JEFFERSON'S BATTLES

BY AMBASSADOR CLAUDE BOWERS

NEW MASSES

April 20, 1943 15c 20c in Canada

BRIDGEHEADS INTO EUROPE

Myth of Hitler's "Chinese Wall." Footholds for the Second Front

by COLONEL T.

SNOBS AND EDUCATORS

by Michael Roberts

DUEL WITH CAMERAS

A debate between Joy Davidman and Lester Cole

WHY THEY DEFEND ALTER AND EHRLICH

by Joseph North, and a London Cable by D. N. Pritt

TO KEEP A PROMISE

Dear Reader:

Twenty-four hours before this number of New Masses came off the press we were in a cold sweat. It looked as though there would be no issue. The printer and other creditors would not release the magazine for publication unless we paid them $10,250 by April 15.

All week long we had been seeing people trying to raise the necessary amount. I don't see how the editors got out the last three issues: they spent as much time as I did raising funds. In addition to writing their weekly pieces, they saw scores of people. Finally we raised $6,430 —still about $4,000 to go. And it was April 12—three days before the deadline.

We then saw we must ask for a loan to tide the crisis. Twenty-four hours before the deadline we talked to someone who finally loaned us the $4,000. It was a short-term loan—one month, in fact. And so you have this issue. Here is how we persuaded this man to make the loan.

We told him that we are certain we will raise the deficit. We always did. We did it because we have a special kind of reader—one who feels the magazine is his—as well as ours. Last year you sent in $40,000; this year, to date, you have sent us $14,474. Although we are considerably behind last year's figures at this time, we said we are certain that we will catch up. We convinced him that our readers will never let the magazine down.

"In short," he said, "you are telling me that your readers are underwriting this loan."
That was it, exactly.

We took the liberty to sign your name to that loan. We know that you would agree and we are relieved that you have this issue of New Masses before you.

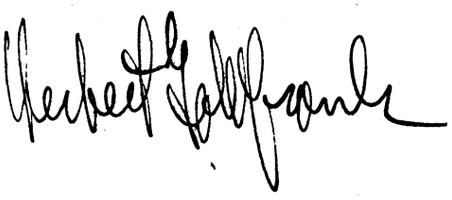
But we urge you not to let us go through that harrowing, uncertain fortnight again. It was a nightmare. And to tell the truth, it isn't much better today.

We still must pay that loan of $4,000 back within a month, and we must raise more funds toward the full $40,000 that is necessary for the magazine to continue through 1943.

Well, you have underwritten a loan: as you have always underwritten the existence of New Masses itself.

We have just gotten through by the skin of our teeth—only on the basis that we will hear from you promptly.

Truly, the magazine's existence is at stake. When will we hear from you?



Business Manager.

NM SPOTLIGHT

Nippon's Game

FIGHTING in China has never ceased for a moment since Japan's all-out attack was launched in the summer of 1937. For that matter, there has hardly been a breathing spell since September 1931. During the last two months or so, however, newspaper reports have indicated a resurgence of Japanese military activity in widely scattered parts of China. Coverage of these military developments in the American press has been, to say the least, spotty; yet enough information has filtered through to permit certain generalizations.

It has become evident that the Japanese have not launched a major offensive in any part of China. Their military actions seem to have had two main purposes: first, to protect Japan from counter-attack; second, to tighten the economic blockade around free China and at the same time to collect loot for the Japanese forces. Nippon's troops have striven to prevent concentration of Chinese strength along the Burma border and have harassed the east coast regions from which the Chinese and Americans could most easily take off for bombing raids on Japan. Other attacks have had the primary purpose of destroying or seizing Chinese crops, as in the Honan-Hupeh border region where rice and cotton are grown, or as in the case of the occupation of Kwangchowan, of plugging the loopholes in the economic blockade.

The current issue of *Amerasia* attributes Japan's strategy in good part to the serious economic deterioration in China which has resulted not only from the long war and the deepening effects of the blockade, but also from "uncontrolled hoarding, speculation and inflation." It is significant that the major Japanese military effort is concentrated against the guerrilla areas in central and northern China, where under the stimulus of a genuine people's war the most has been made of the meager resources.

FIGURES issued by the Japanese military covering the month of February claim that of 1,446 combat engagements fought in China 1,090 were against "Communist forces" and only 356 against "Chungking troops." And of a total force of 208,300 Chinese involved in these engagements "97,000 were Chungking troops and 111,000 Communist forces." If the proportions indicated by these figures are roughly accurate—and they are buttressed by reports from other sources—it would suggest that the Japanese have concluded that the guerrilla areas where the people and the armed forces are closely integrated is a tougher nut to crack than the Kuomintang-dominated areas where democracy has not kept pace with the needs of the war.

The desperate urgency of supplying all Chinese forces with fighting material from abroad is unquestioned. The United States and Great Britain must not permit the plea for aid from the people of China to go unanswered. A second conclusion is equally unescapable: the Chungking government must take those steps, so long overdue, that will bring unity and democratic progress to the nation's war effort. As long as hoarding, speculation, and profiteering are permitted, as long as a political police is allowed to hound pro-war political minorities, China's full resources will not be pitted against the Japanese enemy.

News item: Hitler and Mussolini meet at Brenner Pass.

"Tell me again, mein fuehrer, there will be no second front!"

The Negro People Speak

THE Eastern Seaboard Conference of the National Negro Congress in New York City last weekend urged a sixty-day whirlwind campaign to secure at least 1,000,000 signatures to a petition to save and strengthen the Fair Employment Practices Committee. It also campaigned for pressure from all communities of the nation to obtain the fifty-seven signatures still needed to discharge the Anti-Poll Tax Bill from the House Judiciary Committee. The signal victory

gained by progressive forces at the time the President established the FEPC must be re-won from the counsels of timidity and appeasement which later rendered that committee powerless. The Eastern Seaboard Conference unanimously demanded that the FEPC be set up as an independent body charged with a broad mandate "to cover all appropriate fields of discrimination," including that notorious center of discrimination, Washington, D. C., and to reschedule "and fearlessly hold" the hearings on discrimination in the railroad industry. The Conference further demanded that the reconstituted FEPC be given the authority necessary to carry out its tasks, to hold hearings, to subpoena witnesses and records, and to fix and enforce its mandates by appropriate penalties.

Other resolutions of the Conference called for an end to discrimination in all branches and activities of the armed services, for support of progressive, pro-war legislation and for defeat of the anti-labor, Red-baiting, and divisive program of the poll tax senators and representatives.

THE central theme underlying the work of the 500-odd delegates, who came from nine states and the District of Columbia—and nearly half of whom represented trade unions—was that the war against fascism could be won, quickly and completely, only by the fullest mobilization of the masses of people throughout the world. Otherwise the war will be fought with one hand tied behind our back. The end of discrimination against Negroes in the United States is necessary for the effective prosecution of the war; the full enlistment of the masses in Africa, in the Caribbean, in the colonial areas of the southwest Pacific, in India, is equally essential to a speedy and unconditional victory over the Axis. Thus, as the Conference clearly revealed, the Negro people's struggles are inextricably linked with those of millions throughout the world whose anti-fascist spirit is being ignored or not fully utilized for the achievement of the common goal of destroying Hitlerism.

In this country the Negro people's struggle is identified with organized labor, with the national minorities, with the Jewish people, with all those whom Messrs. Dies, Hobbs, Cox, Hearst, and McCormick seek to persecute. The delegates pledged themselves to an all-out fight, under President Roosevelt's leadership, to defeat the fascists and their allies abroad and at home.

This Eastern Seaboard Conference, it is important to note, is the first of a series of regional meetings under the auspices of the National Negro Congress. Another will be held next month in Detroit, followed, later in the spring, by a similar conference of the Negro people and their anti-fascist allies on the West Coast. They will undoubtedly make notable contributions to the unity of the American people essential for an all-out war effort.

Get Those Signatures!

AS WE go to press, only fifty-seven more signatures are needed to blast HR 7, the anti-poll tax bill introduced by Rep. Vito Marcantonio, out of the House Judiciary Committee. One hundred and sixty-one members of the House have already signed the petition to discharge the bill which is being sponsored by a coalition of Democratic, Republican, and American Laborite representatives headed by Rep. George H. Bender, Ohio Republican. HR 7 would end the Hitlerite practice of denying the right to vote to 6,000,000 whites and 4,000,000 Negroes in seven southern states.

If your representative has not yet signed the petition, write or wire him today urging him to do so. If you're not certain whether he has signed, write him anyhow.

Monetary Currents

THERE is a maze of technical differences in both American and British plans for postwar monetary stabilization. Nevertheless their larger objective is to create an international apparatus to handle the exchange and balances of international trade. Lord Keynes, adviser to the British Treasury, envisages an international clearing union with voting power based on world trade which would—since the British are preeminent in this field—provide London with the controlling hand. Our Treasury's proposals would establish a stabilization fund directed by an international board with voting strength based on amounts contributed to the fund, with no country having more than twenty-five percent of the voting rights. The fund would total at least $5,000,000,000 with the United States contributing about $2,000,000,000, probably giving Washington the maximum voting strength. Both Lord Keynes and Secretary Morgenthau have introduced a kind of international financial Esperanto with the words "unitas" and "bancor"; unitas is the name for the American international gold-based currency, while bancor is the British term for a world currency representing a fixed weight in gold.

These are more or less the innovations to prevent fluctuating exchanges. But there is more to both plans than immediately meets the eye. They are designed to control—the methods differ in some respects—exports and imports and the exchange of goods among the leading as well as secondary powers. In other words all the grave problems of postwar economic rehabilitation involving the flow of capital, of international loans and credits, are being thrashed out on the assumption that the future will definitely belong to the Allied coalition. Our own belief is that these discussions at this moment, although they represent no binding commitments on the part of either Great Britain or the United States, are dangerous. Already one can detect harmful rivalries between Washington and London coming to the fore over the matter of who will control any international financial organization. These discussions also represent in some quarters the erroneous conception that an international monetary apparatus can take the place of a policy of collective security in which rivalries must remain in the background in the interests of world security. To choose this crisis hour for such bypaths is symptomatic of the fact that the military offensive is not at the heart of everyone's thinking. Samuel Grafton, writing in the New York *Post* of April 7, best expressed the criteria by which all postwar discussions, conferences, bluprints, books, and ideas must be judged: "It is hard to see how a single meaningful speech can be uttered . . . on any subject, unless it is illuminated by the feeling of the imminence of the offensive. . . . Even to talk as if this were not the biggest thing of the year, is to deny its bigness, to flee from it, and to strike a blow against it."

Education and War

NO ONE has dared openly to oppose the bill sponsored by Sens. Lister Hill of Alabama and Elbert Thomas of Utah to grant $300,000,000 in federal aid to states for the purpose of bolstering public education. Actually, behind the scenes, certain special interests pull wires to forestall the grant. The fact that the bill, slightly altered in its present form, has been before Congress for twenty years, is proof that the opposition to it is cunning and effective.

Yet never before have the chances to secure federal aid for education been more favorable. Mrs. Bella Dodd, legislative representative of the New York City Teachers Union, explained to the Senate subcommittee on education that the bill would be "a great boon." Educators from

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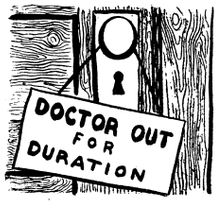
all sections of the country, Negro and white, have given testimony to the subcommittee. One thought is expressed by every witness, the simple one that during the war period low pay for teachers and parsimonious appropriations threaten to wreck the country's public educational system. Classes have swelled because of lack of equipment, especially in war boom centers. Education has never been thought a luxury in this country—but for all America's pride in the low illiteracy record, over 3,000,000 men have already been rejected by the Army because they couldn't read and write, or because improper child care in the past usually accounted for their physical unfitness. Negro and white teachers average $600 a year in salaries, with twenty-seven percent earning less than $300 a year. Appropriations for education per child have dwindled almost to the vanishing point in certain states, particularly in the South. The ruse of using "substitute" teachers means that instructors often receive less in compensation than domestic servants or common labor. Economic pressure forces teachers out of the profession into work that offers greater opportunity to make a living wage. And the children and nation suffer.

What is true in the North, in such wealthy states as New York and California, for example, is aggravated many times in the poll-tax South. What is bad for white children becomes appallingly worse for Negro children. There is no need to argue the importance to the nation's health, morale, and future, of an adequate free educational system. The teachers' aid bill is clearly a war measure.

Wanted—Medical Planning



WHAT happens to a nation's health when approximately one-third of its doctors are drafted into the armed services? To answer this question, the Office of War Information has made a detailed survey and issued a report. So far, the report points out, no serious breakdown in health has resulted. But there is real danger of a deterioration in the near future. Withdrawals of doctors, coupled with the prevalent overcrowding of existing hospital and other health facilities (and often their non-existence in congested areas), can lead not only to suffering but, equally serious, the dislocation of war production.

The OWI names several sources of the danger: enough medical men have not been located in war production centers, which have often shot up from small towns to huge communities; the recruitment of physicians continues without regard to civilian needs; plans based on voluntary relocation of doctors have failed; medicine-as-usual continues despite the crisis; the intensified strain placed on remaining—and often elderly—doctors, endangers their health and efficiency.

Obviously, doctors cannot be trained overnight to meet the hungry demand for medical care. In truth, the supply of trained medical workers is of necessity limited—and the need for their services grows like weeds after a spring rain. No hit-or-miss scheme can solve the dilemma.

The most obvious solution is the fullest utilization of available resources, together with the remedy of certain abuses. In the latter category come improper diet, poor housing, bad transportation, overcrowding, lack of recreational facilities, failure to take every possible precaution to reduce industrial accidents. Elimination of these things will reduce more than one evil: it will limit absenteeism, improve morale and efficiency—in short, boost production, as well as lessen the need for medical service. As for available resources—discrimination in the medical field against women, Negroes, Jews, and refugees is as wasteful as in industry. Pooling of medical resources, both equipment and personnel, proper relocation plans supervised by the government, subsidies to keep medical fees at a reasonable level, adjustment of hours in clinics and of the doctors themselves—all such steps are important. These adjustments, however, will not come spontaneously. They will result only from a planned approach. And there is no substitute for planning in any phase of the war effort. The Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill recognizes this central fact by calling for an Office of Technological Mobilization which "shall effect the full and immediate mobilization of scientific knowledge, techniques, and personnel, for the prosecution of war and for making adjustments necessitated by war conditions."

Children for Sale

A SMALL girl swinging her books passes your door and stops to play with your cat. She is the charming picture of eager childhood you see in the magazines: saddle-shoes, ankle socks and bare knees, jacket over her blouse, kerchief over her hair—or maybe she ties it back with a ribbon. You smile at her and, assuming that the world is a safe place for children, do not turn to see where she is going as the traffic cop shepherds her across the street. But she is going to an apartment where a middle-aged man will give her a quarter to revive his jaded appetite; the madam who runs the place will

"Plow them under, America!" Jim Turnbull

get two dollars for making the arrangements.

That has been happening on New York street corners lately, and on many street corners in these United States. In New York City a seventeen-year-old "madam" has just been arrested for recruiting eleven- to fourteen-year-old girls. She might never have been discovered had not school authorities noticed how much unexplained money the children had. This is an extreme case; but the danger is universal.

The real criminal here is official irresponsibility. The elderly degenerates who patronize such places are just as much to be blamed as the laissez-faire attitude of authorities who let children go to the dogs. The parents of the nation worry about their little girls, the boys in the army wonder about their small sisters; but the recreational and social organizations which should be handling these children are closing for lack of government appropriations. Schools let the children out into the streets at three o'clock. Their fathers are at war or in war industry, their mothers are taking up the jobs men have left open, and the children, with no one to ask questions, wander through the free spending of the entertainment areas.

Still barred by the abominable prudery of the Pharisee from giving adequate sex instructions and conditioning, the schools are forced to let the street and the sex-rag and the movie set the girl's standards. The wrigglings of the current glamour girl become the model for juvenile conduct. Having failed to train children for taking care of themselves, officialdom then refuses to take care of them itself. Parents and children's courts and welfare agencies clamor for supervised entertainment, clubs, playing fields, neighborhood recreation centers, and above all for giving children their part in the war effort and the sense of responsibility which comes with making a contribution to adult society. These measures have been used with signal success in the Soviet Union and more lately in England. But here the suggestion is met either with the policy of a Mayor LaGuardia, who appears to have a blind spot on this vital issue—the policy of the ostrich; or with the smug assertion that a few more

GUEST EDITORIAL

by D. N. Pritt, MP

...AND GOEBBELS PROFITS

London.

THE execution of Alter and Ehrlich, after their trial and conviction by the Supreme Court of the USSR, has let loose a flood of abuse against the Soviet Union from Second International circles (to which the two men belonged) as well as from all sorts of reactionaries. It is asserted that the charges against them were "ridiculous and nonsensical" — charges which included, among other things, that they had exhorted Soviet troops to cease fighting and conclude immediate peace with Germany.

No motive is suggested which would lead the USSR, a country that has done more for Jews and Socialists than any other state in history, to condemn and execute innocent men who would, if really innocent, command the interest and sympathy of many Jews and Socialists. Yet here is a sorry spectacle of some Jews and Socialists shouting abuse at an ally as if she were our enemy, and without any reliable evidence to support their assertions.

All this has a tragically familiar ring. We went through the same story in 1936 and 1937; it was bad enough then but not quite so dangerous since war was still some way off. At that time a number of prominent people in the USSR, including Kamenev, Zinoviev, and Radek, were prosecuted on equally grave and, at first sight, surprising charges before the same Supreme Court—a regular court of Soviet judicature—and most of them were sentenced to death and executed. There was just the same howl from Socialist leaders in various countries affiliated with the Second International, and from reactionaries. They tried to tell us that it was all madness, that such men could not possibly be guilty, that they did not have a fair trial, and so on.

WHAT is the truth? So far as the trials are concerned, I attended one of them and Ambassador Davies attended others. He and I and every other foreign eyewitness were satisfied that the trials were fair and that the accused were rightly convicted. They were plainly guilty. Indeed there is now scarcely any informed critic left who is not convinced of their guilt, and satisfied that the USSR saved its own life and ours by destroying a formidable nest of quislings.

One would think that even the most stubborn, reactionary leaders of the Second International would have remembered this and, no matter how their vision had been distorted by old prejudices against the Soviet Union, would have exercised some caution when they heard of Alter's and Ehrlich's conviction. They have had to eat their words before, and surely in the interests of their diet alone they should have understood that the USSR does not send men to trial on "ridiculous and nonsensical" charges. Surely they can see that in a few months' time everyone will know that there was no more "nonsense" and no less guilt in 1942 than there was in 1936.

IT IS little short of criminal folly for Ehrlich-Alter's defenders to rush headlong into such a campaign in the middle of a terrible war against the enemies of all Jews and Socialists—a war in which the USSR has for nearly two years now borne the greatest share of the land fighting. This folly is heightened by the fact that it synchronizes only too well with the general intensification of anti-Soviet propaganda on both sides of the Atlantic, propaganda that includes a volume of atrocity stories about the treatment of Polish Jews in the USSR —designed to persuade the unwary that Poland is a haven of rest for Jews and that the Soviet Union is anti-Semitic!

Those who are carrying on this campaign, which can only weaken the bonds of friendship among the United Nations, are consciously or unconsciously doing Hitler's work for him and weakening the war effort. Let us assist the Soviet Union and strengthen our future not by accepting unsupported assertions of foolish and motiveless conduct on the USSR's part—assertions from sources always hostile or semi-hostile to the USSR—but by closing ranks and pressing for strong offensive action in Western Europe.

religious lectures will solve the problem. It will not be solved without the reforms suggested in the Children's Charter quoted here some weeks ago: secure home life instead of the trailer of shantytown quarters forced upon many war workers; adequate health and social services; and a national program of social security for children. Supine congressmen, city councilmen, and community officials must be prodded to their feet and made to act.

Press Parade

THE April issue of *Free World* magazine contains a report of Soviet news and opinions, prepared by the publication's research department, after a survey of the Russian press, both newspapers and magazines. The following quotations are particularly interesting in light of Ambassador Standley's recent unfounded assertions that the Soviet people were uninformed about American aid to the USSR, particularly lend-lease:

"When Ambassador Standley was on leave in the United States, his statements were reprinted in the Moscow press. Reports on lend-lease material are likewise published in Soviet newspapers. In popular weeklies which carry pictures, the industrial power of the United States is shown in countless photos, while technical journals are full of descriptions of Allied war materiel. The Russians are fully aware that they receive supplies from the United States and the British empire via Murmansk and Iran. . . .

"As regards America, we find the following types of items in the press: (1) At every opportunity Russians sing the praises of American efficiency and initiative; (2) They have many laudatory stories about the miracles of production in the United States; (3) They report all victories over Japan, featuring such important events as the Battle of Midway, the triumph of Guadalcanal, and the exploits of the American air force in China. . . .

"The press takes every opportunity to dwell on Russo-American friendship. The following quotation from *Ogoniok* is characteristic of the comments of Russian periodicals: 'The friendship between our people and the American people is based on strong traditions. Today it has assumed the character of close military collaboration. The free people of the United States and the other overseas republics are fighting with us against the brigandage and slavery which Hitler and his gangsters have thrust upon the world. . . .'"

★

ACCORDING to the Easton, Pa. *Express*, members of the Lafayette College chapter of Alpha Phi Omega, honorary fraternity for scoutmasters, have just completed a drive for clothing for Russian War Relief. Five large cartons of clothes were donated; "Good substantial stuff," said local RWR officials.

"I will not be needing these clothes for a long time now," one of the students remarked. "In another month or so all my costume problems will be handled by Uncle Sam. One reason I can feel reasonably certain of wearing clothes when the war is over is that the Russians are doing such a terrific job of carving up Hitler's armies.

"Giving the Russians clothing is a mighty small part of what we have to do to help them smash Hitler. As soon as Uncle Sam teaches me how to use a rifle or whatever he wants me to do, I hope to get in there. And being a student at Lafayette College, the first job I'd like to get in on, naturally, is driving the Nazis out of Lafayette's country."

FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

BRIDGEHEADS INTO EUROPE

AT THIS writing Rommel's Afrika Korps is crossing over into the area north of the Sousse-Kairouan line, after which the Axis African Command will only be in possession of about one-eighth of Tunisia. But this one-eighth, some 5,000 square miles in area, will be saturated with probably no less than 150,000 troops.

It is quite probable that von Arnim and Rommel will further squeeze themselves together to occupy an area bounded by Mateur, Tebourba, Pont-du Fahs, and Erfidaville. In other words, their further resistance will assume the form of a defense of a fortress, or *camp retranche*, with an area of some 2,500 square miles, shaped like half of a doughnut, curving around Tunis and Bizerte, and jutting out to sea to a distance of ninety-four miles from Sicily.

The outcome of the struggle is no longer in doubt. This last stronghold will be reduced, if only because the Allies have a superiority in numbers amounting to a ratio of at least 3:1, as well as seemingly overwhelming aerial supremacy.

This aerial supremacy and the presence of the British Mediterranean Fleet would seem to preclude the success of a "Dunkirk" evacuation of the Arnim-Rommel army team to the mainland. It is most probable that the two generals will stand and fight to the last, thus performing their fundamental strategic duty: to delay the Allied attack on the continent of Europe. In fact, they have done so successfully for five months. It remains to be seen how long they can delay it from this point on, but the issue is a foregone conclusion: the "stepping stone to Europe" should be in Allied hands by the time the summer "open season" is upon us.

The questions then arise: *whither now or whither where?* The former question presupposes that the attack will be made against the "soft underbelly of Europe" with Africa as the main base of operations; the latter does not presuppose anything at all, except a determination to attack.

Reams of paper have already been blackened on the question of *where* to attack. Geography textbooks have been taken off dusty shelves by many experts who have refreshed their memories as to mountains, valleys, railroads, beaches, rivers, and other natural and artificial features of the terrain, from Petsamo to the Dardanelles. ,Some experts have even begun to study the mouths of the Danube—this in the case of those who believe that Turkey will jump on the Allied wagon).

This refresher course in geography is to a great extent nothing but so much eyewash, for two principal reasons. First, none of the "writing experts" has access to military intelligence reports from Europe and, therefore, does not know what the Germans have done with the natural face of the earth of Europe. A gap or an avenue of attack which seems excellent to the student of geography (even military geography) may have been transformed by the enemy into an insurmountable obstacle, or a trap.

Second, military history abounds with instances where victory was won by attacking precisely in the place where the enemy thought it would be impossible or "crazy" to attack.

Now, after foreswearing all this learned

babble and magpie chatter over maps which no longer faithfully reflect the actual military features of the terrain, what have we got left to hang our brass hat on?

We do have some fundamental, invariable factors—invariable within a reasonable period of time. These fundamentals are invariable because: (1) The enemy cannot transfer the center of his military power, i.e. our strategic objective, to a new place within a few months; (2) Continents cannot be moved and the distances between them cannot be altered; (3) Rocky coasts cannot be transformed into sandy beaches, and vice versa; (4) We cannot acquire any large scale bases facing and ringing Europe beyond what we have, i.e. the British Isles and Africa.

Beyond that, everything is actually variable. The length of the shoreline between Petsamo and the Dardanelles, via North Cape, Gibraltar and Hatapan, is approximately 15,000 miles. Somewhere in a number of points and sectors of this tremendous distance (more than half the length of the Equator) lies the fateful place where our *main effort* should be applied.

Let us proceed from the fundamental, truly strategic consideration: where is the enemy's "military heart" at which we wish to strike?

IT MAY be placed somewhere between the Rhine, the Danube, and the Oder. To make things easier, let us symbolically designate its geographic center as Weimar. Symbolically again, here is where we must strike. This, of course, does not necessarily mean that we have to make a beeline from London to Weimar (450 miles) or from Tunis to Weimar (1,000 miles). We may get there by way of Petsamo, Narvik, Trondhjeim, Bergen, Sondervig, Flushing, Ostend, Dieppe, St. Nazaire, Bordeaux, Santander, Lisbon, Algeciras, Barcelona, Marseilles, Naples, Ragusa, Salonica, Gallipoli, to name but a small fraction of possible places. These have been selected only to indicate the country which might provide a possible avenue of invasion (Finland, Norway, Denmark, Holland, Belgium, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey).

How can the choice of place be narrowed down? Obviously by consideration of bases in our possession and their distance from the "heart" at which we want to strike.

The British Isles are clearly a primary base, because they are themselves arms-producing, are the home of the men who will do at least half of the actual fighting, and are highly organized. Furthermore, since shipping is our admitted (or alleged) bottleneck, we must use the base which will be closest by sea to the point of attack. The average run of a ship from England to the coastline of Europe, between Bergen and Cape Finisterre in Spain, is about 350 miles; while the average run from the United States or England to the *secondary base* of Africa is 2,500 miles—assuming of course that the western Mediterranean is reasonably safe for our convoys when Tunisia is cleared of Axis troops.

Now, where do we strike from England? It is my unshakable conviction that it is from England we must strike the main blow because the distance *by sea* from there to the "heart" of the enemy (Weimar) is the shortest.

THE shortness of the sea lines is important not only because we suffer (allegedly) from a dearth of shipping. It is important for purely tactical reasons, too. It is clear that the enemy, when he feels the imminence of invasion, will sabotage the ports. Thus we will have to bring our stuff in invasion barges, so we can land it on the beaches without the benefit of piers, cranes, etc. Now, barges *can* bring big stuff (heavy tanks, guns, etc.), but they *cannot* be risked in a sea voyage of several hundred miles. In other words, barges can go from England to points between the Frisian Islands to the Isle of Ushant, i.e. to Holland, Belgium, and northwestern France.

Another thing: barges cannot land heavy stuff on rock-ribbed coasts. They need sandy beaches to slide into. Such beaches exist in profusion between the Frisians and Ushant. They are practically non-existent in Norway.

An invasion must be supported by overwhelming air might. The continent of Europe is dotted by countless enemy airdromes. This means that we can invade only from a base which is close to shore aid is also dotted with airdromes.

That base is England. It would take months and months to cover Africa with sufficient air fields and air bases to support a large scale invasion. The same reasoning applies to ports of issue.

THE "heart" of the enemy is protected from the south by the Pyrenees, the Cevennes, the Alps (Swiss, Dolomiten, Carnic, Dinaric) and by the Balkans. The three important gaps in these mountains—that of the Rhone, the Tagliamento, and the Vardar—must be so fortified as to cease being "gaps."

Therefore, the way to the "heart" of the enemy lies from the northwest, through the great North European Plain which has been the battlefield of the world for milleniums.

Now!

OUR supreme task is still before us. The days and weeks and months rush by and the second front—the beginning of the end—is not yet a reality. The giant enemy mobilizes his *Festung Europa* to the limit. He scoops the barrel of Europe's manpower, terrorizes into his ranks the youth of the occupied countries. The longer we wait, the consequences for all of us will be more formidable than anyone can now imagine. They will be written in terms of men killed who did not have to die; they will be written in terms of lost opportunities which could have expedited victory, shortened the struggle, ended the chaos inflicted on mankind.

The arguments for delay—whether lack of ships, or all the perversions of logistics—have become as useful to Hitler as a hundred fresh divisions. In fact they are ghosts of a defensive-minded past which the war itself has laid. General Sir Harold Alexander, deputy commander under General Eisenhower, last week told a group of correspondents that the junction of American and British troops has tremendously relieved Allied shipping problems. Freighters need no longer make the long trip around the Cape of Good Hope to supply the British Eighth Army. This means that now more ships are available for the shorter run across the Atlantic, across the Channel. We have always contended that the plea of a shortage of vessels was without real substance. General Alexander's words, even at this late date, are additional evidence.

We have the ships and the troops with which to drive into the heart of Europe. Labor is ready and eager. The United Automobile Workers have called for an invasion now. From every industrial center of the country—from the United Electrical Workers, the National Maritime Union, the United Office and Professional Workers, from CIO councils in Jersey, Baltimore, Boston, Detroit, New York and other cities—come urgent demands for action. The appeasers who form the strongest block against invasion will only be licked by an ever mounting campaign of resolutions, petitions, meetings. The lethargy and indifference which the defeatists try to encourage is a challenge for more powerful voices to drown them out, for a renewed and supreme concentration on opening a second front before this fateful spring ticks away.

There is little doubt that when the eleventh hour strikes, there will be many invasions. One might be the main one—others, just diversions. It is entirely possible that one of the diversionary ones will become the main one in the process of fighting, and vice versa.

There is no telling where the blow will fall. Even if we knew, we would not and could not tell. And we don't know. We know only that England is the primary base, that the distance from it to the enemy "heart," to Weimar, is the shortest, that the enemy "heart" is uncovered in the northwest, and that only on the coasts of France, of Belgium, or Holland, can thousands of *barges* land big tanks and guns, and only from British air fields can our fighters and bombers go up in sufficient numbers and with enough tactical range left. We also know it must be done this spring.

Beyond that—everything is idle speculation.

WATCH ON THE POTOMAC by BRUCE MINTON

PITFALLS FOR PRICE-FIXERS

Washington.

THE present struggle for power within the Office of Price Administration is crucial to the success or failure of the war effort. On the outcome depends the whole issue of economic stabilization as proposed by the President in his seven-point program to prevent inflation. Either OPA now succeeds in establishing controls over prices, rents, and rationing, or the home front is abandoned to chaos that can disrupt the economy, endanger the productive output on which the armed forces depend, and sap the energy and morale of the people.

Within OPA two contradictory trends battle for supremacy. On the one hand, policies designed to achieve price regulation emerge painfully and hesitantly. Dollar and cents ceilings at retail levels have been placed on meat; first on pork, and now on veal, mutton, lamb, and beef. The ceilings are still excessive, but the principle of fixed maximums easily understood by the consumer—and therefore more readily enforced—increasingly gains adherents. First steps toward a simplified, over-all price regulation of groceries have been taken. Obviously, firm control of prices can be maintained only when all essential commodities are placed under precise dollar and cents ceilings at retail levels.

Opposed to this progress toward stabilization is the drive to scuttle OPA by undermining its authority. Prentiss Brown, who replaced Leon Henderson as administrator, undoubtedly wants to make a success of OPA. Too often, however, he has displayed symptoms of that fatal disease so prevalent in Washington—the disease of retreat before criticism, the tendency to appease. Mr. Brown, with the profiteers yapping at his heels, has been all too willing to make concessions, and in doing so has menaced the whole structure of OPA.

The attack intensifies with each retreat. The defeatists in Congress, especially the leaders of the so-called farm bloc, join with the special interest lobbies in condemning OPA as the plaything of "young lawyers," of "theoretical economists," of "wild-eyed radicals." The old Red bogey stalks the agency, and Mr. Brown flinches at every sign of this moth-eaten ghost, and gives ground by dropping those of his staff who have worked hardest for policies looking toward stabilization. Replacements have been made with men able to "carry a precinct or meet a payroll"—in other words, with old-line politicians or their masters, the spokesmen of special business interests.

TYPICAL of Mr. Brown's appeasement was the appointment of Lou R. Maxon as director of OPA information. Mr. Maxon serves without compensation. Not long ago he made a speech in his home town of Detroit, in which he declared that OPA has thrown away the policeman's billy and whistle. OPA would not "coerce" anyone, a promise, in effect, of leniency to those who disregard OPA rulings.

Mr. Maxon came to Washington direct from his advertising agency, which counts among its clients the Ford Motor Co., the Hecker Flour Co., the Gillette Safety Razor Co., and a good many food processors, including the H. J. Heinz Co. Maxon was brought into OPA by Brown to replace Robert Horton, who had done an intelligent job of public relations. Mr. Maxon was told to humanize the agency's relations with the public. He humanized, all right, by offering big business every concession. One day after he took over his new post, he wrote a strong memo to Brown opposing grade labeling. To a columnist critical of his atittude, Mr. Maxon laughingly remarked: "I guess your article got my agency a couple more clients today." Mr. Maxon has really enjoyed his opportunities to do a job. The job has been done on OPA itself.

Early this year the OPA announced compulsory grade labeling for the entire 1943 pack of fruits and vegetables. The order, as it was explained by the agency, was not motivated by a passion for reform, but rather was necessary to assure effective price-control. Without some sort of standard government grading on canned foods, it was not possible to set wholesale prices on specified quality within a geographical area. With grade labeling, even though dollar and cents ceilings were not yet extended to cover canned fruits and vegetables at retail, the prices charged the consumer would be approximately uniform for each grade of merchandise. But if grade labeling were not enforced, prices could be regulated only on the basis of costs to the individual processor as reported by him—each processor could then pretty much regulate prices on his product, and the consumer would go without protection on either price or quality.

Even taking for granted that the processors would report the cost of production with impeccable honesty, the prices on canned goods would vary according to the brand. Through national advertising, certain companies have managed to create the illusion that their brand is superior in quality. But this has been proved far from the truth. Unless ceiling prices are related to certain fixed quality standards, and not merely to an empty brand name, the canner can be expected to grow less and less concerned about content while still demanding maximum prices for the brand name pasted on the outside of the can.

OPA thinking has been toward tying price to quality. Otherwise, price-control is meaningless. Against this approach, the million-dollar canners' lobby exerts every pressure it can muster, including Mr. Maxon. For if the canners can smash the principle of grade labeling, the principle of linking price to quality, then they can also so undermine price-control that its failure is inevitable. Regulation of commodity practices already in force would quickly break down. The end would be in sight for precedents established after difficult struggle: policies, for example, like that which prohibits the debasing of soap (already under fire by certain interests, who

want to reduce the quality of soap while holding its price at present levels *and without informing the public*), which compels grade labeling of meat, which maintains minimum qualities for women's stockings, and many others.

LABOR has finally come to the defense of OPA. The labor policy committee, composed of representatives of the AFL, CIO, and Railroad Brotherhoods, informed Mr. Brown that public confidence in OPA would stand or fall with his decision on grade labeling. The CIO's Cost of Living Committee launched a public campaign in defense of grade labeling. Consumer groups, from the American Association of University Women to the CIO Auxiliary, called on the administrator. Grade labeling, considered doomed a week ago, now has a fighting chance.

It is a dramatic struggle, with clear implications. Yet other equally important trends within OPA have not received the same attention. In an attempt to appease hostile critics, Mr. Brown set up a committee to "investigate" his own agency. He chose the membership of this committee from among the most rabid enemies of stabilization, with ex-Senator Clyde Herring in charge, aided by none other than the redoubtable Mr. Maxon. What this investigation is intended to do remains unclear; so far, it has indulged in a good deal of fanfare about making OPA "efficient." Supposedly to accomplish this high goal, the Herring committee attacks just those groups within OPA which have been most eager to achieve genuine stabilization. Nor has the committee been content to concentrate on organizational problems; it has shown an intense desire to alter—and emasculate—policy. Certainly, the committee helped rouse the congressional poll-taxers' unprincipled and anti-Semitic attacks against OPA lawyers, in particular against David Ginsburg, whom President Roosevelt energetically defended. Certainly, Mr. Herring accepted a rather remarkable line when he embraced the "theory" first expounded by the radio commentator Fulton Lewis, Jr., that price-controls on meat should be lifted because over-all rationing does away with the need for price regulations. Herring explains that rationing allows the consumers to buy only a restricted quantity of meat; but since the amounts of meat available for civilian consumption are also limited, the magic law of supply and demand is restored and prices should be allowed to seek their own levels.

The Maxon-Herring junta is very much in the saddle. Recently, in fact, Administrator Brown issued a letter empowering Maxon to review any OPA policy, and further "to represent me [the administrator] in final policy decisions." Protest changed Mr. Brown's mind, and the immense grant of power was withdrawn. That does not mean, however, that Mr. Maxon's influence is on the wane. He and Mr. Herring still ride high—to the detriment of OPA. Their latest brainstorm is a plan to reduce drastically OPA regional and district committees in favor of state committees. Of course, state appointments are made on the advice of state governors in consultation with the political machines. The strengthening of state over regional offices can only undermine the power of the OPA national administration, and threaten effective enforcement. In the majority of cases, price-control would be handed over to the largest business interests. The attempt to discharge John McTernan, regional enforcement officer for California, because he has done his job too well, and despite support of McTernan from the AFL, CIO, and Railroad Brotherhoods, only provides a glimpse into the methods Herring and Maxon consider "efficient."

IN ALL this crucial fight, Prentiss Brown has been susceptible to pressure—yet inclined to give the same weight to the demands of 500 meat packers as he does to the protest of 5,000,000 workers. Brown is thinking too narrowly in terms of getting the OPA appropriation through Congress without trouble. He wants to be able to present Congress with a "good" record. He is given to appeasing OPA's enemies in the hope that they will be persuaded to go along with him without kicking up more fuss. But if Brown does the job entrusted to him, if he holds the cost of living from further advances while he rolls prices now out of line back to the levels of September 1942, he will fulfill the task outlined by President Roosevelt. He need not then fear any lack of support no matter what the reactionaries in Congress attempt to do. His best weapon is a public anxious to defend OPA because its program has brought benefits to the majority and has strengthened the war against the Axis.

Organized labor is bringing pressure on Brown, and also extending it to James Byrnes, head of the Office of Economic Stabilization. In the end, every economy problem funnels up to Byrnes. Both William Green and Philip Murray, speaking for the President's Labor Victory Committee, made clear that the unions have placed great emphasis on the relation between a stabilized cost of living and the entire problem of wage adjustments.

The test of OPA's success or failure is simple enough. The answers to three key questions will tell the story: (1) What is the status of grade labeling? (2) At what levels have dollar and cents ceilings been established on retail goods, and how inclusive are these ceilings? (3) Where do prices stand in relation to a year ago? When these questions can be answered to the satisfaction of the American people then the economy will have begun to approach stabilization. Until OPA achieves this goal, the war economy is at best inefficient, and at worst in serious danger of collapse.

The Tree of Liberty

Rivers of blood must yet flow and year of desolation pass over . . . what a germ we have planted and how faithfully should we cherish the parent tree at home!—THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Here where we stand in the Jericho shade
cold and deep in the darkness of quarry walls
where explosives bellow, blasting for blood:
Close to the hour of dawn we stand
when sunrise will signal the charge
sunfire dynamite bring down the roof of night:
The desert breath of war sears the leaves
of a tree once called Liberty, whose roots
were to be watered with the blood of tyrants.
But the soil was bled lean, plowed lightly;
the wells were poisoned and the fabulous
fruit plucked too soon or left to rot;
When the taproot shall knot its knuckles
into the stone bed of the breathing earth
then will the strong sap rise, the first bud
Appear among the shell-torn limbs:
only then will the spring of the human Century
come to replenish our grave-scarred new earth.

JAMES NEWSTREET.

This poem, by James Newstreet, is a runner-up in NEW MASSES' *Jefferson poetry contest, as is the poem by Kathryn Peck, on page 20.*

CHOPPING HCL: Order of the Day

By the Editors

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S executive order on prices and wages is a move to seal the ceiling on the cost of living. That ceiling is now full of holes and in danger of collapse. Whether the President's order will make it hold will depend on how the order is enforced and how the country is mobilized for total war.

It is clear that the new executive order has come in response to the inflationary threat of the war-be-damned congressional "farm bloc" on the one hand, and the widespread discontent among consumers and organized workers on the other. The point has been reached where inaction invited new depredations by the representatives of the wealthy landowners and new deterioration of national morale as a result of extortionate rises in living costs. By his executive order the President has taken the congressional bull by the horns; he has opened the second phase of a counter-offensive that began with his veto of the Bankhead bill. That veto gave the "farm bloc" its first serious setback. Faced with certain defeat in any attempt to override the President, the bloc resorted to guile, getting enough votes to recommit the bill to the Agriculture Committee, to be brought out at a more propitious moment.

The President's executive order is a hard-hitting reply to this challenge. In the statement he issued in connection with the order he said: "I cannot wait to see whether the committee at some future date will again report the bill to the Senate. I cannot permit a continuance of the upward spiral of prices." This is affirmative leadership. Translated into the policies of the agencies charged with stabilizing the cost of living, it is certain to produce results.

Prices.—The executive order deals with three problems: prices, wages, and employment. The Price Administrator and Food Administrator are directed "to take immediate steps to place ceiling prices on all commodities affecting the cost of living." We hope "all" means *all* this time. That line must be held. The Price Administrator and the Food Administrator are also directed to "prevent further price increases, direct or *indirect*, to prevent profiteering and to *reduce prices which are excessively high, unfair or inequitable.*" We hope that word "indirect" covers the little matter of grade labeling, in regard to which Price Administrator Prentiss Brown has shown a tendency to melt under the heat generated by the canners' lobby (see Bruce Minton's article on page 9 for an insight into this situation). And as for excessively high prices, they are legion. Rolling most of them back to the levels of Sept. 15, 1942, is the least that ought to be done.

The big question mark is enforcement. The best policy in the world means nothing if it remains in the realm of good intentions. For enforcement of OPA price ceilings and rationing (the latter, by the way, is an indispensable part of economic stabilization) more funds are necessary and more participation by trade unions and consumers' groups.

Wages.—The new executive order, despite newspaper headlines, *does not freeze wages.* But it does make the Little Steel formula more rigid, though it continues to permit raises above the formula "to correct sub-standards of living," as well as in cases of promotions, reclassifications, merit *incentive payments.* The latter provides an opportunity to the labor movement to link wages to productivity, thereby benefiting both the war effort and the workers.

An attempt is being made to interpret this provision of the executive order as barring the two-dollar wage increase demanded by the coal miners. But certainly, if the low wages of these key war workers do not fall into the category of those which can be lifted above the Little Steel formula, then the phrase about correcting substandards of living loses its meaning. John L. Lewis would like nothing better than to have the executive order used against the miners. That would give him the opportunity he is lusting for: to defy the government and call a strike. By their intransigence the coal operators are bringing grist to Lewis' defeatist mill.

Employment.—The chairman of the War Manpower Commission is authorized to prohibit the shifting of workers from lower-paid to higher-paid jobs unless this would help in the prosecution of the war. This is an oblique and not too happy approach to the problem of utilizing manpower where it is needed most. Much depends on the interpretation of this provision. With the cooperation of the labor movement it can help control the flow of manpower and prevent the pirating of workers. In a few war production centers the WMC and organized labor are already working together along these lines. But this part of the executive order must not become a magna charta for sweatshops. Actually it underlines the necessity of a much more direct and comprehensive approach. The manpower problem cannot be properly dealt with apart from production; production is affected by the stability or instability of the economy. All three require centralized, planned direction such as is proposed in the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill.

Two omissions in the executive order are worth noting. It speaks of preventing "increases in wages, salaries, prices, and profits which . . . tend to undermine the basis of stabilization. . . ." It is regrettable that the President did not deem it necessary to propose the restoration of the $25,000 ceiling on salaries which Congress knocked down, or for restricting profits in accordance with the President's seven-point economic program. Only recently Secretary of Commerce Jesse Jones estimated that net corporate profits in 1942, despite increased taxes, were about the same as in 1941. When it is remembered that the 1942 profits were sixty-two percent above the better-than-average pre-war year of 1939, it is evident that a scandalous situation exists which cannot but affect the morale of the millions whose wages have been limited and who are being taxed to the hilt. It is unfortunate that the President's statement, instead of urging measures to recover these exorbitant war profits, suggests new taxation "to reduce and hold in check the excess purchasing power." The fallacious theory that the inflationary danger stems from purchasing power was recently blasted sky-high by a report of the Securities and Exchange Commission (commented on in NEW MASSES of March 16) which showed that increased income after payment of taxes, instead of exerting pressure on the price structure, has been going into bonds and savings.

THESE shortcomings need to be remedied. Yet they cannot overshadow the positive impact of the executive order and of the vigorous leadership which the President has begun to display on the domestic front. He has demonstrated that the "farm bloc" disrupters can be licked; and already this has given a lift to morale. What has also been demonstrated is that the initiative and leadership of the labor movement is indispensable. (That same initiative can still beat the dangerous Hobbs bill which has passed the House.) For the President's action on prices is very much along the lines proposed to him only a few days earlier by his Labor Victory Committee, which consists of representatives of the CIO, AFL and the Railroad Brotherhoods. And the consumers, the average people of the country, who individually and collectively have been raising hell over mounting living costs, have also played their part. Now the job is to keep moving ahead, keep breaking through all the obstacles at home and abroad that stand in the way of total war, of swift, decisive military action in 1943.

JEFFERSON'S BATTLES

"He was so much a revolutionist," writes Ambassador Bowers, "that in the parlance of this time, when even liberals are called 'Reds,' he would have been called a Red."

NO OTHER American approaches Thomas Jefferson in his contribution to the creation of what we call "the American way of life." He was its philosopher, its architect, and its munition factory.

We know that no man born of woman is great enough or good enough to mount and ride on the backs of his fellow men; and this was the kernel of Jefferson's political philosophy.

We know that governments are created for the service of the people governed, and not the people for the service of the government; and that was Jefferson's revolutionary thought.

We know that governments derive their just power from the consent of the governed; and it was Jefferson who wrote that into the covenant of our liberties.

We know that in an ideal society the people must be free—free to think and speak their honest thought; free to write and publish what they write; free to speak even in criticism of their rulers; and free to worship God according to the dictates of their conscience without the interference of man-made law; and it was Jefferson who fought the heroic battle that made all this freedom the central thought in the American way of life.

When the stupidities of an insane king and a pliant Ministry forced the American Revolution, nine-tenths or more of the revolutionary patriots thought of it as a protest about taxation laws and commercial regulations; and with these a successful issue was to mean a change in the personnel of the rulers and little more. It was Jefferson who thought of the Revolution as a resolving of society into its natural state offering an opportunity for the creation of a new system based on the philosophy of liberty and natural right.

He scorned the idea that we were to patch the roof, cut a new window, and add a porch; he demanded that we build a new house. He was so much a revolutionist that in the parlance of this time, when even liberals are called "Reds," he would have been called a Red.

When he wrote his illuminating paper known now as his "Summary View" and submitted it to the Virginia Convention as instructions to the Old Dominions representations in the First Continental Congress, his revolutionary contemporaries were so startled by its novelty that they put it aside as too radical for the times. It was the most profound document of the Revolutionary period. It got down to first principles. It tore away the rubbish of stale precedent accumulated through centuries of tyranny and bigotry. It sought the creation of society in the principles of natural right. It attacked the artificial barrier of natural trade. It stripped the monarchs of unnatural powers. It gave the land to those who redeemed it from the wilderness and denied the right of kings to grant vast tracts to favorites of the court who never saw it. Thus he began the building of the American way of life.

WHEN summoned as the man best equipped to frame the Declaration of Independence, he arraigned the King and Parliament for their tyranny and crimes and there most of his contemporaries would have stopped. But Jefferson knew this indictment was an ephemeral thing that would die with the tyranny and the crimes. He was thinking deeper than that, looking farther into the future, and so in one immortal paragraph that cannot die so long as the American way of life shall live he laid the cornerstone of that way of life, and this is what he wrote:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men deriving their just power from the consent of the governed."

And so while most of his revolutionary contemporaries were thinking of the new government to be created on the ruins of British imperialism, he was thinking first and foremost of the creation of a new society, a new perspective, a new outlook, a new day.

And so with the Revolution, crowned with success, the Convention met to frame the Constitution and the constitutional fathers were thinking primarily of the creation of a strong and stable government; Jefferson was thinking primarily of the protection of the rights of the people. He wanted a stable government, but he did not want a government so strong that it could tyrannize over the rights of men.

Thus when in Paris he opened the proposed Constitution he was shocked to find so little that was in harmony with the preamble of his Declaration of Independence. He accepted with general *eclat* the governmental framework devised, but he was shocked to see that there was nothing in the document for the protection of the people against the abuse of the power created. And his first thought was for the rights of men.

Instantly he was aflame. His pen flashed over the paper, writing letters of protest and expostulation to the most influential men in the country. And this is the criticism he made in these letters: "The absence of express declarations ensuring freedom of religion, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, freedom of the person under the uninterrupted protection of the habeas corpus, and trial by jury in civil as well as in criminal cases excited my jealousy."

AND again he wrote: "Besides other objections of less moment, she (Virginia) will insist on annexing a bill of rights wherein the government shall declare that, first, religion shall be free; second, printing presses free; trials by jury preserved in all cases; fourth, no monopolies in commerce; and fifth, no large standing army."

When Madison, the most conspicuous of the constitutional fathers, sought to persuade him that all these freedoms were secure in that the fundamental law forbade none of them, he impatiently replied: "A Bill of Rights is what any people is entitled to and which no Government can deny or rest on inference."

Now the significant, if not sinister, feature of this omission of a Bill of Rights is evident in the fact that it was omitted after consideration and rejection, and some of those who fought its incorporation were the men Jefferson later had to fight when they, in power, enacted the infamous sedition laws for the destruction of the freedom of speech and of the press. Jefferson led the fight; he aroused his friends and followers; he munitioned them and put them on the march with banners; and that fight ended only with the inclusion of the Bill of Rights, the most immortal part of the Constitution. Without that Bill of Rights that Jefferson demanded the American way of life would never have been possible.

AND behind this fight was the struggle for and against democracy—on which the American way of life must rest, and without which it must perish.

Thus we reach the twelve-year struggle to determine whether ours should be an oligarchic, a plutocratic, or a democratic republic.

Now many of the leading revolutionary figures were not democrats. How shocking today to read in Madison's reports the constant recurrence in the debates of the Constitutional Convention of the slurring references to democracy as something to

forbid! The timid were against it, the rich were against it, the financiers and the more influential merchants were against it, and of course the reactionaries and the economic tories were against it; and these, with a compact organization, brilliantly led and abundantly financed, set to work during the first twelve years of the republic to make ours an oligarchy dominated by men of large means.

And again it was Jefferson who fared forth to challenge that arrangement. He led the fight; he created a party to wage the battle; he munitioned the people through the press; he organized all the people as human beings with natural rights from the highest to the lowest, and injected a civic conscience into the laborers on the docks.

And they denounced him with incredible fury as a traitor to his class; they summoned the political preachers wearing the livery of the court of heaven to serve the devil to damn him from the pulpits; they called him a Jacobin and a Red; and in the last desperate effort to destroy him, they enacted the infamous Alien and Sedition laws and Jeffersonians were cast into jails and mobbed by ruffians in the streets.

But in the end, with his election to the Presidency in 1800, the hosts of democracy marched triumphant to the polls. It was not a Jeffersonian, but Henry Cabot Lodge, who wrote in his *Life of Hamilton* that the triumph of Jefferson "definitively determined that ours should be a democratic republic."

Thus, through Jefferson's herculean efforts, democracy came to America to maintain the American way of life.

But even before this, and long before, he had led in the struggle to make this way possible. Having written the Declaration of Independence, he resigned his seat in Congress to serve two years in the legislature of Virginia to wage relentless war on the feudalistic class system in that dominion. Now, bear in mind that Jefferson through his mother's family belonged to the old regime in Virginia; that this was dominated by the land-owning aristocracy; that its directing hand was on both politics and the church; and that this artificial aristocracy, from which was drawn a ruling oligarchy, rested on the old feudalistic system of primogeniture and entail.

Here was a system consciously devised for the creation of a ruling aristocracy in the land. Here was a law providing that these vast estates should pass always and solely to the oldest son; and a law which placed them beyond the reach of creditors. The eldest son might be a moron, a spendthrift, or a fool; but society ordained that nothing borne of his stupidity or ineptitude should be permitted to lessen by one inch the vast estate he had inherited. The purpose was to perpetuate the wealth, the

Ambassador Claude G. Bowers

influence and the power of a few families; to create an artificial aristocracy like that of Europe.

And Jefferson declared war on this phase of feudalism. He fought for democracy and against a law-made aristocracy. He insisted that in a free society every man shall stand on his own feet, assume responsibility for his own acts, prosper or fail according to his own merits. He did not believe in caste or class. He did not bow to families as such. And he hated feudalism in all its forms. Had those feudalistic laws remained, there would have been no such thing as that which we describe as the American way of life.

But, you ask, if he wanted all men free, where did he stand on slavery? He stood foursquare against it. But, you say, he owned slaves, and the answer is, he did. Then why, you ask, did he not set them free? And the answer is that his hatred was for the entire system of slavery and he knew that emancipation by a single owner would be futile. And there was another reason too—the knowledge that such an act by him alone would have deprived him of the influence he might exert in forcing or persuading the extirpation of the entire system.

In his "Notes on Virginia" he had the courage to write these words: "Can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are of the gift of God; that they are not to be violated but with his wrath. Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just."

And again he wrote of the slaves that "nothing is more clearly written in the book of fate than that these people shall be free." Ah, but you say that these are words, and you ask: what did he attempt to do? And the answer is that he led the fight to end the slave trade, and if his indictment of this infamy does not appear in his Declaration of Independence it is that while he wrote it there in burning phrases, it was stricken out by the vote of the majority in Congress.

And the answer is, that in that same year, in the legislature of Virginia, he introduced the bill that put an end to that nefarious trade in human flesh.

And the answer is, that he wrote a bill to legalize emancipation; and if it was not presented it was because those who, with him, felt that slavery should go, believed it would then do more harm than good.

And the answer is, that when he wrote the Ordinance for the Northwest Territory, comprising many great commonwealths of today, he sought on this virgin soil to prevent the spread of slavery by incorporating this provision: "After the year 1800 of the Christian era there shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in any of the said States otherwise than in punishment of crimes."

And if this provision was stricken out, it was by Congress and over his protest.

There was never an opportunity throughout his life to strike a blow at slavery that Thomas Jefferson did not strike. He knew that slavery could have no place in the free society he sought to build and in the American way of life that he envisioned.

And what else did he do to create the American way of life? He had the supreme courage to demolish the obstacles of man-made law that stood between a man's conscience and his God; he fought the Homeric battle for religious freedom; for the separation of church and State; and to end the social and political proscription of Americans because of their religion.

It is grimly ironical that the early settlers of our country, who came ostensibly to escape religious persecution across the sea, immediately began the proscription of other religious faiths and the persecution of opposing sects. The persecution of the Quakers and the dissenting sects was savagery itself. All the instrumentalities of intolerance were put at the service of religious tyrants. The citizen who could not subscribe to the creed made fashionable by man-made law was politically proscribed, and socially banished. And he who subscribed to one religious faith was forced by law to support with his purse another faith his conscience had denied. There was no religious liberty, no religious toleration, and there was a religious persecution and tyranny when Thomas Jefferson was born.

And Jefferson knew this to be the European way; the European way of the darkest ages of European history; and he had the temerity to set forth with sword and shield to drive the demon of intolerance from American soil, to give the bless-

ings of religious freedom to the American conscience, and to write indelibly into law the American way of life.

Within a few months after he had penned the Declaration of Independence, he launched his war to make the conscience free; and he was to recall in his old age that in no struggle of his battling career had he encountered such bitter and unscrupulous opposition. He was denounced as an atheist. And why? Because he said: "I may grow rich by art I am compelled to follow; I may recover health by medicines I am compelled to take against my own judgment; but I cannot be saved by a worship I disbelieve"; and because he wrote: "The life and essence of religion consist in the internal persuasion of belief of the mind"; and because he declared: "I consider religion as a matter between every man and his Maker, in which no other, and far less the public, has a right to interfere," he was denounced as irreligious.

And so he began his war for the American way of life in the religious sphere, cutting the bonds that bound the church and State, that every man might worship according to the dictates of his conscience. That battle was prolonged and bitter, but he won. And when he won that battle in Virginia he shook to its foundation the religious tyranny of New England.

But that was not enough for Jefferson. He demanded a clear official declaration of the American way; and thus he wrote his immortal Ordinance of Religious Freedom, which holds preeminence in the world's literature of liberty. What a pity that this Ordinance and the argument that prefaced it is not compulsory reading in the schools today.

Thus, if today in the American way of life men may worship God according to the dictates of their conscience; if today Jew, Gentile, Catholic, Protestant, and unbeliever have equal right to participate in the civil life of the republic; if intolerance is proscribed, if religious persecution is outlawed, if in the American way the consciences of men are free, we do well this year to pay tribute to the memory of the great statesman and philosopher who fought the battle for religious freedom and toleration.

And what else did Jefferson do toward creating the American way of life? He fought a battle for academic freedom, to shake the directing hand of politicians and preachers from the professor, and to make education free.

In the colleges of his youth he had found the teaching stale and static, resting on the prejudices of the past, and proscribing modern thought. He found philosophy limited to dead thought. He found science frowned upon because it questioned or exploded the theologic theories of the Middle Ages. He found politicians seeking to convert the colleges into training schools of reaction. And in old age, when organizing what he hoped would be an ideal university in Virginia, he dealt iconoclastic blows to the old system, provided teaching based on modern thought, and gave preeminence to science.

When in search of teachers of science of the highest order he found the best qualified in Europe, they denounced him as an enemy of his country; and he replied that science knows no country but all mankind. When he offered a chair to such liberals as Dr. Cooper he was denounced for effrontery in the choice of a thinker who ran afoul of religious bigotry; and he replied that he was not proscribing a great thinker because of his theological convictions that would not enter into his teaching.

I know of no period in his life when Jefferson looms more heroic than when more than eighty years of age, enfeebled physically, but mentally and spiritually alert and virile, he fought his battle for academic freedom at the cost of his personal popularity. He fought to the end for the American way of life; and if today, here and there, the academy is not wholly free it is a challenge to the American ideal.

What is the American way of life? It means that men may think their honest thought and without fear proclaim it. It means that the platform is free, and no functionary of the state can lay a paralyzing hand upon it. It means that men may write and publish what they please in press and pamphlet and in books without interference because of their opinions. It means that men may peaceably assemble to consider public matters without restraint. It means that every man's house is his castle, into which even the highest officer of state dare not enter without due process of law. It means the protection of the habeas corpus. It means that men's religions are a matter between their conscience and their God, and that none shall be politically proscribed in law because of their religious faith. It means that every child shall be entitled to his schooling at the public cost and that in universities there shall be no legal proscription of the truth. It means that all men, regardless of their financial or social status stand equal before the law, and if at times this is not true it is a negation of the American way of life as Jefferson saw it.

And to bring these blessings to the American people, Jefferson in every instance made the fight. No American can approach his contribution to the American way of life.

I have sometimes marveled at the attempt of reactionary elements to evoke the memory of Jefferson in defense of vested wrongs. There is rich irony in the theory that he was a reactionary or conservative. He was throughout his life denounced and damned as a radical and a Red. He was pictured as blood brother of Marat. He was called a Jacobin and a terrorist. He was proclaimed an enemy of all religion from the political pulpits of his time. He was called an enemy of property and a traitor to his class. No man in American history has been so roundly abused by the reactionaries of his time as a dangerous innovator as Thomas Jefferson.

He was a revolutionist. He was an iconoclast. He was a radical. But he was a revolutionist against wrongs; an iconoclast against ancient tyrannies; and he was as radical as reason and social justice.

And I have sometimes been amazed to find among progressives of our day, speaking from the superabundance of their ignorance of his life, criticism of his reforms as mere palliatives with no meaning in our times. These forget that the world moves by degrees. That which is conservative today was revolutionary yesterday. There was no labor problem in Jefferson's day as we know it now. There was no problem of great corporations as we know them now. There were no such social problems as we have today.

But he who thinks that the philosophy and principles of Jefferson have no application now has read to little profit. Many have attacked him because once he said that he would like to see a revolution every twenty years—in every generation.

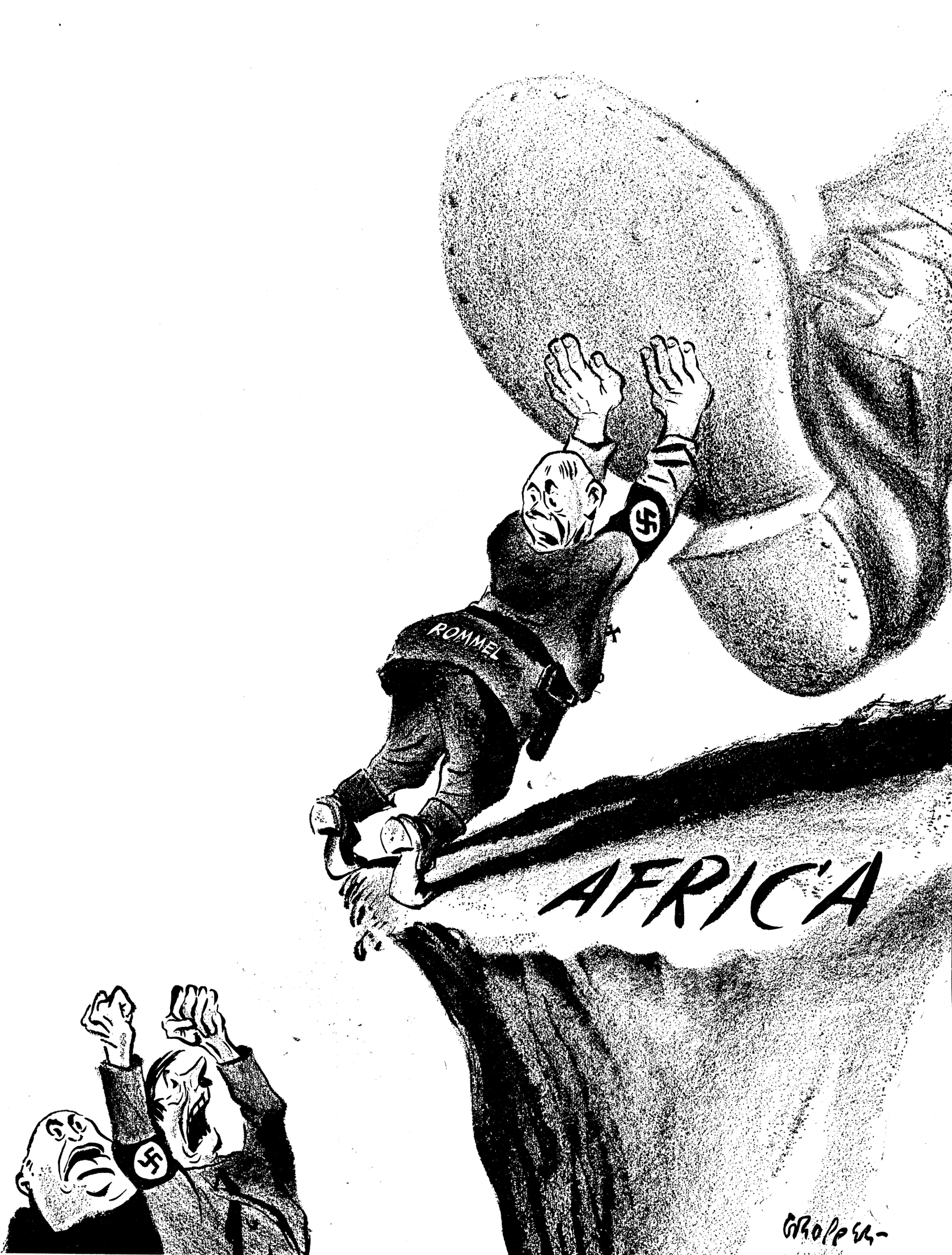
Is it possible that one can miss the implication? He meant of course a recognition of the fact that each generation meets new problems; that civilization should march forward; that systems harmless now may be harmful in the future; and that society must not be static but must move.

And there is not a problem of today for which one does not find a guiding principle in the philosophy of Jefferson. For he stood primarily not only for liberty but for human rights; for the duty of organized society to play its part in the economic and social protection of the mass of men.

It was Lincoln, a disciple, who said that "the principles of Jefferson are the definitions and the axioms of a free society." He belongs to the immortals. And in paying tribute to his memory in this two-hundredth anniversary of his birth, we are merely dedicating ourselves anew to the American way of life.

CLAUDE G. BOWERS.

This paper (published here by permission of the author and somewhat abridged) was specially written by Mr. Bowers, who is ambassador to Chile and one of America's most distinguished historians, for the Jefferson anniversary meeting of the New York Workers School, held on April 9. The proceedings of the meeting, including the full text of Mr. Bowers' paper and the speeches by Earl Browder and Francis Franklin, will be issued in pamphlet form by the Workers School in New York.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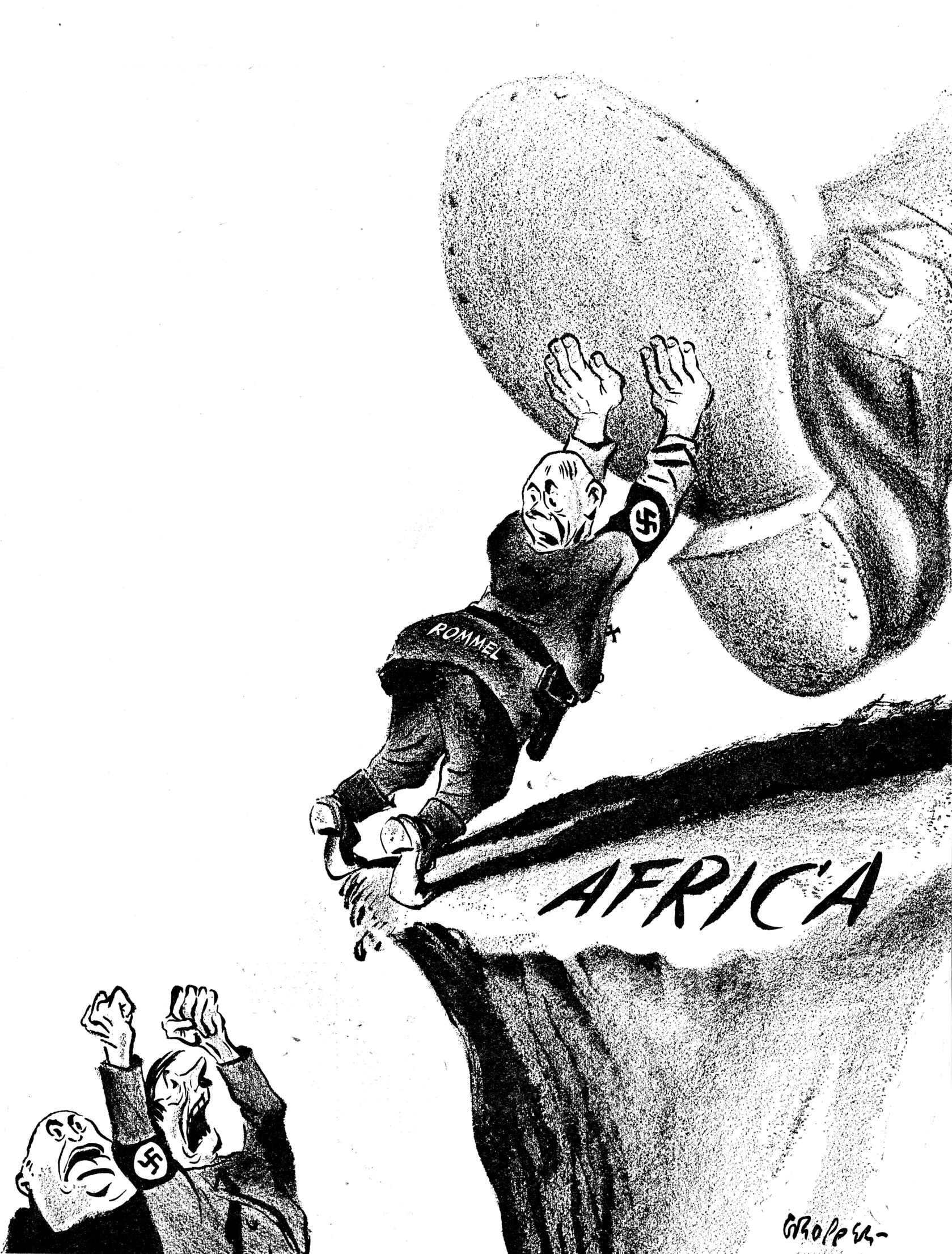
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CANADA DRIVES ON

The Mackenzie King government meets a challenge. Fresh air in the Quebec legislature. Labor provides the big push.

For several months the spirit of the offensive has found vigorous expression in Canadian affairs. Canada's Army in Britain is prodding for an invasion of Europe, eliciting from Sir James Grigg, British Secretary for War, an assurance that its period of waiting will not drag on much longer.

That the spirit of the troops is that of Canadians generally, is indicated by an important advance in government policy: the Mackenzie King administration has begun to take the offensive against defeatists in Quebec.

There have been two large obstacles to all-out war effort in the Dominion: the lack of a consistent, democratic labor and manpower policy, and persistent appeasement of quisling circles in French Canada. Under powerful pressure from the rapidly expanding trade union movement in Ontario and Quebec, we have seen signs of improvement in federal labor policy, with the revision of the personnel and character of the National War Labor Board. But the most meaningful development thus far is the change in the Liberal government's French-Canadian policy.

It is a peculiarity of isolationism in Canada, as distinct from the United States, that its center is not in the midwest but on the St. Lawrence, at the gateway to the Atlantic—among the French-Canadians who form close to a third of the country's population. Moreover, it is an isolationism which has had its origin in a long and honorable record of French-Canadian struggle against imperialism, against involvement in imperialist wars. This fact, together with national inequality in several aspects of French-Canadian life, has been seized upon by all pro-fascists.

Until very recently the King government sought to "solve" the problem by walking a tightrope. The tightrope represented an imaginary "common denominator" between the total war requirements of the anti-Hitler struggle and the anti-war agitation of Quebec's quislings. The most lamentable example of this acrobatic exercise was the plebiscite on the issue of conscription in April 1942. Until the last minute the government tried to create the impression that, in any case, it had no intention of introducing compulsory overseas service. Free rein was given to all the advocates of a negative vote, including those occupying leading posts in the Liberal party. Between eighty and ninety percent of the French-Canadians voted against empowering the government to extend the Mobilization Act from home service to service anywhere—while the rest of the country voted heavily in favor.

Last autumn, some time after the Mobilization Act had been amended in line with the majority vote in the country as a whole (though with the proviso that it would not be applied without further endorsement by Parliament), a French-Canadian spokesman of the win-the-war forces, Major-General Laflèche, was included in the Cabinet. The government was strengthened thereby—and by the resignation of Mr. Cardin, Minister of Public Works and advocate of "partial participationism."

In the midst of the current House of Commons debate on the Speech from the Throne, Mr. Cardin introduced a proposal to suspend the operation of the Mobilization Act, and added that the present war effort was "destroying the economic, social, and national life of the country." The Prime Minister replied to Cardin with a statement of all-out war policy, the vigor of which signalized to the whole country that the long-awaited political offensive on the Quebec front had at last begun. Describing the Cardin motion as "an effort to split the country," Mr. King unmasked the "nationalism" of the defeatists whose policy aims at betrayal of the nation. In energetic terms he reaffirmed the solidarity of Canada with her allies.

Shortly after Cardin had been rebuffed in the federal House, the provincial leader of the defeatist Bloc Populaire, Rene Chaloult, received similar treatment in the Quebec Legislature. Here a Provincial Cabinet Minister, Valmore Bienvenue, delivered a speech whose tone and content was as significant for Quebec politics as Mr. King's had been for the country as a whole. He flayed the Bloc Populaire and its press as "distillers of poison," and underlined the lesson for French Canada in the fate of small nations which preferred isolation to alliance with the forces of freedom, in particular with the USSR.

To appreciate the significance of the speeches of King and Bienvenue it is important to remember that only last year the King government was still basing itself on a compromise bloc with the Cardin forces in Quebec—and that it has now begun to fight them.

Two things are responsible for this turn of affairs. First, the stage of the war, which has brought Britain and America to the threshold of a decisive European offensive and which has led Mr. King to declare categorically that before the year is out all our armed forces will have gone into action. Second, there is the change in French-Canadian political relations itself, which is giving the government a stronger democratic foundation, and encouraging more vigorous leadership.

This change in Quebec consists in the great strengthening of the win-the-war forces, resulting from the advances of the trade union movement. In the past year and a half, 70,000 Quebec workers have been drawn into the International trade unions, as a result of a vigorous campaign initiated by the AFL Metal Trades Council under the slogan: "100 percent Organization for 100 percent Production!" The campaign has swept through the great munitions plants in the Montreal area, and from there up to the world's largest aluminum plant at Arvida, on the Saguenay River. It is now being extended to the textile industry, which employs 76,000 of Quebec's 600,000 workers.

The effects of Quebec labor on the political life of French Canada is mirrored in the fact that it was here, in the aircraft industry, that the first joint labor-management committees were established, and it was here also that the first great shop meetings were held in support of the second front. The way in which labor is re-vitalizing French-Canadian democracy is indicated also by the recent establishment of periodic meetings of Members of Parliament for the Montreal area with representatives of the trade unions, to discuss problems of production and labor in relation to the war effort. In a broader field, the democratic advance is registered by the fact that the principle of compulsory education, for the first time in Quebec's entire history, has been accepted by the Catholic Committee which controls the French-Canadian schools and by the provincial administration of Premier Godbout.

These gains are being achieved against determined opposition from corporatist reaction and a handful of anti-labor employers. These groups continue to utilize their base in Quebec to exercise that pressure which still prevents the lifting of the ban on the Communist Party, and gives ready encouragement to quislingism.

The political mobilization of French Canada for total war is being tackled by the government; it will require the strongest popular support, not only in Quebec but throughout English-speaking Canada, if it is to be successfully completed. Aggressive political leadership will have to be supported by practical measures tending to establish full national equality for the French-Canadians: elimination of the wage-differential that exists between Quebec and Ontario; recognition of the right of the French-Canadians to the use of French as the language of instruction and command in French-Canadian units of the armed services. With these measures the Bloc Populaire can be defeated and Canada as a whole strengthened.

Stanley B. Ryerson.

WAR PAINT

Artists blaze a trail with wit and imagination. The Victory Workshop shows art in shipyards, schools, and battles.

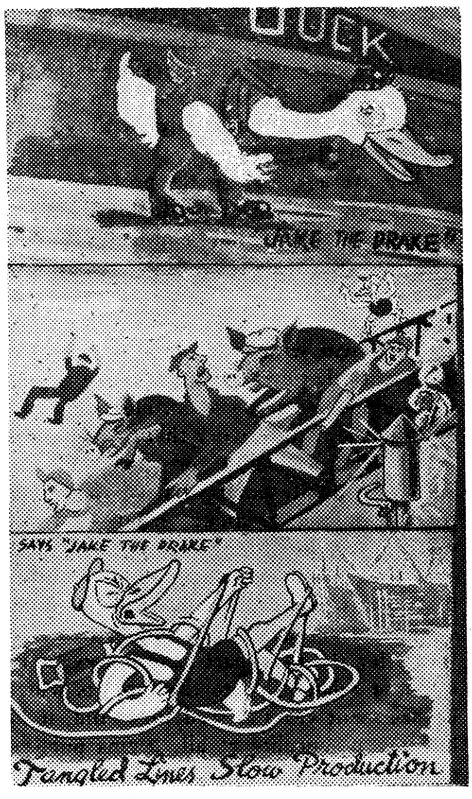
"LIFT your pens and brushes like swords!"

That is what Yohanson said in 1941 to the artists of the Soviet Union; and that is what the Victory Workshop does in its exhibition, *Art, A Weapon for Total War,* which will continue at the New School for Social Research until April 25. The Workshop does it with savage color, with incisive line, with the black-and-white subtleties of photography and the solid impact of three-dimensional construction; even with the schools, even with children's designs for collection cans. It is the posters that leap at you first. Posters of every conceivable subject and style; war, bond-selling, unionism, political satire, industrial safety; a photograph poster of an agonized mother and child of Madrid from the Spanish war, a chart poster with rainbow-colored illustrations of how to behave in an air raid, a sculpture poster with the grotesque figure of Hitler crouching above the world, a stencil poster that takes the profits-as-usual boys apart. A great ship slides toward you down the ways, newly launched by labor-management unity. A tremendous eye, painted on oilcloth for use outdoors, warns the men in the shipyard not to forget their protective goggles. A caricature poster of Goebbels from the Soviet Union squeaks from a rat's mouth, "Aryans must be handsome!" and a painting poster aflame with the colors of war stabs its V symbol through a Nazi's breast. All the fighting workers come at you with their bright flags and strong arms and shining guns.

There is an incredible variety of material —the gadgets for collecting and table display and instruction catch your eye, among them the three-dimensional moving posters—a favorite form of the Victory Workshop — whose interlocking hands demonstrate a process or tell a story. Children in the high schools have put together constructions and lantern slides of their own; even the littlest ones are not forgotten, with reproductions of the many articles they can collect in the scrap drive stuck up on a chart for their kindergarten wall. There are cartoons and comic books, with their quick illuminating comments—many of the latter tell the stories of our battles and teach the history of our enemies and our allies.

Then you get to the illustrations—soberer in color for the most part, using woodblock and camera and burin to show what fascism is like and what the United Nations can do about it. Silk-screen prints and paintings, in this section, combine extraordinary beauty with social effectiveness. One remembers a lovely, gentle canvas for the wall of a nursery, a small yellow-haired girl staring at a green grasshopper—and one remembers the photograph of a small girl in the Soviet Union. Some Nazi thought it was funny to throw a grenade through her window. It is hard to recognize her marred features as a human face.

This collection, with its tremendous scope, grows out of the year-long efforts of the Victory Workshop, which replaced the old United American Artists Workshop in June 1942, at the time when the Artists' League of America was formed. Its members include not only Artists' Leaguers but also representatives of photography, advertising, display, and similar groups, each of which has contributed its share to the exhibit. The Victory Workshop is planned as a community shop, to produce art in collaboration for community needs. It provides a clearing house for art service, it initiates projects and methods like the stencil poster and silk-screen mural applied to war problems, it defends artists against exploitation, and does voluntary work for war relief and similar causes. One of its finest accomplishments is the training of our school children in artistic work; high school classes come to the Workshop for instruction, learn new techniques, apply them to classroom problems, and turn out war posters and illustrations and leaflet designs which find a ready market. Above all the Victory Workshop emphasizes the artist's role as a war worker. Francis Brennan of the Graphic Section of the OWI, a sponsor of this exhibit, is urging the establishment of just such graphic arts workshops in communities throughout the country, in which local unions and community organizations will develop individual contributions to solving war problems, supplementing OWI's national work. (The Workshop is holding a conference with trade union educational directors to this end, on April 25 at the New School.) The function of the artist in war is conceived not as that of a detached reporter or commentator, not merely as that of a mourning candle for the dead, but as a light for the living. And the Workshop's exhibit, with its courageous colors and its positive instructions for action, shows the artist as a fulltime war worker. Those who might question art's contribution to, say, the efficiency of war industry, will question no longer when they have seen Joseph Tonnar's shipbuilding work. Joe is a shipyard worker with a genius for graphic illustration. There was a sign on a low door: Duck! but the men went on bumping their heads. Joe dreamed up a duck and painted him on the lintel; and now Jake the Drake, as he has been named, is the guardian spirit of the shipyard workers. He warns them in moments of danger, he guides them in performance of intricate tasks, he illuminates moral precepts with his sprightly figure. Similarly, Joe Tonnar is not satisfied with a mere warning slogan on a heavy piece of metal. He paints on it two children, crying, "Look out, Daddy!" And the men look out.



The shipyard workers' mascot

IN FINDING their way through the complexities of a great shipyard, workers might easily grow confused. Joe has worked out a system of identifying different types of equipment and different tasks with colors: green for first aid, black and red for electricity, and so on. The time saved is enormous, for men no longer have to read the text of a sign to know whether it concerns them. Artists are using similar humorous illustrations to guide the men through the perils of the machine shop; an army training school has an ingratiating pictured rookie who punctures himself with tools, explodes himself to heaven—even has to be guided from the red-light district to the green light of prophylaxis.

Wit and imagination run all through this show; and there is realistic passion as well in the beautiful Mexican anti-fascist posters, in the great variety of American work, in the sharp and fierce Soviet war cartoons and the heroic Soviet posters. It is impossible to think of a phase of the war where art, as illustrated in this exhibit, has not been of service. The scope and the emotion of war art range from the painted child in her butterfly meadow on the wall of the American nursery to the photographed child in Russia with her ruined face. And the theme of war art is action; these exhibits are so many bullets in our soldiers' guns. JOY DAVIDMAN.

SNOBS AND EDUCATORS

A college instructor asks some provocative questions about the teaching of the humanities. Tradition and dry-rot in the classroom. The war calls for a change in outlook.

RECENTLY the president of a large midwestern state college in which I happen to teach was speaking to a convocation of students and faculty. After the usual cliches and ponderosities, he served up a dessert of "culture"— consisting of quotations, culled for the occasion from Bartlett and read naively from a pile of note-cards. He concluded with one from George Eliot, "that famous man who lived and wrote during the nineteenth century." The same prexy, once before, in a speech of which he was so proud that he had it published, listed physiology among the humanities. Now in case you happened to go to Harvard or the University of Chicago, or in case you have never attended college at all, you may not find such facts credible. And of course, you're right—they *are* incredible. Yet everyone who knows anything about most of our American colleges knows that these things are not only true but typical.

But today, all over the country, the prexies are reorganizing for the war. Mine, for example, has put the entire school at the service of the war effort—that is, all except the liberal arts, which find themselves in a really embarrassing plight. "Culture," says Prexy, "is out for the duration." Now what are the liberal arts to do? English teachers buy war bonds, don't they? Instructors of philosophy become air raid wardens. And humanities scholars remember their tolerance of liberalism, their sweet reasonableness toward the unconventional, their higher political intelligence. Yet here they are on the outside. Of what use are Milton and Descartes, asks Prexy, and public echo answers, What indeed? The fact that Prexy pronounces "Descartes" Desskarteez, and thinks he was a Greek sculptor, doesn't really compensate for the pang of dejection in the scholar's breast. He knows there's something wrong somewhere, but he just can't help asking himself: "How about it, Joe? Don't you really know that you ought to pull out altogether and join the Navy?" If the inner Joe refuses to answer this leading question, he has two arguments into which he can retreat. One is the argument that the humanities have their own values. (Aha! you say, our old friend A. for A.'s Sake—but it's not quite that simple.) The other is that the humanities must continue for the sake of training for, and influencing, the peace by keeping alive humane values. (Or does that bit of presumption sound too much like the sweetness and light of Matthew Arnold and the angels?)

The peculiar thing about both of these arguments is that, like Prexy's "Culture is out for the duration," they have a certain unanswerability. There's something there, don't you see—and yet there's something missing. The missing something is—pardon the cliche—the link between theory and practice. So long as that link is missing, illiterate college presidents with "farm bloc" mentalities and NEA Calibans armed with NAM pamphlets will have it all over the scholars. And rightly so, for the scholars have no right to be as bewildered as they obviously are. Their bewilderment casts a doubtful light on their profession, a light which should have been cast long ago. If it had, they would not now be in such a dilemma.

IT COMES as a shock to many men in the humanities to be told that they are human beings trying to make a living—if you don't believe me, ask some of the Teachers Union people. They think that the relation between the words "human" and "humanities" is a kind of pun. Now some people may call this chloroformed state idealism, but they are the same people who think that state medicine will crumble the body politic, and that Henry Wallace has a morbid imagination. The truth of the matter is that, taken as a whole, the liberal arts faculties of our colleges and universities consist of large numbers of half-starved individuals, in deadly fear of losing their miserable little jobs, bullied about by none-too-tactful administrations, and continuously alternating between impossible pretentiousness and utter servility—the inevitable result of being forced into an economic position suitable only to those who enjoy being lackeys.

The average man in the profession gets his training early as a graduate student—I mean his training for semi-lackeyism. In the graduate school he finds himself regarded as neither man nor boy. He is subjected to the often-humiliating arrogance of older men with little or no flexibility in their critical views—men who have had their minds so narrowed through the years of "scholarly" hack work that they are outraged by originality or independence. When he finally emerges from the idiotic routine of the graduate grind—a fraud which is worthy of thorough exposure in its own right—he staggers into the first job that opens up. Whereupon he becomes swallowed up in his teaching activities—which for the most part have not even the remotest relationship to the subjects which he has spent years in studying—and, if he has any practicality at all, begins publishing articles and books based on anything at all, but mostly on his old term-papers.

These reheated stews are generally of no importance in themselves, of course, but they are what the dean and the administrators want: advertisement for the school. So every year the hundreds and hundreds of research articles pour into the learned journals, proving things that everybody knows or nobody cares about. The alternative to promotion via this mass production route is to find a shabby little sinecure in some agricultural college, where for about $2,000 a year a man can spend his life teaching freshmen how to spell and can live in relative security although rarely with any contractual guarantee on the part of the college that he will still have his job next year.

Is it the fault of the poor little man who spent the best years of his young manhood toadying to pedants in the graduate seminars that his first real love of literature and critical curiosity has been perverted so pitifully? Don't blame him; long ago his conscience deteriorated so gradually that he never became aware of what was going on. No one ever told him what would finally happen. He was never awake to the fact that a modern university is in many ways a big business, using the advertising techniques, the loyality-to-the-the-corporation approach to employes, and the familiar argument that "This is not a profit-making enterprise; this is a profession." The little man never was quite sure of the reason why nonconformism and radicalism on the faculty are generally punishable by summary dismissal. But gradually he gave in to this tyranny, finally coming to confuse it with the standards of "good taste." Your humanities scholar is the Charlie Chaplin of the universities. He has been gradually pushed from a position of primary importance to one in which he is merely tolerated—until the suitable moment. And lo, the emergency is upon us, and the philistines are lusting after his blood.

THE most disheartening thing about the situation is that no enlightened man can really be completely sympathetic with the Charlie Chaplin of the campus, because while this Charlie is unhappy, he is also burdened with so many superstitions about himself that his self-hypnosis gets on people's nerves. In this respect he is like the small businessman. He is usually so ignorant of science that he blames it for all the evils of the machine age, much as if a scientist should blame philology for all the abuses of newspaper-English. He thinks of himself as the preserver of Western culture, yet sneers at modern writers and

artists and is thoroughly unconscious of the work of the followers of Darwin, Marx, and Freud (to say nothing of the studies by these men themselves). He tends to confuse contemporary philosophers who take into account the advances of science with the most banal proponents of "progressive education." Even his reaction against those "progressives" who think that the principles of kindergarten education can be transferred wholesale to the college classroom is more a matter of stubborn resentment than of realistic thinking. And at the same time he is so shot through with doubts about the value of his own work that he is a perfect sucker for the rigidly worked-out and reactionary theories of neo-Thomism, neo-Aristotelianism, neo-humanism, and neo-Platonism—each of which begins with an attack on the confusion prevailing in the humanities, goes on from there to identify this confusion with the discoveries of the physical, biological, and social sciences, and ends up in a perfect welter of contempt for everything that is vigorous and heart-warming in modern life and modern art.

This contempt seems perfectly logical to a man who has lost touch with what is new and vital, and whose graduate education and conditions of employment have tended to destroy all interest in the real world about him. And that is the root of the whole matter: There is no conception of an "art of life"—no perception of the relation between culture in the esthetic sense and culture in the sociological sense. The occasional realist who sees the need for such a perception in order to keep the humanities from becoming the haven of dogmatism and escape is regarded as an exotic creature. If he is witty enough, he will be considered charmingly shocking; if he is not particularly witty, he will be considered to have rather bad taste. Unlike the aggressive anti-scientist, he will find promotion difficult and his position especially insecure.

This situation has its effects on the rest of the university. The scientists, discovering that the liberal arts make no attempt to link what they are doing with what science is finding out, become even more aloof than their colleagues. They develop a ridiculous anti-intellectualism which completes the cleavage with a vengeance. The war has put the humanities on the defensive, however, and the scientists are winning in a walk. They *are* more useful at the moment than the fellows in the next building, and they know it. "Culture is out." But true culture was never in, or such an edict could never even have been *dreamed* up. And what has happened now? Have these changes, have the onslaughts of the philistines changed our little heroes in any way? Why, not at all. I have before me a manifesto issued by two widely respected scholars in the humanities, Warner G. Rice of the University of Michigan and Howard Mumford Jones of Harvard. Now, what does this manifesto say?

Well, first of all it starts out with three propositions: (1) The humanities and humane studies are being put in jeopardy *by the present war effort*, (2) *The continued existence of the humanities* is necessary if proper world organization and an enduring peace—the proper fruits of victory—are to be achieved, and (3) *If the humanities are to be preserved*, far-sighted and decisive action must be immediately taken.

THESE propositions (the italics are mine) are typical both in mood and in emphasis of the frame of mind that dominates the better-fed members of the profession who are in a position to be listened to by the rest. So far removed are they from the common problem of all civilized peoples that they place the blame for their plight not on the Hitlerites but on the war effort itself. While everyone else is worried about preserving humanity, they are chiefly concerned with preserving the particular rights and privileges associated with their activities in their present form. The laughable notion that these esoteric and confused pursuits are "necessary for proper world organization and an enduring peace" comes from the familiar arrogance and pomposity which have long plagued the graduate school classrooms. *Art* is necessary, yes— and *philosophy*, and *criticism*, but *not the humanities as they exist in the universities today*. The artists and theorists whose creations and contributions to our modern thought are of the greatest significance have had almost nothing to do with that kind of "humanities," which might better be called *ersatz* humanities.

For it is ersatz, in the truest sense of the word: an untrustworthy substitute for the real thing, that is now crumbling apart at the first contact with the true problems of human life; the war has caught up every human activity as never before in our history, and exposed it to the merciless light of public criticism. The true humanities

cannot be destroyed by anything but the extinction of the human race. Fascism is its only fatal enemy—fascism, and not the war effort. The true humanities cannot dissociate themselves from that war effort, for they are inspired by and in turn inspire the struggle for the triumph of liberty and reason. But by arrogating to themselves the credit for all the advances of art and theory that society has made, the professional memorizers and stultifiers pretend the true humanities will be endangered if they are not permitted to go on just as they always have gone on.

Yes, gentlemen, "farsighted and decisive action must be immediately taken," but not in the direction of which you are thinking. Without a bold change in your social and scientific consciousness it would be better for you to make way for others who are not afraid of the consequences of honest action for the right, and who do not find it necessary to sneer at the war by questions such as this one: "How far can colleges of liberal arts (whether separately established, or parts of universities) become in fact technical schools for training the operatives of highly complex and delicate machines of destruction for the duration of a long and costly struggle, without endangering or obliterating those arts of peace out of which come a renewed life for the nation and for the world." Here again we see the egotism, the credit stealing. the snobbery toward the sciences, the distrust of the war, implicit in the opening propositions. These are the themes of the entire manifesto and of the program which it proposes.

OF COURSE, I must be fair. There *is* a sentence or two attacking "our enemies"—although not by name. "It is," say the authors, "tragically necessary that there shall not, because of the mechanical nature of the weapons of conflict, be innocently inflicted upon the spiritual life of our country the same serious or mortal wounds our enemies are vengefully anxious to administer." The enemies are mentioned primarily for purposes of analogy, however, and once again the arrogance peeps through in the phrase "the spiritual life of our country." Will the culture of the people perish if Harvard's New Humanists are forced to recognize a few simple scientific truths.

Messrs. Jones and Rice want "training centers in the colleges for the problems of peace." Good, but do they imagine that such training could be given by people like themselves? They certainly must get to know a lot more about the workers and farmers of this country, for one thing, before they are qualified. And they had better study up on the nature of economics, of fascism, if they think that the fact of the war's bringing their weaknesses to light is as dangerous as the enemy himself. And oh yes—there is a whole paragraph in the manifesto on the theme that "only in the

United States is there a possibility of adequately preserving for the duration of the conflict the life and virtues of humane education." Now *that* is true scholarly humility and objectivity. Perhaps one should present these gentlemen with a map of the world, or at least of the Soviet Union, before they start giving lectures on "the problems of the peace." Of course, one *could* recommend some excellent lectures to them—well-educated people, too, and even some college graduates—but these lecturers would all have been corrupted by the cheap controversies of the public forum.

And there is another way in which I should be fair. It *is* a bad thing to let Prexy and the anti-intellectuals hold the field. But the choice does not lie between Prexy and the university "humanists." Prexy won that battle long ago. He forced our little Charlie Chaplins to the wall years before the war broke out. He made them eat dirt on the matter of academic freedom almost from the very beginning. They were compelled to choose, before the memory of the oldest living inhabitants, between a silly cynicism and the forced logic of artificial critical "systems." The real choice is between continuing this condition of abject surrender and making a break. The humanities have long been an "occupied country," hag-ridden with aristocratic traditions of scholarship, burdened with requirements of intellectual drudgery, bounded unreasonably by assumptions that have set them off from the best that was thought and done in the sciences, in Marxist theory, and in art. Properly conceived, the humanities are also scientific; this fact has been established in countless ways, as even a cursory study of *Science & Society*, or of the *Critics Group* series, or of the critical articles in NEW MASSES will show. The "break" has already been made in the minds of more individuals in this country than one would think from reading the official hack journals of the profession.

What is needed is an organization of liberal arts scholars and teachers, working in harmony with the organizations of writers and artists now in existence, and with the trade unions, toward a humanities not based on tradition and servility, but on the living interests of society. Traditionalists view the war and the peace to follow narrowly and shallowly. They are unequipped to understand the glorious possibilities that lie before humanity. But the others will understand that the arts have a value of their own, and an enlightening effect, in direct proportion as they are truly identified with the aspirations and daily life of a people. So also with philosophy and with the history and criticism of art: They either change with the discoveries of science and with the social changes that take place, or they must be replaced by history, philosophy, and criticism that are closer to observed truth.

Such a change has long been due in the traditional humanities. Now is the time for it to take place, if Prexy is not to take over altogether and make the change a thousand times harder in the future.

MICHAEL ROBERTS.

The Man Would Talk

Name of the prisoner . . ?
And crime committed . . ?
Arson or larceny or homicide . . ?
What is the crime for which this man was tried
And labeled guilty . . ?

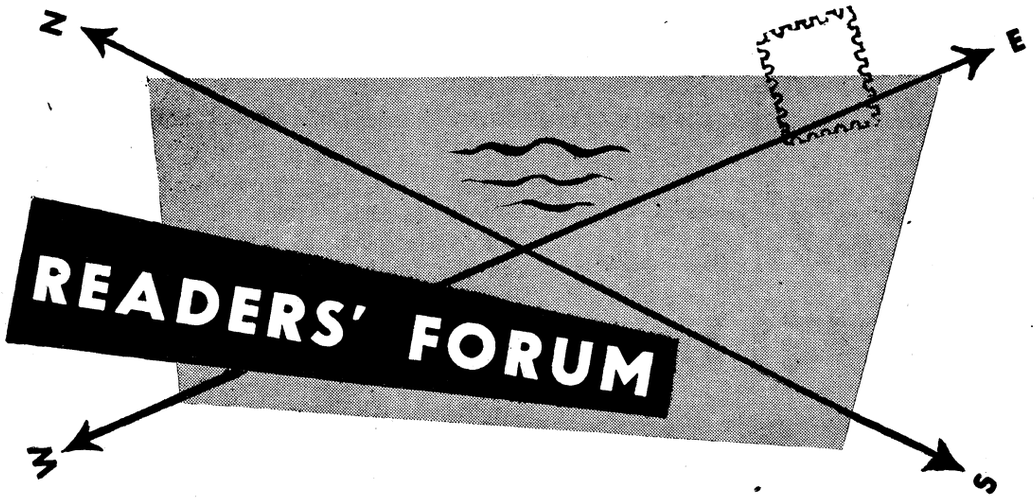
No, not one of these, so may it please
Your Honor.
Guilty of straightening knees
Bent to oppression,
Of making ancient dreams stand up and walk,
Honest and hard and real. The man *would* talk
And that made trouble. For, if life can be
Not thanks to masters for one's misery,
But hand in hand a world, clean, stalwart, free,
Black hand in white, a worker's unity—
It means an end
To bomb and ticker tape and dividend,
To frightened, coughing children and old men
Raiding the garbage dump.
It means an end
To sowing scarcity that you may reap
Continual hunger and continual fear,
It means a singing nation that can keep
Its harvests pouring and its shops in gear
Without the prick of bayonet.

The prisoner, your Honor, made men see
It has no virtue, no necessity.
This poverty!
"He stirreth up the people . ." makes them feel
That brotherhood, not savagery is real?
Ah, now we have the name, the man must be
Jesus of Galilee.
Or yet, perhaps, John Brown with his last breath
Laughing at death:
"The rope to hang me has two ends
The one around my neck, the other, friends,
Around the system of this slavery!"
Or was it Liebknecht, Lincoln, Socrates,
Any of these . . ?
Joe Hill, Dimitroff, Padraic Pearse or Debs . . ?
Lenin or Thaelmann or Galileo . . ?
The men with conquering hearts who have to know
Who have to *prove*
"The earth does move!"
Voices that shine like stars flung through the air
Above Haymarket Square!
Sacco, Vanzetti; or Isaiah crying
Curses on kings when common men are dying!

The prisoner and these—and more of these
So may it please
Your Honor,
Bound in a common brotherhood of crime,
Guilty alike, when bidden to mark time,
Instead march forward!
March through prison wall,
March through the noose of death, invincible!
Marching, they lift the world,—such is their crime,
They strip inertia and they scatter doubt,
And cleaving chaos, in each place and time,
Point the way out!

KATHRYN PECK.

This poem won honorable mention in NEW MASSES' *recent Jefferson Prize Poem Contest. The author lives in Hollywood, Cal.*



Music of the People

To New Masses: I read with interest Wallingford Riegger's comments (in a recent issue of NM) on Paul Rosas' review "All Russian Concert." Mr. Riegger becomes involved in an intellectual exercise as to whether the work of a composer is "from the people" or "for the people." Unfortunately he sidetracks himself (partially because of Rosas' approach) by taking choice of thematic material as the point of departure. Superficially the utilization of thematic folk material is an attempt to become part of the people but cannot be considered a criterion of real people's music. However, the composer will have written people's music if he is integrated spiritually and intellectually with life itself. Both Mr. Riegger and Mr. Rosas miss this point—and therein lie their basic misconceptions.

They treat the artist as someone on the periphery of society, not of it. What we are really searching for is music *of* the people. There is no question here of the artist's patronizing the people. Nor is it Messiahship. (I am reminded of Maxim Gorky's castigation of those "lovers of the people" who became enemies of the people when the common men took his destiny into his own hands.) History always winnows the chaff and leaves the musical and literary kernel that is part of life and the aspirations of humanity. If you will, you can make this a broad test for judging the permanence of a composer of writer.

From this point of view choice of theme does not establish the validity of music, but rather what has the composer to say. Is he reflecting his *own* hates, hopes, tribulations, will to win, struggles and pride in accomplishment (and those of his people)?

I take for granted excellence of craftsmanship. Of course the contemporary run of people will not readily understand a new technique in musical expression. Newly developed idioms will appear foreign at first to an audience that is musically uneducated. Hence the deferred acknowledgment of some composers' worth.

Let us not confuse transitory popular appeal with lasting values. I am sure that a good arranger could make an excellent symphonic presentation of Red Army songs that would sweep the world today and be considered "corny" tomorrow. Similarly, Riegger's appraisal of Wagner's extreme popularity today, characterizing it as "music of the people" is based on false premises. Conceivably a future generation will look back on the sensuousness of Wagner as a type of "symphonic leg show." I offer this not as a categorical statement, but merely as a provocative thought. The transformation of human values in a "century of the common man" will determine these things.

We can turn to Shostakovich as a laboratory specimen. In my mind I identify the Seventh Symphony with the composer's firefighter outfit. It is not mere symbolism to point to a unity in action with the people of Leningrad which is in consonance with a musical work that portrays the innermost feelings of a nation fighting for survival.

I take issue with Riegger's dictum: "Write according to your sincere esthetic convictions. In the way that comes most natural to you . . . if it is valid, it will eventually establish a bond between you and the people. . . ." Rather, let us tell the composer: "Master your art and improve its idioms, become part of the mainstream of life and share in the reshaping of the world. You will find your inspiration there. Thus you will portray real emotions, lasting ideologies, and write music that is 'of the people.'"

Michael Freeman.

Toronto, Canada.

Press-Club Jim Crow

[The following letter from I. F. Stone, Washington correspondent of *PM* and *The Nation*, to the Board of Governors of the National Press Club, was recently released to the press for general publication. As far as we have been able to ascertain, it has received practically no attention in the press at large.]

Dear Sirs: On March 16 I had William H. Hastie as my luncheon guest in the dining room of the National Press Club. Judge Hastie is a former member of the Federal judiciary, dean of Howard University Law School, winner of the Spingarn medal for 1942, and a former civilian aide to Secretary of War Stimson. We were refused service because Judge Hastie happens to be a Negro.

It was a humiliating experience for me, as a newspaperman, to have Judge Hastie see that the club to which some of the foremost members of my profession belong was in no way superior to common prejudice. This seemed to me especially unfortunate at a time when black men and white men are serving side by side in defense of our country.

I have sought to invoke that section of the club's constitution which provides for the calling of a special meeting on request of 25 members. I have been unable to find 24 who agree with me that this entirely unofficial and unwritten Jim Crow bar against Negro guests be rescinded. I am therefore regretfully compelled to resign.

Sincerely yours,

I. F. Stone.

Washington, D. C.

What Goes On?

To New Masses: I have read and re-read all the official commentaries attempting to explain away General Eisenhower's message to de Gaulle advising him to remain in London. They seem to say that the French general must not come to North Africa on a political mission of unity because it might jeopardize the battle for Tunis. In other words Messrs. Churchill or Eden should never have visited the United States because they would have interfered with military action in the Pacific or elsewhere. And to extend this opinion to its inevitable absurdity, Allied leaders should visit each other only when there is no fighting going on.

It will not do to offer such explanations because they insult the intelligence of those who hear or read them. They prove that there is something fishy going on which does not permit either frankness or honesty. And the more horrible thing about it is that those who speak about politics interfering with military progress are playing the kind of politics in connection with North Africa and France which disillusions millions of Frenchmen and raises in their minds the question of our intentions and our integrity. Is it worth losing our great French allies, the common people, because a handful of unreconstructed diplomats want the same kind of leadership in Europe which brought the continent to disaster in the first place?

Detroit, Mich. Bessie Hall.

Immortal Virginian

To New Masses: Your Jefferson issue (April 13) was so rich and meaty, so full of good ideas and tributes to this American political and philosophical genius, that I am passing it on to a number of other Virginians who strongly need to see a Marxist view of this immortal. As a laboring man in whom the ideas and convictions of Jefferson were instilled from the time I could understand written words, I have often wondered what he would have written about the Eddie Rickenbackers, the Martin Dies, or the host of southern tories who shroud themselves in Jefferson's memory and pervert all his teachings. Old Tom would have been furious; he would have written and fought them into oblivion. It is good to see you carry on and expand the great heritage which he left us.

Norfolk, Va. Horace Kinsley.

MEN WHO CAN'T REMEMBER WELL

A PEEP in at the maudlin Alter-Ehrlich wake reveals curiously recognizable figures. In the gloom you can discern the same professional mourners who sat at the wailing wall after the Moscow treason trials. They are an oddly assorted lot. Lamenting loudest are David Dubinsky and his pathological associates, the Social-Democratic Soviet-haters. These are the men who would prefer a shattered Russia to a United Nations victory. Increasingly shunned by labor, they seek, jackal-like, to pile in on the current charge of the Munich-minded powerful of the nation. They weep on the shoulders of William Randolph Hearst and Roy Howard, mingling their tears with those of Coughlinite Father Curran. They have performed invaluable services for Dr. Goebbels and they haven't stopped. But edged in among them are men who belong elsewhere; our worthy contemporaries of the *Nation*, *New Republic*, and *PM*. They too have come to mourn.

Of course, they don't quite know whose wake it is, having never met the deceased, but they know Stalin shot them. Of course, Stalin and his men have shot 4,000,000 of our mutual enemies, but let that pass. Of course, if Stalin hadn't done that we'd be in a pretty fix today, but let that pass. Of course, Stalin and his men have established racial and national equality on one-sixth of the world, but let that pass. It's the hour to mourn Alter and Ehrlich.

NOBODY doubts that the *Nation* and *New Republic* and *PM* want to win this war. They know, by now, that it cannot be won without the Soviet Union. They know, too, that without it the peace cannot be won. Yet here they bob up among the anti-Sovieteers. The current issue of the *Nation* says that the "Soviet government was responsible for having outraged public opinion by the executions of Alter and Ehrlich." The *New Republic* believes that "on the basis of such evidence as is available, it seems most improbable that these men were guilty of being spies." Shades of Trotsky, Bukharin, and Tuckachevsky!

I believe, at this point, it is necessary to ask what they *will* entertain as evidence. Only hysterical and perilous denunciations of the unreconstructed Social Democrats of the *New Leader* stripe? Or the performance of the Red Army, and, since we cannot in modern warfare distinguish between front line and rear guard, the Soviet people. A heroic, self-sacrificing army is impossible without a heroic, self-sacrificing people. In brief, the morale of Russia is exemplary. Their deeds prove it. I contend that deeds are evidence.

Of course the professional mourners are disturbed by this reality. Facts, as one Communist named Lenin put it, are stubborn things. There was Stalingrad. The men at the wailing wall must, despite themselves, recognize that fact. And in truth they do. Their lamentations, this time, have a different timbre. They are loud, but a bit uncertain. Mingled with the reproaches one hears strange words from the mourners—"This is not to deny the heroic Red Army, etc. . . ." Practically everybody who has lamented the Ehrlich-Alter executions has used that phrase in one or another variation. As the *New Republic* put it last week: "This of course does not mean that there should be the slightest slackening in our efforts to help Russia, or that there is any reason why we should not cooperate with her now and in the postwar world." Yet it strengthens the sinister forces operating against such cooperation by its stand on the Alter-Ehrlich case. Vide the Hearst jamboree this week. No, our liberal friends cannot say "assassin" and "ally" in the same breath and hope to improve the cause of coalition warfare, imperative for our national survival.

To the plain people of America the *New Republic's* stand doesn't make sense. The mounting heap of labor union resolutions protesting the divisive propaganda around the case attests to that. The dread reality of the fifth column has become painfully clear to most ordinary men; Spain was an ineradicable lesson. The Moscow trials were an ineradicable lesson. And Stalingrad has an imperishable moral, plain enough for plain people to see.

What then ails our contemporaries of the *Nation* and *New Republic*, and *PM*? Can these triple thinkers be accused of stopping dead in their mental processes when the words "Soviet Union" are mentioned? Do they toss all evidence aside that fails to accord with the traditional rubber-stamp conception of dire, Communistic, atheistic, Bolshevistic Russia? I am afraid that, in this instance, they do.

LOUIS FISCHER, for example, was the *Nation's* expert on Russia. Former Ambassador Davies was not. Mr. Fischer's word in that press weighs far more than the hard-headed businessman's. Because Mr. Davies' ideas failed to jibe with Mr. Fischer's, the Ambassador is "naive," a simpleton among knaves, a Yankee babe among sinister Orientals. Yet it is Mr. Fischer who is expertly eating his words.

Proof? Would that mine enemy would write a book. Mr. Fischer in 1940 wrote a hefty autobiography called *Men and Politics*. It affectionately chronicled the amazing career of the man who knew everybody, and understood everything. Let me recount a few of Mr. Fischer's sober reflections. "The purges and trials," he writes on page 530, "produced a serious crisis of faith in the Soviet Union which continues to this day. . . . This has been ruinous to economic activity and morale. . . . The Soviet masses and intellectuals took refuge in indifference and passivity." And this: "The task of creating an ordered, functioning European economy is beyond the capacity of Russia to achieve. Russia lacks the personnel and material."

And now, may one suggest, please explain Stalingrad.

What special dispensation do such journalists have? If a corner grocer sold you food like Mr. Fischer sells you facts, your family would be poisoned by supper-time. Yet Mr. Fischer goes his sweet way, currently in violent to-do because Warners are bringing out Mr. Davies' *Mission to Moscow*.

Now what about Mr. Davies who is not an expert on Russia? May I introduce his testimony or is he barred since he is not a contributing editor of the *Nation* or a steady hand for the *New Leader?* I will take the liberty of quoting this *naif*, even though much of America knows what Mr. Davies thought of the Moscow trials, which, the *Nation* and *New Republic* rightly assume, belong in the same category with the Alter-Ehrlich case. There were "Socialists" in the dock then too, and Jews among them. And some were Polish Jews. "As I ruminated over this situation," Mr. Davies writes in 1941 after Hitler invaded Russia, "I suddenly saw the picture as I should have seen it at the time. The story had been told in the so-called treason or purge trials of 1937 and 1938 which I had attended and listened to.

(Continued on p. 31)

EMBATTLED WORDS

Volume XIX of Lenin's Collected Works "brilliantly illumines the issues of our day." The distinguishing features of just and unjust wars. Reviewed by A. B. Magil.

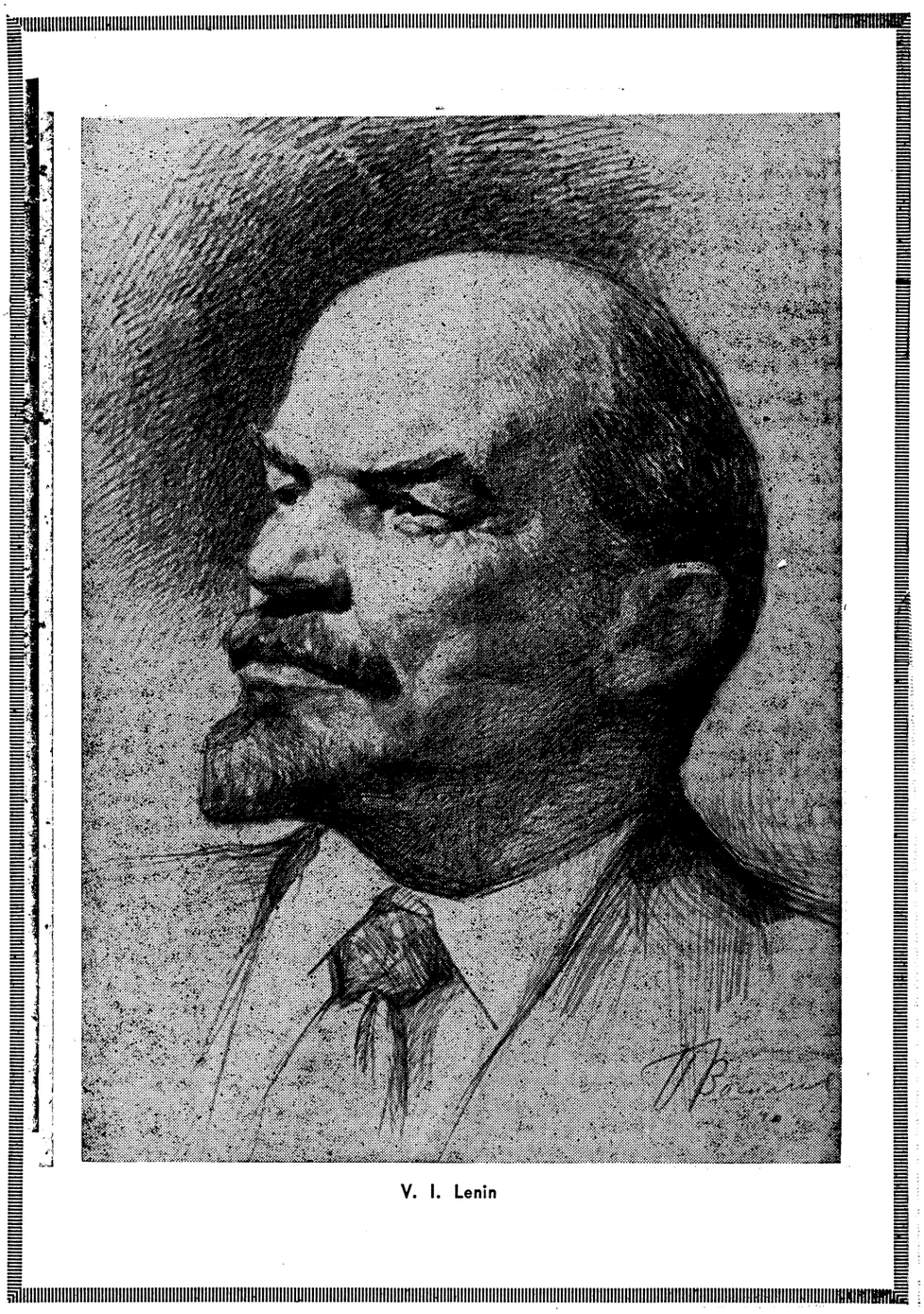
IN A RECENT issue of the New York *Times* the editorial column, Topics of the Times, recalled the famous toast of Stephen Decatur: "Our country! In her intercourse with foreign nations may she always be in the right; but our country, right or wrong." The author of Topics of the Times went on to say that "actually Decatur's words are the simple statement of a truth which in practice the world everywhere endorses." And despite "the frowns of idealists that is what always does happen. With the exception of a minute fraction of pacifists or irreconcilable enemies of an existing regime, people take their stand with their country in its foreign quarrels, right or wrong."

That is a comfortable philosophy—and a thoroughly immoral one. To console opportunism with a sneer at "idealists" and to malign mankind by saying it endorses support of an unjust war—a war waged by a fascist dictatorship, for example—is to misread the temper of the times and to confuse the issues of our own just and progressive war. The author of Topics of the Times falsely invokes the past to justify this smug sophistry. Decatur was a military hero of a period in which the young American republic represented the vanguard of world progress and democracy. As Robert Minor pointed out in a recent issue of *The Communist*, in any conflict with a foreign power, even if this country were wrong on the specific issue involved, it could not in Decatur's day have been other than *historically* right in the sense that the victory of America was essential for the development of capitalism and democracy here and abroad.

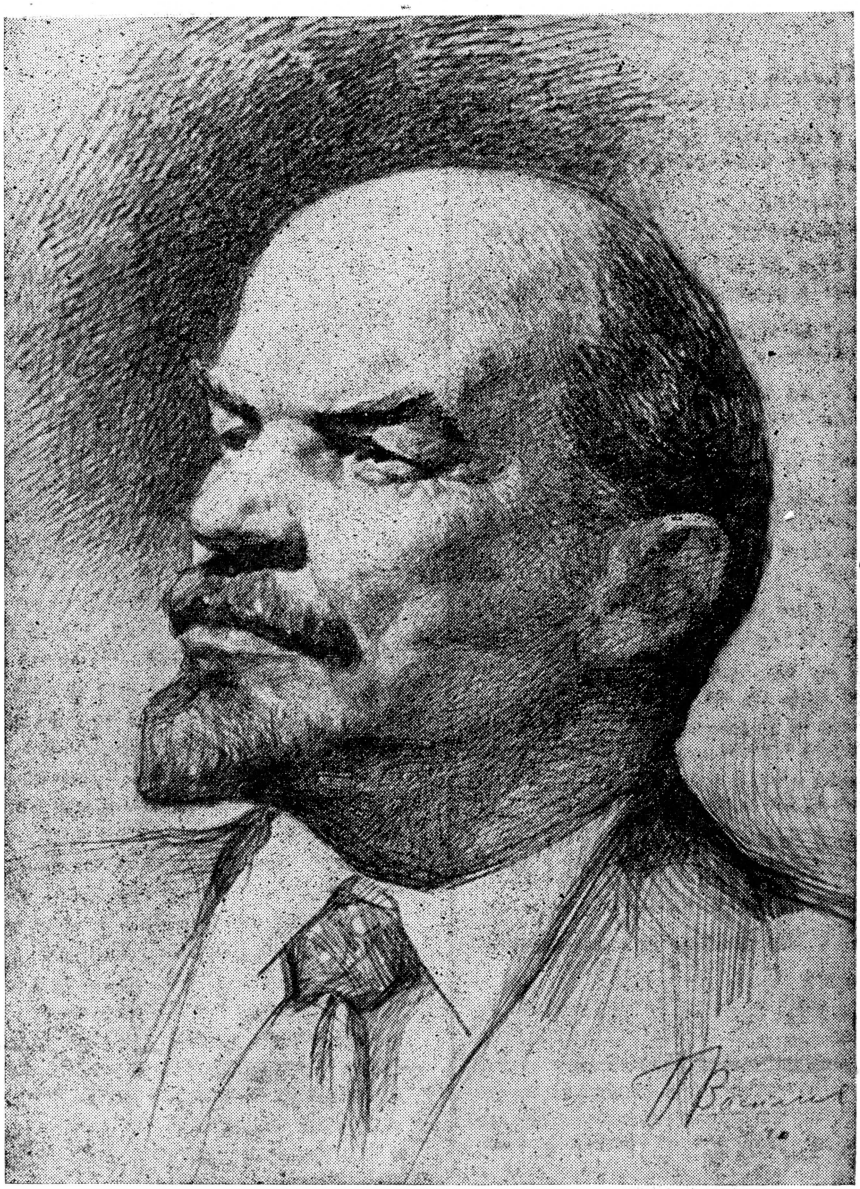
Today we have a totally different situation. The United States, like Britain and other advanced capitalist countries, having long since entered the imperialist stage of development, is capable of waging a reactionary war. It did wage such a war in 1898 and 1917. And no person who loves the land of his birth and has any moral perceptions can be indifferent to the character of the war his country is fighting.

One of the greatest of Americans, Abraham Lincoln, did not subscribe to the immoral doctrine of the *Times* columnist. In his famous speech on January 12, 1848, Lincoln denounced the war with Mexico which had been fomented by the southern slavocracy. And behind Lincoln in this attitude stood the best representatives of American culture, men like Emerson, Thoreau, Lowell, Theodore Parker, who only thirteen years later actively supported the government in the Civil War. In the Lincoln spirit, we hail as true patriots today those men and women of France and of the Axis countries who have the courage to say: our country, or rather, the government that controls our country is wrong; and we honor them for working to overthrow their own fascist regimes. The slogan, "Our country, right or wrong," has in fact become a barricade for defeatists and traitors.

It has remained for Marxism to establish



V. I. Lenin



V. I. Lenin

the distinction between just and unjust wars with scientific precision. The basic principles of the Marxist attitude toward war have nowhere been developed with greater vigor and cogency than in the recently published Volume XIX of Lenin's *Collected Works* (International Publishers, $2.50). Volume XIX is a big book and is not to be read as one runs. But it is a rich and rewarding book, full of wisdom and strength and clarity, passionate with faith in the common man and in his future. Here one finds what is so characteristically Leninist: the utmost intellectual rigor in matters of theoretical principle combined with the utmost flexibility in applying principle to the solution of the shifting problems of everyday life. In Lenin, as in his great predecessors, Marx and Engels, you get social evolution in the flesh, the real world not only as it is and was, but as it is becoming and will be. That is why, though there is not a line in this book that wasn't written more than a quarter of a century ago, it so brilliantly illumines the issues of our own day.

VOLUME XIX contains all of Lenin's writings in the years 1916 and 1917 up to the March 1917 revolution. It bridges the gap which has hitherto existed for the English-speaking public between the volume entitled *The Imperialist War*, covering the period from the outbreak of World War I to the end of 1915, and that called *The Revolution of 1917*. Most of Volume XIX consists of articles published in the legal or illegal Socialist press, but it also includes the monumental *Imperialism*, which has been known for years in English translation. *Imperialism* is the sequel to Marx' *Capital*, consummating the economic analysis of capitalism which Marx and Engels left unfinished because they died before the imperialist epoch opened at the end of the nineteenth century. But *Imperialism* is more than a rounding out of the work of the past. It raised Marxist science to a new level and provided those seminal ideas that directly or indirectly have influenced the thought and action of millions. Today the word imperialism is being rather loosely used as synonymous with the colonial system. This is the sense in which it appears in Under Secretary of State Sumner Welles' statement that: "the age of imperialism is ended" and in Wendell Willkie's speeches. Central to Lenin's analysis, however, is the proposition that the mainspring of imperialism is not the possession of colonies (though this plays a role), but monopoly capitalism. As he puts it elsewhere in Volume XIX: "The substitution of monopoly for free competition is the fundamental economic feature, the *quintessence* of imperialism."

The epoch of imperialism, Lenin points out in his articles and speeches of this period, is characterized by reactionary imperialist wars. This is in contrast to the previous epoch, from 1789 to 1871, when the rapidly expanding capitalism of free competition was engaged in struggle against feudal influences and was characterized by progressive national wars. But just as there were also reactionary wars during 1789-1871, so progressive wars are possible in the present era. "To be a Marxist, one must appraise each war separately and concretely." And it is his marvelous concreteness, his hostility to everything abstract, and doctrinaire that is one of the most striking features of Lenin's—as it was of Marx'—approach to the phenomenon of war. The starting point of the Marxist-Leninist approach is the thesis first stated by the great German military scientist, Clausewitz, that war is the continuation by forcible means of the politics pursued in peace. Hence, Marxism maintains, not slogans and sentiment, but the real economic and political objectives of a particular war determine whether it is progressive or reactionary, just or unjust. In a series of proposals which he drew up in 1916 for the second international conference of anti-war Socialists, Lenin wrote concerning the war then in progress: "The objective content of the policies pursued by the bourgeoisie and the governments of *both* groups of Great Powers before and during the war leads to the intensification of economic oppression, national enslavement, and political reaction." Of these three closely related consequences of the imperialist war, it is clear that for Lenin the second was the decisive one. The nation, its existence, its welfare, its future, was for him the touchstone of the character of a war, for without the preservation of the nation (or its liberation if under foreign yoke) there could be neither democracy nor socialism. In a later article he wrote: "The real nature of the present war is not national, but imperialist. In other words, the war is not being fought because one side is overthrowing the yoke of national oppression while the other side is striving to retain it. It is being waged between two groups of oppressors, between two sets of robbers to decide how the loot is to be divided. . . ."

THE main burden of Lenin's work during this period was necessarily the exposure of the reactionary, anti-national nature of the war and the organization of struggle against it. Yet it is indicative of the remarkable dialectic fullness of Lenin's thinking that he constantly took into account the possibility of another type of war under imperialism or even of the imperialist war itself being transformed into a progressive war. And he thrust with a relentless pen at the ideas of those Bolsheviks and Left Socialists who denied this possibility. Some of the most remarkable pages in Volume XIX are those in which Lenin takes issue on this question with Rosa Luxemburg, Y. Piatakov (P. Kievsky), and Karl Radek—the latter two convicted of treason many years later in the Moscow trials. (It is noteworthy that whereas

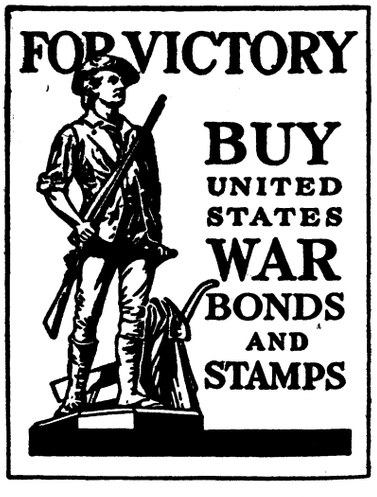
Lenin ridicules Piatakov and Radek, his criticism of Rosa Luxemburg is friendly and respectful.) In his article, "The Pamphlet by Junius" (Junius was the *nom de plume* of Rosa Luxemburg) Lenin wrote: "A national war can be transformed into an imperialist war, and vice versa. For example, the wars of the Great French Revolution started as national wars and were such. They were revolutionary wars because they were waged in defense of the Great Revolution against a coalition of counter-revolutionary monarchies. But after Napoleon had created the French empire by subjugating a number of large, virile, long established national states of Europe, the French national wars became imperialist wars, which *in their turn* engendered wars for national liberation *against* Napoleon's imperialism." (Significantly, Thomas Jefferson, with a sure democratic instinct, made precisely this distinction, supporting revolutionary France against the reactionary coalition, but later opposing Napoleonic France's wars of conquest.)

TURNING to the war of his own day, Lenin declared that "It is highly improbable that this imperialist war of 1914-16 will be transformed into a national war. . . . Nevertheless, it cannot be said that such a transformation is impossible: *if* the *European* proletariat were to remain impotent for another twenty years; *if* the present war were to end in victories similar to those achieved by Napoleon, in the subjugation of a number of virile national states; *if* imperialism outside of Europe (primarily American and Japanese) were to remain in power for another twenty years without a transition to socialism, say, as a result of a Japanese-American war, then a great national war in Europe would be possible. This would mean that Europe would be thrown *back* for several decades. This is improbable. But it is not *impossible*, for to picture world history as advancing smoothly and steadily without sometimes taking gigantic strides backward is undialectical, unscientific and theoretically wrong."

Lenin's conditions for the development of a great national war out of the first imperialist conflict and its aftermath have been fulfilled to an extraordinary degree, even in such a detail as the time schedule he gave, twenty years. And if we consider the war which began in 1939 as a continuation of 1914-18, it is clear that it did result for Germany up to June 22, 1941, in "victories similar to those achieved by Napoleon" and in the subjugation of a number of national states and a direct threat to the independence of others, including Britain. For advanced capitalist states to be compelled to fight for their national existence does represent a throwback of decades. At the same time, however, history has proved richer than even the genius of Lenin could foresee. Not the whole European proletariat remained impotent for twenty years; thanks to Lenin, Stalin, and the party they fashioned, the Russian proletariat and the Russian people took a great leap forward only a little more than a year after Lenin wrote this article. And the Chinese giant, awakening out of feudal sleep, is forging his nationhood in the very fires of war, while his Indian brother and the whole colonial world are likewise moving toward national liberation as part of the process of struggle against fascism. So that the great national war which has actually emerged out of the first and second imperialist conflict combines backward and forward steps, historically speaking, drawing into one gigantic net of global struggle capitalist, socialist, colonial and semi-colonial countries in a common fight to defend, restore or achieve their national independence, their individual right to self-determination.

A polar idea in Lenin's thinking on the wars of our epoch is the right of national self-determination. There is a popular impression in this country that self-determination was a discovery of Woodrow Wilson's. There are even some who presume to lecture the Soviet Union on this subject, their fervor in this cause extending as far as Finnish fascists and Polish colonels but never as far as the people of India or Puerto Rico. Actually, Wilson was a plagiarist and a plagiarist in an imperialist rather than a national sense. It was Marx and Engels who first developed the principles which linked the struggle for national liberation with the struggle for socialism. They regarded national independence as the precondition for the full development of the labor movement and the ultimate abolition of capitalist exploitation. It was the founders of Marxism who declared that no nation which oppresses another can be free and urged that the English workers fight for the freedom of Ireland "not as a matter of sympathy with Ireland, but as a demand made in the interests of the English proletariat."

At the very inception of the Bolshevik Party in 1903 the right of self-determination—that is, the right of any nation to join or not to join another nation—was included in its program. Unlike most Socialist Parties the Bolsheviks did not content themselves with lip service to this principle. Repeatedly before, during and after World War I Lenin and Stalin took up the cudgels against both the right-wingers, who adopted the imperialist viewpoint on this issue, and against certain Left Socialists, who regarded the right of self-determination as a chauvinist slogan or one impossible of fulfillment under capitalism. The irony of it is that the man who became the Bolshevik Party's foremost authority on this question, its leading champion of the right of self-determination—Joseph Stalin—is today the target of malicious innuendoes on the part of those who preach the immoral doctrine that it's right to support a wrong war for the extermina-



tion of other peoples so long as it's our own government that's doing the exterminating.

There is no need to speculate on "what's in Stalin's mind." The Bolsheviks practice what *they* preach. The Soviet government, at the initiative of Lenin and Stalin, recognized Finland's independence before it was recognized by the United States. And the voluntary association of free nations that constitutes the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is the most successful example in history of the practical application of the right of self-determination. This devotion to national freedom has attained a new dimension on the frozen steppes of Russia where the banners of the Red Army —so far largely alone—bear the hope of liberation for Europe's imprisoned nations.

Many liberals ask whether the right of self-determination can be reconciled with the need to have each nation curb its individual ambitions and join in a system of international cooperation for the maintenance of peace. Some of these liberals have gone so far as to oppose article three of the Atlantic Charter guaranteeing the right of self-determination. Others seek to resolve the conflict by urging the abandonment or drastic modification of national sovereignty. This kind of thinking, it seems to me, is sterile and self-defeating. It is an attempt to cure effects rather than causes. On this question too Volume XIX offers much that can help guide us today.

First, Lenin points out, the right of self-determination is not an unconditional right. "The various demands of democracy, including self-determination, are not absolute, but a *small* part of the general democratic . . . *world* movement. Possibly, in individual concrete cases, the part may contradict the whole; if so, it must be rejected." Today, for example, the question of self-determination for India is part of a larger whole, the war of the United Nations against the Axis powers. India's freedom is necessary not only for the Indian people but for the common victory and future security of all the United Nations. But if the struggle for Indian self-determination is pursued in a way that makes it an end in itself, subordinating to it the needs of the war, then it harms the larger whole, including India, and benefits only the Axis. These considerations hold for every people, whether free or oppressed, not only in the period of the war but in the future peace as well.

On the other hand, the denial of freedom may also be a contradiction of the whole by a part. Oppression divides, freedom unites. "The right of nations to self-determination," Lenin writes, "means only the right to independence in a political sense, the right to free political secession from the oppressing nation. . . . The more closely the democratic system of state approximates to complete freedom of secession, the rarer and weaker will the striving for secession be in practice; for the advantages of large states, both from the point

of view of economic progress and from the point of view of the interests of the masses, are beyond doubt, and these advantages increase with the growth of capitalism." And further on he writes that "mankind can achieve the inevitable merging of nations only by passing through the transition period of complete liberation of all the oppressed nations, i.e., their freedom to secede." In other words, far from a conflict existing between the fullest development of national freedom and international cooperation, the attainment of the former is the condition for the effective functioning of the latter.

READING Volume XIX's tough embattled words that grasp the very core of those truths that so many have sought in vain, it is with a shock that at the end of a letter dealing with a multitude of political and organizational problems, one comes across this reminder of the harsh reality of Lenin's everyday life: "As for myself, I must say I've got to earn some money. Otherwise I shall simply crack up, really! The high cost of living is just diabolical, and I have nothing to live on. Use some *pressure* and get some money (let Belenin take up the question of money with Katin and with Gorky himself, *if it is not inconvenient*, of course) from the publisher of *Lyetopis* to whom two of my pamphlets have been sent (make him pay up *immediately*, and the more the better!). The same with Bonch. Also about *translations*. If this is not arranged, honestly, I won't be able to keep going; I say this in all seriousness, really I do."

Just picture that little man with the giant spirit, living in exile far from his native land, writing, speaking, organizing a persecuted minority that was soon to become an invincible majority opening a new continent of freedom—picture that man, one of the great creative personalities of all time, forced to put pressure on publishers to get payment for manuscripts, spending precious energy doing translations in order to eke out a miserable existence. Yet save for this single paragraph in a letter to a co-worker there is in his writing of this period not a shadow of that bitter personal struggle.

Then picture him in January 1917 lecturing in German on the 1905 Revolution to a group of young workers in Zurich, saying: "We of the older generation may not live to see the decisive battles of this coming revolution. But I can, I believe, express the strong hope that the youth which is working so splendidly in the socialist movement of Switzerland and of the whole world will be fortunate enough not only to fight, but also to win in the coming proletarian revolution." Seven weeks later the revolution—first phase—burst with a roar against the rotting timbers of czarist despotism and Lenin was on his way home.

A. B. MAGIL.

SCRIPT AND SCREEN

Lester Cole protests Joy Davidman's "Camera as Narrator." His approach to film-making. . . . Answer by Miss Davidman.

Hollywood.

IN A RECENT article headed "The Camera as Narrator" (NEW MASSES, Jan. 5), Joy Davidman discusses comparative film techniques, both in the silent films and the talkies. It was inevitable that in attempting to prove such a thesis Miss Davidman would find herself wallowing in a mass of contradictions and mystical illusions conclusively disproving her own premise.

Miss Davidman starts out by saying ". . . Subsidiaries, like dialogue and acting, often take on such importance that they obscure the essence of film-making, which —it cannot be too often emphasized—*is narration by the camera* and nothing else." (Miss Davidman's emphasis—as if merely saying it were not bad enough.)

Apparently until recently the world had gone its fighting way toward progress and enlightenment under the grave misapprehension that stories were written by writers; then along came Miss Davidman's bombshell. With the advent of motion pictures, a new narrator had been found who unjustly was being deprived of screen credit —the camera. It's interesting to note, however, when listing the subsidiaries to this remarkable mechanical device, no mention is made of either the cameraman or the director. Whether they also are subsidiaries is left to our speculation. I will deal with the functions and responsibilities of these creative workers along with those of the writers, actors, and other picture-makers later. First, I wish to show how this very approach to films and film-making can lead the critic far astray.

For example, in analyzing the silent film, Miss Davidman has chosen to discuss *The Unholy Three*. She tells us that the plot was ridiculous, the motivation silly, the subtitles a la *East Lynne*, most of the actors atrocious, and the photography—though workmanlike—far from being the smooth article we produce today.

And yet, in some "*queer way*" (my emphasis), the critic tells us it was a good film. Because in a *queer way*, a mysterious way, an unexplainable way, it kept you interested. It had suspense. Had not the critic relied on mystical, subjective reaction, had the critic resorted to *analysis*, it would immediately become apparent that there was nothing queer about it at all. It is immediately discernible why Miss Davidman was interested and held in suspense. Not by the camera, but by the story. She failed to recognize that she was caught by the very antiquated plot, by the very silly motivations which she ridiculed. She admits it in her very next paragraph. There she tells us why the tension became unbearable. Why? Simply because ". . . a detective fumbled with a child's toy elephant in which the stolen rubies were concealed. The three thieves . . . watched desperately and attempted to distract him."

You see, there was really nothing queer about it at all. Miss Davidman was temporarily persuaded by these incredibly bad actors (with the exception of Lon Chaney) by a ridiculous plot, stupidly motivated *actually to believe real people* were desperately watching the detective. Her *dis*belief was suspended by the illusion before her eyes of characters portraying what the writer created for them. It was the creative efforts of writer, actors, director, and others which combined to cause Miss Davidman's "heart to literally spring into her mouth." The camera was merely the mechanical instrument used to record it.

IT IS as if one were to say the writer is subsidiary to his pen or typewriter; the artist to his brush; the musician to his violin. People are not subsidiary to the machine; the machine is the instrument of the people. Apply Miss Davidman's idea to life, and you'll arrive at fascism. Apply it to motion pictures, and you immediately will find yourself practicing a sort of Cultural Technocracy. It will inevitably lead you away from people into abstractions, away from the story, *which is the very essence of the film*, to the film itself.

I WANT first to give another example of how this mechanical approach to films leads to an incorrect critical analysis. Attempting to prove her point in talkies, Miss Davidman chooses as a subject *Shadow of a Doubt*, the latest Hitchcock picture. Here again she comes to a conclusion that, in a "queer way," it is *not* a good picture. Once more we find after objective critical examination that there is nothing queer about it at all. Actually Mr. Hitchcock went a long way toward destroying the effectiveness of his film by doing the very thing Miss Davidman advocates. Miss Davidman fails completely to recognize this although she tells you how he did so. In reviewing the story, she explains how Hitchcock left his story premise to develop a second theme. He tried equally to engage two different emotions at the same time; your warmth for the simple joys of small-town family

"One-Man Band and Strong Man," a painting by Philip Reisman from his exhibition currently at the ACA Gallery, New York.

life, and your horror of murder. Naturally, these *story* elements used disproportionately didn't mix. Finally, we are told, he used his camera to build terrific suspense. He took a character on a wild goose-chase, when all she had to do was to stay exactly where she was and ask a policeman a simple question. Hitchcock knows how to use a camera. He knows how to use it so well he falls into the same basic error Miss Davidman does. He thinks the camera is more important than the story (the plot can be ridiculous, the motivation silly). He makes his writers and actors subsidiary to his camera, because he thinks the camera (which he spells "Hitchcock") is more important than the people. The result, in a "queer way," is a bad film.

How completely dependent upon character and story is the film can best be illustrated by analyzing *Native Land*, the Frontier Films picture which was recently shown out here. When the attempt is made to have the camera *itself* tell the story, the result can become so abstract that the film fails completely to contain any truth within itself. The first 500 feet of this film, which has neither characters nor story is worth analyzing.

Let's try. The camera photographed—what? Truth? Beauty? Life? In turn it photographed a rock-bound coast, mountains, tall trees, statues, giant pillars intercut with giant trees; then churches, tombstones, trees and pillars all cleverly intercut. It continued, to show factories, railroads, and dynamos. Over all this, attached to the film *but not part of it*, was the voice of the narrator, Paul Robeson, explaining to the audience that this was America—the America of the common man who worked and toiled and fought for democracy. But note, it was Robeson telling it, not the film. The film itself told nothing. It pictured no incontrovertible truth. It may have evoked admiration for the photography, but it brought forth no emotional reaction. Without people in action, working and toiling and fighting for democracy, the film itself was meaningless. The same film with another commentator could have been used for quite a different purpose, it could have been represented to you as having quite a different meaning. For example, the commentary over the picture of the church tells the audience that their forefathers fought and died for the right to worship as they pleased. You accepted this, of course, because that is what Robeson said and you had no reason to doubt him. But you would have had no reason to doubt another commentator who might have told you over the same scene that on a dark night the week before last a murder had been committed in the same church, or a girl had been raped in its choir loft. The film itself had no truth within it. The same lack of content can be seen in the filming of the statues. Huge, inanimate bronze masses are shown representing heroes of our past. The commentator tells you what part they played in the building of our country. Yet, the same film depicting these weather-beaten memorials could well be used for an entirely different purpose—and a good purpose. The Commissioner of Parks and Playgrounds could show this film in a campaign to raise public funds with which canopies would be constructed to prevent these memorials from becoming soiled by bird-droppings which were plainly visible. The film itself had no inherent truth within it.

Native Land didn't start to be a moving picture until people were seen in action; until the characters began to tell the story; where the creators started to show the struggle of people; where the camera became the writer's pen, the film began to have meaning. We saw an innocent woman mercilessly beaten by a cop. We saw men shot down without cause, women in tears, men blood-soaked. Here, incontrovertible truth was recorded. The Park Commissioner could not have used these strike scenes for raising funds to keep the streets clean, nor could the National Association of Manufacturers have attached the voice of a commentator to explain how innocent, gentlemen were harassed by thugs. The *picture* of the church tells nothing. The *story* of a grief-stricken woman beside the grave of her brutally murdered husband tells everything.

If we were to make the creative elements subsidiary to the mechanical device, if we failed to recognize that the writer tells the story and the other creative people cooperate with their particular talents to bring it forth onto film, we completely fail to understand our objective. The writer cannot think of himself as being subsidiary to the camera. Too much or too little dialogue is quite beside the point. The camera is a recording instrument. It can record beautifully, imaginatively, truthfully, if that is what all the creative elements bring to it, or it can with equal ease distort them. It depends upon the people, without them the metal in the camera might as well be converted into next month's bombs, and the film into next summer's mandolin picks.

I previously noted that in listing the subsidiaries to the camera, no mention was made of either the cameraman or the director. The important part played by them along with all the other talents employed make for an extremely complex method of production. The relationship of these forces to the producer and to each other is a problem requiring the closest examination if we are to begin to understand the seemingly simple question "What makes a movie?"

Lester Cole.

MISS DAVIDMAN REPLIES

It is always difficult to answer a man who attacks you for something you never said, and I find myself rather at a loss to deal with the logic by which Mr. Cole infers my mysticism and even fascism from my casual use of the adjective "queer." Similarly, Mr. Cole belabors me unnecessarily for speaking of the camera instead of the cameraman. I had no intention of implying that the camera, filled with a horrid unnatural life, hopped round by itself making movies without human aid.

There was nothing in my article, moreover, which established an antithesis between the camera and the people. For of course the essence of a good fiction film is narration *about* people *by* the camera, and there can be no conflict between the subject matter of movies and their technique. The real antithesis, my analysis of which Mr. Cole somehow overlooks, is between the camera and the written word. Stories, he says, are written by writers. Quite so; novel and novella and short story are expressed entirely in words by masters of words, plays are set down entirely in dialogue by masters of dialogue. But films are recorded in pictures; and if they are to be successful, they had better be composed by masters of film. Need I really point out that the art of narrative prose is not identical with the art of the film, any more than it is identical with painting?

And here is Mr. Cole's real objection to my article; he refuses to recognize the difference in the two arts. The screen writer's lot, in Hollywood, is not a happy one. He works on a conveyor belt which takes his script out of his hands and gives it to someone with whom he may not even be friendly—a director. Not only is no systematic effort made to familiarize him with camera technique; he is actually warned *not* to write in camera terms, lest he encroach on the province of the director, who not unnaturally prefers to do his own screen composing. Writers and directors, for the most part, occupy different levels in the curiously stratified society of Hollywood; and when the director wishes to refer anything back to the writer, he must usually do so through the agency of the producer, who stands between the two like an angel with a fiery sword. (Often, indeed, the original author is never consulted, someone new to this particular story being preferred.) Little wonder, then, that unnatural strife and jealousy prevail between writer and director; that each resents the other's importance and the other's claims, denies even the other's function in the art of the film. Exploited and bullied

for years, the writers of Hollywood have had difficulty in getting their importance to the industry recognized at all.

BRILLIANT exceptions will occur to everyone. In the last few years there has been an admirable tendency to fuse the functions of writer, producer, director; an Orson Welles, who can name his own terms, may be all three. Frequently there will be a magnificent collaboration between writer and director, as Nunnally Johnson and John Ford collaborated on *Grapes of Wrath*. A writer, by thought and study, often masters the art of the camera in addition to the art of words, and sooner or later is given his chance at direction. But what should be the rule remains exceptional. The great mass of screen writers, those who turn out the great mass of routine films, continue to create verbalizations which the director must perspiringly translate into picturizations.

For instance, Mr. Cole blames *Shadow of a Doubt's* failings on too much camera, instead of on the irrelevance of the talky script that fought the camera all the way through. For instance again, he explains the effectiveness of sequences in the crude silent film *The Unholy Three* not by the juxtaposition of carefully chosen details which alone can make film narration, but by my being foolish enough to fall for a bad writing job. And, queerest of all, he attacks the superb *Native Land* on the ground that single shots, wrenched out of context, do not tell you what the entire film is about!

This suggests an ignorance of the most elementary fact of the motion picture; the fact that it moves. A film is not an album of related still photographs, strung together with talk. A film is a continuous process, a juxtaposition of concepts from which a new concept emerges, a selection of details to make a single image. Sergei Eisenstein, one of the greatest of the world's directors, wrote *The Film Sense* to emphasize just this point, and it would be an overconfident screen writer who felt he could afford to ignore Eisenstein. To specify; when *Native Land* photographs a statue, then photographs a man, the resultant concept is neither a man or a statue, but a thought created by the conjunction of both. When *Native Land's* camera travels up a column, then up a great tree, the emotional effect is more than column or tree—more, indeed, than the simple addition of tree and column. As Browning put it, apropos of the allied art of music: "Out of three sounds I frame, not a fourth sound, but a star."

Mr. Cole tacitly admits this, indeed, in praising those scenes of *Native Land* which deal with people; for those scenes are achieved for the most part with no *words* at all, like the heartbreaking murder of Negro and white worker in the South. The camera leaps from gun in the bushes to man on the road, from murderers to the quivering barbed wire against which a dead body has fallen. This sequence might conceivably have been filmed with no written script at all, merely from images in the director's mind. The one or two dull moments in *Native Land* were caused by too much talk.

As fine an instance of camera narration as exists in the world is the forthcoming Hollywood film directed by Fritz Lang, *Hangmen Also Die* (which I may add parenthetically is perhaps *the* great film of the war). Here two writers who are thoughtful students of screen technique, John Wexley and Bertolt Brecht, have collaborated with an inspired director to make a picture where dialogue and image are completely integrated, where the word is subordinate to the deed and the deed is created as well as recorded by the camera (pace Mr. Cole, by director-plus-cameraman - plus - machine - plus - cutting-room.) This is an instance of what Hollywood can do with true cooperation; significantly, it was done by an independent producer, Arnold Pressburger. But before the run-of-the-mill screen writer can do his best work, he must lay aside the lazy man's defense that he has nothing to learn; that a man who comes, say, from writing radio scripts, can instantly write for the diametrically opposite medium of the screen without a change of approach and an arduous period of study. The shocking fact that many Hollywood films still use superimposed captions or their equivalent, the disembodied voice, to make connections between sequences, indicates sufficiently how much some screen writers have to learn. No one could quarrel with Mr. Cole's assertion that "it depends upon the people"; that is just the point. And one one could quarrel with him for saying that our films have "an extremely complex method of production." I have tried to elucidate some of the multitude of sins covered in that phrase. It remains for the screen writers themselves to resolve these complexities into simplicities, to identify themselves with the camera instead of resenting "being subsidiary to the camera"; to establish a united front and a basis of cooperation with the directors; in short, like Faust in Goethe, to progress from "In the beginning was the word" to "In the beginning was the deed."

JOY DAVIDMAN.

★

Conrad Veidt

A GREAT chapter of film history closes with the death of Conrad Veidt. Identified in the early years of the screen with the experimental film *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari*, he grew as an actor to keep pace with the growth of screen technique, and will be remembered the world over for American silent films, distinguished German pre-Hitler movies, and the contemporary English and American screen. He could take the shoddiest part and invest it with dignity; he could play a vulturine Nazi or a gentle saint with equal power; and when he had a great role, as in the unforgettable *Suss* of the British version of Feuchtwanger's *Power*, he created not only a masterpiece of individual characterization but a profound comment on the tragedy of modern Europe. Himself a refugee from the Nazi terror, he spent his last Hollywood years striking back at it through his art.

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PROGRESSIVE'S ALMANAC

April

15—Workers School. Registration Spring Term. Full curriculum. Registration all week. 35 E. 12th St.

16—N. Y. Newspaper Guild. An evening with the European Underground. Reports and songs. Irving Plaza, N. Y. C.

17—Social Service Employes Union. Battlefront U.S.A. Hazel Scott, Duke Ellington, Art Hodes, Jack Guilford and others. Town Hall, N. Y. C.

17—"United Nations in America," Dinner. Hotel Biltmore. Elizabeth Bergner, Canada Lee, Stefan Heym, etc. Donald Ogden Stewart, Chairman. Auspices. American Committee for Protection of Foreign Born.

17—21st Anniversary, Morning Freiheit. Earl Browder, Alex Bittleman, Paul Novick. Program. Carnegie Hall, N. Y. C.

24—Russian War Relief of Brooklyn. Concert and Dance. Earl Robinson, Almanac Singers, Joseph Curran. Norwegian Workers Club. Menorah Temple, 5000 14th Ave., Brooklyn.

25—Evening of Chamber Music. Recital benefit New Masses. 23 East 92nd St., N. Y. C.

25—School for Democracy—Recital. Jefferson's music and music of his period. New work by Earl Robinson and Louis Lerman. 13 Astor Place.

28—Russian War Relief of Staten Island. Rally. Quincy Howe, Stanley Isaacs. Curtis High School, Saint George, Staten Island.

30—New Masses. "Where Do We Stand on the War?" Maj. Geo. Fielding Eliot, Capt. Sergei Kournakoff, Johannes Steel, Henry C. Cassidy. Cosmopolitan Opera House, 56th St. and Seventh Ave., N. Y. C.

May

14—Richard Boyer on "Inside Germany." Entertainment by Fred Keating. Auspices Anti-Fascist Press Group. 1349 Lexington Ave., Apt. 5B.

(*Continued from p. 22*)

And he concludes: "*There were no fifth columnists in 1941—they had shot them. The purge cleansed the country and rid it of treason.*"

There you have it. There might possibly have been an arguable basis to question Mr. Davies' contentions before June 22, 1941. One could maintain that it was Mr. Fischer's word against the Ambassador's. But since then the Red Army has entered the argument. And Mr. Fischer, it is hard to win an argument against Timoshenko.

It is of current interest to read Mr. Davies' interview with Maxim Litvinov on July 4, 1937. "Litvinov was very frank. He stated that they had to 'make sure' through these purges that there was no treason left which could cooperate with Berlin or Tokyo; that some day the world would understand what they had done was to protect their government from 'menacing treason.' In fact, he said they were doing the whole world a service in protecting themselves against the menace of Hitler and Nazi world domination, and thereby preserving the Soviet Union strong as a bulwark against the Nazi threat. That the world some day would appreciate what a very great man Stalin was."

And then came Stalingrad.

THE world, to a great degree, has come to understand the greatness of Stalin. And it is forming its own conclusions about the Moscow trials. Hence the Munichite upsurge. The Alter-Ehrlich case, in every major respect, duplicates the 1937-38 phenomena. With this additional factor: the Soviet Union is engaged in the most desperate war of all time. *Our* war. And treason against our ally is treason against us.

I would, therefore, suggest that the editors of the aforementioned journals save Earl Browder's article in the April 4 *Worker*, in which he charged that the Alter-Ehrlich case originated in a conspiratorial effort of American citizens, organized on American soil, to overthrow the government of the Soviet Union. We will see who was right, when all the culprits are once again in the dock.

Unlike others mentioned in this article, Mr. Browder is not in the practice of eating his words.

IF HITLER WERE KILLED TOMORROW...

WHAT THEN?

"If Adolf Schicklegruber had not been a failure at interior decoration, the world would have been a good deal happier."

—New York Sun

"Unfortunately, the man who bites carpets also tears up empires, starves whole nations, murders hostages, thus enjoying to the full the cruelty of his despotism."

—Free World, June, 1942.

V. J. Jerome, prominent Marxist writer, in a series of three brilliant articles beginning next week in New Masses, will discuss the above and other "accidentalist" concepts of the origin of this war.

ELIMINATION OF HITLER IS NOT ENOUGH...

"Translated into practice," Mr. Jerome writes, "the accidentalist approach would lead us into the blind alley of getting rid of Hitler while leaving Nazism intact. It plays into the hands of those who would, in fact, make Nazism respectable by eliminating its present embarrassing Fuehrer; who would have us address ourselves to the "gentlemen Nazis," Herr von Ribbentrop, or Herr Goering, or to the Generals, for instance, with the offer of "negotiated peace."

ARE WARS CAUSED BY "MISTAKES OF STATESMEN"? WHAT ROLE DO "GREAT MEN" PLAY?

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