

What's Happening in Steel BY DAVID LURIE

NEW MASSES

FIFTEEN CENTS

MARCH 18, 1941

INSIDE CHINA

Will there be civil war?

A first-hand account

ANNA LOUISE STRONG

John Howard Lawson, Joseph North, Earl Robinson, Daniel Todd

We Don't Want to Shout

Are you allergic to financial appeals? We wouldn't blame you if you were. All sorts of good causes are on your trail pleading for help. And you give to many. So perhaps you have glanced at the New Masses appeals during the past three weeks and said to yourself: "This is where I came in," and turned the page.

But here we are. We don't want to shout—sometimes a whisper is louder. We wish our creditors were equally allergic to our failure to pay, but they aren't. In fact, if you knew just what the situation is, if we could give you a play-by-play description of our conferences with the printer, the paper man, the landlord, if you could grasp the ominous fact that New Masses cannot go on unless \$25,000 is raised within the next few weeks, your allergy would vanish and you'd rush to give all the help you can.

The truth is as simple as that—and as urgent. Read the letter on the back cover signed by Theodore Dreiser, Dr. Max Yergan, Earl Browder, and Ruth McKenney. It is a letter to you and it states the issue: life or death for New Masses. Thus far only \$2,058 has been received in the drive. We know you mean to help. But we need the money now. Our creditors won't wait. Won't you do these three things at once:

1. Send your own contribution (see coupon on page 24)—as large as you can possibly make it.
2. Contact five friends and get them to contribute.
3. Arrange a house party to raise funds for New Masses.

We await your answer.

THE EDITORS.

MANY letters have been written in praise of the first article in Barbara Giles' series on the Washington "defense" setup. "Best I've seen yet on this subject," says one reader. And another: "It gave me a 'things I never knew till now' feeling. The real character of these dollar-a-year 'patriots' should be made known to the whole American public." The second article in Miss Giles' series will appear in next week's issue. It deals with contracts, how they are made and who's getting the cream.

Also coming in an early issue is the third installment of A. B. Magil's series on the development of American democracy in relation to the problems of the present and the future. NM's readers will recall that the first article, published in our anniversary issue, discussed the early years of the Republic with special emphasis on Jefferson, and the second (March 11 issue) dealt with the Jacksonian era. Mr. Magil's third piece will take up the struggle against slavery, culminating in the Civil War and Reconstruction periods. We have received a number of enthusiastic letters already about the series; several of them urge that the articles be published all together in pamphlet form as soon as the last one has appeared in NM.

Commenting on Herbert Ashcroft's article "From a Country Postoffice" (March 11 issue) a Connecticut reader says, "It gave me a pleasant sort of nostalgia. I spent most of my boyhood on a South Dakota farm and Mr. Ashcroft has really caught the flavor and thinking of the region. He is right too about the 'plenty of hard times' those people have seen—and their ability to keep 'cool heads' when the war propaganda is turned on."

Who's Who

ANNA LOUISE STRONG is the author of *I Change Worlds, China's Millions, One-Fifth of Mankind*, and *My Native Land*. . . . David Lurie is Pittsburgh correspondent of the *Daily Worker*. . . . John Howard Lawson is the author of a number of plays, among them *Processional* and *Marching Song*, and has written a book, *The Theory and Technique of Playwriting*. . . . Herbert Aptheker is author of *The Negro in the American Revolution, The Negro in the Civil War*, and *Negro Slave Revolts in the United States*. . . . Earl Robinson is the distinguished composer of "Ballad for Americans" and the new opera, "The People, Yes." . . . Lloyd E. Trent was formerly connected with one of the major radio broadcasting companies.

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NEW MASSES

VOLUME XXXVIII

MARCH 18, 1941

NUMBER 13

Inside China

Will there be civil war in China? Anna Louise Strong, just returned from Chungking, tells the first comprehensive story of the crucial events there. Their significance for America.

IT IS no service to China either to minimize or exaggerate the present tension between the Communist Party and the Kuomintang. The threat of widespread civil war is serious, but the situation is not yet fatal. It has reached the stage in which the actions of "friendly nations" may either ruin or save the situation—in which, for example, the actions of those in charge of American foreign loans may prove decisive. But they must first know (what Chungking censorship conceals) that there is a situation to be saved.

The January armed clash in South Anhwei in which some 2,000 of the Communist-led New Fourth Army were killed and between 3,000 and 4,000 wounded, after which the army itself was officially disbanded and its general, Yeh Ting, held for court-martial, was only the latest of many armed clashes between Communist and Kuomintang troops which have gone on for more than a year. Nor is even this particular incident settled, as Chungking officially claimed. On the contrary, it has led to far more threatening developments. The Communists have not accepted the disbanding of the New Fourth, but have organized their own "Revolutionary Military Committee" which appointed new commanders for the 90,000 men who still function under the name of the New Fourth north of the Yangtze.

An official "spokesman" for this committee immediately issued an interview in response to the January 17 announcement of the Chungking Military Council disbanding the New Fourth. He charged that the attack on the New Fourth was only one step in the plot of the "pro-Japanese elements who occupy high positions in the government and the Kuomintang" to bring about a peace pact with Japan and to have China join the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo Axis. Nowhere in his statement does the spokesman denounce Chiang Kai-shek himself. He attacks by name Ho Ying-chin, Chungking's Minister of War, who has been for some time charged with being the present center of the pro-Japanese forces which formerly grouped around the now puppet-ruler of Nanking, Wang Ching-wei.

On the basis of these extremely serious charges, the "Revolutionary Military Committee" issued what practically amounts to an ultimatum in twelve points. The demands are of such a drastic nature that they must be considered as an attempt to break through to the Generalissimo's attention by dynamite. They include the "cessation of attacks on Communist armies," the revoking of the or-

der disbanding the New Fourth, the freeing of its general, Yeh Ting, an open apology by the government for the "South Anhwei outrage" and compensation paid to its victims, the abolition of a blockade line now maintained in the northwest against the Yen-an district, the "punishment" of Ho Ying-chin and several subordinates, and the arrest and court-martial of the "pro-Japanese elements" in Chungking. Both the charges and demands were made immediately following Chungking's January 17 pronouncement, but the news of them was suppressed by Chungking censorship, and reached America a month late.

THE PRESENT SITUATION must be seen against the background of Japanese plus German intrigue working upon all the backward and reactionary elements in China, and exploiting the never completely settled cleavage of the earlier civil war. The international setting of the present period begins with the Tripartite Pact between Germany, Italy, and Japan, and with the arrival of many new German advisers in Tokyo. These events served to stimulate Japan's desire to settle the "China incident" as rapidly as possible in order to move south against the French, British, and Dutch possessions, which she is powerless to do with a united and hostile China in her rear. . . .

No pro-Japanese or pro-peace groups would dare express themselves openly in Chungking. Behind the scenes, however, there are capitulators who express themselves either

by defeatism or by stirring up internal friction, or by actual plotting with the enemy. As a high Chungking official, who was not a Communist, said to me: "Wang Ching-wei is gone but his secret supporters remain and are at the root of the trouble." The power of these capitulators would be greatly increased if any of the following developments occurred: (1) if Japan made a big concession, such as withdrawal from the Yangtze valley; (2) if Britain and America ceased to support China's struggle for freedom and democratic progress; (3) if hoarding, speculation, and profiteering continue to demoralize internal economic conditions in Free China; or (4) if there were an increase in civil strife.

In a military sense, the Sino-Japanese war has been for some time at the stage of stalemate, in which Japan's chief weapons have become economic pressure and political intrigue. In using political intrigue Japan merely continues to wield a weapon which she used successfully in China for the entire generation preceding the present war. Cooperation with Japan only recently seemed to northern provincial governors and even to many Nanking politicians a respectable path to riches and power.

The first serious check to Japan's policy of "divide and conquer" came when the ten years' civil strife between Chiang Kai-shek and the Communists was called off in favor of resistance against the common national foe. This was a program around which all China rallied; even backward, provincial warlords were compelled to submit to the Chinese people's will for unity against Japan. General Han Fu-chu, governor of Shantung, was executed for the kind of dealing with the enemy which was political wisdom a year earlier. But it would be utopian to assume that all the former traffickers with Japan were at once converted. There is still a strong tendency among China's reactionary militarists to regard Japan as the natural military organizer of East Asia. Moreover, Japan's fifth column work has been greatly strengthened by her pact with Germany, for Germany, having given considerable help to the Chungking government in the early stages of the war, still has many friends in high places in China.



Anna Louise Strong

THE HIGH POINT of Chinese national unity was reached during the "Hankow period," from the fall of Nanking in 1937 to the fall of Hankow in late 1938. Nanking's fall had broken the exclusive hold of the Shanghai capitalists over the government. Chiang Kai-



Anna Louise Strong

shek had announced that the vast peasant populations of the interior were China's new base. Hankow was an ideal capital, more easily accessible to all parts of the interior than either Peiping, Nanking, or Chungking. Hankow had peasant revolutionary traditions of nearly a century, dating back to the days of the Taipings. It had a larger industrial working class than any Chinese city except Shanghai. From the military standpoint, the heroic but bloody defense of Shanghai had shown China's weakness in traditional methods of war, but the sudden emergence of the Communist-led guerrillas in North China was giving new hope to the nation. All of these factors helped to create a new sense of national unity around Hankow as a center, a unity in which the Communists played an important part.

The unity attained in the Hankow period, however, was never reduced to organized form. Despite much talk of democracy and much energetic popular initiative, the Kuomintang Party never recognized as legal any popular organizations except those which they themselves initiated and controlled. The Communist Border District with its capital at Yen-an was never legally recognized. It was never clearly determined whether the Communist Party was legal or illegal. It depended on the will of the local generals, most of whom suppressed Communists. The supposed amnesty of 1937 was only partly carried out; two Americans traveling in 1940 in South Kiangsi found sixty forgotten Communist prisoners in a single prison, held since 1934. (They are still there.) In Hankow itself there were assassinations of Communists and raids on their newspaper by gangsters alleged to have ties with the secret police of the Kuomintang. When these matters reached the attention of the Generalissimo, however, he usually demanded that the aggressors live up to the new unity that had been proclaimed.

No governmental machinery had been established through which unity might be expressed and questions settled. The "National Congress" consisted of Kuomintang members elected four years previously during the period of civil war; and some of its members were and still are in Japanese puppet governments. A constitution making the Kuomintang the only legal party had been drawn up, but due to the Japanese invasion the Congress had not met to adopt it. Beginning in Hankow, the democratic forces demanded a new National Congress based on popular elections, but the government ministers who had been appointed by the previous Congress and who would be inevitably unseated by any new Congress, claimed that elections could not be held during the war. The deadlock in which the old Congress could not be summoned and a new one could not be elected was partly broken by a new body, "The People's Political Council," formed during the Hankow period in response to popular demand. It has 220 members representing practically all the different political groups in China, but its powers

Who Is Responsible?

IT is a powerful, a terribly powerful story that Anna Louise Strong has brought back from China. It is the fullest account thus far of just how the united front is breaking down, and *NEW MASSES* is happy to reprint it from the March 1941 issue of *Amerasia*. Some of Miss Strong's observations will come as news to most readers, as, for example, the iron-bound censorship that exists in Chungking, or the continuing influence of local reactionary and provincial officials in Chinese life. Other things which she recalls have been forgotten in this country, such as the dictatorial character of the Kuomintang, or the quasi-legality of the Chinese Communists, even in the last three years.

During the past week, Chiang Kai-shek is reported to have made "conciliatory" gestures to the Communists. Insisting that the dispersal of the New Fourth Army was just a matter of "discipline," Chiang offers the mediation of the Peoples Political Council now meeting in Chungking. But the situation seems to be so far gone that the six Communist representatives to the People's Political Council did not attend its sessions, which means that it cannot be considered even the partly democratic body it was. The fact is that the Chinese Communists have taken a strong stand. They will not be cajoled by mere language. They will be convinced by deeds. It is up to Chiang Kai-shek to oust all the pro-Japanese intriguers like his war minister, take firm measures toward the democratization of the nation. It is even probable that these mellifluous words from Chungking conceal measures against the Communists which are already developing in scope.

One of the big questions which Miss Strong leaves unanswered is the future of American policy. As our readers know, British and American stabilization loans to China were partly responsible for the dispersal of the New Fourth Army. Most observers agree that these loans served as a go-ahead signal in Chungking for the anti-Communist campaign; offers of similar loans have had the same purpose elsewhere, for example in Chile. But the next steps in American policy are still unclear. Last week, Lauchlin Currie, one of Roosevelt's right-hand men, returned from his flying trip to China. Currie is a fiscal expert, and the story is that he went to determine how much American gold was greasing the palms of corrupt officials in Chungking. But what were the political motivations of his mission? Does the United States really intend to give Japan still another victory in the form of finally dynamiting the united front? Is it too late for joint action by the Soviet and American governments, demanding a cessation of preparations for civil war? These are the questions which American friends of China want answered. For as Miss Strong suggests, the people of China will not be conquered by assaults or by stratagems. They will find new forms, and gather powerful new friends to resist the enemy within as well as the enemy from without.

are advisory only and its membership is hand-picked by the Kuomintang which decides even who shall represent the Communist Party. The members of the People's Political Council whom I met in Chungking seemed to be able and devoted intellectuals greatly disturbed by the growing disunity in China, but powerless to prevent it. They complained that they had formed a committee almost a year ago to investigate the Kuomintang-Communist friction but the Chungking government paid no attention to their report.

Chiang Kai-shek's power obviously does not rest upon such ineffective fronts of government. It rests upon his armies and his moral prestige as the symbol of China's unity. He has no constitutional power to reorganize the government. He is neither the president of a democracy nor a fascist dictator; his status is more like that of the early kings who emerged from feudalism through the allegiance of many rival lords. If he greatly desired, he might get rid of any individual minister in the government or any individual general in the army, but only by political combinations and pressures which might sap his power in another direction. He has no conception of what is meant by "rule of the people"; he once said, "If the people rule, then how can I rule?"

Moreover, to make changes in a democratic direction became harder rather than easier with the lapse of time. For by the time the government moved to Chungking, it was so widely accepted as the "Central Government of China" in a sense which no government had ever been before, that even those bankers of the coast who were ready to make terms with Japan felt the authority of Chungking and returned to it. They resumed their wonted sway which the fall of Nanking had temporarily broken. Even the talk of democracy, which had been so vivid during the days in Hankow, died. When I visited Chungking in December 1940 no public meetings were allowed without a representative of the police, empowered to interrupt the speech at any moment.

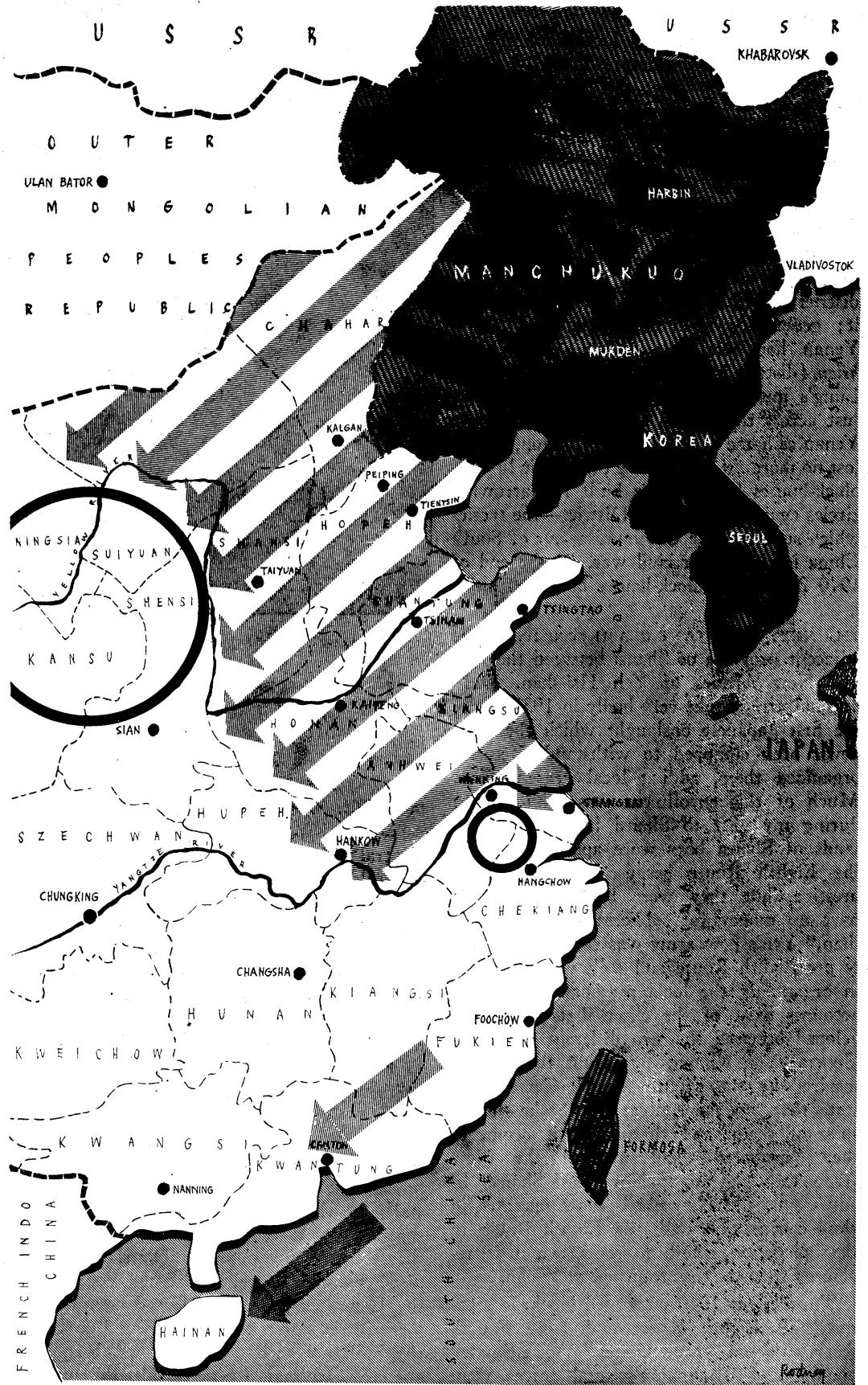
Ministers who had seemed slated for immediate dismissal during the Hankow period not only remained, but increased their power. The most notorious case was that of General Ho Ying-chin, Minister of War, by whom all commands to the armies are issued. For the past decade he has been famous for two things: his wars with the Communists and his agreements with Japan. The 1935 Ho-Umetsu agreement, for instance, gave Japan such dominance of North China that it became the cause of student demonstrations against "Japan and Ho Ying-chin." Its terms could never be published in China proper lest they cause the fall of the Nanking government. General Ho was known to be opposed to the present war with Japan. Today he signs all the orders that carry it on. All orders to Communist armies and all complaints from Communist armies to the Generalissimo pass through his hands.

When I expressed my amazement in Chung-

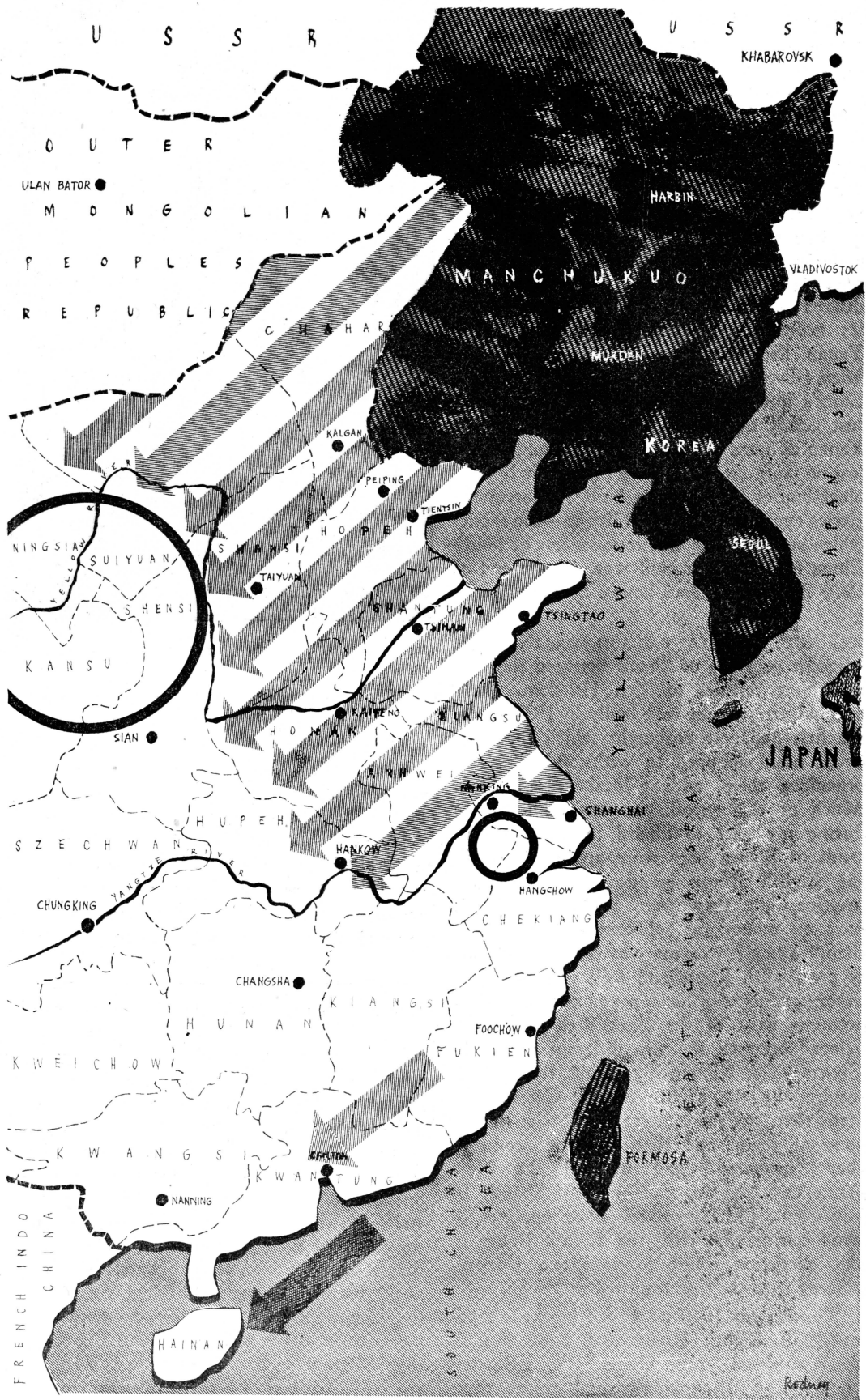
king that a man with this past should be kept by the Generalissimo in such an important post, I was told: "Oh, but the Generalissimo could hardly do without him and it is not even certain that he could depose him. General Ho has much closer relations with all the lower generals than has the Generalissimo himself." . . .

MEANWHILE, FAR AWAY from Chungking in the north and east of China, separated from "Free China" by Japanese concentrations and Chinese armed forces alike, the Communist-led armies rapidly increased. They were assigned only to territory which the Japanese had already conquered: the Eighth Route in North China and the New Fourth on the Lower Yangtze. They were allotted pay for 45,000 soldiers in the Eighth Route and a much smaller number in the New Fourth. They were, however, allowed to organize peasant guerrillas and on this basis they grew rapidly, until by the end of 1940 they claimed from 500,000 to 600,000 armed but unpaid men. They campaigned all over Japanese-occupied China, from Manchuria to the Yangtze, from the Mongolian deserts to the sea. They penetrated Manchuria to within a hundred miles of Mukden, and established contact with 100,000 poorly organized Manchurian Volunteers. They reached the Shantung coast and held the port of Chefoo long enough to collect customs revenue and run in several shiploads of war supplies from Shanghai and Tientsin. They disrupted Japanese rail communications on all sides of Peiping and put up proclamations inside the city walls. Extending southward the Eighth Route eventually made contact with the New Fourth Army, which in its turn was expanding along the entire Yangtze Valley from the area north of Shanghai to districts almost as far inland as Hankow.

This "unruly expansion" was the chief thing held against the Communist armies by Chungking officials with whom I talked in December 1940. Both Sun Fo and Pai Chung-hsi told me that if the Communists would remain in the areas assigned them, organize only the authorized number of troops, and obey the local magistrates appointed by Chungking, there would be no trouble. But the Communists were faced with ever-increasing bands of hungry, armed peasants who demanded to be taken into their armies, and who otherwise would degenerate into local bandits or Japanese puppet troops. Their attempts to give these peasants leadership and organization against Japan were handicapped by lack of funds and food. Since Chungking refused support for such numbers, they tried to form local governments whose taxing-power could regularize the food levies on the countryside. In this they were opposed by local magistrates appointed by distant Chungking, who had no interest in giving them food. "When we got customs revenue from Chefoo," said a young woman with the Eighth Route Army, "the Shantung governor expected us to give it to



Map shows main areas of Japanese penetration of China. The area of shaded arrows is held by Japan only along the railroad lines and is under fairly constant assault from Chinese guerrilla troops. The smaller circle shows the approximate area of operations of the New Fourth Army, until it was recently attacked by troops of the Kuomintang, and subsequently by Japanese forces as well. The larger circle is the approximate area of the Border government, in which the Eighth Route Army is based. Miss Strong's article confirms reports that this area has been blockaded by reactionary officials of the Kuomintang, who hope to isolate all of North China, roughly above the Yellow River valley as a concentration point for a combined Japanese and Kuomintang anti-Communist campaign. The New Fourth Army has now been reorganized, but whether its troops are standing their ground or making their way northwest is not clear.



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him. He lost Chefoo to the Japanese and we got it; we needed the food for ourselves." . . .

Under such conditions local clashes grew more frequent and widespread, with increasing participation by the authorities in Chungking. The first serious armed clash occurred late in 1939 in North Shensi. The Special Border District, with its capital at Yen-an, had declared allegiance to the Chungking Government, but the Central Government had given no legal status nor fixed boundaries to the district. General Hu Tsung-nan, governor of Shensi, decided that the district was his and sent armies to occupy it; generals in Kansu collaborated. After Yen-an had lost four of the twenty-three *hsien* (districts) which it claimed, part of Ho Lung's men—Eighth Route forces operating just across the Yellow River—came back to Yen-an as home defense. From then on, Yen-an lost no more *hsien* but three concentric lines of block-houses began to be built in narrowing circles against the Border District—the tactics which squeezed the Communists out of South China in the earlier civil war. By the end of 1940 2,000 such block-houses had been built.

THE NEXT IMPORTANT CLASH occurred in the adjacent province of Shansi between the Old and New Armies of Yen Hsi-shan. Yen's original army broke very badly in 1937 under the first Japanese onslaught which they had never been equipped to withstand. Yen reorganized them, adding local peasant boys. Much of this enrollment was taking place during my visit to Shansi in 1938. Thousands of Shansi boys were applying to join the Eighth Route because of its superior prestige, but they were being told: "We have no money for soldiers; join Yen Hsi-shan." Yen's new army was therefore strongly pro-Eighth Route and followed its tactics in organizing the local peasants. Conflicting accounts exist of the clash that finally developed between the two different armies of General Yen. Chungking claims that it was inspired by the Eighth Route; Communists state that, on the contrary, it broke out in spite of them, and that, after it occurred, they "mediated" and induced the New Army to withdraw to Northwest Shansi. In any event, the New Army now operates in close conjunction with the Eighth Route in that territory, where to some extent it replaces the forces that returned to Yen-an.

Throughout 1940 an armed blockade separated all Eighth Route and New Fourth territory from "Free China." An estimated one-fifth of Chungking's total forces were diverted to "watching" the Communists. Students trying to go to Yen-an for education were detained in Sian; if they persisted in their dangerous desire they were thrown into concentration camps. For fourteen months the Eighth Route claimed to have received no munitions or medical supplies from the Central Government; if any were sent, they failed to get through. Truckloads of medical supplies sent by Madame Sun Yat-sen's organization, the China Defense League, were indefinitely detained. Even a



CHINA'S COMMUNIST LEADERS. *Po Ku, Chou En-lai, Chu Teh, Mao Tse-tung.*

foreign doctor who tried to reach Wutaishan to replace Dr. Norman Bethune was unable to pass and finally accepted medical service among Central Government troops. One occasion at least is recorded when armed men taking the payroll for the New Fourth Army were seized by other Chinese troops of the Central Government. Neither the payroll nor the soldiers were ever released. Only occasionally could this unofficial blockade be penetrated by men with high prestige.

CLASHES BETWEEN Communist-led armies and other Central Government forces became epidemic in the summer of 1940. They took place in Hopei, Shantung, North Kiangsu, East Anhwei, South Anhwei, and at the northern ledge of Chekiang. Details are impossible to verify, since each side charges the other with attacking, and though the Communists asked for an investigation commission none was sent. Meanwhile the high staffs in the Kuomintang-led armies made speeches to their subordinates urging that they must be prepared to fight the Communists. Pamphlets were published denouncing the Communists as the most dangerous element in the nation; in Hongkong I was told that 200,000 such pamphlets had been sent out to Overseas Chinese. Deadly phrases were whispered: "Japanese are only lice on the body of China but Communism is a disease of the heart." The repression spread beyond the Communists to all united front organizations; the famous "Life" bookshops of the National Salvation Movement were closed in ten cities. Many organizers of the Industrial Cooperatives were arrested, kidnapped, and even assassinated as "Reds," a term which might merely cover the jealousy of a local official who failed to get his squeeze from the cooperatives.

There seems reason to think, in at least three cases, that local generals, acting under Ho Ying-chin's orders to check the Communists, were simultaneously cooperating with the Japanese. General Shih Yu-shan, who clashed with the Eighth Route in South Hopei, was a man of a picturesquely adventurous past. He began his career as a commander under Marshal Feng Yu-hsiang and was left at loose ends when Feng was defeated by Chiang Kai-shek. When the present war with Japan began, Shih despaired of getting funds from Chiang Kai-shek so he went over openly to Japan. After receiving money and munitions for his needy troops, he declared loyalty to Chungking and gained much face for thus outwitting the Japanese. He expected to be made Governor of Hopei and was disgruntled when denied the post. He was, however, assigned the territory of South Hopei and is alleged to have had orders from Ho Ying-chin to check the Eighth Route's expansion by cutting the connections between their Shansi and Central Hopei forces.

Charges that General Shih was conspiring with the Japanese were sent to Chiang Kai-shek on July 2 in an official telegram by Chu Teh, commander-in-chief of the Eighth Route. He stated that on June 22, General Shih sent instructions to all his subordinates giving a code of signals, consisting of white sheets placed on the ground, by which Japanese planes could distinguish his troops from those of the Eighth Route. This information, plus other details of Shih's collaboration with the Japanese, had been given to Chu Teh by Shih's subordinates who did not wish to side with Japan. No answer was received from Chungking to this accusation, but later in July Shih's forces, in coordination with Japanese puppet troops and with the aid of



CHINA'S COMMUNIST LEADERS. *Po Ku, Chou En-lai, Chu Teh, Mao Tse-tung.*

Japanese planes, attacked the Eighth Route near Puyan and Poshan. Shih was shot by one of his own brigade commanders and most of his troops came over to the Eighth Route. For several months no details of this clash reached Chungking, and details are still conflicting. But by the end of November it became known that General Shih was dead. Then General Wei Li-huang, commander of the war zone in which the incident occurred, announced that he had executed Shih for treason—thus removing the onus of mutiny from his subordinates. The Central News Agency in Chungking, however, announced that Shih had been executed “for expanding his territory in defiance of orders.”

Similar charges of treason were made against General Miao Chen-liu, commander of the Fifty-seventh Army in South Shantung. Chu Teh sent a telegram to the Generalissimo in July, giving an exhaustive list of Miao’s alleged dealings with the Japanese, as revealed to Chu Teh by Miao’s subordinates. These included the exchange of signals, exchange of emissaries, joint banquets—in fact, a fully worked out system of combined attack against the Eighth Route. No answer came from Chiang Kai-shek but Ho Ying-chin telegraphed back: “Don’t slander your fellow-generals.” Telegrams from division commanders under General Miao next went to Chungking revealing more conferences with the Japanese and appealing over the head of their commander to the Generalissimo. On October 9, the entire staff of the Fifty-seventh Army signed a joint telegram to Chiang Kai-shek declaring their general a traitor and demanding his execution. None of these telegrams was answered, but word was spread in Chungking that “the Eighth Route is stirring up trouble in other Chinese armies.” Finally Miao’s staff arrested him and sent him under guard to the commander-in-chief

of the war zone who forwarded him to Chungking, where he is now busily circulating his version of the affair. Meanwhile his troops, like those of General Shih’s, have augmented the forces of the Eighth Route—an indication of what may happen if civil war begins. . . .

“We interpret these incidents,” said a representative of the Eighth Route to me, “as meaning that General Ho Ying-chin is ready to cooperate even with Japanese against the Communists.”

To my query whether Chiang Kai-shek had the same attitude as Ho Ying-chin, he replied: “We do not even know whether the Generalissimo gets all of our telegrams. We believe that Chiang does not at present want to make an agreement with Japan. He wishes to suppress the Communists more and more but not quite to the point of civil war and not quite to the point of interfering with the war against Japan. It is a very narrow road. Until now he has been able to take it. But he cannot take it long.”

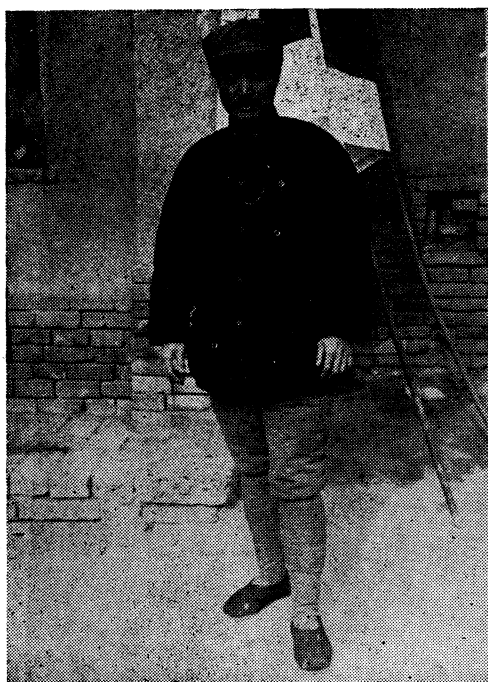
The Generalissimo, however, has chosen to have a show-down and as a first step accepted personal responsibility for disbanding the New Fourth Army in the Yangtze Valley. This army consisted officially of four “units,” functioning as independent groups in different areas on both sides of the Lower Yangtze, assigned to them originally by Chiang Kai-shek. After the fall of Hankow the New Fourth was augmented by 20,000 dispersed soldiers from Central Honan who formed a fifth unit, and by large numbers of peasants on the borders of Hupeh, Honan, and Anhwei who formed a sixth detachment. Later a battalion known as the Shangnan Volunteers, organized south of the Yangtze, grew so large that the commander of the war zone objected to it, and it crossed the Yangtze to avoid trouble and took its sta-

tion north of Shanghai and north of the river.

Thus the New Fourth operated on both sides of the Yangtze almost from Shanghai to Hankow, in small detachments separated by some of the heaviest Japanese concentrations in China. For three years its units were in constant contact with the Japanese, attacking the Nanking-Shanghai railway, the Wuhu-Nanking railway, and the highways between Nanking and Hangchow. They wrecked trains, waylaid Japanese army trucks, stopped trade with the Japanese-held cities. In the autumn of 1938 they raided the Japanese-occupied airdrome within sight of Shanghai and hoisted the Chinese flag above its buildings. In the first year, the detachments south of the river fought more than 600 engagements, most of them small affairs but all of them wearing down the Japanese.

“We have been able to detain 50,000 Japanese in this area,” claimed General Yeh Ting. “No matter how often they change their troops, they never dare lessen the number which they maintain here.” The people in Chekiang called the army “the soldiers of God” and “world army No. 1.” They had a saying, “as in lettuce you eat the heart, so if you join the army join the Fourth.” . . .

With the general worsening of relations between Communist and Kuomintang forces, a whole series of armed clashes took place between the New Fourth and surrounding Chinese armies, beginning in February 1940. Endless details of these clashes are available, but in the absence of checking, nobody knows how accurate the details are. It seems at least clear that the New Fourth payroll was seized on one occasion, and its normal river-crossing, by which communication with Chungking and with troops on both banks was maintained, was permanently blocked. The New Fourth claims to have intercepted



HO LUNG. He is the famous general in the Eighth Route Army with a brilliant reputation of success in battle.



CHU TEH, commander-in-chief of the Eighth Route Army, smiles for the camera while getting ready for the day’s work.



AN EIGHTH ARMY SOLDIER marches a Chinese traitor, caught spying behind the lines, back to headquarters where he will be tried.



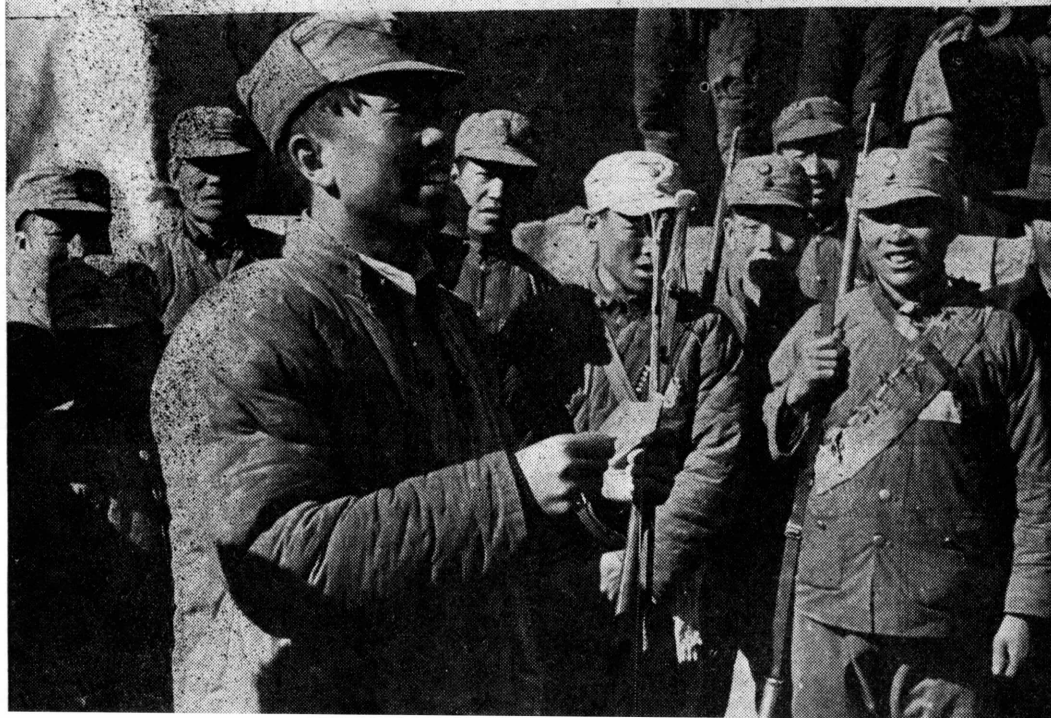
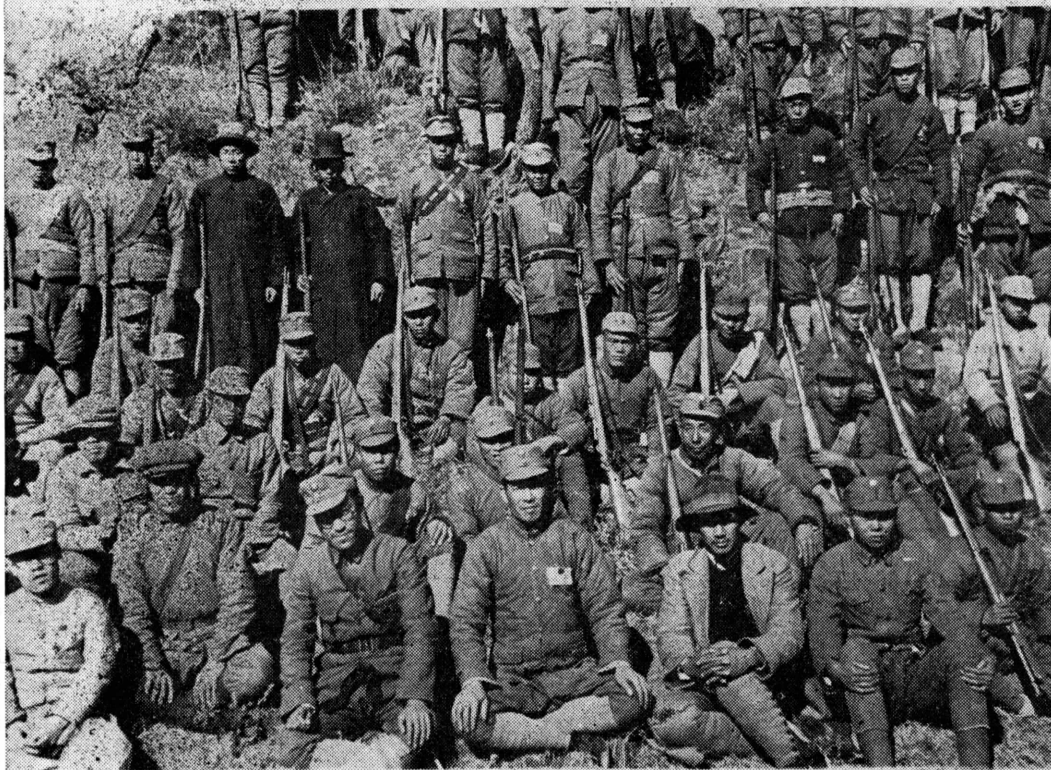
HO LUNG. He is the famous general in the Eighth Route Army with a brilliant reputation of success in battle.



CHU TEH, commander-in-chief of the Eighth Route Army, smiles for the camera while getting ready for the day's work.



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secret instructions from Chungking to local commanders to suppress all New Fourth forces by the end of the year. On the other hand, the New Fourth was plainly increasing its influence in the nearby armies, many of whose troops came over to its ranks during the armed clashes.

Despite these frictions between Chinese forces, the New Fourth continued to fight the Japanese. Major Evans F. Carlson, who visited the area occupied by the New Fourth in Southern Anhwei last October, reports in the China Defense League news letter one of their victories near Kianghsien. "I arrived in this area," he said, "shortly after a particularly aggressive Japanese drive had been turned back by the New Fourth Army. The Japanese came in two columns, one from near Wuhu. . . . They were allowed to make a deep penetration and then the mobile units of the New Fourth fell upon their flanks and rear, forcing them to withdraw with a loss which was estimated, both by the New Fourth and Central Government officials, at an aggregate of 7,000 casualties." Major Carlson was also struck by the emphasis on the "United Front"; even the small children talked to him earnestly about the "need for all people to work together for National Salvation." He adds, "There were many signs of the close cooperation between the army and the people."

Relations between the New Fourth and the commander of the War Zone, General Ku Chu-tung, were not so excellent. He maintained a blockade against the New Fourth which it was perilous to try to pass. A brilliant young intellectual, Wu Ta-kwan, took a party of Chinese journalists to the New Fourth region. General Ku asked them not to visit the New Fourth, but they replied that since they were "comforting" all the armies in this region, they would comfort the New Fourth too. On their return they were summoned before General Ku, and their young leader went alone. He was never seen afterwards. Telegrams sent by Mme. Sun Yat-sen to ascertain his fate were met by General Ku's bland statement that "he had never heard of the man."

THE NEW FOURTH was ordered to leave the Yangtze Valley and move north of the Yellow River to be amalgamated with the Eighth Route. This was given as a "proposal" in



TOP. Captured Japanese soldiers learn what the war is about. Here they are studying with an instructor from the Eighth Route Army. Those who are illiterate are taught how to read and write. MIDDLE. New recruits pose in between drills and lectures that will make them worthy fighters in a great military-educational apparatus. Many of these recruits come from mining areas. BOTTOM. A lesson in singing. Chinese soldiers before the war were unable to sing the difficult unharmonious music of old China. Now they learn new songs expressing their struggle for liberation and songs commemorating the Eighth Route Army's past victories.

July and as an "order" on October 19. The Generalissimo himself did not sign the order till December 10, and there is excellent reason for believing that it was originally issued by Ho Ying-chin without Chiang's knowledge, and later confirmed in the interests of army discipline. The New Fourth regarded the order almost as an instruction to commit suicide. They pointed out that only one-tenth of their army was on government pay-roll, and the rest consisted of local peasants who could not easily leave their homes. No winter uniforms had been furnished, no supplies for the long journey, and no munitions had been received for eight months. Yet they were required to cross several heavy Japanese concentrations and pass by many of the Central Government armies which were already clashing with them in armed battle and which gave no pledge of permitting them to pass. They were promised munitions and pay after they should reach the Yellow River but they had fairly good reason for assuming that they were not expected to arrive.

The Communists' most serious objection to the order, however, was that they considered it not a routine military command but a political and military splitting of China into two parts, in preparation for peace with Japan in Central and South China. None of those with whom I talked claimed that this was the Generalissimo's intention. Chiang Kai-shek himself in an interview with me indignantly denied any intention of making peace with Japan or of leaving any part of China outside his rule. But it was clear that the concentration of all the Communists in North China—which had never been under allegiance to Chiang anyway—would give Japan a heaven-sent excuse for concentrating her attacks in that region. If she should then choose to make a demonstrative withdrawal from the Yangtze Valley, the peace tendencies in Chungking would be immeasurably strengthened.

"We do not refuse to obey the military order," said the Communists, "but we want it made part of a wider political settlement which will allow democratic safeguards in all of Free China. We can trust the Chinese people to preserve their unity against Japan. But if all Communists are put in North China and prohibited elsewhere, and no people's movements are allowed, we cannot trust the Chungking bureaucrats. The result will be either civil war or the splitting of China into two parts, with neither of which alternatives can we agree."

THROUGHOUT DECEMBER, during my visit in Chungking, the capital was buzzing with the "threat of civil strife." Scores of Chinese leaders were urging "patience" and "unity." Reactionaries were gloating: "We have them surrounded and can crush them." Meanwhile some twenty-seven divisions of Central Government troops, uncontaminated by previous contact with the "Reds," were moving eastward to surround the New Fourth Army with the obvious intent of forcing it out of the Yangtze Valley or eliminating it from the

scene. Minor clashes with local forces continued through most of December.

First news of the final clash was announced from Chungking on January 17 by the Military Council which stated that Yeh Ting had been imprisoned and was awaiting court-martial, following suppression of a "revolt" by his troops. Yeh Ting was accused of having plotted "to control the China coast from Chekiang and Kiangsu in the south to Shantung in the north"—all regions, incidentally, held by Japan. General Ku Chu-tung, commander of the Third War Area, was credited with having "successfully suppressed the rebels." A few days later, Edgar Snow reported from Hongkong that it had been the New Fourth Army's rear-guard of some 10,000 men which had been surrounded, and that they had fought for eight days, losing 4,000 casualties before they were suppressed.

Only a month later did full uncensored details arrive from China, signed by Chinese of standing who had steadily supported the united front. It seems that Commander Yeh Ting finally received in late December part of the money needed for moving his army north as ordered. Taking this as evidence of good faith, he sent his forces over the river, the last to leave being a rear-guard of 4,000 armed men protecting some 6,000 unarmed persons, consisting of families of officers, political workers, and the hospital with nurses, doctors, and wounded.

This force of 10,000, more than half unarmed, was surrounded by 80,000 Chungking troops in a narrow mountain pass near Maolin, and were attacked by troops under Gen. Shankuan Yun-hsian on January 6. They ran out of food on the fourth day, and fought without eating until their ammunition gave out on the eighth day. They telegraphed to Chungking begging that the attack on them be stopped, and were told that General Ku Chu-tung, the war zone commander, had already been told to stop it. During the sixth day of their fighting, questions were raised in the National Military Commission in Chungking, to which Ho Ying-chin replied that "everything is proceeding satisfactorily," that the New Fourth was obediently moving northward, and that a "slight difficulty" had arisen which he had directed General Ku to solve. On the seventh day of the fighting, Mme. Sun Yat-sen and others telegraphed an appeal from Hongkong. The fighting ended on the eighth day when munitions gave out. Of the 10,000 people, more than 2,000 were killed and 4,000 wounded or captured; the dead included numerous political workers, technicians, nurses, and children. The remnants of the New Fourth were arrested, and their general, Yeh Ting, held for court-martial. The second in command, Hsiang Ying, was wounded and subsequently killed. (General Yeh Ting was then taken to the headquarters of General Ku Chu-tung in Shangyao, Kiangsi Province, which is noted as the location of Ku's torture chamber where many patriotic youths have met their death. Since there are no foreign corre-

spondents in Shangyao, General Yeh's transfer there suggests that his fate is to be settled without risk of unfavorable publicity.)

On January 17, four days after the conclusion of this battle, the Chungking Military Council—it is not known whether the Generalissimo was included—issued the order disbanding the New Fourth. Ten days after this, on January 27, the Generalissimo himself assumed responsibility for the official disbanding but stated that it would not affect other Chinese troops, *i.e.* the Eighth Route. Thereafter, Chungking censorship shut down and Chinese representatives in this country spread the word that the Communists had accepted the disbanding and there would be no more trouble.

BELATED MATERIAL from China, however, makes plain the tremendous tensions of the past month. On January 20, three days after the official order of January 17, the "Revolutionary Military Committee" of the Chinese Communist Party—which has not been heard of since the earlier civil war—issued an "Official Order" reorganizing the New Fourth under the command of Chen-Yi, formerly the commander of the New Fourth's First Unit. A few days later—in any event before January 26, the date on which my information was mailed from China—the "spokesman of the Revolutionary Military Committee" issued his detailed charges, outlining the fifteen steps of the alleged plot by "pro-Japanese elements" in Chungking to take China into the Axis. Such accusations have been made for the past year, but never in so definite a form. Especially interesting is the fact that some of the steps in the alleged plot took place while the letter containing the charges was on the ocean.

The first step was the barrage of propaganda against the Communist armies which was going on during my December visit in Chungking. The next steps were the destruction of the New Fourth forces south of the Yangtze and the official disbanding of the entire New Fourth Army. These steps were taken in January. According to the Communist spokesman, the future development of this plot will involve the following: actions by large Chungking armies "tightly cooperating with the Japanese armies" in the regions between the Yangtze and Yellow Rivers to separate the New Fourth from the Eighth Route in order to liquidate them separately. Following this, pretexts would be sought for the official disbanding of the Eighth Route Army and the arrest of its commander, Chu Teh. Next would come arrests of Communists all over China, including Chou En-lai, official representative of the Eighth Route Army in Chungking, who is already under surveillance. Large-scale war would be launched to seize Yen-an. The Communist daily newspaper would be closed.

Japan, it is alleged, would next withdraw her troops from the Yangtze Valley, and throw them into a ruthless war against the New Fourth and Eighth Route Armies in

North China. Fifth column elements in Chungking would then celebrate the recovery of the lost territories as due to the valor of Chungking troops, and would demand a "glorious, victorious peace." If it proved impossible to call off the war officially, because of the Chinese people's objections to the Japanese terms, an undeclared truce would reign in all parts of China except the North where the plotters would obstruct the Communist armies by means ranging from blockade to armed attack. All anti-Japanese elements would, of course, be persecuted as alleged Communists—a tactic familiar from the days when the government was at Nanking. Thus Chinese public opinion would be taught to believe that victory had been won everywhere except in those northern regions where "the Communists either cannot or will not drive out Japan."

This would make possible the signing of the actual peace pact which would leave Japan or Japanese puppets in control of North China—insofar as they could clear out the Communists—and of China's ports. China would then join the Axis. (If this transition seems a bit abrupt to American readers, it must be remembered that the Germans have always been popular in China, since they lost their rights of extra-territoriality, and that Germany gave significant help to the Chinese in the early stages of this war. Granted the illusion of a "glorious peace of victory," it might not be impossible to direct considerable nationalist feeling into the channel of "clearing the rest of the imperialists out of East Asia and the South Seas.")

Regardless of whether these charges will prove correct in every detail, large-scale civil war looms behind the fact that they were made. Some 800,000 Chungking troops, one-half the government forces, are now in positions for attacking the Communists. About 80,000 are said to have been engaged in the disarming of the New Fourth rear-guard south of the Yangtze in the battle which raged January 6 to 13. Another 200,000 to 300,000 have moved into North Anhwei and Kiangsu where they separate the Eighth Route from the New Fourth, and are already reported to be engaged in attempts to defeat them. In the northwestern provinces, an estimated half million encircle the Yen-an district and blockade the Eighth Route Army in Shansi.

Meanwhile, the reorganized New Fourth Army, with 90,000 men north of the Yangtze under its new acting commander, Chen Yi, is still the pivot on which the future turns. It has been ordered by the "Revolutionary Military Committee" to continue the fight against Japan in the name of Chinese nationalism, on the basis of Sun Yat-sen's Three People's Principles "while always guarding against the sudden attack of the pro-Japanese elements," *i.e.* attacks which may be launched by Ho Ying-chin. If attempts are made to disband these New Fourth forces, the "Revolutionary Military Committee" officially states that the Eighth Route will come to its as-

sistance. This will give the Communists an estimated 500,000 to 600,000 seasoned fighters, a much smaller and worse-armed force than Chungking possesses. But Chungking contains elements that will not hold together in a war against the Communists, especially if the Communists can convince the local population and soldiers that they are being wantonly attacked.

If this struggle really begins, it will not be the mere disarming of a few Communists. It may well change the map of China and East Asia, and the balance of the present world war. Chungking exists today as the Central Government of China only because it is the symbol of unity toward which nine-tenths of the Chinese people passionately aspire. This gives it the prestige which controls recalcitrant provincial warlords who might otherwise carve restless kingdoms of their own or bargain profitably with Japan. Governors of at least two of the sea coast provinces are reputed to favor Wang Ching-wei, but are held to Chungking by the pressure of the Chinese people. Yunnan in the far South shows repeated tendencies to go off on its own. . . .

IMPORTANT POLITICAL FIGURES have already separated themselves from the actions of Chungking. Mme. Sun Yat-sen led a group of Kuomintang members in a joint message on January 12 to the Generalissimo and the Central Committee of the Kuomintang, appealing for the resumption of the national united front. On the same day, Marshal Feng Yu-hsiang, addressing a committee of the National Military Commission in Chungking, cited Poland and France as glaring examples of nations destroyed by internal dissension, and made a plea for national solidarity. The aged General Yen Hsi-shan spoke even more strongly in an interview telegraphed January 11 to Hongkong. "There are undesirable elements in the Kuomintang who directly threaten our war of resistance and indirectly give the Japanese assistance. Not only am I dissatisfied with them, but the entire nation dislikes them. . . . They arouse the progressive elements to disobedience to the Central Government." On about January 18, General Sheng Shih-tsai, Governor of Sinkiang Province, sent a telegram to Chungking in which he stated that after the military record of the Eighth Route and New Fourth armies against Japan, there is no ground or excuse for any "punitive campaign" against these armies. He declared that if civil war develops in China now, this can only help the Japanese invaders in their plan of conquering China; and that the people and armies of Sinkiang stand solidly behind a policy of unity, resistance, and struggle against all those preparing to sell out to Japan under the cover of a so-called "punitive campaign."

These significant and powerful political figures have been ruthlessly side-tracked by Chungking reactionaries throughout this present war. Their appeal—and also the appeal

from many other sections of China—indicates the widespread ferment going on in all provinces of China behind the censorship veil. Armed clashes, reported but as yet unverified, in four northern provinces, indicate that the military suppression predicted by the "Revolutionary Military Committee" is still going on. In reading news one should look for indications whether the Communist forces seem to be withdrawing to form a new northern area, or whether the agitation still goes on across all of China, looking towards a new and more democratic central government. If large-scale civil war is launched against Yen-an, we may look to see Communist forces break through the cordon of government troops which have continually blockaded them from any contact with the USSR, and which—barring the excuse of civil war—they would not dare try to force. . . .

It will never be too late to save China. She will survive. Her people will organize under some banner to cast forth Japan, even though it may not be under Chungking. But it may soon be too late to prevent a powerful Japanese attack on the Southeast Asian front, which would inevitably involve yet another area in the Second World War. Only swift action to preserve Chungking as the center of Chinese unity can do that. The quickest way to cut the Gordian knot might be an immediate conference among the American, British, and Soviet Embassies in Chungking, a pooling of information and charges from both sides of the strife, and joint pressure to stop a Chinese civil war. Acting together, these three countries might prevent a temporary crisis from becoming a national and international disaster.

ANNA LOUISE STRONG.

This article by Miss Strong was released to the press by the magazine Amerasia which published it in its March issue. It is reprinted slightly abridged.



They Carry On

THE dauntless character of the warriors for republican Spain is being reflected in the actions of their friends. Heroism is contagious. Those backing the Rescue Ship Mission have not been disheartened by Churchill's callous refusal of a warrant permitting the vessel to sail. On the contrary, they have redoubled their efforts to win aid for the refugees who look hopefully through barbed-wire fences for rescue. A National Emergency Conference in Washington, D. C. this weekend to map an immediate program has brought wide and enthusiastic response. Specific proposals to be discussed include an increase in relief to Spanish refugees in the Western Hemisphere; the prevention of deportation of Spaniards in this country to certain death in Falangist Spain, direct aid to the republicans in Franco's prison, and a campaign for total guaranteed amnesty. These are proposals all honest Americans must endorse.



MC GUFFEY'S READER
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THE HOLY BIBLE

ORIGIN OF SPECIES BY CHARLES DARWIN

LEAVES OF GRASS BY WALT WHITMAN

THE GISS
TOM PAINÉ

CHARLES BEARDS
ECONOMIC ORIGINS OF
JEFFERSONIAN DEMOCRACY

The Constitution
of
the United States

ADDRESSES
BY
Abraham
Lincoln

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PARRINGTON'S
MAIN CURRENTS IN
AMERICAN
THOUGHT

Wholpsh -

Sixty Years a Fighter

They'll be celebrating Bill Foster's birthday this week in thousands of homes near the steel mills and the mine-pits. The pioneer of industrial unionism guided millions to today's victories.

"THE greatest Jimmie Higgins of them all," I overheard the old miner say as he observed Bill Foster in action during the bitter Penn-Ohio coal strike in 1931. I thought of that ancient miner when I encountered the tribute Foster pays the Jimmie Higgins' of the world in his splendid *Pages from a Worker's Life*. "Whenever there is hard, slogging work to be done, Jimmie Higgins is on hand. When the going gets tough and dangerous he is always in the front line inspiring the masses to struggle." To me that is the definition of Bill Foster's life work: a career of hard, slogging work, inspiring the masses to struggle. I believe that is the definition of a people's leader, and few in history come better than this native of Taunton, Mass., the son of a good Catholic mother and an Irish Fenian father, one of twenty-three children.

The swivel-chair generals will never understand this people's general. No, neither Bill Green nor Bill Knudsen, neither Stettinius nor Franklin D. Roosevelt. Comprehension requires some degree of identity. There is none. They can remember him with fear as the leader of the great 1919 steel strike. They can recall him uneasily as the man who stood before the machine guns of the New York police on March 6, 1930, along with a multitude of 110,000 and who said to the hungry, "Let's go," in that bread march to City Hall. But beyond this they cannot understand. To them he hails from a different world, from that strange, incomprehensible, turbulent terra incognita that lies on the other side of the tracks. Park Avenue is closer to the craters of the moon than to the lower East Side. No wonder Henry Luce one referred to Foster in *Time* as the most dangerous man in America. With good reason. Few men in this country have been more dangerous to the *status quo* of poverty and the debasement of men than this son of an Irish immigrant.

Foster's sixtieth birthday will be celebrated this week under oil lamps in many an obscure home near the blast furnace and the mine pit. They'll be drinking toasts to him in every immigrant accent since Miles Standish. There will be a birthday party for him in Madison Square Garden next Monday—a mass birthday party (that word, mass, sticks close to Foster). Indeed, Mr. Luce and his class can only guess at the meaning of Bill Foster. But the thousands of Jimmie Higgins' in America know the sense he makes. Multitudes in the Congress of Industrial Organizations know his meaning: those precepts of his that came out of the 1919 strike in steel, paved the way for whatever success industrial unionism has achieved this past half-decade. He pioneered in this field at the turn of the century and more than any man in America he is responsi-



Hugo Gellert

ble for the organization of the scattered millions, for the sense of solidarity and for the democracy that has been achieved within a large section of labor today. He is one of the great figures in American working-class history, whose life work has been an inspiration and guide to millions.

No, it is no wonder that the enemy's only adjective for him is the trembling word "d-d-d-dangerous." I thought of that this week when I came upon an article in the current *New Yorker* honoring one of their men: William S. Knudsen. The mighty Knudsen who "aged by years" during the great sit-down strike in 1937, "took to entering the General Motors headquarters in Detroit by a basement door." A man who has for forty-five years been one of those who oblige the Knudsens of America to enter their plants by basement doors is Bill Foster. "Dangerous" indeed. Damned good reason for it. As he recounts in his *Pages*, a vice-president of Armour's scornfully told him during a stockyard strike: "Go back to your trade union friends and tell them organized labor will never get anything from this company that it hasn't the power to take." This left an indelible impression upon the labor leader. "I never forgot those cold, cynical words, nor did I fail to draw the full class-struggle logic from them."

This is the mainspring of the man: always he has drawn the full, class-struggle logic from the vast abundance of life's experience. Even before he encountered Marxism, his profound proletarian instinct and the poverty of his family helped him understand. He was inspired, as a child, by the burning zeal of his father for a liberated Ireland. His training in the class struggle began in reality at the age of fifteen (though he had begun to work

at nine) when he jogged along with the marching motormen on strike in Philadelphia and saw the armed police attack with all the ancient, customary fury. "It made a never-to-be-forgotten impression on me," he says in the *Pages*. This was initiation. "It was the first of a long series of first-hand practical lessons I was later to get regarding the harsh realities of the labor movement." The recognition of those realities brought him to the position he occupies today. You can discover his life work, his ambitions for his fellow workers, by his devastating criticism of Samuel Gompers, the precise antithesis of all Foster stands for.

"He (Gompers)," Foster writes in his autobiography, "fought against the development of class-consciousness, against militant strike policies, against trade union democracy, against industrial unionism, against the organization of the unorganized millions in the basic industries, against every attempt to form the worker into a party of his own. He supported corrupting alliances with capitalist organizations—economic, political, and social. He tried to keep the working class tied to the chariot of capitalism although he knew well enough when the situation demanded it, how to cloak his subservience with radical phrases. . . . He was a cringer before the capitalist rulers and a tyrant before the weaker ones in his own organization."

I believe, in the main, that sums it up. There is Bill Foster's life work in everything that Gompers fought tooth and nail.

Few men have ever set themselves higher goals and have gone so far toward their achievement than this sixty-year-old son of the American working class. And never has a leader been more simple, more straightforward, more plain—and more dauntless. Like Lenin he knows that the leader derives strength from the people, by being of them as well as for them. One finds that everywhere in the marvelous human document that is Foster's autobiography. He possesses that magnificent virtue of the Bolshevik that Stalin spoke of—modesty. These attributes came to him through the hard lot of the worker: the heartbreak and the toil, the hunger and the sweat, the pain and the danger. And always the urge for freedom. It is hard for those who stand aloof to understand these things. One must, after all, be a working man to fully comprehend the daily rigor, the omnipresent danger, the harsh discipline imposed upon the proletariat.

Foster began work by selling newspapers while still in school and at nine, formal education was over for him. One of his first jobs, in a fertilizer factory, gave him a touch of tuberculosis: his labors as a metal miner taught him that he always "preferred to work in the daylight." His three years at sea on the square-rigged sailing vessels, the *Pegasus*, the *Black*



Hugo Gellert

Prince, the Alliance and the County of Cardigan brought him in contact with men and their ideas in all parts of the world. He experienced the exhilaration of the sea and was challenged by its hazards. He drank deep of its sparse joys and felt its tragedies to the bone. His description of the ancient sailor who had reached the end of the road—unable to get work again—is unforgettable. (The full class-struggle logic.) The crew had pulled away from shore. "Our old sailor friend sat on the dock, watching us go, and we looked sadly back at him. His fifty years of wandering, adventure and work had at last come to a close."

Death labors alongside the working man in basic industry, and Foster felt it that day of terrific storm when the seas washed Ole overboard from his right and Frenchy from his left. When he turned to talk to his friend and saw only space, "something sharp and chill struck my heart. I knew that death had passed my elbow." It was frequently at his side, as it is with every wage worker.

He saw life at its rawest—as the working man does always—living at rock bottom of our society. Much of his power derives from that fact. He encountered at first hand (as always) the blight of Jim Crow in America during his "hobo" years, as a migratory worker. A Negro had been swept under the wheels of a freight car in the South, and was mortally injured. Foster ran for aid and was greeted with the question, "Is he a white man?" He was dumbfounded. "But he's a human being and bleeding to death. We must get him to a hospital at once." His reaction: "This cold-hearted act exposed in all its rotten nakedness the system that robs Negroes of their rights and treats them as subhuman beings." (Always the full, class-struggle logic.) The remarkable memory of the man for the human detail, the smallest detail: the dying Negro cried as they carried him off, "Where's my hat? Get my hat." They returned and picked up a "torn and dirty cap." Always he sought the innermost truth and no man was too humble for him to learn from. Every man was teacher, and he, always, was pupil.

These profoundly vivid experiences can be recounted for pages. But their moral is simple. It adds up to the recognition of a barbarous, outworn system that has to be changed. To that change Foster dedicated his life.

Bill Foster emerged from that turbulent, restless, seething life that was the labor movement at the close of the nineteenth century. Great questions were already then being asked in America. Proletarian leaders were beginning to reflect the emergence of their class as the dominant factor in American life. The middle-class, Populist banner of rebelliousness against the encroachments of Wall Street was borne in the flagging hands of William Jennings Bryan, and he was about ready to hand over his leadership. Gene Debs was coming to the fore after the great railroad strike of 1894 as a spokesman for the American working man. Bill Haywood and his Wobblies entered raucously into the picture with their

courageous actions and their historically inadequate principles. The Socialist Party was on the scene and the ferment was great. Foster, already seeking a solution, a program, encountered all the ideas, grew through them, culled the best from all. "During nearly forty years," he writes in his autobiography, "I have been a member of political parties, among them the Socialist Party, the Wage Workers Party, the Labor Party of the United States, the Workers Party," and finally, as synthesis of all the proletarian movements in this country, "the Communist Party." He had arrived at the need for political as well as industrial action, after intense activity as a leading member of the IWW, the Syndicalist League of North America, the International Trade Union Educational League. His ardent desire for the right answers impelled him to travel to Europe where he studied the labor movements of France and Germany in 1910-11. At Budapest in 1911 he attended the conference of the International Trade Union Secretariat as a delegate of the IWW, was arrested, penniless, for sleeping in a moving van and narrowly escaped six months in jail. He sought out Kautsky, the general of surrender, interviewed him; came into "head-on collision with Karl Legien, chief of the German Federation of Trade Unions," and witnessed the basis for the Bernstein-Legien class-collaboration that led to the betrayal of internationalism a few years later in the world war and eventually surrender to Hitler.

Always, in his political activities, he stood foremost as the protagonist of militant, industrial unionism—the organization of the unorganized into a unified, democratic movement. These experiences mentioned above, went into the making of the leader of the Great Steel Strike in 1919. His tireless crusading for industrial unionism laid down the precepts which proved invaluable seventeen years afterward in the formation of the CIO. I would recommend to every reader that he look up Foster's own book, *The Great Steel Strike*, to glean fullest understanding of the terrific job that was undertaken, and of its historic significance. Foster encountered innumerable obstacles, sabotage at every hand. His splendid organizational gifts were hindered overtly and covertly by twenty-three envious, treacherous sets of craft union offi-

cial—with old Gompers acting as the chief-tain of sabotage. And yet some 365,000 steel workers got a glimpse of their strength, a sense of power that stood them in good stead when they tried again, under more favorable circumstances, almost two decades later.

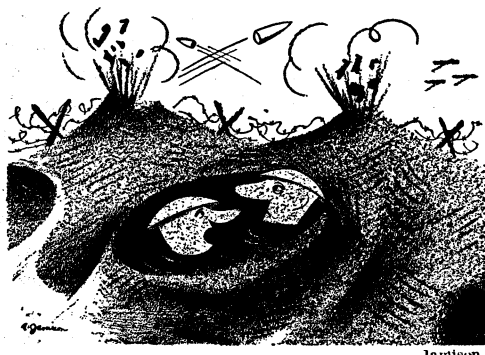
Foster's trade union policies were a subject for years of furious debate in America. It was with a sense of great vindication that he came across Lenin, who, in his pamphlet "*Left Wing*" *Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, corroborated the principles of unionism that Foster advocated. This was a great milestone in Foster's political career. He sat down and read more Lenin, became convinced that the Bolsheviks had the right idea, and he soon afterward joined the Communist movement. In that party he became a bulwark of strength. It is characteristic of the man that he undertook every difficult assignment, unflinchingly even when his overworked physique rebelled at the task.

During the election campaign of 1932 in which he was presidential candidate of the Communist Party, he literally held himself "erect by clinging to the speaker's stand," and drank "glass after glass of water to keep from fainting." After three months of campaigning, traversing some 20,000 miles, and talking to thousands of people in seventy-seven major speeches he collapsed at Moline, Ill. Death knocked at his door (he suffered from angina pectoris) but his revolutionary spirit pulled him through. And finally he returned to his work.

And now the American proletariat is celebrating his sixtieth birthday. We can honor him, not only as a genius of organization, as a political leader, but also as writer. In this career jammed with daily details of union organization, he has found time to write five books and more than thirty pamphlets, excluding innumerable articles. The man is tireless. Perhaps "dauntless" is the word. When I spoke with him several days ago he gave me a booklet, "Organizing the Mass Production Industries," which consisted of some five pamphlets he wrote during the days of the CIO's stormy birth. To many CIO organizers these pamphlets were a sort of Bible. They synthesized the great organizing experience of the 1919 Steel Strike, the close to a half century of Foster's front-line experience. Foster thumbed through the booklet indicating the most important aspects of trade union organization. It must be a "national movement," a "fighting movement," a "political movement," a "dauntless movement." He paused at the latter subhead. "That's perhaps the most important of all," he said. "*A dauntless movement.*"

It occurred to me then that this was the most accurate word to describe the man. This was indeed the great son of the proletariat—an intensely human, simple, modest, fighting, experienced leader who always sought the full, class-struggle logic of his experience. And a dauntless man.

JOSEPH NORTH.



"I remember you. We were on the art project together."

What's Happening in Steel

The sixty-million-dollar plant stands on top of the hill near McKeesport. They thought the union could never climb that high fence.

Pittsburgh.

NEAR McKeesport, Pa., on a hilltop overlooking the river and the furnaces in the valley below, is the United States Steel Corp.'s new \$60,000,000 mill, the Irwin plant. This marvel of modern engineering technology rushes metal at incredible speed through its huge batteries of four rolls, set one above the other, rolling the steel thin, "reducing" it efficiently and rapidly. The dirt and grime of the old hand mills which the Irwin supplanted has gone—and so have the jobs of thousands of highly skilled workers. For, as the new mill began to roll out the hot sheets of metal, the Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corp., which is part of US Steel's mighty domain, shut down mills in New Castle, Farrell, and Monessen, and employed workers on the hilltop. But far less men found employment in the new plant than had lost their livelihood at the old.

It is a wonderful plant on the hilltop near McKeesport. And it went into operation only a short time after US Steel had signed its contract with the Steel Workers Organizing Committee in the spring of 1937. But the union got nowhere in this great mill. Organizer after organizer went up the hill, but still the SWOC failed to make progress. They said in SWOC offices that the new mill was inaccessible, surrounded as it was by a high fence and far removed from the town. Few of the old steel workers had found employment in Irwin, it was said, and the young boys hardly out of their teens—the older men could not stand the dizzy pace of the machines—came from the southern states where the tradition of unionism was weak. These youngsters, it was said, were hardly dry behind the ears, and they enjoyed wages won by the great struggles of the union before they began to work, so that they did not really understand.

SO IT WAS SAID in the SWOC offices. Until that Saturday afternoon, Jan. 18, 1941, when scarfers and cranemen in the slab-yard went on strike. By eight o'clock the next morning not a machine turned on the hilltop, not a man remained at work. "It spread so fast, even the fellows who talked union were surprised," the youngsters boasted. And as the men walked out of the mill, they rushed to join up in the SWOC, to be certain that the strike would be solid and that they would go back to the machines only when they had won a boost in wages.

The Pittsburgh papers were horrified. "Outlaw," they raged, "unauthorized," "wildcat!" But the attempt to picture these workers as irresponsible overlooked the fact that for months these same workers had been asking for an increase in bonus—or incentive—rates, and that the company had failed—

irresponsibly, said the strikers—to enforce the time-and-a-half rule for overtime.

The president of the SWOC who is also president of the CIO rushed to the mill. Philip Murray told the men that they should go back to work, that they still had not exhausted the regular grievance procedure. The men complied. But President Murray had not, as the Pittsburgh papers declared, urged his members to return to work because they were engaged in "defense" industry. What he actually stressed was the importance of maintaining contractual relations, particularly at a time when the SWOC was about to present demands for wages and better working conditions for all the workers in all the mills of the US Steel Corp.

What happened at the Irwin plant—the mill that was supposedly "impossible" to organize—is typical of strikes that have flared throughout the steel towns. And in every instance, the walkouts have been provoked by the continual disregard by management of protests of the workers' grievance committees. The men who make the steel see profits swelling, but wages remain the same and the speedup intensifies. And sometimes men can bear abuse no longer.

IT WAS IN THIS SETTING that Philip Murray one day went to the offices of the Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corp. in Pittsburgh. There he conferred alone for several hours with William Beye, a US Steel vice-president. On that same day Clinton S. Golden, SWOC regional director, met in New York with Raoul Desvernine, head of the Crucible Steel Corp. Murray had several additional conferences with Mr. Beye, all of them described as "informal." The CIO president refused to divulge what conclusions, if any, had been reached. But the SWOC revealed that a wage increase was the main topic of discussion. Later on, the SWOC announced, there would be formal negotiations on such questions as methods of collecting dues, the number of shop stewards in the mills, seniority, and improved arrangements for vacations. For a while rumor swept through the mills that Murray had asked for a ten percent increase in wages and that such an increase was "in the bag." And if Murray won a raise from US Steel, the rate would become the norm for the entire industry.

The steel workers had thought of demanding more than ten percent over their present wage of \$5 a day minimum. They talked much of a flat ten-cent-an-hour increase for all classifications of workers.

The announcement did not come. Instead, the workers learned that US Steel had turned down Philip Murray, that the corporation would agree to a new wage scale only if Mr.

Murray would support a simultaneous rise in the price of finished steel.

Mr. Murray refused to run to Washington as errand boy for management, refused to intercede with Mr. Knudsen and Mr. Hillman so that the steel companies could make even greater profits. His personally conducted negotiations had failed. He called in the SWOC organizers and told them to speed up the organizational drive in US Steel. At the same time, Mr. Murray also told them to push the "Murray Steel Plan" which ostensibly would put the steel industry on a more efficient basis. This is the counterpart of the Reuther Plan in the auto industry. "For national defense," said Mr. Murray. But the workers were little interested in increasing the speedup that already sapped their strength. They were interested in raising their standard of living, in bringing wages up so that their wives could to some degree meet the inflated prices on food and clothing and other necessities. Let management be its own efficiency expert: it was not up to the workers to intensify the already unbearable conditions in the plants.

But Mr. Murray has clung to his plan. He would establish a labor-industry council chaired by a government official, and by setting up a "top scheduling clerk," organize the industry as a single productive unit and so end "rugged individualism" and the anarchy of production. He wanted government purchases spread more evenly throughout the steel industry, so that bottlenecks would be eliminated, and all the mills would get their share of war contracts, which have been up to now largely placed with Bethlehem. Thus, Mr. Murray pointed out, unused plant capacity which had been created by the displacement of old type mills by such new plants as the Irwin, would be utilized. Clearly, Mr. Murray was backing an efficiency plan for the steel industry, which, while intended to benefit labor, would strengthen monopoly. Those who remembered back to the twenties, to the B & O and other efficiency plans, objected that when labor helps speed up production, thereby becoming its own foreman, the corporations enjoy greater profits and the workers get nothing except more exploitation. The Murray Plan, so most workers felt, would disarm the union's shop stewards and grievance committees, who, instead of representing the workers in their struggle against the speedup, would be aligned with management in the effort to increase the rate of work.

But above all, what is wrong with the Murray Plan is that it implies support of a reactionary war program. It accepts the easy words of President Roosevelt, which are contradicted by his actions, that the "defense"

program has nothing to do with the desire of the administration to take this nation into Europe's war, has nothing to do with the lust for empire.

But the rank and file has shown little interest in the Murray Plan. What the workers want is a wage increase. This is a "must." They also want the union shop, a more efficient grievance system, and if not a check-off, at least the right to carry on dues collections inside the mills.

Within the last week, the US Steel Corp., alarmed by the determination of workers to press for demands, tried to spike the SWOC drive for improved conditions by a "generous" offer. Corporation officials would be willing to raise wages by two-and-a-half cents an hour—with the proviso that this new wage would only be in force while the mills continued to operate at eighty-five percent of capacity or over. But this attempt to forestall the SWOC was so far short of the ten-cent an hour raise in wages asked by the union (ignored also were demands on hours, the check-off, vacations, and general improvement of working conditions) that the steel lodges unani-

mously turned it down. SWOC has now served notice, as required by the former contract, that the union wishes to begin discussions on all debated points to be incorporated in a new contract. The steel workers move ahead. The outcome of these negotiations is vital to the entire union movement, and in particular to the coal miners whose contract also expires at the end of this month.

FOR THE RESTLESSNESS so apparent among steel workers also pervades the coal miners. Here, too, mechanization has brought vast unemployment. Speedup makes working conditions dangerous, price rises have decreased the purchasing power of wages. The machine has made the lot of the men who mine the nation's coal even more difficult. But many miners realize that it is not the fault of the machine. As one miner at the recent convention of District Four, United Mine Workers, put it: "The machines are here to stay. What we need is to make them our servants." Some locals in northern Washington County have adopted a program to offset the displacement of men by mechani-

zation. This program would establish strict seniority and provide for severance pay to laid-off miners. When 150 miners—most of them older men—were recently laid off in a Jones & Laughlin mine as a result of mechanization, all the workers struck for application of seniority. Four other Jones & Laughlin mines supported them in a sympathy walkout. The strike was won.

The United Mine Workers has now opened negotiations for a new contract, demanding wage increases, a 200-day guaranteed work year, vacations with pay, and safeguards against accidents. The miners are solidly behind their president, John L. Lewis. They have built the greatest union in America, the backbone of the CIO. That is a power the coal operators will have to reckon with. And so will the Roosevelt administration, which is maneuvering behind the scenes in an effort to discredit Lewis. Watch steel and coal. The one million union men in these two industries will not easily be seduced or intimidated by anti-labor proposals. They hold the key to the whole future of American labor.

DAVID LURIE.



"I see one of our boys is making good in America"

Michaels



"I see one of our boys is making good in America"

Michaelis

A MAN'S A MAN FOR A' THAT

WORDS Robert Burns

MUSIC Earl Robinson

Slow March Tempo

VOICE

PIANO

Is there for honest pover-ty that

hangs his head and a' that the coward slave we pass him by we dare be poor for a' that for

a' that and a' that Our toils ob-sure and a' that the rank is but the Guin-ee stamp the

man's the gold for a' that

Brothers Be for a' that!

that!

a tempo

a tempo

Rit.

1st 2nd 3rd 4th Ending

5th Ending

R.H.

II
 What tho on homely fare we dine, Wear hoddan grey and a' that
 Gi'e fools their silk and knaves their wine
 A man's a man for a' that
 For a' that and a' that, their tinsel show and a' that
 The honest man; tho e'er sae poor, is king o' men for a' that

III
 Ye see yon birkie, called a lord, Who struts and stares and a' that
 Tho hundreds worship at his word
 He's but a cuif (fool) for a' that
 For a' that and a' that, His riband, star, and a' that
 The man of independent mind, he looks and laughs at a' that

IV
 A prince can make a belted knight, a marquis, duke and a' that
 But an honest man's above his might
 Good faith he keeps for a' that
 For a' that and a' that, Their dignities and a' that
 The pith o' sense and pride o' worth, are higher rank than a' that

V
 Then let us pray that come it may, as come it will for a' that
 That sense and worth o'er a' the earth
 Shall win the fight for a' that
 For a' that and a' that, It's comin' yet for a' that
 That man to man, the world o'er shall brothers be for a' that.

Scottish Rebel

Bobby Burns wrote the "Marseillaise of Mankind" in "A Man's a Man." The poet's ardent support of the American and French Revolutions. His hatred of British reaction.

AT THE NEW MASSES anniversary celebration last month, an enthusiastic audience joined Earl Robinson and the American People's Chorus in the singing of "A Man's a Man for a' That." Everybody in the audience must have felt that here was a song that, like Robinson's "Joe Hill" and "Abe Lincoln," would be heard over and over again wherever the people gather. For the spirited simplicity of Robinson's music has restored Burns' magnificent poem to the masses for whom it was written and whose fighting faith it celebrates. The poem has been termed the Marseillaise of mankind. Written almost 150 years ago, it has lost nothing of its vitality as a protest against class distinction and as an affirmation of a future in which "man to man the world o'er shall brothers be for all that."

In one sense, the poem requires less comment than any work in the language. In keeping with Burns' genius it speaks plainly of essentially plain things. Of the 263 words in the song, 240 are words of one syllable. Only a few words in Scottish forms require explanation: birkie for fellow, cuif for fool, hodden grey for coarse grey woollens. The technical skill of the poem resides in its combination of ease and intensity, of the simple and the universal.

But while the poem speaks so eloquently for itself, its full significance can be realized only when we understand the historical circumstances under which it was composed. For the poem was no academic exercise. It grew out of Burns' ardent support of the American and French Revolutions, his reading of Thomas Paine's *Rights of Man*, and his passionate hatred of a reactionary British government which ruthlessly suppressed dissidents like Burns.

It was a period which, in certain respects, was peculiarly like our own. The finest spirits of the age supported the French Revolution of 1789. The British Tories were alive to the dangers of democratic upheavals in their own country inspired by the French and American examples. In 1790, Edmund Burke had written his *Reflections on the French Revolution*, in which he had come forward as the leading theoretical spokesman against the democrats and what he termed the "swinish multitude." Paine had answered the following year with the first part of *Rights of Man*, attacking the British autocracy, describing Burke as one "Accustomed to kiss the aristocratical hand that hath purloined him from himself," and declaring that "Man is not the enemy of man, but through the medium of a false system of Government."

Paine and other democrats were mercilessly persecuted in the years of reaction which followed in England. They were at-

tacked as "levellers," "Republicans," and "Jacobins." They were accused of being "spies of foreign powers," and they were charged with accepting "Jacobin gold." Under "Church and King" slogans, mobs were bribed by the government to attack the homes of French sympathizers. At Birmingham, the house of the scientist, Joseph Priestley, was burned, and his laboratory, perhaps the best equipped in England, was destroyed. Priestley himself was forced to flee to America. Paine escaped to France in the nick of time (with the aid of the poet, William Blake), but he was tried for "sedition" in absentia, and his work was suppressed. A million and a half copies had already been sold.

In Scotland, the reaction took its worst form. Prime Minister Pitt had issued a decree forbidding the sale of Paine's work among Scotland's "laborous folk," and one of the most active Paineites, Thomas Muir, was tried for sedition at Edinburgh in August, 1793. The temper of the British Tories ("yon birkie called 'a lord'") may be gathered from the instructions to the jury at Muir's trial by the presiding judge, Lord Braxfield: ". . . the British constitution is the best that ever was since the creation of the world, and it is not possible to make it better. . . . A government in every country should be just like a corporation, and in this country it is made up of the landed interest who alone have a right to be represented." Muir was sentenced to fourteen years in Botany Bay, Australia. He escaped later on a privateer outfitted by American sympathizers, including Washington and Jefferson.

Meanwhile "The Friends of the People," a pro-democratic society, was active. Two large conventions were held in Edinburgh with delegates from English, Irish, and Scottish societies. Meeting for the purpose of organizing to obtain universal suffrage and annual parliaments, their leading delegates were arrested. The title "convention" was held to be seditious. When Joseph Gerrald, one of the men accused of being a "reformer," pointed out that Jesus Christ was also a reformer, Lord Braxfield, again presiding, replied: "Much he made o' that; he was hanged."

Through these years, the early 'nineties, Burns was living at Dumfries, employed by the government as a gauger whose job was to survey taxable articles and collect revenue (Paine, incidentally, had also been a gauger). He read Burke and Paine at Dumfries, and he sided enthusiastically with the latter. Angered by the suppression of liberal clubs, attacks on free speech, and suspension of habeas corpus, he subscribed to and wrote for the *Edinburgh Gazetteer*, a reform journal. By the end of 1792 his activities were denounced

by an informer before the Excise Board as unpatriotic. An investigation followed. Burns was exonerated, but warned to be more cautious.

Cautious he was, to some degree. Much of the political poetry he wrote during these years was withheld from circulation and destroyed by his family after his death. He was forced to conceal Paine's works with a Dumfries blacksmith. Having suffered poverty and hardship most of his life, having incurred debt and the responsibilities of a large family, he was by no means as active as a Muir or a Gerrald.

But he was cautious only in a limited sense. On one occasion he proposed as a toast "the last verse of the last chapter of the last book of Kings." Hearing Pitt toasted at a public gathering, he suggested, glass upraised, "the health of a better man, George Washington." He described Louis XVI as a "perjured Blockhead" and Marie Antoinette as "an unprincipled Prostitute." He was present at public places where "God Save the King" was drowned in cries of "The sow's tail to Geordie!" In 1794, he composed an "Ode for General Washington's Birthday" in which he spoke of exulting thousands dashing the broken chain in the English tyrant's face. The House of Hanover he described as "an idiot race, to honor lost." He was a close friend of Dr. William Maxwell, who had joined the Republican Army and who had served as a guard at the execution of Louis XVI.

"War I deprecate: misery and ruin to thousands are in the blast that announces the destructive demon." This was his attitude toward the war which was declared between France and England on Feb. 1, 1793; and it is against the background of this war that the last two lines of "A Man's a Man" must be interpreted. That he could have another attitude toward a war of independence is clear from his "Scots Wha Hae" in which he celebrated the fight of the Scottish led by Robert Bruce at Bannockburn. In this poem, which was ostensibly an attack on an English tyrant of 1314, he was really talking in necessarily concealed terms about the present, as he pointed out in one of his letters.

So that throughout the Dumfries period (in which "A Man's a Man" was composed, probably toward the end of 1794), Robert Burns, son of a tenant farmer and for a long time a poverty-stricken tenant farmer himself, was alive to the fateful struggles between tyranny and the people. The poem which Earl Robinson has set to music is a stirring expression of his democratic vision. It belongs to the peoples of all lands, an immortal symbol of their suffering and hope.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

APM Spells Peace

Good neighbors march into the front lines to fight the war. Yorkville on the map. From little councils big peace movements grow.

THE distinction between organizations like America First, which represent an articulate minority of big business, and the American Peace Mobilization, which represents the people, was immediately apparent last month to the congressmen on the Foreign Relations Committees. They listened politely to the businessmen and their more or less openly fascist spokesmen, and they didn't listen to the APM at all. On the next to the last day of the Senate hearings, when the Senators were waiting around for Willkie, they listened to Joe Curran of the National Maritime Union, but there is no evidence that they paid any attention. Their position was similar to that of the big newspapers, which do not agree with what Gen. Robert E. Wood of Sears-Roebuck has to say, but will defend to the death his right to say it. All General Wood and Verne Marshall had to do at this period was to clear their throats and it crowded the war in Africa off the front page of the *New York Times*. This was partly due to the delicate stage in the negotiations between London and Wall Street about the disposal of British investments, and partly to the instinctive respect of newspaper publishers for anyone with a great deal of money. It did not mean that the American Peace Mobilization was an insignificant organization. As a matter of fact, on the national council of the APM, there are two vice presidents of the CIO, upward of a dozen presidents of international unions, fifty or sixty progressive Americans whose names mean more to the public than the Chicago breakfast-food magnates of America First, and there are more than four thousand APM peace councils in the country.

I spent a Saturday morning recently at the Yorkville Peace Council, which has its headquarters in a store on East Seventy-eighth Street in New York. There are forty-five councils in New York, which have been busy for six months, without benefit of newspaper publicity, organizing people against war. The president of the Yorkville Council, an extraordinarily pretty blonde girl named Betty Liveright, was stacking picket signs in the back of the store when I came in. She went on working as she talked to me. The store had apparently once been a candy shop and it was just big enough for two people. There was a wood stove in the corner, a mimeograph machine on a table, several folding chairs, piles of leaflets, and a green rug on the floor. The green rug and the wood stove made it look a little like a Victorian parlor.

"We used to be in the store on the corner of Seventy-eighth Street and First," said Mrs. Liveright. "We just moved here and

I'm afraid the place is a mess. Two painters from the Painters Union volunteered to come in this afternoon and fix it up. It isn't very roomy but it's going to be nice. You can see for yourself, this is a poor neighborhood. Senator Wagner—we're going to picket Senator Wagner this afternoon, that's what the signs are for—lives in a big apartment house on Eighty-sixth Street with a doorman. But in this neighborhood it's different. I've just been setting up our window display."

We went out to look at it. Little clusters of toy figures on a big map of the world represented various points in the APM program. A group of tin soldiers standing around a tent in New Jersey was labelled, "Decent conditions, better pay for draftees." An American soldier in a gas mask invading South America had a tag, "Good neighbor policy, yes—Wall Street interference, no." American battleships off the coast of Ireland were labelled, "No warships in belligerent waters."

"It's funny what they sell in the dime stores," said Mrs. Liveright. "You can get tin soldiers for almost every army in the world. The woman who painted the map had a baby just after she finished the Western Hemisphere so for six weeks we could only show our domestic program. The trouble is, downstairs there's a man who sells coal and ice, and the cellar doors in the sidewalk are open most of the day during the week, so you can't get close enough to read the slogans. It was better in the old store. We had two windows, the map in one, and five or six big blown-up pages from *Friday* in the other. It cost us fifty dollars a month, so we decided to move here and put the difference into leaflets. Unfortunately, we can't start putting the difference into leaflets till we pay off our debts. We spend about seventy-five dollars a month as it is, and we have a lot of headaches. You can buy tickets to a cocktail party we're having next week if you want to, we have to raise last month's rent. A man came in yesterday and gave us three dollars. He fought in the last war and he said he doesn't want to fight in another."

We went back into the store and unfolded two chairs and sat down. "Yorkville is a real melting pot," said Mrs. Liveright. "Everybody thinks there are just Germans in Yorkville, but besides Germans we have Czechs and Slovaks and Hungarians and Italians and Irish. There are some Negroes, but not many. We have Negroes in the Peace Council because the Domestic Workers headquarters is in our territory. The militant women in the neighborhood are the Czechs, they're the backbone of the Peace Council.

"The out-and-out Nazis in Yorkville never were very numerous. We've had quite a bit of trouble with them because they know

we're really against fascism while a lot of other people are doing all the talking. Last week the furniture movers next door had their front window broken with a bowling pin, and a few days later they got a nice letter of apology because it seems that whoever broke their window meant to break ours. One night when we had the store on the corner somebody threw a whole garbage can through one of our windows and a door knob through the other. They must have taken a good windup because the door knob went clear through the back of the store into a grocery. We made this quite a community issue in Yorkville. We sent a petition to Commissioner Valentine and just about every community leader in Yorkville signed it—preachers and lawyers and doctors. The police were pretty lackadaisical."

By this time half a dozen people had come into the store and two women were listening to Mrs. Liveright and watching me as I took notes.

"Do you know about Joe McWilliams?" a young Negro girl asked me. "He's one of our prominent local boys." "Joe McWilliams," said Mrs. Liveright, "he's been getting out shopping guides of 'Christian merchants' and going around giving speeches when he's not in the observation ward at Bellevue. We handed out peace leaflets at one of his street meetings outside the Labor Temple, and I never heard such disgusting things in my life. I went right down and got a summons for him in Yorkville Court. It got the Peace Council into the papers, but serving a summons on Joe McWilliams isn't the easiest thing in the world. The district attorney's office wouldn't have a thing to do with it. I called up and got a cop several times to go with me to McWilliams' office, but McWilliams either got tipped off in advance or he'd go out the back door as we came in the front. A professional process server said he wouldn't serve that summons for less than \$150 because he wouldn't go near the Christian Mobilizers without a body-guard. It expired a few days ago. Some people who saw the stories in the papers came in and joined the APM."

"Betty, tell him about how we started," said a motherly woman in a battered fur coat.

"All right," said Mrs. Liveright. "We had a big head start on the APM. Last year around Mothers Day some of the women in the neighborhood mimeographed an anti-war petition, and it caught on like wild-fire. When we had 5,000 signatures we started the Yorkville Women's Peace Council. On the Fourth of July we had a streetcorner rally that the police said was the biggest rally ever held in Yorkville. We stopped traffic two blocks both ways on First Avenue.

The people may have come because of the brass band but they stayed because they were against war. In the next few weeks we had a petition campaign against conscription. We got a permit to set up tables on five street corners which was a big success; the streets of Yorkville are jammed on summer evenings. Then one Saturday we hired a hearse from a funeral director on Eighty-second Street and plastered it with signs and had a procession to Rep. Martin J. Kennedy's house on Lexington Avenue. I'll never forget that afternoon. It was the hottest day in the summer and we all had on black veils and shrouds. We picketed Kennedy's house for two solid hours in those shrouds."

"We were wringing wet," said the Negro girl.

"Since then a lot of people used the same idea," said Mrs. Liveright, "but by golly, we were first. I never was so surprised as when *Life* that week came out with a picture of our picketline. I've got it somewhere."

"We have quite a problem in our neighborhood," she said. "Because of all the different nationalities there isn't the same kind of community life as in places like the Lower East Side. Tammany Hall never had a really good block-to-block organization here. Most of the people in the Peace Council came in from street meetings, they never worked in any progressive activity before. Yorkville is almost entirely a residential section, if you can call old-law tenements residential, and about the only factory is Ruppert's Brewery. There's the big car barns of the Third Avenue Railway at Sixty-fifth Street, but outside of the transport workers, a couple of bakers' and painters' locals and the domestic workers, we work most with national groups—the Federation of German Clubs, the German singing societies, the IWO. Then there's the Tenants League and the churches.

"The churches are polite; we hand out leaflets to the congregations Sunday morning, but we haven't made much of a dent. We meet regularly with the Yorkville Youth Congress, which after all helped get the APM started last Labor Day in Chicago. We sent fifty delegates to Chicago. Now we have men in the Peace Council too, but unfortunately not too many; it's one of our weaknesses. On the way back from Chicago we stopped in Washington, and frankly, we put the fear of God into Martin J. Kennedy. We represented almost every organization in his district except Tammany Hall. He'd already voted for conscription but when it came up again he voted against it. He voted against the lend-lease bill too. I don't know anything about his personal convictions, but I know how tough they made it in Congress for any Democrat who went up against the administration. I guess he felt it would be even worse if he didn't. We've sent four delegations down to Washington. One woman in the last delegation said Kennedy looked worried stiff."

"Frankly," said Mrs. Liveright, "after conscription passed there was a let-up in our

The Fight Has Just Begun

"THERE is a great deal of truth in the senatorial forecast that, as a result of the enactment of the lease-lend bill, the GHQ [general headquarters] of the wars in Europe and Asia will be located in the White House," wrote the March issue of the *Army and Navy Journal*. This admission came from a semi-official source only after passage of the bill appeared certain. Analysis of the vote on HR 1776 reveals a phenomenon that casts considerable light on the functioning of the democratic process in this country. Of the sixty who voted for the measure in the Senate, sixteen were from the eight poll-tax states in the South, where the majority of the Negro and white electorate are disfranchised. In the House seventy-one of the 260 supporters of HR 1776 were from poll-tax states. The poll-taxers, plus the representatives from three other states where there are restrictions on the suffrage, Louisiana, Florida, and North Carolina, held the balance of power in the House which tipped the scales in favor of the war bill.

By their rejection of all efforts to include in the measure even the semblance of a ban on a new AEF, the majority of Congress and the Roosevelt administration have served notice that, despite the wishes of the American people, they intend to press forward on the path of war and imperialism. For the people the struggle around the lease-lend bill, while it did not result in victory, did achieve certain gains. In the first place, it exposed the hollowness of the Roosevelt-Willkie plan of "national unity." In both houses a sizable vote was cast against the bill, but even this was only a partial reflection of the tremendous opposition to the measure. Secondly, the debate itself served to awaken large sections of the population to the meaning of the Roosevelt-Willkie foreign policy and gave a new impetus to the fight against war. Thirdly, it brought into the struggle many trade unions, both AFL and CIO, which must be the backbone of any effective peace movement.

One of the most important lessons to be learned from this battle is the necessity for utmost clarity regarding foreign policy. The official opposition in Congress was self-frustrating, denouncing the bill and in the same breath offering another form of aid to Britain; professing love of peace and yet attacking the country which is the greatest force for peace in the world, the Soviet Union. This kind of doubletalk tends to confuse the people and weaken the movement against war. All the more reason, then, why the great People's Meeting, which the American Peace Mobilization is calling in New York April 5-6, ought to clarify the issues and unite on a broader basis those who want peace and democracy as the American way of life.

work. There was a kind of feeling of defeatism, particularly just after the election. Then 1776 came along, and we got going. We picketed Kennedy's house every weekend, we sent speakers to all the neighborhood organizations, we had street meetings. We got out a lot of leaflets. We had one big meeting at the Yorkville Casino with some big union leaders like Blackie Myers of the seamen's union, and an Irish transport worker and a German painter from Yorkville, and then we went en masse to Pennsylvania Station to see our delegates off to Washington. Naturally we work with the city APM when it does something, like putting on a demonstration Friday nights at Pennsylvania Station when the Congressional Special comes in from Washington. Since the bill went to the Senate we've been picketing Senator Wagner. The Upper West Side Peace Council is picketing Sol Bloom and then they're coming over to help us. We're not a glorified Washington lobby. We've got to organize in the neighborhoods. We've got to tell more and more people about the war. Right now our big thing is the April 5 and 6 meeting in New York, the American People's Meeting, which is honestly going to be one of the biggest things in American history. All our organizations are going to send delegates and we've already started holding meetings in each block to elect block delegates. In the next three weeks every family in Yorkville is going to hear about this meeting if our mimeograph holds out. We're breaking up into small peace clubs

now, groups of five to ten people in every block who meet every week, and then we'll have a meeting of the whole council here twice a month. We were getting so many people we were getting unwieldy. There won't be any let-up this time. The APM is a growing thing, and it's going to go on growing no matter what happens in Washington."

Mrs. Liveright and several others handed around the picket signs and leaflets and we started walking up First Avenue escorted by a squad of police cars. There were already several hundred in the picketline outside Wagner's apartment house, and at least that many cops. When we got into the picketline it extended two abreast half the way between York Avenue and East River Drive. We had to duck our signs every time we passed under the canopy outside Wagner's house. There were a couple of hundred neighborhood kids with balloons marked "Defeat HR 1776."

"When they took in the petition," said Mrs. Liveright after we had been picketing fifteen minutes, "naturally it turned out that Wagner wasn't home. He's hard to catch. They even told them over at Sol Bloom's house that Bloom doesn't live there, it's only his voting address." We walked up and down the block between two solid lines of cops, standing shoulder to shoulder. "I never saw so many cops," she said. "One of our Czech women got here early and picketed all by herself for fifteen minutes. When she saw all the cops she asked one of them, 'What are you scared of?'"

DANIEL TODD.

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Choices for Greece

HAVING brought his battalions to the borders of Greece by the diplomatic victory over Bulgaria, Herr Hitler is letting the moral sink in. He is taking great pains to assure Turkey of nothing but "peaceful" intentions. If the latest reports have any substance, he is negotiating some sort of pact with Yugoslavia which will only further encircle the Greeks, while in Albania there are signs of a renewed Italian offensive through the mountains. The Greek ruling class is thus confronted with extremely difficult alternatives. In the absence of an overwhelming British support by land, sea, and air, Greece can hardly expect to stand off a German thrust across the narrow strip of Thracian soil to the Aegean Sea and Salonika. The alternative, at this late date, is capitulation. From the very meager news that's coming through, it seemed to us last week that the Greek ruling class was wracking itself with the problems of the technique, the terms, and the personnel to effect the capitulation.

The editorialists of the highly "class conscious" capitalist press seemed to share this opinion: their current hosannas over the "heroic defiance" of the Greeks invariably end up like funeral orations. The fact is that American and British imperialism have already gotten more than they originally expected in Greece, namely, about five months of time. German imperialism now moves into position to use Greece for its own ends. Never was it so terribly apparent that the independence of small nations has become a fiction in a world where the big imperialist powers are locked in their deadly embrace.

The USSR and Bulgaria

IN THINKING about Soviet policy, it is well to be guided by the ancient rule that the simplest interpretation of events is usually the best one. When Soviet statesmen have emphasized again and again their interest in the security of their borders, and their desire to keep the war away from their borders, we believe they have meant precisely that. The USSR is not allied with Germany; if anything, her attitude toward the occupation of Bulgaria scotches that slander. Neither do we think the USSR stands in particular fear of Germany. Soviet policy is a policy of independence, arising out of the socialist nature of its civilization, basing itself on its

moral, economic, and military strength, and a fundamental unity of interest with the peoples of the world.

But last week, several newspapers and journals devoted a good deal of their perverse brain-power in the effort to make the USSR somehow responsible for the occupation of Bulgaria. The *New York Times* even undertook a hoary effort to make France and Britain less culpable for the rape of Czechoslovakia on the grounds that the USSR never intended to fulfill its commitments to Czechoslovakia. This is a downright lie. It was exposed by none other than Erika Mann in an interview with Eduard Benes, former president of Czechoslovakia, in the *Chicago Daily News* for April 18, 1939. Dr. Benes told Miss Mann "he was assured by Russia that it would have sent military assistance even though France and Britain failed to do so."

As for Bulgaria: let it be remembered that the USSR has no common frontiers with that country and no commitments toward it. In fact, the Bulgarian ruling class has been so hostile to the USSR that it did not even recognize its existence until a few years ago. It is therefore ludicrous to think that the USSR could unilaterally defend the neutrality of Bulgaria once its ruling class had decided to abandon that neutrality. As for the piddling charge that the USSR might have spoken earlier, it ought to be recalled that as long ago as January 12, Tass declared that if there were German troops in Bulgaria they were there without the knowledge or consent of the Soviet government. Moreover, it does not take much sophistication to realize that diplomatic statements invariably confirm attitudes and decisions which are already known between governments. Thus, the Soviet attitude toward the occupation of Bulgaria must have been known well in advance in Sofia and Berlin, and for that matter, Washington and London.

Is the USSR happy about these developments? Obviously not. Its note makes that clear. Does this imply a rift with Germany?



No, we think it indicates a divergence of interest, which flows from the basic fact that one state is interested in preserving peace, the other has a big war on its hands. This is a divergence which has been obvious for half a year. It need not necessarily lead to war between the two countries, which is of course precisely what British and American imperialism, and their staunch supporters, would just love to see.

The war developed in the Balkans because the big imperialist powers are itching to get footholds and come to grips with each other, because the Bulgarian ruling class has expansionist ambitions of its own which it gambles that Hitler will satisfy. This will remain true until the peoples of the Balkan countries gain strength enough to take power into their own hands.

Victory in Chile

THE results of the election in Chile are a reminder that in political life no conclusions are foregone and where the energies of the people are set in motion, great things can be accomplished. Only a few weeks ago the outlook in Chile was black. The Socialist Party had disrupted the Popular Front after one of its leaders, Oscar Schnake, a Cabinet minister, returned from an extended stay in Washington. The Socialist leaders sought to drive the country away from neutrality and into active alignment with the Anglo-American side in the imperialist war. Taking advantage of this situation, the reactionary majority in both houses of Congress passed a bill outlawing the Communist Party. But the workers and peasants of Chile refused to permit the betrayal of their future. Their continued unity in the localities persuaded the middle-class Radical Party to retain the alliance with the Communists, and President Aguirre Cerda vetoed the anti-Communist bill.

In the election a new Popular Front, excluding the Socialists, was created, with the Radicals and the Communists as the leading parties. The Chilean masses responded by giving this front a striking victory. The Radicals substantially increased their representation, but the greatest gains of all were made by the Communists, an emphatic vindication of their Popular Front policy. In the Chamber they increased their seats from seven to seventeen, and in the Senate from one to four. In the lower house they now outnumber the Socialists. Carlos Contreras Labarca, general secretary of the Communist Party, was elected to the Senate with the greatest majority in the country, polling more than the entire party did in 1937.

Faced with the choice of remaining in the Popular Front government in which they have three ministers, or of casting their lot with the reactionaries, the Socialists are reported to have decided on the former. If this policy is also pursued in Congress, it will give the PF an absolute majority. Even without the Socialists, it is believed that the

Popular Front could control Congress through agreements with a number of liberal-minded deputies of minor parties. However this parliamentary situation finally crystallizes, the election results are a blow to the State Department in Washington and its plans for impressing Chile, together with the other Latin-American nations, into its hemispheric war front.

Drang nach Suden

AND now the Republic of Panama has signed on the dotted line. It has conceded to its "good neighbor" north of the Rio Grande the right to quarter troops, naval and air forces, on its soil. Last week's dispatches from below the Rio were of a sort that brought "pleasure" to Secretary Hull, the *New York Times* said happily. Mexico, too, is "close" to similar agreements and the wires are humming between Mexico City and Washington. *Imperialismo yanqui* is gaining ground. Virgil Jordan and the rest of the *Drang nach Suden* school must be delighted.

Events in Mexico, particularly, bring alarm to all friends of Latin America. The Camacho government is reported surrendering the bitterly fought gains made by the peasants and proletarians since the stirring days of 1935-36. Land distribution has come to an absolute standstill because Wall Street looks with a dour eye upon the confiscation of a number of vast properties—the infamous haciendas—which were to be broken up for distribution among the land-hungry. Reports also indicate that the oil companies have their men on the scene energetically plotting to win back their expropriated properties with Washington's connivance. And finally, Mexico is preparing to cede strategic spots to the military of the United States—in effect, to cede its sovereignty to the Colossus of the North.

Sovereignty—*soberania*—is a sacred word in Hispano-America. Too much blood was shed in its name to consider it lightly. And though Secretary Hull derives "pleasure" from the reports of his department's gains, a hundred million Latin Americans hear the news with a deep pang. But they remember what happened to Porfirio Diaz and Maximilian before him.

The Old Game Again

WHEN it comes to shrugging off a startling contradiction, President Roosevelt yields to no man. He was forced recently to admit that strikes, far from paralyzing war industries—as claimed by the largest anti-labor employers—had actually affected production by only one-quarter of one percent. Having made this admission, the President agilely reversed himself: during a press conference last week, he viewed with alarm inroads made by strikers on his armament and aid-to-Britain program. He proposed to set up an apparatus to "mediate" labor disputes—by executive order.

The new plan, a substitute for no-strike

legislation, would create a commission similar to the Labor Board of the last war. Though the President "warned" against jumping to conclusions, he hinted that his method would combine features of the old Board with the strategy of the existing Railway Labor Board which, through elaborate delays, virtually outlaws strikes.

In the President's eyes, an executive order setting up mediation machinery would conveniently forestall debate in Congress over anti-labor legislation while accomplishing the same end as William Knudsen's plan to force workers to delay forty days before taking action against intolerable abuses. Sidney Hillman, like William Green and the rest of the AFL hierarchy, has expressed willingness to accept anything and everything desired by

management and the administration—thus assuring the President that he can count on "labor" support.

But what about the wishes of working men and women who consider mediation boards no more than a means by which government can eliminate strikes without having to resort to "illegal" methods? Their opinion is expressed by Philip Murray's outright refusal to approve such schemes. Although the CIO president has offered the "Murray Plan" as a substitute (and the plan is open to serious criticism), Mr. Murray has pointed out that the real purpose of the administration's proposals would be to freeze the *status quo* and with it low wages and speedup. "There is nothing contained in the proposal," declared Mr. Mur-

(Continued on page 22)

Spy on the Spot

OUT of the night of the journalistic underworld the truth about the small-bore criminal who calls himself Jan Valtin is being brought into the light of day. This case is, of course, something more than a literary hoax palmed off under respectable auspices. It is part of a larger and fouler picture, a political conspiracy, many of whose leading actors play their parts off-stage. Following the expose of the convicted criminal and former Gestapo spy, Richard Krebs alias Jan Valtin, in *NEW MASSES* and the *Daily Worker*, the newspaper *PM* last week decided to get the real low-down. Its elaborate effort to play Diogenes was confused by its suspicion of honest men because they happen to be of the left and its reluctance to think evil of dishonest reactionaries like Isaac Don Levine. Its article, nevertheless, does conclusively support the charge that Krebs-Valtin is a criminal operating in this country with the connivance of Washington, and that his pornographic best-seller, *Out of the Night*, is hardly the candid autobiography it professes to be. The salient facts about this typical product of the anti-Soviet, anti-Communist racket may be summed up as follows:

1. By his own confession, while still in Germany, Krebs-Valtin entered the service of Himmler's Gestapo.

2. On a previous visit to this country in 1926 he was convicted of assaulting a Jewish storekeeper in Los Angeles after an attempted robbery. He served less than three years of a ten-year sentence.

3. In 1938 Krebs-Valtin came to the United States again as a seaman, entering the country illegally after jumping ship at Norfolk.

4. In its January 1938 issue *Paa Torn*, monthly paper of the Scandinavian Seamen's Club, published a passport photo of Krebs-Valtin with a story warning against him as a Gestapo spy.

5. *Out of the Night* was first written as a novel. With the help of the veteran Hearst writer and professional anti-Sovieteer, Isaac Don Levine, it was recast and published as the autobiography of a man who claims to have been a secret Soviet agent.

6. It was published last November by Alliance

Book Corp. as an 841-page book. It became the February selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club—this time 749 pages in length. *Out of the Night* was given the blessing of Henry Seidel Canby and other high priests of the book club and was praised as an authentic document by the *Nation*, the *New Republic*, Vincent Sheean, and others—though many reviewers expressed doubts about the more purple passages.

7. The book itself contains so many contradictions and statements which do not check with ascertainable facts as to forfeit all right to credibility.

8. Before it was published, *Out of the Night* was read and approved by Assistant Secretary of State Adolph A. Berle.

9. Despite the fact that Krebs-Valtin not only entered the country illegally, but under the law cannot be admitted because of conviction for a crime involving moral turpitude, he has been permitted to remain in this country without molestation from the State Department or the FBI. Moreover, he has been allowed to carry a gun which he has threatened to use against those who try to expose him.

All this raises a number of questions. The State Department has refused even transit visas to thousands of anti-Nazi refugees, but it provides asylum for a man who by his own admission was formerly a Gestapo spy. Why? The Department of Justice is now seeking the deportation of one of the best, most courageous leaders of American labor, Harry Bridges, despite the absence of any legal basis for such action, but it gives the convicted alien criminal and spy, Krebs-Valtin, the run of the country. Why? And a third question: who is employing Krebs-Valtin: the State Department, the FBI, Herr Himmler, or all three? Certain it is that the anti-Soviet gold bricks peddled in this country by such characters as Krebs-Valtin and the late Ginsberg-Krivitsky (who was brought here by former Ambassador William C. Bullitt) bring joy to the leaders of both the fascist and the pretended anti-fascist sides in this war. For the American people this whole incident offers an insight into the way of life that the Berles and Bullitts and J. Edgar Hoovers wish them to defend.

ray, "which would compel employers to extend the practice of collective bargaining, which is the best guarantee for avoiding labor disputes." In other words, labor disputes can be eliminated easily enough once employers deal with workers, adjust wages to rising prices, provide bearable working conditions, curtail speedup. But employers are funny that way. They want their own way and no strikes.

So does the President. And if workers don't like it, they can be made to like it. After all, Hitler did it. The defense of democracy—a la administration—seems to be an attempt to beat the fascists at their own game.

James B. McNamara

THIRTY years ago James B. McNamara was put into prison "for the remainder of his natural life." His sentence was fulfilled, but not exactly in accordance with the phrase. True, only death proved a release for the world's oldest labor prisoner. But McNamara's "natural life" for three decades was the living death of a jail cell and it was that which killed him—the prison food, mistreatment, and indifferent medical attention, culminating in intestinal cancer.

All but five years of "J. B.'s" long imprisonment were spent in San Quentin jail, which also housed Tom Mooney for twenty-three years. Like Mooney, McNamara was the victim of anti-labor hatred and violence. In 1910 he and his brother John, both prominent in the labor struggle, were accused of dynamiting the Los Angeles *Times* building. Among the leaders in the West Coast open-shop drive were the *Times* publisher and owner, General Otis, and his son-in-law, Harry B. Chandler. They and their friends used the "dynamite conspiracy" as an excuse for a furious campaign against organized labor, and the McNamaras, who had stood ready to defend their innocence, were persuaded by shortsighted friends of labor to plead guilty in the hope of halting persecution of other labor leaders. Of course the hope was betrayed by the open-shoppers—thirty-eight trade-union officers served prison terms—but McNamara had already been committed to jail for life. His brother was imprisoned for ten years.

McNamara served his sentence without a whimper. He won the respect of his fellow-prisoners, many of whom called him "Uncle Jim," for the real fortitude of his martyrdom. To friends who urged him to seek a parole or pardon, he said, "Let's get Tom Mooney out first." When the critical nature of his illness became known, demands for his release were sent to Governor Olson from all the nation. Mooney, himself still ill as a result of prison life, issued a special appeal for aid to McNamara. Now it is too late. Nonetheless, McNamara's death has served a purpose: it is a reminder of the strength and courage of working men, a reminder also of the brutality of their enemies. J. B. McNamara's advice to his fellow workers is his best epitaph: "Free yourselves! That's the only way you can free J. B."

Fable and Fantasy

THERE is a colossal perversion of ordinary decency in the tactics of the Rapp-Coudert committee. The press has cooperated with the committee in elevating to front page "news" any irresponsible rumor or fantasy which will bring into disrepute the public schools of New York in whose interest it pretends to function. As in the notorious case of Jan Valtin, we are witnessing that cynical disregard for the distinction between fact and fable which is so typical of fascist propaganda. Invent the most stupendous lies and tell them as often as you can—that is the Goebbels formula and the Rapp-Coudert committee's practice.

Thus, an obviously rehearsed witness like William M. Canning, an instructor at City College, is offered an unlimited forum despite the fact that he has been publicly branded as an impostor. Baldly pretending to have been a member of the Communist Party, Canning makes wild charges against the leaders of the College Teachers Union which the committee gleefully accepts at face value without a shred of evidence. The reputable men and women of the community are placed in the position of "defending" themselves against weird slanders involving mysterious plotting and intrigue. And once put in this position, they are not even given an opportunity to answer their accusers.

It is obvious that the Coudert attack on teachers, like the National Association of Manufacturers' attack on textbooks, is part of a larger pattern. In his firm and forthright statement to the press, Morris U. Schappes, a tutor in English at City College, alluded to the efforts of monopoly capitalism to destroy political democracy as dangerous to its survival. As Mr. Schappes pointed out, reactionaries in America are trying to impose upon the free schools of this country the restrictions which operate in Nazi Germany. The simple truth is that our educational institutions can survive only if academic freedom and progressive teacher unionism survive. The Rapp-Coudert witchhunt is a supremely crucial test case for democracy. It is therefore gratifying to note that the organized teachers of New York, alive to their responsibilities in this fight, are determined to resist Rapp-Coudertism to the very end.

ANOTHER IMPORTANT INDICATION of the increasing tension in the schools is the aroused and vocal protest of the New York University student body against Jim Crow policies in the athletic affairs of that institution. Some time ago the students protested the discrimination against Len Bates, Negro football star. A little later, a campaign was launched to permit Jim Coward, Negro basketball player, to participate in NYU's games. And last week, a new wave of indignation spread over the school when it was learned that Negro track stars would be kept from competing in a meet of the Catholic University of Washington. Because the democratic right of petition was exercised

on the campus, seven students were arbitrarily suspended by the Dean of Washington Square College. Significantly, a number of the students are leaders in progressive school organizations on the campus. It is an outrage that a traditionally liberal institution like NYU should penalize students for protesting against Jim Crow treatment of athletes. The undergraduate body is rallying to the support of the young people whose only crime is that they have the courage of their democratic convictions.

Democracy Defined

REACTION's greatest bluff is its insistence that Communism and fascism are identical, meriting identical treatment. Now the bluff is being called by more than 450 prominent Americans, who have united to defend the constitutional rights of the Communist Party as an orderly, democratic institution with a legitimate place in American life. Among the 450 are educators, ministers, attorneys, writers, artists, youth leaders, and social workers from 153 cities and towns in thirty-seven states. They include names like Bishop Francis J. McConnell, Mary E. Woolley, Zachariah Chaffee, Jr., Franz Boas, Henry Pratt Fairchild, William Steig, Max Lerner, Theodore Dreiser, Paul Robeson, Dr. Harry F. Ward, Countee Cullen, Julien Levy, Herman Shumlin, and Prof. Colston E. Warne.

They are not Communists themselves, these 450 men and women. But they, also, are concerned with the preservation of democracy, which is threatened by any violation of civil liberties. Like hundreds of other Americans, they have been deeply disturbed by the violent infringement of Communists' rights in fifteen states. In a petition to President Roosevelt and all members of Congress, the 450 signers point out that such infringements "lead toward an attempt nationally to outlaw the Communist Party" and that "no basis in fact has been offered for this attempt . . . or for placing the Communist Party in the same category with organizations which drill or arm their members." In fact "the party has been submitting itself to the franchise of the American people for twenty years. For all that time its program and its activities are an open record." And the signers of the petition also remind the President and Congress of some other facts of political life—in particular that the Communist Party opposes espionage and sabotage, specifically forbids acts of violence, and condemns any attempt to subvert democratic American institutions.

Indirectly, the petition makes plain that the truly undemocratic forces are those which would make Communists the culprits: ". . . the attack upon the Communists has been followed by a general assault upon the rights of labor, upon progressive legislation, upon academic freedom." Which places Martin Dies, not the Communists, in bed with Goering—exactly where Mr. Dies and his friends have always been.

New Theaters for Old

John Howard Lawson reviews Mordecai Gorelik's study of the theater. A book "crammed with meaty observation and rich material." The problems of style and method.

THIS is one of the most important theater books (*New Theaters for Old*, by Mordecai Gorelik. Samuel French, \$4.50) of recent years, and one of the most difficult to review. It is crammed with meaty observation and rich material; it reflects the viewpoint of one of the ablest and most progressive artists in the American theater, and it deals with fundamental problems of dramatic theory.

It is easy to applaud—and dismiss—such a book as "provocative," "challenging," and "likely to create discussion." It is more difficult to accept the author's challenge, to debate the issues he has raised in all their scope and complexity. There are dangers in attempting this within the limits of a brief review: one must generalize; one must use terms which are not adequately explained or defined. Yet I feel that *New Theaters for Old* offers conclusions which are so sweeping, and so controversial, that one cannot deal with the book at all without dealing with the concepts on which it is based. I can only hope that these notes will lead to more extended, and more thoroughly documented, discussion.

Gorelik sees two major trends in the history of the theater: illusion and convention. "Two conclusions seem inevitable. First, that until our own era, the technique of drama was overwhelmingly conventional. Second, that within conventional technique there has been a slow development of greater and greater illusion-values. . . . The Italian Renaissance, in fact, saw the beginnings of the Naturalistic technique which flowered centuries later. . . . Not until the time of Antoine did illusion become the dominant, systematized technique which exists, for example, on Broadway and in Hollywood today."

It will be noted that the author associates the tendency toward an illusory technique with the Renaissance, and its triumph with the great movement of naturalism at the end of the nineteenth century. The flowering of drama in the Italian city-states at the time of Machiavelli sprang from the weakening of feudal ties and the first stirring of social change. The ferment of the times brought a new life to science and art: the theater began its long struggle for the right to interpret life deeply and truly. Gorelik cannot mean to suggest that this drive to realism has been *illusory*. Yet it is difficult to draw any other meaning from his insistence that "the traditional, and basic, form of dramatic production is not the *illusory*, but the *conventional style*," and "the work of building up a whole *illusory system* began when the last great conventional stage technique—that of

the baroque—had disintegrated." What was the baroque technique? Gorelik gives us an excellent definition: "It was typically the court theater of absolute monarchs like Louis XIV." Of course it was! Because the conventions of the baroque style expressed the rigid social forms of a dying feudal society. These conventions were swept aside by the genius of Moliere and the materialist philosophy of Diderot and Beaumarchais, who demanded a realistic theater as a weapon of the rising middle class.

Obviously, Gorelik does not want to lead us back to baroque. I have stressed the point because I believe it exposes the weakness of his historical approach: an over-emphasis on forms and styles, and a failure to grasp the rich and complex movement of social forces which has determined the development of the theater. Whenever the stage has served the interests of reactionary classes, it has tended toward rigidity and convention. But the living theater has been part of the great libertarian stream of culture. In periods of social change, the drama, like the other arts, has served to deepen man's knowledge of his world, and strengthen his will to change it. I am inclined to suppose that Gorelik would agree with this statement. There can be no doubt that his **work is based on** the general principle that the history of the drama is socially conditioned. But this remains a *generalization*, because he has given insufficient attention to the concrete conditions of social life which have determined specific modes of presentation. He undertakes to examine the theater "from the neglected standpoint of production." This is an admirable purpose. His error lies in identifying production with the design or arrangement of the stage, and in using this as his only major point of

reference. *Production is not style*. Production is a social process, dependent on the general level of social organization in the period. For example, the actors on the Elizabethan stage were feudal servants. Their lord's permission and protection were the legal condition for their right to play. But the lord did not pay them for public appearance. Thus the entrepreneur (in the person of Henslowe) makes his entrance. The conflict between elements of feudal control and the drive toward commercial organization runs through the whole Elizabethan period. It produced the struggle between the Court and the London City Corp. for control of the stage; it led to construction of new theaters (the Swan and the Globe), bigger audiences, higher admission prices, an astonishing ferment of new ideas and new techniques—and Shakespeare.

The history of the stage shows a constant inter-play of social, esthetic, and technological factors. For instance, one of the great technological improvements of the nineteenth century was the introduction of electric lighting. Gorelik discusses this as a stylistic change: He says that "this amazing new scenic element was shaped by Symbolist designers." But electricity transformed the whole social framework of the theater. On the one hand, it brought the girl-show, with its exploitation of carefully illuminated flesh. On the other hand, it brought the incisive psychological analysis of Ibsen: it made possible the technique of writing and acting in *Hedda Gabler*. The method of characterization, with all its social implications, depends on the lighting of Hedda's face. And this lighting, in turn, is the product of the industrial era which has created millions of upper middle class women in the image of Hedda.

Gorelik's preoccupation with categories of style leads him to give inadequate attention to the material conditions in which the life of the theater is rooted. This is particularly apparent in his treatment of the modern drama. Here his definition of styles becomes so arbitrary that one is completely at sea. He describes the naturalistic and symbolist modes of production as *both* purely illusory. I am unable to understand how symbolism can depend on illusion, and I am further puzzled by the author's view that symbolism is a dominant trend in the current American theater. He asks: "Must we believe that symbolism is the final and perfect conception of the theater?" There are elements of symbolism and mysticism in the contemporary drama. But where these elements appear (the masks in *The Great God Brown* or the double-talk in *Strange Interlude*), the technique of illu-



Mordecai Gorelik

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sion is discarded—because the two methods are incompatible.

The final chapters of this book are devoted to an exposition of the Epic theater: "The exact reproduction of life is left behind. . . . The building up of illusion is replaced by a precise, direct method in which illusion in the sense of replica has no place. . . . In this new sort of conventional drama, the theater's scaffold is changed to a laboratory work-table." These isolated sentences do scant justice to Gorelik's extended—and often brilliant—discussion. One must applaud his plea for a theater which shall reflect objective reality. But the flaw in his argument lies in his identification of reality with the scientific or functional symbols which are the stage properties of the Epic drama. Scientific symbols are useful. They have their place in the theater. But it is dangerous to confuse intellectual or scientific concepts with the stuff of life itself. The objective reality to which the theater owes its whole allegiance is the world of men and women. Gorelik describes the setting of his laboratory work-table: "Its settings are no more than tokens of environment, this time derived from the concepts of science." But the role of people, the specific role of the actor, is not stressed.

A revealing passage shows that human personality is a subordinate factor in the Epic process: "In showing the effect of the conveyor-system on workers in an automobile factory, the method of psychological drama would be to build up a tense emotional relationship among certain workers, employers, etc. . . . The Epic writer would put into the foreground, not the psychology of these characters, but the conveyor-system itself, of which the human figures, in all their complexity, are only a part."

In *Dynamo*, Eugene O'Neill sees man dwarfed and helpless in the mystic presence of the machine. It may seem gratuitous to assume a connection between the shadowy half-world of *Dynamo* and Gorelik's thoroughly "objective" conveyor-system. But once one accepts the premise that the machine is greater than the men who created it, one is on the borders of the no-man's land of economic determinism. Having taken the first step, one is forced to doubt man's capacity to change his environment. The end-result is mysticism (with its dream-world of subjective styles and abstract forms), or the phony kingdom of the technocrats, dominated by a few technical supermen.

The progressive artist sees man as a heroic figure, creator and organizer of his destiny, able to change his environment. This is a scientific view because it is the truth of history. How can we show this truth unless we project and analyze those "tense emotional relationships" which bind men together and make them strong?

Here again, the difficulty lies in the weakness of the author's historical method. He indicates the social background of the Germany of the Weimar Republic, in which the Epic theater made its appearance. But he fails to analyze the theory in terms of the

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objective conditions which brought it into being. The work of Brecht and Piscator grows out of the social situation in Germany in the nineteen twenties and the special development of left-wing intellectuals under these conditions. *The Good Soldier Schweik* on his tread-mill, the gay bitterness of *The Three-Penny Opera* are colorful, and lasting, contributions to theater art. One can enjoy these achievements without ignoring the over-intellectual dependence on symbols and conventions, the cynical mechanical materialism, which plagued the artists of the period, and which have influenced the careers of Piscator and Brecht from that day to the present.

The fact that Epic is abstract in its presentation of people and their environment is indicated in Gorelik's description of *The Three-Penny Opera*: "The costumes, which elsewhere would have been smartly modern or exotically 'period' (for the *Opera* was purposely kept vague as to century), instead became a mixture of anything that suited the point to be made by the play; they tended to gravitate about the period of the nineties, but nothing from the eighteenth or twentieth centuries was barred in principle." This subjective approach, which can select costumes at random from three centuries because the pattern in the creator's mind is more important than the objective truth of history, may be regarded as a casual, and amusing, deviation from the scientific objectivity which is claimed for the Epic technique. But actually it springs from the philosophy which underlies the Epic method, a philosophy which seeks to substitute a narrowly "scientific" and "functional" world for the real world of men, and which lends itself to the despairing comment of Macheath in *The Three-Penny Opera*:

"Man lives only because he can so utterly forget that he is man."

There were similar tendencies toward a narrow and one-sided materialism in the Soviet theater in the nineteen-twenties. Gorelik treats the Soviet drama with profound respect, but his sympathies seem to lie with the formalisms and abstractions which have been so sharply criticized in the work of Meyerhold, Tairov, and others. He offers no adequate definition of the term, "Socialist Realism," but he tells us that, by 1940, "Socialist Realism was beginning to look more and more like Socialist Romanticism." He is so critical of this trend that he assures us that "some of the Soviet theaters have not been as Marxian as Marx!", and that "a rather more incisive approach would seem to be needed."

It seems to me that this criticism could be valid only if it were based on an appraisal of Socialist Realism as a working technique, seeking to preserve and extend the tradition of humanism which has been so powerfully celebrated by Maxim Gorky. It is a distortion of the method and its purpose to

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describe it as an attempt "to combine the somber Marxian conception of class war with the subjective technique of Romantic Naturalism." There is a double misconception here: Marxism was forged in the white heat of the great social struggles of the last century. Romantic Naturalism is a general term which covers the whole sweep of nineteenth century culture from Goethe to Zola and Ibsen to Chekhov. It is strange to think of Marxism as somber. It is even stranger to think of it as alien to the main stream of nineteenth century culture.

Gorelik closes this book with a moving appeal to "build the foundations of a future theater worthy of the democratic American people." Gorelik is one of those who should lead in that great task. One cannot doubt his sincerity, for his whole life has been devoted to the vision of a people's theater. But his vision is clouded, because he has neglected the one thing that gives it shape and substance—people.

The people want a theater as great as themselves. They enter the theater proudly, demanding their birthright: Give us the living world. Show us the wonder of men and women, so that we may laugh and look forward, knowing our strength!

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON.

Mr. Lawson's review raises a number of interesting problems concerning method and style in the theater about which there are differences of opinion among progressive workers in this field. NEW MASSES would welcome further discussion of these problems.

Bacon's Rebellion

TORCHBEARER OF THE REVOLUTION, by Thomas J. Wertenbaker. Princeton University Press, \$2.50.

How precious is America's revolutionary heritage may be judged by the lengths to which the enemies of its continuance and development have gone to obscure or falsify its history. From a Chief Executive who finds distasteful and unfortunate Thomas Jefferson's enthusiasm for the French Revolution, to the puniest pen prostitutes who defame Samuel Adams and revile John Brown, one witnesses, as an integral and vital part of reaction's offensive, the besmirching of the traditions of mass struggles for a decent life.

Happily, Professor Wertenbaker, an outstanding authority on southern colonial history, has produced the most thorough study available—probably the definitive study—of an important, though almost forgotten, episode in the epic story of the progressive strivings of the American people. He tells the story, as fully as existing records permit, of the outbreak that occurred in Virginia (and spread for a short time to Maryland and North Carolina) from 1676 to 1677 against the corruption, tyranny, and exploitation of British rule, which, after its leader, is known as Bacon's Rebellion.

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This effort gathered sufficient force to drive the royal governor, Berkeley, out of the province's capital and keep him out for several weeks. But the failure to fully develop inter-colonial support, the British control of the sea, Bacon's death in the midst of the uprising, and the renegacy thereafter of some of the rebels' leaders, permitted the forces of regal despotism to regain control—for the time being—and carry out barbarous reprisals.

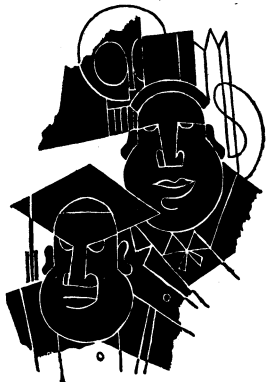
That movement's backbone was made up of men like Anthony Arnold, who flung these words into bloody Berkeley's face: "If the King should deny to do me right I would think no more of it to sheath my sword in his heart or bowels than of my mortal enemies." While those who make up the Daughters of the American Revolution spend their time delighting in *Oliver Wiswell*, and erecting monuments to Benedict Arnold, it does one's heart good to see resurrected the history of men like Anthony Arnold and Nathaniel Bacon.

HERBERT APTHEKER.

Brief Review

THE STRUGGLE FOR JUDICIAL SUPREMACY, by Robert H. Jackson. Alfred A. Knopf. \$3.

THIS recapitulation of a fight now long past adds nothing to what has already been said. The issue itself is dead. Mr. Jackson seems intent on reviving memories of former liberalism for the purpose of insinuating that the same administration remains true to the same ends. The essence of the 1937 Supreme Court fight was to preserve for the people the right democratically to exercise their will in government. The drive is now in the opposite direction—and the issue that was central to the Supreme Court fight has been betrayed and deserted by Roosevelt. By harking back to the old days, Mr. Jackson revives pale memories that are only accusing. His scholarship thus serves no very apparent purpose—except perhaps to insinuate that Mr. Jackson himself would like to be a member of the Supreme Court. His book, added to the recently obtained conviction of Earl Browder and William Weiner, the current profanities of the FBI, the anti-trust suits against labor unions, and the persecution of Harry Bridges, seems to give him most of the prerequisites for a place alongside the eight other old men.



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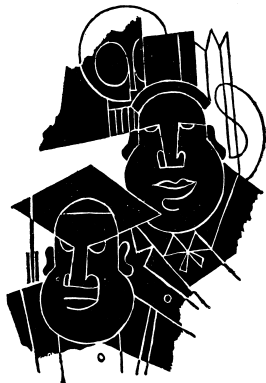
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IN THIS dark chaos of our time we look for a ray of light, we look for something to hang onto, knowing that the time is rapidly approaching when all but those who can see in the dark must fail to find their way, when all but the strongest swimmers must inevitably sink. In the darkness of individualism, we are frequently still unaware of how many there are throughout the world who *can* see at night; feeling our strength flow out of us, we forget how many are those who *can* swim against the tide.

What I am trying to say is that there is no reason for despair; there are only reasons for anger. Anger over the still persisting strength of a putrescent carcass. Anger over the fact that the few may still control the most powerful media of illumination, and keep the many in the dark. But the many, in their unutterable might, will break away from darkness into light, will yet sustain the failing swimmer in the surf. If you want to catch a glimpse of that light, see a moving picture called *University of Life*. If you still have a friend who cannot see the Soviet Union for a load of fish, take him along. If you have an acquaintance who thinks the many favorable books and articles about the Soviet Union are so much propaganda, who is not impressed by the statistics on the industrial expansion in the USSR, drag him by the hair to see this third cinematic treat-

ment of the life of one Alexei Maximovitch Peshkov, who also had his doubts for a time.

Gorky (the same, Peshkov) had his doubts because, for all the greatness of his genius, he was only a man. He could not see everything at once, feel everything, understand it all. He was weak on theory and he was confused by the multiplicity of human phenomena. He had great and celebrated verbal battles with a friend of his named Lenin, and Lenin, who loved and revered him as a great artist, quite frequently spanked him when he was being particularly obtuse. In this obtuseness, the great Gorky was like all other human beings who are the products of their environmental confusion. He came to see in time, as will we all. But take your friend to see the youth of this Maxim, as the Soviets have placed it on a film. If your friend is integral, if he is sensitive, if his doubts are the expression of honest confusion or ignorance, he will make a confession to you when the last sequence has unrolled and he walks out of the theater with the everlasting visual memory of the young Gorky holding the new-born child aloft. He will tell you that it is impossible that so great a work of art as this picture could have sprung from a state dedicated to anything other than the aims and objectives it professes. There is that about the picture.

And it is in every Soviet picture you will

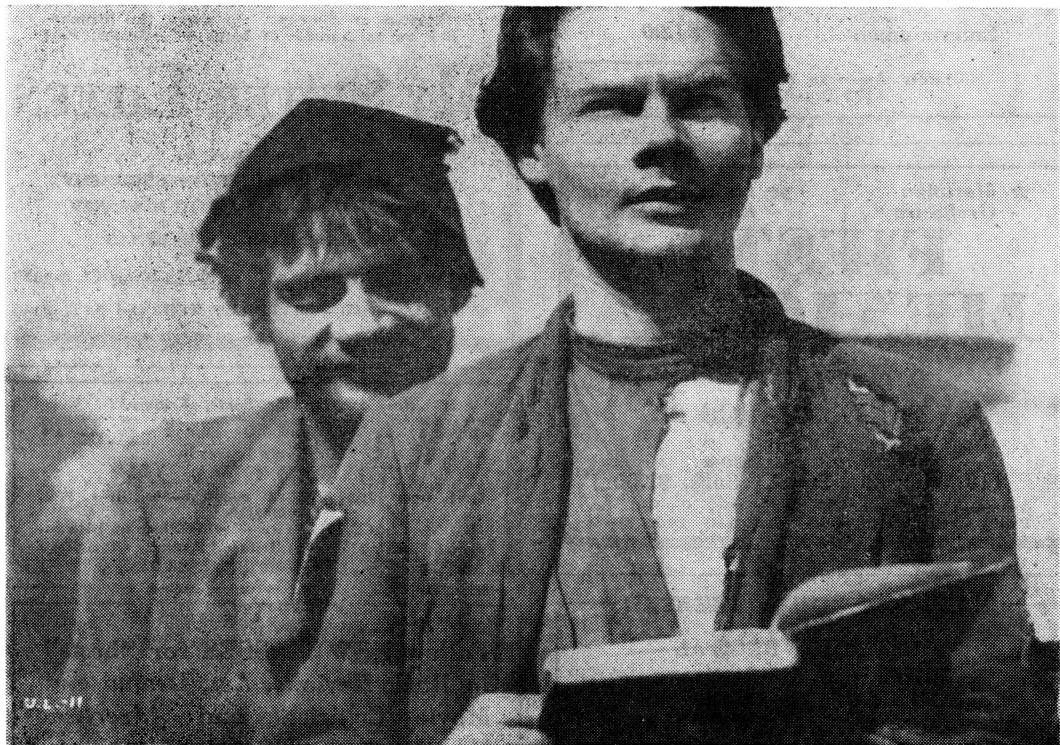
see. It is the *truth*, the unadulterated and literal truth. The truth, if you can see it, can reproduce it on paper, in music, on the films or the stage, in private speech, is revolutionary; it cannot be anything else, because it *is* the truth. And the truth of human beings lives and breathes in every Soviet picture I have ever seen, from *Potemkin* all the way down the line. These people know how to make moving pictures, and when you see one and compare it to the Hollywood confectionery, you begin to get slightly sick at your stomach. The Russians make pictures about *people*, not about streamlined, highbrowed, standardized automata who give the total impression of being activated by hidden strings—as indeed they are. And they can make pictures about people not only because they know a lot about people, but because their special way of looking at people (with love in their hearts) is the *only* way of looking at people that will make it possible for you to understand them.

This sort of love informs the slightest gesture of the least consequential supernumerary in their films. See *The University of Life*—watch the various young tramps with whom the young Gorky spent his early days starving on the banks of the Volga. Look into their faces; they are the faces of every sort of human being you have ever met. What those faces tell you is the truth. Watch the workers in Semyonov's bakery—the one that is dying of tuberculosis; the one with the empty face that betokens generations of undernourishment; the one with the cigarette dangling from his lip, who is a "collector of words." This man in particular will shock you with the tragedy of life under capitalism. When young Gorky has won his confidence, the worker tells him that he is collecting words because "there is a magic rhyme which when known will make everyone in the world happy." The words, he says, are scattered all over the world, and when you find them and put them all together, you will have the magic rhyme, and then all men everywhere will be happy. This is not funny and you will not laugh; it will break your heart.

Soak in the magnificently understood characterization of the brutal employer Semyonov. He is more than a brute; he is a man, and as you watch him, as you listen to him, you understand why he is an employer, why he is a brutal employer, why he is a man of the exact kind he is. There is nothing black and white about him, or about any other character in the film. There could not be, because their portrayal in the film is *understood*—all these people are understood, the little boy apprentice in the bakery, who tells



A SHOT of the young Gorky from the new Soviet film, *University of Life*



A SHOT of the young Gorky from the new Soviet film, University of Life

Gorky not to be afraid, he will protect him, the Tatar night-watchman who picks up the frozen kitten, the woman beaten by her husband who attacks Gorky when he gallantly attacks her husband, the police-spy Nikiforitch and his wife, who warns Gorky against him, the student Guri Pletnev, all these people and innumerable nameless characters beat against your mind and heart with the strength of breathing human beings who live around the corner.

Because they *do* live around the corner, and because the great art of the Soviets seems so really casual that they can recreate them in the flesh. There is a scene in a hospital after Gorky has tried to commit suicide—an unknown workman, the *Kazan* newspaper says, has tried to kill himself with a pistol. The bakery workers come to call on him, they bring him a string of small cakes, a tiny paper of sugar, tobacco he cannot smoke. There is practically no dialogue in this sequence; the workers merely cluster about his bed, look at him, hold his hand, and all that is said is the word *bratya* (brothers!) repeated over and over by the young man who had wanted to die because he felt alone in the world and there was no point to further suffering. He repeats it in astonishment, in bewilderment, in dawning consciousness of comradeship, and the expression on his face will tear the heart out of you.

You leave the Miami Theater, and come out onto Sixth Avenue in the cold of a slushy winter day, and you see the men and women clustered around the cards posted on the usurious employment agencies, and you know the *Kazan* of czarist days is just around the corner, in our slums, in every city of our great and to-be-greater land. The same ragged specters haunt the streets, the same unshaven men and bedraggled women who have no place to go, no food to warm their bellies, no bed to rest themselves. Yet the truth is hidden in the Miami Theater because they will not show it at Mr. Rockefeller's Music Hall. But it is there to be seen; it is here to be felt; it is here to be seen in the faces of the unemployed and the employed as well, and they will reach the truth. Because people gravitate naturally toward the truth as a plant gravitates toward the sun—people have a *tropism* for the truth, and it will take more than the still persisting power of capitalism to keep the truth from them for very long.

ALVAH BESSIE.

Humdrum Cinema

Two of Hollywood's latest are disappointing.

WHEN all the hack ideas in Hollywood are laid end to end, you get something like the package labeled *Come Live with Me*. A mild and pretentious comedy, it combines Hedy Lamarr, Jimmy Stewart, and a stack of piffle. It is the old one about the marriage of convenience which develops into a real marriage, and never has it seemed older. Hedy's as in-

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credibly beautiful as ever, though starved so thin she has to wear long full sleeves and heavily draped necklines. Jimmy does what he can, and occasional flashes of humor are contributed by the neat acting of Ian Hunter and Verree Teasdale. Even Miss Lamarr makes a real effort to act. It's a mistake.

The laughs are spaced as widely as a seven-year-old's teeth, the situations and even the dialogue are completely predictable, and the climax is a farm sequence with contented cows and moonlight and fireflies and dear old Grandma and a bedroom scene. The alternation of Grandma's homely sentiment and Hedy's *deshabille* does provide some humor, but of the unintentional sort; and Jimmy Stewart's attempt to get into his wife's arms is nothing you ought to see after a heavy meal. You oughtn't to see it at any time. From the moment the film begins with a sweet-and-sour tenor warbling a garbled version of Marlowe's *Passionate Shepherd*, you know what you are in for.

So Ends Our Night does make a half-hearted attempt to come to grips with reality. It is sensitively acted, except for occasional hamming by Frederic March, and not insensitively written. Margaret Sullavan and Glenn Ford portray the anguish and bewilderment of gentle people whose lives crumble unexpectedly. Almost every episode, taken by itself, is moving, and the photography is fine, though romantic in its treatment of scenery. At moments, as in the scene of Josef Steiner's suicide, the film reaches breathless intensity. Yet it is neither truthful nor interesting.

There are two reasons for this failure. The first is heavy-handed direction. Loosely episodic in construction, the picture bubbles along at a dead level of emotion, slowed down by many superfluous details. A director must know what to leave out; and John Cromwell insists on leaving nothing to his audience's imagination. Moreover, the successive episodes never build to any sort of climax.

Worse than this is the way in which *So Ends Our Night* blandly ignores the political and social reasons for the refugee's plight. Some of them are Jews, but no mention is made of the forces behind anti-Semitic propaganda. The refugees never criticize the Nazi social order and their personal misfortunes do not illuminate the causes of their exile. The Nazis are represented as black villains, as they should be. But there is no mention of England's role, or of the French concentration camps for refugees. And the United States, which has turned down so many anti-fascist fighters, is represented as a haven for all fugitives. It is this vagueness of approach that makes the picture a dull one.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

FCC Aids Hearst

Gives his WINS greatly increased wattage.

UNTIL the generous act of the Federal Communications Commission, WINS, a New York outlet owned by William Ran-

dolph Hearst, was an unprofitable 1,000-watt station, allowed to remain on the air only until early evening. If Gimbel's had placed WINS on the counter along with the other Hearst *objets d'art*, it is doubtful whether it would have brought as much as a couple of good antique tapestries.

Now the FCC has given WINS permission to operate full time and, what is more important, at 50,000 watts, the maximum power for any American station. There are only fifty-six such powerful stations in the country, and all of them are big money makers. With its new power, this once obscure station will be in a position to cut into the tremendous profits rolled up by the four other New York 50,000-watters—WABC, WOR, WEA, and WJZ. Overnight WINS has become one of the chosen few of broadcasting, a station worth several million dollars—thanks to the FCC.

Stations are supposedly licensed by the FCC on the condition they operate in "... the public interest, convenience, and necessity. . . ." So perhaps the power and time boost is a reward for the Hearst station's noteworthy achievements in program service. WINS is the tipsters' and touts' delight. It interrupts any and all of its programs for bulletins on the latest race track results. These horsey flashes, paid for by a racing tip sheet, have provided WINS' major income.

The excuse for this munificent gift to Hearst is the forthcoming reallocation of station frequencies. (Incidentally, you will have to have adjustments made if you have a push button tuning; but don't pay more than two dollars at the most for the change.) WINS has been a part time station, operating on the same dial point as another station. Under the new setup, it moves up to a channel on which, according to FCC theory, there is room for a 50,000-watt station.

The FCC warmed up for its WINS gift by another interesting decision it made earlier in February. The Commission ruled that WCNW, a small Brooklyn station that shares time with WWRL, New York, must leave the air and give its time to WWRL. The excuse for the attempt to kill off WCNW is engineering malpractice.

Now, WCNW is no great shakes as a station, but for a small broadcaster, in the midst of the greatest stations in the country, it doesn't do so badly. It has had some excellent forums, local news reports, and regular Chinese and Negro programs. WWRL, on the other hand, broadcast Coughlin in New York when WMCA refused to put up with the fascist Father any longer. WWRL carries a regular program by the *Tablet*, a house organ of Christian Fronters and Coughlinites. And this is the station which the FCC wants to reward with full time on the air!

Note on radio's foreign policy: Appeasement, it seems, is a nasty word, except when its direction is eastward. NBC recently scheduled a production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*, then called it off for fear it might offend the Japanese government!

LLOYD E. TRENT.

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NEW MASSES would be grateful for **VOLUNTEER** clerical **HELP** in circulation campaign. Apply Room 1204, 461 Fourth Ave., N. Y. C.

GOINGS ON

ANNUAL SPRING DANCE of the Workers School to be held **SATURDAY, MARCH 15th**, at Irving Plaza, 15th St. and Irving Place. Music by Doc Snyder and his Swingsters. 40 cents in advance; 55 cents at door.

MARXIST ANALYSIS OF THE WEEK'S NEWS, by Si Gerson, Daily Worker staffwriter, Sunday, March 16, 8:30 P.M. Workers School, 50 East 13 Street. Admission 25 cents.

AN ISSUE TO TREASURE . . .

With its 30th Anniversary celebration one week gone, **NEW MASSES** moves along into its fourth decade. The Anniversary issue of the magazine, however, will be treasured for many years to come. Its sixty-four pages, rich with the contributions of **NEW MASSES** writers and artists, both past and present, remain a permanent part of American literature.

Of the one hundred thousand copies which rolled off the presses, all but a few thousand have already passed into the homes of America. These remaining copies are still available at the special mailing rate set for the birthday celebration: 10 cents each for a minimum order of 10—wrapping, addressing, and postage charges included.

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Dear Reader:

Dr. Harvie Coghill's report will concern you. He is director of the Children's Memorial Clinic in Richmond, Va. "The War", he reported in a recent study, "is having serious psychological effect upon the children of America". Listen to some of his interviews with children. A boy of 8: "I worry a lot, but I don't know what I am worrying about. I dream about flying planes and fighting". A child of 9: "I am afraid my father will have to go to war. The other night I dreamed all night long about people getting killed".

Our children are growing up torn with anxiety for their fathers who may soon be among "the people getting killed". The daily press carried Dr. Coghill's statement and pretended solicitude. But the same press' war-mongering columns surrounding this story belied its sincerity.

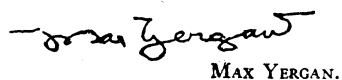
We want to write you about the New Masses - a magazine that is genuinely concerned about the war, about the children of men being groomed as cannon-fodder, about the welfare of America. New Masses' thirtieth anniversary date was a memorable day for progressive America. It marked three decades of fighting for a happy, peaceful world.

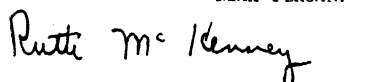
This letter is an appeal to you to help it keep that fight up. New Masses, because of its stand, is boycotted by advertisers, the chief source of revenue of all magazines. And because of that stand, it is not endowed by any millionaires as other weekly publications are. It has cut its budget to the bone. Its writers and artists contribute their services. The journalistic miracle of a publication existing without advertising can only continue because of these factors.

But each year the magazine has a deficit of \$25,000. The magazine has been able to postpone payments to its creditors until the annual financial drive. That time is now. The paper company, the printers, the engravers, all of them are waiting at the doors of the magazine. To remain alive it must depend on you. That is the only way.

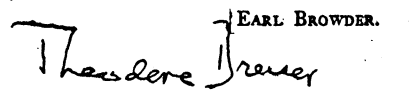
We feel the least we can do for a better world is to help spread the truth this magazine publishes tirelessly week after week.

We want to keep it fighting for that day when our children can go to a peaceful bed and dream of toys and dolls, not of death.


MAX YERGAN.


RUTH MCKENNEY.


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