

June 1 1937

June

# The Fight

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A FIGHT AGAINST WAR AND FASCISM



IN THIS ISSUE: LABOR'S MARCH FOR DEMOCRACY



## The Enemy

BIG guns will be trained on population centers miles behind the lines. Airplanes loaded with explosives, poison gas and bacteria tubes will rain death upon the heads of women and children in congested areas. The generals call it "demoralizing the enemy."

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come next, or Rumania, or the United States—or the Fascist plague may hit somewhere else.

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## With the Readers

CELIA was a nice girl. In fact, in many ways she was an unusual girl. She was good to look at, big brown eyes that would have added a great deal to her fine chiseled face if only they had twinkled. But Celia was a very serious girl, and pretty too.

WE have known Celia for ten or twelve years, ever since her fourteenth or fifteenth year and can never recall seeing her without a book. Wherever you saw Celia, you saw a book. We watched her grow up and through the books she read we got to know a little about Celia.

WE used to go into that household three or four times a week to find her always curled up in an arm chair reading. What did Celia read? Dos Passos, Carl Sandburg, Michael Gold, Hemingway, Dreiser, Stephen Crane, Gorky and Whitman. This was Celia when she was sixteen or seventeen years old. Ferris, or the movies? Bah, give me a good book and an armchair.

IT was three years this past Easter since we saw Celia. Immersed in our own work we forgot her. Occasionally we would remember and wonder what had happened to the brown-eyed girl and her books, until a friend of ours from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, came in unannounced and without a "Hello" dropped into a chair at our desk and said, "Celia, same vein, 'Celia.' He pointed an accusing finger at us: 'You have made a contact woman of our Celia.'

THIS is the story we heard. Celia is now an ardent anti-Fascist and has gone "straight to the people with her message." She wants to make "contacts" with the workers. Celia stands near the steel mills in Bethlehem with a pulp magazine in her hand. You mean to say, we asked, that Celia now likes adventure stories and tennis and movies? No, heaven forbid, said our friend, in fact she is re-reading *Barbusse*. But the workers, Celia claims, are mentally backward under capitalism. Therefore Celia stands at the mill with a pulp magazine in her hand and strikes up an acquaintance with some steel worker, and then pulls an anti-Fascist pamphlet from between the pages of the pulp and sells it or gives it away to the worker.

CELIA now has two standards, one for herself and one for the workers. Our Celia has become an anti-Fascist snob. Certain books for herself (she has an armchair in her furnished room), but the workers, they want—she calls it "popular" literature. The workers won't have anything to do with the intellectuals, Celia says.

OUR friend sitting at our desk told us that when he asked Celia how she knew him, mad as hell. When he told her that a recent investigation of library readers showed that the worth-while books were read by workers, Celia did not believe it. She likes her workers dumb, our friend teased us.

YOU imply, we said, that Celia has become a little nutty on the subject. No, said our friend, but when the workers see Celia coming with the pulp magazine in her hand they get a bit worried and walk a little taster, a trifle faster.



When mass was being celebrated, this Durango church was bombed, by Franco's Fascists.

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JOSEPH PASS, Editor

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## The Contributors

BISHOP FRANCIS J. McCONNELL, Methodist Resident Bishop of the New York Area, was chairman of the Commission of Inquiry of the Interchurch World Movement which investigated the great steel strike of 1919 when 365,000 workers walked out on strike. *The Report of the Steel Strike of 1919*, issued by that Commission was edited by the Bishop and is a rare document of social value. The story here was told at intervals to his daughter, Miss Dorothy McConnell.

FRANCIS J. GORMAN, president of the United Textile Workers of America, has long been a leader in the trade union movement and is now in the midst of a drive to organize one of the great industries of America (textiles), which has long been known for its low pay, long hours and bad working conditions. Mr. Gorman writes on civil liberties, having undoubtedly in mind the textile workers in the South and what their fate when they want to join a union of their own.

WILLIAM F. DODD, JR. has taught in American universities and has lived in Germany under the Hitler regime.

JACOB BURCK has worked as daily editorial cartoonist for both American and European newspapers and now takes his first bow in the pages of THE FIGHT.

MERVYN RATHBORNE is President of the American Radio Telegraphists Association, a progressive leader of a progressive union which has recently gone through its first big strike.

ROBERT GESSNER, author of *Upstairs, Some of My Best Friends Are Jews, Massacre, etc.* contributes here the first chapter of a novel which he is now writing. Mr. Gessner comes out of Michigan and is at present teaching at New York University.

CHARLES RECHT, an attorney who writes in this number on anti-labor legislation and the recent progressive court decisions, has contributed to *The Christian Science Monitor, The Nation, The New Republic*, and is the author of *Rue With a Difference, American Deportation and Exclusion Laws, etc.*

JOSEPH SCARPA is the pseudonym of an Italian worker who after long hours in a shoe-repair shop puts in his time in making trench shoes for the Spanish Loyalists.

RUSSELL T. LIMBACH, a Cleveland artist now residing in New York, has worked on newspapers and periodicals in both cities and has frequently exhibited his lithographs and drawings.

JOHN WILSON, who writes on government trade unions, is the pseudonym of a writer who works for the government.

LOUIS LOZOWICK, who made the cover, ranks as one of the first artists of industrial scenes in America. Mr. Lozowick has contributed to many publications including *Harper's Magazine, Theater Arts, The Forum, The Nation, etc.*



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(Selected Articles from June Issue)

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MICHAEL WILLIAMS

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*Homo Sapiens Should Try to Be a Better Animal*

EARNEST A. HOOTON

My Child Was Crippled

*A Normal Life for a Handicapped Girl. . . .* ANONYMOUS

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June, 1937

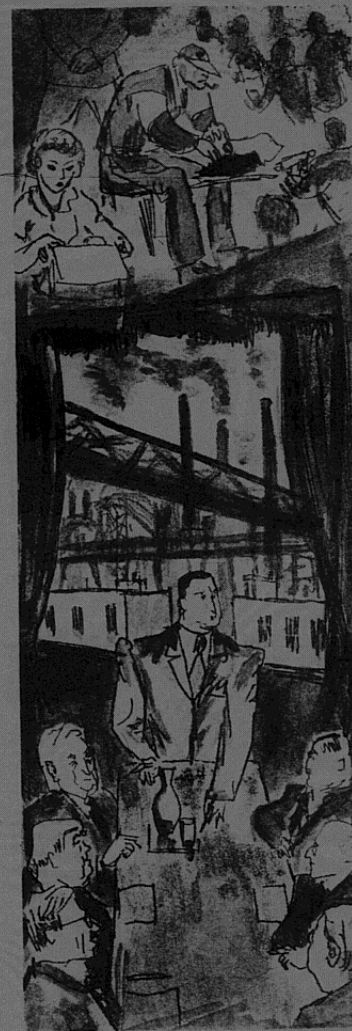
Steel

The strike of 1919 was lost, but it pointed the way toward steel labor's 1937 victory. Conditions of 18 years ago are revealed by one who saw them

By  
Bishop Francis J.  
McConnell

As Told to  
Dorothy McConnell

ILLUSTRATED BY  
WILLIAM WESTLEY



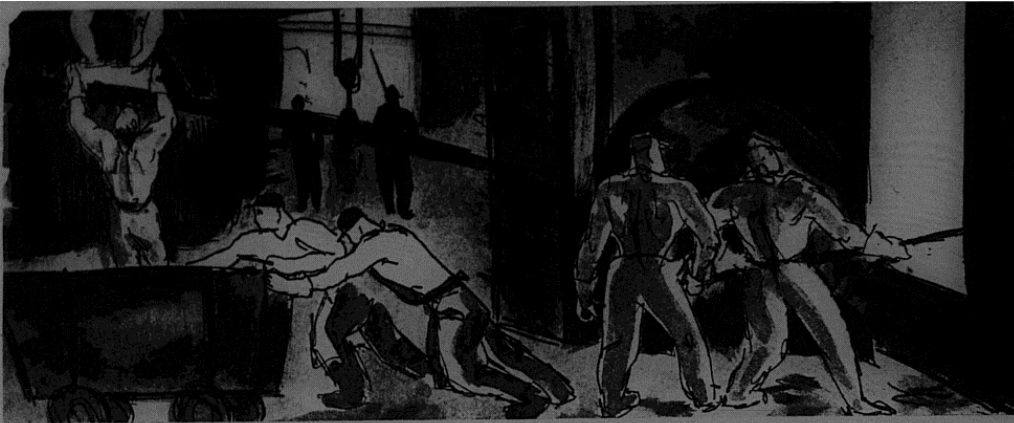
**D**URING the Interchurch Steel Strike Inquiry in 1919 one of the members of the Commission of Inquiry was walking about a steel town. He fell into conversation with a steel worker and asked him why he was on strike. Was it because he wanted recognition of the union—collective bargaining—better wages? Well, yes, the striker replied, it was all those things but it was something more that had driven him to go out. He had, he said, recently lost a child and he realized at the time of her death that he had never known her. He had been working the twelve-hour day, seven-day week. When he was coming home to bed the child was getting up to go to school—when he was going back to work the child was going to bed. Now, he had some other children at home and he had made up his mind to *know* them—obviously impossible in the twelve-hour day, seven-day week persisted. That was why he was on strike.

A Time of Reaction

The Interchurch World Movement Commission of Inquiry was organized to find out just these facts about the steel strike of 1919. In the papers, all of them with the exception of the New York *World*, the strike was hailed as a part of a great Bolshevik plot to take over the industry of the United States. A red hunt was going on all over the country. We had sunk into a deep reaction immediately following the close of the War. No correct labor news could be had from the press. The employers themselves "seemed to know" nothing about their workers' lives or the reason for their discontent, and said openly time and time again that the whole strike was the work of outside agitators of alien birth. Even those living in and about steel sections knew nothing of the workers' lives. The system of the twelve-hour day and the seven-day week did not give the worker much opportunity to enter into the life of the community. The workers were seen as men passing to work and passing home again.

The real issues and grievances were swallowed up even in the labor press, a press that might have been able to describe the conditions back of the strike, by organization problems, reports of victories and defeats, and the skirmishing necessary to try to bring the strike to a successful close. We set out to get to the workers themselves and ask the two questions: (1) *Why are you striking?* (or *not striking?*), and (2) *What do you want?* These questions answered by the strikers themselves we decided to publish.

We had no intention of investigating many of the things we did—such as the espionage system in



the United States Steel Corporation—but we were drawn into it by the very nature of the investigation of the conditions surrounding the workers' lives. When we were organized as a commission of churchmen we were simply a Commission of Inquiry—nothing more.

We set up the Commission in October, 1919, and by November we were ready for open hearings in the steel section. During the months of investigation hundreds of workers, many employers and some "welfare workers" were interviewed. Testimonies were taken from over five hundred workers. And at the end of the investigation the Commission went on record with a formal declaration that the strike was justified.

#### Labor Spies

During that time about 600 "labor reports," the reports of labor spies, had been collected. Most of them were turned over to us by the employers themselves—who saw no reason why such reports might bring them into disrepute.

Elbert H. Gary, spokesman of the United States Steel Corporation, "knew" that the strike was stirred up by outside agitators because he was in "close touch" with his men and if there had been any very serious grievance he would have known it. When he was asked how he could know the grievances personally of the hundreds of thousands of men in his employ he replied that he, of course, did not know every man personally but that he talked to foremen, that he had called his presidents of subsidiary steel companies together and told them to give a hearing to any complaints that foremen might bring from workers, that individual men with grievances had the opportunity to go to the president if they wished, and that in addition he had labor reports which would tell if there were any trouble or dissatisfaction in a mill.

Mr. Gary's naive pride in his labor reports was in great part responsible for the Commission getting at what was going on in the mills through spy terrorism. When the labor report files were turned over to our investigators they were found to be—often as not—dirty scraps of paper, scribbled on in pencil, misspelled and ungrammatical. In one case, where five men were accused of being troublemakers in a mill, the writer suggested that they might be

made to suffer as they had made life hard for him—how, he did not state. Within a day the names of these five men had gone to all the steel mills in that valley and finally the names were sent to the secret files of the Department of Justice in Washington as "dangerous radicals."

#### Blacklisting Workers

One of the most inhuman features of this method of getting information and firing "undesirables," was that when the man was fired, often as not for a reason unknown to him, all opportunity in that section was closed to him—so that he had to move his family into another part of the country. Often the only trade in which he was skilled was closed to him forever and he had no redress.

The casualness with which the lives of steel employees were treated was revealed in the testimony of Mr. Gary himself, when he told of how he settled the grievances of a strike in a subsidiary steel mill before the outbreak of the great strike. One day, he said, he received a telegram from a president of a company saying that a thousand—or maybe two thousand (Mr. Gary could not remember the exact number)—had walked out. The president could fill their places with other men at once; what was Mr. Gary's advice? Gary telegraphed him to come to New York before he filled the places. At a conference in New York, Gary asked the president why the men had walked out. The president did not know. No one had been to him with any grievances. The men had simply walked out.

"Go and get hold of a foreman and find out what the grievances are."

There were three grievances which the foreman reported. Gary found two of the three to be just and suggested that notices be posted that these two would be remedied. It was done and the men went back to work. By a casual intervention on the part of Gary so that one foreman could be heard, a thousand—or two thousand—men were saved from loss of jobs and from moving with their families to another section of the country.

There seemed to be almost no contact with the actual working lives of the steel employees by the employers, and no realization of the human cost of the twelve-hour day and the seven-day week

except the very practical realization that men of forty or over must not be re-hired in steel mills.

During the entire strike Gary was almost the sole spokesman for the employers' side, and it was funny—if it had not been of such grave social significance—to see his assumption of the role of tender-hearted father to hundreds of thousands of workmen.

#### "The Night Shift Is Easy"

The night shift, he avowed, was an easy shift. He even produced photographs showing men at ease on the night shift. From his story one might have thought that the men found it more comfortable on the night shift than at home in bed. Hard work? Yes, it was hard work at times, but not nearly as hard work as he had done on the farm as a boy. He had certainly felt no ill effects from it. But his testimony did not stand up against workers' diaries—written, by the way, before the strike—collected by Heber Blankenhorn and afterward printed in the Steel Report of the Interchurch World Movement.

"You lift a large sack of coal to your shoulders, run toward the white hot steel in a 100-ton ladle, must get close enough without burning your face off to haul the sack, using every ounce of strength, into the ladle and run, as flames leap to the roof and the heat blasts everything to the roof. Then you rush out to the ladle and madly shovel manganese with it, as hot a job as can be imagined."

#### Thirty Nationalities

The fact that at least two-thirds of the men on strike worked the twelve-hour day, seven-day week and were in the lowest pay brackets shows that the strike was supported by the ones who were suffering the greatest hardships under the system. It was an old-fashioned strike, in a way, run under the A.F. of L. direction and supported by 24 craft unions. The only novelty it contributed to the strike technique was the flexibility of its organizational approach to different sections in the steel territory. This had to be. There were at least thirty different nationalities involved and all manner of political and religious backgrounds. At one time, when the press was making much of the fact that many of the strikers were aliens and had



brought "subversive" ideas of industry to the United States, I asked one of the organizers if the foreign strikers had contributed anything to the policy or development of the strike. Remember, this was in the last days when the organizers were worn out and discouraged, so the answer must be taken as the exclamation of a tired man.

"Contributed?" he said. "Contributed? They have contributed a lot of blank skulls into which we have to put ideas."

Of course, many foreign workers were considerably above the naive-born workers in their understanding of labor relations, but the outburst of the weary organizer does prove that "alien" rank-and-file influences were not playing any considerable part in the conduct of the strike.

Although many of the organizers were Socialists and the leader, William Z. Foster, was a syndicalist, the strike was led on the old craft-union lines. There was no indication that Foster was stepping over those lines to preach syndicalism. At one time, when Foster's pamphlet on syndicalism was being quoted by every newspaper in the country as the policy back of the strike, not one copy of the pamphlet could be found in the hands of the strike organizers or in the hands of the strikers themselves. Foster often complained of fighting the "radicals," but by that he meant those in the strike who wanted to move faster than the strike committee could successfully go at the time.

#### Three Hundred Thousand Strikers

At one time there were 365,600 men out on strike against the iniquitous system under which they were living. The great majority of them had never heard of "radical" views.

I remember talking to Foster once toward the end of the strike when the supporting craft unions were pulling against each other, and the progressives in the A.F. of L. pulling against Gompers, while the United States Steel Corporation presented a united front to the world.

"At any rate," I said, "there must be unity among you strikers."

"Just about as much unity," he replied, "as you find in a wagon-load of furniture."

But lack of unity as there might be as to policies and methods of putting those policies into

action, there was a unity in the workers' complete dissatisfaction with things as they were.

At the first of the drive men joined by the thousands because they felt hope. There was feeling that at last there was a chance to get free of their twelve-hour day, seven-day week, and to get their grievances before the companies. Towards the end of the strike they straggled back to work because they had lost hope. At the very end Fitzpatrick and Foster came to us and asked us to try our hands at arbitration with the United States Steel Corporation, since all other attempts had failed. Foster at first feared to turn over the arbitration to such a group as ours lest the strike lose its autonomy, but the situation was desperate and it was the last chance.

Heber Blankenhorn, speaking for the Commission, agreed to arbitrate with Gary if the arbitration should be for a new deal for the entire steel industry, both those on strike and those at work. If Gary agreed to arbitration the men on strike should go immediately back to work. The strike committee agreed. We went in to see Gary.

#### An Interview with Gary

I think of the first of that interview with Mr. Gary with some satisfaction. It seems that Gary had put his labor reporters on the trail of our Commission and had received a report on our "Bolshevik" tendencies. He had sent copies of this report to the presidents of the steel companies. Now, during the World War, one of our Commission had served as a chaplain and had rescued a man under fire at great personal risk to himself. The rescued man became president of one of the subsidiary steel companies, and as an expression of his gratitude passed the secret report on to our Commission member. He, in turn, gave it to me as chairman of the Commission.

As we sat down to open negotiations Mr. Gary said: "Just a minute, gentlemen. Before I agree to talk to you I would like to put a few questions to you—" He began to shuffle around among some papers which he had before him and then turned around to Mr. Close, his "welfare director."

"Where is that paper we have on these gentlemen, Close?" he asked.

"Perhaps, Mr. Gary," I said, "you would like to use my copy for your questions." I handed over the copy which had been given me. Gary tried to ask the questions but the atmosphere was not helpful. He finally gave it up as a bad job. When I afterward told the story Mr. Gary expressed himself as being grieved at my lack of ethics in making a confidential document public. But, inasmuch as the document gave considerable attention to me, I could not feel any very lively sense of shame.

Mr. Gary refused to arbitrate. The men on strike, he declared, were "Bolshevik" and better out of the mill. The men in the mill were contented or they would not be there. And so we fizzled out as the others had done before us on bringing the strike to any degree of success.

#### Smearing the Report

With the publication of the Steel Report by our Commission, some time after the close of the strike, a howl went up from steel officials and their sympathizers all over the country. Great amounts of money were spent trying to disprove the stories that were told. But the investigators, under the direction of Heber Blankenhorn, had got hold of facts that could not be disproved. Not one incident contained in the Steel Report was ever proved false.

The simple method of our investigators in asking the workers their two questions—Why did you strike? What do you want?—uncovered the steel situation in human terms as it had never been done in any industry before in this country. The effectiveness of the method was shown directly when, several months later, a Glasgow railroad cancelled its orders with one of the steel companies because of the working conditions revealed by our report.

#### Lessons of the Strike

Conditions remained much the same after the strike, with one or two bows to public opinion by shortening hours or raising wages here and there. The solid front of the United States Steel Corporation had been too strong for the old type of labor organization. The times were against them, of course, too. But the strike proved that organization could be made in steel and that the need was there.



The President of the United Textile Workers calls on American democracy to help labor maintain its liberties in the current great organizing drive for better living conditions in the textile industry

## Textile and Civil Rights

By Francis J. Gorman

ILLUSTRATED BY WILL BARNET

IN EVERY mass-organizing campaign, the issue of civil liberties and the maintenance of our democratic rights comes forth as one of the outstanding problems of the drive. Suits brought against union leaders, especially in times of strike, charging them with "inciting to riot," "disorderly conduct," "contempt of court," and all the other trumped-up charges are, to the workers and union sympathizers, clear cases of the throttling of civil liberties. To the lay public, however, these court litigations with the anti-union publicity which usually accompanies them, tend to discredit the workers and their leaders, and demoralize the local union ranks.

In 1934, when over a half-million textile workers struck for the maintenance of the N.R.A. code standards and the right to join a union, the textile workers got their first really bitter taste of the miscarriage of justice, and the denial of civil liberties, possible in a free country through the reactionary courts and local law-enforcement agencies. By the thousands, workers were arrested, beaten up, and framed on the picket-lines, and in the mill villages, for their participation in the general textile strike. Today, literally thousands of textile workers in the South cannot find work because the stain of having supported the heroic 1934 strike is still with them. The blacklist has

probably never operated with such thoroughgoing efficiency as in the Southern textile industry.

### Terror in Georgia

In La Grange, Georgia, home of the Callaway Mills, local sheriffs have aided and abetted the vicious anti-union Callaways in destroying the United Textile Workers' local union. They have even gone so far as to fingerprint the president of the local. The mills are filled with scabs, some of whom, however, have already joined the ranks of the strikers. One night the president of our local union was called in by the sheriff of the county and given a threatening lecture. When he was released, he was directed by the sheriff as to what route to take home. On the way home, he was jumped by thugs and barely escaped without a severe beating. This is going on today in a supposedly democratic country!

The whole history of the struggles of the textile workers is written against a background of the complete denial of civil liberties. Ella May Wiggins and the Marion martyrs were shot in Gastonia, North Carolina, for trying to establish the constitutional right of the workers to their ordinary civil liberties.

In this present campaign, then, the question again arises, and this time

even more seriously because of the scope and magnitude of the union's undertaking.

Appointed by the Committee for Industrial Organization, the Textile Workers Organizing Committee was set up during the first week in March to conduct a mass organizing campaign in the textile industry. The aim of the Committee is to bring within the fold of the C.I.O. the one million and a quarter textile workers, of whom only 100,000 have been organized in the United Textile Workers of America.

The T.W.O.C. is another demonstration of the pooling of resources in a powerful industrial-union combine, for the purpose of organizing a specific mass production industry. It is modelled on the Steel Workers Organizing Committee in the drive to organize the steel workers.

### Textile on the March

The progress to date has been more than gratifying. We have discovered that the textile workers are no different from millions of others in American industry. They, like their brothers and sisters in steel and automobile, and sundry industries, want organization. They want a contractual relationship with their employers, guaranteeing the observance of certain minimum standards, and establishing the right to free-

dom of assembly in black and white. That is what the T.W.O.C. is doing right now. Over a hundred contracts have been signed by the T.W.O.C., so far, covering many thousands of workers. In each contract signed, the clear and inalienable right of the workers to a union and representatives of their own choosing is set forth. To be sure, all of the contracts have not provided for the closed shop and the check-off, but the union has been recognized in every single case.

So far, the question of infringing the civil liberties of the textile workers has not come sharply to the fore. The stunning effect of the Supreme Court decision on the Wagner Labor Relations Act has temporarily, at least, opened the road for a conciliatory attitude toward the union by most textile manufacturers with whom we have come in contact. We must, however, face the real situation, now, in order that the question of our civil rights can be met when it becomes crucial.

### The Drive to Date

The drive has up to now centered in woolen and worsteds in New England, and rayon and synthetic yarn in Pennsylvania and the Eastern states. The most important contract so far signed is the contract with the Viscose Corporation, covering nearly 20,000 workers, in six rayon-yarn mills. The United Textile Workers had been working on this for nearly a year prior to the establishing of the T.W.O.C. and the ground was considerably broken for the consummation of the recent contract.

Other important contracts, such as the agreement with the International Braid Company, covering nearly a thousand workers, apply to New England companies, or mills in the Middle

Atlantic area. With one or two minor exceptions, no important contracts have yet been signed in the South.

The question of the preservation of civil liberties, I believe, will come to the front when the Southern organization campaign gets in full swing. The implications of the Southern part of the T.W.O.C. drive are tremendous and politically far-reaching.

Already we have had some storm-warnings. The Governor of the largest cotton-textile state in the country recently said, in commenting on his dislike for sit-down strikes, that he would not hesitate to drive any organizer out of the state who conducted his business in such a manner as to provoke sit-down strikes in textiles. This is clearly aimed not at sit-downs, but at the militancy and success of the drive itself. Any activity on the part of an organizer might lead to a sit-down.

We cannot forget, for example, that during the 1934 general textile strike, the Governor of the state of Georgia erected bull-pens, and in true Nazi style, herded striking textile workers into wide-open concentration camps where they were kept for the duration of the strike. This is perhaps one of the most flagrant recent abuses of our civil rights.

### Political Repercussions

Throughout the entire consideration of the question of maintaining the workers' constitutional rights, runs the knowledge that if the struggle to organize Southern textiles is a sharp one, the character of the Democratic party may change. It is too well understood today that the "Solid South" politicians do not differ in any way except in name from their Republican brothers in the North. They are as reactionary and as anti-labor—many of them—as the most die-hard G.O.P.'er! It is a bitter memory, too, of the names of the Southern politicians in this Congress who are opposing the President's Supreme Court proposal.

I firmly believe that before our drive is completed, and the Southern textile industry is under contract, the President himself is going to have a chance to observe where he stands with respect to his own party supporters. I firmly believe that a successful organizing drive in Southern textiles will change the whole face of the Democratic party. I may be wrong. I hope, personally, that we are going to be able to complete our drive without one single major strike. I hope, personally, that the Southern mill owners are going to sit right down with T.W.O.C. representatives and sign contracts. I am not too sanguine, however, as to the probability of this.

In my opinion, it is the duty of all liberals to think of the formation of civil rights groups in support of the T.W.O.C. for the duration of our drive. These groups could first be

organized on, let us say, a state-wide scale. When, then, the Southern states each have a civil liberties group, an All-Southern Committee could be set up to coordinate the work done in each locality. Finally, of course, the work of these groups in the North and the South could be combined in a National Civil Rights Committee in defense of the T.W.O.C., or in defense of the C.I.O.

Pressure is a very important element in any organization campaign. Public pressure can be applied through these civil liberties groups. This likewise serves to weld the workers and their middle class, professional, agricultural and white-collar allies more closely together. This likewise serves as a basis for the development of the Non-Partisan League into a strong, independent, political movement.

At any rate, I believe that all men and women interested in the question of civil liberties should be alert now to what will very likely become a burning issue for the T.W.O.C. in its Southern organization campaign.

### A Ticket to Liberty

The Supreme Court decision has helped pave the way, but it has not done the whole job. The whole job can only be done by organized labor

and an organized and sympathetic civil rights group. We must make the Supreme Court decision mean the end of tyranny and intimidation. It is up to us to turn it into a ticket to liberty and our real constitutional rights.

The textile workers have suffered hard and long since the day we were chartered as an International Union by the American Federation of Labor in 1901. Our members, in many instances, have been persecuted and driven from their homes because they fulfilled a desire to join the union. All the forces of reaction have been brought to bear against our organization in the past. In spite of this, down through the years, we have mobilized a militant organization which is now scattered into every textile community in the country. We now have our greatest opportunity.

Other organizations connected with the C.I.O. have joined with us in the crusade to organize over one million textile workers. This calls for a wide range of activities, with intensification of our educational work, research facilities, publicity and legal protection. All of these activities are now in operation under the Textile Workers Organizing Committee. We need the support of liberty-loving people throughout the country!



June 1937, THE FIGHT



THE FIGHT, June 1937

# German Universities

And now Nazi Germany invites the world to celebrate the two-hundredth anniversary of Goettingen University. Princeton and many other American and British universities declined the invitation. Why? Read this article

By William E. Dodd, Jr.

standing. An illustration, not without its touch of humor, is the case of the Rector of the University of Berlin. Before Hitler, reports have it, he was a minor official in a slaughter-house. When the Nazis came to power he was "promoted" to the Professorship of Veterinary Science at the University. Then, his Party record being unimpaired, he was made its head.

Another practice which effectively coerces teachers is that prevailing in regard to exchange professorships at foreign schools. The Minister of Education must approve any removal from the country, notwithstanding the taxes which would be returned on salaries received while abroad. A teacher who has been dismissed or is in danger of dismissal is now discouraged strongly from accepting a position outside the country, even though no means of support are available at home. I know of several cases in which professors in good graces with their university authorities were simply denied permission to leave Germany.

The teachers' organizations, like the trade unions, have long since been dissolved; now, before one may become a teacher (*privat dozent*), he must have served in a labor camp and gone through a special training school (one of them is located at Kiel) where political orthodoxy is inculcated—in addition to his professional training in his own field of study. This ample opportunity is afforded to weed out "undesirable" elements, not on tests of ability and equipment, but solely on Party lines.

This process takes care of prospective teachers and scholars but obviously cannot affect those already in the profession. Another method has been devised for them.

### Why Teachers "Retire"

Within a period of six months (the spring and summer of 1935), three outstanding historical scholars were retired from the University of Berlin alone. The first was Professor Hermann Oncken, probably the most notable and respected authority on modern German history now living, who published a book of essays on Oliver Cromwell. In one essay he alluded to the mistakes of the ex-Kaiser and hoped

the lessons of the past would not be forgotten by Germany's present ruler. One of his former students, an ardent Nazi, immediately attacked him in the Chancellor's official *Volkischer Beobachter*. Professor Oncken replied with a dignified defense. Shortly after, he was informed he could no longer meet his classes until further notice. A few months later he was permanently retired on the technical excuse that he had reached the retirement age. His special service and distinction would have entitled him to remain in his position for as long as he wished—in pre-Hitler days.

At about the same time Professor Otto Hoetsche, an authority on Asiatic and Russian affairs, was retired without warning or cause. Although no reason was ever given, it was rumored that his offense lay in inviting the Soviet Ambassador to visit a seminar meeting, a courtesy which before Hitler had been extended on a number of occasions.

Still another Professor, Wolfgang Windelband, son of a famous philosophical scholar, was removed from the teaching faculty in September 1935. He had been a ministerial adviser in the Prussian Ministry of Education under Social Democratic governments. Professor Wolfgang Koehler, one of the originators of Gestalt psychology, resigned in disgust the same year when he was informed he could no longer use Jewish research assistants in his courses at Berlin.

These cases, typical of hundreds reported from universities throughout the Reich, indicate the methods of purging and nazifying the institutions of higher education.

A few statistics will show what the "new education" means to Germany. Before a student may enter a university, he must serve a season—three

months at first, now longer—in a labor camp, and bear the stamp of approval of the local Youth (*Hitler Jugend*) leader as well as that of the district Party leader. In the spring of 1934 a maximum limit of 15,000 new students was set for the German universities, because of the high rate of unemployment among technically trained youth. Only 9,000 of the 39,000 who had passed examinations and were otherwise qualified were actually sent to the camps for training in "sports" and in the spirit of mixing with boys and girls of all stations of life. Less than half of the 9,000 actually reached the goal of the university, as compared with 20,000 for the corresponding period of 1932.

In 1914 the total spring registration in the universities was 69,300. By 1931 it had grown to 131,000. In 1933 when the Nazis seized power, it was 130,000. But by the winter of 1935 it fell to 77,000 and 76,800 in the spring of 1936. Thus Fascism drives German education back to pre-war standards.

Baiting of professors by students belonging to the *Deutsche Studentenschaft* (official student union which all must join) is one of the many extracurricular activities engaged in by Nazi enthusiasts. Jewish and anti-Hitler teachers, as well as those lukewarm in political zeal, are reported to the proper headquarters and then usually replaced by loyal Party members. Students are continually urged to instill correct attitudes on the part of their professors by boycott and hooding.

The National Socialist Party has local school units to which many of the students belong; the organization for girls is called the *Bund Deutsche Maedel* (Union of German Girls). Many men students are in *Sturms* of one of the two private

armies of Hitler: Storm Troop and Staff Guard. Or perhaps they belong to one of the Chauffeur Corps.

Party membership is not always required of the S.S. or S.A. man, but the demands on student time are burdensome. Sometimes as many as three nights a week are spent in *Sturm* meetings, in addition to irregular service on holiday celebrations of the Party and regular Sunday drill and hiking (also target practice). Still another requirement is that each student must attend a class in political and social education at least once a week, conducted by one of the Nazi leaders on the faculty. When, one might ask, does the student find time for the work of his courses?

### The Student Nazi

Much of the old colorful student life has disappeared. The various corps, most famous at Heidelberg, have been dissolved and forbidden to operate under pain of severe penalties, the mildest of which is expulsion from school. Dueling was temporarily restored to legality and grace soon after Hitler came to power. But in the spring of 1935 one of the most famous corps got drunk on the occasion of a soul-stirring speech by *Der Fuehrer* and marched about Heidelberg refusing to listen to the droll. Expulsion of the leaders and disbandment of the corps followed.

Women in Hitler Germany have lost to a great extent the opportunity for higher education, as well as for jobs. They can number only 10 percent of all students who matriculate at the universities. As early as 1933-1934 this policy was revealed in registration figures—when women totalled 13,915 of

(Continued on page 26)

Regimented youth of Germany during a celebration at Weimar

THE NAZI regime has robbed the German people of even the measure of academic freedom they possessed under the rule of the Hohenzollerns. In the days of the Empire there was at least a semblance of *Lehrfreiheit*. But the Prussian Act of 1852 was nullified by brown-shirt decree in 1934. The mild protection of a teacher's freedom to study and write what he saw as true, guaranteed in many German states following the example of Prussia, is entirely gone.

Such is the decline of German education since the advent of Hitler—a decline I observed during two years of study at a leading university.

What place and duty are left, for the German teacher? The educational machinery of the whole Reich has been coordinated into one Ministry (of Science, Education, and National Culture) under a minor dictator subject only to Goering and Hitler. Bernhard Rust, acting in this capacity, has authority over every phase of education, schools, literature, church affairs—except where they come into the orbit of another Minister, such as Herr Goebbels, supreme arbiter of Propaganda.

### "Aryan" Physics

The purpose of education according to an official decree is to "incorporate German youth in Home, Folk, and State by the awakening of sound racial forces and the cultivation of them with political goals consciously in mind." The extreme to which these "conscious political goals" are carried can be

seen in the rise of the new school of "distinctly German" physics. This school, which opposes itself to the older "Jewish" one of Einstein, brings Nazi tactics into the realm of scientific research. Such distinguished physicists as Professor Max Planck and Professor Max von Laue have risked their professional status to combat the absurdity. The originator of the new idea is a Nazi hack, the student Willi Menzel, who claims that though there is no National Socialist physics—this will come in proper time!—there is a "German" physics. This he defines as "experimental research into reality in inorganic nature caused by the joy of observing its forms of reaction." On the other hand he notes that the "Jewish" science which must be replaced "aims to make physics a purely mathematical thought construction, propagated in a characteristically Jewish manner."

Nobel Prize winning scientists in German universities are unfortunately defending this amazing charlatanry, men such as Professor Philipp Lenard of Heidelberg and Professor Johannes Stark of the German Research Association.

The power of the administrative branches of the government over education extend to discharge, promotion, retirement, and transfer at will of college and school teachers and officials. The heads of the universities, formerly chosen by the faculties for a definite period—usually not more than a year—are now appointed by the Minister of Education for an indefinite time, assuming they remain in good Party

The youth of America. Students attending a special session at Wellesley College





**C**OMPLAINTS to this and other publications, which have been offering the schedules of English-language broadcasts from Madrid's EAQ-2, prompted some frenzied checking-up with People Who Ought to Know. The latest and most authentic consensus is that our short-wave sets will receive hot-off-the-battlefront news, interviews with important individuals, Spanish music, by tuning in on 36.95 meters on Mondays at 8 P.M., Tuesdays and Fridays at 9 P.M. A number of American listeners enjoyed particularly a recent male chorus of People's Front defenders of Democracy who sang their fighting songs.

Much to the fore has come the problem of archaic working hours in the ultra-modern radio industry. With the spectre of C.I.O. haunting so many industries and its shadow always hovering about the overworked announcers, directors, assistants, engineers and studio office staffs, WOR's board of directors, in an obvious move to forestall unionization, announced the adoption of a five-day 40-hour week. Additional employment is expected to result.

WMCA and WNEW may follow suit, as intimated by a recent promise to technicians to improve working hours. Loew-owned WHN's announcers and production men decided to build up union membership and open collective bargaining.

Not to be outdone by NBC's recently introduced 40-hour week in Chicago, the local CBS branch put its sound men, announcers and producers on the same basis, which led to the hiring of two more announcers. At eight Columbia stations, where technicians are organized, word was spread that beginning Sept. 1 the 40-hour week will be applied. We know all the arguments in favor of such a delay and still could endure the improvement a bit sooner.

The radio's rôle in the life of America and the world was re-emphasized

# RADIO

*Spain on the air . . . Organizing the industry . . . Deserving Democrats . . . Big Business in radio*

at the spring conclave of the Association of National Advertisers, where it was brought out that 25,000,000 receivers are to be found in U. S. homes, not to mention the 5,000,000 more in the nation's autos. Other hints of broadcasting's might were that the motion pictures can no longer get along without radio publicity, important periodicals seek circulation through the same medium, unions are utilizing it.

## More Politics in the F.C.C.

**P**OLITICAL patronage continued its sway over the Federal Communications Commission which gave the \$7,500-a-year secretaryship to Thomas J. Slowie. The new secretary of the Federal body which controls the destinies of American broadcasting has no previous experience in the radio art, science or industry. But this little circumstance pales into utter insignificance alongside of his loyal performance in behalf of the Democratic machine in Washington since 1930, when he arrived in the capital as secretary to Representative Jacobsen of Iowa.

Slowie succeeds Herbert Petzey who left for a juicy job with WHN. Pet-

zey was originally placed on the F.C.C. as a result of his faithful service in behalf of the Democratic National Committee.

Incidentally, the political maneuvering which terminated in the grant of the plum to Slowie pushed out Robert I. Berger who for some time was expected to get the job. It is rumored that Berger's political wounds are likely to be soothed by a Commerce Department job, possibly in the Bureau of Air Commerce. In this connection, it would be interesting to look up his previous aeronautical experience and qualifications for a post in the government department responsible for the epidemic of recent airliner crashes.

## Radio Trust

**T**HE Commission's shady doings overshadow the Teapot Dome oil scandal, it was recently intimated by Representative Thomas R. Amlie of Wisconsin. In a News Letter which he sends regularly to the constituents back home, the legislator reiterated the charge that the ether waves are lorded over by a "radio trust," that the august F.C.C. looks in the other direction

when the precious station licenses are peddled about by influential Big Business, that only three favored law firms "get any results" at F.C.C. hearings.

Chairman Anning S. Prall of F.C.C., the Congressman reminded, is a "former Tammany member of Congress," three networks control 93% of watt power, the NBC is owned by "a Morgan corporation," CBS is in the palm of "Wall Street finance" which thus dominates "the only great resource left in the hands of the people."

## Air Notes

**O**DDS and Ends: Record intakes from sales of time were made in April by NBC and CBS—\$3,277,321 and \$2,596,238, respectively, or 19.5% and 33.1% better than in April, 1936 . . . Philadelphia's 25-year old Gian-Carlo Menotti has been signed up to compose an hour-long opera expressly for broadcasting, to be ready for its world premiere at Radio City by the end of 1937 . . . At the Saturday kids' show of Albuquerque's KGGM a 13-year-old and his 9-year-old sister bought ice cream and candy to treat the other 800 children present; the station went on the air with a spiel of how the two washed mountains of dishes, ran errands, bathed infants to save the money; a citizen reported theft of \$19, police questioned, two public benefactors admitted taking \$8 . . . Censorship still going strong—Cleveland's WGAR cut off the air a speech to parents-teachers by the Rev. Robert B. Whyte right after he used the word "hell", and in an apology the next day alibied the act by asserting that the speaker had exceeded his time . . . This is reminiscent of a situation a few years back when speakers who mince no words, the hard-hitting Marine General Smedley Butler, for instance, using "hell" and "damn" frequently, prompted the self-appointed radio censors to specify how often each offensive word could be used.

—LUCIEN ZACHAROFF

Over the air came the story of German grenades captured by the Loyalists in Spain. Here they are



"Leave him up a minute, here comes a LaFollette man!"

By Jacob Burck

NOT SINCE the cleanup campaign of the Legion of Decency, two years ago, have the Hollywood barons found anything so completely bewildering to them as the strike of the Federated Motion Picture Crafts for recognition. Over a period of many years, through the efforts of many a sweat-stained brow, these Hollywood barons have built up a legend that their land is a land of sunshine and enchantment, that millions of people have no desire but to crash its gates, and that there is no God but Hollywood, and Looie Mayer is its prophet.

Now of a sudden, the Hollywood barons have been brought face to face with a saddening actuality. They have discovered that their carefully nurtured stars and featured players, their technicians and craftsmen, their thousands of workers once thought to be only servile and supremely happy in that servitude in the cause of Hollywood, also have an idea or two on the subject. Salaries, wages, working hours, unionization, recognition—such points as have been argued over, and battled over in giant industrial plants throughout the country, have come to roost on one of the biggest industries of all.

The attitude the producers adopted for the strike is an indication of their astonishment. I quote, for example, the statement given by Pat Casey, the labor-relations representative of the Motion Picture Producers' Association, as published in the *New York Evening Journal*:

All this talk of a general walkout is pure balderdash. So far as the studios are concerned, strike conditions do not exist.

There seems to be little doubt but that the strike came about as the result of long-standing differences between the producers and the workers in the film studios. That the Federated Motion Picture Crafts brought these differences out into the open is a minor point. Sooner or later one of the unions would have struck—if not



Strike leader in "The Wave," a Mexican picture made by Paul Strand

# MOVIES

Main feature: "Trouble in Paradise," starring the Motion Picture Crafts. . . . Good foreign films

the F.M.P.C., then the Screen Actors' Guild, or the writers, or some other body. The same problem dealt with all of them, the question of recognition by the producers. This problem has been one of the greatest and most bitterly fought, since the rise of Hollywood as an industrial center.

The Screen Actors' Guild, as a matter of fact, gained immeasurable strength just by standing on the sidelines during the first week of strike of the F.M.P.C. The Guild had demonstrated its strength before that, when other unions refused to work in pictures unless the actors were Guild members, but when the definite break between the studios and the craftsmen finally came, the Guild was immediately boosted into the dominant role. For more than a week, the producers hung on its decision as to whether it would go out or not. In view of this evident power, the separate agreement which the Guild finally signed with the producers was a real blow to the labor movement—besides doing no good to the members of the Screen Actors' Guild.

## From Hollywood

COINCIDENTAL with the strike, the Selznick Studios chose to release *A Star is Born*, which dealt with the "inside" of Hollywood from another angle. Here the Hollywood legend was shown in all its glory, here the little farm girl came into the movies and rose to be a big star, and here the whole business was further enhanced by the application of Technicolor to its exhibition. I don't know that there's very much else to say about it, except to add that it had nothing to do with either Guilds, Crafts or other unions, that Frederic March delivered a convincing performance as a Great Lover on the skids, and that Janet Gaynor's hair turns out to be somewhat reddish in color, rather resembling an over-ripe carrot.

The other pictures of the past month fell mostly into a light and frolicsome mood, for instance *Wake Up and Live*, with Jack Haley, Alice Faye, and Ben Bernie and Walter Winchell carrying the Broadway tradition to Hollywood. *Cafe Metropole* bounced around with a lot of horseplay and romance between Loretta Young and Tyrone Power,

with Charles Winninger and Helen Westley supplying much of the business, and Fred MacMurray and Carole Lombard made their appearance in *Swing High, Swing Low*, based on that old play, *Burlesque*, but brought up to date by having Mr. MacMurray toot a trumpet instead of being a vaudeville comedian. And of course we mustn't forget Jean Harlow and Robert Taylor in *Personal Property*, which exploited the peculiar charms of its two stars to great advantage. On the other hand, would it be so terrible to forget it?

Interspersed with these gay and lilted little affairs there came some pretty grim business. The Warner studio took the Dewey vice investigation as a basis for *Marked Woman*, returning Bette Davis to the screen as the euphemistically titled "hostess" in a night club. The RKO studios threw away the definite and skillful talents of both Paul Muni and Miriam Hopkins in some trash about the war called *The Woman I Love*, and then redeemed itself by presenting Katharine Hepburn in Barrie's *Quality Street*, as charming and happy a little picture as you could wish. Then, as if to disprove what it could do, this same studio turned round and gave us *The Soldier and the Lady*, adapted from Jules Verne's *Michael Strogoff*, and *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, adapted from Bret Harte, neither of which redounded to any great credit.

And for the purposes of the record, I suppose I should also include some mention of *Night Must Fall* and *Love From a Stranger*, two melodramatic studies in psychology, with murderers of defenseless women as their subjects. *Night Must Fall* had Robert Montgomery as the murderer, and *Love From a Stranger* had Basil Rathbone. Very chilling, and very unimportant, both of them.

## Foreign Films

FROM London, the city of coronations, princes, ex-kings and what-not, there came an item called *You're in the Army Now*, in which racketeers, petty thieves and small-time gangsters enlist in the British Army and are regenerated to die nobly in China, serving in the cause of Empire. It was

nothing more than a recruiting film, produced in line with the British rearmament program, and calculated to bring thousands of English lads to the colors. It needed only a Kipling to make it sound authentic, Edward G. Robinson also made an appearance in a British picture called *Thunder in the City*, that had to do with advertising some mining scheme, but I never could figure out the details.

And last, but far from least, we come to both *The Last Night* and *The Wave*, the former an importation from Moscow, and the latter a stunningly photographed film about the revolt of the fishermen of Vera Cruz, Mexico. In *The Last Night* the Soviet film makers have once again demonstrated their feeling for characterization, their brilliancy of acting, and their incisive, forthright direction. The tale is that of two families pitted against each other on the eve of the October Revolution, and the interplay of character against character, situation against situation, changing deftly from comedy to horror, from suspense to relaxation, is as fine as anything that has ever been achieved in the cinema. Critics have ranked *The Last Night* with such masterpieces as *Chapoyev* and *We Are From Kronstadt* and for once, at least, the critics are far from wrong.

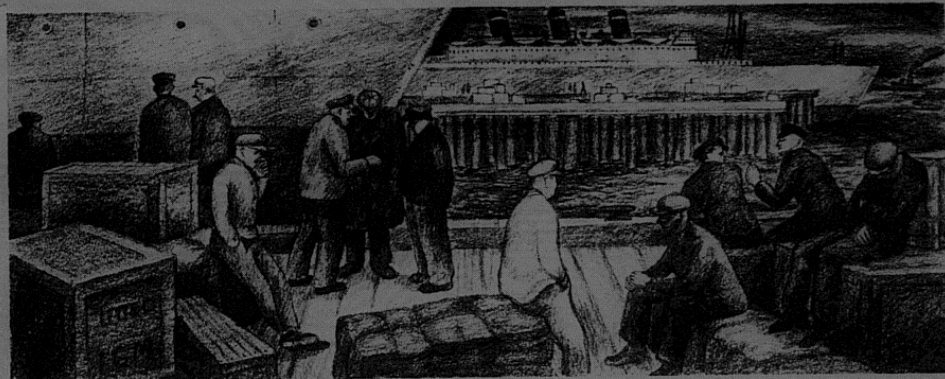
*The Wave*, distributed by Frontier Films, was photographed by Paul Strand on the Mexican Coast, and constitutes the first of a series of government-sponsored films to be made below the Rio Grande. Here too, there is strength and nobility, here too there is a social consciousness that far outranks the tawdry American product, and here too there is vigor and force and power. It is a slow moving film, this *The Wave*, depending more on its photography than its story for its drive, but so beautifully has it been developed, so splendidly unfolded, that it stands as a major contribution of the year.

—ROBERT SHAW



Picketing the Paramount studios in the Hollywood strike

June 1937, THE FIGHT



## Calling All Workers

By Mervyn Rathborne

ILLUSTRATED BY MAXINE SEELBINDER

IT IS HARD to realize that, as one reckons in time, only six years have passed since 1931; for they have been six years so crammed with rapid-moving events that they represent many times that span in valuable experience. Looking back from the vantage point of 1937, it seems incredible that when we founded the Commercial Radiomen's Association in that earlier year, we had not yet the vision to see the limitations of scope of organizations of the kind. That vision came later; and with it came the organization of the American Radio Telegraphists Association, to amalgamate in one body not only the maritime radio operators, but all other radio operators, and telegraph and telephone operators as well; in short, communications workers in all branches.

Have you noticed how certain expressions that have been familiar all our lives can all of a sudden be fraught with new meaning? "E pluribus, unum," we have seen on coins and emblems; and "in union there is strength," we have heard and read over and over. We knew the truth of these things, after a fashion. The founders of the American Federation of Labor knew it, within limits, more than half a century ago, when the Federation was born. But the recent march of events has thrown brilliant

illumination upon the idea of "union," lighting it up to a new and deeper significance. For union to have strength, there must be no chinks and crannies, no openings for the insertion of a destructive wedge, no scattering of forces. Union, in other words, must be quite literally and in the fullest possible sense—union.

### Signposts of Warning

We did not arrive at that realization without heavy cost, partly direct, partly indirect. By indirect, I refer to the events in Italy and Germany, where Fascism, to gain and hold its power, had to destroy the progressive trade unions, and to emasculate the others as to leave them mere empty forms. Fascism in Italy and Germany has set up relentless and terrible signposts of warning to the American workers; and recent developments in American labor are demonstrating that the workers are giving heed.

Indeed, the warning example of European Fascism may be said to be more than a little responsible for the organization of the powerful Committee for Industrial Organization, whose chairman, John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers Union, had many friends in the German coal mines. Seeing what happened to them and to their unions, with the advent of the Hitler regime, he had to see also the need for immediate steps to combat even the remote possibility of similar destruction here. He realized that trade unions organized on the old lines, little separate entities of varying strengths, were vulnerable; they did not really constitute union at all, and consequently did not offer adequate defense against the perils that beset the workers on all sides, in this troubled moment of the world's history.

But it was not only conditions abroad that made that clear. There were and are many evidences in America of the

opposition of the industrialists to unions, and of their eagerness to destroy them, or to sap their strength, whenever possible. The LaFollette Committee of the Senate exposed the shocking intention of many large industries to stop at nothing in their fight against their workers, if the need arose. Over half a million dollars' worth of tear gas and mustard gas, according to the Committee's findings, have been delivered to industrial plants, to say nothing of other weapons that can kill and cripple—the price of all of which, ironically, is charged to "cost of production" and thus paid for by the consumers, who are in large numbers the workers themselves.

### Disarm the Bosses!

Maybe this arming of the industrialists isn't exactly Fascism, but it bears a striking resemblance to it in some of its aspects. John L. Lewis, recognizing it for the danger signal that it is, has demanded of the Government, in the name of the workers, the disarmament of industry, "lest labor men in their march to industrial democracy should have to take by storm the barbed-wire barricades and machine gun emplacements"—has demanded that "the agents of the Federal Government should enter these plants and

(Continued on page 29)

THE FIGHT, June 1937





THERE were one billion, three-hundred-odd million of all races, colors, and creeds traveling through uncharted space on this isolated and cooling cinder in the year 1887, and that one of them, a boy standing on a street corner, should decide the destiny of his loins is one example of the inexplicable nature of our existence.

That an emotion should be born by the sea and transplanted like wind-driven pollen to a small inland bay and there haunt another generation, that an idea stirring in one age should blossom in another, that a seed carried from the cradle of civilization ever into backward lands should be borne farther into the wilderness, that a Jew from a ghetto in Prussia should turn his eyes on a lumberjack's village in the pine forests of northern Michigan . . .

BERNARD STRAUS stood on a corner of Union Square, New York, in the late Spring of 1887, holding a can of beer in his clumsy and boyish fingers. He was looking at the sky. It was brilliantly clear with the promise of a long and lazy Summer, and a succession of heat waves. The pavement was beginning to reflect the warmth which at that moment was pleasant. The air, for all the horse-car traffic and pedestrians, was fresh as the trees were as yet dustless, and the boy filled his lungs with a relish that was strange. A drop of sweat fell unnoticed into the beer.

He looked at the sky and saw the tenement on Essex Street, the crowded rooms filled with kindly strangers. They had received him as their son, but it was not a home and he paid them rent and board. First there was Eliza Sallin, the old woman who seemed like Moses, stern and commanding and sewing torn buttons. Then there was old lady Wolfe whose cold-water flat was even more crowded with lined faces coming and disappearing. They

were patriarchs who sheltered him with the alternating intensity and indifference of a tribal relationship. He was thankful for their attention and humble in the fire of their ignorance. When he was without money and between jobs he sometimes did not return to Essex Street to hear the thunder of their temper or the nagging concern of their love. He knew New York as he knew each lump in his small but mountainous mattress. He liked the trees on Fifth Avenue and the carriages of fine ladies and gentlemen, the excitement of the penny arcades and nickelodeons, and the strange murmur of the city at night, echoing in the river tugs. He would faithfully give his earnings to the women masters of the tenements and they were his bank and his canteen, rationing him a few pennies on Saturday nights.

Bernard Straus loved New York as only an immigrant boy could love her. Her size was a continuous source of wonder and discovery. He would wander for days, lost in the labyrinth of her beauties, looking into her innumerable eyes sparkling with the colors of food and clothes and jewels. Fifth Avenue and the trees were an enchanted forest. Each new block became a city; each challenging street, a world. Her conveyances became mediums for joy-rides, which he took on warm Sundays, going uptown to Central Park on the Broadway car. He would never forget the time he brought a small girl, belonging to the patriarchal circle in which he was at that time confined, to Central Park, his fingers hot with the coins he saved from Saturday night. After a day of ice-cream and soda while wandering over the grass and watching people in rowboats, he took her hand and wearily headed for the street-car. As he neared the street he automatically thrust into his pocket to discover that the dime he had saved was lost, and he stood staring at the car as it loaded and departed, tears streaming on his

June 1937, THE FIGHT

## The Green Years

The story of an immigrant boy of the 'eighties—one of the millions of European workers who, seeking in America a new land of freedom, pushed ever westward to build our country

By Robert Gessner

ILLUSTRATED BY M. PASS

face. He had almost the length of the town to traverse, and the long blocks that he had so loved now lay before him like endless deserts. When the child cried he carried her until his own feet cried and thus they proceeded through the city, and each time a car passed, its clang approaching behind him, the boy's head would ring with blows of remorse and anger. And as the city darkened the cars became progressively deserted, going by with their car-long, back-to-back benches illuminated in all their emptiness under forlorn lamps, the conductor dozing in the rear and the driver nodding in beat with the hollow clump-clump of the horse. The cars did not remind him of Coney Island. And the thrashing he received at home late at night did not register upon his exhausted body, compared to the pain he felt over a love that had turned against him.

He saw that money ran the town. At the cigar-rolling shop he asked for a raise and when it was refused he quit. At the next shop he stayed after hours to sweep and run errands for the boss, and when he was again refused a raise he quit. He worked his way through the streets from Grand to Fourteenth, demanding with an increasing insistence that only hunger and ambition could create. A curious pride grew in him and once, after a workless day, he was wandering in the Bowery, cold and hungry and without money and reluctant to return home, he heard a Salvation Army trio and they gathered him in. He was so grateful that they did not scold him because he was not working that he overlooked the prayers, and he slept warmly with food in him. He never forgot their shelter and years later he repaid them.

And once when he was again hungry and lonely he paused in a fashionable neighborhood before the window of a food store, and never in his life, or ever since, had he seen similar assortments crowded into such a rich and

colorful and tasty array. He pressed his nose against the cold glass (it was Christmas time) as though trying to feel the flavors on his tongue, but after a time the lights smarted his eyes; and in a neighboring window were dolls and trains and the colors of the sunset over the East River. And large and well-furred ladies and gentlemen with enormous dark statures towered past him into waiting carriages, arms swelling with white packages. And Bernard Straus cried and vowed to himself that if ever the Good God would make him a man like those who were passing, he would feed every hungry child that came to him on Christmas and place a toy in his hands. And he never forgot that vow.

The cigar-rolling shop on Union Square was like the others. He was a boy working among men, and the cruelty of their lives made them cruel to him. They enlarged his vocabulary in wrong ways and circumscribed his pulsating zest to learn. He was never happy among them, and he felt he did not belong with them.

THE country-like air he breathed that morning on Union Square reminded him of the village where he was born, its air washed by another sea, the bluer and younger Baltic. It was a small village surrounded by pastures and Prussian farms. He would have stayed there with his brother and mother (he never knew his father who died when he was three), but a half-uncle had usurped the home. He would forever remember the time he called, a boy of seven asking for bread, and the monster reared up with a whip and chased the boy out of the house and across a wooden bridge under which a small stream sparkled with tears. The irony of time cast the half-uncle upon the boy's doorstep years later in America, asking for bread . . . and he remembered in a new way. His older brother, David, he loved, his stature and humor, and

David was like a young father to him. David was a giant of a boy with the luck of the stars in his hair. When he was conscripted for the army he drew the lot, after a year's service, which granted him an honorable discharge, and he went home in his uniform and threw himself on his half-uncle's couch and laughed. He ate and slept like a god, until the half-uncle had mustered enough courage to purchase David's rights. With the money David and his mother went to America; Bernard came later.

They were not in New York now and he was alone again. His mother had gone to the Middle West with a son from her first marriage, his half-brother, and David was somewhere in Pennsylvania. But there were rich relatives in the brownstone house far uptown in a new fashionable district. His mother's brother was a banker of sorts, that is, a high-class loan merchant whose clientele were officers in the army and navy, ladies of the stage and gentlemen of irreproachable repute. Meyer Jacobson was a man of fashion and pleasure, a horse-racing man and a gentleman sport. He enjoyed butlers and summer resorts and women, but he played the harp, attended opera religiously and bought rare books. He loved beauty and art so much that he tired of them constantly while forever seeking them. Bernard was invited to dinners and he came, scrubbed and silent under the glass chandeliers. He was not invited as an office-boy into the business, or sent to a business school. The distant patriarchs in the lower East were more interested, for all their harsh love, than the blood uncle uptown. Without knowing it Meyer Jacobson taught Bernard the law of New York. It was the law of the jungle: money was the fang.

THE boy, standing under the warm sun of Union Square, aroused himself from the enervating reverie of

a late Spring and moved along. He would get the money somehow and the City would be his, his home and garden. He began to run, driven by the energy of his dream, and by an unconscious awareness that he was late on his errand. He would get the Grand Central Station between jobs, waiting to struggle with a traveler's bag, faithfully bearing it like a coolie to a hotel. A horse-car almost ran him down as he dodged under the bridles of a carriage. He arrived breathless at the stairs leading to the cigar-shop and began leaping them three at a time, but stopped abruptly. He had forgotten to snitch a mouthful of beer, and then he swirled the can, making the foam rise above its depreciated level.

In the shop the men were fidgety, their thirst increasing with anticipation and delay, increasing under an awareness of the approaching Summer. Bernard was surprised that they did not scold him. After he had sat in his chair at the long table working for some minutes with the crisp and stubborn leaves, a man tip-toed awkwardly to him.

"Bernie," he shouted suddenly. "The place is on fire! Jump up!"

The boy leaped to his feet, ready to continue his run through traffic, but he felt his pants tear from him. And there it was, the round seat of it, stuck to the chair with tobacco glue. He stared at their hilarious faces—they were blood-drinking Cossacks. He collapsed into the chair and glue, sobbing among the bitter leaves while their laughter sounded like burning timbers in a falling house.

BERNARD STRAUS went West not because he had read or ever heard of Horace Greeley, but so that he might return East. His mother sent him a train ticket to a town he couldn't pronounce. He would convert the ticket into a round-trip. He would

(Continued on page 24)



# Books

## Spiking the Guns

THE PRIVATE MANUFACTURE OF ARMAMENTS, by Philip Noel-Baker, with a Prefatory Note by Viscount Cecil; Vol. 1, 574 pages; Oxford University Press; \$3.75.

JUST ten years ago, in a now all but forgotten book on disarmament, Philip Noel-Baker wrote: "The vast majority of men regard the burden of their present armaments as part of the divine ordering of things, a legacy from the remote and distant past, a normal condition of the civilized state."

Times have changed. In America, following on the valuable exposes of Engelbrecht and Hanighen, of George Seldes, Elvira Fradkin and others, came the heavy publicity barrage of the Nye Munitions Inquiry, with its more than 12,000 pages of detailed evidence from every country in the world. England, officially timorous and hopelessly double-faced, toyed with a Royal Commission whose published *Report on the Armaments Industry* brilliantly cancels the facts in a hundred pages of verbiage.

But England has also Mr. Philip Noel-Baker, the first volume of whose great monograph on the Cannon Kings is now offered to the American public. The first thing to be noted about this work is the calm and judicial thoroughness with which the author marshals his facts: not against individuals, or even a class, as he is careful to state, but against a system, the system of the private manufacture of armaments. The method of treatment suggests that of a lawyer's brief, assembled with meticulous care and the utmost attention to accuracy of statement, and offered as evidence for the prosecution in the case of the People versus the Munitions Makers.

The book is in three parts, each of which is subdivided by chapters abounding in factual details, citations from unimpeachable authorities, statistical, economic and political material bearing on every phase of the subject. Part I is a general discussion of the whole armaments paradox, with special emphasis on the contradiction between the loud "official" clamors of imperialist states against all wars and the secret, equally official encouragement given to

the munitions makers. It is made clear that the armaments system in any of these countries—notably Great Britain, France and Germany—is indissolubly linked with Heavy Industry, and therefore with private manufacture.

In Part II we come to the "objections" raised against the private manufacture of arms. The documentation here is exceptionally rich, covering as it does some of the most dramatic and significant events in recent history. You may read, at first hand, material exposing the bribery and corruption of the great armament firms, and the political consequences; the Krupp trial in 1913, the Skoda and Putloff scandals; the "lending" of army and navy officials to the gun-makers; the indiscriminate sale of munitions to "enemy" countries; evasion of treaties and the subtle wire-pulling of such men as Zaharoff; the influence of armaments on a venal press, with detailed proof of the methods of war propaganda leading to popular hysteria. Secret agreements, the exchange of military intelligence and technical formulas; how "patriotism" is exploited and panic generated; the systematic sabotaging of "disarmament" conferences—on all of these points, and scores of others, the reader will find the evidence cited by chapter and verse, in innumerable cases "out of their own mouths."

Just how the private manufacture of arms contributes to the historical processes ending in war is the theme of Part III. Considerable space is given here to the notorious "Mulliner Panic" of 1909, from which developed the pre-war naval activities of England. Taken together with the very similar episode of the American, William B. Shearer (which Mr. Noel-Baker discusses in detail), the Mulliner campaign should permanently destroy the illusion that governments are "forced" by "public opinion" to engage in hysterical war preparations.

Impressive as are the facts so patiently brought together and so skillfully presented by Mr. Noel-Baker, they can find their full justification only in a powerful, all-embracing popular sentiment—not only against that meaningless abstraction, "war in general," but also, and pointedly, against any "war in particular" not willed by

the people in their struggles against the forces of reaction and Fascism. Recognition of the sequence of cause and effect is highly essential to an understanding of the problem; such recognition is forced upon us up to the hilt by Mr. Noel-Baker's dispassionate and authoritative study.

Let us hope that in his second volume—to deal with the future implications of the private manufacture of armaments—Mr. Noel-Baker will get down to real brass tacks. The Death Merchants have never been "impartial" when their profits were involved; why should their victims practice "objectivity" at the very moment when the guns are being trained upon them for future slaughter?

—HAROLD WARD

## The Military Juggernaut

THE TRAGIC FALLACY: A STUDY OF AMERICA'S WAR POLICIES, by Maurice A. Hallgren; 374 pages; Alfred A. Knopf; \$4.00.

AS THIS is written the press is filled with the wails of the military men and their servants in Congress that the country is "unprepared to offer resistance to any force equipped with modern offensive weapons," and that an increase of \$25,000,000 over last year for the Army is absolutely necessary. In other



Maurice A. Hallgren, author of *The Tragic Fallacy: A Study of America's War Policies*

words, the Army wants \$416,413,382 for the current year. And the military lobby operates so perfectly that the Army will undoubtedly get what it wants.

If, however, some patriotic Congressmen would read Maurice Hallgren's new book, they might raise some embarrassing questions. Why does the Army need to expand at this time? Is it afraid of an invasion? By whom? Did it never read what Assistant Secretary of the Navy Franklin D. Roosevelt said in 1916, that invasion of this country would be possible only to a power which is "twice as strong as we are on the seas and fifty times as strong as we are on the land"?

Or is the Army getting ready for another "excursion" in Europe or Asia in which it will have 4,000,000 Americans fighting on foreign soil? Yet the conclusion is inescapable that this is exactly what the Army is planning. How else explain its lopsided over-equipment?

The German army in 1913 had 30,000 officers to 718,000 men. The Spanish army in 1931 had 12,500 officers to 102,000 men. The American army in 1935 had 12,810 officers to 146,152 men. The militaristic menace of Germany in 1913 consisted not a little in its abundance of officers—only to 27 men. The Spanish army was one of the most over-officered in the world—one officer to 8 men. The American army in 1935 had one officer to 12 men. And this does not count 112,590 reserve officers, who cost millions of dollars every year, in the R.O.T.C.

Is there any possible reason for this enormous number of officers except a repetition of the World War? And what shall anybody think when the Army now demands an additional 2,000 officers? Hoffman Nickerson, a good friend of the military, has pointed out the great inefficiency resulting from this superabundance of officers. Only 13 colonels out of 173, and 40 majors out of 1,380, are needed to command the present U. S. Army. The rest are waste, and make for inadequate training of all. Much worse is the menace of militarism inherent in this body and the preparations for another war on foreign soil which this policy involves.

Policy? That is a mistake. There is no military or naval policy. Nobody knows what all these preparations are for. If they are solely for repelling an attack on continental United States, they are largely wasted. Geography has been kind to us, so that the 3,000 miles of ocean are worth 10,000,000 soldiers. General Johnson Hagood believes that we are perfectly safe with a small army—if we stay at home. Yet year after year military and naval expenditures keep climbing until we are close to the top of the world list.

That is the Military Juggernaut at work, with its huge number of officers, its efficient lobbies, its tie-ups with business men all through the country, its propaganda in the schools through the R.O.T.C., its stirring of fear before unknown enemies, and its eternal cry of helplessness and unpreparedness.

You ought to know about this powerful militarism. Maurice Hallgren will lead you through the story since the close of the World War—and lead you intelligently, understandingly, warningly. He knows what has happened and what is going on now; he sees below the surface into the economic causes of "preparedness" and war; he is ready to oppose these dangerous forces—with facts and with public pressure. Join Mr. Hallgren in this magnificent fight!

—H. C. ENGBRECHT

## All Quiet?

THREE COMRADES, by Erich Maria Remarque; translated from the German by A. W. W. been; 480 pages; Little, Brown and Company; \$2.75.

IT WAS a long time since I had been in a theatre. . . . Theatres, concerts, books—all these middle-class habits I had almost lost. It was not the time for them. Politics provided theatre enough—the shootings every night made another concert—and the gigantic book of poverty was more impressive than any library. These quiet lines from *Three Comrades* define Remarque's Germany of 1928. It is significant that the writer refers to "politics" rather than to "the class struggle." Because of the certainty that "everyone" lacked (including Remarque), the masses were ready to accept any political party that promised the most. Logic was not in them—and for that reason the middle class accepted Hitler. Only those who believed in working class Democracy and their sympathizers fought the Nazi doctrine. But, although the backdrop of *Three Comrades* is the struggle between Labor and Nazism in a world of bitter economic blight, nowhere does Remarque make a distinction between one "mass meeting" and another. From a social point of view, it is this lack of social definition that contributes largely to the limitation of Remarque's work.

Forgetting this unfortunate fault for the moment to comment on the narrative itself, it is sufficient to say that in *Three Comrades* Remarque is at his usual best. Unlike many other novelists, this writer emerged upon the literary scene, full grown. He is never better nor worse than *All Quiet on the Western Front*. And although Remarque's last book is in some ways comparable in theme to *The Magic Mountain*, when I say that the author of *Three Comrades* in no way compares in stature to Thomas Mann I have no intention of indicting Remarque.

*Three Comrades*, in essence, is the love story of Bobby and Pat—a girl who dies of consumption. "No (Bob says) . . . Go out. Don't touch her. Then I washed the blood from her. I was like wood. I combed her hair. She grew cold. I laid her in my bed . . . I sat beside her and could not think . . . I watched her face alter . . . Then morning came and it was she no longer." If Remarque believes in anything at all, it is that certain essential values will persist in human relations, no matter what social catastrophes befall the race. In *Three Comrades* these are loyalty (as expressed between the "three comrades") and love (as between Bob and Pat).

Remarque is a weary writer. His characters are of a different "lost generation" than the one that Hemingway embraced. The German workers went through hell in the decade leading up to 1928. But one wonders how Remarque will treat events from that period on—unless he begins to see the dialectic arrangements of that time more clearly soon.

—NORMAN MACLEOD

## After War

NIGHTS OF AN OLD CHILD, by Heinz Leipmann; translated from the German by J. Lynton Hudson; 260 pages; J. B. Lippincott Company; \$2.50.

READING this book is like dreaming a nightmare. Its events are vivid but irrational, unbelievable; its movements detailed but unpredictable and incoherent. The unrelenting sequence of its suffering is numbingly borne, as are the tortures of a dream. But we do not, in these times, the publisher's insistence that this dream derives from the very stuff of a life, since we have only to open our daily papers to know that there are places where men turn real life into incredible nightmares.

This novel was based on a diary kept by its author in his youth, between the ages of about thirteen and twenty-one. He grew up in wartime Germany; the story begins in 1918. His father killed in the war and his mother dead of malnutrition, the sensitive lad spent the years of his adolescence tossed about in a world made mean, cruel,



Romain Rolland, head of the World Committee Against War and Fascism, whose book of political essays, *I Will Not Rest*, has just been published by Liveright

confused and insecure by the poisonous aftermath of war; a world which offered him neither peace nor joy, nor love, nor beauty. He tried to escape to what seemed a land of promise; he stowed away on a ship to America. After heartbreaking suffering the boy found himself like one who flies from a plague-stricken place and painfully penetrates a fearfully guarded haven, only to find it too is infected. Here too life was mean and cruel for the have-nots. Out of this futile struggle he managed to scrape enough to take him back to Germany during the inflation, but it was soon evident to the young man how false and desperate German life had become. On the verge of suicide with a girl more hopeless than himself he saved himself and her by dedicating his energies to writing—writing which through comprehension would give him a vision and power over his miserable plight—the vision and power with which to carry on the battle for a good life.

"It is one of the books which can never be forgotten," John Galsworthy wrote after reading this book when it first appeared in German in 1928. This reader thinks Galsworthy over-estimated the book. It is memorable only as a nightmare is memorable; its substance drops from the mind as does the substance of a nightmare, because it shares the nightmare's basic obscurity; it does not sufficiently reveal the submerged origins of its dreadful disorder—its abnormality. We are told from time to time that this life is the result of the War, but we do not witness in the early part of the story just how the War actually produced this effect on the life of the boy. The result is that it would be possible for an uninitiated reader to set the book down with the judgment that it is excep-

tional—the exaggerated, melodramatic record of a neurotic dreamer—since it is, in places, just that. To make clear and convincing why it is nevertheless true would, of course, require a novel of dimensions and scope far beyond the apparent intentions of the author of this book.

But what this author has done in giving us the end result is eminently valuable. He has made it possible for every civilized parent in more fortunate lands to see what happened to sensitive children in war-stricken Germany; to see the sins of the fathers were visited with a vengeance on the children; how, though it takes ages of biological evolution to make the slightest physical change in the human organism, in less than a generation the aftermath of war will warp the spirit so that the very survival of civilized life is desperately menaced. This story is valuable not only as history but as prophecy. The parent who can read it and not resolve to fight the menace of war is unnatural.

—IRVING FINEMAN

## Struggle of Our Times

I WILL NOT REST, by Romain Rolland; translated from the French by K. S. Shelton; 320 pages; Liveright Publishing Corporation; \$2.25.

ROMAIN ROLLAND, better than any other great contemporary writer, typifies our period. A thinker of fine and highly cultured intellect, an esthete to the marrow of his bones, a man of years—he was born in 1866; in poor health, he is today in the front rank of fighters for a better world. From his position of esthete and individualist before the World War to his present position of internationalist and tireless fighter for genuine Democracy, he traversed a long and difficult road, but always going onward and upward; "I have always been on the move, and I hope never to stop as long as I live."

Rolland has come by his convictions through a painful struggle within himself, illumined by his clear mind and profound sense of unity with the world's workers.

*I Will Not Rest* is part diary, part collection of essays and correspondence for the period 1914-1934. Every page is a stirring appeal, every page is vibrant with conviction; each succeeding event is a new advance. Rolland joins in every progressive step of humanity on the march; he writes against anti-Semitism, he appeals to youth, he brings hope to fighters for Democracy in Italy, Germany, Spain. "Fascism is the enemy!" he cries. "It must be smashed!" He repeats Voltaire's words—"Ecrasez l'infame!" (Smash the infamous thing!)

His greeting to the Spanish Revolution in November, 1934, sounds prophetic today: "From the blood-stained with the judgment that it is excep-

(Continued on page 30)



LAST MONTH, this column described the devious methods of propaganda and pressure by which the Wall Street boys were hoping to create a wave of public anti-labor hysteria.

This month, at the risk of repetition, it must be emphasized that Big Business' fears and aims regarding labor remain the same. In fact, the drive for compulsory arbitration and for compulsory incorporation of trade unions has steadily gained ground and unity. Previous to the Supreme Court's decision upholding the Wagner Labor Act, there was a real split in the camp of reaction on the proper tactics for sapping labor's strength. The majority of the big-timers, still living in an intellectual vacuum that presented the mummies of the Coolidge-Mellon-Hoover paradise, were committed to a policy of do-or-die denial of the most elementary labor rights—unless forced to concede by strike action. But now that even the Supreme Court has been compelled to reject this view as inexpedient politically and socially, the die-hards and the more sophisticated minority among the fat boys have become united under a common slogan: Amend the Wagner Act. And by amending it, the Moguls don't merely mean to weaken it. They're out to reshape it into a definite anti-labor weapon.

The grounds on which compulsory arbitration and compulsory incorporation amendments are sought are clearly a fraud. In union, the Chamber of Commerce of the United States, the National Association of Manufacturers, the New York *Herald-Tribune* and the reactionary press and other Wall Street spokesmen generally proclaim that the Wagner Act must be amended because it is "unfair" to organized industry. The bosses must be "protected" too. In other words, the existing Wagner Law, which at best can merely lessen some of the more flagrant inequalities in bargaining strength as between the bosses and their employees, is "one-sided," and helpful only to the trade unions.

This is the balderdash by which the Wall Street wisecracks think they can clip the wings of the labor movement. It is dished out, moreover, with a complete dead-pan expression and with many pious protestations of belief in "collective bargaining." For example, the National Association of Manufacturers, the core of the open-shop movement, and functioning only to defend that policy, proclaims that among its members are "many pioneers in collective bargaining" and complains that strikes have "added new burdens to our efforts to bring complete reemployment and to lift the nation to a firmer foundation of better living for all its people."

And the United States Chamber of Commerce adorns with mealy-mouthed

tributes to the necessity for increased mass purchasing power its demands that picketing be limited by statute to the giving of information, that strikes against public utilities be outlawed, and that union contributions to political campaign funds be barred.

#### Monopoly Prices

IN VIEW of the momentum already established by the labor movement and progressive social forces generally, any widespread action in response to this Wall Street pressure campaign can probably be checked, provided the opposition is sufficiently militant and well-organized. But the big capital interests are simultaneously wielding an equally potent weapon in the direct economic sphere. This is the weapon of monopolistic price increases which not only protect profits against wage rises, but actually tend to increase the share of national production accruing to Big Business.

If a manufacturer can increase his selling prices 15 or 20% on the excuse that his wage rates have been increased 10%, it is obvious that he is better off than ever from a profit standpoint, provided his volume of sales does not decline in the process. This weapon of industry against the public in general has been worked overtime during the past few months. Aiding and abetting the price rises, of course, has been the world-wide accumulation of basic commodities for war purposes, which in turn has produced frenzied speculation in these commodities—and still higher prices. Although the speculative price balloon has been deflated somewhat recently, the basic items which make up the cost of living for the American people are still sharply higher than a year ago, and further increases in retail prices are anticipated within the next few months. Here are the current wholesale prices of the basic cost-of-living commodities as compared with a year ago:

	1937	1936
Cocoa (per pound)....	8.089	051
Coffee (per pound)....	069	046
Corn (per bushel)....	117	71
Cotton (per pound)....	129	11
Wheat (per bushel)....	120	86.2
Steel (per ton).....	55.96	46.92

# WALL STREET

profits (which amounted to \$28,561,000) increased 74%.

Quoth Tom (Back-to-the-Farm) Girdler, head of Republic Steel, at the company's annual meeting late in April: "Our relations with our employees are wonderfully good. A large majority of our men do not want anything to do with outside labor leaders."

On May 3, the steel workers' union threatened strike action against Republic unless a conference was arranged to negotiate a written labor contract.

Who's loony now, Herr Girdler?

Cotton cloth (per yard)	072	052
Wool (per pound).....	1.08	87
Calfskins (per pound)...	245	175
Sole leather (per pound)	152	10

By the time consumers' goods reach the hands of the consuming public, most of the increased price has been absorbed in profits and distribution expenses, with little benefit to the original producer of the basic commodity. Statistics recently released by the Securities and Exchange Commission show that out of each \$1 of sales by four of the largest manufacturers of processed package foods, from 38 to 51 cents is represented by gross profit, over and above the cost of materials, labor and other basic manufacturing expenses. These companies are General Foods, Standard Brands, National Biscuit and United Biscuit.

The lesson of these figures is that the battle against monopoly capital for decent, civilized living conditions for the great majority of the people cannot stop with trade union victories alone, but must be carried into the political field in order to protect and extend those victories. Immediate objectives then could be the shattering of monopoly prices by governmental action and the redistribution of monopoly profits by social taxation.

#### The Steel Profit Harvest

THERE is plenty of fat left in the steel industry for further pay increases for the steel workers. In the first quarter of 1937, profits of the six largest steel companies were \$55,109,000 as against \$7,700,000 in the first quarter of 1936, an increase of 614%. Here the price boosting policies outlined above have been working to perfection—from the Wall Street viewpoint. Although complaining of the "burden" of higher wages, U. S. Steel, the largest company in the industry, paid out only \$28.25 in payroll per finished ton of steel produced in the first quarter, as against \$32.30 a ton in the first quarter of 1936, but its operating profits per ton increased to \$12.24 from \$8.23. Although the average pay per employee during the quarter increased 21.4% (because of more hours worked and some increase in wage rates), U. S. Steel's operating profits increased 156%, and its net



Leon Fraser, president of the First National Bank of New York, one of the group of capitalists who have formed a committee to assist the Spanish Fascist, Franco

June 1937, THE FIGHT

Hamlet: This was sometime a paradox, but now the time gives it proof.

SINCE the first of the year, the change on the legislative and judicial horizons of the country has been quite impressive. Indeed, a comparison between the activity of our lawmakers and judges as recently as three years ago, and their activity in 1937, indicates that the country has undergone a startling reversal of policy. *The influence of organized labor has clearly become more effective.* It is not only that there have been fewer laws and court decisions unfriendly to labor, but that at present the favorable plus signs appear to top the minus signs on the ledger.

A brief and necessarily incomplete survey of the record shows the following:

First and foremost is the approval by the United States Supreme Court of the Wagner Labor Relations Act, hailed by some liberals as the new Great Charter of labor's rights. This Act, in substance, provides for the creation of a board having jurisdiction over disputes between employer and employees, and empowers the board to enforce its decisions. The Act also guarantees workers the right to join unions of their own choosing and to bargain collectively with employers through their own representatives.

#### The Court Repents

The Supreme Court, since the beginning of the year, has apparently reversed its attitude and has finally given its approval to state laws fixing minimum wages for women and children. It has set aside the Criminal Anarchy Law of Oregon by reversing the conviction of Dirk de Jonge, and has declared unconstitutional the Georgia statute under which Angelo Herndon was sentenced.

The year 1936 saw the setting up of the elaborate administrative apparatus of the national Social Security system, under the Federal law which for its scope and costliness might be compared to the T.V.A. Now the constitutionality of the Social Security Law has been challenged in Massachusetts, and the United States Circuit Court of Appeals, by a divided court, has held the law invalid. In view of the importance of the issue, the United States Supreme Court has consented to an immediate review of this decision, and by the time this article appears, the highest court will probably have given its opinion. The Supreme Court's decision on the Social Security Law may well be the most important test of its new attitude toward New Deal measures in the future.

In Congress, the new Guffey Act to regulate the coal industry has been enacted, after the invalidation of the original act by the Supreme Court. The present session of Congress has also seen the introduction of Representative Celler's bill to grant the right of asylum to political refugees, followed by a similar measure presented by Congressman Phillips. While the Dies new Immigration Bill, sponsored by the Roosevelt Administration, (H.R. 6391) is obviously a compromise, and contains a number of objectionable features, it is on the whole a step forward because it gives the Secretary of Labor discretionary powers to legitimize the entry into the United States of some 8,000 unfortunate "stateless" people now in this country. The Gavegan Anti-Lynching Bill has passed the House, and while it is doubtful that it will jump the hurdle represented by the Southern contingent in the Senate, its approval by the House alone may be added to the plus side of the ledger.

#### Sheppard-Hill Bill

Of the objectionable measures proposed in Congress at this session, the worst is perhaps the Sheppard-Hill Bill now pending in the lower House. This bill is not only unwarranted in time of peace, but must be deemed an essentially Fascist proposal because it provides for practical conscription of the entire population and gives the President excessively wide discretionary powers.

Far from encouraging has been the travail of the Federal Child Labor Amendment in the state legislatures during the past decade. At the present session of the New York Legislature that amendment has again been defeated in the industrial Empire State, presumably the most progressive of the Union. And it has met the same fate this year in Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, Nebraska, North Carolina, South Dakota and Texas. Consequently, the ratification of this amendment during 1937 becomes impossible.

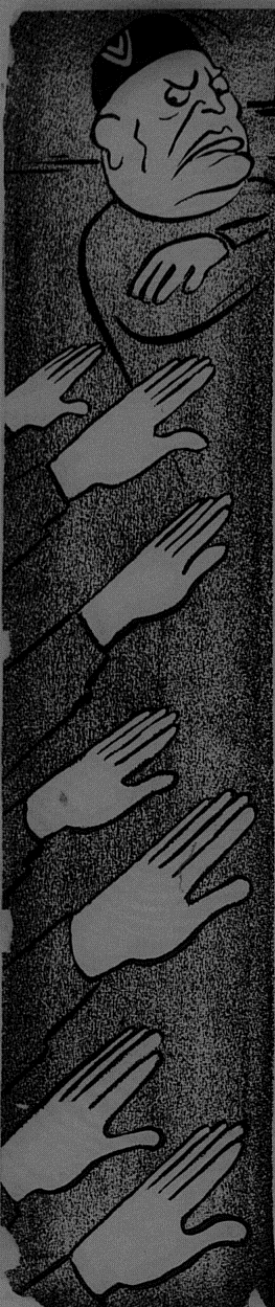
It is to be observed that oppressive legislation, once enacted, is apt to remain unnoticed on the statute books until called into operation unexpectedly in some critical instance. The Federal Espionage Law, for instance, which was passed as an emergency measure during the World War, remains in several important respects unrepaled to this day. The same is true of the Deportation Laws, enacted after the Palmer raids of 1919 and 1920, which continue in force and indeed have in some features been sharpened.

#### State Legislation

One of the most favorable actions in state legislatures recently has been the repeal of the Criminal Syndicalist Laws in Oregon and Washington, and the introduction of similar repeal legislation in California, Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Idaho and Pennsylvania. The laws of those states were largely modeled on the Criminal Anarchy

(Continued on page 30)

THE FIGHT, June 1937



## We Make Shoes for Spain

Many Italian-American workers are opposed to Mussolini's invasion of Spain. "We do this because it is a way to struggle against Fascism." One of them tells of his path to solidarity with the Spanish people

By Joseph Scarpa

ILLUSTRATED BY RUSSELL T. LIMBACH

WE ARE making shoes for Spain. We are members of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, American Federation of Labor, and almost all of us are Italian-Americans. We are doing this because it is a way in which we can help the Spanish Loyalists—a way in which we can help the working people's struggle against Fascism.

We work under the direction of the Trade Union Committee to Manufacture Clothing for Spain, affiliated to the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy. Altogether, we have made 10,000 new pairs of trench shoes for the Spanish fighters, and have repaired tens of thousands more. We come in and work whenever we can, an hour or two at a time. Those of us who are unemployed come during the day, while others come after work in the evenings and on Saturday. Most of us are Catholic. Some of us belong to the workers' political parties—American Labor, Socialist or Communist. Others do not take much interest in politics, except during elections. But like our Spanish brothers, we all believe in Democracy.

Sometimes the lack of materials slows down the work. The Spanish people need a great many things, and the funds which their American friends have been able to give are not enough to buy everything. The friends of the Fascists are rich, while we are poor workers, struggling to get along ourselves.

I wanted to enlist in the Garibaldi Battalion of the International Brigade, but they told me not to go across because I have a family. I think that the next best thing I can do is to make

shoes, collect money and spread the truth about the Spanish War among the Italian-American people.

Many of us are collecting money for Spain. In the shop where I work repairing shoes in the daytime, I am also the shine man. Instead of taking the customer's money for a shine, I let him drop it into a box marked: *Help Spanish Democracy*. In this way I not only get money for Spain, but spread sympathy among my customers. I have so far turned in about ten dollars in shine money alone.

We also collect among our friends and acquaintances. I went to one business man. "Why should I, an anti-Fascist, trade with you?" I asked him. "You were formerly secretary of a Fascist club."

He denied that he was secretary, but admitted that he had supported the club. "What of it? I support any organization with a worthy purpose, anything that is for the good of the people."

"Then you will contribute to the defense of the Spanish Republic against the Fascist invaders?" I said.

He gave two dollars.

### I Have Seen With My Own Eyes

I am making shoes for the Spanish fighters because I have seen with my own eyes what Fascism has done to the Italian workers and farmers. I know what Fascism would do to the Spanish people and the people of the whole world. I know that Fascism must be overthrown before there will be any happiness or peace for anyone on earth.

Until I was eighteen, I lived in my birthplace, a little farming town in southern Italy. Then I came to Amer-

ica, and it was in America, through reading the Italian newspapers controlled by Mussolini, that I came to think I was a Fascist. In this way many poor Italian-Americans read about the glory of Italy under Mussolini and believe they are Fascists. But really they are only poor workers and storekeepers, deceived by lying newspapers into false feelings of glory. Those who only read the Fascist newspapers are much worse deceived than anybody in Italy, even the uniformed Fascists there. In America some read the newspapers and say, "Mussolini is an Italian, I am an Italian, Mussolini is a great conqueror, therefore I am a great conqueror." But in Italy all the people *know* that they are starving.

When I went back to Italy, to the home of my childhood, two years ago, I too expected to find great things there. Instead I found poverty, suffering, and disease. I found that all the farmers and working people of the locality, without one exception, hate Mussolini. Even the *fascisti* are against him. The nearest industrial city is ninety miles away, and the people of our quiet town are not progressive or republican in their beliefs. They are very loyal to the king and to the flag of Italy, but Mussolini they hate—like a pain in the belly!

*Il Duce*—hated and fear. No matter how strongly the people feel, they are afraid to speak. "Keep your mouth shut." I did not talk politics, but when the authorities came to collect taxes from a man who had nothing and could not get work, I would ask honestly: "How can they do that?" "Don't talk about it," my friends told me. As I was an American citizen, I

was not afraid; but the people of the region did not even trust each other. When a man is starving it is easy to corrupt him, and they know that some will report their own brothers to the authorities for a little money, for a chance to stand in with the big shots.

### Taxes! Taxes! Taxes!

The taxes are very heavy, especially on the small farmers. To sell a pig in the market, you must have a stamp showing that you have paid the tax. A man must pay a tax for being unmarried, even though he cannot support himself, much less a wife. But if he does get married, he must pay a "family tax" of 25 lire. An old man of 73, a relative of mine, had only one possession in the world, a burro which he used to carry sticks he picked up and other objects. One day they came to take this burro for the family tax!

There was a sick boy whom the authorities owed over 200 lire in back wages for playing in the town band. His mother had no money to buy medicine for him, had nothing but a trunkful of his clothes. One day the tax contractor came with a militiaman to demand payment of 73 lire in taxes. As the woman had no money, he was going to take the boy's clothes. I went with her and we managed to get enough of the wages to pay the tax and have a little left over for medicine. But when before she had gone alone, they told her "next month, next year, and maybe not at all"; and if she had demanded payment, they would probably have thrown her into jail.

Even if there were no taxes, it would be very hard for the working people of Italy to live. They are glad to work in the fields, as during the weeding season, for three and a half to five lire (70 cents to a dollar) a day. But this work comes only a few weeks in the year. Sometimes they can earn as much as eight lire a day—when they can find work. But how far will this go when a pair of shoes costs 100 lire?

It is to earn a little money that the young men I grew up with join the *fascisti*, even though they hate Mussolini. There are no regular groups of *fascisti* on steady pay in our town, although there may be some in the city. Instead, when *Il Duce*, the King, or some other government dignitary visits the region and the town, they hire the young men for two or three days. At these times the young men wear the

uniform, parade, salute, and line the streets when the important person goes by.

The important person is always well guarded, thickly surrounded by *fascisti*. They are always very much afraid that something will happen to him.

Sickness is widespread. Great numbers of the people are not really alive at all—they are living dead. There is much tuberculosis, due to starvation. They blame it entirely on the germs, but I think that if the people were eating right, they would be strong and the germs would be destroyed. Take one row of four houses that I am thinking of. In the first house, tuberculosis; second, tuberculosis; third, where the people have relatives in America, no sickness; and fourth house, tuberculosis again. It is a fact that where a family does not have anyone outside of Italy who can send money, the family is starving.

There is no freedom in Italy, not even in the smallest things. For instance, to spend the evening in another town, you must have a "recognition card" issued by the government. Wherever you go, Fascists, spies and police agents are watching you. And yet I know that in the cities the underground movement against Mussolini is stronger than ever. Even among the farmers, every now and then there are revolts. They are suppressed by the militia—but they keep happening. While I was there, the farmers of a nearby town went into the government warehouse and emptied out the wine which had been confiscated for taxes.

### No More War

I have heard that since I returned to America, since the Ethiopian War which Mussolini said was going to make life better in Italy, conditions are much worse and prices are twice as high. Is it any wonder that I do what I can to free the Italian people from this slavery and to prevent its being forced on the people of Spain?

There are some who say that our helping Spain might get America into war. I think they are greatly mistaken, about as mistaken as they could be. The Spanish people are struggling for peace, against the worst war-makers in the world. If the Spanish Loyalists win, they will make Mussolini and Hitler hesitate long before attacking another country which they believe is too weak to resist. I think that if the

Loyalists win if they show the Fascists that "Spain is not Ethiopia," there will not be any more war for a long time.

But if Franco and the Fascists win, we can be sure they will not stop with Spain. While Mussolini was conquering Ethiopia, many said, "Let him have Ethiopia, then he will be satisfied." But he was not satisfied. If the Fascists win, they will attack Czechoslovakia or France or Poland next, and finally they will plunge the whole world, including America, into another World War. I think that the best fighters against war are the Spanish people who are fighting for their independence and against the Fascists.

### For the Common People Everywhere

When the Spanish fighters wear the shoes we have made and repaired, I hope they know that these were made by Italian-American workers. They know that many Italians are risking their lives in the Garibaldi Battalion against Mussolini, but we want them to know that many more are counting on Spain's victory and doing everything they can to help. For the Spaniards are not only freeing themselves and the people of Italy, they are the ones who must bring all those working people who have been deceived by Fascism out of their ignorance. Here in America the mass of the Italian people have been badly fooled by Italian Fascist propaganda, especially since the Ethiopian War. They believe that if you talk against Fascism, you are talking against the glory of Italy. But after the people's victory at Guadalajara, Mussolini's stock fell in America. They know that Ethiopia was a very weak country, but if Mussolini cannot defeat Spain, how can he defeat a powerful country like England? Thus they suspect that perhaps he is not such a strong man after all.

The Italian-Americans are watching the campaign around Bilbao very closely. They are wondering whether Fascism is really so powerful and good. If the Rebels win, they will "become Fascists" for a long time again. But if the Loyalists win, I think they will realize the strength of Democracy over Fascism.

For the Spanish people, for the people of Italy, for our fellow Italian-Americans, for the working people of the world everywhere who want peace—for all these, we are making the shoes for Spain.



# AS TO WOMEN

And now men are realizing the obvious fact that women too, must be organized

IT'S easy enough to get hot about the average trade-union man's attitude toward woman in industry, but before we get too hot it's just as well to remember the part woman has played in the past. For the most part she has been unorganized. Being unorganized she has worked for low wages and long hours. She was a scab often and always a potential scab. To tell the truth, the trade-union man recognized her as a danger to himself and she was. But he did not go about correcting the danger in the right way. He tried to push her out.

The C.I.O. now points the way for woman to become part of the labor movement. The C.I.O. leaders have announced they are out to organize the unorganized workers. Women will be organized. At the peak of the influence of the A.F. of L. there were only 300,000 women organized. During the War, when millions of women were thrown into industry, labor lost many of the gains won through years of struggle. The workers who went to war had left their jobs in the hands of unorganized women. Perhaps the C.I.O. does not call itself an anti-war and anti-Fascist movement, but we say that no better job could be done for the anti-Fascists and those against war than to organize women and break down the division between workers which the Fascists utilize.

AND we might, while we are on the subject, think of the part the worker's wife plays in the struggle. The rôle of women appeared particularly clear in the auto workers' strike in Michigan. One woman told her story in the official paper of the Women's Auxiliary to the United Automobile Workers in Detroit. She said: "During the weeks previous to the sit-in he (my husband) attended union meetings much too often, to my way of thinking. I asked about the 'doings' and this is the answer I always got, 'Oh, we just talked.'"

Finally she got mad and went to see what this union was which was keeping her husband away from home. At her visit she was drawn into the strike preparations, became part of the Auxil-

ary and ends her story by saying: "I've only one regret, and that is that I didn't get mad and investigate this union long before I did. I feel I've missed a lot. But as our men go back to work, I can say with the others, 'We won and I'm proud.'"

A veteran organizer told me once that half the dissension in a strike came because of the "woman" back home. He said that the bosses realized this and that in their anti-labor propaganda they went after the women. It would be hard for anti-labor propaganda to succeed with women who have been a part of a trade union auxiliary.

SINCE we are talking about men and women working together, there is cause to work to be done against the 213 Clause of the Federal Economy Act. You remember that it is the clause that bars persons from the Civil Service if they are married to persons in the service. In its effect it has acted against married women and those married women in the lower income group, too. It has caused great injustice in many cases and has served as a precedent for bills against married women in state legislatures. It is modeled after the laws introduced in the Fascist countries to "pass around" their unemployment.

The other day two of our National Women's Committee members went down to Washington to ask Mr. O'Connor of the Rules Committee why the Celler Bill, a Bill which would offset the 213 Clause, had not been presented in the House. He replied that the men of the country were not interested in the repeal of this clause. There are many men in the American League Against War and Fascism who are very much interested in seeing the presentation of the Celler Bill. It might be a good idea for them to let their Representatives know how they feel. And the sooner the better.

The intelligent men of our country must make this one thing clear—married women work because they have to work. If they are fired from one job, they are forced to take lower wages in another. And everyone suffers from that.

—DOROTHY MCCONNELL

## The Green Years

(Continued from page 17)

return to his love and woo her with the only gestures her fickle eyes notice. In the West there was money, as in Europe everyone said New York was paved with gold.

In Chicago he spent the day roaming in the West Side with a wrinkled bit of paper in his hand. Aunt Theresa, his mother's sister, had married the first rabbi on the West Side, an Old World character who had once been offered the choicest downtown lot in the boisterously booming city for the price of a good song, but the pious man hoarsely ridiculed the thought of owning earthly dirt and continued to slice chicken's throats for an earthly living.

Bernard pulled a bell and entered the room of a well-like corridor, the stairs leading almost perpendicularly and endlessly toward a distant lamp held in a woman's hand, and behind her was the dark face of a bearded man in a skull cap.

"Who is it?" the woman shouted down the well.

"It's me," the boy feebly responded, placing his foot bravely on the step.

"Who?" shouted the man, his thick thunder causing Bernard to hesitate on the next step.

"Me—Bernie..."

"Oh, Bernie," said the woman, her voice warming.

"Yes, it's me, auntie." The boy grimaced sheepishly and took two more steps.

"What do you want?" the woman asked, her voice suddenly concerned as though she were prodded in the ribs.

Bernard was weary from his long and sleepless journey, but his longest and most exasperating trip was up those stairs. "I want to sleep," he said, his grip and bundle becoming heavier each minute.

"Sleep?" hollered the man, leaning over the stairway rail. "There is no room!"

They were two strangers in a secure heaven with a light between them, and he was a boy below with even the walls pressing to exclude him. "But, auntie, I'm only here today—" his hand was extended for alms—"I'm going to mother tomorrow. See, here is the ticket."

The man grunted with relieved surprise and subsided. "Come up," said Aunt Theresa.

And although they fed him well and filled him with more questions than he could answer, Bernard was silent. An image had been burned into his memory: the mooned are above, like angels with lanterns.

O West, how long lost in the West before the East will shine in the dawn.

MESABANEE was an Indian word meaning where the iron and the wood meet, but nobody knew

from what tribal language it was derived, and amateur historians were ever to relegate the word to new tribes and with new connotations. Nevertheless, iron and wood did meet on the banks of Lake Nicolet. The town began with a wooden cross a French Jesuit pressed into the sandy beach near the bark huts of Indians, but never grew beyond a few traders' cabins until timber became king and iron ore was discovered in the Mesaba Range. The twin rulelets created a new kingdom and eager subjects flocked to them from everywhere over the world. Finns and Swedes and Irish to cut the pine, and Poles and Hungarians and Italians to dig the ore. The melting pot was moved to Mesabane, and the brew made a stench which shivered the lungs of neighboring Indians.

The village prospered so quickly that saloons were erected before homes and dance-halls before schools. Soon the town led the world in the production of softwood footage and the transportation of iron ore tonnage. Docks were built into the bay like streets.

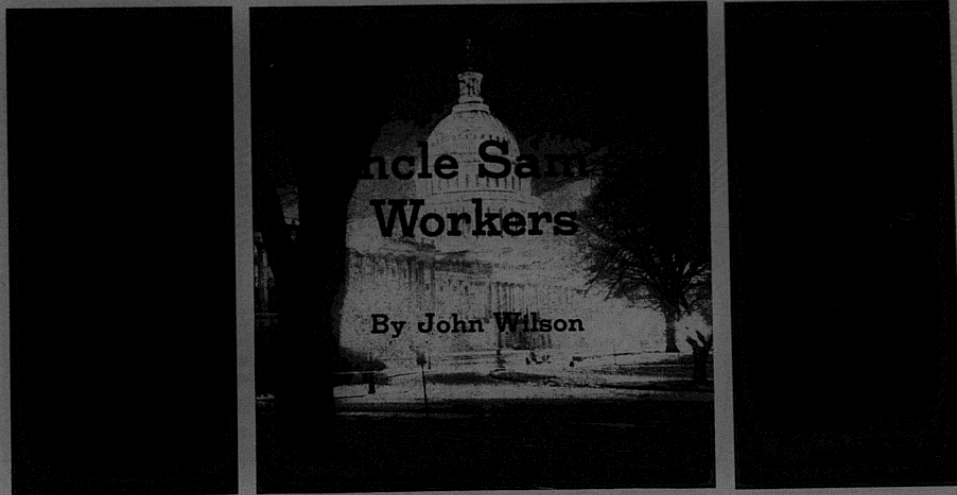
BERNARD arrived in Mesabane at 4:40 in the morning. The town lay under an exhaustion; beyond the depot nothing stirred. It was as though a giant had lain down to sleep where night had discovered him at his labor. The energy and tumult of a backwoods boom town could even be felt as the light of the early dawn could be seen trembling with the restless energy of birth.

Bernard's exhilaration faded as he came upon Main Street. He had stood at the depot breathing the cool and spicy air of the North-country, and he had relished it as a city boy, but Main Street carried the breath of decay. He had smelled that sour, malty, dung-like stench in the Bowery. Beside him on the corner was a saloon, its doors open, like the unclosed mouth of a prehistoric monster. At his feet lay a lumberjack, and from him arose the brown smell.

Before Bernard was a wide street of one and two-story frame buildings with pretentious false-fronts reaching grotesquely above the level of modest decency. And in the unpaved street lay matted and ribboned sand—red sand.

He began to run, slowly at first, his satchel and bundle heavy against his calves, carefully picking his steps among the strewn logs of lumberjacks and ore-dock workers. He almost tripped over a double pair of legs, a drunken jack with arms around the neck of a prostrated policeman. Casting a terrified glance over his shoulder at the embracing couple, Bernard sped as though he had seen the devil and God together in a brothel. The grip and bundle banged unmercifully, and his city shoes hurt and squeaked

(Continued on page 29)



GOVERNMENT is the largest employer in the United States today. In all its branches, Federal, state, county and municipal, it employs over 3,000,000 people, exclusive of relief workers—six times more than its nearest competitor, the steel industry. It employs every variety of worker, white collar, professional, skilled and unskilled manual laborer. One of every 11 wage earners in the country works for it. Directly and indirectly, government employment affects each inhabitant of the United States. To some of those outside the government payroll, it is a hope of security and of decent wage and working conditions. To others, it is a bogey of extravagance and inefficiency. For the government worker, it is a job, with conditions in many ways similar to those he would expect in private employment, in others different.

### The Big Boss—Uncle Sam

Greatest of government employers is the Federal administration, which we shall consider here. In 1936, nearly 825,000 men and women were on its payroll, not counting those in the army, navy and air forces. Federal employment has steadily increased since the first formation of a government in the United States, with few recessions of any duration. After each of our wars it is true, employment has slackened, to resume its climb in a year or two. Economic crisis furnishes one of the best stimuli to the Federal payroll. The years since 1929, especially those of

the New Deal, are responsible for an increase of approximately 20 percent. Today government is expanding its administration into more and more of the field previously left to private management. The next decade will see that extension pushed still further. For all the complaints of those who cry for "economy," for "less government in business and more business in government," the increase will go on. The United States has committed itself to a growth in government functions of every kind, and with that, to a steady growth in the Federal government's position as leading boss in our society.

The Federal government has become the biggest of Big Business. Its labor policy is little better than that of the great corporations. In one respect—decentralized administration—the government's policy may even be considered inferior to that of industry. For the government employees, when they seek to better their working conditions, face many different types of authorities.

### No Central Policy

Within the government service, politics and the diverse methods of choosing administrators tend to diffuse responsibility. Where managers are chosen on their merits and their holding office depends on the results achieved, an organized policy is possible. But where they are chosen for "political" reasons, it is every manager a king. The Civil Service Commission has little control over an administrator who is not a Civil Service appointee.

Sharply differing points of view prevail in the various departments and agencies, and within the divisions and subdivisions of these agencies. The older departments, untouched by the New Deal, differ in many respects from those set up since 1933, sometimes to the disadvantage of their workers, occasionally to their favor. Within the huge organizations, often employing several thousand men and women, a score of division heads, section bosses and smaller chieftains have immediate powers over their underlings that they may use in a dozen different ways.

The Federal government lays down rules on wages, hours and hiring methods. It makes no provision for many other aspects of labor relations—for instance, seniority rights. Congress, which has concerned itself with the policies of other employers in dealing with their employees, has failed to see that its own straw bosses carry out consistent and satisfactory policies.

What are the conditions in which the government worker earns his living? The chief impression outside the service is that of security. A government job, so the notion runs, is a cinch for life. The lucky holder has no worry about lay-offs, he has a good salary, long holidays, and retirement at the end of 40 years or so of light and congenial work. He is a respected citizen, with good credit, a standing in his community, any number of small but pleasant prerequisites—in fact, the envy of his neighbors. You would hardly think such a man had to bother about his

working conditions, that he needed organization to protect and improve his job as the industrial worker does.

### The Hovering Axe

The pleasant picture is not wholly correct. In the first place, the security of a Civil Service job is largely an illusion. Though he cannot be fired arbitrarily—that is, too arbitrarily—the Civil Servant can wake up any morning and find his job gone, because his bureau or his section has been dropped in budget making, or because an attack of economy may have come over Congress. New Deal workers, who do not have Civil Service status, have an even more precarious grip on their livelihood. No one knows when the axe will fall on the emergency agencies. Within the past few months, it has fallen heavily and repeatedly, on WPA, on Resettlement, on a dozen studies and research projects. The government has no system of automatic re-employment of laid-off workers when things pick up again. Once the New Deal worker is out, he has no claim to the return of his job.

Government workers put in nominally a 39-hour week. Actually they put in considerably more. A recent government study showed millions of hours of overtime affecting every department. No compensation is paid for this extra labor. Wages are not remarkably good. The average is well below the \$1500 minimum asked by the government unions. Vacations are 26 days a year, higher than those in

most industries, but not equal to those in teaching. Under the Economy Act of 1932, they were cut to 15 days, together with a general pay cut of 15 percent, and were restored only last year. Section 213 of the Economy Act, which prohibits two members of the same family from working in the government, continues in force.

#### Discrimination

Other discriminations of a more general nature operate against the government worker. He is excluded from all Social Security legislation—unemployment insurance, old age pensions, and the like. The Wagner Labor Relations Act, defining the right to collective bargaining through union representatives of his own choice, does not apply to him. Racial discrimination is practiced throughout the government. Negro employees are rarely given jobs above the grade of porter, elevator operator or messenger. When they are put in clerical jobs, they usually receive less than the standard pay for such work. Finally, the government worker is required to take a "loyalty oath" before starting on the job.

Adjustment of grievances is slow and awkward. Wages and hours depend on Congress. In a period of rising living costs, such as the present, wages lag even further behind than they do in private industry. In depression periods, however, the first yelp for economy quickly brings salary reductions, though at the same time the payroll may increase in numbers. No uniform machinery for settlement of individual disputes has been set up. A government worker has no guaranteed right of appeal beyond his immediate boss. Plenty of cases of arbitrary dismissal for "radical activity" (labor) have taken place. Unless the worker has a progressive union in his reinstatement, nothing is done for his reinstatement.

Government workers in Washington face added discrimination outside the service. Washington is the second most costly city in the country, for food, clothing and especially for shelter. Housing is wholly inadequate, particularly since the crowding in of tens of thousands of New Dealers. Social legislation in Washington is backward. Relief standards are low, both Federal and local. Health and other protective services are poor, and discriminate strongly against the Negro government worker, who must live in the Jim Crow sections. Some of the worst and most profitable slums in America crawl with five minutes of the Capital.

With these conditions in their work and daily life, the government employees are in obvious need of unionization. For purposes of organization, they can be roughly divided into three groups, the manual workers, skilled and unskilled, the postal employees, and the administrative, white collar workers.

The first group is made up chiefly of

Navy Yard and other workers supplying the military forces. They are the closest to working class organization, having their own well established American Federation of Labor unions, set up on craft lines. The postal workers cut across manual and white collar lines, though the majority can be classified as manual.

The largest group, both in Washington and in the field, is made up of administrative or clerical workers. These employees are the most difficult to organize. Drawn from the middle class, with a minority from the professions, they are furthest from the idea and practice of trade unionism. They were the last of the three groups to undertake organization, and have made the least progress to date. Only a fraction have joined the two unions open to them. Yet in Washington alone the administrative workers represent one quarter of the population, more than half of the capital's wage earners.

Two unions are at work in the field today, the American Federation of Government Employees and the National Federation of Federal Employees. The A.F.G.E. is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, and was set up in 1932. The N.F.F.E. was formed in the same year, as the result of a split. Both are national, in the sense that they take in Federal workers both in Washington and in the field. At one time the A.F.G.E. included state and county employees, but turned them loose in 1935 when a change in leadership took place. Both are industrial unions, since they take in administrative workers of all occupations.

Of the two, the A.F.G.E. is closest to the American labor movement. Through it, members are able to attend delegate bodies—the Central Labor Unions, the State Federation of Labor conventions, and the A. F. of L. conventions.

#### Methods of Action

The A.F.G.E. is in a formative stage, and its methods of action are still being worked out. They range from lobbying in Capitol Hill—since Congress has the ultimate control over the government worker's lot—to delegations, petitions, and other forms of mass pressure. The most militant locals are in general those made up of New Deal emergency employees. Beginning with the Donovan case, when a young N.R.A. worker was fired by General Johnson for union activity, these progressives have consistently used genuine trade-union tactics.

The N.F.F.E. offers little in the way of real trade unionism. Topheavy control and constitutional provisions against militant activity cripple its effectiveness, and thus impair its value to the government worker. In the Washington local of the N.F.F.E., for instance, only the leaders meet.

Some of the more progressive gov-

ernment employees have recently broached the idea of C.I.O. organization, as a means of rapidly unionizing the "industry." However, it is recognized that a new group, the third in the field, would serve only to further split the already divided workers. To achieve unity, the majority opinion favors building the A.F.G.E. into an all-inclusive, bonafide industrial union.

#### Government Workers and Labor

The government worker needs to be united with his fellow workers in other industries for the protection of his own job and living standards. At the same time, the labor movement needs the government worker. He administers the nation. In times of crisis, whether economic depression or war, his position is strategic. In Germany and in Italy, the government clerk combined with Storm Trooper and Blackshirt, from fear and hostility to Democracy, from the mistaken thought that he was thus promoting his own security. In the United States today, there is a chance to demonstrate to the government worker that Democracy can give him the security and the decent life he wants, with other workers. Organization, on progressive trade union lines, can do it.

#### German Universities

(Continued from page 11)

new enrollments for the winter term, but only 11,867 for the summer. The sweep was downward again the following year. The compulsory labor-camp service has had the opposite effect on the girls from the character-building which Herr Ley so optimistically and glibly forecast. It is a notorious fact that illegitimate births have soared among the women in these camps. The League for Larger Families, which has had little success elsewhere is perhaps the chief beneficiary of the "new education."

The treatment of the Jewish people is, of course, similar. At first Jewish attendance at the universities was not to exceed the percentage of "non-Aryans" in the nation as a whole (about one percent). But after 1933 Jews were excluded from the labor camps and hence also from the universities, service in the camps being requisite to matriculation. To make even more certain, the German Student League requires proof of the "Aryan" descent of every university candidate.

#### Culture Strangled

What are the long-time results of such an educational system as has been described? Fewer students go to higher schools and consequently there has already been observed a shortage of certain types of professional men—the most noticeable lack being in engi-

(Continued on page 30)

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# BUILDING THE LEAGUE

A United Movement in Common Resistance to War and Fascism

## By Paul Reid

CHICAGO—Steel workers recognize the urgent need for an aggressive campaign against war and Fascism. Many local lodges in this area were represented at the League's Midwest Conference early this year. Recently seven locals of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers have affiliated with the League. Patrick Mullholland, our trade union organizer, visited the following lodges and after speaking with their members and executives secured their affiliations: Unity, Good Luck, Chicago Malleable Casting, Wisconsin Steel, Blue Eagle, Liberty, New Deal and Carnegie-Illinois. A trade union committee of the League has been established in the Chicago area and a program of contacting some 200 labor unions is progressing rapidly.

On May Day the Chicago League took part in the colorful parade and added slogans and banners against war and Fascism to the parade. The major issue of the Spanish campaign and the fight against the Sheppard-Hill Bill were the chief matters stressed by the League. The Chicago Federation of Labor has taken a stand against the Sheppard-Hill Bill. League members have circulated a petition against this dangerous piece of legislation in many sections of the city and are sending these protests to Washington weekly. Trade unions and other organizations in local neighborhoods have been visited and hundreds of signatures against the

bill have been secured. On May 3rd the Religious Committee of the Chicago League, under the leadership of its chairman, the Reverend W. B. Walters, conducted a very important conference on the theme of "Trends Toward Fascism in Religion." Among the speakers were Professor William Pauck, Rabbi Felix Levy, Professor Henry N. Wieman and Dr. Harry F. Ward. Every local Branch of the League has pledged to enroll 75% of its membership as subscribers to THE FIGHT. A new Branch of the League is being organized on the near North Side of the city.

OHIO—The turnout for Cleveland's Mother's Day Peace Parade of May 9th was excellent. A very moving and colorful demonstration. Ten thousand marchers with many appropriate floats helped organize the parade. A mass meeting at the conclusion held at the Public Square with Reverend Howard M. Wells, First Presbyterian Church, Septimus E. Craig, Cleveland City Council, Robert S. Clemmons, American Youth Congress, and Mrs. Royce Day Fry of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom as speakers. Announcement of the organizations receiving prizes for the best floats will be made in the July issue of THE FIGHT. In addition to preparations for this parade the Cleveland League has been conducting a weekly round-table, a high school essay contest and has participated in a picket line of protest against intervention in Spain at the Italian consulate. Toledo has reorganized its executive board. Mr. Elwood Young—prominent attorney— and Mr. William T. McKnight, chairman of the local branch of the N.A.A. C.P., have been added. The secretary writes, "We are facing an amalgamation of Fascist forces in Toledo which demands our immediate attention." It is to be recalled that vicious anti-labor activities have marked this city in the past. The League was largely responsible for exposing Black Legion actions.

PENNSYLVANIA—On April 16th the Philadelphia League rallied over 1,200 citizens to an impressive anti-Fascist meeting in the Hotel Benjamin Franklin. Colorful slogans in the hall read: "Stop Anti-Semitic Propaganda

in Philadelphia." "Demand Federal Investigation into Nazi Activity." "Let's Stop Them Now! Don't Let it Happen Here." The enthusiastic meeting was addressed by Representative John T. Bernard, Farmer-Laborite of Minnesota; Henry Hart, journalist and author; the Reverend J. A. MacCallum of the Walnut Street Church; Attorney Gross, and Paul Reid of the National Office. The Reverend David C. Colony, pastor of St. Luke's Church, reported to the crowd on his attendance at a Nazi meeting in Philadelphia and revealed the program this Fascist group is attempting to put into effect.

Labor, fraternal and religious groups are being enlisted for a city-wide campaign against Nazi activities in the city. Pittsburgh has been carrying the campaign against the Sheppard-Hill Bill into many local trade unions. By use of leaflets, pamphlets, speakers and delegations the community is being aroused to oppose this bill. League members got articles against the bill into the local publications of the National Council of Jewish Women and of Hadassah. The League appointed a representative to appear at the hearing of the Board of Education on the matter of discrimination against Negro teachers in the public schools. Local 1993 of the United Mine Workers, Renton, Pennsylvania, recently contributed \$25 to the League and \$75 for the campaign in support of the defenders of Democracy in Spain.

GREAT FALLS, MONTANA—Starting from scratch last January, a most healthy and active Branch of the League has been developed in this western city under the leadership of Jean Simons Murray, the local secretary. The first open meeting was addressed by Joseph Hajek of the Cascade County Trades and Labor Assembly and John McKenzie, Jr., local lawyer. A campaign of protest against WPA layoffs and the huge war budgets was conducted with considerable public effectiveness. The League leaflet, "Fascism—What is it?"—was distributed at a lecture and movie hailing the Spanish Fascists, presented by Gus Anderson. A committee of two Leaguers recently presented the League program before the Cascade County Trades and Labor Assembly and received a warm welcome as well as a contribution for



M. R. Salomonick, member National Executive Committee, American League and Organizer, Trade Union Department of the New York League

Louise Brantzen, member National Executive Committee, American League and Executive Secretary, Trade Union Department of the New York League



the best affair of this type ever held in the local school. At Plainfield a proposed ordinance requiring the fingerprinting of all persons who make deliveries in the city is being opposed by the League as unnecessary and dangerous. The Branch here recently heard the Reverend Norman D. Fletcher, president of the Montclair Ministers' Association, on the subject of "Civil Liberties and Fascism." In celebration of its second anniversary the Branch plans a special meeting on May 25th with John Jacobson of Brookwood Normal College and Paul Reid of the National Office as speakers.



**NEW YORK CITY**—Since last fall, the major concentration of the Trade Union Department has been on securing aid for the Democratic forces in Spain. Through the Department's initiative and under the leadership of its secretary—S. R. Solomonick—the Trade Union Committee to Manufacture Clothing for Spain was brought into existence. Over 100,000 garments have been produced and sent to the Spanish Loyalists. In addition, the Department has carried on a drive among the labor groups and has secured thousands of dollars, many cases of milk, and large amounts of clothing for Spain. Over 100 trade unions have been visited in this campaign. At the Washington Legislative Conference of the League last March, 54 New York union locals were represented. Since then a very intensive program of opposition to the Sheppard-Hill Bill has been organized in New York labor groups. Thousands of postcards of protest have been sent by individual unionists to their Congressmen, while telegrams and resolutions have been directed against the bill by their labor bodies. The *Blueprint for Unionism* has been widely circulated in the unions and considerable educational work has been done in revealing the dangers of the bill and the Industrial Mobilization Plan. The League dinner tendered to Senator Nye on April 6th was attended by over 100 trade union leaders. The League has also carried on a fight against the Wadsworth Bill in the New York state legislature. This bill would force the incorporation of trade unions.

Over 160 unions are at present cooperating with the League on various campaigns. Of these 35 are now affiliated. Two of the latest to enter this relationship are Bakery Workers Local 50 and Furniture Union Local 76B. In the May Day parade a number of unions carried banners—reading, "We support the American League Against War and Fascism campaign against the

Sheppard-Hill Bill." On the League's executive board of 68 members, 20 are trade union leaders. Among them are Isidore Sorkin, manager of I.L.G. W.U. Local 9; Abraham Feingold, American Federation of Teachers Local 5; Thomas Young, vice president Building Service Employees Local 32B; William Feinberg, secretary American Federation of Musicians Local 802; Holton Henry, secretary Brotherhood of Dining Car Employees, and Thomas McLoughlin, executive board of Typographical Union Local 6. Other members of the executive board are members of the Cook's and Courtmen's Union, Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the Artists Union, and Bricklayers Local 37. At present the Department is carrying on a consistent drive to bring the local unions into closer contact with neighborhood branches of the League. Anti-war committees within the unions are being organized for this purpose and to enlist the unions in the campaigns of the League.

**WEST COAST**—The East Bay region of California is centering attention on violations of labor rights at Stockton where the sheriff has deputized civilians and where vigilante action has taken place. Likewise they are demanding an investigation of the use of the highway patrol and the activities of the Lake Erie Gas Company in the agricultural region. Los Angeles has developed a tremendous volume of protest against the Sheppard-Hill Bill. A campaign for the protection of civil rights, especially in relation to the "Red Squad," has also been organized. Seattle is busy organizing the Third Northwest Congress Against War and Fascism, which is to be held May 29-30. Calls have been out for some weeks and the largest attendance ever is expected. Bert Leech, our California organizer, will be one of the leaders of the Congress. Numerous trade unions, civic, women's and fraternal groups have endorsed this assembly and will send delegates.



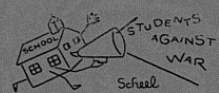
**MEMBERSHIP AND FINANCES**—Among the larger cities, Pittsburgh is leading the country in the national membership drive with an increase of 61%. Great Falls, Montana, among the smaller cities has made the most phenomenal growth, while Plainfield, New Jersey, Norwalk, Connecticut and St. Louis are rolling up substantial gains. We want to offer words of commendation to the following cities for paying their literature bills in full: Cincinnati, Duluth, Engelwood, N. J., St. Louis, Norwalk, Urbana and Utica, N. Y.



By James Lerner

# YOUTH NOTES

ONCE again the youth organizations of America are preparing for their congress. It is to be held in Milwaukee on July 2-5. The Fourth American Youth Congress is to be organized like the Federal government, with a House consisting of representatives of local organizations, a Senate of national organizations, and a cabinet. The only thing missing is the Supreme Court, there being no 75-year-old reactionaries in the American Youth Congress. There will be committees on Peace, Democratic Liberties, Agriculture, Education, Labor, Recreation. Proposals for legislation are to be in before the congress opens so that the committees may consider them.



THOSE who gather the figures told us that close to a million participated in the student peace activities on April 22nd. I demanded proof and got it too. These activities consisted of actual strikes and peace assemblies.

Gordon Sloane, New York Youth Secretary, asks that some of the city's Youth Branches be given credit for the excellent work they did in selling the April "Youth Issue" of this magazine. Eastern Parkway went over with 210 copies, Yorkville with 200 (that's where the Nazis tried to set up a little Hitlerville), Abraham Lincoln with 250 and Thomas Jefferson with 124. And the city Youth Committee went beyond its goal of 2500 copies. Credit Gordon Sloane's energetic work for that.

Incidentally Sloane, along with fellow youth members Ronconi and Levine, was arrested for picketing the Nazi consulate on May 10th, anniversary of the Book Burning in Germany.

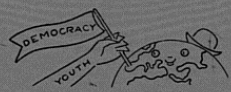
The American Student Union asked its members to "Fast that Spain May Eat" on April 22nd. Although not members of the A.S.U., the staff of the national and New York offices skipped a meal that day for Spain. The United Youth Committee to Aid Spain

thought the idea so good that it asked that May 18th, celebrated as International Good Will Day by the churches, be a day on which young people should give at least the price of one meal for the kids of Spain. The money is to be used for the building of children's homes in Spain. If you didn't participate, you might choose a day and still do so. Clubs may also be asked to assume patronage over a child. Details including costs involved are available in printed form. How about adopting a slogan in your group of "Adopt a Spanish Child"? There are literally hundreds of thousands of children who must be saved from becoming homeless, suffering wanderers.

IF YOU believe in planning a long time ahead, think of the Second World Youth Congress to be held in the United States in the summer of 1938. The exact place is to be decided soon. The congress is to be closed, with a huge encampment most likely on the Canadian border so that thousands of young people from both our countries may gather in a gigantic peace demonstration.

HAVE you cast your ballot in the Peace Poll? Over 75,000 ballots have gone out and on April 22nd entire colleges and high schools enrolled. The Baltimore Peace Council, which includes practically every Baltimore group interested in peace, is working on the ballot. In Minnesota and Washington the state Department of Education joined in sponsoring the Ballot.

THE only youth anti-war prisoner in America today is Caroline Hart, the girl arrested at McKeesport, Pennsylvania, a year and a half ago for participating in a peace demonstration. Although eligible for parole, Caroline is still held after serving eight months. Protests should be sent to Governor Earle asking her release.



## Calling all Workers

(Continued from page 15)

gut them of their deadly weapons, so that Americans in the industrial communities may walk erect and enjoy, with the pride of free men, their inherent and rightful privileges." The withdrawal of those privileges is one of the prime earmarks of Fascism, and strong unions are their main safeguard.

### Old-Line "Unionism"

Those crises that have shown up the deficiencies in the old order of unionization have been unhappily numerous. The recent seamen's strike, which lasted 98 days, is a case in point. On the Atlantic Coast the strikers were weakened by the fact that they had to fight the parent body, the American Federation of Labor, which instead of standing four-square behind them, as it should have done, declared their strike illegal and outlawed.

Yet in spite of the serious handicap of A.F. of L. opposition, some gains were made. Important among these were the increased solidarity among seamen. The unions on the east and west coasts gave mutual support; the rank and file seamen, headed by Joe Curran, cooperated. And here is where industrial unionism shows its value—the A.R.T.A., differing in craft but one in industry, cooperated too.

In contrast, let us take a case where the parent body did stand ready to back its affiliate, and the employers knew it, and acted accordingly. It didn't even come to a strike; it didn't come to that.

Officials of a large radio company, thinking of their employees as not sufficiently organized to offer effective opposition, undertook to break through the minimum wage level, and in order to do it, hired men at much lower wages. There was plenty of protest—their men were members of the A.R.T.A.—but it had little effect until the company learned that the A.R.T.A. had affiliated with the C.I.O., and then they voluntarily raised wage rates for all classifications of operators. That is a well-known trick among industrial leaders, aimed at making the workers at least temporarily contented, and alienating them from their unions, and from the union idea; but the majority of workers have come to understand the motives back of most of these so-called "voluntary" concessions, and are not fooled by them. They know that the purpose is to lull them into contentment, and get them away from allegiance to any unions, or else into company unions which as unions are farcical. They realize that the industrialists must be afraid of the unions, or they would not be at such pains to undermine them; and they know, therefore, that the unions are their bulwark and their strength. That is why the idea of stronger and ever

stronger unionization is gaining so rapidly in favor. That is why the C.I.O., despite its youth, is already so powerful an influence in the lives of the American workers.

### A United Army of Freedom

In all the years of its existence, the A.F. of L. had organized something less than four million of the approximate forty million workers in the country. These figures declare eloquently that union in the fullest sense did not exist. How could there be real power to oppose the evils of industrialism with such a pitifully small proportion of the workers lined up for the battle? Since the inception of the C.I.O., hundreds of thousands more have joined the ranks, ready for action; ready, that is, for concerted action, which is the only kind that is effective. The old order was like an army, in which each battalion planned its own individual campaign, regardless of the moves of the others. The new order is like an army whose regiments are all united in a common campaign, under one guidance, and with one plan.

No one will deny that the greatest enemy today of peace, liberty, Democracy, and all the other elements that go to make up decent human existence, is Fascism. No one not utterly blinded, either by supreme ignorance or supreme selfishness, will doubt that the greatest need of the American worker in this hour is to prevent the monster's entrance into our midst, and still at the same time weaken the likelihood of an outbreak of its twin evil, war. The workers, almost to a man, are against war and Fascism; they are under little illusion, the mass of them, about the forces that beget these enemies of civilization. When J. Pierpont Morgan, in the course of the Senate investigation into the part played by his house in the last war, declared with grandiloquent flourish: "We had to get into the war to save our souls!" the workers were not taken in. "Souls" was a euphemism for House of Morgan dollars—and there were many millions of them involved in the war, and naturally the House of Morgan had to get into the war to save them. It is significant that all the talk about the unpaid foreign debt has nothing to do with America's greatest banking firm. It saved its souls—every penny of them!

### Labor's Political Power

Now in the old order, it was the thing to say: "Let labor keep out of politics." The error of that was another thing that was vividly demonstrated by what happened in Nazi Germany. The new order says: "Labor must take part in politics. Through politics the workers can get the action, and consolidate their power." The recent political campaign, which returned Roosevelt to the White



Here is one industry on the alert in the struggle for peace and Democracy! (Above) The executive committee of the United Cloakmaker's Branch of the American League Against War and Fascism, New York City

House, and defeated the reactionary forces of which London was the figurehead, leaves no doubt of the force of the workers, politically. A majority of members of Congress, too, owe their election to the labor vote, which means that Congressional action must reckon with the demands of the workers. The C.I.O. unions know the importance of their political activity; but they know that it derives its force only from the strength of the unions themselves.

Nor do they think that depending upon politics alone is enough. They know that the strike remains their most effective weapon. They will continue to know it, as each new evidence of Fascist tendency rears its head. They will know it if there is an attempt to perpetrate upon them an unjust war, a war whose causes and aims are entirely divorced from their interests.

The massed workers, strong in purpose and in numbers, constitute the most important bar against war and Fascism in America today.

## The Green Years

(Continued from page 24)

against the wooden sidewalks and became filled with uncivilized sand. If a lumberjack had awakened at that moment and seen the fleeing figure of this immigrant boy from New York, his shoes furiously squirting sand, he would have thought his money well spent.

And as he ran there arose in his mind the images of his life: he saw his hunger, his yearning in the hard streets, and now he beheld sand in the Middle West; he felt his old joy for good and rich things, his happiness over beautifully dressed men and women, and he ran over the legs of drunken monsters; he smelled the prophesy in the Spring air of Union Square, and here was the uncouth staleness of the Bowery; he heard his own words of determination and promise and ambition, and now

his shoes pattered on wooden planks. He was a boy, but he knew he was again a stranger in another strange land . . .

He was Moses seeking a promised land, a peddler roaming into China, a horseman on the chalk roads of Spain, a lone boatman paddling down the Volga, the homeless Jew ever seeking the Klondike of security, the rainbow's pot of gold in Morocco and Alaska, in Kentucky and Michigan . . .

O West, how long last in the West before the East will shine in the dawn.

HIS mother was frantically attempting to open the door, her fingers still numb with sleep; on the other side Bernard was pushing with his shoulder, crying wild words. The door was warped and sprung, but it was strong; neither of their efforts could open it until Mrs. Straus found the catchlock. Bernard stood in his mother's arms, barely conscious of his tears. Finally, her familiar aroma subsided and there came a moment of relaxed peace. He was a boy pressed against his mother's breast. And then he saw the two rooms. They were an indoor continuation of the backwoods street; they were primitive and farmlike, barren and uncivilized.

Bernard fell on the bed and sobbed aloud. They were not merely sobs of disappointment, but of anguish and loneliness and despair. His mother, a tall woman even in her slippers, stared in bewilderment. "I can't stay here," he sobbed. "I can't—I must go back—please let me go—"

The door had not fully closed, and a sudden wind that had sprung up upon the arrival of the morning swung it open, and the freshness of the full dawn entered the room. The tall woman stood in the center of the rag-carpeted floor, looking at her son, and then she captured a sprig of hair the wind had loosened and with a quiet but swift movement crossed the room and bolted the door.

## Labor Goes to Court

(Continued from page 21)

statute of the state of New York. It was under these laws that Ben Gitlow and others were convicted in New York, Anita Whitney in California, Fiske in Kansas and de Jonge in Oregon.

The rights of political minorities have been strengthened by the recent action of Governor Lehman of New York in vetoing the Berg-Kleinfeld measures aimed in particular at the American Labor Party. The New York Legislature has passed a new Minimum Wage Law for women and children, which undoubtedly will stand the test prescribed by the United States Supreme Court. A number of interesting progressive measures have been introduced in both the lower and upper houses of the New York Legislature, at its present session. For instance, there is a bill which would guarantee jury trial to accused persons in labor conflicts. The value for labor of such a law is evident in the circumstances of the hospital workers' strike in New York City, as a result of which a number of persons were convicted and faced drastic prison sentences (which were, however, suspended). The defendants were convicted in the Court of Special Sessions, a tribunal which lawyers jocularly call "the court where defendants are found guilty." This court, with power to pass indeterminate prison sentences up to three years, is a part of the New York criminal courts system which is sadly in need of curtailment, for its powers violate the spirit of the Bill of Rights, that guarantees an accused the right of trial by jury.

### Labor Bills in New York

The present session of the New York Legislature has also seen the introduction of a bill limiting the right of police officers to prevent picketing, and a measure which has been called the Little Wagner Labor Act of New York. On the favorable side can also be listed two anti-fingerprinting bills, restricting that practice in private plants and in labor conflicts; and a resolution to investigate private detective agencies, along the lines of the enactment under which the LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee has been conducting its investigation.

On the minus side of the ledger of the Empire State must be entered the Ives Teachers' Loyalty Oath bill, the repeal of which, sought at the present session of the legislature, has failed. A number of additional reactionary proposals, such as the McNaboe bill to appoint a committee to investigate alleged radical activities in New York schools and colleges, have not been reported out of committee.

Other industrial states in the East have had almost parallel histories with

respect to legislation. In Massachusetts, an anti-fingerprinting measure has been introduced, as well as a bill to regulate private detective agencies and to limit the powers of the courts to punish for contempt of court. In Pennsylvania, a measure similar to the Federal Norris-LaGuardia Act, limiting the power of courts to issue injunctions in labor disputes, has been introduced. A bill to repeal the Seditious Act is also pending, as is a bill limiting the use of deputy sheriffs in industrial conflicts and prohibiting their employment by corporations and private industry. Also pending is a measure to prohibit eviction of workers unable to pay rent on company homes, during strikes, and prohibiting interference with parades and demonstrations. While none of these measures has yet passed, their introduction in Pennsylvania is significant.

### In Western States

In the Northwest the state of Washington, having repealed its Criminal Syndicalist Law, has introduced bills to prohibit the use of tear-gas in labor disputes.

In California a resolution to grant a pardon to Tom Mooney has been defeated in the legislature for the second time. On the other hand, an anti-injunction bill has been introduced, as well as a bill to prevent the use of the Highway Patrol in industrial disputes, and a measure making a private person or corporation paying the salary of special deputies or policemen, in whole or in part, responsible for their acts as an employer. In addition, an anti-picketing act has been placed on the legislative calendar.

The South registers more minus than plus signs. In Georgia a Seditious Act has unanimously passed the lower house but was defeated in the Senate. Arkansas had its own Seditious Bill, aimed primarily at Commonwealth College in that state; but this bill was likewise defeated. The Senate of the state of Tennessee passed a newspaper censorship bill, which was, however, defeated in the lower house.

The sidown strikes have early brought a reaction in many states. A law prohibiting such strikes has already passed in Maine and another is pending in Michigan and several other states.

In addition to Federal and state legislation, it should be noted that municipalities also legislate by means of ordinances and police powers in many fields affecting labor, especially in respect to picketing, street demonstrations and meetings, and distribution of leaflets. The record in local anti-labor ordinances must be conceded to the State of New Jersey, and particularly to Jersey City. Of special interest is a decision of the highest court of New Jersey, holding that a labor union picketing a plant in which there

is no strike of its employees, may be enjoined. Many municipalities have recently seen convictions under local ordinances, as, for instance, in Georgia, where convictions were obtained of persons distributing pamphlets of even a religious nature. On the other hand, San Francisco has repealed its anti-picketing ordinance, and San Diego County, in California, has done likewise.

### The Judiciary and Labor

Judicial reaction to cases involving labor has likewise been of mixed character. In California a court has held the sidown strike illegal and imposed a substantial fine against a labor union. In Michigan the sidown strike has brought a number of injunctions and contempt orders, some of which were disregarded and others enforced, with resulting convictions of the strikers. The Supreme Court of Alabama recently sustained the Seditious Literature Ordinance of the city of Bessemer. The first judicial interpretation of the Wagner Labor Relations Act since its approval by the Supreme Court, has shown an attempt to limit the scope and operation of that Act. It has been held in a Maine court that an injunction may be granted against a union engaged in a strike, on the ground that the union has not first conducted an election as required by the Wagner Act, to determine whether it speaks for the majority of the workers. On the favorable side of our ledger may be noted the indictment in the Federal courts of the Remington-Rand Company and the Bergoff strike-breaking agency, for violation of the Federal law prohibiting the transportation of strike breakers. In Maryland, an injunction against the International Seamen's Union was recently denied.

This bird's-eye view of Federal, state and local legislative and judicial trends, indicates an unmistakable current toward a more liberal attitude toward labor and political minorities.

Mr. Dooley observed to Mr. Hennessy: "The Supreme Court follows the election returns." The comment was at the time something of a paradox, but recent events have shown it to be literally true. Judges, as well as legislators, do react—albeit sluggishly—to the economic needs of the time, when social pressure impels them.

It is precisely because of this tendency of the judiciary that the people must compel the adoption of Roosevelt's court-reform proposals. The President's plan would shorten the period of time which it takes the present courts to hear *vox populi* after it has been expressed. The proposals would make easier and more certain the response of the courts to the popular will. Thus they would aid the struggles of the people's eternally vigilant organizations for social and progressive judicial rulings.

—A. A. HELLER

## German Universities

(Continued from page 26)

neering. Not only is the interest in education declining, but the whole cultural level of the Germans as a people is being undermined. The former leaders of the world in science, music and philosophy are being turned into a nation of barbaric force-worshippers.

The glorification of force is a phase of the psychosis of the German people, predicated to some extent upon its post-War inferiority complex. The tragic treatment of all dissenting elements (Jews, Catholics, Protestants, Communists, trade unionists, Socialists, liberals and pacifists), in the effort to create a goat on which to load the blame for the bankruptcy of German leadership, is also predicated on this complex. In the chaos of a collapsing German economy, Hitler utilized the division of the democratic forces to enslave and brutalize the nation. In Germany as in Italy, there will be no amelioration of conditions until Fascism is overthrown. Until then, the prospect remains: a German nation to a large extent ignorant of the outside world, hungry, miserable, sacrificed to the glorification of a regime of bayonets and terror.

It may be pertinent to ask: do our scholars who contemplate a visit to Goettingen this summer—remembering the razed Heidelberg celebration of 1936—wish to condone such a regime by their participation?

## Books

(Continued from page 19)

mountains of the Asturias will forth the victory of the proletariat of Europe which will cover the world with its wings."

Rolland is unshakable in his admiration for the people in the Soviet Union, where he sees a new world unfolding which is the realization of his youthful dreams. "Since I have entered into direct contact with the U.S.S.R., with its millions of workers and fighters, I have felt freed of the pessimism which, all my life, has mingled its taste of ashes with my bread. I have become young again."

Thus from his home in Switzerland does Romain Rolland, the comrade in arms of Henri Barbusse in the fight against Fascism and war, send forth his shafts and his words of hope. *I Will Not Rest* should be read by everyone, for its sincerity of its pages, for the light it throws on events, for its courage and inspiration:

Brothers, depend on me. I am but one man among millions. But this man has been through his life a free voice in Europe, the voice of Jean Christophe and Colas Breugnot, an independent worker, brother of the independent workers of the world, who wishes to pave the way for the union of universal Labour, emancipated from prejudices, and from the yokes of race, caste, and class.

—A. A. HELLER

# Forsaking Democracy

HAS THE State Department no eyes, no ears, no heart? Is it trying to play ostrich with head in the sand when the soldiers of Germany and Italy rain death from heaven upon the Spanish people? How long will we allow our government to sanction shipments of war materials to these nations?

Even a month ago when Senator Pittman advised waiting "until the facts are clearly established" there was ample evidence that Italy and Germany were engaged in an undeclared war upon the government of Spain. Armed nationals of these two countries were taking part in hostilities on the soil of Spain under the direction of their own officers and in their own military units. Can any one believe that large bodies of military men left the borders of these nations without the knowledge and consent of their rulers?

The bombing and burning of Guernica annihilated every doubt about the part played by Fascist nations in the Spanish civil war. Does our State Department have to await action by the British before declaring itself? Is this nation of free people to be the tail of the imperialist English bulldog? Shall we leave the management of our foreign relations in the hands of officials who pretend to be blind when headlines scream daily from the newspapers and eye-witness accounts of reputable correspondents lay the guilt at the doors of Berlin and Rome?

Regardless of the refusal of one or both belligerents to make a declaration, public law has held for years that a state of war can actually exist and require the usual obligations upon neutral countries. Germany and Italy have no right to sit on the Non-Intervention Committee in London. Their hands are covered with the blood of Spanish women and children. They are criminals at court, but they act like judges enforcing their will upon an innocent and absent plaintiff.

A State Department worthy of its name and function would possess not only information equal that in the public press but even more first-hand data from its own foreign agents. The American people have a right to that information. By withholding it, the State Department is exercising what amounts to discretionary power in regard to the application of embargoes on arms, ammunition and the implements of war to Germany and Italy. It is high time that this nation cease its support of the Fascist cause. Both law and humanity demand that American aid to the Fascist murderers and marauders be stopped at once!—P.M.R.

## Trade Unions and Progress

RECENT months have witnessed great and profound changes and progress in the American labor movement. Faced by the slow but certain rise of Fascist tendencies, the more progressive and far-seeing trade unions took the offensive for the right to live and work and be free human beings. Not only were gains made in auto and steel but the nation-wide tide of reaction was stemmed, thereby contributing toward a better standard of living, more decent working

conditions, the right to organize and assemble almost every industry.

Another hopeful sign in American life has been the recent organization of so-called white-collar workers. Who would have dreamed of this ten years ago? But today newspaper men, women, teachers, Hollywood screen folk, department-store girls are organizing.

Organized labor, united in militant demand the right to live, is the best guarantee against Fascism. Organized labor *struggling and learning* in its day-to-day energetic battles is the guarantee for the preservation of Democracy.

This is a test for a realistic anti-Fascist movement: What have you done to assist organized labor? What have you done in the preserve of free speech, free press and the right to organize when labor needed it most? What have you done when the picket line was going round and round the factory gate or the store? What have you done when Mr. Hearst belted against 100 workers? What have you done to tell the world about Democracy and Fascism? What have you done to bring the worker into the active and serious anti-Fascist movement?

The destruction of the trade unions in Germany and Italy is an expensive but needless lesson to liberty-loving people everywhere. Our job in the struggle for Democracy and progress is in the front lines wherever labor is fighting for its right to live. And it is our job to draw labor into the active struggle against Fascism. Without labor on its side Democracy is lost, and Fascism will be defeated and a new day will dawn for all of us.—J.P.

## The Sheppard-Hill Bill

DESPITE the unanimous conviction of organized labor, peace societies, anti-Fascist organizations and all alert-minded Americans that the Sheppard-Hill Bill is a dangerous undemocratic instrument, the Military Aff Committees of the House and Senate have voted favorably on it.

The Sheppard-Hill Bill has been euphemistically described by its sponsors as a measure to profiteering in wartime and to promote peace. Senator Nye and Senator Lundeen, who wrote minority report of the Senate Military Aff Committee, have stated that the bill fails of its purposes.

An unprecedented unity of the American people has been forged around their opposition to the measure. They have made it plain that they will not tolerate the thoroughgoing and oppressive military dictatorship which the bill would make possible. The first victory in the controversy belongs to the people: the War Department, American Legion and the military-minded element in Congress have been compelled to water the bill down at every legislative stage of its development.

But modifying the bill is not enough. Industrial mobilization plan is a good one, for mere existence of any blueprint for war Fascism is a step in the direction of war. The American people don't want and will not abide an autocratic form of government. No matter how much the bill is watered down, it will never be acceptable.—F.B.B.



A Spanish Loyalist woman who was bombed out of her home in Malaga by Franco's Fascists



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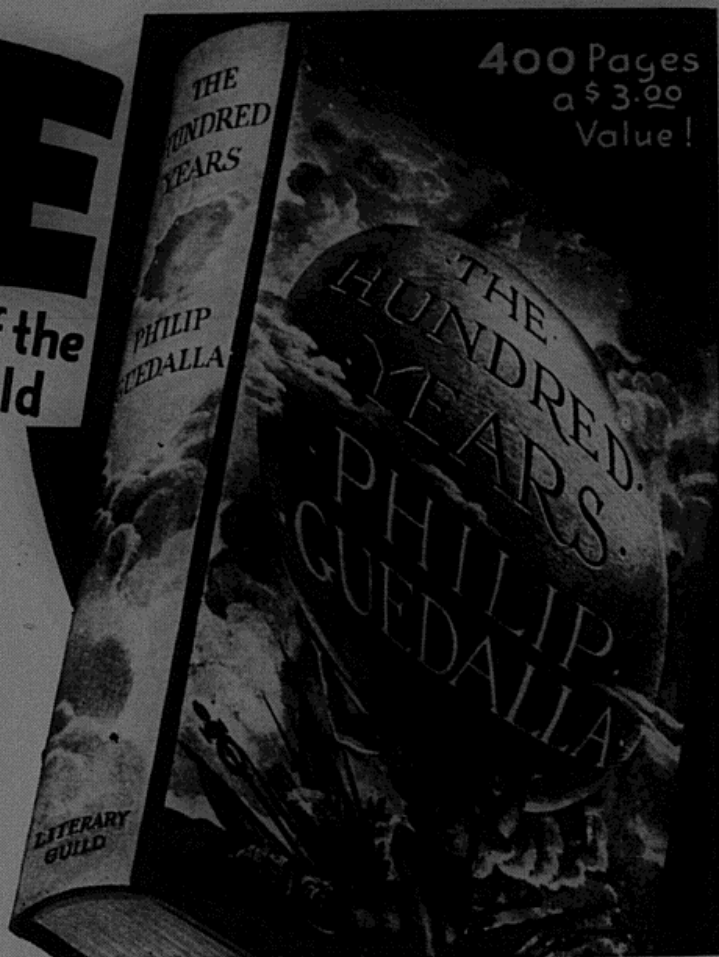
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