

**IS THE PRESS DOING ITS JOB?**

by **EARL BROWDER**

# **NEW MASSES**

May 29, 1945

15¢

in Canada 20¢

## **CRISIS IN FOREIGN POLICY**

### **THE F. D. R. I KNEW**

by **JOHN A. KINGSBURY**

**ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:** San Francisco Trial Balance, by Bruce Minton; Shaping the New France, by Virginia Shull; Joe Hecht, American, by Alvah Bessie; Will We Coddle Germany? by Virginia Gardner; The AFL Bucks History, by George Morris; The Rediscovery of Henry James, by Isidor Schneider; The Trieste Dispute, by The Editors.

by **JOHN STUART**

# BETWEEN OURSELVES

THE music teacher is here again. "I came back because I forgot something the last time I was here," he explained. "Could it be the Willi Messerschmitt stories?" I hazarded.

He smiled. "I hear by the international grapevine that Willi spent a miserable night in London. He and Hess and his escort were unable to drum up a fourth for bridge. But you're wrong. I came back for something else, something much more important. Did you ever stop to think, by the way, about how the venal press gets fighting mad in defense of such fine phrases like independence and freedom of the printed word?" I opened my mouth to answer, but he went right on.

"In the early days of our country, around the time of the War of Independence, people used to get the news through the Town Hall meeting. Periodically the Town Fathers would address the citizens on what was taking place, and have a discussion about it. There, my friend, was a picture of democracy with its sleeves rolled up. But of course, that condition couldn't last. As the towns grew larger, it became impossible to get all the citizens into the meeting hall. In their place what newspapers there were began to take on the function of informing the citizens as to the issues of the day. Back in those days, before the Civil War, the papers were still published in the interest of the people. They were guided by the civic duty to inform the people of what was going on in the world—to substitute honestly for the town meeting. So conscious were the people of the democratic function of the papers that the freedom of the press was zealously guarded.

"Gradually over the years, a change took place. Newspaper publishing became big business. Papers were now published in the interests of the owners, which began to clash with the interests of the people. Freedom of the press became something else in the hands of the publishers. They used the phrase to justify news distortions, omissions, and rigged-up stories. The phrase began to mean freedom from interference, freedom from protest, freedom to carry out whatever irresponsible plans they had afoot. As papers reached what for the industry was the monopoly phase, publishers became shrewder and cagier. In order to make sure that their news would be accepted and their papers bought, they began to introduce features—the comics (Hearst was the first), the ladies' page, the columnist, bedtime stories, nature studies, magazine sections, contests and the rest of it. In order to compete, even a relatively honest publisher in a small town has to buy loads of boilerplate syndicated stuff delivered in stereotype. For a while radio threatened to cut into the news field, but publishers are now buying sta-

tions and there is in general, agreement on the style of news gathering between radio and newspaper.

"Well, we have three ways of overcoming the effects of the press. One way is to go back to the old method of direct contact with the legislators. Let Congress know how you stand on this or that issue, regardless of the editorial stand taken by the papers. Second, we have the leaflet, which is an informal extension of the independent press. If every voter in the country could be given a leaflet every day for a week on Bretton Woods, for instance, the effectiveness of the newspapers on this matter would be cut down considerably. Third is the independent press itself, to which magazines like NEW MASSES belong. Naturally, the bigger the circulation of the independent press, the more influence it would have, and conversely, the less power the commercial press.

"So here is ten bucks for your fund drive. I meant to leave it with you last week, but I was so hot about the Goering

story, I forgot all about it. When music teachers are as appreciated in this country as racing jockeys, I will be able to give more."

ODDS and ends: One of our favorite heroes, General "Vinegar Joe" Stillwell, will be a main speaker along with Maj. Gen. Saraev of the Red Army at the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship meeting at Madison Square Garden on May 31. Other highlights will be the appearance of two of the GI's who met the Russians at Torgau Bridge, and the presence of Paul Robeson, Serge Koussevitzky and others. . . . Ruth McKenney, NM contributing editor, whose brilliant pieces on the San Francisco conference were among the most moving we have read, is on her way back to Hollywood after a four-day flying visit to New York. . . . We are glad to welcome back Alvah Bessie, former NM drama editor, and now with Warner Brothers, whose article in this issue is the first he has done for us in some time. . . . The Jefferson School will have reports from industry, labor, minority groups, etc., on the San Francisco Conference at a meeting at Times Hall, Friday, May 25. J. F.

## NEW MASSES ESTABLISHED 1911

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# CRISIS IN FOREIGN POLICY

By JOHN STUART

**T**HERE is nothing gained in blinking the fact that almost simultaneously with the military defeat of Germany the bond of unity among the leading Allies has been weakened. When the emergencies and compulsions of war were fully operative in Europe the centrifugal pull of divergent interests was kept under control. The needs of victory could tolerate no other conduct but that of a preponderantly harmonious partnership. But the victory over the Wehrmacht has been attained and relations among the great powers now assume a more voluntary character. And in assuming that character, all the forces in this country and in Britain who during the war were not ready to reveal with exactitude the several plans that hovered in their minds now come forward in a mighty push to reverse the policy that crushed German military power. Latent imperialist ambitions are beginning to throb and quiver before the rich prospects of peaceful aggrandizement.

In no other way, it seems to me, can the confusion which has marked Allied relations since V-E Day be explained. In no other way is it possible to understand how the United States is drifting away from its contracts made at Tehenan and Crimea, from the whole concept of a unified international community which was Mr. Roosevelt's hope for the world. At the very moment when the European settlement takes its place with the struggle against Japan as uppermost on the political agenda, at the moment when the essential terms of the security of the world are being defined, the American and British members of the trinity have seemingly chosen to move toward a policy that brought war in Europe and cost them so much in life and treasure.

It would be a mistake to believe that the apparent identity of views between Great Britain and the United States represents an absence of conflict. Far from it. Mr. Churchill's speech last week in the House of Commons represents weakness, not the strength of a war leader who must help in building

the peace on the same terms on which the victory has been forged. The larger Churchillian strategy is to keep the United States and Soviet Union apart, for it is only by this strategy that the British government can recapture the initiative in world affairs. If it regains the initiative, then it can convert its industrial and financial inferiority, not into superiority, but into a position of controlling the future of Europe and of making the decisions that spell a Continent more amenable to those impervious Tory minds which cannot abide the fact that the Soviet Union is a world power and that the United States has no essential conflict with it. By playing on the weaknesses of American foreign policy, by utilizing them for its own advantage, British torydom gains a certain strength.

This strategy on the part of the British government is only possible as long as the makers of American policy forget the Roosevelt legacy and conduct relations with the Soviet Union only on the most formal and frigid terms. This throwback to a policy ringed with black Munich embroidery has such little possibility of ultimate success and is so detrimental to our own interests that it can be described only as the summit of stupidity. If successful diplomacy is a diplomacy that can accomplish the possible, then the British strategy and its reflections in the United States are already a failure even before they advance another inch. The temper of Europe and the flow of its affairs is away from domination by imperialist politics. The only abiding influence any of the big powers can have on the European countries is an influence consonant and moving parallel with the aspirations of their people. As soon as the influence moves in an opposite direction, it becomes an external burden to be sloughed off by one means or another.

**T**HE heartbreak of Mr. Churchill's position is that it leads to civil war and that it leads us, if we bend the knee to him, to become accessories in such conflict. When the leader of a great

power and of a great people can see nothing but chaos in Europe today, then he is tragically blind. To a man who sees order only in a Greece ruled by British bayonets, Europe would be "in a frightful state of confusion." Perhaps Mr. Churchill's whole concept of order is derived from the way in which Britain has ruled India over the last hundred years. Terror does bring a kind of order and calm, but it does not bring them permanently. When Mr. Churchill warns against "totalitarian" and "police governments" in Europe replacing those of the German invaders, what exactly does he have in mind? Is Greece the model government?—a government he helped establish and under which the real enemies of Hitlerism are being cut down or imprisoned? Athens is a quasi-totalitarian and police authority and yet the British government seems quite satisfied with it. Or does Mr. Churchill have in mind the Tito government? Well, he helped establish that too. But perhaps what does not please Mr. Churchill about Belgrade is that it is the seat of a government which insists on its rights and will not fall on its face whenever the lion roars. Somehow many people have the feeling that British torydom, when it tosses around the silly epithet of "totalitarian," means all those new vigorous democracies which, even if they have to lift themselves by their bootstraps, will preserve their hard-won liberation. Mr. Churchill will have to learn that the Continent's future will not be written at 10 Downing Street, and that he can assist in writing it only if he learns the language of the new Europe.

Equally dismaying in Mr. Churchill's current attitude is his assumption that the experience and suffering of the war have taught Americans so very little. It may be a conviction of the British upper classes that only to them is given the light, but it would be catastrophic for them really to believe it. When Mr. Eden appeared in Washington on his way to San Francisco, he may have been able to convince a few Congressmen that Mr. Roosevelt was much too



Edith Glaser.

easy with the Russians and that the Russians therefore got whatever they wanted. This depiction of the President as a Caspar Milquetoast suited Mr. Eden's purposes—the purpose of creating friction between the United States and the USSR. And it was a depiction based on what Mr. Eden assumed to be American ignorance of Mr. Roosevelt's role in welding the grand alliance.

We shall leave to the historians to write twenty or thirty years hence all the details of the proceedings at Teheran and Yalta. But there is one fact

that is a matter of common knowledge among those who have seriously concerned themselves with the course of American foreign policy and the way it was shaped by Roosevelt. Basic in the Roosevelt position was the precept that there could be no collective security in war or in peace, in fact there could be no security at all, unless the Soviet Union were included in the family of nations as an equal. He was one who firmly believed that the USSR existed even if you shut your eyes or burrowed your head into the sand. He knew

American history and he knew that at no point in the history of relations between the United States and Russia has there even been any basic conflict of interests. If disagreements existed from time to time they were artificially engendered and had no roots in reality. He conceived his role as one of convincing the British that they had everything to gain from working with the Russians because if conflict dominated Anglo-Soviet relations, it would have serious effects not only on the outcome of the war but on the peace as well.

Mr. Roosevelt had to convince Mr. Churchill that a western military front was feasible; he had to overcome Mr. Churchill's reluctance to many tri-power agreements of one kind or another. And in helping Mr. Churchill climb above his prejudices and thereby rise in stature, Mr. Roosevelt was shaping a truly independent American policy which conceived of the national interest not as something separate and apart from the world interest, but closely interlinked with the interests of all democratic states. He realized, until the moment he died, that genuine independence of policy was never one in opposition to the rest of the world, much less opposition to an ally or allies whom we needed for the sake of security and our economic well being.

IT is to the great credit of Walter Lippmann that he has used his recent columns and his prestige in conservative circles to remind those who have so quickly forgotten Mr. Roosevelt's special role in managing the highest issues that faced the grand alliance. For if Mr. Stettinius at San Francisco had kept clearly before him the policies of his former chief, he would not have acquiesced so easily to Senator Vandenberg or been overcome by the blandishments of Mr. Eden. The art of controlling divergent interests among powers and keeping them unified requires a master hand. Mr. Stettinius is obviously not a master but neither is he less talented than the millions of Americans who watched with pain and nausea the way he was switching policy and slowly deserting the Roosevelt legacy.

The Polish dispute is the best example of how, on Mr. Eden's urging, Mr. Stettinius hopped into the British foreign secretary's pocket. When Mr. Molotov at San Francisco announced that the "missing" sixteen Poles had been arrested for diversionist activity, Mr. Stettinius and Mr. Eden went into a huddle and emerged with a brusque statement challenging Moscow for dar-



ing to take such liberties with "democratic" Poles. Some bold correspondent, quite unscorched by the heat of Mr. Stettinius' words, asked him whether he knew the names of the Poles. The Secretary replied that he did not. "Then how, Mr. Stettinius," said the correspondent, "do you know they were 'democratic'?" Thereupon the Secretary scowled and made no intelligible answer.

It would, of course, be embarrassing to say that Mr. Eden had advised that the sixteen Poles were "democratic." After all, it is not pleasant to admit that for that moment the British foreign minister had temporarily become the American Secretary of State. Not only was this a retreat from the sacred sovereignty which the American delegation, under Mr. Stettinius' leadership, was defending at San Francisco, but it was a retreat from an approach and a policy which Mr. Roosevelt had fashioned—a retreat from Yalta. Under British influence, Mr. Stettinius gave Mr. Vandenberg and the whole anti-Soviet cabal another opportunity to take American policy farther back than even Mr. Stettinius may have desired.

The fact is that Mr. Roosevelt had no serious differences with the Soviet Union over the reorganization of the Warsaw Provisional Government and that it is Churchill and Eden who violated their Crimea commitment and got Mr. Stettinius to go along with them. That is clear from a report in the New York *Herald Tribune* (May 17) by Bert Andrews who, in investigating an indirect clue given by Walter Lippmann in one of his columns to the effect that letters were in existence indicating Mr. Roosevelt's position on Poland, found a source at the San Francisco meeting—a source not connected with the Yalta agreement—"in a position to know the whole story." Andrews reported that "the texts of none of these letters are so far available," but their publication would reveal "that President Roosevelt disagreed with Mr. Churchill on the latter's interpretation of how a new Polish government should be organized under the terms of the Yalta agreement, and pointed out that insistence on the British interpretation would lay the United States and Britain open to charges of sabotaging the agreement."

Now the plain fact is that the "issue" of the sixteen Poles has nothing to do with the issue of broadening the Polish Provisional Government. Marshal  
(Continued on page 21)

# SAN FRANCISCO TRIAL BALANCE

By **BRUCE MINTON**

*San Francisco (by wire).*

THE third week of the United Nations Conference on International Organization lacked the drama of the opening sessions. But, in reality, these have been fulcrum days. The area of disagreement over the scope and approach of the emerging security organization has been delimited. Solutions have been found to problems that a week ago loomed enormously. The mistake of injecting controversies extraneous to the conference (and thereby endangering the task UNCIO set for itself) seems to have been overcome.

The original Big Three failure to preserve the unity of approach at San Francisco which had been proclaimed at Yalta had the effect of allowing the moral leadership of the anti-fascist world to slip through the fingers of the United States and British spokesmen, and to pass, almost by default, to the Soviet delegation. It was Mr. Molotov who asked that observers from the World Federation of Trade Unions be seated at the conference; it was Mr. Molotov who sought to include the "right to work" and the "right to education" in the statement of human rights; it was Mr. Molotov again who insisted that the charter emphasize the goal of independence for dependent peoples; and finally, it was the Soviet delegation which defended the Dumbarton Oaks draft against attempts to water down the responsibility of the

great powers for the preservation of peace and to inject into the charter all sorts of debilitating clauses threatening to security.

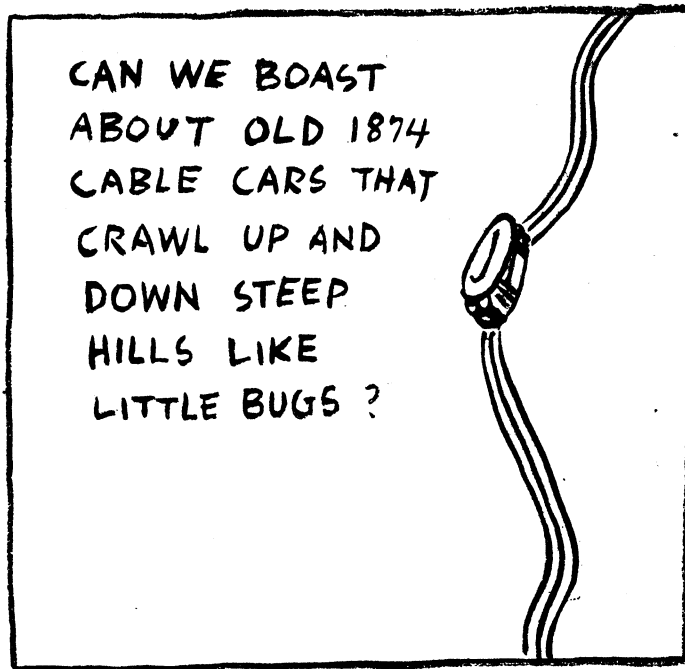
For a while the British, and even more, the United States delegations forgot their purpose in coming to San Francisco and concentrated on "putting Mr. Molotov in his place." The very success of their fantastic opposition in the end frightened them. It was all very well to bait the Soviet Union and to organize voting blocs to defeat Mr. Molotov; but the danger to the national interests of the United States and Great Britain grew alarmingly obvious. The game was not only unrewarding; it threatened to end in disaster.

The dispute over the sixteen arrested Poles, which they had no business injecting into the conference in the first place, has been dropped; it is no longer discussed at press conferences. An attempt is now being made by the United States to preserve the essential character of the Dumbarton Oaks draft. On the question of the relationship between regional pacts and the security organization, acceptance of proposals made by the Soviet delegation strengthened the original United States formula and made possible agreement by the five major powers. On the whole there has been a return to the method of consultation and agreement among the sponsoring powers to prevent divergent views from developing into public brawls.

In fact, Stettinius' statement to the press last Tuesday (May 15) was a frank effort to recapture moral dignity. Having stubbornly opposed the admission of labor observers, Mr. Stettinius rediscovered the Atlantic Charter (which will be woven into the statement on human rights); he assured the press that the basic freedoms enunciated by the Atlantic Charter allow for labor representation in the new organization. He did not explain why, in that event, he had so strenuously opposed the mention of these rights specifically. But for all the evasions, the Secretary com-

## F. D. R.

"When Hitler and the Nazis go out the Prussian military clique must go with them. The war-breeding gangs of militarists must be rooted out of Germany—and out of Japan—if we are to have any real assurance of future peace." — From President Roosevelt's report to Congress, Sept. 17, 1943.



mitted the United States to an interpretation of the charter which acknowledges the principles he is so loath to mention. The language could be a good deal more precise—vagueness allows leeway for future “subtleties” on the part of Senator Vandenberg and his friends. Quite obviously, the refusal to accept the wording of President Roosevelt’s Economic Bill of Rights, as proposed by Mr. Molotov—and now supported by New Zealand and others—amounts to an appeasement of the Senator. But the conclusion evidently reached by Stettinius—that appeasement must be accompanied by an elaborate explanation—is worth noting.

ON THE trusteeship problem, the same evasiveness is again apparent. The British insist on substituting “self-government” for “independence”—with India in mind, the British want to limit any future concessions they are forced to make and grant at the most dominion status. The Soviet Union asks that the concept of complete national liberation be included in the charter. President Roosevelt’s approach to this problem was closer to the Russian position than to the British. And the Russians showed their desire to work closely with the Americans by making the original American trusteeship plan the basis for their own proposals. However, as on other matters, the American delegation has maneuvered itself into a position where it seems to be siding with the British against the Russians. The United States delegation walks a tight-

rope—it talks of “self-government” but attempts to prove that black is really grey and grey approaches white, and therefore self-government really does mean national independence, which just is not so.

Yet for all the circumlocutions, one central fact emerges: the clear-cut, unambiguous position taken by the USSR has had some impact on the other two members of the Big Three. They show some desire to win back the prestige they gave away in the first days of the conference, and the efforts to reconstitute their position have been made at the expense of Senator Vandenberg. He won the first round by seducing the US delegation into irresponsible Soviet-baiting. He has lost the subsequent rounds because his position endangered the best interests of the United States. Vandenberg’s defeat is by no means final. In the days ahead the resourceful Senator may find new possibilities for disruption. For the moment, however, his leadership has been rejected.

What convinced his colleagues that all was not well so long as Vandenberg called the play was the series of events following hard on Molotov’s appeal on Argentina, and the controversy on the inclusion of labor observers and on the independence of colonial peoples. The protests berating the US delegates for their role in the Argentine incident had their effect, as did the insistence of former Secretary of State Hull and, it is considered certain here, of President Truman that the US delegation stop

baiting an ally and get on with their task of drawing up a workable security charter.

I have no detailed first-hand information as to the reaction of the European press to the first days of the conference. But I have talked with delegates and responsible correspondents from England, France, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Norway, Latin America and China. The views of all, with the exception of the Chinese, have been startlingly similar. The Europeans are astounded by what they consider the political immaturity of the American people who permit such a frenzy of Soviet-baiting. They deduce from this that the American people have not yet fully decided to follow the policies (supported in the last presidential election) of President Roosevelt. They further deduce that the United States is in danger of being captured by reaction and of inheriting the disease of fascism from Germany. In particular, the French and middle Europeans talk of the menace of a third world war if the United States does not live up to the commitments made at Yalta. They believe the death of President Roosevelt plunged this country into confusion; they begin to look toward the Soviet Union for support and moral protection against what they consider the imminence of a reactionary—or, as they put it, a “Vandenberg”—victory in the United States.

Those British who realize that peace can only be maintained by keeping and expanding the agreements achieved at Teheran and Yalta recognize that the

national interest of the United States cannot be divorced from a secure and peaceful postwar world. But, they say, regardless of necessity, the relative lack of political sophistication among the American people makes easier the role of the reactionary demagogues, and national interest can be betrayed if the American people do not recognize in what direction their true interests lie. On the other hand, the tory-minded among the British welcomed and perhaps helped instigate the initial US self-indulgence in Soviet-baiting—they feel that any coolness between the US and the USSR increases British bargaining power. It is well known that Anthony Eden's blast against the Soviet Union in connection with the Polish issue, delivered at a press conference just before he left San Francisco, was urged by Churchill, who insisted that Eden pile fuel on every disagreement between the US and the USSR.

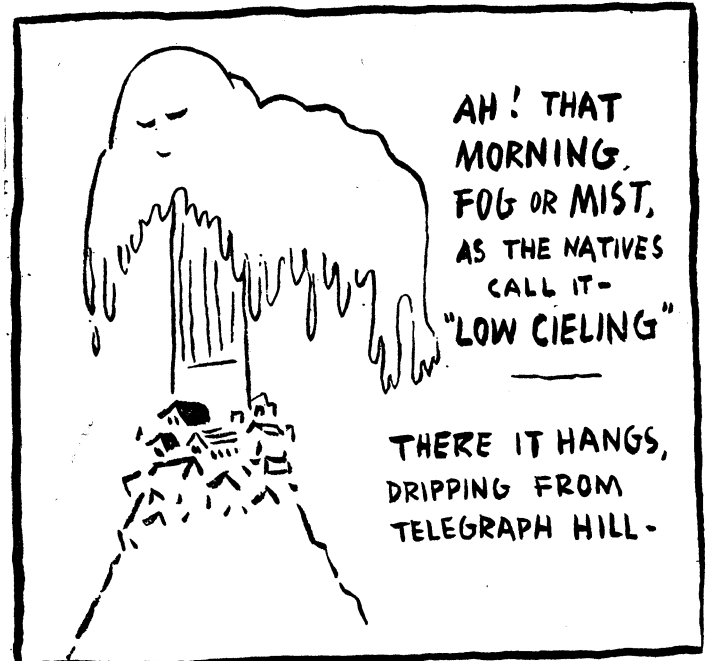
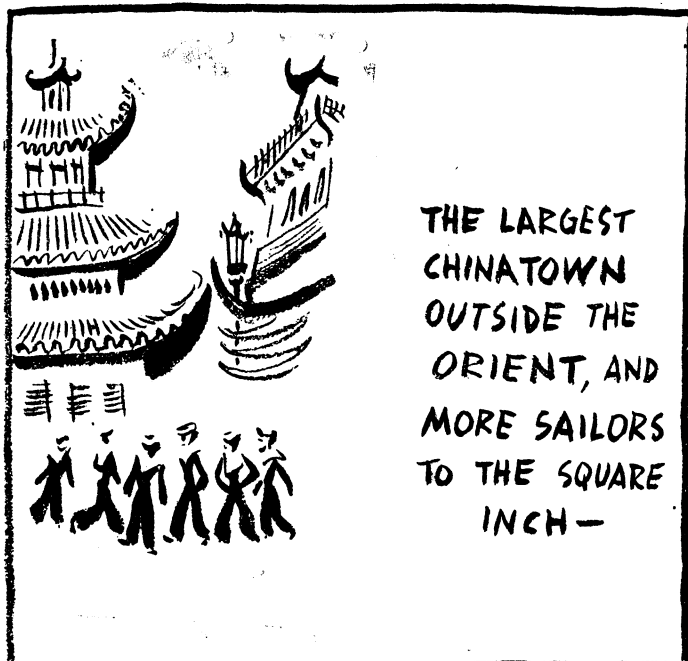
For their part, the Latin Americans are alarmed by the refusal of the United States to take a forthright position on the independence of dependent peoples. They fear an abandonment of the Roosevelt good neighbor policy and a return to the Harding-Coolidge-Hoover gun-boat and dollar imperialism. They resent being used as an anti-Soviet bloc. Whenever US relations with the USSR deteriorate, the fear grows in Latin America that the United States will look upon the hemisphere as its own private sphere of influence to deal with as it likes. In addition, delegates and correspondents begin to doubt the ability of the United States to solve its post-

war economic problems. The argument is that if the United States refuses to continue good relations with the other great powers—and in particular, with the Soviet Union—this country will attempt to win economic domination for and by itself. But this will doom the United States to crisis and depression, and profoundly affect the economy of the rest of the world, especially of this hemisphere and of the colonial and semi-colonial countries. All this would lead to a new world war. Such reactions have become very vocal in San Francisco in off-the-record-conversations with delegates and in discussion with foreign correspondents.

Almost alone, the Soviet delegation has refused to be drawn into these fervid speculations. I learn through indirect sources that on the whole, the Soviet spokesmen appear not dissatisfied with the progress made in San Francisco. The fact that the Soviet delegation took moral leadership gives them some satisfaction; they consider the determined, if belated, efforts by the United States and Great Britain to participate in this moral leadership all to the good. Most of all, the Soviet spokesmen are pleased that the baiting and disruption have not been injected into discussions of the charter itself. In other words, they seem assured that the purpose for which this conference was originally convened will be fulfilled. Weaknesses in the final charter are to be expected, but they feel these can be overcome in the future. The Soviet representatives indicate regret over the hostile bombardment to which they have been subjected by our press;

they frankly dislike the disruption by certain anti-Soviet figures around and within the United States and British delegations. But the fact remains that despite the admission of Argentina, despite the refusal to seat representatives of the Polish people, despite the hysteria over the sixteen arrested Poles, the main work of drawing up a charter based on Dumbarton Oaks is being accomplished.

**T**HE Chinese have been reticent. The delegation has been content to sit with the great powers and to avoid definite action on controversial questions. The exception is the support the Chinese have given to the inclusion of the word "independence" in the trusteeship formula—China as an Asiatic nation naturally aligns itself with advocates of the liberation of subject peoples. Besides, the Chinese want to regain Hong Kong from the British. The delegation is a hodge-podge: the four Kuomintang representatives are perhaps not so completely reactionary as the worst elements within the Kuomintang government; the two non-party representatives are slightly more liberal than the Kuomintang spokesmen, but the difference is hardly noticeable; and the one Communist is completely isolated from his delegation and colleagues. The Chinese were supposedly coming to San Francisco with a program that was pro-United States and anti-British—at least this was the advance rumor assiduously spread by the press; but in their actions here the delegation has not lived up to this advance gossip. The majority of the Chinese delegates are eagerly trying



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JAPAN



Gropper

to reinforce the policy enunciated by United States Ambassador Hurley of building the Chinese armies to full strength, and equipping, modernizing and mechanizing the Kuomintang forces. The Communists, so the plan provides, would be allowed to disband their own armies and enter the revived Kuomintang army as individuals. The Communist delegate, however, who speaks for a vast section of the Chinese population, points out that a feudal army, such as the present Kuomintang forces, cannot be modernized; men conscripted at the point of a bayonet do not know why they are fighting, and will not be able to defeat the Japanese. Only a democratic coalition government in China and a united high command can bring victory, he insists, and save the lives of scores of thousands of American soldiers.

At this stage of the conference it is perhaps unduly speculative to predict that even with specific issues still unsolved, a sound and effective charter will be drawn. The key problems still unsettled are the organization of the World Court, the role of the Social and Economic Council, the final approval of the Security Council voting formula, the precise wording of the section dealing with colonial trusteeship, and the definition of aggression (if this arises, as now seems likely). To my mind, the harm done to the charter so far by appeasing Vandenberg will not prove irremediable. The real question is: how much harm has been done to the unity of the Big Three and to the morale of the United Nations?

It is evident that irrespective of what

happens at the conference, everything depends on the unity and leadership of the Big Three. Much repair work will need to be done in this respect in order to bring American policy back on the course set by President Roosevelt.

Gerald L. K. Smith, fuehrer of the America First Party, has been very much in evidence here, attempting to exploit the negative aspects of the conference. Lamentably, Smith has been allowed to hang

around the Palace Hotel and to threaten to hold mass meetings—one has already been stopped. Smith is somewhat out of his element in this big-time atmosphere, but that does not bother him; as he says, his audiences are in the Midwest and the South, among simple people in the industrial cities of the interior and in the small agricultural communities. Smith is merely getting "documentation" for his theme song—which is the failure of this conference. He feeds on the discouragement and disillusion of honest people, and on the Red-baiting of the disrupters. I asked him what he thought Senator Vandenberg would do in the Senate when the World Charter was up for ratification. Smith put it this way: "Senator Vandenberg will support it, all right, but he won't support it on the basis of love me, love my child. Oh no—he'll say love me, and if you don't like my ugly child, that's all right with me too." Judging by the tactics so often pursued by the Republican Old Guard in the Senate, there is plenty of precedent for the maneuver hinted at by Vandenberg's America First friend. Many times, when the Republican reactionaries were determined to kill progressive legislation, Senator Taft has opposed and Senator Vandenberg has supported, and between the two they have managed to conduct the debate in such a way as to assure the legislation's defeat. Vandenberg is adept at using the weapon of faint praise; he has already intimated that he will support the World Charter in the Senate "for all its weaknesses"; it is this sort of attitude which can magnify the supposed

"weaknesses" until they loom larger than the positive aspects of the World Security Organization.

ACTUALLY, the fight for a secure and lasting peace has already begun to shift from the San Francisco arena. A charter—and a good charter—will definitely result from this gathering. But to win Senate ratification is another matter. Vandenberg has never indulged in the illusion that he could have any real expectation of preventing the UNCIO from doing its job. But he has always banked on defeating the security charter in the Senate. His disruption here has been shrewdly calculated—with the intent of preparing for the subsequent murder of the charter. He has raised the bogey of Bolshevism—that old standby of fascism—and he expects the specter to do a good haunting job when he escorts it to the floor of the Senate. Nevertheless, most significant has been the fact that despite all the confusion and the attempts to pervert, misrepresent, and divide, the common national interests of our country and of the rest of the powers continually reassert themselves in San Francisco. It is true, after all, that a secure peace depends on Big Three collaboration.

Even the most fearful of Europeans, after describing their horror at the admission of Argentina, their disgust at the Red-baiting American press, and their surprise that this country does not have greater realization of the role of the USSR in winning the European war and as a great power in the coming years—even these Europeans conclude their discussions with a puzzled question: unless the United States is willing to act with the responsibility thrust upon it by its immense strength and its primary world position, how will the United States avoid economic crisis, how will it meet the problems which can only be solved if collaboration exists among the great powers? The strength of the Crimea Declaration did not rest in a vague idealism; the lasting quality of the agreement had its roots in the necessity that brought the three powers to Teheran and Yalta. Senator Vandenberg may stage a good show, but his position is weak when confronted with the vital necessities of this historical period. Yet these necessities do not impose their will automatically.

Unless the American people insist that the Roosevelt policy of close collaboration with the USSR be restored, there is real danger that the perspectives of Teheran and Yalta will be shattered.

# JOE HECHT, AMERICAN

By ALVAH BESSIE

WHO will remember Joe? What does this name mean to you? It is not Eisenhower, Rokossovsky, Bong, or Patton, King or Meyer Levin. He had no DSC, no Purple Heart . . . he didn't get the time you need to earn one. I can tell you this about Joe Hecht. Maybe it will mean something to you.

March 18, 1938: Some seventy-five replacements joined the decimated lines of the Abraham Lincoln Battalion up near Batea in the Aragon. We had spent four days in boxcars and *camions*, marched forty kilometers the night before. What we found was an outfit that had just had the stuffings knocked out of it at Belchite, Caspe, Alcaniz. It had no guns, no food, no clothes on its back, no shoes on its feet. It was camped on the side of a partly wooded hill, crouched in the rain, licking its wounds, eating what grub it could get off leaves instead of mess-kits. It was a bad time.

They lined up the replacements and assigned them to what was left of Companies 1, 2, 3 and 4. A guy stepped out of the ranks when my name was called. He looked like a walking corpse to me—hollow eye-sockets, jutting cheekbones, sunken cheeks. His face was covered with hair and dirt. His eyes were red; his clothes in rags. "Didn't you work on the *Brooklyn Eagle*?" he said to me. "I think I met your kids one time."

That was Joe Hecht. A soldier. A man such as they come once in awhile, and there seem to be more like him today than there ever were before. His beaten face lit up like a light bulb when I said I knew his name, remembered hearing about him during the East Coast seamen's strike of 1936. He gave me a cigarette—where did he get it? Joe Hecht had more parcels sent to him in Spain than any fifty men I ever knew. Why do you suppose that was? I guess because so many people loved him.

How do you love a man? How does one man love another? Let me tell you. Wherever I went in Spain I met Joe Hecht. After that rout at Belchite, Caspe, Alcaniz, and after the second licking that followed it at Batea, Gandesa and Villalba, when we staggered back on the Ebro River and across it, Joe Hecht was all worn out. He had been in Spain since December 1936.

He had done more than his share of fighting. So they gave him an easy job. We envied him. They gave him a job driving a car, an ammunition truck . . . day and night, hour after hour. "It's better than walking," Joe said whenever I ran into him. And whenever I ran into him he had a cigarette for me, a piece of chocolate, chewing gum, a can of smoked sausages from home—from Brooklyn.

WHAT he ever saw in me I'd like to know. But I discovered later it wasn't only me. It was people. He loved them with a passion that is known to few of us—it devoured him. He could—and did—give more of himself than anybody I have ever met, and when he was through giving, he still had more than when he started. That's the way it is with people full of love; the more they give, the more they have.

We'd be dead-beat; marching through rain; spent the night out "sleeping" in the rain; come into a town. At the crossroads I'd spot Joe Hecht with his *camion*; that grin on his face. "Come over here," he'd say. "I got something for you, baby."

He had something for me. Believe me, friends, it was something more important, more permanent, more satisfying than a butt, a half a bar of chocolate, a tin of condensed milk we could spread on bread. When I was low in the gut, Joe had good cheer. When I was confused, Joe Hecht had clarity. When I was lonely, Joe had understanding, comradeship. When I was ill, Joe nursed me—massaging my rheumatism-crippled legs for hours, finding food and cooking it himself, spoon-feeding me with his hands and with his love. And he had these things for anyone who needed them.

Some of us came home from Spain, and Joe went back to work. He never had a formal education. He worked as a garage-man, a mechanic. He had worked before that as a factory worker, an organizer for unions, for the Workers' Alliance, for the Communist Party. For that's what Joe was—a Communist. He wore the label for what it really is—a banner. That banner flashed in everything Joe was and everything Joe knew. With no formal schooling, he was still the most widely read, the most deeply cultured man I ever knew. There

was no field of art or science in which Joe had not plunged—alone, except for books—and in which he could not swim stoutly with the best.

He was the soundest critic of writing I have known; he knew music, classical and swing, and loved them both with equal fervor; he knew painting from the Neanderthal caves of southern France to Picasso. He could point you out the errors—in conception or in execution—of actors, stage and screen, of playwrights, poets, painters, physicists, auto mechanics, dancers, novelists, radio technicians and philosophers. There was nothing human alien to Joe.

Does this sound like a superman to you? Joe was just an ordinary guy. I do not mean to make him sound unusual—he was common as dirt, he was a common denominator of mankind. He taught himself to speak fluent French and Spanish, he could speak German, Yiddish, Italian and some Russian. He could talk the language of any human being, black or brown or white, he met from the Brooklyn waterfront to the halls of Parliament—and somewhere and somehow he had met them all.

THERE was a time we don't like to remember, but I think we should recall it now. Because the times have changed and many people have changed with the times. It was the time when Communists, or men and women who had been in Spain, were regarded with suspicion here at home. Joe went in the US Army in 1942. He met with the reception that became a pattern with the Spanish Vets. He was greeted as a veteran, an expert in the science of war. He was asked to speak to his company, his battalion, regiment; he was interviewed by the Army papers and put on the local radio. Then he was kicked in the teeth.

Joe was only human. He got bitter. He wrote me letters, told how he had been recommended for officers' candidate school, and then turned down. He told how he had applied for active service, got his transfer, then had it countermanded. He told how he was finally sent to an officers' preparatory school, made the best marks in his class and was then sent back again.

His commanding officer called him in. "What happened up there, Hecht?" the CO asked. "I don't know," said



Preparing the "act."

Joe. "They say my grades weren't good enough." The CO thought a moment, then went to the personnel file.

"This is none of my business, Hecht," he said, "but it wasn't your grades." He brought out Joe's card and showed it to him. Up in one corner there were two letters—SD.

"What does that mean?" asked Joe.

"It means suspected of disloyalty," the CO said, "I understand you are a Communist . . . but I never heard of you passing out any leaflets or agitating the men. I only heard you were a damned good soldier."

"I try to be," said Joe.

All this, as I say, has changed and the Army has learned it can't fight an efficient war if it discards good men simply because they are or have been called Communists.

His CO recommended Joe for active service again and he was transferred—to a hospital, where they had him scrubbing floors and polishing brass. Then

they "promoted" him—to keeping a filing system on the hospital cases. Joe even learned something from this: he made a breakdown of the percentage of psychoneurotic cases to the total, and he expressed his concern about the disproportionate number of "combat fatigue" patients. "Maybe they're not teaching the boys enough," he wrote.

And Joe was transferred again—back to infantry. He wrote, "After two months of blundering about from one camp to another with nobody knowing where I belonged or why I was transferred here or there, I've finally reached a stopping place—I think. Co. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Infantry Regiment, \_\_\_\_\_ Division, Camp \_\_\_\_\_. That sounds good, doesn't it? In the infantry! I've been given a rifle, I'm a soldier!"

Joe was the kind of soldier who didn't like things run wrong. He didn't like the way some things were done in his outfit; so he set about to remedy them. He trained the men under his charge—

for he was immediately made a sergeant—along the lines he had learned in Spain, where he had been a corporal, a sergeant, a lieutenant, a captain. He worked out infantry problems for them and solved them. He argued and explained—it was a common thing for the guys to call Joe in to settle their arguments. He led them in field maneuvers and won the commendation of his officers. A general, watching Joe demonstrate a combat problem with two platoons of infantry, spoke to him, said, "You're a good leader, young man." It made Joe feel good.

So—after two and a half years in the Army, Joe finally got shipped out—to France. Technical sergeant—in command of a platoon. He wrote from France—twice. He sent us the French papers. He asked for "grub, candy, candles." He wrote about the morale of the men. And this is the last thing that he wrote to us:

"March 13, 1945  
Germany

"Lots to say but there is too much adrenalin in my bloodstream to permit the patience and relaxation to say it. This country of our enemy, the German, is desolate, destroyed, dead. Like the bastard's soul.

"One of these days you, my 'dear diary,' will receive a twenty-page letter from me. Till then bear with me and my suprarenal glands.

"I'm well, kinda tired but OK. Write lots of letters and keep my morale up. Send me some candles if they still make them in the US and brighten my days and nights. How are you doing in Hollywood? Sid wrote to say that he received a review of your *Objective Burma* which was very complimentary. Good going chico. Love to BV I and BV II. Wish me luck and cojones.

"Joe."

We had sent the grub. It didn't reach him. We didn't have time to send the candles. BV I is Joe's name for my wife—Blonde Venus, I. (Silly, isn't it?) BV II is his name for my daughter whom he never saw. When he heard she was born he sent her a gift: a Spanish coin he had been carrying since 1937, called a *perro gordo*. It means "fat dog" in Spanish. And this is what Joe wrote:

"Tell her it is a poor man's coin . . . that it was worn thin this way for over fifty years by the hands of poor, hard-working people. So she will understand, in time to come, what it means."

(Continued on page 21)



# SHAPING THE NEW FRANCE

By VIRGINIA SHULL

THE results of France's first elections make it clear that her people have not changed their minds since the Liberation about the direction in which they wish to go. They have wiped out the wishful speculations of certain foreign correspondents who have manufactured a new turn to the right from every minor crisis, by returning a clear mandate of support to the candidates who called for carrying out the program for nationalization of the Council of National Resistance (CNR), supported jointly by the Socialists and Communists in the elections. This is no sudden reaction to the cold and hunger of the past winter in France, but the logical demand of a people who have already built a remarkable foundation for the new France which they are determined to create. And if the correspondents had troubled themselves to discover what the French people have already accomplished there would be less surprise in the boulevard cafes. It is a fascinating story, which begins in the underground, flowers richly with the Liberation and continues to develop, through all France's present difficulties, toward permanent forms. What France achieved during the Liberation and what she is forging into new political and economic forms will be of major significance in the new Europe. The story for the most part has to be pieced out from incidental items in a press passionately concerned with immediate problems.

The fullest account to come our way of the great creative days of September and October, 1944, the first two months of the new France—the account of what happened in Lyon, the "Capital of the Resistance"—outlines clearly the patterns of many similar events throughout France. According to *Action*, the *Front National* weekly, Lyon's first task was to clear out her collaborationists. In the first eight days of the Liberation, courts martial were installed by the Committee of Liberation in place of the Vichysois tribunals. One hundred and ninety-three German agents, Gestapo and Vichy militia who had rounded up patriots for the concentration camp and worse were condemned to death and executed. New "tribunals of honor" were instituted, which in one month dismissed from their jobs 480 police agents and inspectors. Collaborationist firms were sequestered, their permanent status to be decided

later. Two Vichy directors of *comites d'organisation*, Vichy's production and distribution agencies, were arrested for fraudulent distribution of raw materials to their own profit and for stealing Jewish property.

The problem of keeping production going for the war effort was met at once. In the sequestered firms, the workers elected delegates who sat with a government administrator from Paris and the technical staff in a *comite de gestion*, or management committee, and shared executive power in the administration of the sequestered plant. Production rose quickly and decisively. In the great Berliet truck factory, for instance, one of the sequestered firms (Berliet and his son were put in prison as collaborators) which produced only twenty trucks in September turned out 150 in November. By mid-December there were no unemployed in Lyon. This is in contrast to Paris, where removal of Vichy elements was less thorough; there unemployment ran as high as 300,000 at the end of November, even without the millions of war prisoners and deportees who had not yet begun to return. Details of the organization which accomplished this remarkable recovery in Lyon are described by the president of the city's *Metallos*, or metal workers union: Each shop elected a *comite d'entreprise*, or labor-management committee, whose business it was to serve as liaison between the workers and the directing committee in solving the problems of continuing production. These committees in turn were divided into subcommittees to look after such matters as social welfare, relief, canteens, sports, culture, and there was one to take care of the farm of fifty head of cattle that was part of the Berliet estate.

The story of the reorganization of Lyon was repeated in many instances with slight variations throughout France. At Neuilly, a motor repair factory set up by the Nazis, employing about 340 workers, was simply abandoned by the Hitlerites in September. The workers and technicians at once elected a new management, sent a delegation to Paris to the Ministry of Production for a new administrator, whom they got. They set to work at once to repair some 800 Renault motors desperately needed for France's shattered transport. When they

ran into a crisis and needed new transmission belts, they bought them out of the union treasury.

At another motor repair company in the Paris region, the SOGA, employing around 900 workers when the Nazis left, the workers and technicians elected a *comite de gestion* for each shop and got busy. They put fifty-two broken-down German cars in service for the FFI, another twenty for the Ministry of War, with a few for the Ministry of Air thrown in. All in all, they put in some 222,000 hours for the army alone.

THE full story of these rich days is yet to reach the USA, but sufficient evidence of its character and its success appears in the corners of the paper-starved French press. An understanding of its scope is important for the future. Cement factories in the department of Ardeche which kept production going through the organization of *comites de gestion* were reported to be producing at practically pre-war levels by December. *Free France* (organ of the French Press and Information Service in the USA) reports that plants in Toulon and Beziers as well as Lyon were operating successfully with mixed committees having the right to examine company finances.

A report by Daniel Mayer (Socialist representative in the CNR) to a convention of the departmental Committees of Liberation in Paris indicates the significance of these emergency organizational developments in the creation of a new French economy. Speaking of the tasks France faced in rebuilding the country physically and spiritually and of carrying on the war, he emphasized that new methods of solving economic problems were inescapable, and were for that matter already in the course of being worked out. He spoke specifically of the "*municipalisations*" of Toulouse, where electric power, gas, water and the city transportation service were brought under city control, operating under a director appointed by the City Hall and in conjunction with an advisory board on which workers and technicians were represented. The same discussion reported the success of *comites de gestion* and *comites d'entreprises* in the factories of Montlucon and the mines of Allier and elsewhere.

Why the participation of the workers themselves in these emergency organizations was so successful not only in preventing France from falling into a dangerous state of economic anarchy but also in resuming production quickly and in an orderly fashion can be illustrated in the story of the reconstruction of the *Pont Laversine*. At the moment of the Liberation not a single bridge remained across the Loire. Not a train, bus or truck could pass from the north of France to the south, and what little transport was left in the north was strained to the utmost in the early Allied blows against the Wehrmacht. The responsible ministry listened to experts explain that it would take two months, four months, heaven knows how long to rebuild a railway bridge. But it was imperative that something be done right away. The Parisian Committee of Liberation called in the Reconstruction Committee of the *Front National* and asked for a plan for an emergency bridge. Its Reconstruction Committee called in turn the UCIF (the organization of engineers and technicians) and the relevant trade unions and asked them what would be needed to do the job. They drew up a plan, they made an inventory, they made lists of where the needed items could be found, and in three days reported that they had assembled everything but two cranes, and that there were two broken-down cranes within thirty kilometers of the location where they were needed. It was the engineers' union which finally supplied the twenty men necessary to repair the cranes. The "impossible" bridge was completed and carrying trains across the Loire within a week.

This sort of creative work occurred all over France during the crisis, and even though the various regions were often completely cut off from each other, the solutions for the most part took closely analogous forms.

FROM the success of the crisis measures and organizations have developed two opposing movements. One is leading to the gradual incorporation of a significant part of the emergency organization into French law by decrees of the Provisional Government. The other appears in the form of renewed efforts on the part of some still powerful pro-fascist political and industrial elements who wish to destroy these gains and recover control of the state. The latter preserve their influence in certain high administration staffs whose

personnel still includes the dubiously "select" graduates of the now reformed *Ecole des Sciences Politiques*, the major training ground for civil servants, before the Liberation effectively controlled by the *Comité des Forges*.

During the government's delays and indecision of the past months in consolidating the gains of the Liberation, sufficient sabotage has occurred to create a great deal of trouble. It by no means indicates an impending reversal of the direction in France's development, as some Cassandras writing back to their New York offices have intimated; but it does show how the remaining enemies of the French people work and what interference with the machinery they are still capable of provoking. The workers in the motor repair plant at Neuilly, for example, after they bought their new transmission belts out of their own pockets found that they needed credit for many things—gas, electricity, water, telephones. They petitioned Paris, this time the *Direction des Domaines*, for help. That office raised a considerable fuss because the workers had not come to them in the first place for an administrator. After the *comité de gestion* agreed to accept a new candidate, they were promised a million francs' credit, with two millions more to be granted later. Four weeks later, they still had no credit at all, nor gas, nor electricity. They saw idle machines which they needed on the open market, but they hadn't the money to buy. Benoit Frachon, secretary of the CGT (General Confederation of French Workers), who reported this scandal, charged that the offices which tied up the factory with red tape were full of Vichyssois.

THE story of the sabotage of the French press is one of the most complete in the reports which have reached the USA. At the moment of the Liberation, the Paris Resistance press, which had built a superb organization during the underground period, at once seized the plants of the prostitute press and began to issue some of the most remarkable journalism the Western world has seen. So complete was the corruption of the Vichyite journals that governmental decrees were passed at once making only those papers legal which had published clandestinely during the occupation or which had closed that fatal June in which the Nazis marched in and took over. But the secret partisans of the *status quo ante*, or of fascism, made

inroads even in this vigorously alert area. Initial troubles with the great distributing monopoly, the *Messageries Hachette*, are reported from the early days after the Liberation. There was recently a paper cut which, evidence indicates, was not entirely the result of a real paper shortage or difficulties of transport. The national press was cut to half size, with drastic results. One can print much less than half the news and editorial comment on the twelve-by-seventeen-inch sheets to which most of the press is reduced. "*On nous étouffe!*" ("We are being smothered!") was the protest. The paper trusts are blamed for sabotaging both production and imports, while such incidental scandals as the granting permission to the once corrupt, collaborationist *Miroir des Sports*, as well as other papers, to publish again and receive a quota of paper reinforce the sense of threat and conspiracy against the patriotic press. And only a short time ago, the title of the new French press to the premises in which they were working had not yet been clearly established, as if the question of return to their former owners might yet come up. The whole problem finally blew wide open in a searing session of the Consultative Assembly where M. Albert Bayet, president of the National Federation of the French Press laid directly at the door of the Minister of Information, M. Tietgen, the blame for the scandalous situation in which the legal press could not get decent paper of any sort in adequate quantities, but plenty of fine paper was appearing on the black market.

But while the reactionary forces do what they can to prevent the extension of the gains made under the leadership of the Resistance forces and the progressive parties, the de Gaulle government has already embodied in national ordinances many of the democratic measures of the emergency organizations set up at the time of the Liberation. These represent a solid achievement toward French reconstruction and toward a wider and more vigorous democracy. It is against the background of these achievements that the current demands of popular French forces for further essential reforms must be viewed. In a subsequent article I shall discuss the progress France has made in legalizing the remarkable gains of the Liberation.

*Miss Shull's second article on shaping the new France will appear in next week's issue of NM.*

## IS THE PRESS DOING ITS JOB?

*Mr. Browder's column this week is his statement and one of the questions from the question period presented in the New York Newspaper Guild's weekly radio "Free Speech Forum," heard over WMCA, May 15. Mr. Browder and Dr. Paul Lazarsfeld were the chief speakers in a debate chaired by Dr. Frank Kingdon and entitled "Is the American Press Doing Its Job?"*

**I**F THE job of American newspapers is to serve and protect the interests of the nation then it must be said that the press is not doing its job.

The case of the Associated Press and its European representative, Mr. Kennedy, last week, in the premature release of news of the Nazi surrender, is merely the culmination of the dominant spirit of the whole American commercial press. It is not a special and isolated incident. It is the climax of a general spirit of irresponsibility that characterizes the American press as a whole, with but few exceptions. Three great governments, in the moment of victory of the greatest war of history, had their plans interrupted, thrown into confusion and jeopardized, by the personal decision of one newspaperman who was able to put into motion the whole terrific machinery of the American press for that purpose. Even a blind man can now see something is wrong with a system that produces such an incident.

At first almost the entire press rushed to the defense of Mr. Kennedy and made a hero of him. When it became clear that his act was indefensible the press took the opposite line and made Mr. Kennedy the goat who should carry the sins of the newspaper world. Both views are equally wrong. Mr. Kennedy was guilty of irresponsible tampering with the national interest, but his guilt was the natural and inevitable product of the institution he served, of its training, its standards of values, its whole moral atmosphere, where the line between heroism and dishonor becomes indistinguishable. American newspaperdom could produce a Kennedy because it is itself essentially *amoral*.

The American press likes to boast that it is the supreme example of the "free press" toward which mankind has striven since the first invention of printing. But this American "free press" is, for better or worse, an integral part of the general economic system which calls itself "free enterprise," and has undergone a similar evolution. Just as "free enterprise" in the basic economy of the country has meant, first and foremost, the freedom of capital to concentrate and centralize itself into ever fewer hands, so that today some eighty percent of American economy is in the hands of the 100 largest corporations, in an analogous manner the "free press" has become a trustified industry.

A hundred years ago, "free press" meant that any reasonably active and intelligent American, who could rally a few friends around him, could become an editor with approximate equality of powers with all other editors, and the one

amongst them who rose to great heights did so almost entirely on the basis of individual genius. Today even a millionaire cannot hope to break into the newspaper industry as an independent producer. It required the \$75,000,000 of Marshall Field to break into the monopoly in Chicago, and even he still operates under severe handicaps. Since the Marshall Fields are exceptional phenomena, occurring but once a century or so, they do not change the course of history. The press, for all practical purposes, is an industrial monopoly just about as free as the chemical industry.

The old independent editor, a moral and political force in his own right, is gone never to return. His place is partly occupied by the syndicated columnist, mouthpiece of special interest syndicates, and an integral part of the monopoly structure. The hired-man editor with all his specially trained staff has all his moral, social, and political problems decided for him by the "higher ups" in the monopolistic hierarchy. He is left to strive for distinction among his fellows in the search for "scoops," for sensational headlines, for anything that will make a noise and boost the circulation—anything, that is, except issues of policy and public morals, anything but the fight for the public interest.

In the strictly amoral atmosphere of the hired-men who make up newspaperdom in America, the miracle is that newspaper men remain as decent as they are. True, to remain decent, they must cool the heat of their personal and professional ambitions. Only those whose ambitions are stronger than their sense of decency rise in the profession. The most completely amoral man is the one, given a certain minimum of professional equipment, most likely to succeed. The outstandingly successful ones are men to whom any discussion of newspaper morality is pure and simple hogwash. To them Kennedy really is the hero, even if, for reasons of the higher expediency, it has become necessary to disown him. For Kennedy obeyed the only morality recognized in his world, get the sensational story across ahead of the other fellow no matter what the cost or consequence; he obeyed the only loyalty demanded by newspaperdom: loyalty to the man who signs the paycheck.

These are some of the reasons why the American press is not doing its job for the nation. Until these conditions are fundamentally changed we have no reason to expect the press to do any better.

*Question:* In your capacity of editor-in-chief of a New York newspaper, in connection with Mr. Kennedy and your statement that he made a personal decision, I would want you gentlemen to comment on what seems to me to be a well known fact—that it is very unlikely that an obscure person like Kennedy made the decision which launched V-E Day twenty-four hours ahead of time.

*Answer:* I think Mr. Kennedy probably made the immediate decision, but he made it in an atmosphere in which such decisions were being called for and in which a precedent had been established only a week before in releasing a completely false report of the same nature. Also, these individual decisions, taken for purely opportunistic reasons, occur in an atmosphere in which tremendous political interests were trying to confuse and destroy the dignity of the victory being registered, and to create difficulties in the actual carrying through of a simultaneous surrender on both the Eastern and Western fronts.

# WILL WE CODDLE GERMANY?

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Washington.

THE Washington *Times-Herald* columnists have picked themselves up after the shock and disappointment of final victory over the Nazis—John O'Donnell (*Times-Herald* and New York *Daily News*) spoke of the “confusion” and “bewilderment” of V-E Day—and are now writing again quite happily, bubbling over with joy at the prospect of Allied rifts.

In the treatment of Germany they have discovered a subject which is a “natural” for their rodent talents. It even seems possible it will crowd Poland for column space before long. Burbles Frank C. Waldrop, “Cissie” Patterson's columnist and man-about-town, in the *May 12 Times-Herald*: “The Germans would have to be even stupider than they have shown themselves already if they cannot reason that there is a conflict of policy among their victors. . . . The British are getting control of northwestern Germany facing toward the ocean. Russia is getting the principal industrial sections of Germany in the center and east. France is getting the Rhineland. We are to patrol and govern the scenic beauties of the southwestern and least important remaining section. A child of ten could figure out what will happen. . . .” This will mean, among other things, “the Russians will take care of German industry in their own little way . . .” and he sighs over Finland, Latvia, Poland, et al.

Now Waldrop was off on his facts about 100 percent, but he and the rest of his crew are right in sensing that the treatment of Germany can give rise to a feeling of good will and trust among the Allies, or just the reverse. Of course they are going to work overtime to try to bring about the reverse.

Edwin Pauley, chief American representative on the Allied Reparations Commission, has confirmed in a press interview that the Roosevelt plan for the treatment of Germany, as interpreted by Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau, Jr., is to be the official policy. Of course it remains to be seen how it will be administered, but unquestionably our government has adopted a so-called “tough peace” policy.

In a couple of days of talking with various informed people, I was given to understand that the Morgenthau plan had been distorted from the first, that it never contemplated that every Ger-

man would work on a farm, that it is designed simply to remove any potential war-making power. It would set about to weaken German industry so that it would not be the core of industrial strength in Europe, and would physically remove armament plants, and all heavy industry capable of being converted to armament production, into surrounding countries, building up the latter's industrial strength. Only light industry would remain, and its products would be consumed mostly within Germany, any surplus going to other countries in exchange for things Germany needed.

Contrary to Mr. Waldrop's assertions, the section of Germany the USSR will supervise has virtually no factories left and is not primarily industrial anyway, but agricultural. Here are the big landed estates, the huge farms. It is in the territory England will supervise that industrial plants are concentrated.

This poses a nice question. Does England agree to the Morgenthau plan or the policy adopted by this country, which is closer to the original Morgenthau plan than any other put forward at the time? The only answer I can get to this is that there are powerful forces in England, just as there are in this country, who want a strong Germany as a bulwark against the Soviet Union. These forces are more influential in the British government than they are in our own, my informants say. The forces here gained momentum after President Roosevelt's death, but President Truman has held to the Roosevelt policies nevertheless. In England an election is pending and various things are cooking—as evidenced by Anthony Eden's antics at San Francisco in promoting US-USSR hostility over the Polish issue.

Certainly the goal in the treatment of Germany is a unified policy. There has been no official statement by the Soviet Union, it was said here—but there has been none by the other Allies, either. It is believed by supporters of the Morgenthau plan that the Soviet Union would favor it. Nevertheless, difficulties can arise. The tremendous shifts in population caused when troops and civilians fled from the Russians to what they hoped would be the “protection” offered by a separate peace—which of course didn't work—has

precipitated a considerable feeding problem in the west. Germany has crops and can be self-sufficient if inter-zone transportation is established. Much depends on how effectively the “coordinated administration and control” of Germany decided on at Yalta functions.

THE circles in this government who support a tough peace are wholeheartedly in agreement with the principle of reparations in the form of labor. France and Holland, as well as the USSR, have asked for manpower from Germany to help rebuild the wreckage the Nazi invaders wrought. The last Gallup poll, published ten days ago, indicated more than eighty percent of our population favored forced labor in devastated areas. This poll included union members, too. AFL President William Green is a lone labor voice raised against it. Although the Catholic Church is said to be quietly opposing it, a group of prominent Catholics have spoken out in its favor.

I am told that roughly two-thirds of German industry either is pretty intact or could easily be restored to production. When I remarked that this did not seem to speak well for our tactics in relying so heavily on mass bombings, I was assured this was strategic bombing, and that all ball bearings plants could be knocked out and yet tank plants remain. The plan, it seems, would be to remove plants, and men to work them, to the countries which need them. In the US section at least, the farms and estates will be broken up and agrarian reforms introduced—as certainly will be the case in the Soviet-supervised area. This does not mean that German labor would not receive a living wage, wherever it was.

There is not one of the liberated countries which has not expressed a desire for German industrial plants, it is said. It is now apparent in all but certain Tory circles in Britain and their counterparts here that the concentration of industry in Germany only served to hold down the industrial development of the rest of Europe. Yet you hear reports in Washington that Britain opposes industrializing other European nations for fear of loss of markets. Obviously one factor in the situation is the need for solving Anglo-American trade rivalry in the postwar world by offering Britain secure markets.

# THE FDR I KNEW

By JOHN A. KINGSBURY

THE day after the caisson bearing the flag-covered coffin of our great President was drawn by six brown horses up the winding road into the dooryard fronting the great old farmhouse on the east bank of the Hudson I sat alone on the west bank opposite that dooryard made sacred as the last resting place of our Commander-in-Chief.

For two hours I sat and gazed. How fitting that he should have returned to his boyhood home on the highlands of the Hudson where, boy and man, he had lived for sixty-three years.

I saw him in his little nursery room in the great house: here, where he now had his study, I had seen him take my child upon his knee a few weeks before his nomination for the presidency. I saw him the happy lad his mother that day had described to me, riding horseback in the forest he loved, riding under the very trees where I was walking with his mother that beautiful afternoon in June of 1932. His great-hearted mother pictured him sailing on the sparkling waters of the Hudson, and told how he adored the Hudson, and yearned to sail the high seas.

I recalled vividly this upstanding, handsome young man as he entered the Senate Chamber at Albany in January 1911. I felt the warm grasp of his strong hand; I saw his winning smile, and heard his hearty laugh—all as real and lasting as the total impression he made that memorable day in my life when I first met him. His was a personality stronger than death is strong. There in the Senate Chamber at Albany I heard him declare his independence. I saw him defy the political machine that sought to control him. I recalled his vigorous support of the first comprehensive state health program proposed by the Sulzer Commission, for which he helped to win the backing of two young Tammany leaders, State Senator Robert F. Wagner and Assemblyman Alfred E. Smith.

Then I saw him fighting the greatest battle that any individual fights with himself—a truly epic battle over crippling illness. He won victory over death and to a large extent over the crippling illness; but most of all he won a spiritual victory. Out of the darkness that covered him, black as the pit from

pole to pole, we thank whatever gods there be for his unconquerable soul. He emerged from that struggle with head unbowed.

GAZING across the Hudson, I recalled that sunny afternoon in June 1932, when as a member of Governor Roosevelt's Special Committee on Public Health I addressed the Dutchess County Health Association in the large living-room of the Roosevelt home at Hyde Park. While I was speaking, the governor arrived. Insisting that I proceed, he seated himself in a chair beside his mother. At the conclusion of my speech we exchanged places, and he proceeded to fill in my outline of the work of his commission, showing amazing familiarity with the public-health conditions in the state, with the activities of the State Health Department and with detailed results of the work of his Special Commission. In the midst of this extraordinary performance his mother, with pardonable pride, leaned over and whispered to me: "He's got a great head—that boy!"

After the guests had departed I walked with his mother under those great trees that he loved and we talked of Al Smith's attitude toward the governor, though she said: "Franklin has forbidden me to discuss the subject!" But when I told her of a sharp controversy in which I had engaged with certain prominent social workers, partisans of Smith, on the question of the respective loyalties of Smith and Roosevelt toward each other, she said: "I want you to come in and repeat that to Franklin, even though I will have to confess I disobeyed him!"

At the conclusion of my visit, I told Governor Roosevelt I was leaving shortly to study the public health and medical services of the Soviet Union. He wished me Godspeed and requested me to give him a full report on my return. Then referring again to "the fine job" his Public Health Commission had done, he said slyly, "You know, we might possibly have an opportunity to do something like that for the nation." To which I promptly rejoined: "I won't let you forget that, Governor." With a significant smile, he replied, "Don't"—and I didn't.

Despite the demands of the depression,

by the early summer of 1934 he had appointed a Commission on Economic Security to study and report on national security and health, and on August 9, 1935, the Wagner Social Security Bill became law by the signature of the President. Unfortunately, due to powerful organized opposition, especially that of the American Medical Association, the National Health Program was largely eliminated from the bill before it became law. Like many others who, over the past two decades, have advocated a comprehensive social security program, including adequate medical care for all the people, I have been impatient of the delay. I am confident President Roosevelt, despite pressing demands of war and peace, never lost sight of the goal. I am informed that he had planned to present to Congress in the immediate future a program for implementing his Economic Bill of Rights, including "the extension of Social Security to millions not now covered, more provision for veterans, a full employment plan, expanded public housing, federal aid to schools in impoverished areas, and a national health plan."

MY MOST recent personal contact with President Roosevelt was an exchange of letters concerning Governor Dewey's statement on health conditions made in his report on the first year of his governorship, published in the *New York Times* of April 15, 1944. On April 17 I wrote the President referring to Governor Dewey's assertion that his immediate predecessors had failed to recognize the vital importance of public health to the people of the state, and calling his attention to an enclosed copy of a letter I had written to the editor of the *New York Times*. I said: "I felt that some former member of your Special Public Health Commission of 1930 should call public attention to the governor's gross misrepresentations." Among other things, Governor Dewey's report had stated: "I have . . . approved a bill empowering the Commissioner of Health to reorganize his department, rearranging divisions and bureaus; in short, to bring it up to date. Since the Health Department was last reorganized some thirty years ago, its annual budget has increased from \$576,000 to \$5,346,000; its personnel from 230 to



"Chili and Beans," pencil sketch by Minna Citron.

2,300. In those years our needs and concepts of public health service have changed utterly, but the department just grew, like Topsy, and its divisions remain rigidly in the old mold."

The editor returned my contribution with regrets that it was "not available for publication in the *New York Times*," but Albert Deutsch published most of it in his column in *PM*. Moreover, to my great surprise, President Roosevelt found time to write a personal letter from which I now feel free to quote:

"Let me thank you for your letter of April 17, 1944, bringing to my attention the inaccuracies in Governor Dewey's statement on health conditions in his report on his first year in his governorship.

"You are perfectly right in your action in calling to the attention of the people of the state his inaccuracy in stating that the Health Department of the State of New York has grown like Topsy. It is astonishing to me that he could be in such complete ignorance of what the State of New York has done to improve the health of its people during the past thirty years. You are correct

in your statement that the organization of a special commission to make recommendations to the governor resulted in making the 1913 law operate efficiently.

"I look with great pride on the fine work that has been done in the case of tubercular citizens of New York. . . . This law had the complete cooperation of all the responsible public welfare officers of our state, and it is surprising to me that the governor should be in such ignorance of it.

"Another outstanding contribution made . . . during those years while I was governor was the improvement in the care of mental patients, and New York today stands as a fine example of what can be done for those unfortunates.

"It is not understandable to me why the governor would make such statements in his official report for there must be a very complete record of the monies allocated to the Health Department since it was reorganized in 1913. In my remembrance, you are quite correct in stating that the budget of 1913 was approximately \$150,000—a great discrepancy from the figure quoted by Governor Dewey.

"You and I have no reason to apologize for anything at all that was done through the years in which we were responsible for conducting the affairs of the Public Health Service of the State of New York. . . ."

I have in my files many letters received from Franklin D. Roosevelt since I first met him in 1911, which I prize and with pride shall hand on to posterity; but this letter of April 17, 1944, the last I received from him, written so leisurely in the moment of storm and stress and in the beaten way of friendship, is particularly precious. At most, under the circumstances, I would have expected an acknowledgement from the secretary to the President. But I submit that this was nothing unusual for him.

As I sat gazing across the river my sorrow was mingled with some chagrin at my impatience over what I had considered undue delay in recognizing the Soviet Union and prompt and active cultivation of American-Soviet friendship in the interest of world peace. I felt regrets too at the thought that perhaps I had added even an iota to his burdens, by stimulating pressure for a prompt adoption of the National Health Plan which I knew he favored. I felt that I should have had greater faith in his wisdom in the timing of important social reforms.

As I rose reluctantly to leave this peaceful scene to which death had come so suddenly and—let us be thankful—so unflinching, I felt, like Frank Sullivan, that "one could wish in these hours to be a Walt Whitman, able to give a proper voice to grief." But I seemed to hear a voice from across the river answering me in these confident words from what proved to be the President's last message to his countrymen and to the people of the United Nations, a message of tribute to Thomas Jefferson: "I ask you to keep up your faith. I measure the sound, solid achievement that can be made at this time by the straight-edge of your own confidence and your resolve. And to you, and to all Americans who dedicate themselves with us to the making of an abiding peace, I say: The only limit to our realization of tomorrow will be our doubts of today. Let us move forward with strong and active faith."

*Dr. Kingsbury was formerly secretary of the Milbank Memorial Fund and is an outstanding authority in the field of public health. He is the author of "Health in Handcuffs" and other books.*



# THE AFL BUCKS HISTORY

By **GEORGE MORRIS**

**M**R. MOLOTOV's proposal at San Francisco that the United Nations Conference invite representatives of the World Trade Union Conference as official advisers spotlighted a fresh force in international affairs. With unity of 60,000,000 trade unionists of thirty-five countries achieved, the leaders of this new movement were in San Francisco to watch the security meeting and to express labor's influence within it.

As is known, the conference did not put out a welcome mat for the WTUC. Even within our own delegation, the best that AFL and CIO representatives could get was a "consultative" status. The British, it seems, didn't even get that recognition; for on the day after Molotov's move, Sir Walter Citrine of the British Trade Union Congress issued a blast against his associate, Laborite Clement Attlee, for supporting exclusion of labor advisers in his own delegation. Citrine promised to settle scores later within the Labor Party at home.

It was quite natural, therefore, that Vasily Kuznetsov, head of Soviet trade unions and an official delegate, should move within the United Nations conference presiding body for admission of the WTUC. Later, when the social and economic commission of the security conference voted to admit the WTUC as a consultant, this was overruled by the steering committee.

World labor has served notice that henceforth it is a factor that will have to be taken into account in international affairs. To that end, the WTUC's administrative body completed arrangements for its Paris congress September 27 at which the World Federation of Trade Unions, as the new international is to be known, will be formally launched. But the AFL is still isolated from this movement and its controlling leaders continue with their infantile attacks upon it.

The course of events that isolated the AFL from organized world labor at such an important period of history is evoking some disturbance in the Federation itself. When Cleveland's District Council of Painters dispatched its leader Courtney Ward to the recent World Labor Conference in London as an observer, it merely indicated the growing doubt among AFL members

on the entire policy. Through a mailed poll of sentiment of its locals, the overwhelming majority of the members of the Brotherhood of Painters had earlier shown a desire to participate at London. Now, with every major district of the International Association of Machinists heard from, this largest affiliate of the AFL is almost unanimous for participation in the newly-formed world body of labor, independent of the AFL's action.

**W**ITH the dam of reaction around the AFL cracking, at least on this issue, Secretary-Treasurer George Meany hastened to New York recently to address an especially arranged meeting of the city's AFL leaders. Meany once more recited the familiar and monotonous story of the AFL's adherence to nothing but "free trade unionism" in its purest form. He assured his listeners that the unions of thirty-five countries represented at London were either "totalitarian-dominated," "government-controlled," or organizations of former enemy countries. Thus, all are disqualified by the AFL. When Meany finished his talk, the conclusion was inevitable that the AFL is about all that is left of "free" trade unionism in the world.

At the very hour that Meany was speaking, a few blocks away two of his dear friends, associates in the top machinery of the powerful building trades department of the AFL, began serving sentences of from eight and one-half to fifteen years in prison. Joseph Fay and James Bove, vice presidents respectively of the Operating Engineers and Building and Common Laborers, had "freely" shaken down employers to the tune of some \$750,000 to keep them "free" of strikes and provide them with lower paid workers. They are the latest of a long chain of noted "free" trade union exponents, including an Executive Council member, who have donned striped suits in recent years!

AFL members familiar with William Green's and Meany's indifference to racketeering in the Federation's high circles, take the talk about "free" unions from these gentlemen as just so much hogwash.

What, then, is the real reason for the AFL's stubborn resistance to international trade union unity? The answer

is in the outlook of its controlling leaders. Their mentality is still essentially what it was in the twenties when they headed a labor movement about one-seventh of present organized strength, when narrow craft unions predominated, and when it was customary to enter into collusive agreements with the most reactionary circles of business at the expense of the overwhelming majority of the workers.

**T**HESE leaders have no confidence in a program of full employment or in the outlook of prolonged peace and world security. In common with the most reactionary circles of business, they look to a recurrence of the same line of uncontrolled, unplanned economic development, with its accompanying profit orgy and dollar diplomacy, that came after the last war. They have far more in common with the reactionary program outlined in the last convention of the NAM than with the progressive trend expressed at Teheran and Yalta. They oppose the basic points of the Big Three agreements. Since international labor unity could be effected only on the basis of supporting the decisions of Teheran and Yalta as the resolutions of the London conference showed, the AFL's decisive leaders see no place for themselves in such a movement.

In line with their basic outlook, AFL leaders preserve the traditional narrowness and "economism" that still dominate the life of most AFL unions. This is particularly evident in the unions affiliated with the reaction-dominated building trades department. Fear of the crushing weight of its economic power practically condemns most of the affiliated unions—the backbone of the AFL—to silence on political or international policy questions.

Old line Social Democrats are another very influential factor in the AFL's stand on international affairs. They, especially the large number of emigre Social Democrats here, are guided solely by a desire to regain the powerful positions they once held in Europe. They inject into the AFL a bitter hatred of the Soviet Union and suspicion of the Continent's anti-fascist resistance movements. Their hopes rest only on division among the United Nations.

The Social Democrats, through their

union spokesman David Dubinsky and the decisive group in the AFL's leadership around Matthew Woll, have established a close organizational intimacy. They formed the American Labor Conference on International Affairs, which includes the Woll group, the Social Democrats—emigres and native—and Liberal Party leaders. They are also the leading spirits in the campaign for the so-called "Free Trade Union Fund" which they plan to use to further their ends in European labor ranks.

The ALCIF originally intended to contaminate CIO ranks, too. But the CIO's active role in the new world labor body and its opposition to a "soft peace" for Germany is evidence that the effort was a total failure.

**T**HE stock arguments against participation in the London conference—the claim that the Soviet trade unions aren't "free" or that the auspices or scope of the conference were objectionable—aren't receiving serious attention in the AFL anymore. That is why AFL leaders are now trying to prop their battered fences with new arguments. First in their contention is that the AFL is practically alone as a "free" union center. The recent statement of the AFL's international committee (AFL *New Letter*, March 20) introduces the formula that free unions can function only in countries "practicing the system of individual initiative and private ownership." William Green had previously indicated this approach at the November New Orleans convention of the AFL when he told the British delegates that by their favoring a strong government hand in national economy, British unions were undermining themselves as "free" unions.

In his speech, George Meany also charged that British labor was government-influenced and cited as "proof" transportation aid given to delegates from colonial countries to get to London.

He pointed to the presence of delegates from fifteen colonies and dominions of the British Empire at London who came "by airplane, under arrangements made by the British government." Meany added: "Then we must surely realize to what extent Sir Walter [Citrine] and his friends in the British government strained their efforts to bolster up British representation at the conference."

Meany also played on the division between the AFL and the CIO, hold-



Eugene Karlin

ing that the AFL cannot possibly participate in an international body of labor in which the CIO is represented. He viewed it as strange that the CIO opposed "organic" unity of labor domestically but favored it on the international field.

This is false, first, because the CIO proposed collaboration with the AFL, but was turned down by Green who said nothing less than "organic" unity would do. By organic unity the AFL made it plain that a piecemeal splitting away of CIO unions was meant. Second, Meany falsely represents this international body of labor as constituting "organic" unity. It is a federation of organizations on the basis of the common problems of worldwide scope. The autonomy of affiliates is not touched nor are the affiliates directed on the specific application of policies.

**T**HE formula by which the AFL establishes itself as the sole trustee of "free" trade unionism has been stretched still further—to deny the right of workers to establish international relations. Meany quoted the following from the above-mentioned AFL statement: "As citizens we have a right and duty to express our views to our President. But to negotiate with the citizens of other nations on the terms of the international political and economic commitments goes far beyond the legitimate functions of trade unions or the privilege of citizens." Since there can be no relationship between workers internationally regarding "political and economic" commitments, on what basis could there be such unity? Obviously,

what the AFL leaders want is an International that hardly even meets or functions, much less actually decides anything. This is why the defunct International Federation of Trade Unions is so suitable to them.

What we have here is a neat formula of labor isolationism. The real purpose behind it is to break labor's solid front throughout the world in support of United Nations policy as projected at Teheran and Yalta. AFL leaders have been among the most vocal in attacks upon provisions of the Yalta agreement, particularly on Poland and reparations in kind, which they call "slave labor." In common with their Social Democratic advisers, they want only a few of Hitler's top colleagues held guilty for war crimes.

In developing the theory upon which they base their policy of isolation, AFL leaders run into an obvious contradiction: they must explain to their members how it is that the whole world labor movement went "Communist," as they claim. In "solving" this puzzle, Meany displayed the case of the AFL in all its bankruptcy. Noting that labor of thirty-five countries were represented at London, he said to his audience of New York labor leaders:

"Let me point out that while thirty-five countries might sound like a substantial number, it does not appear so when we consider that there are approximately 375 countries listed by all reliable world atlases." (This gem was retained in a printed copy of the speech.)

Were it not for the instant adjournment of the meeting when Meany concluded, someone would undoubtedly have asked him to explain how it is that the entire United Nations counted only forty-six countries, some of them having no labor movements. Meany would have been very much embarrassed if someone asked him if he didn't mean 375 national groups (half of which are in the USSR), or to name at least one country with a labor movement that was not represented.

Meany's resort to "reliable atlases" just about sizes up the level of the AFL arguments against international labor unity. Their obvious intellectual decline and the much stimulated interest in world affairs that recent weeks have brought will greatly favor those in AFL ranks who fought for participation in the London conference. The Norfolk Central Labor Council of the AFL apparently sensed this when it adopted a resolution demanding AFL affiliation with the WTUC and sent it to every AFL body in the country for approval.

# NM SPOTLIGHT

## The Trieste Dispute

THERE is nothing in the Trieste issue which could not be settled amicably between the Italians and the Yugoslavs if Britain's Field Marshal Alexander stopped rattling his saber at Tito. As a result of London's carefully contrived reports the impression is widespread that Tito's forces "invaded" Trieste when the fact is that they liberated the city even as did other contingents of Allied troops. It is Alexander who is inflaming the dispute by needling the Yugoslav leaders, by making charges such as that Tito is using methods similar to Hitler's and Mussolini's. Tito, showing great restraint, does not remind the British Foreign Office and Field Marshal Alexander of their early assistance to the Nazi collaborator, Mikhailovich, or how Britain agreed under the London Pact of 1915 to give Italy large sections of Yugoslavia as payment for her entrance into World War I. Tito could also remind the United States of President Wilson's great dismay when he discovered at the Paris Peace Conference what was in the London Pact, and of his upholding Yugoslavia against the Italian annexation of territories.

Trieste is admittedly a city where Italian is spoken predominantly. Yugoslavia, judging from an article (in *Nova Jugoslavija*, June-July, 1944) by Dr. Josip Smodlaka, who was at one time Tito's foreign minister, does not claim Trieste "on the basis of national rights. Though Trieste is encircled by a Slovenian population, the Italian character of the city is unquestionable. Yugoslavia does not wish to dispute it. The interests of Trieste, notwithstanding its Italian character, depend on the closest collaboration with Yugoslavia. But for its language and culture, which are Italian, Trieste belongs in every other respect to the Yugoslav side of the Adriatic: as much by its geographic position and lines of communication with its hinterland as by its maritime-commercial traditions, which developed out of its position and by its economic interests, which are common with Yugoslavia. Moreover, it is also tied to Yugoslavia by blood relations, because, as one can read in Meyer's Encyclopedia of that period, at the end of the nineteenth century the population of Trieste consisted mostly of citizens of South-Slavic descent who

spoke Italian." And in the same article Dr. Smodlaka insisted that the Yugoslav program would preserve the cultural character of Trieste and that the city would be enabled to conduct its business independently as an autonomous area under Yugoslav sovereignty.

Tito has said that he is ready to cooperate with the Allies, but that he is unwilling to be humiliated—and humiliation is obviously what Alexander is attempting. The resort to technicalities camouflages what seems to be a move by London to weaken Tito and the kind of forthright democracy which he represents in the Balkans. American collaboration in the British demands gains us nothing but the bitterness of a great people who saved many American lives by sacrificing their own.

## Tokyo Strategy

JAPAN certainly realizes that after the fall of Germany her situation is beyond any possible hope of redemption. Even the confusion of Allied relations in Europe would not help Japan in the short range sense. However, there being no situation without at least a little loophole, the Japanese calculate that if they make every day of war as costly as possible, their enemies will get tired of it and will be willing to compromise. Thus Tokyo has adopted a seemingly suicidal strategy of hanging on to everything, everywhere, at any price. The Japanese hang on to their long by-passed bases and positions in New Guinea, in the Carolinas, in the Marianas, while Wewak, for example, had to be taken by storm.

The Japanese fight stubbornly in what is left to them of Burma where, strategically speaking, their position is at the battle of Okinawa. He cannot putting on his real grand-stand play. He knows that the whole world is looking at the battle of Okinawa. He cannot hope to win there; he can only strive to make his loss very expensive to us. Meanwhile the B-29 bombing of Japan is proceeding at an ever increasing pace. More than 500 Superfortresses now go out at a time. Our fighters, to say nothing of the bombers, reach across to the coast of China from Okinawa and Luzon.

In China itself the Japanese offensive in Hunan seems to have been checked, although there is still no evidence of a "huge Chinese victory." Chinese preventive measures are also reported in Honan. It is difficult to assess at this time the importance of the Chinese capture of Foochow. The Japanese got out much too quickly and there is reason to suspect their hasty departure. We're keeping our fingers crossed.

## Naval Epic

ON MARCH 19, shortly after dawn, a Japanese bomber dived out of a cloud and made two direct hits on our 27,000-ton aircraft carrier, the "Big Ben" Franklin. Planes covered the deck, ready for the take-off, with full tanks and bomb loads. These went off, blasting everything on the surface and tearing huge holes inward. For twelve hours the ship's stores of explosives, ammunition and high octane gasoline exploded in successive blasts. When it was all over 832 men had been lost and 270 wounded, and the ship had a fourteen-degree list starboard and was five feet down astern. But for the heroism of the men of the escort vessels and, above all, of the Franklin's crew itself, hundreds more of the complement of some 3,000 men would have been lost. To their heroism the Franklin's men added devotion to their ship, whose wounds they stanchied. They performed the seemingly incredible feat of bringing the shattered ship 13,400 miles home to the Brooklyn Navy Yard. Naval history has few episodes to equal this for courage and resourcefulness. America is proud of the heroes who came through this ordeal with such gallantry, and proud also of their shipyard comrades who built such hardihood into their great ship.

## Tariffs and Tomorrow

IN ANTICIPATION of the need for vastly increased foreign trade in the postwar period, the administration is urging Congress to pass the Doughton amendment to the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act authorizing the government to reduce our tariffs up to fifty percent and thereby facilitate the expansion of our foreign trade. The

passage of the Doughton bill is indispensable to the over-all administration plan to enable our productive enterprise to work at full capacity and find profitable outlets for its vast output.

The House Ways and Means Committee last week favorably reported the Doughton bill, fourteen to eleven, on a straight party vote. This was an important victory. But the final passage of the bill is by no means assured. Republican House leader Joseph Martin is frantically mobilizing the Republican members and wavering Democrats to defeat this vital measure. The opposition to this bill represents more than the traditional Republican support for high tariffs. It is a part of a strategic opposition to all international economic and political cooperation to achieve enduring peace and well-being. Simultaneously with their war upon the Doughton bill a renewed effort is being made to amend the heart out of the Bretton Woods proposals.

The Doughton bill is now before the House. Now is the time for the people, and especially organized labor, to speak up.

## Maintaining Take-Home

OUR generation still retains the bitter memory of the "automatic" reconversion to peacetime production after the last war. Prices soared, wages declined and the open shop drive sought to exterminate the trade unions. That was the Harding return to normalcy which led to the disastrous postwar depression.

We are deeply indebted to Franklin D. Roosevelt's foresight for the realistic reconversion plans drafted during his lifetime and under his guidance by the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion. There are many reasons to believe that President Truman fully shares the views of Mr. Roosevelt on reconversion and the postwar perspective of 60,000,000 jobs. It appears, however, that Fred M. Vinson, the recently appointed Director of War Mobilization and Reconversion, has not yet grasped the central core of the Roosevelt reconversion plan: the necessity of maintaining wartime purchasing power during the critical reconversion period. The Vinson plan calls for the retention of the wage stabilization and price control machinery during reconversion. This is essential. However, it is not adequate to solve the problem of the contracting purchasing power already in evidence.

The CIO has taken the initiative to supplement the positive aspects of the

## Eastern Workers' Song

Free and fair is our Ukraina  
Far beyond this German hell—  
Listen, friends, who live in freedom,  
To the tale we have to tell.

Here they brought us in their wagon  
Bound in chains the young and strong,  
Torn from out our happy homeland—  
Bitter was the road and long.

Under guns in mine and factory  
We work silent as the dead,  
If we ever stop and falter  
Hunger only bows our head.

In the barracks in the evening  
On the filthy straw we lie  
Dreaming of our distant meadows—  
Birds and clouds against the sky.

Long before the dawn has reddened  
From our dreams we slowly wake  
Tired and hungry to our labor—  
But our hearts will never break.

For our chains will soon be broken,  
Never doubt, oh friends afar,  
From Ukraina they are coming,  
Soldiers of the Soviet Star.

*Sung by Ukrainian slave laborers in Germany.*

Vinson plan with an urgent request for immediate steps to increase the basic wages by seventeen cents an hour, to raise the substandard wage ceiling from fifty-five cents to sixty-five cents, to allow upward adjustment of salaries of white collar, professional and government workers, and to prohibit all wage cuts. These are concrete measures to maintain the national take-home pay in face of the growing cutbacks, reduction in overtime and the working week, downgrading and shifts to lower-paid occupations. The CIO correctly points out that now is the time for the expansion and not contraction of the national purchasing power if we are to realize full production and full employment after the war.

In addition to these proposals, Mr. Vinson should be called upon to press for what the administration had requested of the last Congress: passage of legislation such as the original Kil-

gore bill providing for benefits, dismissal pay, travel expense for war workers forced to move to new localities, and the retaining of laid-off workers.

## Empty Marketbaskets

THE growth of the black market in the USA is an ugly sight. In New York City, one of the worst areas affected, the housewife can cart her empty marketbasket from butcher to butcher and not even find a kidney for the Sunday stew. The many little people with already war-tight budgets find no red meat, poultry deflected to under-the-counter sales at fantastic prices, variety meats practically vanished and even the tough little piles of salami and bologna disappearing. At the bottom of this scandalous and unnecessary situation are some pretty well known unsavory facts: the scant OPA appropriations which provide ridiculously few inspectors for any given area, the perpetual sniping at the OPA in the reactionary press and in Congress, ridiculous legal provisions for prosecuting cases of OPA violations once the charges have been properly brought, with penalties so low that violators can shrug them off; and finally, pressure from the notorious "farm lobby," which has managed to prevent price ceilings from being set on livestock on the hoof. The total adds up to a dangerous sabotage of the cost of living controls.

War Mobilization Director Fred Vinson has moved to ease the troublesome and sensitive spot with a revised meat control program calculated to increase meat production by encouraging higher slaughter, while preserving retail ceilings and redistribution of the supply more evenly over the country. It is not expected, however, to put more meat in the nation's groceries for some time, nor is it expected to increase the overall production. Even with this strong move the dangers to price control demand stringent action if the stabilization policy is to be preserved.

Beyond the immediate trouble lies the threat from organized efforts on the part of such familiar enemies of the people as Senator Taft of Ohio on the Banking and Currency Committee to scuttle the renewal of the price control act altogether, against which Senator Wagner has issued a sharp warning. The breakdown of price control would be disastrous to a speedy victory in the Far East and to maintaining consumer purchasing power in the postwar period. Not only does the OPA need to be urged to act with all the strength delegated to it by law, but the most vigorous and

widespread activity of consumer groups, labor and other people's organizations is required to rescue the national marketbasket from the saboteurs. It will take many more volunteers on price panels, many more willing collaborators to bring the guilty to court, and more organizational pressure on Congress to do the job.

## Contempt by Rankin

JOHN E. RANKIN, the Mississippi Congressman whose entire political career has been in contempt of the free principles Congress was established to protect, is seeking to indict, on a charge of "contempt of Congress," the newspaper writer and sociologist Albert Deutsch, whose career has been signalized by his devotion to these principles. Mr. Rankin is the whitewash chairman of the Congressional Committee supposed to be investigating the Veterans' Administration. Instead of a careful consideration and use of the disclosures made by Mr. Deutsch in the newspaper *PM*, Mr. Rankin has attempted to discredit them and to force Mr. Deutsch to reveal the names of people who helped him secure his data. This would oblige Mr. Deutsch to violate a pledge of confidence and to expose a number of persons to possible persecution. Rankin's action is a threat against free speech and a free press; and a threat against the health and welfare of 13,000,000 servicemen since Rankin aims to sabotage attempts to better the practices of the mal-administered Veterans Administration. The threat to free speech is particularly dangerous. If Deutsch is indicted a precedent will be established which would place punitive power against newspapermen in the hands of some of the most dangerous enemies of free speech and a free press in America.

## Crisis in Foreign Policy

(Continued from page 5)

Stalin made that clear in his letter to Ralph Parker, correspondent of the *London Times*. This "issue" is only pertinent if the British continue using it and gain United States' acquiescence in its use, to prevent a Polish settlement as formulated at Crimea. Observe how Mr. Churchill, after lashing the London Poles in past speeches, now builds a bridge to them by adopting the same attitude towards the Crimea contract as did Tomasz Arciszewski, the London "premier," when he attacked the Crimea agreement the moment it was signed. In other words, when Downing Street was

working more or less in accord with the other two members of the trinity, the London Polish exiles were more or less *personae non gratae* to the British government. But as soon as British policy embarked on a lone wolf course in opposition to the common interests of the major powers, and particularly in opposition to the Soviet Union, then it again embraced those Poles who also have the same outlook.

The moral is obvious. A reactionary policy seeks out and attracts reactionary supporters. It begins to substitute other means for the politics of coalition, for the method of consultation and mediation. It leads to such ideas as Britain building up a Polish army under the command of anti-Soviet officers. This is an army that will not be used in the Pacific war, yet it will benefit indirectly from the arsenal of American equipment sent to the British under lend-lease. And for what purpose will the Polish military force be used? To police Germany, say the British. Then why not ask the Warsaw Provisional Government to participate in the German occupation? But that would hardly be welcome to the London planners because the Warsaw army is friendly to the Red Army while the commanders of the Polish troops, guided by the London exiles, are decidedly hostile.

Does Mr. Churchill have in mind to

prevent a democratic Polish settlement because he knows that this will directly affect the German settlement? Does he desire to have Germany become a bone of contention between Washington and London on the one side and Moscow on the other? Mr. Churchill is the only one who knows the answers to these questions, just as he knows that a disagreement over Poland means disagreement over Germany, thereby giving the Junkers and the German monopolists the opportunity to return with a new Hitler and a new war.

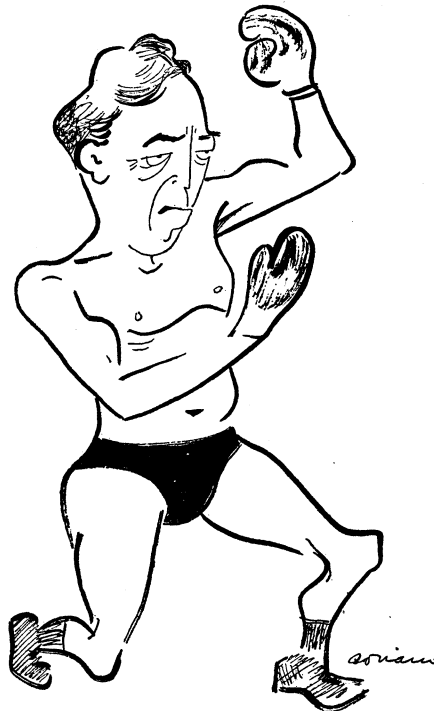
And is all this in the American national interest? Mr. Hearst will say yes and Col. McCormick will say yes, and both Mr. Hoover and Mr. Vandenberg in their own polished and polite way will also say yes. But what will the millions of Americans who rallied around Mr. Roosevelt say? Their voices have been somewhat dim this past month. Perhaps it is because they were patient and waited to see whether the shadows over the land would pass away quickly. Perhaps it is that the sudden loss of Mr. Roosevelt's leadership, on which they leaned so heavily, reduced their vigilance. The time has come for a return to vigilance, for protest to every official quarter—to the State Department, to Congress, to the whole of the administration—demanding sanity and repair of the damage done the Roosevelt legacy. Nor is President Truman exempt from this protest. There must be an end to this calamitous straying from the Roosevelt path.

## Joe Hecht, American

(Continued from page 10)

Joe was killed in action on March 18, 1945, in Germany—six years to the day I met him on a hillside in the Aragon. My wife wept and said, "It isn't fair; he never had any fun at all." But she was wrong, for Joe had lots of fun. And what he gave to others we are carrying around inside of us, and it will make us happier in the future, even if it aches today.

The coin Joe sent is attached to a silver bracelet that our daughter plays with every day. And when she is old enough to understand, we will tell her about Joe who sent it to her and whom she never saw. She will understand, Joe, who you were and what you did for her. She will remember your name and it will mean something to her, even if we never show her that picture of your beautiful ugly mug you sent us a week before you sailed. *Salud!* Joe—*y suerte y cojones!*



Rankin: "I'm only trying to pin my witness down."

# READERS' FORUM

## How to Treat Nazis

**T**O NEW MASSES: An AP dispatch in the New York Times of April 9 relates how Maj. Gen. Hans von Schubert, captured by the American Army in France last fall, had died of a brain ailment in Tennessee. Brought back to the war prisoners camp at Como, Miss., he was buried there "with full military honors." The American Army and his captive countrymen gave the fifty-two-year-old Prussian officer last rites befitting his rank. From the chapel where the body "had lain in state—with squads of German officers as guards of honor—the general's swastika-draped casket was borne to the stockade gate by four officers. The procession passed between two lines of prisoners, each of whom gave the Nazi salute as the coffin passed. At the graveside an American squad fired three volleys." This general had fought in the first World War, for which he had won an Iron Cross in 1916, so this marked the second war he had helped to wage against us.

In this same issue of the New York Times was the story of how the Germans had starved, clubbed and burned to death more than 4,000 European captives in the last eight months in the camp near Ohrdruf. Among them was a naturalized American fier of Polish extraction. Right under this dispatch was another from the 7th Army area in which two US Army lieutenants, who had been prisoners of war in the Gerolstein and Hammelburg camps, declared, "We can never forget the horrors of those prison camps. Gerolstein should go down in history as a blot of shame on humanity."

Almost every day recently there have been reports in the press of the most horrible atrocities perpetrated on captured Americans by the Nazis. Yet it seems that some of our leaders here at home are still under the illusion that fascist generals are civilized persons whom we are obligated to treat with due honor and respect when they fall into our hands. If this sort of thing is allowed to go on it makes a mockery not only of the sacrifices our boys are making all over the world to root out fascism but makes a farce of our intentions to eradicate all fascist influences within Germany itself.

JAMES H. DOLSEN.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

**T**O NEW MASSES: I protest the publication of the article "Why We Despise Them," by Ilya Ehrenburg (NEW MASSES, April 10). I have up to now read every word of this author that I have seen in print, and read it with appreciation, but his bitterness has in-

creased to the point of pathology. No doubt the bestiality of Nazi soldiers to those near and dear to him, as very likely he feels all the Soviet people to be, and the constant intensification of his bitterness by the continued experiences of the war give reason enough for his outburst, but we are holding a great international conference which is to build peace in the world. Excessive expressions of bitterness have never yet forged peace.

GERTRUDE H. DUNIPACE.

Los Altos, Calif.

**T**O NEW MASSES: A friend of mine and I were recently discussing Ilya Ehrenburg's article "Why We Despise Them" in the April 10 issue of NEW MASSES. We agreed that in most respects it was a fine and truthful statement about Nazis, but my friend took stubborn exception to a number of Ehrenburg's generalizations on the minor vices of the German people. She was particularly irked by the paragraph which begins, "We despise the Germans for their cult of externals, for their passion for appearances, for their make-believe. . . ."

My friend felt that these words weakened his thesis considerably and that they had no place in the article because we despise the Germans first and last for their bestial accomplishments, their overt actions.

I was very much interested, therefore, to read today in the *Soviet Information Bulletin* of April 24 an article by G. Alexandrov entitled "Comrade Ehrenburg Oversimplifies," criticizing Ehrenburg for his article entitled "Enough," published in *Red Star* on April 11. Alexandrov takes Ehrenburg to task for his description of Germany as "a huge gang" and says that "if we admitted that Ehrenburg is right then we should have to agree that the whole population of Germany must share the fate of the Hitler clique. . . . The Red Army is fighting for the destruction of Hitler's army, Hitler's state and Hitler's government, but its purpose never was, nor is it now, to exterminate the German people. That would be stupid and senseless."

Alexandrov points out that Hitlerites are striving to show that "the entire German people are solidly rallied around them," that they are "trying to tie up the fate of the entire German people and the entire German army with the fate of the fascist clique." He adds that the Hitlerites "would not have worried about this unity if . . . there were not so many individuals in Germany anxious to . . . jump off the fascist wagon . . . from this it is clear why Ehrenburg is mistaken

when in his article he represents the population of Germany as an integral whole."

I personally feel convinced that Ehrenburg erred in generalizing on the German's "cult of externals" because that is not the heart of our grievance against them.

Washington, D. C.

J. Z.

## "I'll Be Seeing You"

**T**O NEW MASSES: I was surprised at Joseph Foster's review of *I'll Be Seeing You* in the April 24 NM. From where he sat, the plot seemed to revolve around Ginger Rogers and the various vicissitudes of her life. From my seat it looked like an intelligent and sensitive presentation of the problems of a psychoneurotic veteran. Perhaps mine is a biased point of view, perhaps I wanted to read into the film more than was present, but it seemed clear enough that the Ginger Rogers motif was subordinate to the much more vital one concerning the neurotic soldier's recovery. Both Deutsch and McManus in *PM* saw it that way. And so did the psychiatric workers and psychiatrists down here—as well as the patients themselves. In fact—we're going to try to get the movie to show to all of our men.

But no matter where Foster sat, it was too bad he didn't recognize the wonderful material in the film. There's so much confusion prevalent about "psychos." Are they crazy—or what? The movie gives the answer. *I'll Be Seeing You* also provides the answer concerning our attitudes toward them. The man who has returned with "combat fatigue," "battle neuroses," etc., needs above all the security of love and acceptance into society—needs to be treated as any other healthy, normal person to insure his recovery. This movie demonstrates that so well that it would have been far wiser to have pointed to these positive aspects than to emphasize the episodes (agreed: they were silly) regarding Ginger Rogers.

CPL. MARTY SOLOW.

San Antonio, Tex.

## Dr. Gideon's NM

**T**O NEW MASSES: I was very interested to notice that your issue of NM for March 27 had an article about our college president, Harry Gideonse. Bella Dodd's article gave me a lot of information which I hadn't had before and information which I thought other Brooklyn College students ought to have also. That is why I was very perturbed to find that the president's office had taken that issue out of the college library last week. At first I thought that Dr. Gideonse had lacked fifteen cents at the moment and was especially anxious to read the article himself. But it seems to be something a little more than that now, because today, more than a week later, I asked for that issue and was told that it was still in the president's office. I would like to suggest that you send our college president a complimentary copy so that he might return the library's copy for the students to use.

BROOKLYN COLLEGE STUDENT.





# THE REDISCOVERY OF HENRY JAMES

By ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

THE centenary of Henry James' birth came in 1943. That it was observed with little ceremony was not all due to the preoccupations of a war year. James was too unplaced a writer for the memorializing apparatus in official and academic circles to operate in the standard manner.

In compensation, however, observance fell into the hands of the really concerned who carried on and expanded an interest stirred some years before. In this way the centenary was turned into an important literary occasion—the still continuing rediscovery of a major American writer. Instead of eulogies like wreaths on a statue that soon resumes its unheeded stare, we had republication of collections of some of James' work, long out of print, a number of critical essays, and Mr. Matthiessen's reevaluation of the novels of the most controversial phase of James' career.\*

Thus James' place as a major figure in American literature is being established, but it is useful to go into the things that formerly confused it. First, James dealt with a restricted circle of cultivated middle-class people from the *inside*, not, as was the contemporary way, from the *outside*, in wistful romance or envious satire. Readers found difficult a treatment that failed to provide the perch of an attitude. Second, James' sentence structure, with its internal verbal relations mirroring character relations and complexities, called for an attention to which the public was unused. Finally, James, as the most celebrated of our literary exiles, has been the classic case history of the supposed literary disease of expatriation.

All this combined into a misconception of James as a literary snob who wrote about social snobs in an overdressed style and who finally sought a more congenial atmosphere in snob-ridden England. The truth is becoming known that James made no snob choice of characters—though their restricted range is one of his limitations. He did

what was literary wisdom—he chose characters to write about whom he knew. And about them he wrote penetratingly and truthfully with the result that, as in Balzac (though differently and to a smaller degree) numbers of his characters, particularly in their class significance, stand condemned in unintended social criticism. Primarily James wrote of highly conscious, sensitively reacting people, and wrote of them with supple and rich, though sometimes overstrained perceptions in a style also supple and rich—occasionally to excess.

But nothing, it seems to me, has been so misjudged as James' expatriation and its consequences. It has been turned into a moral judgment against him; and it has been assumed that retribution visited him in the gradual thinning out of the works written after his self-exile. The "thin" books, generally pre-judged without a reading, happen to be, as Mr. Matthiessen reminds us, among James' masterpieces. And the condemnation of the expatriation often leaves out of consideration what James exiled himself from.

IN THE America James left behind him, most of the nation's intellectual as well as physical vigor had gone into the filling out and industrialization of the Continent. Its culture had been reduced to pastime and ornament, governed by the taste of a desiccated gentility, to whose standards and ways artists with a serious view of their work could not but react negatively, in ways determined by their individual circumstance and nature. Emily Dickinson, for example, after the attempts to "correct" her verses, exiled herself in Amherst more entirely than James in England. It was not till the virtual intellectual revolution of the twenties, that broke the rule of Puritan and Babbitt, that American receptivity to culture reached the European level.

England proved more congenial to live in than America, but it failed to give James a public. His most humiliating literary defeat was in the London failure of his play. And the British types of literary success confirmed him in

his despair of a public for his work. It is not surprising that his view of the role of the artist, as it takes shape in the collection of stories of writers and artists, edited by Mr. Matthiessen, is a stubbornly defensive one.\*\* The artist is pictured as carrying on his function in spite of rather than for society; and for his fulfillment in a resistant environment he must be unhampered by social ties, even those of marriage.

Perhaps an early physical injury which made him avoid marriage contributed to this extreme view. The view itself was the unhealthy rationalization of the unhealthy artist-society relationship from which later writers suffered, including the miner's son, D. H. Lawrence, whom it drove to a repudiation of democracy James was never guilty of.

But this extreme view was in contradiction with his basic principle that the source of art is life. The contradiction is consciously noted, for example, in the study of the self-defeat of perfectionism in *The Madonna of the Future*; it is at the bottom of the failure in the portrayal of Mark Ambient in *The Author of Beltraffio*, an impossible fusion of the alienated and the participant; and it is obliquely acknowledged in satirized figures like Ambient's pre-Raphaelite sister.

Even at its extreme, however, this view of art has fullness and nobility which differentiates it from the gaudy conceits of the esthetes. Art is a human good not unworthy of a man's self-dedication whether apart from, or within the social whole, as the time-scene makes possible. The attitude applied in the actual writing of James' masterpieces indicates an identification with life that, in a better integrated society, would have been wholer and heartier.

James emerged from literary defeats that would have crushed a weaker artist, at an age that could have allowed them to be gracefully attributed to a natural decline. Instead, in his fifties, he rose into what Mr. Matthiessen demonstrates

\* HENRY JAMES, THE MAJOR PHASE, by F. O. Matthiessen. Oxford University Press. \$2.50.

\*\* STORIES OF WRITERS AND ARTISTS, by Henry James, edited by F. O. Matthiessen. New Directions. \$3.50.

to be his major phase. The demonstration is able and clear; but since it is based largely on textual analysis, the reader should be warned that it requires a fresh, prior reading of four books—*The Ambassadors*, *The Golden Bowl*, *The Wings of the Dove*, and *The Portrait of a Lady* which, though not belonging with the others, is analyzed in the light of James' editing for the new collected edition, issued in the later years. The collection of stories, the majority of them small masterpieces, vivify these insights, in James' own dramatizations of them in fiction. Together the two volumes make Mr. Matthiessen's contribution the most important in the rediscovery of a major American writer.

## "Liberal" Self-portrait

THE BEST IS YET, by Morris L. Ernst. Harper. \$3.

NEW MASSES readers who also peruse the columns of the New York Times may remember Mr. Ernst as a letter-writer who regularly views Soviet activities with alarm along with the activities of American Communists and others who fall into Mr. Ernst's category of "subversive."

Mr. Ernst, a busy attorney, is an enthusiastic New Yorker but he hates the city. He says it is too big. He once wrote a whole book about the Menace of Bigness. That's why he loves Nantucket, where he tries to spend at least four months a year. Occasionally he runs over to Martha's Vineyard to discuss *Realpolitik* with Max Eastman. He knows lots of prominent people whom he calls by their first names. They include "Ben" Stolberg and Norman Thomas, though they are "the worst bowlers" he ever saw. Bowling, however, is obviously not the bond between them. Mr. Ernst, who has gone to bat for Christian Fronters and had words of praise for the publisher of the New York Daily News, reports that "Russia has operated without free speech, free press and free religion."

Reading *The Best Is Yet* we learn that Mr. Ernst and Sumner Welles are like this. "Recently I gave my first and, I hope, my last big party. It was to Sumner Welles." He admires the arch-Red-baiter Francis Biddle: "Lovers of civil liberties could not have a better friend in power."

Mr. Ernst would not bar seditious literature from the mails. "For my part I would not ban a line from the mailbags but I would allow no quantity publications in the mails unless the name

of the responsible author or publisher was printed clearly on the material." Hence, if the names of Hitler, Goebbels and Admiral Doenitz were conspicuously printed on mailbags containing *Mein Kampf* and incitements to violence against the people of the United States and its allies, everything would be jake. Flowing from the same line of thought is Ernst's praise for the American Civil Liberties Union, which objects to breaking up Christian Front meetings. Mr. Ernst writes that: "Minorities, often composed of the neurotic fringe and fanatics, need special support and legal representation. Otherwise, the state, the big industrialists, the vigilantes ride over them, and in time threaten the liberty of us all."

Mr. Ernst has nice words for David Dubinsky, Matthew Woll, Walter Reuther and Milton Murray, who recently characterized Harry Bridges as a "quivering" because he fights to maintain labor's no-strike pledge.

Listing his "regrets" of the past, Mr. Ernst is "sorry that I didn't represent some of the Christian Front groups when they were indicted, and when I was urged to do so by high Catholic prelates who thought I could be of help in a kind of lego-analytic catharsis."

Echoing the Bourbon view of the Reconstruction period, it seems to Mr. Ernst "that progress in the South is greater than in the North, particularly when viewed against the rather valid fear of white people in much of the South where Negroes, if allowed to vote, might well capture the local governments and retaliate for historic injustices practiced on them."

One of Mr. Ernst's clients (past or present) is Mr. Frank Costello, the underworld racketeer. It was a tapped phone conversation between Costello and Magistrate (now Justice) Aurelio which disclosed Aurelio's connection with the slot machine magnate. At the time Ernst—incidentally a bigwig in Dubinsky's Liberal Party—admitted to reporters that he had represented the racketeer for several years in "special matters" and particularly when he thought Costello "was being molested by some members of the Police Department without any charges being preferred against him." Also, "We are now representing him in some civil tax matters." This adviser and counsellor to Costello wants to know what happened "to all the money collected to defend Bridges and to free Browder."

In this book, reeking with slanders against Communists, you will find no

words of hatred for the fascists. However, it contains bits about cheap insurance, magazine postage rates, dramatic critics and the author's great crusades to legitimize that famous four-letter Anglo-Saxon word.

SENDER GARLIN.

## And Your Eyes Open

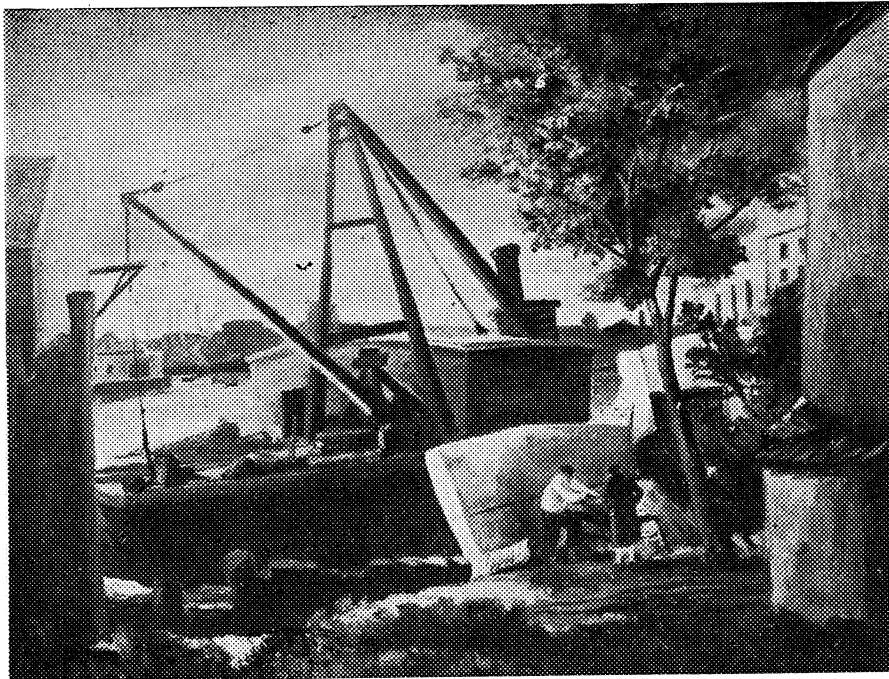
KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN, by Walter Bernstein. Viking. \$2.

DEDICATED to "The Men Who Reported to Draft Board 179, Brooklyn, New York, On the Morning of Feb. 24, 1941, Wherever They Are," this book is GI. The global war was then 3,000 miles away. In the three years during which Sgt. Bernstein went over there and came back he watched men like the ones who reported to Draft Board 179 change over from nervous civilians to hard matter-of-fact soldiers. Men like the former theater manager who said, "I wouldn't look at a war picture in my own theater." Or like the kid who "couldn't stand dirty language at the table."

Bernstein heard such men, months later, remark, as enemy artillery smashed a nearby barge: "Give the gentleman a cigar." Or say, about air jumping, "A roller coaster is worse." Or converse, while wandering to the rear after a battle, as follows: "I ain't sure we been relieved," the mortar man said. "I'm sure," the rifleman said. "The lieutenant came by and said we were relieved—that's good enough for me." "The lieutenant got killed," the other man said. "So what?" the rifleman said, "he relieved us before he got killed."

If Sgt. Bernstein makes the former Pvt. Hargrove sound like corn, it is partly because Bernstein doesn't stand out from the rest of the "doughs," but is one of them. During a shelling, for instance, he says: "I put my face in the dirt and tried to dig deeper with my knees." As he lay there, he thought "of a wonderful leather handbag my wife and I had seen once in the window of John Frederics and I thought now, the shells falling like the end of the world, we should have bought the bag."

Only in the early camp scenes do you catch him looking, rather than participating—as in "Juke Joint," for instance, or in "A Night in the Guardhouse." But overseas, as in the unforgettable "Search for a Battle" or in "The Taking of Ficarra," he is always in the thick of it, hunting with unheroic passion for the undecorated fact. One of his early buck sergeants used to yell at the com-



"Waterfront," oil by George Pickens. At the International Print Society through May 26.

pany, "Show the enemy he's fighting *Americans!*" Remembering it, Bernstein keeps picking Americana out of the chaos of battle—those little details and oddly familiar bits that added together seem to satisfy his search, never openly avowed, for the meaning of war.

But Bernstein was not to find its full meaning until he came among the Yugoslavs. In "Walk Through Yugoslavia," he tells with excitement how he got to Marshal Tito's GHQ after crossing the Adriatic in a fishing smack, and hiking for seven days with a party of Youth Congress delegates, all armed and singing, over the Yugoslav mountains, often through German-held territory.

Of them he says: "The partisans were all healthy because they knew why they were killing and what it meant to them. There are practically no cases of war neurosis in Tito's army and the main reason is that they have a good idea why they are fighting and believe in this idea."

Whether Sgt. Bernstein himself has as good an idea is not altogether apparent in his book except by indirection. Nor is it further revealed in either the prologue or epilogue that attempt to hold the book together. In the prologue, he phones his wife from the Jamaica armory: "It's me—I'm in the Army." "Oh. . . . How do you feel?" she asked. "All right," he said. In the epilogue, during his first moments back with his wife, he answers her question: "Are you hungry?" with—"I had a milk-

shake at the station." She nodded and he said, "It didn't taste the same."

Maybe that's something—obviously Sgt. Bernstein tries to make something of it. If the chocolate milkshakes don't taste the same to the vets, maybe it's a good sign. If the Sergeant and the other GI's found out that in war it's a good thing to keep your head *down*, they'll also find out, in due time, that in peace it's just as good an idea to keep your head *up*—so you can see what's coming.

JEROME WILDER.

## Wilson's Biographer

AMERICAN CHRONICLE, THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RAY STANNARD BAKER (DAVID GRAYSON). Scribner. \$3.50.

WITH news from San Francisco uppermost in our minds, the autobiography of one of the reporters best able to chronicle the formative days of the League of Nations makes absorbing reading. Ray Stannard Baker handled press relations for the American delegation at the Paris Peace Conference, and for twenty years thereafter devoted himself to a painstaking biography of Woodrow Wilson. He has an important story to tell here, in his own autobiography.

Partly it is an account of a search for leadership that led him to Wilson. He continued to believe in Wilson, though recognizing that his hero had failed in the greatest project of his career.

However, new or probing analysis of Wilson's failure is not the substance of *American Chronicle*. Nor do we get incisive studies of the social forces in America which produced Wilson and then cast his League aside. To be sure, Baker tells us he began to ask himself during the peace conference how Wilson could work with the old imperialistic governments which were bitterly opposed by the masses. But Baker stops short of the final answers to this and related questions, as he had stopped short of the essential conclusions during his brilliant days of muckraking.

Associated with him then and also present at the peace conference was Lincoln Steffens. Both he and Steffens had misgivings about the conference, but they were not always the same. In their differences lies a key to the subsequent divergence of the careers of the two journalists. Steffens moved into the broad stream of progress, and Baker withdrew into prolonged static absorption in Wilson and his dreams. Steffens visited Russia on a government mission and came back with his unforgettable report: "I have seen the future and it works." Baker, on the other hand, watched without protesting the fact (or possibly without perceiving it) that the powers were, among other things shaping the League as an instrument for use against Soviet Russia. Not that Baker reveals himself as actively anti-Soviet. He disliked being anti-anything, his muckraking years to the contrary notwithstanding. He needed to affirm, and he affirmed the aspirations of Wilson who could not see the suicidal contradiction inherent in sending American soldiers against the Bolsheviks while at the same time he looked forward to world peace.

In the earlier muckraking period when the careers of Baker and Lincoln Steffens touched closely Baker dug into trusts, municipal corruption and other unseemly weeds in our economic garden. He likewise wrote sympathetically on labor. At the very outset of his long life as a newspaperman he covered the march of Coxe's army of the unemployed. Not long afterward he reported—decently—the great Pullman strike of railroad workers, led by Eugene V. Debs. His output of liberal magazine articles was prodigious and, in addition, he wrote a number of useful books. All this made him *persona grata* with the labor leaders of the time, and in consequence (after America's entry into the war) Wilson selected Baker to go on a secret mission abroad to study

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anti-war attitudes among European  
labor.

But Baker is not solely preoccupied  
with the tremendous social terrain he  
has covered in his long life. He also  
deals with the "David Grayson" side of  
his personality. Under that pseudonym  
Baker attained immense popularity for  
his graceful eulogies of farm life. If this  
more personal portion of *American  
Chronicle* does not increase the value of  
the book for historians, it does add pleas-  
ant moments to the reading.

PHILIP STANDER.

## Labor and the Church

LABOR AND TOMORROW'S WORLD, by G. Brom-  
ley Oxnam. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press. \$1.50.

THE labor movement has long com-  
manded the attention of churchmen.  
Some have fought it. Others have main-  
tained an attitude of neutrality toward  
it. Still others have spoken out in behalf  
of labor's right to organize for collective  
bargaining. But few, all too few, says  
Bishop Oxnam in this latest book have  
viewed it with favor as "a worldwide  
movement that means a new social or-  
der as truly as the coming of the machine  
meant the passing of feudalism."

As a plea for a reorientation in the  
attitude of our churches toward the  
labor movement, *Labor and Tomor-  
row's World* is a significant work. It is  
not addressed exclusively to churchmen.  
It is designed to reach the millions who  
are members of the church. And since  
these include men and women from all  
social and economic strata, the book  
speaks not only in the language of the  
church, but in that of the economist,  
the sociologist and the humanitarian.

Democracy, says Bishop Oxnam, is  
as great a necessity in our economic  
order as it is in our political life. "The  
worker," he declares, "is reaching out  
for democracy and cooperation so that  
the work life, like the political life, may  
be 'of the people, by the people, for the  
people.' He is beginning to feel that po-  
litical liberty may perish from the earth  
unless economic justice is born upon the  
earth." But democracy, whether politi-  
cal or economic, cannot be fully realized  
without an effective labor movement  
that is given an equal voice in the plan-  
ning of the future peace and well being  
of the world. Our author understands  
this. Hence he advocates hearty support  
of labor in its effort to build such a  
movement.

It is not only in general terms that  
Bishop Oxnam urges this support of  
the labor movement. On grounds that

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must commend themselves to churchmen and laymen alike, he argues for the fulfillment of labor's specific aspirations. He bespeaks the desirability of the union shop. He advocates that "the right to work which is written into the Constitution of Russia . . . must be written into the practice of the economic life"; that an annual wage be granted to all workers because such a wage "determines the living standard of the worker"; that full production and employment be our goal because "a higher standard of life depends upon increased production"; and that a comprehensive program of social insurance, embracing unemployment, old age and health insurance, with medical and cash benefits, be adopted as a method for the peaceful advancement of economic and social security.

His thinking on such matters as international trade, as well as on the labor movements of other countries, shows him to be a churchman who takes the here as well as the hereafter in his stride. The following quotation will illustrate my meaning:

It will be necessary to find a method to remove the barriers that selfish nationalism, in response to pressures from business and labor alike, erects in the form of tariff walls thereby blocking the avenues to an unimpeded world market. . . . We are fearful that the production of goods in one land will mean that the market is closed to us. We fail to recognize that, as standards rise, markets are increased because the higher living standard means more effective demand. The world does not become poorer because of increased production. The world does not become poorer by becoming richer.

In his discussion of the labor movement in the Soviet Union he reads a lesson to those who insist that it is not free:

These unions differ from unions in capitalist countries because of their historical development, because of the structure of the Soviet Union, and because of economic and cultural conditions. Their functions are related to the fact of nationalization. Their duties are to help increase production; to organize socialist competition; to care for the interests of their members; to administer social insurance; and to provide for sports, holidays, cultural and social activities.

In one respect, however, I find it necessary to express my disagreement with Bishop Oxnam. Because he believes so strongly in the labor movement, he advocates that the church should not only aid it but participate in it by sending missionaries into its ranks. The danger that inheres in such a course is that our labor unions may become a battle-

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ground on which theological differences may be fought out. Enlightened churchmen, as Bishop Oxnam's own activities prove, can make their contribution to the labor movement without actually being part of it. HARRY SACHER.

## Recent Fiction

THE POWER HOUSE, by Alex Comfort. Viking. \$3.

AGE OF THUNDER, by Frederic Prokosch. Harper. \$2.50.

THE SMALL BACK ROOM, by Nigel Balchin. Houghton Mifflin. \$2.50.

BANSHEE HARVEST, by Jim Phelan. Viking. \$2.50.

**A**N IMMENSE machine dominates *Power House*. The impotence of a workman obsessed with the machine is cured by a Nazi victory. An ex-officer of the French army discusses life with a German officer who releases him after his activities as a saboteur are discovered. The thinking in this book is anarchist muddle and its characters fail to symbolize the rottenness of French society before the Liberation as the author seems to intend. Book Three has good prose describing the German bombings and the confusion of the army and the isolation of its defeated units. The whole book is as thick with minor imagery as a dog is with fleas. And the effect is just as uncomfortable.

**"A**GE OF THUNDER" has just as little to do with France. Again a German official releases an underground agent with much philosophical verbiage. Where Comfort's prose is detailed and dusty, Prokosch's sentences drip. The entire journey of the hero to freedom in Switzerland occurs in a ghostly light generated by the author's style. One suspects the whole thing was done with an eye for technicolor. In both books, violence wanders about at random.

**"T**HE SMALL BACK ROOM" is competent. The author is a lieutenant-colonel on the general staff at the War Office in London. His tale deals with petty intrigue in a quasi-official war research agency; his hero is a cripple who refuses to be heroic (and, of course, is). Its direct writing is attractive after Comfort's pretentiousness.

**"B**ANSHEE HARVEST" grinds axes. The peasants of an Irish district around Mt. Killavola revolt. A Nazi agent is involved with the local landlords and their police. The author tries to prove that the English aid the op-



pressors of the Irish farmers, who are anti-Nazi as is the IRA. Politics removed, the story of the revolt and its betrayal is good. The rest is padding of the *Cosmopolitan* sort.

BILL AALTO.

## Spending and Depressions

PUBLIC SPENDING AND POSTWAR ECONOMIC POLICY, by Sherwood M. Fine. Columbia. \$2.50.

MR. FINE's book appraises the pre-war public spending policy of the New Deal and subjects some of Prof. Alvin Hansen's ideas to criticism. His aim is to prove that public spending alone, even on a large scale, will not cure the ills which bring about depressions in the prevailing economic system. His attempt is successful but pointless, since neither the New Deal nor any other serious group proposed to limit the efforts at pre-war recovery to public spending alone.

In his final twenty pages Mr. Fine projects some general views on postwar economic policy that reveal a progressive outlook. Obviously, twenty pages written before Bretton Woods and the development of the President's postwar economic program cannot do justice to such vast problems. Like most economists Mr. Fine overlooks the Teheran Conference, another evidence of the time lag between the emergence of a radically new world situation and its recognition and understanding even by progressive economists. He did, however, sense something big and new growing out of this war as he was completing his book. We shall no doubt hear from Mr. Fine again and there are reasons to believe that he will use his talents in behalf of the progressive economic postwar plans outlined by the Roosevelt administration.

RALPH BOWMAN.

## Brief Review

SELECTED WRITINGS OF THOMAS JEFFERSON. *Modern Library*. 95c.

HALF of this valuable selection consists of Jefferson's autobiography and his main public writings; the other half includes about 250 private letters, the largest number available outside of the expensive, multi-volume editions. In its 750 pages the reader will find a complete presentation of Jefferson's political philosophy and his vast range of interests. It is a pity that this fine selection contains no index other than an itemized list of contents.

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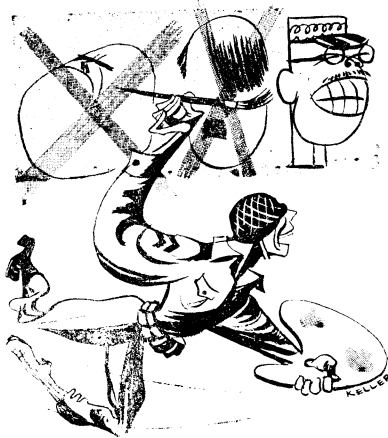
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# FILMS OF THE WEEK

"COUNTER-ATTACK" (Criterion) is one of the most pertinent films to come out of Hollywood in a long time. Far from being belated, its appearance now brings a sharp and timely reminder of Soviet character, of the resourcefulness, courage and sacrifice of the Red Army, and of the arrogance of the Nazi. As in *Sahara*, Columbia teams writer John Howard Lawson with director Zoltan Korda; but in this instance Lawson's adaptation of the Janet and Philip Stevenson play is the strongest part of the film. The main action takes place in a sealed-in cellar. This area is cinematically so confining that the camera rarely gets an opportunity to help out the action, and it says much for the skill and inventiveness of the dialogue that the interest is kept at such a high level. The direction and the acting also deserve high praise.

The dramatic conflict follows closely the pattern of the play, although additional scenes have been written in. The Soviet high command plans a counter-attack to thwart a Nazi attack. Part of the plan includes the construction of an underwater bridge within sight of German sentries and patrols (an actual event) and the seizure of Nazi provisional headquarters in order to capture officers and thus ascertain the concentration point of the Nazi attack. While the bridge is being constructed, all by hand, Russian paratroopers are dropped into the village where the Nazi command has holed up. The paratroopers force their way into the enemy's headquarters but are shelled out by German artillery. All but one Red soldier and his guerrilla guide get clear. The building caves in over them, and these two are left alone holding off, with a couple of tommy guns, eight captured Germans. The Soviet soldier learns that one of the eight, who are all in the uniforms of privates or non-coms, is an officer. Here is his chance to get the information he was sent for; and there develops a contest of wit and endurance, along with suspense as to which side will dig out the contestants. Since the cellar is behind the German lines, the Nazis are supremely confident they will be rescued by their fellows. The paratrooper, knowing about the bridge under construction, is equally certain that the Red troops will do the job. Their matching of strength, ingenuity and bargaining powers constitutes the sub-

stance of the film. Now and again, as an imperative relief from the constrained quarters of the cellar, the camera swings out to the countryside, to the exciting nocturnal activity around the bridge and to the ensuing counter-attack. When the battle nears its end, the cellar inmates hear digging going on. The Nazis are full of joy as they hear German voices, but it is the Red troops that come through.

Mr. Lawson includes several bits of dialogue that make astute reference to the future. When the paratrooper wants to know about the German voices, he is told that German prisoners were used in the digging. Toward the end of the film, when one of the Nazis, the only worker among them, comes over to the paratrooper, he is given a gun to help guard the others. The rescue party is surprised to find one of the Nazis armed. When the paratrooper breaks open the gun and shows an empty barrel, the German is hurt. "You didn't trust me," he complains. "We will trust you—later," is the reply.

Paul Muni plays the paratrooper in what is probably his best characterization since Juarez. Marguerita Chapman, the guerrilla girl, is least convincing, looking too much like the product of Hollywood's beauty salons. She doesn't get too much to do, so this bit of miscasting doesn't affect the general excellent quality of the film.

WARNER BROTHERS have revived Robert E. Sherwood's *Petrified Forest* under the name of *Escape in the Desert* (Strand). Apart from the locale, it bears little resemblance to the original. In place of the gangster and the tired sophisticate, we have a Dutch flier making his way to the West Coast, and a group of escaped Nazi prisoners. Until the prisoners come upon the scene, the film is slow and heavy. Afterward the film succeeds in generating a few moments of exciting melodrama. The Dutch flier gets in a few telling observations on why the Nazis have succeeded, not wasted even at this date, but he is better at talking than at fighting even though he gets his man, or men. Aside from the flashes of suspense, the film shapes up as an unsubtle horse opera, and it might better have been left in the respectable obscurity of its original form.

JOSEPH FOSTER.

## Notes on Music

THE Jewish synagogue has not, on the whole, attracted the modern composer. Jewish liturgy is rooted in traditional forms of cantillation frequently beautiful and moving, and is surrounded by religious, historical and emotional associations not easily penetrated or assimilated by the modern non-religious composer. The annual concerts of liturgical music by the Park Avenue Synagogue are courageous attempts to overcome these difficulties. The third of its annual Sabbath Eve musical services on May 11 involved the talents of eleven composers. The evening was a rewarding one, and reflected varied styles. Thus, David Diamond, Henry Brant and Leonard Bernstein used a modern idiom for their settings. Bernstein's "Hashkivenu" had the most virtuosity, especially in the fugal passages, but it was less moving than the work of some of the others. Max Helfman and Frederick Jacobi used more traditional forms. The former's "Lecho Dodi" was simple and touching. A. W. Binder's "Kiddush" vacillated between the traditional and the new. It is unjust, after one hearing, to try to pass judgment, but it can be said that much of the music sounded fresh and good, in spite of a notable drawback—an absence of responses—which made for a certain detachment not usual at services. The performers were excellent—both choir, directed by Mr. Helfman, and the soloist, David J. Putterman, sang with precision and finish.

I DID not get to hear more than a portion of the first concert of the Festival of American Music at Columbia University. This was devoted to orchestral compositions and included David Diamond's *Rounds for String Orchestra* (1944), Howard Hanson's *Symphony No. 4* and Henry Brant's *Concerto for Saxophone and Orchestra* (1941). Diamond's composition for strings was neatly and skillfully contrived and unpretentious; Hanson's heavily orchestrated symphony struck me as long-winded and unclear in thematic development; and Brant's *Concerto* was buoyant, deft and humorous, utilizing the limited compass of a solo saxophone with skillful restraint.

IVAN DZERSHINSKY'S opera, *The Quiet Don*, based on Sholokhov's great novel, is known in America chiefly through one of its famous songs, "From Border unto Border." New York music

lovers will have the opportunity of hearing the entire work performed at Carnegie Hall on the evenings of May 27, 28 and 29. The work won the Stalin prize in 1935.

WHAT to hear in New York: Through May 27, opera, New York City Center. . . . May 25, Gabriel Faure Commemoration, Museum of Modern Art. . . . May 25, Jefferson School Concert, Town Hall.

FREDERIC EWEN.

## Records

THE first Asch album of classical music is the hitherto unrecorded *Two Part Inventions* of Johann Sebastian Bach, which he is said to have intended as studies for one of his sons. In Erno Balogh's sensitive playing, these fifteen pieces in their simple polyphonic design are a well of beautiful melody and rhythmic variety. The recording is "boomy," but otherwise clear.

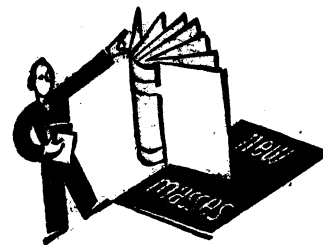
THE six selections in Meade Lux Lewis' album of Boogie Woogie (Asch), are original compositions, but the influence of Negro folk tradition can be traced throughout. This is especially true of the *Denapas Parade* and *Yancey's Pride*, both piano blues. Characteristic of the music is a sustained rhythmic beat on the bass while the treble runs wild in sharp, restless, probing improvisations. Amazing piano techniques alone cannot create the effect Lewis gets; it comes directly from the heart to expressive fingers.

ASCH's Album 349 is sponsored by the CIO War Relief Committee. *Songs of Citizen CIO* chronicles the workers' contribution to the war effort and voices their desire for a productive and peaceful postwar world. "No more breadlines after this war," Josh White sings; and Tom Glazer tells GI Joe for the CIO that "The CIO has got a plan":

*You fight for us and we fight for you,  
And we'll all work together when  
the fighting's through.*

*Social Worker's Talking Blues* tells of CIO accomplishments and what its members want to do about winning the war and "about clearing slums and fighting disease and poverty." Glazer's advice to social workers ends with a hint on how to get a higher education: "M.A., Ph.D.,—CIO."

JOHN KITTON.



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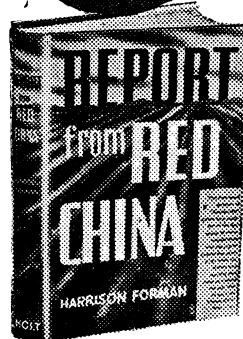
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