

# New Masses

Sir Stafford Cripps

*Why the British Labor Party Expelled Me*

Martin Anderson Nexö

*Dachau: Foundation of the Third Reich*

Robert Forsythe

*Thanks for the Brickbats*

Front Page Liars

*An Editorial Indictment*

C. Day Lewis

*on W. H. Auden*

Kenneth Burke

*on Kenneth Fearing*

A. B. Magil

*on Max Lerner*

Cartoons by Gropper, Richter, Gardner Rea, Hirschfeld

# BETWEEN OURSELVES

ONE of the features of NM's new format which has brought most enthusiastic response from our readers is the use of photographs, either to illustrate the text or for some particular interest in the pictures themselves. The decision to use photos was based in large part on the knowledge that our contributors and readers are becoming more and more interested in candid-camera studies. NM will welcome contributions of such pictures from people whose cameras have caught some phase of life in America which they feel would merit a display in our pages.

NM Editor Granville Hicks has agreed to participate in a debate with the Rev. Edward Lodge Curran, head of the International Catholic Truth Society. The meeting will probably be held in Boston's Symphony Hall; we shall publish the date and other details as they are decided.

An exhibition of the paintings of Robert Hallowell (see page 14) will be held February 20—March 4, at the Reinhardt Gallery, 730 Fifth Ave., N. Y. C.

Our mail from the Far West during the past few weeks has brought us some particularly heartening notes from readers. K. H. of Seattle, Wash., tells us: "I could not possibly get along without NM. I have subscribed for the magazine since its inception . . . and now have most of the files in my possession. I sold sixteen hundred copies of the famous Liebknecht number. Thanks for getting out such a magnificent periodical. In helping NM, I always think I am helping Spain—which to me is the most important thing in the entire world today."

And also from the State of Washington comes this comment, by E. E. B., of Yakima: "NM gets better with each issue. In an anti-liberal com-

munity, such as the Yakima Valley, NM is indispensable. The forces of progress are definitely on the march . . . the United Farmers (not the Associated Farmers), the Workers Alliance, and particularly the Communist Party are making themselves felt in this district."

C. E. L., of Sausalito, Calif., writes: "We have just got back from Europe (six weeks in Germany, my friends). . . . Even if we hadn't believed in the necessity for keeping alive a liberal press before, the trip to Europe would certainly have made us see the light."

"Our copy of NM is the only one within 125 miles," says H. S. of the Bar-X Ranch, McLeod, Mont. "We pass it around until it is limp and ragged—you have no idea what it means."

Anna Sokolow and her unit are now in last rehearsals for her second annual NM concert at the Alvin Theater, Sunday night, February 26, at 8:45 p.m. Miss Sokolow's appearances are the crest of any dance season: this year she will reveal new originals, the most important of which is *Façade-Esposizione Italiana*, an ironic comment on the "culture" of Il Duce. Tickets are still to be had from Tiba Garlin, Caledonia 5-3076.

A packed house heard Joseph North speak on *Today in Spain* at the most recent Keynote Forum. The newly announced editor of NM answered many questions, assisted by the chairman, James Benét of the *New Republic*, who spent eighteen months with the International Brigades. This week, Thursday, February 16, at 8:30 p.m., Simon W. Gerson will make his first public address since he became a municipal employee. His Keynote Forum topic will be *New York City Politics: 1939*. The ensuing Thursday's program will feature nine leading left-wing poets in a symposium on *Living Poetry*. They are Kenneth Fearing, Genevieve Taggard, Alfred Hayes, James Neugass, Muriel Ruker, Joy Davidman, Willard Maas, and Norman Rosten. Admission for both of these Thursday-night events will be 35 cents; the address, 201 West 52nd St., the Keynote Club.

Beginning Sunday night, March 5, NM's Keynote Club will be the weekly home of a new satirical theater, the Keynote Variety Show, featuring musical skits, sketches, and caricatures prepared by the leading wags of the social theater. With staging by Nat Lichtman, lyrics by John La Touche, music by Bernice Kazouloff, sketches by David Gregory and Sam Locke, the Keynote Varieties will be performed by a group of fifteen young professional actors and actresses who have been rehearsing daily for four weeks. Original choreography by Bill Matons will make up the dance numbers. To ensure seats for all of these events a membership in the Keynote Club is essential. For

\$1, members will receive mailed announcements of the programs, priority in reserving seats, invitations to special events which cannot be open to the public, and a dollar's worth of transferable credit on any privilege of the club. A few more memberships are open; cards will be mailed upon receipt of \$1 by Tiba Garlin at 31 East 27th Street.

NM is in front again—this time in presenting Mordecai Bauman in his Town Hall debut on Sunday evening, March 19. Bauman, one of the most promising of young baritones, is well known to those who have watched the steady forward march of a people's music in America. The songs of such composers as Eisler and Blitzstein have for many years had the advantage of Bauman's stirring performances, and he it was who introduced many of them for the first time. Incidentally, some of Eisler's and Blitzstein's best known songs will be featured on the Town Hall program; so save the date—Sunday, March 19.

## Who's Who

SMITH F. BIXLER is the pen name of a Detroit newspaper man. . . . Milton Meltzer's writings have frequently appeared in NM. . . . C. Day Lewis, British poet, critic, and novelist, has contributed several Letters from London to our "Review and Comment" section. . . . Kenneth Burke is a well known critic, the author of

*Counter-Statement, Attitudes toward History, and Permanence and Change.*

## Flashbacks

THE strength of the People's Front movement against fascism and reaction was unforgettably brought to the world's attention Feb. 16, 1936. That day in France 100,000 trade unionists, Socialists, Communists, and Radical Socialists marched in protest against the beating by fascists of Socialist Léon Blum. . . . And that day, as the French people were displaying their might as a corrective to the ways of the Two Hundred Families, the Spanish were winning control of their government. Among the 228 members of the anti-fascist majority elected to Parliament, there were just fourteen Communists, pro-Franco propaganda to the contrary notwithstanding. . . . On Feb. 20, 1895, Frederick Douglass, Negro abolitionist and leader, died. . . . "A movement has been started among the members of the Junior League," reads the *New York Times* for Feb. 17, 1919, "to pledge the organization to resist the attempts of a faction to require members' attendance at lectures to be given in the New School for Social Research by Prof. Beard, James Harvey Robinson, and Thorstein Veblen. A resolution now being circulated among the members quotes from the writings of Veblen and expresses the opinion that 'these men are not suitable teachers for the members of the league.'"

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

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Martin Andersen Nexö  
This caricature of the famous Danish writer, author of "Pelle the Conqueror" and "Under the Open Sky," was drawn by Georges Schreiber in pre-Hitler Germany and is autographed by the subject.

## Why the Labor Party Expelled Me

Sir Stafford Cripps tells the inside story of the growing fight against Chamberlain. Britain studies his twelve-point program. A plan for action by the former Labor Party executive.

**T**HERE can be no doubt as to the real reason for my expulsion from the Labor Party.

My late colleagues and I differ profoundly and fundamentally as to the political tactic to be employed in meeting the present urgent and critical situation in national and international affairs.

They are afraid that the circulation of my memorandum within the party urging the concentration of all progressive anti-fascist forces against the National government will have so large a measure of support that it will lead to difficulties and create diversions inimical to the interests of the party.

It is both interesting and curious that the *Daily Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph* seem to share these same views, or to be inspired from the same sources upon a line somewhat similar to that stated above. Can it be that this is a new step towards uniting the people behind the National government?

It is for the reason stated that the National Executive of the Labor Party has taken the drastic step of terminating my membership in the hope that their action may paralyze other Labor supporters of my policy.

### SUPPRESSION OF FREEDOM

It is undoubtedly a serious matter for the democracy of any so-called democratic party when members, whatever their position in the party, are penalized or expelled for expressing and advocating views not in conformity with the majority opinion.

I have fought strenuously within the party during the last few years to assert the right of free speech, free writing, and free propaganda. The governing body of a party has no more right to suppress these freedoms within its own ranks than has a government to suppress them within its country.

It is, indeed, of the very essence of democracy that there should be the most unfettered discussion and canvassing of opposition views. Without it, no democratic body can arrive at a wise decision or maintain its vitality. The theory that past decisions are binding upon the membership can be, and is today being, used so as to destroy all democracy within the Labor Party. From this results the apathy and the hopelessness in face of grave dangers that can be so widely observed amongst all progressive forces in the country.



SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS. *His militant efforts to unite progressive forces against the policies of Chamberlain resulted in his expulsion from the Labor Party, in which he was a member of the National Executive. He has been MP for East Bristol since 1931, and was Solicitor General in Ramsay MacDonald's 1930-31 Cabinet. The younger son of Lord Parmoor, Cripps was educated at Winchester School and University College, London, and was admitted to the bar in 1913. He served with the Red Cross in France. He is an authority on canon law, and the author of "Why This Socialism?"*

But the issue raised between myself and the National Executive of the Labor Party is not a personal one, nor does it concern merely the scope of freedom within the Labor Party. Something much more important is entailed, nothing less than the safety and security of every man, woman, and child in our country.

As the problem presents itself to me, there are three questions that must be answered before we can decide upon our course.

First, shall we have a better chance of saving ourselves and our civilization by continuing the National government in office or by displacing it?

Second, how can we displace it—can it be done by a single party or must we have a concentration of the progressive anti-fascist forces?

And third, how can we bring about that concentration if it is necessary?

As to the first question, the only doubt that I have heard expressed or seen written by any progressive person is the doubt as to whether a government of mixed progressive elements would be strong enough or sufficiently united to carry through the tasks that might fall upon it in these critical times.

No one can forecast the strength or weakness of a hypothetical government, but this I think may be said with some degree of certainty, that the elements added to the nucleus of the Labor Party would be no weaker and might well be stronger than some elements in that party itself.

As to policy, both domestic and foreign, that, as I point out in my memorandum, must be a practical policy covering the whole field of government action. It must, too, of course, be agreed upon by those who are going to combine.

I am sufficiently optimistic to believe that there would be no great difficulty in agreeing on such a program, given the intention on all sides to sink particular differences for the attainment of the common end. The response that I have received from all quarters, even including some who are still labeled Conservative, to my twelve-point program proposed in the memorandum confirms me in this belief.

That we must get rid of Chamberlain and his pro-fascist forces, if any of the decencies of our civilization are to remain, seems too obvious to argue.

There are some—I do not know how many

—within the Labor Party who have expressed the view that a strong Constitutional Conservative government is preferable in the present crisis to a weak and motley government of progressives. That is indeed the policy of despatch, and means that within a few months, if that line were to be pursued, there would develop a national unity in which the Liberal and Labor Parties would find themselves very junior members in a partnership with reaction and conservatism well on the road to fighting the next great imperialist war.

Rather than risk such an outcome I would prefer the far smaller risk of the motley progressive bloc—the alternative to National government—representing, as I believe, the true democratic instinct of our country in this time of emergency. Ask the first fifty people you meet in the street whether they see the possibility of an alternative government in any existing political party alone and I am sure that at least forty-five will answer, "No."

#### CONCENTRATE FORCES

If, then, it is essential to displace the National government how can it be done?

In my memorandum I went into facts and figures which no one to my knowledge has so far challenged.

I have not met more than a very few people who are prepared, as a matter of serious electoral calculation, to state that any single opposition party has a real chance of success at the next election. I doubt if there are any who seriously think that the Labor Party could today recapture its position as in 1929, when it held a minority of the seats in the House of Commons.

If that is an accurate estimate, and if, too, it is right that we must at all cost displace

the National government, then we have no option for the time of the emergency but to adopt some method of concentrating the opposition elements into a single attacking force.

This brings me to the third question: How can we bring about this concentration?

I am convinced that we cannot achieve our aim by setting up yet another political party. We must make use of what we have and bring every possible pressure to bear, each upon our own organization, to adopt the policy that we believe to be right.

There can be no possible doubt as to the enormous volume of opinion in favor of such action amongst Labor Party members, trade unionists, cooperators, Liberals, Communists, members of no party, and even Conservatives.

My experience all over the country at meetings, in conversations, and by correspondence convinces me of this. Any reader can test it out in his own district by asking the question of his friends and associates, and I am certain he will come to the same conclusion.

#### WRITE, SPEAK, ACT

The key to successful pressure is publicity. If those who are desperately anxious to get their parties to combine hide their light under a bushel the political future will remain as dark as it is today.

If each one of them, in his or her own way, stands out publicly, at meetings, by writing letters or signing circulars, or in whatever way it may be, then the volume of opinion becomes apparent and effective, since it can be weighed and estimated. As a result, those who are perhaps weaker or less decided take courage and express their views, and so the volume grows. Not only so, but action which may be possible against single individuals, undemo-

cratic action as I hold, becomes impossible when the aggregate of single individuals shows itself to be a large and effective portion of the party. Heresy hunting ceases to be a practical means of suppressing opinions the moment the so-called heretics become sufficiently numerous to give one another protection.

#### NO TIME FOR DOUBTS

At times like these, sincere well-wishers for their country and for humanity must make up their minds as to the course to be pursued, and having decided, must without hesitation give full and public support to their convictions.

It is largely the doubts and hesitations of the Western democracies that have brought the world to the desperately dangerous pass in which it now finds itself. Long ago we democrats ought to have resolved those doubts and put aside those hesitations. Had we done so I should not now be hearing, as I write this, of the fall of Barcelona; instead we should be reading of a strong and triumphant democracy in Spain and in Czechoslovakia. These tragedies are the price of our unwillingness to assert our convictions.

In this last hour when our own liberty and freedom are directly threatened let us cast aside our hesitation and come out boldly in support of our convictions, whatever the consequences may be to our personal positions.

If my many friends and comrades amongst the rank and file of the progressive parties of this country will instantly act, as I ask them to, I am confident that we can, at the next election, defeat the National government and so save not only our own democracy and freedom, but perhaps even that of Europe.

SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS.

## Sir Stafford Cripps' Program for United Opposition to the Chamberlain Government

1. The effective protection of the democratic rights, the liberties, and the freedom of the British people from internal and external attack.
2. A positive policy of peace by collective action with France, Russia, the United States of America, and other democratic countries for the strengthening of democracy against aggression and a world economic reconstruction based upon justice to the people of all classes and nations.
3. Cooperation with the trade unions for advances in wages, bettering of working conditions, shortening of hours, raising of workmen's compensation, and increase of holidays with pay.
4. Higher standards of nutrition, especially for children and mothers.
5. Improvements in the conditions and standards of the unemployed, including the removal of the family means test.
6. Improved pensions for old-age pensioners and those older workers who should be encouraged to retire from industry.
7. Increased educational facilities freely open to all children, and an effective raising of the school-leaving age.
8. An immediate and serious tackling of the problem of unemployment by the national planning of industrial development and of the investment of new capital in industry and by rapidly increased public works.
9. The full utilization of the productive resources of the land by giving planned assistance to agricultural development on the basis of a fair wage to the agricultural worker, a just return to the farmer, and an equitable price to the consumer.
10. The national control and coordination of all transport services, with fair wages for those working in the various industries.
11. National and controlled planning of the mining and allied industries so as to enable fair wages to be paid to the workers and fair terms to be given to the consumers.
12. Control over the financial resources of the nation through control of the Bank of England and the increase of direct taxation, if necessary, to enable the above program to be carried through.

# How to Wreck a Union

Homer Martin furnishes a new standard of trade-union treachery. His Bennett-Lovestone-Coughlin axle. The triumph of the automobile workers.

THE recent events in the United Automobile Workers' internal struggle, deplorable as they may be, have this positive feature about them: they have divested the entire situation of treacherous disguise and placed all facts and personalities involved exactly where they belong. There has been much confusion concerning the UAW factional fight, mainly because former President Homer Martin's chief opponents have for the sake of the union voluntarily suppressed basic details concerning his activities, particularly the pernicious underground feud which he has long conducted against the CIO. They were content to wait until his present term of office would run out, since his defeat at the next convention (originally scheduled for August 1939) was considered inevitable—a fate that Martin himself took for granted and which his most recent outburst was designed to forestall.

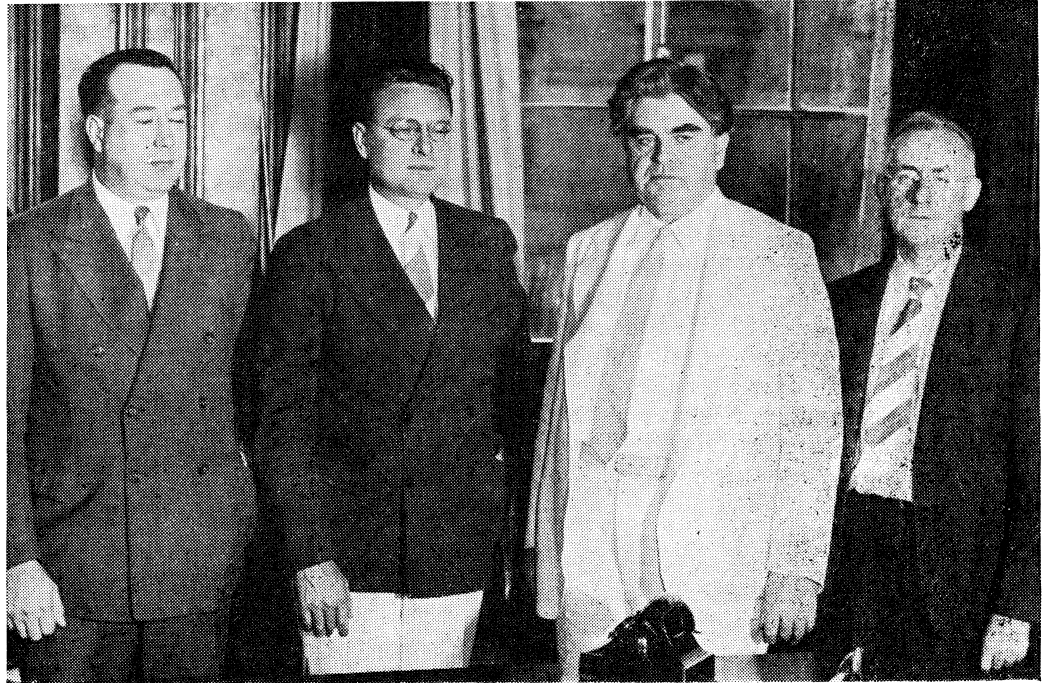
Few who saw the impeached UAW president on the stage of the Pittsburgh CIO convention last November, graciously presenting gift watches to John L. Lewis and the other CIO leaders, could have imagined that the showdown would come so soon after. Homer was as always very impassioned, even if his words went against the grain. "Words cannot express, there is no language that can fully represent the feelings of our appreciation," he told the convention.

## THE WAYS OF DISRUPTION

But at that very moment, his organizers and agents in the field were secretly maturing plans in Ohio, Flint, Wisconsin, and other centers for an attempted mass secession of UAW locals from the CIO.

It is but a single, negligible detail in a history of almost unbelievable perfidy. Homer wasn't fooling the CIO leaders any more than he was fooling the great mass of his own union's members. But the CIO heads were trying desperately to make the UAW a going concern. After having helped settle the dangerous crisis of last summer, they had been bending over backwards to placate the UAW head, urgently hoping to make the peace a lasting one. It was a laxity that Martin took full advantage of, repeatedly refusing to carry out mandates of his Executive Board. At every attempt to curb his disruptive activities, he would threaten to blow the lid off again. In particular he refused to give up personal administration over numerous opposition locals whose autonomy he had violently invaded during the summer battle. On this point the CIO peace plan had been very explicit.

About six weeks ago Martin brought his campaign out into the open. In a radio talk paid for out of union funds he hit out savagely



Acme

MARTIN BATS AN EYE. Even while John L. Lewis and John Brophy were conferring with Homer Martin on the question of factionalism that was crippling the UAW, Martin's wreckers were sabotaging the union organization. Then the CIO and the auto workers woke up. l. to r.: R. J. Thomas, present acting-president of the UAW, Homer Martin, John L. Lewis, and John Brophy.

against the CIO, accusing its leaders of having usurped the autonomy of the auto union and demanding the dissolution of the so-called Coordinating Committee, a sort of mediating body established by the peace pact, made up of CIO Vice-Presidents Philip Murray and Sidney Hillman; R. J. Thomas, UAW vice-president; and Martin himself. The committee's function was exclusively advisory, and despite Martin's demagogic play for popular support on the plea of "democracy," none of its decisions had ever been put into force without first having been approved by the UAW board.

But truth has never restrained the ex-UAW head, who in this case needed a basis for the program he now projected. His first move was against the powerful opposition Plymouth local, which he said was being ruined by the Communists. This was rather surprising news to the membership of the local who had just led a victorious fight for the thirty-two-hour week in the Chrysler Corp. plants. Dues payments in November and December had registered the fullest acknowledgment of this brilliant gain.

But Homer found a lieutenant in the local who was prepared and eager to stir up the necessary commotion to serve as a pretext for his stepping in. Pat McCartney, a rabid Dies-committee witness, was the leader of a small group in the plant, consisting chiefly of a

queer amalgam of Coughlinites and Black Legionnaires, as well as a few former leaders of the company-fostered, so-called "two-bit union," now defunct. McCartney held build-up caucuses and arranged a rump meeting for his chief, who Red-baited for two hours to his heart's content. Following the meeting, Martin led a group to the Plymouth headquarters, where, with the aid of a hundred of Commissioner Heinrich Pickert's police, he subdued a handful of defenders and carried off or destroyed the local's records, files, and thousands of dollars' worth of equipment and furniture.

"We moved the Plymouth local from Moscow Square," he boastfully reported to the press, stating that similar action would be taken immediately against the Dodge and Murray Body locals—a pledge which he has not been able to fulfill to date, as an armed, twenty-four-hour guard was posted the next day in every local in the city.

## THE EMERGENCY CONVENTION

Following the Plymouth raid, the UAW Executive Board was immediately reconvened by means of a ruling adopted at its last session which had foreseen exactly such a contingency. The majority of the members came prepared for decisive action, determined on calling a special convention in order to rid the union of its disruptive head—a move that

many had favored for several months. Realizing that such action was now inevitable, Martin cagily anticipated the board's move by himself proposing the emergency convention at its first day's session. He demanded that the board take immediate action on his proposal and then adjourn, alleging great concern for the cost to the union of its remaining in session.

What he was really anxious about, however, was that the board might bethink itself, before breaking up, of restricting his powers and preventing him from carrying out certain plans he had developed for capturing the convention. One of these was to divide up all locals of auto mechanics and charter every garage separately, no matter how few men it employed. By this plan alone he expected to get five hundred delegates. He had several other similar schemes, but they all dwindled away compared to the one he banked on above all else—an agreement with his newest and certainly his strangest ally, Harry Bennett, head of the service department of the Ford Motor Co.

#### HARRY BENNETT'S PAL

Martin's dealings with Henry Ford's notorious personnel director were not—thanks to the ex-UAW head's penchant for boastful gossip—entirely a secret to the Executive Board. It so happened that several of his confidants were honest unionists who grew alarmed at the dangerous implications of his plans. Among them were the president and secretary of the Ford local who had only recently been appointed to their posts by Martin. Their testimony against him is, consequently, all the more damaging.

One of these, Paul Ste. Marie, vice-president of the Detroit chapter of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists and recording secretary of the Ford local, has given some details of the "verbal agreement" that Martin was supposed to have reached with Harry Bennett. His story differs materially from the account Martin gave of his negotiations to the Executive Board.

According to this "agreement," Ford would recognize the UAW, but only in and through Homer Martin. The agreement would hold only as long as Martin was president of the UAW and the CIO would have to be kept strictly out of the picture. The plan further provided, Ste. Marie testified, that there would be "no shop committee or grievance procedure in or out of the plant other than Martin," whose supreme popularity with Bennett was to be attested by the following fantastic arrangements:

Ford was to place at Martin's disposal as many service men [company spies] as he needed and for as long as he needed and Ford would assist in the organization for sixty days, until Martin had straightened out his difficulties with the Executive Board. To prove that Ford was ready to help us organize, the company had agreed to put thirty thousand men in any hall for any meeting Martin would call for purposes of organization.

The first token move in the carrying out of this "agreement" was supposed to have

been the rehiring by Bennett of a selected number of men from the six hundred on the union's discrimination lists. In all seriousness, Martin's organizers conned the records selecting those whom they regarded as "loyal" to Martin. Telegrams were sent to them holding out the promise of the restoration of their jobs and calling them to a meeting. As they arrived, the organizers would put the following questions to them: Are you a member of the Communist Party? Do you believe in sitdowns? Will you support Homer Martin?

Martin himself appeared at this meeting and spoke glowingly of the new day that had dawned for the union in the Ford plant.

He grew ecstatic over the inimitable qualities of Bennett and Ford and ordered that the local office be kept open day and night in anticipation of the rush of Ford workers to join the union!

#### MUNICH TACTICS

Whatever his actual intentions, there can be little doubt of the verbal basis, in any case, of Bennett's chimerical promises to Martin. Ever since the latter's surprise visit to the River Rouge plant in October, the Ford service head had been going out of his way to extol the virtues of Martin, particularly his "spunk" in cleaning Communists out of the UAW. More substantial aid for his fa-



Richter

Mischa Richter

*"I am happy to announce that Mr. Dies got his appropriation."*

vorite came while Martin was under fire of the Executive's Board's charge of having plotted the formation of a company union at Ford's. Bennett denied the accusation in Homer's behalf and to prove his point announced the dissolution of the Liberty Legion, the Ford plant union, crediting the move to Martin! The UAW head had convinced him, Bennett solemnly asserted, that the legion was not a pure insurance scheme, as he had always believed, but was actually a company union. It is true that Ward Culver, the legion's attorney, also claimed credit for the move, but Bennett insisted that the palm was entirely Homer's.

It seems easy enough to guess what Bennett's game actually was, a plan nonetheless startling in its boldness and brilliant simplicity. The Ford personnel head had no intention of allowing Martin or anybody else to organize the Rouge plant, not even on a company-union basis. For he knew perfectly well that though the principals to such a compact might agree as to its immaterial nature, the ninety thousand Ford workers would be apt to take it much more realistically. However, he was not averse to giving Martin a little support in his life-and-death struggle with his foes by helping to foster the illusion that the UAW leader was making progress in his Ford negotiations. What could he lose by doing so? To strengthen Martin was merely to help make permanent and increase the rift in the union—as good a bit of anti-union insurance as one could get on the market. He might even agree to rehire some of the union members he had discharged in order to forestall what now seemed to be their inevitable reinstatement by the federal courts; and thus incidentally to bring the head of one of the nation's most important unions into a little conspiracy to evade the hated Wagner Labor Act.

THE JIG IS UP

But the whole "deal" was now definitely off, and Martin hurled the accusation at his Executive Board foes ("the factional majority," he called them in a phrase of amazing egotism, while always maintaining that he and he alone represented the union) that they had for purely political reasons committed the "greatest betrayal in labor history." He played the emotional angle to the full, appealing to the keen sensitiveness of auto workers on the subject of job security and bewailing the loss of jobs to the discharged Ford workers who had supposedly been slated for a return to work. Harry Bennett assisted in the little drama, throwing up his hands in mock despair and exclaiming, "If I confer with a labor leader, his followers will only call it a conspiracy, anyway, so what is the use of my talking to them?"

And he packed his bags and sailed for a vacation in South America.

Martin realized, of course, that the jig was up. The board stolidly refused to take his transparent advice, each day sedulously repeated, to adjourn; but rather continued to

## The Hunters

Five miles or more we hiked thru bloodtipped curling leaves. Death was underfoot: the death a man should have—spangled and flying in the wind, the skin glowing and leathery as old parchment.

We sloped down amber valleys: sniffed distant smoke: rolled our eyes with the hills: crackled the dry twigs: smiled at painted cows munching in meadows—fixing on the mind's film the bitter-sweet and the cloud-wool carded by the wild wind-comb . . .

and then on a rise we saw the hunters. Black against the sky: peaked caps and boots and inquisitive rifles nosing thru the brush. The hounds streaking gray across the hill: baying some echo in us as they joyed to kill. . . .

Back in the cabin we spoke of the horrors of war, in the mind's brush hounds streaked thru the gore.

SIDNEY ALEXANDER.

clip his wings a little more with each successive resolution they adopted, stripping him of numerous powers which he had once arrogated to himself with their own formerly supine consent. He made a final attempt at intimidation. Again with the help of the indispensable Pat McCartney, as well as several Lovestoneite and Trotskyist maulers, a mob of several hundred workers was organized to march on the UAW headquarters while the board was in session. Denied admittance, the invaders tore doors off their hinges and forced their way in, holding the board at bay while demanding under threat of violence that its members sign an agreement rescinding all their former actions. The grand play failed, however, when crowds of anti-Martinites came flocking from locals in all parts of the city to the defense of the board.

BEFORE THE COURTS

Martin was now brought to his last resort. One morning, before the board had reconvened after the night's recess, he announced the suspension of fifteen of its members, while a strong-arm squad took over the international headquarters. The suspensions were utterly illegal, as the UAW constitution recognizes the board in session as the union's highest authority. This proved a mere technicality to Martin's legal talent, however, who argued that the board was nightly divested of its powers! The fifteen suspensions left only nine members of the board in good standing. Martin controlled four of these (besides himself), which assured him the necessary majority to approve his acts. The legitimate board, including three members whom Martin had not suspended, had no alternative in the critical situation but to impeach the UAW president and to put an end to his violent actions.

Vice-President R. J. Thomas, formerly Martin's closest supporter, was named acting president. Legal proceedings for the restoration of the union apparatus were likewise instituted.

That question is now before the courts, which will rule eventually on the superficial phases of the struggle: who is entitled to the name, seal, property journal, etc., of the organization? But the real decision will rest with the auto workers and with no one else. The union's convention will be held in Cleveland on March 27. Martin has called a dual convention for March 4 in Detroit. Meanwhile, the struggle is going on down in the ranks and at the work benches. But the unequivocal judgment of the CIO in support of the legitimate officers of the union, and the already clearly evident sentiments of the rank and file leave no doubt as to the ultimate issue: victory for the CIO and progressive unionism over Homer Martin and his Bennett-Lovestone-Coughlin axis.

SMITH F. BIXLER.

## That Terrible NLRB

FOR the year ending last June 30, the National Labor Relations Board handled 8,851 cases involving 1,845,818 workers and closed 95 percent of them by securing the dismissal or withdrawal of union complaints or by arranging employer-employee agreements without a hearing.

In the remaining 5 percent upon which it made its decisions there were forty-one cases involving some disagreement between the AFL and the CIO. The AFL won twenty-one of the decisions; the CIO won sixteen; four were dismissed or withdrawn.

# Dachau: Foundation of the Third Reich

Martin Anderson Nexö, the Danish genius, here reveals a strange document on the concentration camps of Hitler's Germany . . . and the lesson they hold for American Democracy.

**O**N MY DESK there is a manuscript of a book about the disgraced Dachau, not the Dachau prior to the Third Reich, the beautiful picnic grounds of the people of Munich, but the Dachau of today. The concentration camp par excellence, the hellish place of torment, Dachau!

Do the concentration camps still exist?

Of course they exist! The Third Reich also still exists, and the concentration camps are its foundation. It is not possible to destroy the foundation of a structure without causing the structure to collapse. But it is possible to try to strengthen a tottering structure by reinforcing the part regarded as its foundation; and it is significant that the Third Reich, instead of liquidating these "educational institutions of the new spirit," as they are called in the Nazi lingo, has not only increased their number but has made them larger. According to the predictions of Nazi leaders in 1933, the concentration camps and the educational methods peculiar to them should be but a memory today. And why not? It has been seen before that great reformers have been compelled to whip the slow masses of humanity through to green but unknown pastures; and the staid German people have—as staid people in other places—every cause for distrust. But now, after six years in the Land of Plenty, the German people could be expected to feel better than ever before, so well, in fact, that it would be impossible to whip them out from the Third Reich.

## LABELS DON'T COUNT

This great staid people has a good deal of political sense. A form of government may be called dictatorship or democracy, or whatever else, if it only makes progress. The pauper does not bother about the label. But he may let himself be caught by it—for a time!

And the time is now up which, according to the predictions of the Nazi leaders at the outset of the Third Reich, would be required to convert the "unwilling." Have they been converted? Would it be possible, if it were desired, to discontinue the concentration camps and the political Gestapo prisons? Is it possibly only sluggishness, slowness of the state machinery which causes them to be continued, even enlarged?

There is no doubt whatsoever that the number of the "unwilling"—the disobedient and opposing—in Germany has increased instead of decreasing, and to a degree quite damaging for the prevailing system. The number of anti-Nazis today is legion and closely connected with the fact that the conditions of the great masses, which in 1932 were none too good, have become much worse—in spite of all their toil. Because the Germans are



Wide World

GOVERNMENT BY IMPRISONMENT. *The concentration camp has become the symbol of Nazi rule. Here the inquisitors line up fresh victims for their official sadists.*

working and working hard—but why? The Third Reich of today resembles the German knight of the Middle Ages who, when suffering reverses in his own profession, thought he did not look horrific enough, and therefore plated himself and his Rosinante with iron. Everything he could scrape together went for armor and plate, and at last he and his animal were so heavily ironclad and so worn out that a wretched peasant could toss him from his saddle and kill him with a pitchfork.

There are two ways of leading and governing a people—only two. Either help them to a steadily increasing production, enable them to work toward steadily improving living conditions. Or start them forging weapons, make them starve, more or less unwillingly, take them bread out of their mouths and convert it into armament; cover the people with armor and plate, with golden promises of a place in the sun, a Utopian life at the expense of other people, if only they comply in the matter of armament. There are no other ways than to work or to rob others of their work!

## THE PITCHFORK'S TRIUMPH

But the pitchfork never fails, while any form of armor sooner or later becomes so antiquated that a pitchfork defeats it. The very idea which serves as a basis of armament fails; the wiser ones among the profiteers of

humanity are realizing that it is more profitable to let the people work than to send them to war. Even a victorious war leaves a deficit; if one has robbed his neighbors in war, this neighbor has nothing to buy with later on!

Many among those who should be self-evident pillars of war in every part of the world are beginning to doubt its value in general and become pacifists of a sort; perhaps one could call them profit-pacifists. At the top of the Third Reich there are people of this kind, too, although the desertion there progresses more slowly. But there are many more today who regard war as a glorious enterprise, the only one worthwhile for a man, but who have their doubts regarding the intention of the Third Reich to start a war. The armament is heavier than it is in conformity with the times, it is equally difficult for both man and mount to drag it along in times of peace; the man with the pitchfork is visible at the horizon.

## LAURELS ARE NOT FOOD

There is no doubt that the Führer no longer is a savior or idol in the eyes of the people. The holiness and infallibility are past, now he is being weighed pro and con. He has saved some *glory* for Germany as a great power, reestablishing her prestige as a military state; all this may be good enough





Wide World

GOVERNMENT BY IMPRISONMENT. *The concentration camp has become the symbol of Nazi rule. Here the inquisitors line up fresh victims for their official sadists.*

for the Junkers and the professional goose-steppers. But the German people are fed up on martial romance and dreams of colonies served on a bayonet; they want peaceful work, food, and a home. And in spite of fair promises Hitler has not been able to put a piece of unadulterated bread on the table. When the German laborer, starved and weary, puts a piece of bread in his mouth, he may be chewing something that tastes more like waste than nourishing food. And this applies to the daily bread in all its ramifications, as already defined by Luther. Not to mention the spiritual nourishment which long ago has become a constituent of the nourishment of this staid people.

The result of the continuous descent in spite of all promises is that the German people, in

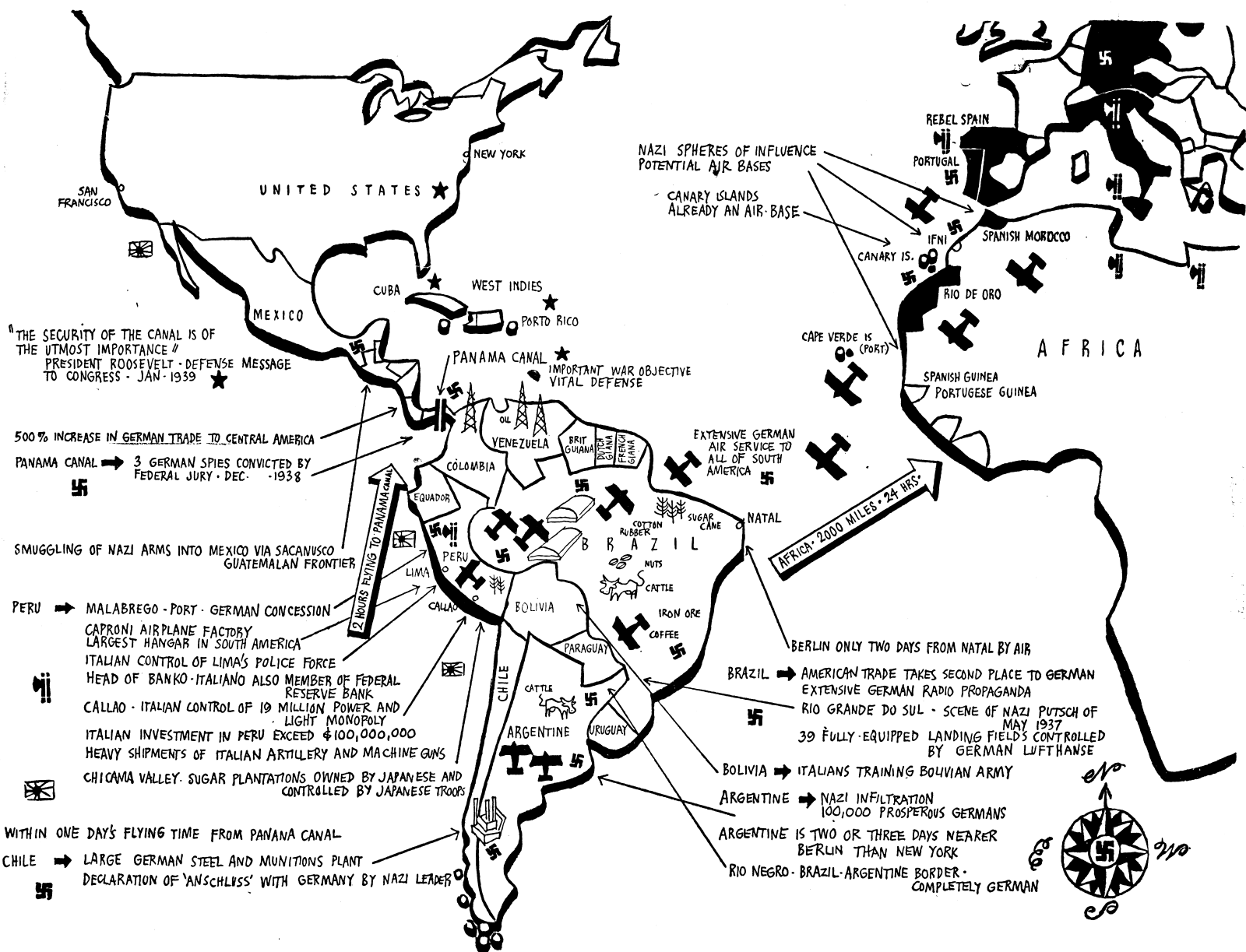
ever increasing degree, are turning from—and against—Nazism. The people manifestly express their indignation with respect to the prevailing system in spite of distress and terrorism—as during the mobilization before Munich, and shortly thereafter, during the Jewish pogroms. And the Third Reich may reinforce its foundation with still more terrorism, still more concentration camps.

MARKS OF THE BEAST

During the last two or three years silence has prevailed about the concentration camps—in any case outside of Germany; the descriptions of various places of torment which made the world shudder during the first three years of Nazi rule were not followed by new ones. It was almost as if the camps had been liqui-

dated. And now this new description of the place of torment above all other places of torment, Dachau, comes and reminds us that *man* has not yet been destroyed in the Third Reich but, on the contrary, seems to come out with new strength from all vicissitudes, and that Nazi officials have a strong conviction that people can be converted to Nazism by the meanest arguments: by whipping and more whipping, by beastly physical and mental torture, by the most exquisite torment to death.

The present description of Dachau, written by a laborer who spent years in this hell and only by chance came out of it alive, makes one shudder more than any of the previous descriptions of concentration camps in the land of the Nazis. They are all alike, as the method is the same in all of them; and the



The Fascist Axe in South America

This map, prepared by the Lawyers Committee on Relations with Spain, shows more vividly than any article or picture why it is the right and duty of all Americans to demand the lifting of the embargo on republican Spain. Our State Department knows the fascist menace in South and Central America. They know that it is being prepared

by Hitler, Mussolini, and Japan for the same invasions republican Spain and China are fighting. It is criminal and treacherous stupidity to argue that the United States is not involved. Lift the embargo now, so that soon we may not have to fight a bigger, strategically placed fascist army on our own continent.

description of Dachau is the quintessence of them all—as Dachau itself is the hell of hells. All the best arrive here, consequently all the worst from the Nazi viewpoint: the intellectual fighters for peace, liberty, social progress—brilliant figures who would be the envy of any other nation. The best sons of the German people are suffering in this hell whose methods of torture greatly surpass those of the medieval Inquisition. This new Inquisition has had hundreds of thousands in its bloody grip in the course of the six years of Nazi rule; and several thousands of them have been tortured to death.

#### THE BLOODY "EDUCATORS"

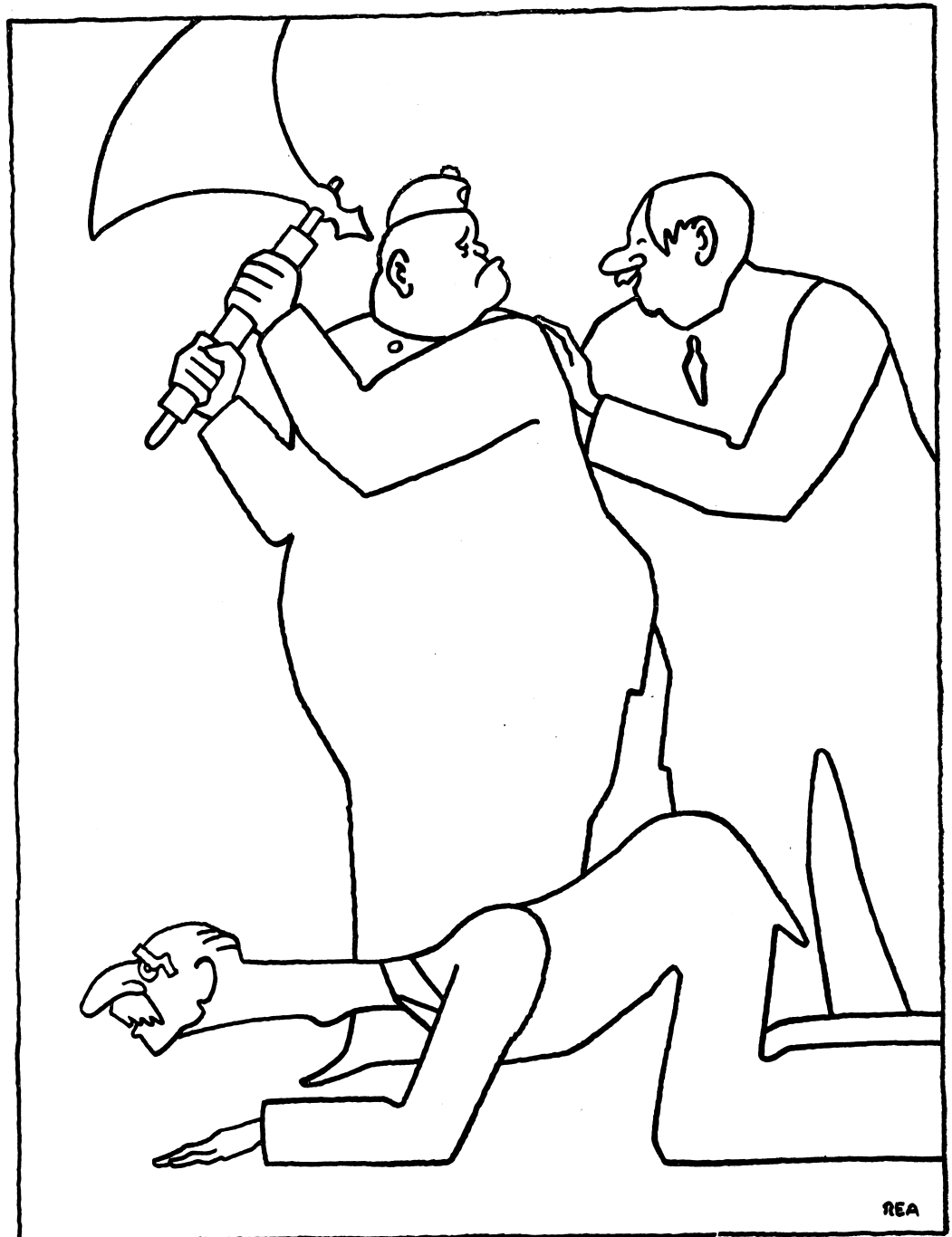
The book on Dachau gives us information about both the prisoners and those who are called educators in the Nazi language, that is to say, the hangman's helpers who in their own way are excellent people, too. They are SA—and SS—men, selected from the most dependable partisans of Nazism. As an essential part of them are former spies, criminals, or felons, it speaks a good deal for the material which forms the foundation of the Third Reich. Their attitude towards the prisoners conforms, so to say, to their antecedents.

The concentration camps in the Third Reich are the product of a system and fulfill the ideology of this system. All descriptions relating to them, whether they are written by the tortured persons themselves, by hangman's helpers whose acts are troubling them and have made them anti-Nazis, or by those who boast about how they have converted Marxists or sent Jews into eternity—all these descriptions tell the same tale: that the Third Reich thinks itself capable of continued existence only when the *human* part of the German people, its heart and soul, is trampled out with hobnailed boots.

These descriptions do not offer any esthetic enjoyment; but notwithstanding this—or perhaps because of it—public opinion should not drop them. They are human—inhumanly human—documents of a time which is bad for the good peaceful powers in existence, a wolfish and martial era. Everyone of liberal opinions and sentiments should read the books about concentration camps again and again; they show as nothing else the will of fascist reaction, supported by the dregs of humanity, to kill any germ of democracy and the very development of humanity with it. It is the duty of everyone who cares and is concerned about culture to acquaint himself thoroughly with the forces which are in command and those which are subjugated in the Third Reich. Nobody has the right to rid himself of the thought of what is awaiting humanity if this bastard offspring of the sergeant spirit of the Wilhelmian era and blunted martial morality deadened during the World War is permitted to subjugate the world.

#### WE ARE TO BLAME

Reading about the hell of Dachau makes one shudder. But we are all to blame that it has happened and we are all responsible for



Gardner Rea

*"No, no, Benito. Wait till he sticks his neck out a little farther!"*

stopping it as soon as possible. It is the soul of a great, worthy, and highly gifted people that is calling to us through these words. If one has lived in Germany and has learned to love the people for their human qualities—their industry, helpfulness, and honesty—the reading makes one shudder for the sake of culture. After the treaty of Versailles it was thought that the renewal of the Western European culture of olden times would come from Germany. The German people, after its defeat, would rely on the ample reserves of spiritual powers which hitherto had been hidden behind the military armor and the sergeant's spirit, and would give Europe new human beacons.

How differently everything has turned out. The people allowed themselves to be lured

by high-sounding "noble phrases," like a child in dense smoke, excluded from the world and cultural unity with humanity. Flattering words were whispered to them until they were far away from the common road; and only then the kidnapers showed their real intentions.

#### FOUNDATIONS OF FASCISM

The concentration camp is the foundation of the Third Reich, and it is like a grave under it. Down below in the dark the good of the people is extracted with red-hot tongs; soul and spirit must be burned so that only "the naked beast" remains.

But the spiritual forces are so rich and unconquerable that even the instruments of torture are producing green sprouts! Deeply

touching are the passages in the present document in which the human qualities defeat the bestial, in which the hangman's helpers—even if only *en passant*—become paralyzed when seeing the spiritual and human strength of the tortured fighters for liberty. The spirit of sacrifice with which the prisoners take penalties in order to free weaker comrades makes the torturers tremble, calls something to life in their dulled souls.

THE DEMOCRATIC MARTYRS

And all over the immense concentration camp which is the Third Reich it is sprouting green despite all the growing terrorism. There is a penalty of death by hanging for spreading true information about the concentration camps; it is not allowed to refer to them in conversation! But today *they*, the Führer, the system are openly discussed. The German is freeing himself from fear and anxiety; perhaps the concentration camp has purified him. Uniforms, commands, and police are about to lose their power over him. Consequently the terrorism increases, but—

A member of the Reichstag, Franz Stenzer, is one of the hundreds who have been murdered in Dachau. As he could not be driven to suicide in spite of most inhuman torture, he was—in accordance with the cowardly system—"shot while trying to escape." In the difficult days of torture, shortly before his death, he wrote the following words:

To fight for something higher than one's own self and to suffer for it, to sacrifice for it, to develop courage—this gives strength and vitality. Only this gives meaning to life and makes it worth living!

No martyr has given his comrades more beautiful words as a heritage, when going to his death. If democracy would adopt Stenzer's words today, fascism would soon meet its end.

MARTIN ANDERSEN NEXÖ.

The Deadly Parallel

A FEW days ago the London *Times* commented on "Mr. Chamberlain's apt comparison of his own position to that of the younger Pitt." So we look up Lecky to find out just what the umbrella man meant by this historical pose. We find Lecky said (about the younger Pitt):

He was, in a word, a great peace minister; but in the latter part of his life an evil fate brought him face to face with problems he never wholly understood and with difficulties he was little fitted to encounter.

Reading a bit further, we again see a suggestion from history. In 1756, British Admiral Byng lost Minorca to the French. When he returned home to Old Blighty, he was court-martialed and shot for such treasonable cowardliness.

Last week, Chamberlain handed Minorca over to Mussolini and Hitler *with* the aid of the British navy. Will Britannia waive the rules?

This Is Station AFRA . . .

As you tune in your radio, gentle reader, you may read here how every song, joke, plug, and sound effect on commercial broadcasts comes to you under a 100 percent closed-shop agreement.

FROM now on tuning in on a Fred Allen or Jack Benny show will be even more fun than in the past. Dial-twisters will have the added satisfaction of knowing that every gag, every song, every commercial plug, and every sound effect is being delivered by a union man working under a 100 percent closed-shop agreement. On February 2 the American Association of Advertising Agencies came to terms with the American Federation of Radio Artists on wages and working conditions for all radio entertainers on commercial broadcasts. It is probably the greatest first contract ever obtained by any union.

For eight years there had been union talk among radio people, but little was done until the CIO thrust its way into the unorganized industries. Aroused by the CIO's success, the AFL began seriously to organize radio. By January 1938, AFRA, the AFL's union of radio singers, actors, and announcers was strong enough to dicker with the advertising agencies and the networks. The latter signed a two-year contract with AFRA, giving it a preferential shop for sustaining programs (unsponsored shows put on at the network's own expense).

THE ARROGANT AGENCIES

The big test was in the offing. Many of the sponsors for the leading commercial shows are devout believers in the open shop. It would dent their pocketbooks to sign with the union, but worse, it would demolish their pride. Having held off older unions for a long time in their own businesses, they were outraged by the prospect of being forced to sign with a union still in diapers. To their representatives also—Ruthrauff & Ryan, Lord & Thomas, J. Walter Thompson, Young & Rubicam, etc.—the union was anathema. Staffed almost entirely by Dekes and Phi Delts from the country-club campuses, the agencies were even more arrogant toward AFRA than were their butter-and-egg clients.

Continual stalling by the agencies' committee led to the AFRA committee walking out of the conference on January 10. Less than a week later the national board of the union and the New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco locals had voted to call a nationwide strike. All preparations were made for the issuance of the formal strike call. The strike fund was whipped out of the vaults and placed at hand. Captains were appointed on each show. Thirty phone calls per hour poured in to the AFRA switchboard in New York from the captains who wanted to know when to pull their shows out. AFRA's stand received the formal endorsement of all performers' unions affiliated with

it: the Associated Actors and Artists of America, the Screen Actors Guild, the American Federation of Actors, and the American Guild of Musical Artists.

Plain as it was that the union had the performers from coast to coast sewed up tight, the agency collegians determined to put up a fight. Hastily they rounded up all the amateur talent in town, and rushed them to the studios for auditions. If the twenty thousand actors, singers, and announcers walked out, they would be ready to put on shows without them. But the amateurs didn't do so well. On such short notice it isn't easy to replace a Charlie McCarthy or a Bob Burns.

Ironically, as big an obstacle in the path of the 4A's union-busters were their own business confederates, the networks. Neither NBC or CBS wanted to have a strike forced upon the union. With no performers available for the commercial hours, the networks would lose their chief source of income, the sale of time on the air. And not only that: they would be obliged to fill the hours with their own sustaining shows, paid for out of their own pockets. Despairingly, the agencies and sponsors saw the networks line 'up on the side of the workers.

On January 27 the networks interceded to bring AFRA and the 4A's together for further negotiations. Absent from the conference this time was George Link, the agencies' legal counsel during previous talks. Mr. Link is secretary, vice-president, and a director of the Charles Bedaux outfit—Mr. Bedaux the efficiency expert, once the unhappy David Windsor's pal.

UNION VICTORY

After a huddle lasting almost thirty-one hours, the union emerged with a clearcut victory, making only a few paper concessions to leave the agencies a grain of dignity after such a walloping rout.

AFRA's pay demands, considerably higher than the agencies' scale, were granted with one or two academic discounts written in as face-savers for the ad boys. The agencies threatened that additional talent costs would mean the curtailment of commercials, but the union laughed that one off, knowing that talent is no more than 40 percent or 45 percent of the total cost of a show, including even the high salaries of the stars.

To evade recognizing AFRA as sole bargaining agent, the open-shop sponsors passed the buck to the networks, which signed a Code of Fair Practice for all commercial shows originating in a network station or affiliate. The networks then got the agencies to agree

to abide by the terms of the code. AFRA doesn't mind being considered "untouchable" by the sponsors, so long as the code is observed.

#### REPERCUSSIONS

Repercussions of the AFRA victory will be felt in many places. Since you have dealt with the AFRA union, it will be said by the employees of such reactionary sponsors as Ford, du Pont, and Lever Bros., how about dealing with us? And having seen their co-workers' pay boosted and their conditions bettered, the writers, producers, engineers, and office workers in the broadcasting industry are sure to join the onward march of successfully organized labor.

Some of these workers now outside the AFRA organization are members of other unions in radio. The Radio Writers Guild, connected with the Authors League, never having adopted the militant methods of AFRA, is in a weak position. Probably it will gain impetus by affiliating with AFRA in the future. Some eight hundred workers in the American Guild of Radio Announcers and Producers, unaffiliated, will have to join AFRA because of the closed shop.

The network engineers, potentially a very important group because of their key technical work, are divided among several organizations. Many joined company unions a while back, but have had time to see their mistake. Others, active in the American Communications Association of the CIO, were sent into exile out in the sticks by the network bosses in the radio centers. The AFL's union, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, is so bound by ancient practices that engineers are not attracted to it. To solidify their position and to secure a vertical organization of the industry, AFRA may get a federal charter from the AFL for the engineers, in which case it is likely that the ACA, which offered its help to AFRA during the strike crisis, will relinquish the field.

#### ONE BIG UNION?

Almost before the code went into effect on February 12, there was talk of one big union for the talent end of show business. If AFRA does not slacken its pace it will soon be the largest union in radio, in a position to hasten the unification of the several groups now in the field. The federation of all unions for entertainment workers, once a dream, has been brought much nearer earth by AFRA's sweep. The militancy and unity that slapped the union label on radio will one day build a solid front of performers, stagehands, technicians, and musicians—all those employed on stage, screen, and in radio.

MILTON MELTZER.

#### Quotation

"FRANCE and England should be as a horse and its rider; but France should not always be the horse."—TALLEYRAND.

## The Political Commissar in Spain—II

The manifold duties of the political commissar . . . strengthening political morale . . . forging friendship bonds between the army and its people.

This is the second and concluding part of an authoritative article upon the institution of a political commissariat in the People's Army of Spain. The author, a former member of the GHQ of the 11th International Brigade, tells why and how political commissars work—and the effect of their activity upon the various groups that make up the Popular Front.—THE EDITORS.

THE political commissars had among their duties the forming, clearing, and strengthening of the political consciousness of the combatants by regularly placing in relief the high ideals and the basic social principles of the Spanish republic, and the underlining of the importance that a Republican victory would have not only for the Spanish people but for all the peoples of the world.

The political education of the peasants who compose more than three-quarters of the active troops of the army was one of the principal tasks during the war. They fought bravely for the government of the republic because they knew that it defended and always will defend their most vital interests. It was the task of the political commissars to enlighten them in this field by pointing out that the Popular Front government had given them the land (Decree of Oct. 7, 1936) and had already set aside more than 200,000,000 pesetas—despite the enormous unproductive expenses of the war—for farm credits, schools of agriculture, and numerous other forms of aid to the farmers and their workers. It is necessary that these agriculturists understand that the defeat of the People's Army would signify an immediate return to vassalage, famine, misery, the rural ignorance of olden time, the reestablishment of great landed properties, *caciques*, policing by the Civil Guard, the constant terror of bloody repression, the shutting off of all credit, the reestablishment of high rents, disproportionate redivision of land, loss of all the social conquests of the agrarian revolution, the snuffing out of democratic liberties, and the return to methods of medieval exploitation aggravated by the domination of foreign capital.

#### EDUCATION COMES FIRST

In the active domain of the political commissar, the fight for raising the standard of culture in the ranks of the army is inseparable from agitation and political propaganda. The liquidation of illiteracy has become a reality about which the commissariat of war is legitimately proud. It is incumbent upon the political commissar to encourage among the fighters the taste for reading and study and to arrange their rest periods so that they may be employed in diverting tasks tending to improve their health and physical well-being. They should supervise the distribution of newspapers and

books to the soldiers, encourage their correspondence, and arrange for the publication of wall newspapers and other periodicals in each unit. Finally, the political commissar should remain in constant contact with his soldiers, paying particular attention to their personal needs, their human vicissitudes, and their individual character.

The commissars should especially devote themselves to maintaining, to the highest degree of enthusiasm and fervor, the combative morale of the commanders and soldiers, stimulating in them fortitude, the desire for initiative, constant courage, and the will to conquer. [Article 6 of the Instructions of Dec. 21, 1937]

They should direct their efforts toward the creation of a suitable morale for the tactical tasks of their unit: a morale of offense or defense, according to the course of the struggle.

#### FOUR COMMISSARS' BRAVERY

During the fighting, in which my unit participated (11th International Brigade, Thaelmann Battalion), the political commissars were always the first to advance and the last to retreat. I can recall no exceptions to this rule. On the Brunete front, during July 1937, for instance, during the attack on Quijorna, I have seen company commissars decide the success of the attack by their heroic example. Their courage and their spirit of sacrifice inflamed the hearts of soldiers whom the savage fight had made uncertain. One day in the battle of Jarama (February 1937), the violence of fire from automatic armaments, artillery, and enemy tanks was terrifying and the attacks followed each other in trip-hammer rhythm all along the front. The crushing superiority of the technical equipment of the fascists caused a battalion of our sector to abandon its position. Four political commissars saved the situation in the following manner. Two of them remained in place with a score of volunteers and these heroes alone held back the ferocious attacks of three battalions of Moors for more than an hour. The tanks passed over their trenches four times and the fascists seemed decided on removing with artillery all the live trees in the sector. The two other commissars reorganized those who had fled to the rear, spoke to them shortly and energetically, and obtained from them a counter-attack which cost the enemy the loss of two hundred men and three tanks. While they were thus reintegrating their trenches, the commissar and fifteen of the men who had remained to hold the front line had been killed and the six survivors were all wounded—but the position was saved.

One of these two courageous commissars was a young mechanic, a member of the Uni-

fied Socialist Youth of Madrid. The other was an engineer and a member of a Catalan Anarchist Union. The twenty other combatants were all young peasants. Our comrade, Ernst Bickel of Zurich, who was reported missing several months ago, behaved in a similar manner as political commissar of the Thaelmann Battalion on the Madrid front in December 1936. One can never say too much about the heroism of such men.

The political commissar must always keep sight of the fact *that human forces are the most precious of all*. The material and spiritual well-being of the combatants, within the limits imposed by the war, should be the permanent preoccupation of the commissar. He should thus supervise the feeding, the dressing, the equipment, the quartering, the recreation, and the behavior of his troops, and see that they are rationally organized. He should likewise ascertain regularly that the wounded are well taken care of.

Commissars also control the continual perfecting of the fighter's technique, the instruction of troops, the assimilation of the lessons learned in battle by both the commander and the soldiers; the supply, conservation, and utilization of arms, munitions, and technical material; the observation of military secrets and the fight against espionage and provocation in the ranks of the army.

THE ARMY AND THE PEOPLE

A primary task of the political commissar is to forge the closest links of fraternity and mutual aid between the army and the civil population. The Republican Army is, before all else, the army of the people. It is composed and directed by workers, peasants, petty

bourgeois, artisans, and intellectuals who fight for the interests of all the working masses. It draws its vital force from such people.

One of the great weaknesses of the fascist army rests in the hostility of the civil population towards it. These people detest, and justly so, the invading Italians, the brutal Nazi officers, the Moors, the Foreign Legion, the Civil Guard, and all the Brown Shirt and Black Shirt strutters. But, we must remember, it was the heroic people of Madrid who permitted the Fifth Regiment and the Anarchists of the Durrutti Brigade to save the city. In November 1936, precisely because the women of Madrid fed and refreshed the troops, dug trenches, erected barricades, and even fired guns; precisely because the entire civil population of the city united with the militia in a Popular Front struggle, tightly collaborating for defense—Franco was not able to keep his promise of drinking vermouth at the Cafe Molinero on the Gran Via. The people of Madrid still laugh about this and the children have made a song about it. The commissariat of the army itself had made a rule of conduct charging the commissars with establishing fraternal relations with the authorities and with the civil population, to respect their goods, to avoid any sort of civil abuse, to grasp every occasion in rendering a public service, and constantly to show the people the active sympathy of the troops.

While stationed in the region of Guadalajara, my battalion established its quarters for a month in a little village behind the front. Our soldiers helped the peasants gather the harvest, our doctors cured their sick, our commissars occupied themselves in politically educating the villagers, teaching the illiterate to

read, and organizing celebrations with the youths of the village. They even created a nursery for the children. The friendships which the army thus made were deep and durable. Such bonds attach the population to the army. They are tightened through such a broad and continuous policy of the People's Front. This policy the commissars apply to prisoners of war by demanding that even these be respected and treated humanely. They work to develop such friendly solidarity among the enemy by means of tracts and loudspeakers.

ONLY POPULAR-FRONT POLITICS

The political commissars are the best guarantees of the unity of the Popular Front and its best builders. They do not use or emphasize the politics of their personal organizations but preoccupy themselves with strengthening everything that unites the workers to the peasants; the middle classes to the intellectuals; the Socialists to the Communists; the Republicans to the Catholics and the Anarchists; the unions of the UGT to those of the CNT; and the Spaniards to the Catalans. They fight without relief or mercy against all enemies of the people and of unity, against the saboteurs, the ambushers, the speculators, Trotskyites, and the Fifth Column.

Naturally, for the political commissars to be able to accomplish these multiple tasks it is necessary for them to choose collaborating specialists, commissars for cadres, newspaper editors, cultural militia, etc., and also to be themselves men of education in the full meaning of that word.

The necessity of their existence need no longer be demonstrated. Nevertheless they have their adversaries. These are recruited from among the enemies of the people. The Trotskyites accuse the commissariat of war with being exclusively Communist (which is far from the truth) because it is as energetic and thorough as the Communist Party of Spain and because young men play a preponderant role in it. The basis of this whole question is one of social character. It is necessary to choose between an army drawing its strength from the political consciousness of its soldiers and an army like any imperial army, in which all political activity is feared like the plague and is rigorously repressed because certain people want to make of such an army an instrument to be used *against the people* in their fight for justice and *for the defense of the privileges of the ruling class*.

Today my own country, Switzerland, is menaced by Italian and German fascism, the identical invaders of Spain. The day when this menace springs, the absolute necessity of cleansing the Swiss army of its fascist officers will be understood, as well as the basing of its defensive power on the political consciousness of the anti-fascist people of Switzerland. The example of Austria has shown us that it is not possible to defend the independence of a nation without the collaboration of the workers and farmers. May the experiences of the Spanish war open the eyes of the people of every democratic country. R. LUC.



COMMISSAR IN ACTION. Dave Doran, the first political commissar of the Lincoln-Washington Battalion, talks over the military situation with the soldiers.



COMMISSAR IN ACTION. *Dave Doran, the first political commissar of the Lincoln-Washington Battalion, talks over the military situation with the soldiers.*

# A Brave Man Is Dead

Granville Hicks writes a friendly appreciation of Robert Hallowell, artist colleague of John Reed, who set himself to bring art to the people.

**T**HERE was a death over on Staten Island the other day, the death of a great man. The newspaper obituaries did not say he was great, and perhaps his greatness would be hard to prove; but I think most of those who knew Bob Hallowell feel about him as I do. One could not talk with him for five minutes without recognizing the almost unique integrity of the man and sensing his infallible discrimination between shams and realities. Though he was well on in his forties when I first met him, he had zest for new experiences, an unflagging capacity for heroic decisions, and tremendous courage. It was what these qualities demanded of him in a world such as ours that killed him at the age of fifty-two.

Robert Hallowell belonged to the class of 1910 at Harvard—the class of Walter Lippmann, T. S. Eliot, and Jack Reed. Unlike those three contemporaries, who were to become famous in their various ways, Hallowell fitted into one of the typical Harvard niches. There was a Harvard pun in those days, "Hallowell be thy name," and, though Bob belonged to one of the less prosperous branches of the family, he had no difficulty in winning the kind of social position in the college that Reed, for example, craved, fought for, and did not achieve. He was not an outsider, but he was something more than a conventional insider.

## JOHN REED'S FRIEND

Hallowell and Reed both won places on the staff of the *Lampoon*, Hallowell because of his relatively good drawings, Reed because of his absolutely bad jokes. They became and remained close friends. Bob Hallowell could not do what Jack Reed did. He was incapable of the slashing gestures and irrevocable commitments out of which Reed's life was made. He stood a little aghast at Jack's college pranks, and marveled at the saga of the Dutch Treat Club, Paterson, Mexico, the War, and Russia. But he laughed at the condescension with which Lippmann, for instance, signalized his unlikeness to Reed. He never denied that he wished he could be like Jack. And he told me once that he had never made an important decision without asking himself, not what Jack would have done but what Jack would have thought he ought to do.

On his side, quite obviously, Reed felt an admiration for Hallowell, but it was accompanied by a certain anxiety. Knowing well the temptations to which he was subjected, Reed feared that Bob might succumb to convention. He kidded him gently, in *The Day in Bohemia*, and he advised him, for his own good, to accept the treasurership of the *New*

*Republic*. He also cursed out Bob's Wall Street-Harvard Club friends with passion and thoroughness.

## SUPERB COURAGE

As a matter of fact, Reed need not have worried about Hallowell, who had a kind of stubbornness that made it just as impossible for him as it was for Jack to sink into the easy ways of upper-middle-class banality. The proof of his fearlessness came after Reed's death, which was a pity, for Reed would have applauded the decision that most of Bob's friends viewed with skepticism. In 1925 he resigned as publisher of the *New Republic* and turned to painting. I am no critic of art, as Bob, with a good many shakings of his head, would have been the first to say. But I know that his water-colors deserved the praise they won and that the wisdom of the man got itself expressed in his portraits. Beyond all that, however, I know there was superb courage in his becoming a painter. He was not merely doing what he wanted to do; he was dedicating himself to the proposition that beauty is the birthright of all the American people.

During the years that I knew him he was far more concerned with this social problem than with his own painting. He saw that the depression had put an end to the patronage of art by the wealthy, and, though the process had brought many artists, himself included, to penury, he welcomed it. He ardently wanted



JOHN REED. *The above painting of John Reed by Robert Hallowell now hangs in Harvard University's Adams House, and was used as a frontispiece and dust-jacket decoration for Granville Hicks' life of John Reed. Just to complete the circle, Hicks, now a counselor at Harvard, is quartered in Adams House.*

artists to find their support in the people, and he evolved dozens of schemes, practical and impractical, to achieve this end. It was this interest in a people's art that led him to applaud the Federal Art Project, in which he served for two years as an assistant director.

I would not suggest for a moment that Hallowell was interested only in giving people a chance to see good pictures. He had an alert conscience as well as the sensitivity of an artist, and he was aware of all the suffering that goes on in our country and in the world. To me, as he knew, his political thinking never seemed to go far enough, for he believed that something less than a complete economic change might suffice. But I knew that his work was on the right side, and I knew where he would stand in whatever struggles the future might bring. He himself admitted freely that the Communists might be right, and he was always ready to unite with us in fighting for the ends in which he believed.

## ARTIST AND SOCIETY

Because of his political outlook, he thought it possible for artists to find some satisfactory adjustment to the existing economic order, and, misdirected as his efforts often seemed, his spirit was magnificent. His last enterprise, if it had its pathetic as well as its tragic aspects, was proof of his sincerity and of a kind of recklessness that Jack Reed would have approved. Like William Morris before him, he became convinced that, if the public was not ready or able to patronize the fine arts, perhaps it would patronize the handicrafts. He set himself, therefore, to the task of making quasi-useful articles, such as andirons and door-knockers, that were works of beauty. By the use of machine techniques, he discovered, the work of first-rate craftsmen could be sold as cheaply as the hideous objects carried by department stores. Into this enterprise he put all his financial resources as well as his abundant energies. Here, he believed, was a way in which the artist could maintain his integrity within the framework of our system, and he wanted to prove his point to other artists. It was in this struggle that he exhausted himself.

## WHERE HIS GREATNESS LAY

It would be easy to point out that Bob Hallowell's premature death was one more of the tragedies of art under capitalism, just as it would be easy to dwell on his failure to understand the system in which he was forced to do his work. But it is better to make clear where his greatness lay. You could not know Bob Hallowell without realizing the terrible human importance of the revolution—all the more strongly because he was not, in any sense of formal avowal, a revolutionist. I have said and I believe that the revolution would justify itself if it meant no more than decent physical conditions for all the people. But it does mean more than that. It means the release of human capacities that cannot function in the world we have now. Bob Hallowell's life was evidence of how much of magnificence there is to be released. GRANVILLE HICKS.





JOHN REED. *The above painting of John Reed by Robert Hallowell now hangs in Harvard University's Adams House, and was used as a frontispiece and dust-jacket decoration for Granville Hicks' life of John Reed. Just to complete the circle, Hicks, now a counselor at Harvard, is quartered in Adams House.*

# Forsythe

## Thanks for the Brickbats

AS A general thing I am careful not to answer my critics lest I receive a wallop which will really knock me on my can, but the brick throwing which followed my recent words on the theater has created such a beautiful shindy that I can't stay out of it. It may be unfair to enter it as an argument but the condition of raw nerves revealed by the replies indicates either a deep sense of guilt or proves that the myth of the theater is more firmly a part of the national consciousness than I had suspected.

To be honest about it, I am as much a victim of the myth as anybody else. For years I have been trying to write for the stage and will probably be at it, as unsuccessfully as ever, when the last gurgle subsides in my gullet. But the fact that I am a quaint dope is no reason for deluding myself. I'd like to make a little money and be well thought of and see my brain child listed in lights over a theater entrance. For years I used to cherish the notion that by so doing I would be influencing the thought of the times. If I realize at length that there are other and better ways of influencing our times than by having a play on Broadway, I certainly have no intention of keeping playwrights from being playwrights. What I should like to do, however, is keep good novelists and good artists in other fields from sacrificing themselves for the sake of a silly theatrical success.

Brother Samuel Sillen has not only furnished an extremely cogent analysis of my views but has fortunately opened up the subject of my former article which was called, much to my disgust (editors having their way with you in such matters), "Down With the Novel." The central theme of that article was simply: "Novels should be written by novelists." I went further and said that the novel was a dying form, a thing which I still believe, but that is quite different from saying that on Wednesday, March 8, 1939, the novel will fall flat on its face and expire. Because I so obviously speak with the voice of posterity and tend to think exclusively in terms of eons, I caution my readers to listen carefully: that the theater is definitely becoming narrower in its influence is plain; that it is dead or will die does not necessarily follow.

What I was trying to do in the case of the novel was to discourage good biographers, essayists, poets, and economists from dropping whatever they were doing to rewrite for the nine hundredth time the legend of Frankie and Johnnie. A good novelist is a joy forever and must be unconfined, but a bad novelist is

a punk, particularly if he happens to be a good biographer who has been wheedled into the business by the myth (fostered by publishers wanting profits) that the novel is really the thing for any decent writer to be engaged on.

In short, I am opposed to myths, no matter in what form they appear. When I say that the theater in America is limited in its effect upon our national culture and almost entirely a plaything of Broadway, I mean just that and am not moved by the exceptions which are brought up to confute me. The success of *Waiting for Lefty* and *Plant in the Sun* does not alter the case. They are one-act plays which have been used widely because they are suited to amateur and workers' groups. What full-length plays have had the same fate and what, for example, is Mr. Odets engaged on now? He is writing plays for Broadway, which is to say New York City and such few larger cities as may be reached by a short road trip. From this I am not going to the other extreme of saying that Odets should cease writing plays and become a novelist. I am saying that any successful novelist who deserts his craft to become a playwright on the ground that he is advancing either his views or his art is nuts. Nothing could be more pathetic than the sight of Mr. Sinclair Lewis taking up his career as an actor, speaking of the renaissance of the theater, and furnishing a play called *Angela is Twenty-two* as his contribution to the renaissance.

Margaret Larkin has written a sensible statement of what a chain of workers' theaters could mean in this country and with that I am in wholehearted agreement. If the theater can be made national again, all I have written can be ignored. The success of the Federal Theater Project is heartening and an indication of what the future of the stage in America could be, but the reactionaries are doing their best to ruin it and even at its best it has never claimed the allegiance of American playwrights. I ask you to find me a solitary author who is willing to forego a Broadway production for the sake of one by the Federal Theaters. The myth of the theater is so widespread that playwrights will sell their souls for a Broadway production even if it be offered by the sleaziest shoestring ever invented.

In the furore which accompanies the activities of the New York stage we are likely to forget that it means almost nothing in Terre Haute, Ind., and Oskaloosa, Ia. At the present moment Los Angeles relies for its theatrical fare on two revivals done by the Federal Theater. There is nothing in San Francisco; Chicago recently had four shows in town, two of them revivals. When Bernard Simon quotes figures to prove that *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* has already been seen by more people than read *It Can't Happen Here*, the novel, he overlooks the fact that the novel got into practically every town in the country; the play has reached to date only a New York and upper-class audience and will be years in reaching the others, if it ever does.

It has become almost a cliché to speak of

the "carriage trade" at which most Broadway productions are aimed, but clichés are often the purest forms of truth. If it had been left to Broadway, *Waiting for Lefty* would never have amounted to anything; the play finished a short run in that atmosphere with the greatest difficulty. *Sing Out the News* was a failure because the people who could afford to see it would have none of its pro-New Deal views and the others couldn't get in. *Pins and Needles* added the final ironical touch to the situation by immediately raising its prices after it became a success, thus doing its slight bit to narrow the appeal of the stage to those with gold in hand. With the pressure of the upper-class theater-going public always in mind, even the Group Theater has had to yield to it, and I say it with the greatest regret. If it produced a play with bite even in these whirling times, it would risk its life—and it knows it from previous sad experiences.

If you ask my views, once and for all, they are that novels should be written by novelists, plays should be written by playwrights—and there should be an end of myths which act to divert good artists from their true bent. When I ask that artists remain within the medium which allows them to reach the greatest audience, I am not asking them to sacrifice themselves artistically. If you must write plays, go ahead, but don't rationalize it into a theory that you are at last walking among the immortals. You may be so hipped by the smell of grease paint that you will feel that life can be complete only if you push your handsome face into a closeup shot kissing an actress, but don't try to prove from this that the theater is all-important. It definitely is on the wane. It is not dying and as I said in my previous article it is immensely valuable in supplying originality and freshness to the drama, but please let us have an end of this illusion that it belongs with the gods. It does only if it functions properly, which at present it is not doing. Miss Larkin has the right idea: it must be taken out of the hands of the audience which now possesses it exclusively. It must either be made national or it must be regarded fundamentally as a literary and pleasantly mercenary exercise.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.

## We Told You So

"MUNICH finished Czechoslovakia's independence. But it did more. France advanced into Czechoslovakia's previous position. Like Czechoslovakia before Munich, France is now fighting for its existence as an independent power. This is the meaning of Italy's demands for French territory. These constitute France's Sudetenland."—THEODORE DRAPER, NEW MASSES, January 17.

"Now France is in somewhat the same position as Czechoslovakia was last year, for it is her turn to give way to Mussolini as the Czechs gave way to Hitler—anyhow, such are the expectations in Rome."—HAROLD CALLENDER, New York "Times," February 12.





Gropper

# New Masses

ESTABLISHED 1911

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## No Right To Veto

THE geysers of indignation that spurted from certain eminent tory senators in the dispute over President Roosevelt's appointment of Floyd H. Roberts to a federal judgeship in Virginia invite the suspicion that there is more involved here than meets the naked eye. On the surface the President was merely attempting to break through a deeply encrusted tradition that such appointments must meet the approval of the senators from the states involved. The Constitution provides that these appointments be made "with the advice and consent of the Senate," but, as the President pointed out in his letter to Judge Roberts, it nowhere gave one senator or two senators from the nominee's state the privilege of vetoing an appointment. This is, in effect, what Senators Glass and Byrd have done in regard to Judge Roberts, and the Senate, acting in accordance with an unwritten rule of senatorial courtesy, has upheld their veto.

All of this may appear to be a quibbling over technicalities, but what is involved, and Senator Glass has bluntly stated as much, is something deeper. The President is here continuing the struggle which he began in the primary campaign to break the power of the Southern bourbons in the Democratic Party. One source of that power is the patronage machines which the Copperhead Democrats have built up with the aid of the New Deal in the past. In the primary campaign these pure-hearted Galahads, who inveigh so piously against "politics in WPA," did not scruple to use their hordes of mercenary jobholders to defeat the New Deal's fight for the people.

Admirable as the President's appointment of Judge Roberts and his subsequent letter are in principle, one may, however, question the wisdom, in view of the relation of forces in Congress, of his inviting battle on such unfavorable ground, particularly when the

immediate issue is definitely secondary. The President has fought hard for Judge Roberts, but the administration did not fight nearly so hard against the Dies committee—a much more important question. The New Deal cannot afford to dissipate its energies; it needs all its heavy artillery for the big battles on domestic and foreign issues.

## Socialist Planning

THE contrast between capitalism and socialism is underscored in the draft third Five-Year Plan for the expansion of Soviet economy and cultural life. In the capitalist countries, a new world economic crisis increases the unemployment and poverty of the masses, corrodes social values, and sets the stage for wars initiated by fascism. The spread of capitalist crisis makes all the more significant the new program for the spread of socialist progress in the Soviet Union.

In announcing the draft plan last week, Premier Molotov emphasized the main achievements of the preceding plans. The division of society into exploiters and exploited has been eliminated in the USSR. The collectivization of agriculture has been completed. The socialist system of production today prevails throughout the Soviet Union. Socialist society now consists of two friendly classes, the workers and peasants; and the boundaries between these two classes, as well as between them and the intellectuals, are gradually vanishing. As Stalin has said, "the first phase of Communism—socialism—has in the main been established."

Under the second Five-Year Plan, the average wage of workers and office employees increased by 113.5 percent. Between 1933 and 1937, the income distributed among collective farmers increased four and one-half times. The cultural revolution during the years of the second Five-Year Plan witnessed the increase of students in the elementary and secondary schools from 21,300,000 to 29,400,000. The number of students in higher educational institutions increased to 552,000.

On the basis of these achievements, the new Five-Year Plan outlines a program of expansion by 88 percent of industry, building construction, and cultural life for the period of 1938-42. The main economic job now is to reach and outdistance the most developed capitalist countries. The development of machine construction and heavy industry will be stepped up. Power output will be doubled. There will be a 70 percent increase in the production of consumers' articles, and a 53 percent rise in agricultural output. The average wage of workers is to be increased by 35 percent. State expenditures on social insurance, education, public health, and cultural services to workers will be considerably

expanded. General secondary education will be introduced in all cities, and in the villages and national republics a minimum seven-year education program is to be established. During the third Five-Year Plan, 1,400,000 technicians and 600,000 specialists are to be trained in the universities. Raising the cultural-technical level of the people will be a primary objective.

Premier Molotov's report expresses the spirit in which this plan will be carried out. In view of the general crisis of capitalism, "All the more responsible are our obligations as builders of the first socialist society, a society which has already succeeded in finally standing on its own feet politically and economically, a society full of strength and confidence in victory, a society bearing good cheer and confidence in the rapid liberation of the working people of all countries."

## The Scientists Speak

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, who fought for the freedom and equality of an oppressed race, would have agreed with Secretary of Agriculture Henry A. Wallace that the racial theories of Nazi Germany are "pure scientific faking." Lincoln, indeed, would have been pleased at the entire spirit and purpose of the gathering that took place on his 130th anniversary in twenty-seven American cities and university towns throughout the country, under the sponsorship of a committee of scientists led by Columbia University's Prof. Franz Boas. The group, known as the Lincoln's Birthday Committee for Intellectual Freedom and Democracy, focused attention on the following four questions:

1. How can the scientist ensure freedom of research and socially useful application of the fruits of his research?
2. How can scientists and educators help to combat racial, religious, and other forms of discrimination which violate the letter or spirit of the Declaration of Independence and the Bill of Rights?
3. How can the schools best meet the obligations which rest upon them as fortresses of democracy?
4. How can the government most effectively assist the expansion of science and culture?

Secretary Wallace was the principal speaker at the principal meeting in New York City. Wallace, with humor and with due seriousness, blasted all theories of racial hierarchy. His subject was "Racial Theories and the Genetic Basis of Democracy," but he did not fail to mention the economic basis that must of necessity accompany the scientific. "I for one will not be confident," he said, "of the continued survival of American democracy if millions of American workers and their families are condemned to be relieved all their lives, with no place in our

industrial system." Prof. Clyde Miller, whose duty it was to talk directly of the economic basis of democracy, amplified Wallace's statement still further and with complete justice to the subject. Miller, drawing on his experiences as a propaganda analyst, added mention of the menace to democracy of Father Coughlin and Martin Dies.

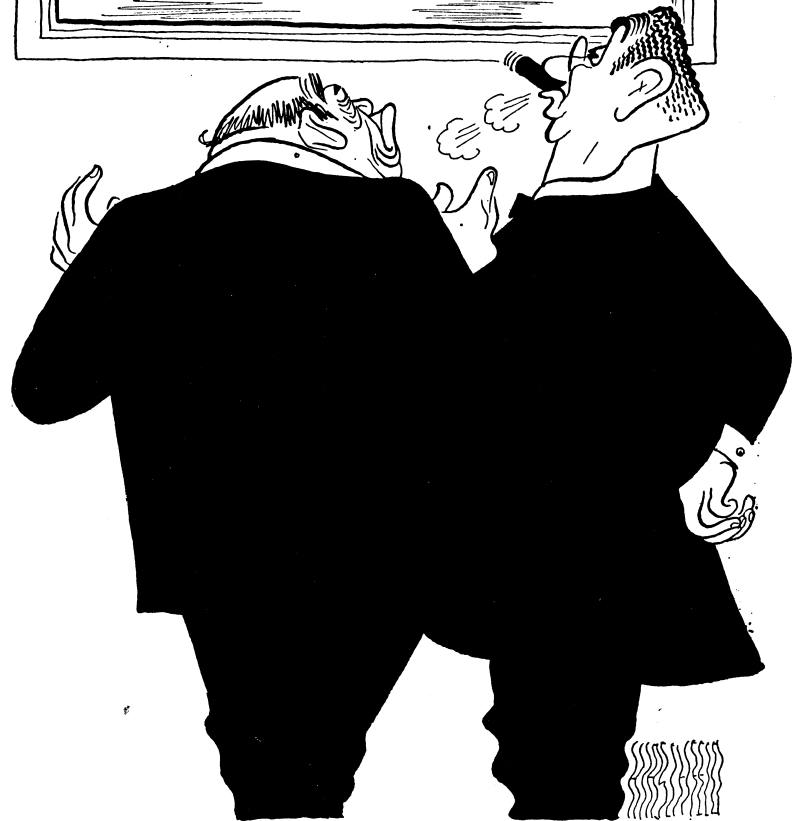
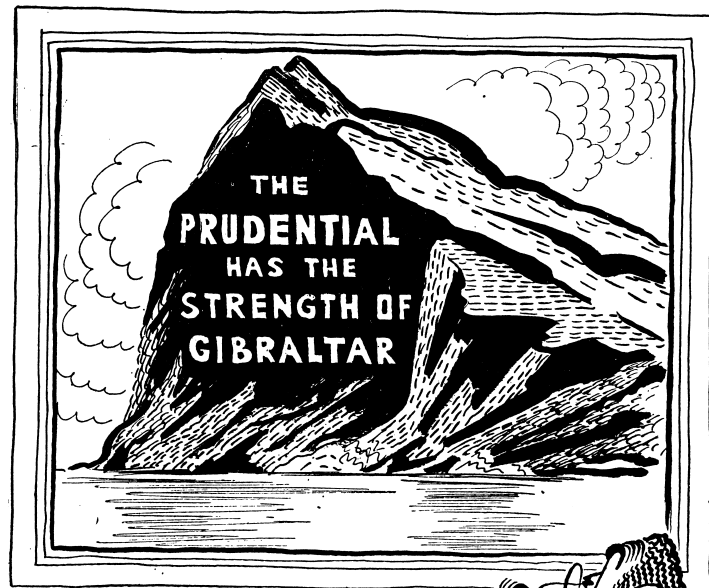
Jan Masaryk, son of the chief founder of the Czechoslovakian republic and its former ambassador to Britain, spoke of the consequences of Munich and proposed a democratic conference which would not exclude the United States and the Soviet Union. Professor Boas, Chairman Harold C. Urey, and Dr. Ordway Tead also spoke, each adding the fruits of his own experience to the struggle for democracy. The meeting, as an example and a promise of what America's scientists plan to do in defense of democracy, was the finest kind of celebration of the service given democracy by Abraham Lincoln.

### Japan at Hainan

AT 3 a.m., on February 10, Japanese troops occupied Hainan Island off the coast of Indo-China. This move, however, was not primarily directed at China, but at France (Indo-China), Great Britain (Hainan cuts across the sea lane between Hongkong and Singapore), the Netherlands (Dutch East Indies), and—the United States (Hainan is only seven hundred miles from the Philippines). Here is another omen of the "long peace" which Hitler promised in his Reichstag speech.

Like the Japanese drive into the British sphere of influence in South China last November, the seizure of Hainan owes its origin to the Munich settlement. Surrender to fascist aggression is the mother of still more aggression. And the pitiful effort of the Daladier government to placate the Japanese two months ago by closing the roadways across Indo-China through which supplies were being received by the Chinese government has now been rewarded with this bayonet thrust into the very back of the French empire. It is significant that the Japanese consulted Berlin and Rome, but not Paris, before making their move on Hainan. Thus France is being squeezed at both ends, with Mussolini and Japan twisting the screw.

Commenting on the Japanese coup, Chiang Kai-shek emphasized the grave consequences for the United States if the Japanese are permitted to maintain their hold on this strategic base. "Japan will next place herself in a position to control Guam," he said. But men like Senator Nye and Representative Fish would say, of course, that Chiang was merely making propaganda for the Roosevelt administration's proposal to fortify Guam.



Hirschfeld

*"Drat that Chamberlain. This used to be a good trademark."*

Despite the bland assurances of reactionary isolationists, however, the fascist threat to this country is real. Further evidence of it is contained in a *New York Times* dispatch by T. R. Ybarra from Costa Rica. Ybarra reports that the Japanese have bought hundreds of acres of land on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica, near the port of Puntarenas, where they have started to grow cotton. Experts say that this venture cannot possibly be profitable, but it so happens that the Japanese land would make an ideal landing place for planes. And it is only 250 miles from the Panama Canal.

It is clearer than ever that no false neutrality or scuttle-and-run policy can protect American democracy in a fascist-menaced world. Around totalitarian aggression

America must have the courage to build, together with all those in other nations who are of like mind, a stockade of positive action for peace and democracy. Anything else is suicide.

### Nazis Forced to Retreat

THE German proposals for "orderly emigration" of Jewish refugees from the Reich do not, of course, indicate a basic change in Nazi race policy. Whatever concessions have been made represent a strategic retreat in the face of world opinion and economic pressures which the fascist regime cannot ignore. The systematic assault on the Jews after Munich was followed by a sharp decline in German foreign trade, a decline

which gave still another push to the tottering structure of Nazi economy.

During the past week, many signs pointed to the same conclusion: Nazi leaders are engaged in a frantic search for markets, credits, raw materials, and gold. The conquest of the Sudetenland has created more economic problems than it has solved. Pressure is being put on Czechoslovakia to hand over one-third of its gold reserves to Germany, and to pay in gold for coal and electric power from the Sudetenland. Nazi agents in America are angling for a barter agreement with Midwestern farmers whereby German manufactured goods would be traded for American lard. According to the New York *Times'* financial correspondent in Berlin, the Reichsbank has drawn heavily on the accumulated funds of the German Labor Front, the savings banks, and similar semi-public institutions and enterprises where workers' funds, skimmed by the government from meager wages, accumulate. The "flexible" policy of the Reichsbank is tied up with the "orderly emigration" policy.

The Nazi concessions to refugees are in the form of vague and qualified promises. Some Jewish business will be reopened, presumably. Jewish workers who are given "a chance of employment" will be segregated from other workers, though it is not at all clear how this segregation can operate in a factory. Other conditions for emigration are more precise. Emigration will be financed by a trust fund of at least one-fourth of the existing Jewish wealth in Germany—this in addition to the one-billion-mark "fine" imposed last November. Wage-earners will emigrate first, to be followed by their dependents after they have been established in other countries—a condition, it should be noted, which does not protect refugees against the ransom program of the past. At the same time, the plan as a whole does indicate a retreat, however temporary, from the remorseless pogroms three months ago. This retreat, we must once more emphasize, proves the effectiveness of world protest and economic boycott. Only a vigorous reinforcement of protest and boycott can win further and more substantial concessions for German refugees.

## The Death of Pius XI

**P** IUS XI, Pope and bishop of Rome died during one of the most crucial periods of the Roman Catholic Church. He died on the very eve of his conference of Italian bishops to discuss the breaches of the Lateran Treaty made by Mussolini. His successor will have one of the most trying posts in the world, for upon his political and religious perception will depend the future health of the Catholic Church.

For Americans it is a novel occasion, too. Due to technological advances in crossing the Atlantic, the American cardinals will be able to get to Rome and, for the first time in history, take part in the voting on the new Pope. Representing the greatest political and financial national group in the church, they have only three votes.

But it is to the Western democracies that the Catholic Church must look for support at present. Bankrupt Italy, under the domination of the anti-Catholic Mussolini, holds the Vatican itself in pawn. Hitler has openly and physically attacked Catholicism in Germany and has for years shut off all income to the Vatican. Austria, once the greatest stronghold of the Catholic Church in Europe, has now become a vassal of fascism, where Catholic money and property is confiscated as freely as that of the Jews. Czechoslovakia, with approximately eleven million Catholics

out of a population of fourteen million, is now under Nazi domination, ideologically and financially. In Spain, where the Nazi and Italian invasion has wrecked church property and impoverished the country, Catholicism and brutal fascism are one in the eyes of the people—particularly in the most Catholic part of Spain, the Basque country. France, where the Catholics are an integral part of the Popular Front, presents a healthy sign. Eire, with a small agricultural population, is developing symptoms of becoming another Spain, with the accumulation of church lands.

If fascism and reaction come to South America the church will be weakened there even more than it is now, with its impoverished, uneducated, and exploited people.

The twenty million American Catholics are the bulwark of the Roman Catholic Church today. The great mass of them are

## This Is the Free Press

**L**AST week the press of America lied to the people of America. With almost complete unanimity the newspapers declared, on a basis no stronger than the macabre eagerness of the publishers, that the Spanish loyalists had given up the fight against fascism. The implication, of course, was that the American people had no further reason for working directly to aid and to see that aid is given the people of Spain.

Last week in Washington Congress voted an appropriation of \$100,000 to the Dies committee, an appropriation to enable the Texas Red-baiter to do four times the damage he has already done, an appropriation to let Dies malign and slander his way across America, leaving the fascists untouched.

Perhaps in all this there is some explanation of why this magazine is coming to you for \$30,000. Telling the truth, encouraging democratic action, fighting Dies are seldom a sure road to prosperity. NEW MASSES has supported loyalist Spain, has urged your support, has fought Dies—and will continue to do so as long as the Spanish people and the American people fight for their democracy.

We need \$30,000—need it badly, *now*. We intend to publish this magazine fifty-two weeks a year until fascism lingers only as a memory of old men. We plan constantly to improve it, to make it a sharper weapon for your defense. *This* is the free press—no false armistice with fascism, no Jeremiads. And to do it we need you as a backer.

Send in your contributions now, \$10, \$5, \$1—more if you can. But whatever you send, rush it to NEW MASSES, 31 East 27th St., New York City.

in the democratic front, for progress and against reaction. But the corruption that has wrecked the church in Europe is showing itself here. The racists and fascists must be exorcised from the body of the church if it is to remain healthy and democratic.

## Justice Brandeis

**S**UPREME COURT Justice Louis D. Brandeis leaves the court a far different institution from the one he joined twenty-three years ago as an appointee of President Wilson. The court now has an assured liberal majority, and the phrase "Mr. Justice Holmes and Mr. Justice Brandeis dissenting" would find no counterpart today. The people will surely concur with President Roosevelt's hope that Louis D. Brandeis "will be spared for many long years to render additional services to mankind."

## It's a Racket

**T**HE pink-tea atmosphere with which certain members of the Temporary National Economic Committee have sought to invest the monopoly investigation acquired a decidedly astringent flavor with the opening of the inquiry into the nation's life-insurance companies. Chairman William O. Douglas of the Securities and Exchange Commission was polite but firm as he dug a probing scalpel into the structure and practices of one of the largest and most powerful aggregates of capital in the world. And one of his chief conclusions was that "mutuality is a sheer myth"; in other words, the 64,000,000 policy-holders who are supposed to own and control the \$26,000,000,000 insurance business do nothing of the kind.

The investigation has thus far revealed the highly concentrated character of the control of the insurance business (six out of the 308 American legal reserve life-insurance companies have 56.9 percent of the total assets); the powerful role played by the companies in every phase of our economic life through the purchase of corporate bonds, government securities, and farm mortgages; and the frustration of all democratic control through out-and-out chicanery.

It was the latter phase of the investigation that proved the most sensational. A number of agents of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. testified that the election of the board of directors every two years was completely fraudulent. Agents are compelled to forge the signatures of policy-holders and in some cases to vote in their own names. That the company—and undoubtedly the Metropolitan is not unique in this respect—does not even make a pretense of securing a democratic expression of the desires of its policy-holders is evident from the fact that in 1937 only 437,000 ballots were cast for the 27,000,000 Metropolitan policy-holders.

We trust the monopoly committee will delve further into the relations between the insurance companies and the policy-holders. In an article in the November 29 issue of *NEW MASSES* Oliver de Werthern, former head of the Life Insurance Adjustment Division of the New York State Relief Administration, gave a graphic account of the manner in which the Metropolitan systematically mulcts its policy-holders. These practices are undoubtedly typical of other companies as well. The labor policies of the companies would also bear investigation, and it is to be

hoped that representatives of the Industrial Insurance Agents Union (CIO) will be asked to testify.

## Progressive Lawyers

**F**IVE HUNDRED delegates representing five thousand American lawyers met in Chicago last week and acted on many of the issues now confronting the country. Urging maintenance of the Wagner act with no revisions, an extended WPA, laws against racial discrimination, friendly relations with Mexico, a national health program, and other progressive measures, the National Lawyers Guild added its voice to the chorus of progressive professionals and middle-class people.

Most important of all perhaps was the unanimous decision, based on six months of legal study and inquiry, that President Roosevelt has it within his power to lift the arms embargo on Spain. Following as it does on statements to the same effect by former Secretary of State Henry L. Stimson and others, it leaves the opposition on shaky theoretical ground. Hearst, Coughlin, and others who have fought for the maintenance of the embargo have contended that the President has no such rights. The declaration that he does have the power makes the issue one of support or non-support of the Spanish people—and hence of democracy.

## WPA Emergency

**T**HE President wasted no time in confronting Congress with its misdeeds: no sooner had he signed the deficiency WPA appropriation of \$725,000,000 than he exercised the power of an "emergency" clause to ask immediately for the \$150,000,000 which tory congressmen had chopped off the original request. There is a continuing emergency and F.D.R. was quick to remind Congress of it.

On another front the fight against the emergency was being carried on by the Workers Alliance. At its New York State convention the alliance considered an old-age pension plan suggested by the meeting's keynote speaker, Sam Wiseman. Such a plan would provide \$60-a-month pensions for Americans over sixty years of age. The formulation of a workable pension scheme would provide progressives with a heavy weapon against reaction. Dr. Townsend's movement was captured at the last polls by Republicanism: many a tory demagogue owes his election to the misguided Townsendites. A further Workers Alliance proposal asks a 20 percent increase for WPA workers and a 40 percent rise in home-relief allowances. These two recommendations will go far to meet the economic dilemma that reaction has brought on us.



FRANCO TAKES CATALONIA. A cartoon comment by Nils Berg, a veteran of the Spanish war, who had a finger of his right hand shot off in the fighting. He is learning to use his left hand to draw.



# Front Page Liars

The lords of the press gave Spain to Franco last week . . . A new low in American journalism . . . Its lesson for Spain's friends.

LAST week in Toulouse and Le Perthus, France, Premier Juan Negrin and Foreign Minister Julio Alvarez del Vayo said that loyalist Spain would continue to fight. Negrin flew to Valencia and said so again. Chief Loyalist Generalissimo José Miaja said that Spain would continue to fight. In the high Pyrenees a lost loyalist army worried and dogged the fascists despite the nominal conquest of Catalonia. In Central Spain eight million people worked on in the calm knowledge that their first task was the maintenance of their own liberty. In Figueras the Cortes, Spain's parliament, voted continued prosecution of the war.

These were the facts—available to all. Yet in that department of American society whose proper function it is to bring to the American people the latest developments throughout the world something very different happened last week.

Last week, in the American press, with tragically few exceptions, the indomitable Spanish people were scraping the Spanish earth with their knees, begging peace and mercy from the fascists. In the American press last week ex-Premier Juan Negrin, safe in France and anxious only for his own well-being, declared that the fight was over. José Miaja's troops were weary, aggravated and cantankerous, ill-disciplined and rebellious. In the American press last week the Spanish people's fight to maintain their hard-won democracy was over, done with, finished.

"Loyalists Seek Peace, Prepare for Surrender," said the *New York Daily News*, on Feb. 7, and across the country the *Los Angeles Times* answered, "Loyalists to Surrender Rest of Spain to Foes." There followed news stories of manufactured incidents and false statements—without so much as a Riga rumor to back them up—of the demolition of loyalist strength and morale following the Franco advances in Catalonia. The *New York Herald Tribune* printed an editorial obituary, "The Death of an Anachronism." Modern Spain, it said, has been a political miscarriage. Democracy there was born too soon or too late, and "At all events, the republic is dead." The next day, Wednesday, the self-styled liberal *New York Post* said in an editorial that it agreed with the *Tribune*, something the *Post* does not often admit, and asked, with unbelievable impertinence, that the loyalists shed "no more blood." Scarcely a word from the *Post* of the blood shed at Badajoz, at Guernica, at Durango, not a word of the blood now flowing in Catalonia or the blood that would flow if the Spanish people followed the unsought advice



of Mr. Stern's editorial writers. Not a mention of the execution squads and Franco's blacklist of two million names.

The false anticipation and wish-fulfillment of the lords of the press came at a time when it had a peculiarly significant effect on the American people. Seventy-six percent of America wants a loyalist victory and is conscious of the implications for our own national and social security in a fascist conquest of Spain,—as is graphically shown in the map on page 9. America knows what a fascist Spain will do to heighten the prospects for world war. When the press announced an armistice in Spain, the Congress of the United States was being besieged with demands for the lifting of the arms embargo. American democrats were rising to full consciousness of the distress of brother democrats in Spain, realizing more completely than ever before the tremendous courage of a people beleaguered.

The press laid down its hand too soon, however. It was with telling haste that Ameri-

can newspapers announced that Franco had won, for it showed where their sympathies were and added to the American people's disbelief in the newspapers. It was no Franco victory, and for the publishers it was the kind of victory that might well lead them to say, with Pyrrhus, "One more such . . . and we are undone."

We know now that Spain is fighting on, and that we must not heed the advice of those who tell us that the Spanish people have laid down their arms. That in mind, there can be no reason for us not to continue our fight in our own way. The embargo must be lifted; that comes first. Congress can still be made to heed our wishes, if we can make Congress feel them. Spain needs food, and that we should provide in abundance. Unceasing action in behalf of loyalist Spain to match the unceasing action of the Spanish people will produce the results we all want—victory against fascism, which would bring chagrin to the front-page liars.

# Reader's Forum

## Don't Be Angry

**T**O NEW MASSES: By this time Ruth McKenney has probably stopped boiling about George Kaufman's and Moss Hart's *The American Way* and calmed herself into a more realistic evaluation of the bards of Buck's County and their patriotic double talk. No, anger is not the final answer. Nor is hatred. Nor contempt. Nor, for that matter, any emotion. Not when one is faced with that most stubborn, most exasperating of all obstacles, emotional thinking.

As literature, of course, *The American Way* is preposterous. As a play, it is ridiculous. As a creative effort in any category it is practically devoid of all merit. But as a sign of the times its importance cannot possibly be underestimated. For here is the first commercially successful play to reach Broadway which definitely helps the fascists. But we attack fascism, say the authors. Precisely. The attack is the very method now being employed by the purveyors of Adolf's dirty dogmas throughout the land. Coughlin and Hearst and Dies disguise their poisonous propaganda pills with a sugary coat of chauvinism—consciously, intentionally. Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart are producing the same effect in their play—unconsciously, unintentionally. Thus two well-meaning authors, out of ignorance and naiveté, are helping to bring on the very thing they hate most, fear most, the very thing that would destroy them. Why is this so?

The dynamics of the times have set into motion a relentless process of polarization from which no one is free. The professional patriots know this, recognize this, and have taken a definite stand. Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart either do not know it or refuse to recognize it. The professional patriots are trying to push back the tides of history. Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart refuse to swim in its rising waters. Thus static thinking makes far stranger bedfellows than politics ever did. This has been the tragedy of Germany and Italy and Austria. It has been the personal tragedy of countless well-meaning but narrow-sighted liberals. It is the personal tragedy of Messrs. Kaufman and Hart. Sensing in a vague way, however, that civilization is being pried loose from its roots, they want desperately to keep pasted together the defective world they see crumbling about them. But this they are attempting to do with the equally defective tools of their consciences and minds which are the products of that world.

It is no accident that Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart have been able to produce successful plays more or less consistently. They are the theatrical spokesmen for that section of the middle class which thinks and feels exactly as they do. With their class brothers in the audience they are chained to similar thought-patterns, lashed by similar contradictions, and tortured by similar boomeranging compromises. Nor is it an accident that their plays are consistently devoid of genuine artistic merit. Art must reflect reality. This Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart are incapable of doing because they live in a world only half real. And even this half, time is mercilessly contracting. Thus the collaborators are emotionally compelled to reflect the world not as it really is, but as they see it, as it *seems* to be to them. They see it only in terms of themselves, in terms of their inner struggle. It is in this shadowy world that Kaufman and Hart write plays for people in that world. Bourgeois communicates himself to bourgeois and the bond of understanding pays off at the boxoffice.

But to live in an externally real world and be

incapable of contact with that reality is very much like being in a prison cell whose barred window looks out on a city teeming with life. It is exasperating. More. It is painfully unendurable. A way of life must be found if one is to survive and so the instinct of self-preservation produces one. As the prison walls to the prisoner, so do the intellectual and emotional limitations of the middle class become the confines of reality. And gradually everything within these bounds looms up as the *only* reality. But in these times history is impatient with mechanisms. External reality keeps pressing in from without. Hence the desperate device of the mechanism within the mechanism—little jokes about reality itself (fun-poking at the WPA or the New Deal), flights to the past, etc. And this is precisely where the paths of the villains and the innocents merge. For it is on this plane that the Kaufmans and Harts unwittingly help the Coughlins and Hearsts.

By appealing to sentimentality, vulgar patriotism, nostalgia, etc., they help to create the emotional climate in which fascism flowers. For these emotions are the very bridges that fascism must cross to get to the middle class. Emotion clouds the reason and relaxes the vigilance which must be maintained at all costs if the overt onslaught of the barbarians is to be warded off.

No, anger is not the final answer. The time is not yet when we can lump misguided playwrights with vile traitors and in a burst of anger declare them both equally culpable. We hope that time never comes. We can, in fact, prevent it from ever coming by striving, with a desperate patience, to point out to Mr. Kaufman and Mr. Hart and the millions like them the fallacy of their major premises and the path they must follow for their own salvation.

New York City.

STEVE MORGAN.

## Freedom's Best Soldiers

**T**O NEW MASSES: The men of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade are almost all home now; all except 125 who are in concentration camps on the French border and eighty who are prisoners of Franco—and those who will never come home.

These are dark days for Spain. But the men who left their homes and their jobs, who crossed an ocean and climbed the Pyrenees, who fought for two years alongside the Spanish People's Army, who gave their health and left their limbs and eyesight in Spain, these men know—as the Spanish people know—that so long as one Spaniard remains on his feet, just so long will the war against the invaders continue.

For thirty months the people of Spain have thrown their flesh against the steel of fascism. All of Hitler's and Mussolini's weapons of death and hundreds of thousands of men have not conquered the Spanish people. It is clear that fascism can never win on Spain's battlefields.

No, the war will be won or lost in London, Paris, and Washington. The American people, by compelling their Congress to act, can help fulfill the one condition necessary to a loyalist victory. The Spanish people have fulfilled all the other conditions. They are united behind a government of victory, a government which puts the prosecution of the war above all else. They have a People's Army strong enough and determined enough to win the war. But the army fights with its bare hands; it has no guns.

The veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade know better than anyone else that lifting the embargo is the key to the successful termination of the war; it is the key to the problem: how shall the fascists be halted?

They are among the ablest fighters in the battle to lift the embargo; they can become more effective, a hundred times more effective—if they are provided with the means to subsist.

They are home now, many of them with bullets and shrapnel still in their bones—in need of hospitalization, food, clothes, lodging, rest, bus fare back home. They need jobs.

For themselves they ask nothing. But restoring them to health, maintaining them until they find work, is not merely an act of charity, an expression of gratitude because they fought democracy's battles—your battles and mine. It is insurance that the war against the embargo will have in its front lines freedom's ablest soldiers.

The Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade have cared and are caring for thirteen hundred men. They are now reaching the end of their resources. The problem of rehabilitation is for some a long-term problem spreading over years. But it is also an immediate problem—unless \$10,000 is forthcoming within the next week or two, the Friends may now have to say to these men who made the greatest sacrifices in your behalf: "We have no money for your hospitalization, your medicine, your food."

We know you won't permit them to say such things to these men. The address is 125 West 45th Street, New York City.

New York City. LT. COL. JOHN GATES.

## The New "New Masses"

**T**O NEW MASSES: Congratulations on the last issue of *NEW MASSES*, both as to contents and form. If you keep up this standard you will certainly make big advances.

New York City.

EARL BROWDER.

**T**O NEW MASSES: I think your last issue was a swell job. The new cover has real punch. The contents were good. I think the idea of special numbers, in that case the Lincoln Brigade number, is good.

I believe this idea of special numbers is good not only from the viewpoint of general interest, but also from the viewpoint of circulation. It will give you new armies of boosters who will go out week in and week out to put the magazine over. And hundreds of these will become permanent readers and boosters.

Your editorial section was improved. There one found a well balanced and timely handling of foreign and domestic issues and a clear statement of progressive policies.

Your handling of Abe Lincoln was an expression of a recognition of the importance of keeping up with our best progressive traditions.

New York City.

CLARENCE A. HATHAWAY.

**T**O NEW MASSES: Well, I didn't think you could do it, but you have. The new format is even better and you should reach more people, which is the main thing. More power to you. Hemingway's piece on Spain is magnificent and Joseph North's story of the Lincoln Brigade boys is swell.

Forest Hills, N. Y.

MILLEN BRAND.

**T**O NEW MASSES: Congratulations to the new magazine I found on the newsstands last Friday. The cover is good, the type is clean and newsy, and the new writers are more than welcome. I didn't think it was possible to print on your paper photographs of the quality of the Lincoln pictures. The respects you paid to the American boys in Spain were the best I've seen yet. *NM* stacks up as the most exciting progressive review in America since you made these changes. It's the kind of magazine writers will want to appear in and thousands more readers will want to read.

New York City.

JOHN L. SPIVAK.

**T**O NEW MASSES: Congratulations to the entire staff. Half an eyeful of the new issue knocked my hat off. If the creative artists of America do not rally behind this splendid beginning to raise a mighty and defiant voice against reaction, then we deserve Mayor Hague for President.

New York City.

GEORGE COREY.

**T**O NEW MASSES: The word for the new *NEW MASSES* is "magnificent!"

New York City.

TED BENSON.

## Gay Rhymes for the People

C. Day Lewis, the brilliant English critic and poet, reviews the Auden-edited "Oxford Book of Light Verse." A socially intelligent anthology of vigorous popular poetry.

PERHAPS the most interesting anthology produced in 1938 was *The Oxford Book of Light Verse*, edited by W. H. Auden (Oxford University Press, \$3). The responsibility of editing one of these Oxford books, which are the classics of the anthology world, is considerable: Auden has taken it seriously, but has not been overawed by it into any conventionality of approach or choice. Light verse has come to be identified with *vers-de-société*, the work of such as Austin Dobson and W. S. Gilbert, the trivial flippancies of *Punch*. An anthology composed of such stuff would be about as unpalatable to our present taste as a dishful of sugared feathers, and Auden has avoided this impasse sensibly, if cavalierly, by starting from a new definition of the term. For his purposes "light verse" can mean any one of the following:

1. Poetry written for performance, to be spoken or sung before an audience. . . .
2. Poetry intended to be read, but having for its subject matter the everyday social life of its period or the experiences of the poet as an ordinary human being. . . .
3. Such nonsense poetry as, through its properties and technique, has a general appeal. . . .

This permits the inclusion of Chaucer, Pope, Byron, Tom Moore, English and American folksongs, Lear and Carroll, Burns and Hardy, and even poems such as Blake's "Auguries of Innocence," which—though they are not light or even popular verse in the ordinary sense of the word—are derived from a proverbial, popular style technically. The general attitude of critics in England toward this anthology is that it is an admirable anthology with the wrong title; honor would have been satisfied and no harm done, I think, if it had been called *The Oxford Book of Popular Verse* instead.

Anthologies of verse may be divided into two sorts—the objective on the one hand, the subjective and idiosyncratic on the other. The former are compiled by scholars, the latter by poets. An extreme example of the latter is Yeats' *Oxford Book of Modern Verse*, the immediate predecessor to Auden's in this series, a volume whose eccentricity and almost arrogant lack of impartiality raised critical hackles from every point of the compass. The fact is, of course, that if you want a catholic, disinterested, definite anthology, you should not entrust the job of compiling it to a poet. He will put in the poems that most appeal to his imagination, with little regard for their relevance and even less interest in presenting a complete picture of whatever subject he is supposed to be presenting. His book will be stamped and overshadowed by his particular

quality of imagination. Auden's anthology, though remarkably carboic, is not disinterested; it is, however, saved from being a procession of veiled enthusiasms and prejudices by the breadth of his sympathies and by a coherent line of choice.

This line is plotted out in an introduction which, summing up and clarifying as it does the scattered intuitions that lie behind a great deal of English postwar poetry, is of real importance to critics and poetry readers everywhere. To come upon an introduction like this in an Oxford Book of verse is just about as startling as to find a Socialist agitator standing on a soap box in the Bank of England. Not that it contains a word of Marxist critical jargon or waves even the tiniest Red flag at its readers. Auden has made his introduction what it is, not because he is a professor (in either sense of the word) of Marxist dialectic, but because he is an honest, sensitive, and intelligent poet who knows what is going on round about him and has consistently approached politics through his own imaginative medium. It is for this reason that the introduction is so stimulating and valuable. It begins:

Behind the work of any creative artist there are three principal wishes: the wish to make something; the wish to perceive something, either in the external world of sense or the internal world of feeling; and the wish to communicate these perceptions to others. Those who have no interest in or talent for making something . . . do not become artists; they dine out, they gossip at street corners, they hold forth in cafes. Those who have no interest in communication do not become artists either; they become mystics or madmen.

It is the constantly changing stresses between these "three principal wishes," Auden suggests, that make poetry what it is at any given time.

If, then, we are to understand the changes that do in fact take place, why in the history of poetry there should be periods of great fertility, and others comparatively barren, why both the subject matter and the manner should vary so widely . . . we must look elsewhere than to the idiosyncrasies of the individual poets themselves.

"The wish to make something," he argues, is what remains constant for the artist. The changing factors are "his medium . . . the kind of things he is interested in or capable of perceiving, and the kind of audience with whom he wants to communicate." From this he proceeds to his first definition of light verse and of its opposite, which is "poetical" poetry—the poet in "his singing robes."

When the things in which the poet is interested, the things which he sees about him, are much the

same as those of his audience, and that audience is a fairly general one, he will not be conscious of himself as an unusual person, and his language will be straightforward and close to ordinary speech. When, on the other hand, his interests and perceptions are not readily acceptable to society, or his audience is a highly specialized one, perhaps of fellow poets, he will be acutely aware of himself as the poet . . . In the first case his poetry will be "light" in the sense in which it is used in this anthology.

The final break with the "popular" tradition of poetry came in England as a result of the swift and radical social changes produced by the Industrial Revolution. The Romantic Revival created the type of poet and the type of poetry prevalent up to the present day: the poet became the Romantic Rebel; his verse was generated by friction against society, contempt for society, or withdrawal from it, rather than through sympathetic cooperation with it. This idea of the poet as a romantic, aloof, rebellious figure has now, in the mind of the average layman, entirely superseded the idea of the poet as craftsman and mouthpiece of society. But, as Auden points out, "this has not always been so." Even before the Industrial Revolution, difficult, obscure, highly "poetical" poetry had appeared in England. The paragraphs in which Auden outlines this change are the most significant in the whole introduction, and must be quoted at some length.

Till the Elizabethans, all poetry was light in this sense. It might be very dull at times, but it was light.

As long as society was united in its religious faith and its view of the universe, as long as the way in which people lived changed slowly, audience and artists alike tended to have much the same interests and to see much the same things.

It is not until the great social and ideological upheavals of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that difficult poetry appears . . . The more homogeneous a society, the closer the artist is to the everyday life of his time, the easier it is for him to communicate what he perceives, but the harder for him to see honestly and truthfully, unbiased by the conventional responses of his time. The more unstable a society, and the more detached from it the artist, the clearer he can see, but the harder it is for him to convey it to others. In the greatest periods of English literature, as in the Elizabethan period, the tension was at its strongest. The artist was still sufficiently rooted in the life of his age to feel in common with his audience, and at the same time society was in a sufficient state of flux for the age-long beliefs and attitudes to be no longer compulsive on the artist's vision.

An introduction of this sort necessarily raises a number of questions it has no space to answer. The degree of identity between the earlier poets and their audience, for instance, can be over-emphasized. That their "wish to make something" should have taken the meta-

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phorical form of making something in verse, rather than emerging through one of the more normal physical outlets, is in itself a sign that these men were to some degree social misfits and in consequence could never see exactly eye to eye with their public. Again, though it is salutary for us to be reminded that a satisfactory and thoroughly integrated society does not automatically do away with the poet's problems, I cannot altogether agree with Auden's implication that in such a society the poet will be necessarily biased "by the conventional responses of his time" to the detriment of his work. These responses do not have to be false and impose a certain falseness on the poet just because they are conventional; nor is there any reason, given certain social conditions and organization, why society as a whole should not be able "to see honestly and truthfully" and thus to guide rather than fetter the poet's imagination.

As a whole, however, and in reference to English poetry up to the present day, the paragraphs I have quoted—with their insistence on the two stresses of perception and communication whose tension has created the highest poetry the world has yet seen—are ones of brilliant illumination. Moreover, after tracing the course of poetry through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries up to present times, and putting forward a very interesting theory for the emergence of "nonsense poetry" in the Victorian Age, Auden concludes with these words:

The problem for the modern poet, as for everyone else today, is how to find or form a genuine community, in which each has his valued place and can feel at home . . . A democracy in which each citizen is as fully conscious and capable of making a rational choice, as in the past has been possible only for the wealthier few, is the only kind of society which in the future is likely to survive for long.

In such a society, and in such alone, will it be possible for the poet, without sacrificing any of his subtleties of sensibility or his integrity, to write poetry which is simple, clear, and gay.

For poetry which is at the same time light and adult can only be written in a society which is both integrated and free.

The last two paragraphs, and the word "adult" in particular, indicate Auden's conviction that poetry need not inevitably be cramped or distorted by having to "accept the attitudes of the society in which it is written."

This essay of his would stand by itself. But it is immensely reinforced by the illustration which the editor's theory receives in the body of the anthology. Here again we may be surprised by a few of the poems he has chosen—occasionally he appears attracted by the merely quaint or the uproariously ribald verse whose interest is historical rather than literary—but the collection as a whole is wonderfully diverse and vigorous. American readers will be especially interested to find here ballads such as "All The Pretty Little Horses," "Frankie and Johnny," "Casey Jones," "Cocaine Lil and Morphine Sue," "John Henry," "The Man on the Flying Trapeze," "Rye Whisky," a number of Negro spirituals and Appalachian folksongs, Herman Melville's

"Billy in the Darbies," and Vachel Lindsay's magnificent "Bryan, Bryan"—a poem I am ashamed to say I never came across before. In this context Auden writes:

The Border ballad could be tragic; the music-hall song cannot. Directness and ease of expression has been kept, but at the cost of excluding both emotional subtlety and beauty of diction. Only in America, under the conditions of frontier expansion and prospecting and railway development, have the last hundred years been able to produce a folk poetry which can equal similar productions of pre-industrial Europe, and in America, too, this period is ending.

And, we may safely add, this tradition of folk poetry, of popular verse, and of poetry which can be "simple, clear, and gay," will not be resumed till the common people of every land, coming into their own, resume the eternal struggle with nature, unimpeded by the rich exploiters, the careerists, and the maniacs of power.

C. DAY LEWIS.

## Max Lerner's Credo

A. B. Magil reviews "It Is Later Than You Think"

THE past ten years have been heartbreak house for traditional liberalism. The world has gone awry and the ancient virtues seem powerless to set it right. And as the crisis has deepened, many of the younger liberals, wrenched from their intellectual moorings, have undertaken the at times painful task of discovering new and more durable values to bind them with the real world. Max Lerner is one of those who have already found the new faith. His book, *It Is Later than You Think* (Viking Press, \$2.50) is both an eloquent affirmation of that faith—faith in militant democracy—and a program of action. It is the ablest, most sensitive, and clear-sighted discussion of the dilemma of democracy in the contemporary world and of the imperatives which that dilemma imposes that has come from a non-Marxist writer in this country. That the author has been strongly influenced by Marxism, derives most of his analysis and program from the Marxists, and looks toward the socialist society as the ultimate solution of democracy's crisis does not alter the fact that his thinking stems basically from the non-Marxist liberal tradition and represents in many respects an attempt to fuse Marxism with the ideology of middle-class liberalism.

### URGENCY OF ISSUES

The book is permeated with the urgency of the issues facing America and the world. It is later than you think, Max Lerner tells us. And he calls upon all thinking men and women to face calmly, without fear or panic, the realities of a world threatened by fascism and war, and to act while there is yet time.

The thesis of the book is that capitalist

democracy can stave off social collapse and the advance of fascism only if it becomes more militant, more "collectivist," more organically bound up with the people and their needs. The ultimate logic of this, Mr. Lerner points out, is socialization—in other words, the expansion of democracy through the elimination of capitalism.

The capitalist democracies of Europe [he writes] are today dying of a creeping paralysis of will. But that paralysis lies not in the common man but in the capitalists, torn between lust for profits and fear of the fascists, and in the liberal leaders, terror-stricken and impaled on their own syllogisms. . . .

I mean a democracy willing to act decisively when decisive action is required, unmoved by the fear of increasing governmental power, willing to use that power with swiftness and tenacity for social ends.

As against the *laissez-faire* economics of the classical liberal, Mr. Lerner argues for increased government intervention in the economic sphere in behalf of democratic objectives. And despite his reservations in regard to the Popular Front tactic, Mr. Lerner urges the creation of this type of alliance between labor and the middle classes as essential both for the survival of capitalist democracy and the advance to a new society. In his understanding of the dialectic connection between the defense of capitalist democracy and the struggle for socialism Mr. Lerner most closely approaches the Marxist position.

PREVIOUS DISCUSSION

The author's elaboration of his main thesis is on the whole so admirably done that it is unfortunate that he at times blunts the edge of his argument by misconceptions that reflect a failure to think certain problems through. There is, for example, the chapter called "The Left in Retreat" and particularly the section, "Marxism: Six Errors," which was published separately in the *New Republic*. In the December 6 issue of *NEW MASSES* I discussed in some detail these alleged errors,



John Loneragan

and there is no need to repeat. I wish merely to point out that one of the conclusions he advances in this section, that the majority of both the workers and the middle classes are incapable of revolutionary action and are foredoomed to be the prey of the Right, is repeatedly contradicted in the rest of the book. In fact, the entire argument of *It Is Later than You Think* rests on the premise that the common people can be masters of their own destiny, that a Popular Front bloc of workers and middle classes can defeat fascism and advance toward socialism.

The book is also studded with unfavorable references to the Soviet Union, and the author too often tends to lump socialist USSR with fascist Germany. True, he occasionally warns the reader against carrying this too far, but what is this but a warning against the logic of his own false analogy? Moreover, the book gives the distinct impression that Mr. Lerner for some reason felt it necessary to dissociate himself from Communism by a kind of oblique and thoroughly superficial running criticism of the Soviet Union, the Communists, and Marxism. Mr. Lerner is of course no Communist, but if he were giving a balanced view of his own attitude, he should also have indicated his points of agreement with the Communists—which far outnumber the differences. It seems to me that he has here succumbed to an inverted type of Red-baiting that afflicts other liberals as well. This attitude is unworthy of the militant democracy that Mr. Lerner espouses. Communism is part of the mainstream of the democratic thought and action of the world. It should be treated as such.

UTOPIAN PROPOSAL

The roots of Mr. Lerner's attitude toward the Soviet Union lie in his confusion in regard to the nature of capitalism and capitalist democracy. This is revealed in his discussion of planning under capitalism. Despite the fact that he has little faith in the readiness of the capitalists to abide by the will of the democratic majority, he believes it possible to persuade the tycoons of the twenty or thirty basic industries in this country to submit to the decisions of national planning boards. But since the capitalists will refuse to sell unless they receive what they consider large enough profits, and since the consumers will be unable to buy in quantities sufficient to stimulate production substantially unless prices are low, Mr. Lerner proposes a Utopian scheme by which the government would buy the unsold product from the capitalists so that they would suffer no loss on the total. This device is supposed to satisfy everybody and keep production going at full clip—though Mr. Lerner fails to tell us just where the government would get the money to subsidize the capitalists or how unplanned agriculture and the unplanned production of the lesser industries would fit into his perpetual motion machine.

This is not to say, of course, that some measure of planning is impossible in indi-

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vidual industries under capitalism or that restraints cannot be placed on monopolistic profiteering. But this is not the same as planning the production of the entire economic plant or even of its major industries. Mr. Lerner's illusions on this question are essentially the same as those of the leaders of international Social Democracy, particularly in the pre-1929 period. They are of a piece with the Hilferding-Kautsky theories of "organized capitalism" and "ultra-imperialism" (shared to a great extent by Bukharin), implying the elimination of the class struggle and economic crises and the attainment of political stability and permanent peace—all under capitalism. The fact is, however, that the basic anarchy of capitalist production and the tendency of capital to flow, not into those branches of industry whose expansion would benefit the people, but into those whose rate of profit is highest, cannot be abolished without abolishing capitalism.

Since he believes it possible to achieve a kind of collectivist society under capitalism, it is not surprising that Mr. Lerner likewise conceives of socialism as a sort of improved and perfected capitalism. He does not see that the economy and culture of socialism are qualitatively different phenomena, representing a sharp break with their capitalist precursors. His whole thinking on the subject of democracy under socialism is fetishistic, with the parliamentary party system, which is the peculiar creation of bourgeois democracy, exalted into an eternal principle. He fails to understand that socialist democracy, in order to permit a fuller realization of the popular will than is possible under capitalism, must be structurally different from a system designed to express the will of a minority. Mr. Lerner criticizes the USSR on the score that it operates through a single party and suppresses all political opposition. But what is the "tyrannical" one-party system of the Soviet Union? It is the system through which the vast majority of the people are able to express their interests and to carry on the struggle against anti-social minority groups, both within and without the country, whose activities no more deserve to be legalized than do the activities of underworld criminals in our own country. One must not confuse organized political opposition with criticism. Of criticism and self-criticism there is no lack in the USSR.

Mr. Lerner has actually provided his own refutation on this whole question of political opposition. While he writes of "the corruption of power" in the Soviet Union and declares that "The one thing on which a democratic collectivism cannot afford to compromise is the principle of an unlimited opposition," he himself criticizes the first Popular Front government in Spain because it failed to take "extraordinary measures of suppression in the interest of the safety of the state—measures to which the necessity for the insurance of democracy would have given the stamp of legality." And in discussing the possibility of a similar situation arising in the

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United States, he writes: "One can say only that a government that does not in this kind of emergency act decisively to control the army, the National Guard, the police force, and the radio, and to deal severely with treason is a government that is already lost before the first shot is fired or the first dynamo switch pulled." Excellent! But if drastic suppressive measures are under certain conditions necessary for the defense of capitalist democracy, how much more necessary are they for the defense of a socialist state completely encircled by a hostile capitalist world.

Yet, despite these blind-spots, Mr. Lerner's vision in respect to immediate tasks is on the whole clear. He calls for an uncompromising struggle against fascism. He urges a Popular Front to revitalize democracy and to enable it to move forward to higher goals. He asks of our era "only a chance to consolidate and continue the affirmative achievements of science and intellectual freedom in human history, to provide an enlargement of human life for the masses, to provide a base from which individuals can explore the possibilities of human effort."

A. B. MAGIL.

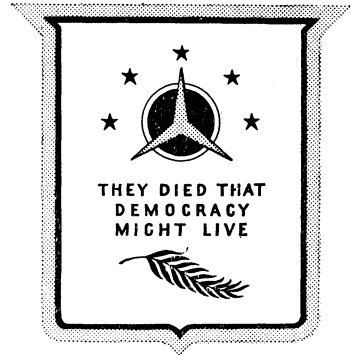
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"Dead Reckoning" reviewed  
by Kenneth Burke

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By his method, you may peer beyond some trivial advertisement to discern despair, migration, even "Amalgamated Death" (since the poet, after a secular fashion, is given to carrying out the churchman's injunction: "Thou shalt live a dying life"). The handwriting in a letter becomes the handwriting on the wall; and I feel sure that, with his expressive resources, he could readily transmogrify a pat salutation like "Dear Sir" into a prognosis of the vast collapse of Western culture.

Perhaps the quickest way to characterize his book (Random House, \$1.25) is by a paragraph of cullings, one from each poem, that convey the quality of the poet's burden: "shadows that stop for a moment and then



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There is a risk here, in the "statistical" quality of the perspective by which the poet sizes up the "thousand noble answers to a thousand empty questions, by a patriot who needs the dough." There is such limitation of subject matter as may come of taking the whole world as one's theme. All people look like ants, when seen from the top of a skyscraper—and the poet's generalized approach often seems like the temptation of a high place. Connected with this is an over-reliance upon accumulation and repetition, traits that derive also from his disposition to establish a very marked pattern, which he expands as a theme with variations. Hence, for my part, the items I liked best were "Pantomime" ("She sleeps, lips round, see how at rest" . . .) a poem of tenderness and meditation that is very moving, and the opening "Memo" ("Is there still any shadow there, on the rainwet window of the coffeepot". . .)—where the generalized plaint is introduced in less head-on fashion. "Devil's Dream" (a kind of "There but for the grace of God goes our author" theme) is another poignant accomplishment, by reason of the more personal note. The author's rhetoric of attack ranges from the slap to a tearing of the hair (with perhaps his "En Route" among the most successful of the generalized statement); and all his lines bear convincing testimony—in speech swift and clear—of estrangement in a world awry, where many are asked to face the emptiness of failure in order that a few may face the emptiness of success. **KENNETH BURKE.**

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**A**LTHOUGH audiences have neglected his plays almost as thoroughly as have producers, Albert Bein wears a proud name in the theater. *Let Freedom Ring*, produced by the Theater Union, was his only hit; *Little Ol' Boy*, like Philip Barry's *White Wings*, was a flop masterpiece; and *Heavenly Express* has had no production at all. His first movie script, *Boy Slaves*, should break the jinx.

The film is an uncompromising study of child labor in the turpentine camps of the South, lighted with episodes of beauty and Gorky-like characterizations of a gang of boys imprisoned in a resinous concentration camp. Bein knows the road kid well; that is part of his own past; he lost one of his legs under a Manifest Freight on the Santa Fe. His original work might have made a great movie without the Hollywood temporizers. As it comes out now, in RKO's handling, *Boy Slaves* is an excellent film but not a great one. When the score is checked up yonder, I want to be standing over the celestial commissar's shoulder reminding him that botching an honest script is a trespass more heinous than all the cynicisms in the average screen year.

Up to the very last episode the handling is true. A gang of kids, arraigned for petty marauding in a small town, are remanded to the custody of Mr. Albee, the owner of a turpentine camp, to make honest boys of them. It is high season in turpentine and Mr. Albee is a little more subtle in his enslavement of labor than the other bosses who shanghai workers from each other. The kids are locked in Albee's concentration camp, held legally by the credit extensions of the company store, forced to eat slop, and obliged to strip the sticky trees from "kin see to can't see." They organize a strike.

Perhaps Will Hays, to whom this is as taboo, or more so, than the inside of the feminine thigh proscribed in the code, did not realize that the strike was being pulled on him as well as Mr. Albee. The kids effect their protest by shinnying up the trees and staying there while they yell their demands. The first tree sitdown is broken by a boss trick and the desperate boys search for another strategy. They decide to write to Mrs. Roosevelt because she is a "maw" and is likely to understand. Each of them adds his own grievance, including Atlas, the Negro lad, who confides that his banjo is broken. One of them climbs the barbed-wire gates and runs through the swamps to mail the letter. But he becomes confused in the dark and circles back into a guard's clutch.

The overseer attempts to attack a young girl in the camp and she comes to the boys for protection. A riot of outraged youth ensues and fire breaks out from an overturned lantern. The kids rush the gates and escape, followed by bloodhounds. They are trapped in a mountain cabin and brought into court again. The noble judge (soft focus) tells them that society has erred against them and society will have to pay its debt. He sends them to a reform school where they can learn an honest trade and become good citizens. Out of the fire into the frying pan.

*Boy Slaves* has a basic strength in that it is a study of a group problem. Often enough, real situations of contemporary misery are attempted on the screen: Warner Brothers' films, particularly, excel in their realistic *mise en scène*—the hero and his people, poor and in trouble, seeking a way out. The social reality of such films is always betrayed near the middle when the story narrows down to the efforts of the hero alone to escape. The happy ending has him escaping, and the group which is in the same dilemma is conveniently forgotten. But Bein's film has no such diversion: the group stays together working out its own

destiny. The hurrah ending on *Boy Slaves* consequently is a garish and desperate stragem by the producers, changing the author's work to make the Hollywood conversion at the last possible minute. The quaint idea that a reform school solves the child-labor problem is the only cheap thing in this movie.

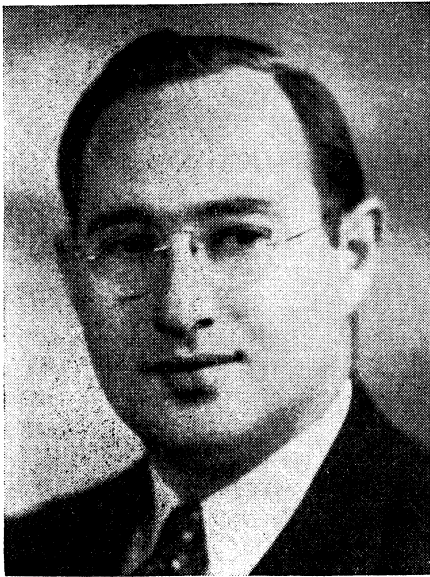
Being an uncommon departure for Hollywood and having no stars, a small budget, and little promotion, *Boy Slaves* will need vigorous support at the box office. It is fully as worthy as *Blockade* and *One Third of a Nation* of every penny of praise progressives can give it.

### FILM ON SPAIN

The Belmont (N. Y.) has a fighting film on Spain called *The Will of a People*, made up of documentary material taken at the front and behind the lines in the vital war industries. It was produced in Spain by L. Frank and has a militant English commentary tracing the history of the war from Alphonso's abdication to the first phases of the march on Barcelona. The film is a must for your friends on the fence, but the poor synchronization of the commentary with the shots may cause some misunderstandings in



BOY SLAVES. Slop time in a turpentine camp from the RKO child labor film, "Boy Slaves," now playing at the Rialto in New York.



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the uninitiated. For instance the narrator speaks of death and misery being visited on women and children while the screen is showing loyalist artillery cannonading a fascist town. There are obviously no civilians in the town, as later sequences establish. Immediately after this shot, fascist bombers are shown but the commentary has allowed a dangerous confusion. Again, in the frequent depiction of loyalist crowds giving the Popular Front salute it is not established that this is the Popular Front salute and not a Communist gesture. Aside from these slipups, *The Will of a People* is a valiant and much needed picture in this hour of fake liberal defeatism.

JAMES DUGAN.

## Bad Week on Broadway

Florodora girls, immigrants,  
and the upper classes

IT IS indeed a privilege to peek into the lives of the upper classes and to spend a few hours with them just as if one were their equal. The informal revue, *One for the Money*, offers everyone with the price of a ticket the opportunity of dropping in for a whole evening on the top crust of the socially elite. Of course I suspected that my hosts would "fear F. D. R."—as they put it rather bluntly. And this average, well-to-do, top-hat, ermine-coated group naturally felt that "right is right, and left is wrong." But other than these quaint prejudices, they are a mad, slightly smutty, less than cheerful crowd, spending their time in beautiful surroundings and decked in very swell clothes. They think the Negro people are rather funny, you know, a merry lot who like to complain because that is their picturesque way of expressing their souls. And who could ever conceive of a Negro without a slice of watermelon in his hand? And isn't Mrs. Roosevelt a scream—always doing things with such vulgar energy that make those with nothing to occupy them (except to love themselves and their protectors, the fascists) terribly grouchy and slightly embarrassed at their own worthlessness.

But this reviewer is an ungrateful wretch. The chance to fraternize with self-declared superiors proved less than amusing. If they only had just a *souçon* of wit! After all, it is inexcusable to be so unmitigatingly boring, so unrelentingly dull. I'm afraid I must summon that old cliché to describe *One for the Money*. It just stinks.

The rest of last week's openings were also pretty dreary. The attempt to recapture the glamour of the Florodora girls in a piece called *I Must Love Someone*, turned out to be inexperienced and stuffy. I liked the part where the sextette sings "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," because it had a pleasant nostalgic ring to it, but one song by no means made up for the rest. Nor does one character save a show. Patrick O'Toole, the immigrant who becomes a Tammany leader the day after his arrival in this country, does a good deal to make Mrs. O'Brien Entertains more palatable, but the

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play drags along and seems to get nowhere. The cast is good, except that everyone is afflicted with a vaudeville dialect. Indade, and they be talkin' the brogue of the ten-cent joke books when they're not sprechin' Deutsch or Dutch or spikkin' Polish. The theme that Harry Madden has chosen for his play is the theory of one Timothy Callahan that Irish immigrants in 1848 should intermarry with immigrants from other lands. There is nothing wrong with the main idea, I suppose, but it doesn't come off and the whole thing results in a rather flat and stale comedy-farce.

This is a good week to catch up on the movies.  
RUTH MCKENNEY.

## Dancers and Society

American Dance Association holds second annual conference

**LENORE COX**, young Negro writer, speaking at the second annual conference of the American Dance Association, pointedly indicated that the future of the Negro dancer depended completely on the future of the Negro as a social being. What holds for the Negro dancer holds for the entire American dance field, for all cultural workers, for culture itself. Almost without exception, in one form or another, the long list of speakers—Irene Lewisohn, Grant Code, Martha Graham, Lloyd Morris, Elizabeth Delza, Lincoln Kirstein, Kenneth Burke, Henry Gilfond, Elizabeth McCausland among others—gave evidence of a growing realization in constantly widening circles of the need to look at the problems of the artist as problems of society, and, in the face of barbarian fascist assaults on both sides of the Atlantic, to strengthen their defense of the arts and American culture.

The question of esthetics was detached from whatever ethereal substance still lingers in the dance world. The discussion of thematic materials, choreographic structure, techniques, and virtuosity assumed real value in the deeply felt need to rally all forces to meet such native attacks on the American Renaissance as we have experienced in the wholesale slashing of the WPA art projects and the further destruction now being outlined, plotted, by anti-New Deal, anti-cultural members of our national Congress.

For young dancers this is not a new but an intensified phase of a familiar struggle. Their battle for jobs, security, a theater in which to bring their work to the people, has been a long one. Nor have their teachers, the pioneers in the American dance movement, always been with them. There is still a lag, but the ranks of the progressives have grown. The audience that sat in at the Nora Bayes Theater (N. Y.) the opening night of the first WPA dance production of the season, singing its protest of the pink-slip scourge, was evidence enough of the sentiments and temper of the American people—and a portent of better days.  
OWEN BURKE.



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Gerald B. Winrod, Editor. Wichita, Kansas. October 15, 1936

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