JUNE
1948

ıasses & MAINSTREAM

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VOLUME I, NUMBER 4

masses & MAINSTREAM

June, 1948

Drawings by Blaustein, Evergood, Gropper, Karlin.

MASSES & MAINSTREAM *is published monthly by Masses & Mainstream, Inc., 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y. Subscription rate: $4.00 a year; foreign and Canada: $4.50 a year. Single copies 35 cents; outside the U.S.A., 50 cents. All payments from foreign countries must be made either by U.S. money orders or by checks payable in U.S. currency. Re-entered as second class matter February 25, 1948, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.* MASSES & MAINSTREAM *is distributed nationally by New Century Publishers, 832 Broadway, N. Y. C.*

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All manuscripts should be addressed to The Editors of MASSES & MAINSTREAM, *832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y., and be accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelope for return. Payment is made on publication.*

Silence is Treason

OVER six months have passed since the Un-American Committee folded up the big tent which housed its Hollywood carnival. The scene has shifted to a Washington courtroom, hushed, orderly, uncluttered with newsreel cameras and network microphones. The hundred reporters that crowded into J. Parnell Thomas' Klieg-lighted show have dwindled to three or four, while the handful of spectators are a pale reminder of the long lines in the corridors last October. As I sat in the courtroom where Dalton Trumbo was on trial, I was struck by the physical contrast to the exhibition I had witnessed last year. The Hollywood Ten were no longer considered "news."

Why? Superficially one might say because Gary Cooper and Robert Taylor had dropped out of the act, but the reasons go much deeper into the thinking of our time. I believe it is partly that so many people are uneasily adjusting themselves to a new pattern of persecution in the country. The Un-American Committee, acting habitually as accuser, judge and jury, is assumed to conduct the "real trial" while the role of the courts is limited to placing a seal on its verdicts. A foregone conclusion has little news value. But there is at the same time another form of complacency. Some people, alarmed though they may have been by the behavior of the Un-American Committee in October, like to believe that the law, in its impartial majesty, will automatically and at last insure that justice is done. With a sigh of relieved responsibility, they float on their trust in legalisms.

But to the layman sitting in the courtroom, the law in operation does not appear as a pure, impersonal arbiter. It appears to exclude, with a fine impartiality, everything relevant to the defense of a writer seeking to resist the browbeating invasions of Thomas and Rankin and Mundt. The most important testimony a writer can offer is his work. But when the defense attorneys seek to introduce Trumbo's scripts and two big cases of films as evidence refuting the Un-American Committee's charge that he subverted the screen, Prosecutor Hitz

objects, Judge Pine sustains the objection, the writer's lifework is ruled not pertinent.

The defense attorneys seek to show that the entire history of the American labor movement explains why a trade unionist does not jump to his feet to inform a group of Taft-Hartley Congressmen on matters of union affiliation. Denied; not pertinent. They seek to show that in any case Trumbo has been listed as a director of the Screen Writers' Guild in every issue of *Who's Who in America* since 1941, so that J. Parnell Thomas did not have to "investigate" this question which Trumbo allegedly refused to answer. Motion denied. And none of this will reach the jury, which incidentally includes nine government employees (the jury that convicted John Howard Lawson included ten) from a community drenched in fear.

Thus, the startling physical contrast between carnival and courtroom does not long hide a certain moral identity. There is no more opportunity here than under Thomas' big tent to answer the attacks on one's liberties, patriotism and livelihood.

MEANWHILE, in the halls of Congress, a few blocks away, the mentality of the Un-American Committee as embodied in the Mundt Police State Bill threatens to blot out American democracy altogether. "You know," said Committeeman John McDowell at the Hollywood hearings last October, "during Hitler's regime they passed a law in Germany outlawing Communism and the Communists went to jail." As a student of Hitler's Germany, boastful of historical precedent, Mr. McDowell was surely aware that the German law presumably aimed at Communism outlawed every anti-fascist and was the prelude to gaschambers and war. This is the clear purpose of the Mundt bill.

Through this bill the advance to fascism is pushed far forward within a framework described as "legal" and "democratic." Under its sweeping terms every single right which the American people have won in 150 years of struggle would be torpedoed. A strike could be construed as a crime under the "disruption of trade and commerce" provision. Opposition to Jim Crow could be linked to treason under the "inciting of racial conflict and strife" provision. Writing and speaking against the bipartisan war policy of big business could be banned as "the dissemination of propaganda calculated to undermine established government and institutions."

For American culture this Police State Bill, if passed—and as I write its fascist-minded sponsors threaten to railroad it through—would deal a crippling blow. The persecution of the Hollywood Ten would directly broaden into a persecution of every American writer and artist who seeks to portray the truth of American life, who sides with Wallace against the warmakers. For the Mundt Bill would set up the "legal" structure of fascism. It is intended as a prelude to the burning of the books.

This modern and infinitely worse version of the Alien and Sedition Acts is bitterly opposed by democratic-minded intellectuals. It has been accurately described as "a request by the Un-American Activities Committee for legislative sanction to accelerate its drive to squeeze all opinion and activity into the channels of conformity," and it has been indicted in these terms by hundreds of artists, writers, scientists, educators and clergymen of various shades of political opinion, including Van Wyck Brooks, Mark Van Doren, Lewis Mumford, W. E. B. Du Bois, Henry Seidel Canby. These men recognize that, in Jefferson's words, we dare not today "silence our fears for the safety of our rights."

For silence today is the real treason of the intellectual. Failure to fight now, at this terribly late hour, is renegacy to culture and democracy. The battle against the Mundt Bill is the battle to save America from fascism.

Just as the Hollywood Ten are being persecuted as un-American because they dare defend the Bill of Rights, so the thirty-two intellectuals who signed the Open Letter to Soviet Writers in the May issue of MASSES & MAINSTREAM have been smeared as un-American because they dare advocate peace and friendship between our country and the Soviet Union. The distortion by the press of our Open Letter nakedly illustrates the utter lack of scruple which the warmongers parade as Americanism today. We reject with contempt their crude effort to identify a desire for peace as treason, a determination to resist the fascist drive as un-American. No intellectual who values his freedom will submit to their obvious technique of silencing opposition by smears and threats. As for ourselves, we proudly re-assert that because we love our country, because we are unswervingly devoted to our democratic heritage and the interests of our people, we fight the imperialist drive to fascism and war. We shall carry on that fight with all our strength.

—SAMUEL SILLEN

PROBLEMS OF Marxist Culture

by GEORGE LUKACS

ACCORDING to our conception, man is formed in and through his labor. The new social man is formed in building the new society.

A new society always develops a new culture. And here the problem arises: "To what degree is this culture really new? What are its relations with the culture of the past?" The problem was posed at the very beginnings of socialist thought. Lenin always rejected every claim of absolute newness (see his discussion with Bukharin on the question of imperialism). His theory of tradition is the theory of the social continuity of culture. Naturally, this means continuity in the dialectic sense, that is, one which contains within itself discontinuity, the formation of qualitative newness, the leap. Marxism accepted in its own philosophy the *Knotenlinien der Massverhältnisse* (nodal lines of mass relationships) of Hegel, but renewed them by means of the materialist conception: revolutions are decisive moments in historic continuity.

All this is unusually important for the new democracies. Generally speaking, they have come into being without such qualitative leaps. It is therefore all the more necessary to see clearly what of the past can be accepted and, if so, in what form. At the moment, we can only allude briefly to several categories of problems.

First there is the question of formal democracy and its ideology. With each passing day, formal democracy is being increasingly utilized to serve as a screen for reaction and fascism. On the other hand, the masses who have only now been liberated from fascist oppression

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This article is from a report given at an international conference held at the House of Culture in Milan, in December, 1947, on the subject, "Marxist Thought and Contemporary Culture." Lukacs is a Hungarian citizen, and while his analysis illuminates the problems of Marxist thought in general, it mirrors particularly the political and intellectual situation in the new democracies of Eastern Europe. The second and concluding part of this article will be published in our next issue.—THE EDITORS.

demand—and rightly so—a broader democracy. Thus, we face the need of a fresh examination of the entire heritage of democratic evolution from the political, social, juridical and cultural point of view. An examination of the central problems of the greatness and limitations of the French Revolution, a critique of the revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are absolutely necessary. It is even more essential that we learn from the experiences of the Russian Revolution of 1917: what were the democratic elements in that revolution that can be studied and applied in the culture of non-socialist countries? And above all, in what way can that be done?

The struggle against decadent bourgeois ideology is also very important; but the ideology of vanguardism in left-wing and even Marxist circles is often an obstacle to that struggle. In effect, there exists the habit of uncritically accepting every cultural innovation as undoubtedly progressive and revolutionary. But what is needed is a very careful examination and criticism of such attitudes, based on concrete social content. Here too it is not possible to enter into details, but only to touch upon the main problems.

I REFER above all to the nihilist conception of the world. We must arrive at a very clear understanding of the relations between fascist ideology and modern nihilism and irrationalism. As a matter of fact, these tendencies have profound roots among left-wing and even Communist intellectuals; and there are many who do not recognize in Nietzsche, Spengler and existentialism basic tendencies of nihilism. To this must be added the fact that the nihilist conception of the world dominates most recent literature and art, often indeed in an unconscious manner. And this is all the more understandable since the destruction of man in capitalist society is so fundamental a fact inherent in life that it cannot fail to be reflected in art as well. But this problem must not be tackled solely by considering the philosophy of decadence. It demands quite different treatment: we must energetically combat every kind of nihilism in art as well. At the same time, we must not exclude on principle the possibility that notable works of art can be created from an unclear position.

A criterion can be found that considers only content, revealing the social foundations of ideological decadence. Here the central point is remoteness from the culture of the broad interests of the working

people, hence from the broad interests of the nation and of humanity. Imperialism not only stimulates decadent ideologies tending to the mass brutalization of the people, but it also spontaneously arouses a false aristocratic sense in its intellectuals, who are the agents of its culture. I say "spontaneously" because such ideological movements are almost always imbued at the outset by sentiments of opposition. Their content is in fact an instinctive reaction against capitalist hostility to culture on the part of honest intellectuals, a rejection of man's impoverishment and sterility under the system of monopoly capitalism. But since these revolts do not have a social base nor any ties with the progressive tendencies of the people, they generally end by lacking any direction. There then follows a process of introspection, exaggerations and unbridled egotistical lamentations, the complete loss of social-historical perspectives, and all of this gives rise to nihilism.

The tendency to nihilism is strengthened by the fact that, given these premises, there generally develops, even in intellectuals who honestly feel themselves distressed, a tendency to narcissism, to excessive introspection and a morbid withdrawal into themselves. If such conditions provoke a clash with the environment around them, and this environment appears absurd, there then arises spontaneously an aristocratic sense, a contempt for the masses.

From this state of affairs it necessarily follows that such an intellectual, even if animated by the best of intentions, finds himself defenseless in the face of reactionary ideologies; all the more so if extreme reaction dresses itself up in attitudes of liberation, revolution and anti-capitalism. Capitalist imperialism is growing more and more conscious of the possibilities offered it. It understands with increasing success how to utilize in its own interests this new aristocratic sense, nihilism without perspectives, ideologies hostile to the masses. (Figures like Céline, Malraux and Koestler are typical examples.) But even if in individual cases it does not go so far, even if it is accompanied by subjective sympathy for progress, the revolt provoked by decadence against social passivity is—objectively—a prop for reaction.

A more decisive struggle against such ideologies is imperative. But when it concerns cultural questions, and especially artistic or literary questions, an objection is usually raised in the name of the threat to freedom. (On this point too, the ideological struggle demands a fuller definition of the concept of freedom, which must not be understood

in a formal sense. It must not be freedom for fascism, for open reaction. Even if the higher importance of art, literature and philosophy is admitted, this offers no excuse either in art, literature or philosophy for the spread of reactionary concepts, of completely or partially fascist concepts.)

Given these conditions, freedom of expression is absolutely necessary to creation and criticism. Here too we find extreme cases of error, even among Marxists. On the one hand, excessive bureaucratic control of cultural phenomena; on the other hand, a tendency in the field of culture to grant freedom to any opinion whatever. But when we spoke of freedom of criticism, we meant above all freedom of Marxist criticism against decadent bourgeois culture, even if the latter boasts of famous names throughout the world and has infiltrated our own ranks.

The Communist Party as such certainly does not have an esthetic in the sense that adherence to the party demands in advance any specific artistic creed. But Marxists have a philosophy, an ethic, an esthetic, a Marxist culture, which they seek to apply both inside and outside the Communist Party with the weapons of ideological conviction. All these disciplines of Marxism must be formulated and concretized in view of the specific tasks of our times; and here too there is a vast field of work lying before us.

The Problem of Tradition

"Marxism has been able to achieve its world-historic importance as the ideology of the revolutionary proletariat because it has not rejected the most valid results of the bourgeois period, but on the contrary has adopted and elaborated everything noteworthy in the course of human development and culture for a thousand years." This statement by Lenin in no way contradicts the fact that Marxism is something qualitatively new, a decisive turn in the history of thought. Precisely because it has taken up (*aufgehoben*) all the progressive currents in the development of humanity, in the triple sense that Hegel gives to the word (that is, is has kept them, cancelled them, and transferred them to a higher level), Marxism has constituted such a leap.

It is enough to look back at the history of philosophy to grasp the scope of this change. In the pre-Marxist period, the history of philosophy revealed a double struggle: materialism versus idealism,

dialectics versus metaphysics. These two lines of struggle showed a constant criss-crossing; and in the pre-Marxist period idealism, insofar as it was often the agent of dialectical thought, had a definite progressive import, a specific scientific effectiveness. After the rise of dialectical materialism the struggle was simplified: dialectical materialism opposed metaphysical idealism, which became increasingly reactionary and sterile.

Moreover, we must remember in what sense Marxism gives an entirely new status to practice in the ensemble of philosophical relations. In preceding philosophy, practice was looked down upon in contrast to contemplation on the part of the wise man (the ancient Greeks, Spinoza, Hegel), or if it was emphasized, that meant—as in Kant—a limitation on theory, a subjective position. With regard to this problem too, Marxism is a completely new conception of the world. The stress we are giving to the newness of Marxism does not, however, contradict the need for acknowledging a hereditary patrimony. But here lies the real difficulty: we must take as our basis the most authentic high points in modern history. Thus, considering only the periods nearest us, we must claim as an essential heritage the great materialist philosophy of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the development of the dialectical method in classic German philosophy, classic economics up to Ricardo, the dissolution of his school and the classics of Utopian Socialism, the great historians at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and Russian revolutionary-democratic currents.

Only a new critical analysis of this heritage will make for a firm and victorious struggle against ideological decadence, against Kierkegaard, Nietzsche and their disciples, against subjectivist economics, against the systematic falsification of history. The general disavowal of modern currents in the social sciences does not of course exclude the possibility of drawing useful lessons from their concrete and specific researches. But the greatest caution is necessary in utilizing such results because there often exist the closest connections between methods and positive conclusions, which may lead to error.

IN IDEOLOGICAL questions too, Marxism is of course based on the law of unequal development. In the present situation, this gives rise to two main sets of problems.

Above all, there are the tremendous advances and at the same time

the internal crisis in the natural sciences. The uninterrupted and progressive development of the exact sciences in the midst of the general decadence of the bourgeoisie is an economic necessity. Nevertheless, the decadence is reflected, particularly with the advent of the period of imperialism, in the increasingly reactionary philosophical *conclusions* drawn from scientific achievements. While during the golden age of bourgeois culture philosophical generalizations from the results and methods of the natural sciences offered the chief element of progress in human thought, today, on the contrary, the philosophy of the natural sciences generally fulfills an opposite function. Here then is a great task for Marxist philosophy. Since objectively all the results of modern science are based on dialectical materialism, we must point to the materialist dialectic hidden in their methods as well as in their results. In effect, a general refutation of a theoretical and methodological nature, showing that the philosophical generalizations of modern science are idealistic, although correct and useful in itself, is altogether inadequate. Together with such a refutation, it is essential to present an analysis of the real problem on the basis of dialectical materialism, showing concretely how we can thereby solve problems that are otherwise insoluble or lead to artificial compromises.

The second set of problems is presented by modern literature and art. Here too, the situation is very confused, often for Marxists themselves. On the one hand content, isolated artificially, is considered by itself; and only an art that is openly revolutionary, openly proletarian, is accepted, with all the rest rejected *in toto*. Or artistic form is artificially isolated. Then one gets the false idea that the social revolution must automatically bring about a revolution in form, as if only the formal revolution could be an adequate expression of the real revolution. From this point of view, past art appears completely outmoded, trivially bourgeois, and only modern vanguardism seems to be truly revolutionary.

This false antithesis leads to various erroneous attitudes. Above all, art is not recognized as authentic if it is not directly militant. Here we arrive at far too limited a conception of what Lenin called party spirit (*partiinost'*).* Or in matters of form and style, some Marxists

* A word that is difficult to translate. It springs from the theory and practice of Bolshevism, according to which there is no higher qualification than that of party member. Joining the party is, in this sense, not only political but also philosophical and moral adherence, a guide to life in thought and action.

take refuge in mental abstention and completely renounce party spirit in favor of estheticism.

In the face of all this, we must return to the objectivity of our method. We must ask ourselves: what does the work of art objectively represent, which in itself is relatively independent of the ideological program of the author? For the object of Marxist analysis is not the author's intention but the artistic reality of his work. On this question we cannot refrain from passing judgment on form and style, nor can we leave the problem to personal taste. It is superfluous to point out that the basis of the Marxist attitude, insofar as the question of form and style is concerned, is by no means formal. The problem we have to raise is the following: what is the possible social influence of a work on a stylistic trend in general and on the artist's individual style in particular?

Putting the problem in this way implies a definite and precise attitude with regard to the fundamental questions of esthetics; and in the first place, with regard to the question of the reflection of reality in a work of art and the specific character of this artistic reflection. This means above all a struggle against the theory and practice of anti-dialectical and photographic reproduction (naturalism), and on the other hand a struggle against infidelity to truth, against falsified form and content. Moreover, we must recognize and bring out the humanist function of art, which in unfavorable periods is a source of health for the concept of man, and in favorable periods a means of perfecting man. Art reveals the sufferings of life and the final triumph of the human principle; it reveals man's ingenuity and the typical character of the life of the individual. This general humanist principle makes of art something irreplaceable in the birth and evolution of humanity, and it is only in proceeding from these principles that one can philosophically adopt a Marxist position in favor of great realism (from Homer to Gorky). Only on the basis of these principles does an exact evaluation of the past and present become possible.

Problems of Ethics

Ethical problems constitute a special group. It is not accidental that they occupy a central position in the ideological crisis of our epoch. For rarely has humanity found itself confronting so con-


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sciously, as it does today, the decision to be taken concerning its own destiny. Whether on the broader stage of world history (war or peace, problems of new democracy, etc.) or in every act of their individual lives, men are placed again and again before a choice. Yesterday it was a question of deciding for or against fascism, and at every daily political turn of events the man of our times finds himself placed before a choice that is pregnant with consequences. To be sure, problems of this kind were also present in other periods. But in revolutionary epochs such questions are posed with much greater sharpness and demand quite different answers than in so-called tranquil periods. For the consequences involved in every choice are much more immediately visible and perceptible. To this must be added the fact that our epoch, as a result of revolutionary upheavals that have recurred from decade to decade has awakened in men a stronger consciousness, a more acute sense of responsibility than that encountered in other periods, such as the one following World War I.

And here the question arises: is it still possible to make a choice? Is it still possible to arrive at a decision, both in an individual and a social sense? And if the answer is yes, then to what extent can this decision be linked with the recognition of historic necessity? Has the individual, defined in his moral behavior, an influence on historic events? All these questions constitute fundamental dialectical problems. To us Marxists, still another question arises: does there exist a Marxist ethic, that is, a specific ethic within Marxism? Such questions demand a definite and precise answer from us: first of all, in order to make concrete the Marxist world-outlook, and then to lead the struggle against bourgeois ideology, which sets up various forms in opposition to the Marxist ethic and asserts that these alone constitute an ethic against the "amorality" of Marxism.

We believe that it is necessary to reply to such a question from the point of view of the Marxist method; we say that ethics are a part, a phase of human practice in its ensemble. Here, as in esthetics, it is important to break with the alleged autonomy—in bourgeois philosophy—of the various attitudes man assumes with respect to reality in various fields. Bourgeois philosophy isolates ethics from the rest of human activity, thus provoking a false opposition between morality and legality; it isolates the ethical nature of the human conscience, allowing it to wallow in the mire of irrationalism (the

existentialist ethic); it isolates the ethical nature of history (for example, in the atemporality of Kantian morality); or, if it recognizes history, it plunges into relativist nihilism, confining morality to abstract individual decisions and creating an apparent dilemma between internal and external ethics (sentiments and obedience).

These contradictions do not arise in any sense from the developments of so-called immanent philosophy. Each of them, in its different way, reflects the influence of the capitalist division of labor on the being and thought of man. All the insoluble questions, all the irreducible antitheses, all the apparent problems of bourgeois ethics are a reflection, in practice, of the structure and development of bourgeois society.

Hence, in this field too, a criticism of our traditional heritage is indispensable. We must again study the progressive trends in scientific ethics from Spinoza to the materialist philosophy of the eighteenth century and the movement which led to dialectical generalizations in Hegel; nor, looking back, must we neglect the social sense so vigorously emphasized in the ethics of the ancient Greeks. Here, too, it is a question of a critical re-examination of tradition. At the same time, we must display energetic critical opposition to ethical individualism after Kant, culminating in existentialism, in which ethics has become nihilistic. But within the limits of this criticism, there is also to be found in the great tradition of human practice an imperishable inheritance for Marxist ethics: Lenin expressly recognized this in his theory of habit.

BOURGEOIS society separates the public man from the private man, "the citizen from the bourgeois." The development of this society necessarily brings about an atrophy of man as citizen, an aspect which from the beginning of bourgeois society has been presented as abstract and contradictory. Having established the objective necessity of this process, it is necessary to point out that man's limitation in the solely *private* aspect of his personality is a mutilation of the truly complete man, notwithstanding the fact that little by little even the most extreme individualism ends by feeling at home in this mutilation.

The struggle for the advent of the complete man is an old slogan of revolutionary democracy: today this slogan can be renewed under circumstances incomparably more favorable for its realization than

any obtaining in the past, even though it is now clearly apparent that its complete realization can only come with socialism. But this point must be understood and stressed in direct opposition to bourgeois ideology: without active participation in public life man cannot be a complete being. It is a question of showing that real democracy (and herein lies its essential difference from formal democracy) tends to fuse, in the most intense and multilateral manner possible, every man's private activity with his public life. Of course, objectively man has always been part of public life. This aspect of social development can be analyzed with specific reference to the crisis of imperialism, but only in itself, insofar as the individual continually and increasingly becomes an object superimposed on public life: existentialist categories like that of "co-existence" (*Mitsein*) or "being in the world" (*in der Welt sein*) express this situation in caricatural form.

In the new democracies a fundamental change has occurred: man lives these connections between public and private life as an active subject and not as a passive object.

The change also occurs in the realm of philosophical outlook. In bourgeois society public life is the abstract domain of "general" questions, while everything concrete (such as economics, etc.) belongs to the realm of private life. The inner motive of this situation is the classic theory of popular bourgeois economics, the idea that the uncontrolled and immanent movement of economic life spontaneously produces general well-being and the unfolding of all human possibilities.

This concept was a justifiable illusion in the time of Adam Smith and Ricardo. But it has become hypocritical since capitalist economy has shown in practice that just the opposite is true, and this hypocrisy is still today the secret principle of bourgeois morality. (If Nietzsche, in the course of his critique of morals, has some points of contact with the moralists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with Mandeville for example, the contact is only an apparent one. In truth, their assertions point in a direction diametrically opposed to his.)

Still more important is the fact that bourgeois morality always proceeds, more or less consciously, from the principle that a person's freedom is of necessity a limitation on the freedom of another person, and that ethics has the mission of preserving the moral purity of the ethical act in such a world. From this flows first of all the opposition

between legality (the ethical *minimum*) and morality, and then the absorption of man in his own inner life and his own exclusive private life. Objectivity is either rejected or transferred to the transcendental.

The new ethics asserts, on the contrary, first of all that the *other person* (the *Mitmensch*) is not a limitation on man but an essential factor in his own freedom. Only in a free society can an individual be truly free. From this flows a new concept of the development of personality. While bourgeois morality seeks this development in the strengthening and expansion of isolated individualism, to Marxism this has always signified a richness of life and above all a richness in the most varied human relations, with the field lying wide open to the various human activities. The man who oppresses and exploits other men cannot himself be free, not even as an individual (the Stoics and Epicurus recognized this fact, but only in a negative way).

THE realization that freedom consists of the recognition of necessity is a basic point of Marxist morality. Intimately bound up with this basic point is the fact that men feel they are members of the human race. In this matter, too, from the objective point of view it has always been so. But today this has become a conscious motive for practical action, and it constitutes a qualitative difference. The fact that this has become concretely man's relations with the general development of humanity, with the immediate collective conditions in which man acts, constitutes an essential characteristic of our times. The relations of the individual to his own class (this of course is only true of the broad masses of the people and especially of the working class) are manifested in his relation to the destiny of the entire human race.

The consciousness of these relations, that is, their transference to the conscious practice of daily life, blots out the last remains of animal behavior, the characteristic of which is the individual's lack of consciousness of the species. The awakening of individual consciousness in unconscious collective life constituted a tremendous historical step forward. Today we are living at a qualitatively higher level of the same process: the awakening in the individual of the consciousness of the human race. Up to now, all preceding forms of the group in history, which together constitute the human race, have always been dominated by a zoological individualism of a collective character,

above all in the form of nations. For some time now a certain humanization of the individual has occurred; but today for the first time the consciousness of its relations to the destiny of the human race appears in the consciousness of the working class. The great problem today is: to humanize national consciousness in opposition to imperialism, which feeds the zoological individualism of nations!

At the basis of all these concepts is the general Marxist world-outlook: *we* are the ones who make history, *we* determine our destiny.

As is well known, Engels placed at the very beginning of human history the self-edification of man by means of his own labor. The consciousness of what men achieve, of the modes of their self-edification, has appeared by degrees and in a very disconnected manner in the course of history. The consciousness that has now been awakened, the self-consciousness of the human race, opens up this perspective: "the prehistory of humanity" is on the verge of ending. The self-edification of man has assumed a new aspect in the sense that in the general movement a bond has been established between the individual's self-edification and that of humanity. In this process, ethics is a very important element of fusion. To the extent that ethics renounces all autonomy and consciously considers itself a part of the general experience of humanity, it can become a force in this tremendous process of transformation, this true humanization of humanity.

(*Translated from the Italian by Joseph Bernstein.*)

PREPAREDNESS

"I have nothing to say about education. I don't know enough about it."—*General of the Army Dwight D. Eisenhower in his first press conference at Columbia University.*

THE RAILROAD LIFE

A Story by

HOWARD M. PHILLIPS

THE night cold angered Lokoz. It got into his middle-aged knees and made them ache hour in and hour out. He carried the pain home with him as surely as he carried his lunch to work.

He let the handle of his wrench fall into the snow blanketing the drawhead. It fell too far. There was no ring—just a dry, flat thud. He elbowed the snow away. The coupling hung like a steel hand half amputated by a giant shears. More work. More hours. He wrote, "C-821,434. Knuckle."

He stepped back and hammered on the side of the car. "Hey, Warden, skip this 'n."

There was no answer.

"Why don't you keep up?" Lokoz shouted. "You sick or plain lazy?"

He could hear the snicking of loose buckles on his partner's arctics.

"None o' yer business!" Warden snapped. He glanced from the broken coupling to Lokoz' face. "Y' don't know half what's goin' on, workin' so fast."

Lokoz shrugged disdainfully.

Warden backed away and drew himself up to a bit less than normal height. "Get on my side an' watch. G.Y.M.'s hirin' shines."

Lokoz clambered over the coupling. The broken steel caught at a worn, rubber arctic. "Damn you! Damn you!" he shouted.

Warden smiled savagely. "Dog bite yer tongue!" He nodded toward the shanty. "Don't that bite yeh?"

Lokoz coughed disinterestedly. "He's too little, more like a road kid."

"You watch! We won't have no white jobs left. Just like in the auto shops years ago." Warden was on his favorite topic. "Shines—they bring 'm up t' work against us."

The conversation wearied Lokoz. "For all of me, he can have your job."

"The hell he can! I'll push him under a car, that's a nice place." Warden's raw face shrivelled and his small, blue eyes stabbed at the distant figure.

"I don't believe in fightin' with anybody. I'm too busy makin' a livin'."

"I bet he's fresh from the South." Warden waited for him to agree. "That's bad. They're soapy, soft t' the boss."

"You don't take a wrench to 'm yourself." Lokoz dropped down to the hard packed snow on his own side of the track. "How 'bout it, salesman, more work an' less jaw? Or don't you know enough to get outa the cold?"

Warden tightened his grip on the lantern. "That ain't funny. Y' talk like a nigger-lover."

"No I ain't. I don't love anybody but me an' my own." Lokoz was angry in his own way, his anger embracing everything—the broken knuckle, Warden, the kid. "No, I don't love niggers."

Warden laughed. "No," he said with bitter emphasis. Not a question —a flat statement, a warning.

Lokoz finished his route. A good, clean row, but for the cripple. He swung back along Warden's side of the train, eager to forget the flareup. He slowed, passing the little oiler. "Okay, salesman?"

Warden grunted uncommunicatively and bent to his work.

Lokoz walked on, carefully oblivious of his partner's pique. He approached the colored boy starchily, a bit on his toes, as he had seen the yard cop walk when stampeding a bum. "Hit the road, sonny, before you're troubled."

The young Negro held his ground. "Misteh, I'm hired t' work here. Where's the night boss?"

He studied the boy's face. A smooth hollow in each cheek, and eyes crouching in deep sockets. The hungry kind of kid you can't bluff or fool.

"Get in outa the cold. He'll be back after a while. He's over the saloon with a glass while we're out workin'." He followed the boy into the shanty. "Where you from?"

"Nashville. My daddy got kilt in the flour mill, an' I had t' quit school an' go 'way."

From the South! "Well, you wait here by the desk." Lokoz stamped into the locker-room in search of a deck of cards.

"I went through 'leventh grade," the boy said proudly.

He wished that the kid wouldn't talk so much. "That's tough," he said, to cover his confusion. "I never got through third, myself." He fingered the cards. "What's your name, so I'll know what to call you?"

"Jim Thompson." The boy hesitated. "Everybody calls me Dixie."

Lokoz was anxious to get out of the conversation before Warden came in. Trouble enough now, without scrappin' over this. "Okay, buddy, tell it to the boss."

LOKOZ watched the boy bobbing on ahead of him, working like any other new man, sweating in spite of the cold. He wondered how long it would be before the kid turned wise. Well, he wasn't any different from the others, like that. Okay.

"Hey, Dixie, you'll do better to keep a handful of fresh waste."

A lean, black hand shot up. The darkness of it stopped him. He wished that the kid would go away.

"Hey, Misteh Lokoz, come here."

The brat ought to keep more to himself. "Yeh, what you want?"

"Looka here."

"I'll find it when I get there."

The boy waited, anxious to know the meaning of his discovery.

Lokoz worked close to him, his mind a pit of fear and loathing. Just livin,' *you* make trouble. Like I don't have troubles enough, cold an' bills. You have to have friends. Now, this comes along. "Well, what is it?" he asked irritably.

The boy stumbled against him, confused, then bent over the journal, tapping it with one finger.

The journal was black and flaky-dry. Lokoz ran his fingers over a network of fine cracks. "Burned it out."

The boy nodded.

"You write it up, boy. Damned if I will!"

Dixie tugged at a board forked away from the car. "Look. Side's loose."

"It won't do any good to talk about it. Nobody gives a damn about anything that won't stop a train."

"I wanta learn," the boy said uneasily. "I'll tell the boss."

"Write that down an' give it to the boss. That'll learn you!" Lokoz was suddenly ashamed of his violence. "Just do like you was goin' to do," he said weakly.

"How's the li'l helper?" Warden asked.

Lokoz shrugged and laid out a hand of solitaire.

Warden rattled the candy and cigarettes in a small, pasteboard box.

"I ain't hungry," Lokoz said curtly.

The colored boy came in and dropped a scrap of bag paper on the foreman's desk, then got as close as possible to the ash-ringed stove. The sudden warmth made his eyes water.

Lokoz glanced from Warden's face to the boy's and back to his cards. No sense goin' too far out on a limb, bein' too friendly with the kid.

"Hey, you, whatchucallit!" The foreman beckoned to Dixie. "Why all this stuff?"

"He means you, jigaboo." Warden laughed mockingly, confident of an appreciative audience.

The boy's shoulders arched tensely. He did not turn.

"You," the foreman growled.

Dixie stood before him.

"What do you think you are?"

The boy stood silently, confused.

"Well, I just wanta tell you you're an oiler, not a car knocker. This is the Polack's business."

"Yesseh. But I wanta learn." There was a faint undertone of mockery, a subtle hint of defiance, in the boy's speech.

The foreman jammed the paper onto a spike file. "Fire up."

Dixie emptied the coal scuttle into the stove and retreated to the locker-room. He sat on the bench nearest the door.

The foreman leaned over him, one shoulder driven against the door jamb. "You're plenty new here, kid. You keep the fire. You can do it better if you take a bench behind the stove."

Lokoz stared at the table and forced himself to think: No chance of makin' game.

The boy walked quietly to the stove and peered into its flaming belly. He circled the fire and returned to the locker-room.

What's the use of all this arguin'? Lokoz' lips were dry, his throat dry and rough, like crumpled paper.

The foreman turned away, beaten.

Warden spat on the floor and spread the green phlegm with the toe of his shoe. "What y' buyin' tonight, shine?" He rattled the candy box.

"Nothin'," Dixie said coolly. "This ain't Tennessee."

"That's right. If it was ye'd behave." Warden's arms swung toward the boy.

Lokoz concentrated on finding the ace of hearts. Find it, an' make ten.

"Hey, you, nigger-boy! Get out and grease a train," the foreman yelled.

Dixie picked up a bucket of waste and walked out.

Lokoz scrambled his cards, laughing.

Warden cleared his throat with angry force. "Nigger'll be wantin' t' go out t' saloon with us next. You wait."

"He's too little. He wouldn't get a kick outa it."

"Y' don't read or watch or learn. That's the trouble with yeh. Give 'm an inch an' he'll take a mile." Warden thumped the candy box against his knee.

"Maybe," Lokoz parried.

Warden sniffed. "Y' don't understan'."

"Well, maybe." Lokoz dragged the ace of hearts from the top of the deck and across the table to the edge. "It's natural, if that's what he likes."

"He won't get chummy with me. No, sir. I've got pride."

"Why trouble everybody else with it? Just don't be too friendly, that's the way with me." Lokoz wished it was all over.

"I ain't that soft," the candy salesman bragged. "No, sir."

"Eat it! I got work to do." Lokoz pocketed the cards.

"Gimme the deck," Warden begged.

"You sold 'm to me," Lokoz said, glad of the advantage. "Buy some from yourself."

"WHAT you want two wrenches for?"

"Oh, I dunno . . . if I break one, or just to act rich." Lokoz turned the old wrench over to the boy. "What you wanta know for?"

Dixie scraped the oily dust from the screw thread and wiped his fingers on his trouser-leg.

Lokoz grinned. "Wanta buy one like it? I can tell you where to get it."

The boy shook his head. "It'd be easier t' get this. How much for this?"

"What you want it for? Oiler's got no use for tools."

"I can learn it inside an' out, every scratch an' turn. I can see how t' fit it t' all kinds o' fittin's."

Warden stirred angrily and scrubbed along the bench to a more comfortable place in the corner. "I *know* they'd never make a nigger reg'lar car knocker."

Dixie tightened his grip on the wrench.

Warden nodded emphatically. "Y' hold onto yer money. Yer wasteful." His blue eyes feigned kindness and he stroked his knee pompously. "Don't sell it t'm, Polski."

"His money's green, like yours. I like long green. Say, four fifty?"

"I'd like it," Dixie responded eagerly.

"He's too dumb t' bargain. I told yeh," Warden grumbled. He leaned forward. "Why take the nigger's money? He's too nigger-dense t' ever be anythin' but a greaser."

Dixie chopped at his arm, hard. The wrench cracked against his elbow.

Warden rolled away from the blow and grabbed at the swelling bruise. "Y' yella pup! Now there won't be no niggers in this yard, ever! I'll have yer job!"

"Squeal, will you?" Lokoz grated.

"Nobody put me down in Tennessee!" Dixie aimed the wrench at Warden's head.

"Quit, I tell you!" Lokoz caught his wrist.

Warden lurched into the office, whimpering. He stood between the stove and the wall, nervously licking his lips, waiting for the foreman to return. He turned his back to the locker-room door.

"He had it comin', but you shouldn't 've done it," Lokoz said bitterly.

The boy handed him the money, his fingers moist and cold. "He had t' get it."

"No. You don't know what you're sayin'. When he talks, you'll get hard jobs, big ones an' little ones all over the yard. You'll be the unhappiest you'll ever be. Why don't you let it pass?"

"I thought y'd learn me t' repair." There was a strange undercurrent of humiliation mixed with wrath in Dixie's words: "But yeh won't show me, an' I don't want yeh to."

"Okay. Okay. But you're too much like me before I got a fam'ly, always pushin' on. It don't do any good. What you workin' so hard for? Like when I was a kid in Poland, thinkin' big, an' here I am, a greaseball."

Dixie smiled triumphantly.

The foreman came in, red-faced and wheezing.

"Look!" Warden jerked his thumb toward the back room. "What y' thinka that, the friends some guys pick up?"

"Not much," the foreman sneered. "Not by a damn sight."

Lokoz' muscles tensed. He wanted to turn away, but couldn't.

"KNOCK out boxes up by the fast track"—by the fast track, where a death wish is as good as a push. Hard Luck Alley. Why drag *me* in on the kid's punishment? Hell, sellin' a wrench ain't a crime, even sellin' it to *him.*

The rails sang softly. Lokoz stared down the track. Have to be fast freight to make so much racket that far away. He snubbed his cigarette out on the car door and went through his pockets for the rest of the pack. He found two cigarettes, both broken across the middle. He smoothed them out carefully. About fifty yards ahead, Dixie was cramming waste into a journal. Like to give the kid a smoke, but he's too far.

"Hey, Dixie, you wanta hurry up, if you're goin' to set air tonight. Pretzel Belly'll get wise I'm showing you."

Dixie speeded up. It was cold again, and all the false-spring melt of snow had frozen into rippled glass, and new snow had drifted over it. The boy's heel skidded. He fell against the car.

Instinctively, Lokoz lurched away from the through track. He knelt to check a brake. Okay from here. No going under. Low-hanging sides made it rougher, but they were usually farther down the yard. At least,

more of them down there. The greenish-white glare of a headlight surged over him, down to the boy, and beyond. The pistons clicked like huge false teeth.

Lokoz flagged Dixie over to the stalled cars, but the boy tapped the wrench at his belt and hurried on toward the last of the journals.

The locomotive crashed by. Fine, warm drops stabbed at Lokoz' cold cheeks. The couplings began to creak and groan. There was a funny sound, like a rod dragging. He watched the passing cars, but saw nothing unusual. He didn't hear the noise, now. Probably something about the weather, just the sound of the wheels.

He stepped between the cars and chipped the ice from a knuckle. There was no crack, only blackened rust. He backed out and reached for his lantern. Again, he heard the sound.

Dixie ran toward him, cap lost, his hollow face black and terrible. "Look out!" He waved both hands for Lokoz to jump between the standing cars. His hands flapped disjointedly and his lips stretched thin, in agony. "Out! Out!"

"Get in! I can take care of myself!"

Lokoz fell between the cars. He leaned against the drawhead and heard the low groaning of couplings amplified to thunder in his cubbyhole. A broken board flashed by with a raw, scraping sound. A sickle of light exploded in the crack between the cars. Ice chips blasted him like air rifle pellets. He heard a thin cry, higher than the scream of the wheels. He leaped out, his lungs hogging air. "Yer draggin'! Loose board! Yer draggin'!"

Dixie was gone. Only the wrench on the ground. Only *his* wrench!

Lokoz swung frantically. His light found a brakeman, and the train began to slow.

He ran after it. He could see a slat hanging, nearly touching the standing cars. Close to the rolling box, the boy hung.

The train stopped.

"Dixie!"

The board had been driven through the boy's jacket, scraping across his chest. He was curled over the door slat as if asleep, huddled, immensely alone. Both of his legs were gone.

Lokoz tore a sleeve from his shirt, chanting blind hatred at the strange crew. "Never look! Y' never look! You yellow dogs!" He

propped the boy's hips against a tie. "You never looked!" he shouted at the approaching fireman.

"How can I see back on a movin' hawg?" the man demanded savagely. "I don't pick the stock they hang on my tail."

"Maybe it happened on the road, or somebody overlooked it," the conductor mumbled.

"Somebody *did*," Lokoz said bitterly.

The boy was awake. "I fell," he whispered. His voice rose. "I fell... I fell...."

"You lie quiet. Damn hangin' door slat took you under the car. You'll get big dough." Lokoz tugged at the hole in Dixie's worn jacket, ripping it still more. "The board's all broken up. Right there, it caught him."

"What'd he say?" the conductor demanded.

"He didn't say anything. He's outa his head. You ain't gonta steal his pension."

The stretcher came.

LOKOZ' arms were cold and his hands ached stubbornly. At the shanty door, he met Warden. The little oiler's lips twitched. "H-how . . . lost yer li'l helper!"

The night cold was upon Lokoz, stinging him to fury. "Shut up!"

"Said that shine'd never make a railroader. Goddamn glad he's gone forever."

Lokoz shoved Warden into the hot, blinding office. "You keep your mouth shut forever!"

The room was enormously hollow, sucked out by excitement. It was a vacuum, like one left behind by a speeding train. Warden crouched on his bench, whimpering.

"You witness against the Company for that shine?" the boss demanded.

"Sure," Lokoz said impatiently. "I'm gonta get 'm a lawyer."

"Then you don't need to be here tomorrow. I'll see that you don't have to come back."

"Who y' gonta drink with now that no white man'll speak t' yeh?" Warden whined.

"Anybody that comes along," Lokoz said angrily. "But I'd drink with the devil in hell before it'd be you!" •

TASK FORCE A.D.A.

by HERBERT APTHEKER

ON JANUARY 5, 1947, the New York *Times* did a remarkable thing. It told the truth. In reporting the plan of Stewart Alsop, David Dubinsky, Morris Ernst, Louis Fischer, Edgar A. Mowrer, Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., and one hundred additional paragons of intellectual integrity to establish an organization christened Americans for Democratic Action, the *Times* noted that this followed hard on the heels of the formation of the Progressive Citizens of America. Thus, aptly concluded the paper: "The historic significance of their decision was the cleavage which it creates in the American liberal movement."

The result stems from the purpose, and the purpose necessitates the function. The ultimate purpose is to prolong the life of an obsolete social order; the function is to hide its decay with euphonious lies.

Basic is the allegiance to what both the NAM and the ADA refer to as "free enterprise." This is why the first sentence in the *Report of the Committee on Economic Stability, sponsored by Americans for Democratic Action* (May, 1947) announces: "America's democratic system of private enterprise today faces a crucial trial and challenge." This adherence to present-day American finance capitalism determines and limits the remaining ideological details and the programmatic pronouncements. For the ADA, the struggle for a severely limited bourgeois democracy *is* democracy—the struggle is the democracy. Their adherence to capitalism makes them incapable of understanding that while struggle is implicit in liberty (indeed, in life) the *level* of the struggle need not be, in fact cannot be, eternal and unchanging. This, too, is why such individuals are in mortal terror, as Schlesinger put it in his *Age of Jackson,* of "being enslaved by a theory of the future."

It explains, too, their conviction that, again citing Schlesinger, "most important problems" cannot be solved. They see history in the words

of William Harlan Hale's *The March of Freedom* as "a pendulum [swinging] from reform to reaction" and back again, full of movement, yet motionless. It explains, also, why the New York state chairman of the ADA, Dr. Eduard C. Lindeman, finds diversity of interests synonymous with democracy (*ADA Guide Lines,* April 1947), never considering for a moment that the forces producing such diversity are the forces necessitating struggle.

The concept that the struggle for bourgeois democracy—or the right to prosecute such a struggle—is democracy falls down at two points. In the first place, the attainment of bourgeois democracy, the overthrow of feudalism and the enhancement of the political rights of large segments of the population under varying forms of parliamentarianism, all this represents a *stage* in the development of man's freedom; it most certainly does not represent its fruition. And in the second place, the struggle for these political rights or the possibility of exercising these rights *within a capitalist framework* demonstrates not only the *presence* of a degree of freedom but also and simultaneously the *absence* of a degree of freedom. For if there were no lack, the struggle would be unnecessary. One struggles against something and for something else. The existence of political struggles, the presence of Professor Lindeman's diversity, demonstrates the incompleteness of bourgeois democracy; it is not synonymous with democracy.

No wonder, then, that Dr. Reinhold Niebuhr, the ADA's prize philosopher, agrees with Schlesinger as to the insoluble nature of significant social problems. He sees humanity suffering from an inherent and ineradicable "defect" which "is too constitutional to be eliminated by a reorganization of society." The cause of societal decline, according to him, lies in "various types of human sin" and the highest wisdom is a "contrition [which] mitigates our pride without destroying our hope." It is Marxism's failure, concludes Niebuhr, to accept the "fact" of man's sinfulness, its insistence upon the soluble nature of man's difficulties and its refusal to acknowledge the omnipotent efficacy of contrition which constitute "the basic refutation of [its] utopian dreams" (*The Nature and Destiny of Man*).

WE RETURN, then, to the starting point: devotion to the status quo and the function of assisting in its maintenance. But one does not rest here, for the status quo is not static. The allegiance to

"free enterprise" permits interest in political and civil liberties only while such liberties are either necessary for the launching of such free enterprise or useful for its continued existence. But the enterprise takes precedence over the liberties and when it has surfeited itself, when it has tied itself into monopolies and super-monopolies, cartels and super-cartels, then the liberties which hitherto were constructive levers become intolerable brakes. Brakes they are, however, only for the monopolists and the cartelists, not for the masses of people whose life blood was spilled in creating those liberties.

The monopolists turn to the destruction of those liberties, but the people resist and rise to defend their ancient freedoms. By defending ancient freedoms, however, under new conditions, new freedoms will and must be forged. Thus appears the irreconcilable conflict of our era and the final testing ground of one's ultimate loyalties: for the decaying social order or for the advancing of humanity's freedom, for the exploited or for the exploiters.

It is this which has produced the unprecedented hysteria against Henry Wallace. His courageous defense of basic civil rights represents a fundamental threat to the treasonous plans of the American ruling class; that class can no longer tolerate such liberties. In this age of permanent crisis for capitalism, even bourgeois political freedoms become fatal impedimenta. Thus it is that a former Vice-President is barred from university campuses and a United States Senator is manhandled by the police of Alabama's satraps.

Such an analysis makes understandable ADA's own agreement, expressed in its official publication, *Toward Total Peace,* with the hoary myth of all reactionaries to the effect that social unrest is the result of the machinations of foreign agents. From George III to Czar Nicholas, from Jefferson Davis to Mitchell Palmer, from Bismarck to Hitler, this has been the Big Lie. In its own words the ADA sees "Soviet influence" and "Communist agents" "oozing, trickling, filtering" throughout the world, tearing down "the fabric of mutual confidence" that, but for these devils incarnate, would reign supreme.

Karl Marx supplied the answer to this vicious absurdity when, in the days of the Paris Commune, he replied to similar slanders from Thiers, that "virtuoso in perjury and treason." "The police-tinged bourgeois mind," wrote Marx, "naturally figures to itself the International Working Men's Association as acting in the manner of a secret

conspiracy, its central body ordering, from time to time, explosions in different countries. . . . Wherever, in whatever shape and under whatever conditions the class struggle obtains any consistency, it is but natural that members of our Association should stand in the foreground. The soil out of which it grows is modern society itself. It cannot be stamped out by any amount of carnage. To stamp it out the governments would have to stamp out the despotism of capital over labor—the condition of their own parasitical existence."

Logical, too, is the phenomenon of the ADA's legal light, Morris Ernst, taking an active part in the drafting of the Mundt bill and publicly accepting therefor the gratitude of its sponsors. Nor need one be unduly surprised to see an ADA "labor leader," Emil Rieve, president of the Textile Workers Union-CIO, withhold from the floor of his convention three resolutions—condemning segregation, the Ku Klux Klan and lynching—because, as he said, these were "controversial," and because among the delegates (who re-elected him by acclamation) "he supposed that some might even belong to the Ku Klux Klan" (New York *Herald Tribune,* May 1, 1948).

Such realism, such hard-headedness flows naturally from the ADA's insistence that "for too many years" liberals have been preoccupied with "grievance and guilt" rather than with "the actualities of policy." Away with such mawkishness, such sentimentality! We, proudly announces the ADA's manifesto, *Toward Total Peace,* must "confront the facts of life in all their discouraging complexities."

And, notwithstanding "complexity," commendable certainty appears. Speaking of, if not for, the present Administration, the ADA finds "the interests of the United States are the interests of free men everywhere." Just as their refusal to recognize the reality of class divisions and the dynamics of class struggles makes their concept of "democracy" static and identifies it with "free enterprise," so the same failing makes it possible for them to identify the interest of the American bourgeoisie with that of "free men everywhere." The objective result in foreign affairs, as in domestic affairs, is to align them with reaction.

The justification for this alignment reads as follows: "It is ridiculous," says the ADA, "to deny our power, and impossible to renounce it. The question is not the existence of power but the uses to which power is put." The pseudo-classless quality of the ADA's "our" is evident. The assumption, too, of a static, detached entity labeled power

is false. Power is dynamic; it is generated by and simultaneously affects specific forces. Moreover, the *nature* of that power, and *who*, what *class*, possesses it, are the ultimate determinants of "the use to which power is put." All this is deliberately ignored by the ADA.

It is ignored because the ADA has the same presuppositions as the Forrestals and Du Ponts who wield this power; namely that with this power must go further conquest. The ADA spells it out—in polite language, of course. "We must," it says, "assume the initiatives in foreign policy which Britain, without its military power, can no longer assume. . . . Today we must stand up and make the big decisions ourselves."

It is on this basis that the ADA is convinced that the Marshall Plan represents "the climax," "the highest point" in the history of American foreign policy. Now, this conviction does not derive from an entirely uncritical analysis, one must understand. No, there are "certain large ambiguities" in American foreign policy; indeed there are even "certain errors," we learn.

YES, certain details produce—how shall we put it?—ah, yes—regret. Thus, "we regret the *temporary necessity* of unilateral military aid in Greece" [my italics—H. A.] though, of course, while the United States "hasn't sufficiently curbed the arbitrary power of military and reactionary elements, hasn't sufficiently encouraged democratic forces, and hasn't yet carried out essential economic and administrative reforms," still the "temporary necessity" persists and we must "continue to aid Greece" (*ADA World,* March 2, 1948). And "we regret the failure of the United States to extend the spirit of the UN Charter, on trusteeship, to its Pacific bases" (General policy statement, ADA, March 29-30, 1947). And "we regret that the President's speech" in which was pronounced the Truman Doctrine—waving the Big Stick of the President's favorite Roosevelt over the entire world—was so "vague and rhetorical" that it led naive folk to take seriously what was really but "campaign oratory." Imagine anyone taking seriously the pronouncements of a President of the United States delivered before a joint session of both Houses of Congress! (*Toward Total Peace,* p. 25).

Now, it does appear that Mr. Truman suffers from certain personality deficiencies as exemplified in the above instance. He has, moreover, made some rather "unfortunate" appointments and has followed "pas-

sive and dilatory" tactics with regard to Palestine, which make "us" actually "deplore [not "regret" this time] undue [!] influences of the military and private oil interests" (*ADA World,* March 2, 1948).

The suspicion dawns upon the editor of the Social Democratic *New Leader,* Dr. William E. Bohn, one of ADA's founders, that "Truman is not big enough or strong enough to be President of the United States." Of course, this "Socialist" hastens to add that "I am not a partisan. Some of my best friends are Republicans," and graciously to "acknowledge that Senator Vandenberg is a good man." Yet, the erudite and non-partisan Dr. Bohn thinks General Eisenhower is the man for the task (*New Leader,* April 17, 1948). At the same time another ADA charter member and one of the editors of *The Nation,* Mr. Robert Bendiner, finds within the organization an "unquestionable leaning" toward the General, which does not result in a precipitate tumbling only because of the difficulty that: "Some members appear to feel strongly that an organization based on a political program cannot readily plump for a candidate whose stand on major issues remains a top secret" (*The Nation,* April 10, 1948).

Yet the stalwart members of the ADA do not permit such technicalities as the mystery of one's "stand on major issues" (except one's partiality for segregation) to stand in the way of duty. No, at a special convention held recently in Pittsburgh, the General was drafted by the diminutive army. The explanation? Eisenhower's very "personality unites those qualities of patience and firmness which ADA believes to be indispensable to our dealing with Russia"* (AP dispatch, April 11, 1948).

That the ADA believes firmness a more realistic virtue than patience in "our dealing with Russia" must be apparent when one learns who are among its financial supporters. A generous contributor to the ADA has been William Averell Harriman of Brown Brothers & Harriman, the Union Pacific Railroad, several other assorted corporations, lately Secretary of Commerce and now dispenser extraordinary of the beneficent billions of the Marshall Plan. Its chief single source of funds has been Mr. David Dubinsky, titular head of the International Ladies

* Mr. Emil Rieve, in supporting the decision of the ADA, said of Eisenhower: "His public record is blank. Frankly I would take a chance." Still, that this be not too long a chance, he added that while "on the basis of what he has done, Mr. Truman's record is miserable," yet should he run, "it was still conceivable he would vote for him..." (N. Y. *Herald Tribune,* April 28, 1948).

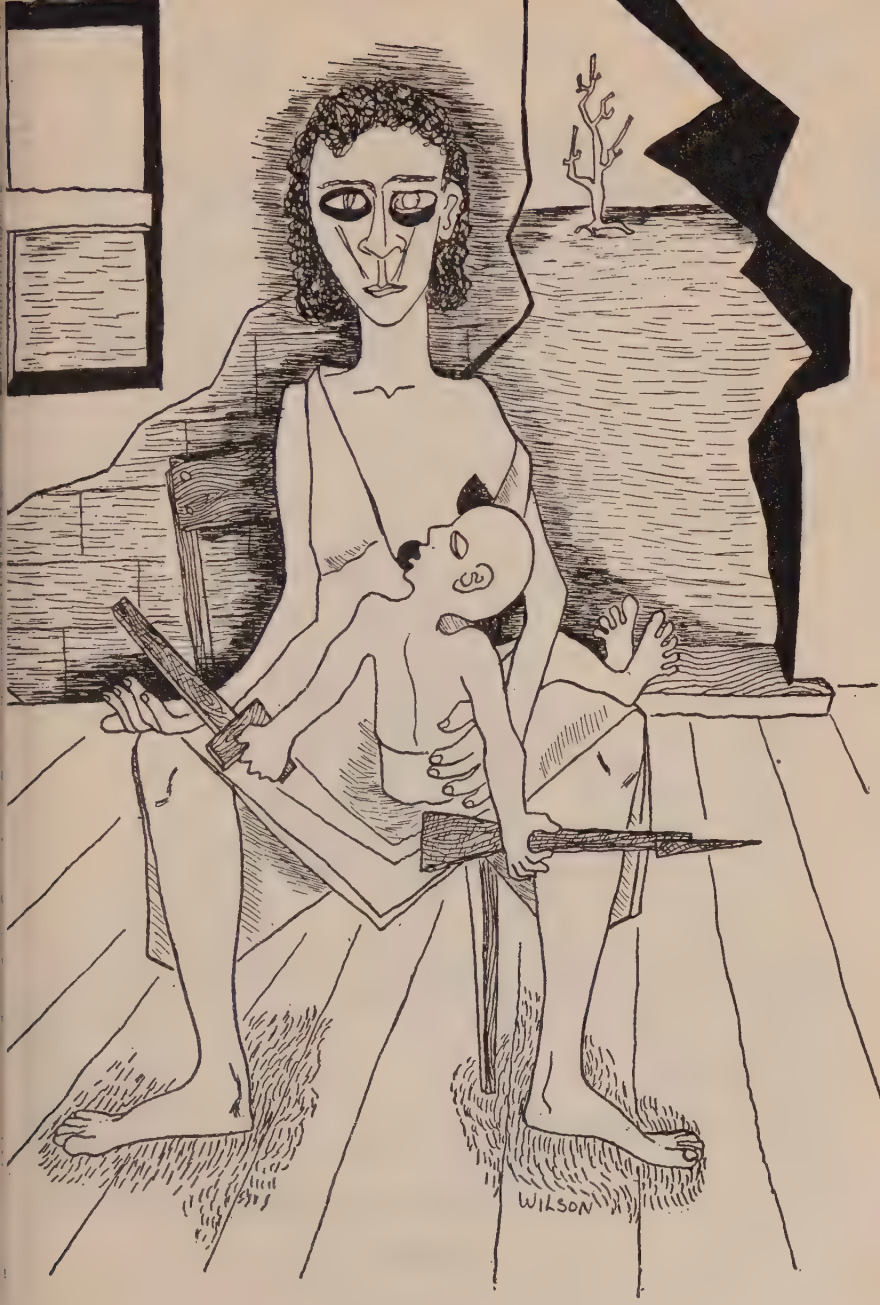
Garment Workers Union. *Look* magazine tells us that Mr. Dubinsky has "made several contributions of $5,000 each" in the past and the *Tribune* reports that he threw another $2,500 to the ADA in the first two months of this year.

Mr. Dubinsky's policy for dealing with the Soviet Union has been expressed with considerable vigor and with notably little patience. He selected the spring of 1943, after the Nazi rout at Stalingrad, to announce his ardent wish that the government accomplishing this might be "shot to pieces" (*Jewish Daily Forward,* May 3, 1943).

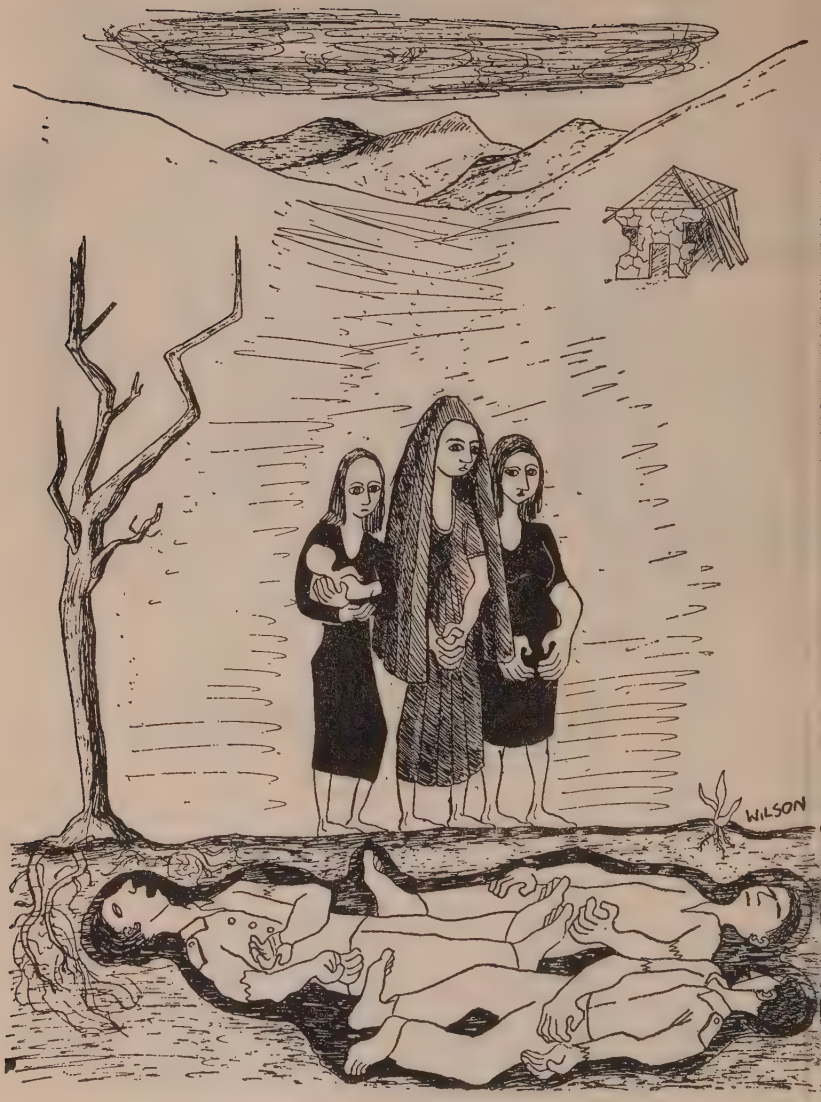
Such are the depths to which fall—and everywhere and always have fallen—the word-weavers for the "malefactors of wealth," the fastidious slayers of liberty: concocting fascist-like bills aimed at the annihilation of civil liberties; compromising with Klansmen; planning American world-hegemony. In our time, such degeneration follows naturally and inevitably from an eclectic or mystical philisophy having its roots in allegiance to imperialism.

SEAMAN'S NOTEBOOK

The following drawings were made by FORREST WILSON, *who was a ship's carpenter on vessels which docked in postwar European ports. They represent his impressions of the effects of war and our foreign policy in Western Germany, Greece and Italy.*



HAMBURG



PIRAEUS

VENICE

AUDEN: *Poet of Anxiety*

by SAMUEL GREENBERG

THE Auden Myth is tenacious in this country. In keeping with Auden's complexity, the myth has many aspects. Chief among them are the claim that he has grown as a poet and thinker, the illusion that he was a Marxist and is now a liberal, and the more intricate version of Cleanth Brooks and other followers of "the new criticism" which discovers a source of artistic strength in Auden's class ambiguities. Let us compare the myth with the reality.

In his first volumes W. H. Auden came forth as a kind of Elijah to the British upper classes, prophesying not that the drought was to come but that it was already upon them, that their lives and works were hopelessly sterile. The rotting wharves, abandoned mines, and deserted factories that play such a large part in *Poems* (1930) were but symptoms of upper-class spiritual decay. In poem after poem Auden pounded the sense of doom, "dark and deeper than any sea-dingle," into his bourgeois readers. They had been deserted by the Life Force (*Poems,* III) and like the Romans they would have to leave the stage of history. Despite their rigid formal poise, they were disorganized and sick within, their pristine vigor forever lost:

> 'There is a free one,' many say, but err,
> He is not that returning conqueror,
> Nor ever the poles' circumnavigator.

The symbols for this class death were many and effective. Sometimes, like Piers Plowman on Malvern Hills, Auden presented a panorama of a corrupt society viewed from high places, from a hilltop, from the hawk's or the airman's angles of vision. Often, the trappings of modern war and of English Public School intrigues typified the confusions and tensions of the alienated bourgeois intellectual. "To My

Pupils"* and *Paid on Both Sides,* the latter using the vendetta plot of Icelandic saga as a framework for its bleak pessimism, are the starkest examples of the war symbol.

But the most universal symbol was disease. Here Auden was not following Freud, as most critics casually assume, but, as he tells us in *Letters from Iceland,* the mystical doctrines of D. H. Lawrence, Gide, and especially Homer Lane.** Using the American psychologist's involved medico-religious concepts, Auden portrayed illness as the wholly psychogenetic result of individual maladjustment and social misregulation. "What do you think about England," asks the speaker in "Address for a Prize-Day," "this country of ours where nobody is well?" Curiously enough, invalidism, paralysis, cancer, criminality and other ills that haunt the pages and personages of Auden's early work, are shown to be consequences of bourgeois values—of bourgeois prudence or "reasonableness," propriety, repression of human instincts, and exaltation of things above men. For Auden as for Lane this "reasonableness" is the voice of the Devil, the irrational revolt against it the voice of God.

Auden's early work was strong in its passionate rejection of the negations of a dying order, weak in the partial, distorted character of the criticism and in its lack of a feasible alternative to the society it attacked. Indeed, Lane's worship of the irrational was a double-edged sword, sanctifying Auden's personal and social ambiguities in the name of God and the Subconscious, and providing him with just the right bulwark against basic self-reformation. As long as Auden clung to his own past and cherished his precious bourgeois individualism, he could not ask for a destruction of the economic base that had produced that individualism. Therefore he did not look toward the only force capable of negating the negations he hated—the working class. In his view, the proletariat was potentially dangerous:

> Engine-drivers with their oil-cans, factory girls in overalls
> Blowing sky-high monster stores, destroying intellectuals.

Instead of calling for a change of system, therefore, he called for a change of heart. To "harrow the house of the dead" meant not to replace

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* Significantly retitled in his *Collected Poetry,* "Which Side Am I Supposed to Be On?"

** For the best brief statement of Lane's influence on Auden, see Christopher Isherwood's autobiographical *Lions and Shadows* (London, 1938), pp. 300 ff.

capitalism by socialism but to revivify the old order's paralyzed sensibility, change its psychology, sexual relations, art and architecture.

To achieve this, Auden exhorted his own class to lift itself out of its decrepitude:

> Shut up talking, charming in the best suits to be had in town,
> Lecturing on navigation while the ship is going down . . .
> If we really want to live, we'd better start at once to try;
> If we don't, it doesn't matter, but we'd better start to die.

Unfortunately, however, the class as a whole refused to mend its ways:

> For what by nature and by training
> We loved, has little strength remaining:
> Though we would gladly give
> The Oxford colleges, Big Ben,
> And all the birds in Wicken Fen,
> It has no wish to live.

Accordingly, Auden relied more and more on a small body of élite who would form a conspiracy against their own class, carry out a kind of palace revolt by shock assaults on established conventions, and usher in "the season of the change of heart." "The healers," lone-wolf fighters striving to bring health to a diseased society, were auxiliary forces.

IN THE early 1930's Auden's "healer" was apt to become "the truly strong man," a charismatic leader; and the élite's romantic individualist sallies against bourgeois morality tended to assume now a proto-fascist,* now a bohemian, surrealist aspect. Both aspects are combined in *The Orators* (1932), especially in the homosexual Airman, whose shock tactics recall Marinetti's blatant Futurism. His journal notes on the hated middle-class enemy reflect Auden's own attitudes:

> Their extraordinary idea that man's only glory is to think....
> Three enemy catchwords — insure now — keep smiling — safety first....
> Three results of an enemy victory—impotence—cancer—paralysis.
> Three counter attacks—complete mastery of the air—ancestor worship—practical jokes....

* "Mussolini, Pilsudski and Hitler have charm but they make such a noise." (*The Orators.*)

> The effect of the enemy is to introduce inert velocities into the system (called by him laws or habits).... Practical jokes consist in upsetting these associations. They are in every sense contradictory and bogus, *e.g.,* my bogus lecture to the London Truss Club. Derek's seduction of Mrs. Solomon by pretending to have been blessed by the Pope.

What a Marxist would regard as a farcical debacle flowing from a ridiculous strategy and an impotent social group, Auden sees as a tragic defeat. The Airman realizes that he too is infected by the diseases of his society and, after abject repentance, commits suicide, apparently at the behest of God. Throughout this period of Auden's work violent bludgeonings of the bourgeoisie alternate with acceptance of his destruction along with the upper classes and with complete submission to God, History, or the Life Force. Such oscillation is a function of Auden's class ambiguities, which make him the Double Man of his title: what he believes he disbelieves, and he cannot rid himself of what he condemns.

After *The Orators,* to be sure, Auden announced his conversion to Communism with *The Dance of Death.* But if the play is on its negative side a witty satire on a dying culture, its attempt to conclude on a positive note reveals the limitations of Auden's "Marxism." Capitalism is destroyed without mass action. Instead, Karl Marx enters with two young Communists (perhaps the young élite of the earlier works) and declares capitalism liquidated, but not before being greeted by the chorus singing to the tune of Mendelssohn's "Wedding March":

> O Mr. Marx, you've gathered
> All the material facts
> You know the economic
> Reasons for our acts.

One finds it easy to agree with Philip Henderson that this Marx is closer to Groucho than Karl!

The relation of Auden's anti-bourgeois attitudes to English aristocratic "socialism" or "Tory radicalism" has been overlooked. More than a century ago, Tories like Southey and Disraeli wrote bitter critiques of rising capitalism in the interests of the embattled landowners. Professing a good deal of sympathy for the exploited masses in the new

factory towns, they lashed out violently at Whiggism and bourgeois liberalism. Disraeli coined the famous phrase about the "two nations, between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy . . . the rich and the poor." Against the atomistic *laissez-faire* theories of the bourgeoisie, the Tory radicals posited an organic society in which the peasant and the lord would be united by reverence of tradition and by common devotion to King and Church. These Tories called on the "natural aristocrats" (read "peers" and "landlords") to assert their leadership, win over the rebellious masses, and return to an idyllic society in which the two nations were united in love and loyalty.

Auden's early poems exhibit a kindred desire to arouse in the sluggish upper classes the vigor of their pristine glory. They appeal to the "true" or "natural" aristocrats ("the truly strong men," "the healers," "the saviours") to "restore" the organic social unity of high and low (which never existed of course in the pre-capitalist past of peasant wars against feudal overlords). This reactionary illusion of the two warring worlds wedded in a Utopia of reconciliation excites Auden's warmest emotions in *The Orators*:

> This is the season of the change of heart,
> The final keeping of the ever-broken vow,
> The official re-marriage of the whole and part,
> The poor in employment and the country sound,
> Over is the tension, over the alarms,
> The falling wage and the flight from the pound,
> The privates are returning now to the farms,
> The silo is full, the marsh under plough,
> *The two worlds in each other's arms . . .*
> A birthday, a birth
> On English earth
> Restores, restore will has restored
> To England's story
> The directed calm, the actual glory.
> (My italics—S. G.)

In such a context, Auden's High Anglicanism is not surprising. Aside from the fact that both his grandfathers were clergymen of the Church of England and that his own home was, as he puts it, "professional and 'high'," the British aristocracy's preferred system of dogma has long been High Anglicanism as against the latitudinarian,

rationalistic faith of the despised pre-imperialist bourgeoisie.* Compare Auden's contemptuous assertion (1936):

> I don't like business men. I know a Prot
> Will never really kneel, but only squat.

As with Cardinal Newman, among Auden's *bêtes noires* are rationalism and Useful Knowledge, caustically satirized in a recent poem. Its subtitle, "A Reactionary Tract for the Times," is a deliberate echo of the Oxford (High Church) movement's *Tracts for the Times.*

A RECOGNITION of these aristocratic elements in Auden's ideology would, as I see it, make for a clearer understanding of his work. For example, the *Communist Manifesto's* characterization of feudal socialism has a striking relevance to Auden's "revolutionary" verse:

> In this way arose feudal socialism: half lamentation, half lampoon; half echo of the past, half menace of the future; at times by its bitter, witty and incisive criticism, striking the *bourgeoisie* to the very heart's core, but always ludicrous in its effect, through total incapacity to comprehend the march of modern history.

To comprehend the march of modern history one needs to understand that the proletariat is the only class that has both the will and the power to change the world. Auden, on the contrary, looked on the proletariat either as a threat or as an inert mass incapable of self-liberation:

> "Our proletariat. . . . Their minds as pathic as a boxer's face/ Ashamed, uninteresting, and hopeless race." (*The Orators,* 1932.)
>
> "Despair so far invading every tissue has destroyed in these the hidden seat of the desire and the intelligence." (*The Dog Beneath the Skin,* 1935.)
>
> "...helpless as the poor have always been."
> ("In Time of War," 1939.)

For Auden, only the superior heroes, "the creative odd ones the average need/ To suggest new goals" (1947), could show the way to the

* Today, of course, the bourgeoisie is embracing the mystical theological dogmas of its quondam class enemies. A shrill insistence on Original Sin and the medieval scheme of salvation emanates from such high priests of capitalism as Henry Luce. Auden's more sophisticated propagation of these dogmas can only aid the monopoly capitalism he professes to despise.

passive masses; only they could free them from the ogre of bourgeois morality. But the common man did not want to be freed:

> He dreads the ogre, but he dreads yet more
> Those who conceivably might set him free . . . (1936)

This situation is basic to the three volumes following *The Dance of Death*: *The Dog Beneath the Skin, On This Island, The Ascent of F 6.*

Passivity and the elegiac note, sounded in the first poem of *On This Island,* are dominant throughout the book. The second poem suggests that this passivity stems from the poet's identification with a dying class, living behind a shaky façade of comfort and culture:

> The creepered wall stands up to hide
> The gathering multitudes outside
> Whose glances hunger worsens;
> Concealing from their wretchedness
> Our metaphysical distress,
> Our kindness to ten persons.

Yet the poet hopes that "these delights we dread to lose," resting on mass misery, will "need no excuse" in the future but will make up part of its strength. The final poem complains that the masses do not heed the voices of the healers: "the feverish prejudiced lives do not care," and the poet accepts war and poverty as therefore inevitable.

The hero of *The Dog Beneath the Skin* is an alienated aristocrat, Sir Francis Crewe, who masquerades as a dog. Such a disguise, as Francis Scarfe has observed, precludes "any possibility of . . . rising above the level of farce. It is this fact which allowed the bankers, capitalists and aristocrats to go and see the play and have a good laugh." The play may be taken to symbolize Auden's disenchantment with the landed aristocracy. "The last of my illusions is shattered," says the cynical Second Journalist. "So this is rural England! Just another lousy racket!" When Sir Francis returns to his village, he finds his sister engaged to a munitions manufacturer, his ancestral estate about to be converted into a barracks, the lads of the village receiving military training, and the bluff country vicar of the first scene delivering a hysterical tirade against "Bolshevism and the Devil." Denouncing the village's hypocrisy, Sir Francis asserts that he is "going to be a unit in the army of the other side," but he is joined by a pathetic handful of young rebels. In the recent Cherry Lane theatre

revival Sir Francis was stabbed to death by a lower-class villager, an ending even more defeatist and distrustful of the masses than is the original. Though the final chorus concludes with "To each his need: from each his power," this communist slogan does not emerge from the dramatic structure. It is the wish-dream of an intellectual who catapults his anarchistic personality into the communist future, evading the necessary organized mass struggle for socialism. Just so does Auden excuse his defection from socialism in *New Year Letter* (1941):

> We hoped; we waited for the day
> The State would wither clean away,
> Expecting the Millennium
> That theory promised us would come,
> It didn't.

The Ascent of F 6 is called "a tragedy" by Auden and Isherwood. Its "tragic hero" is Michael Ransom, leader of an unworldly band of friends. Michael states the creative-hero pitiable-masses relationship in the following terms: "Was it to me they turned their rodent faces, those ragged denizens of the waterfronts, and squealed so piteously: 'Restore us! Restore us to our uniqueness and our human condition?'" Michael's "tragic flaws" seem to be his Oedipus complex and his ambition to rescue the masses and win their love. These flaws make him cease climbing mountains purely for pleasure (symbolic of disinterested art) to take part in an imperialist race for the summit of F 6. His adventures redeem the listless lives of the people, who wish to be exhilarated without taking risks or making sacrifices. But since Michael in aiding the imperialists has flung away virtue and knowledge for power, he must pay for his sin by being destroyed. And ironically enough, the imperialists make him into a legend to mislead the people.

The parable is clear enough. The trickery of the capitalists and the inertia of the people will destroy the élite artist if he is involved in practical struggles. Somewhere below the summit of F 6 a Buddhist-like abbot offers Michael a "solution": complete abnegation of the will. The co-authors eventually applied this quietist counsel in their own way, Isherwood retiring into Vedanta and Auden into Christian existentialism.

Journey to a War (1939) illustrates Isherwood and Auden's aristocratic emotional attachments beneath their sympathy for the Chinese people's anti-fascist struggle. Though they realize the brutal upper-

class bias underlying Peter Fleming's Etonian and Oxonian personality, they find common bonds of friendship. "He, on his side, confesses to a relief that we weren't hundred per cent ideologists: 'I'd expected you two to be much more passionate'." They get to like nearly all of the British imperialist naval officers "very much indeed." They admire the self-contained poise of Ambassador Clark-Kerr. Though they "are genuinely shocked and indignant" at the contrasts between wealth and poverty in Shanghai, they realize that they "belong, unescapably, to the other world. We return, always, to Number One House for lunch." Is this return an accidental imposition of foreign travel or a spiritual allegiance to upper-class ideals? Let the book's astonishing observations on the English Consul-General at Hankow supply the answer:

> In the early evening there is usually a little knot of spectators round the gates of the British Consulate, peering into the garden, where the neat, athletic figure of the Consul-General is to be seen, practicing with his golf clubs. The exquisite accuracy of the consul's putting seems somehow very reassuring, amidst all the chaos and inefficiency of wartime China. Perhaps the Chinese onlookers feel this, too.

O fortunate though bombed and oppressed Chinese! You can draw reassurance from the Oxford-trim figure and the exquisite putting of the pukka sahib, His Majesty's Consul-General!

IN *On The Frontier* the conflict between an explicit Marxist ideology and an implicit aristocratic structure can be seen mainly in the big capitalist, Valerian. He talks like someone who has studied Dutt and Dimitrov on fascism. "And what did the Leader do? Crying: 'Revolution!' he obligingly ruined a number of our lesser competitors and business rivals. He did not dare to touch the Valerian Trust. He did not want to touch it. Without us, he could not exist for a fortnight." Valerian, however, is the most complete and civilized character, a "natural aristocrat," who never loses control of himself or of a situation. He remains cool and collected while the revolutionary Grimm hysterically demands that he squeal for his life, till Grimm, breaking down, is unable to pull the trigger. Since Grimm shoots Valerian in a neurotic frenzy only when the capitalist incautiously gibes at his former employee's Oedipus complex, his act stems from moral and

Al Blaustein

psychological inferiority. And Grimm is the only character whom the reader sees operating as a revolutionary, inasmuch as Eric's final recantation of pacifism is stated rather than dramatized. Nevertheless, this, the least ambiguous of Auden's plays, is also his most moving and concentrated, almost as if meant to highlight the confusion and intricate verbosity that were to follow.

The abstruse, the discursive and the heavily erudite, already evident in "In Time of War," dominate *Another Time* (1940). Poems on Pascal, Melville, Rimbaud and others, give the illusion of insight through an involved verse restatement of familiar biographical data. The vaguely petulant satirical description (Oxford, Dover, etc.) comforts by placing the blame on a whole civilization instead of depicting the particular forces that breed disaster. The proportion of vapid doggerel increases, while the serious verse relies almost exclusively on

monotonous rhetorical tricks. At its best in graceful annotation and supple epigram, the book achieves straightforward lyric emotion only with the elegies on Yeats and Toller. Such motifs as the anguish of life in the ubiquitous present, man's isolation in the cell of self, the universality and meaninglessness of human suffering, anticipate the rotten-ripe existentialism of *The Age of Anxiety.*

The Double Man (1941) is one long self-justification for Auden's desertion from the struggle. First, Auden denies that art has any effect on the problems of life, thereby excusing himself from the need to "make action urgent and its nature clear." Secondly, by asserting that "aloneness is man's real condition," he denies the constant reaching of man toward solidarity with his fellow men, denies, in effect, the responsibility of joining hands and strengths in comradeship and struggle. Thirdly, by calling everyone guilty for fascism, war and depression, he denies the difference between progress and reaction and absolves himself of the necessity of choosing sides.

> Upon each English conscience lie
> Two decades of hypocrisy,
> And not a German can be proud
> Of what his apathy allowed.

"Each English conscience?" What a slander on Ralph Fox, David Guest and Christopher Caudwell! And were all Germans apathetic? What about Carl von Ossietsky, Erich Mühsam, Ernst Thaelmann? Auden's Kierkegaardian claptrap and verbose mysticism are a smokescreen concealing his headlong flight before temporarily ascendant reaction, such a flight as he himself once brilliantly satirized:

> Unhappy poet, you whose only
> Real emotion is feeling lonely
> When suns are setting;
> Who fled in horror from all these
> To islands in your private seas
> Where thoughts like castaways find ease
> In endless petting.

THE closer Auden's thinking came to the existentialist dead end, the more intricate grew his metrical forms and the slacker the poetic tension. Sestina, ballad, villanelle, terza rima flow from his pen with

conversational ease in *The Sea and the Mirror,* but these forms are like highly polished ornamental boxes with nothing inside them. The essence of the piece is Caliban's long disquisition on the relation of art and life. Caliban warns the middle-class enemy, the artists and the élite against expecting art, whether vulgarized or "pure," to provide release from their unsatisfactory lives. All art is made trivial by a more universal anodyne—the theological Christ who, though He will not remove any of life's evils, will shower His grace on our existentialist misery. The counsel of the abbot in F 6 has been taken, and Auden-Ransom has abandoned secular salvation altogether. Not only the masses but the élite as well are to be socially passive. Religion has become the opium of the intellectuals, too.

Critics of theological persuasions hastened to embrace Auden's *For the Time Being,* overlooking the fact that it is a narcissistic apologia rather than a genuine devotional statement. What was once for Auden the divine absurdity of impulse is now the Divine Absurdity of the Word made Flesh, and Mary has become the unique person whose wish-world of childhood will achieve reality. The middle-class enemy is played by Herod, New Dealer and rationalist, who refuses to believe in the nonsense of a God come down to earth. The artist-savior is now a theological Savior who rescues the romantics and bourgeoisie, and "Redeem[s] for the dull the/ Average Way." The Three Wise Men are the weary aristocratic intellectuals of Auden's early poems, the Shepherds the passive proletariat who, having been liberated from "the filth of habit" by Ransom-Christ, can forget about freedom from economic exploitation. St. Simeon reminds that the Fall of Man must be accepted because every form of society (including socialism, presumably) has been tried and found wanting. Or as the Narrator puts it:

> ...all societies and epochs are transient details,
> Transmitting an everlasting opportunity
> That the kingdom of Heaven may come...

This is the complete abandonment of even bourgeois liberalism, since fascism too becomes only a "transient detail" against which one need not trouble to fight. For are not "all, before God, absolutely in the wrong"? (1946).

It is scarcely necessary to pursue Auden into the existentialist morass entitled *The Age of Anxiety.* What, after all, is existentialism? The

bourgeois intellectual transfers to humanity and the universe his sick soul, his enormous egocentrism, his inability to achieve genuine comradeship or love, his actual and potential treacheries, his nebulous hatred, frustration and insecurity, his illusions that the miseries of capitalism are eternal, and dignifies his projection by a name and by maxims from Pascal and Kierkegaard. There are no characters in this so-called "baroque eclogue." Rosetta, Emble, Quant and Malin are mere puppets who speak with their master's voice and prove exactly what he wants them to prove. One of the quartet sneers at the anti-fascist resistance, "imperiled plotters plan[ning] in outline . . . half-truths for their times." Another slanders socialism: "Tidy utopias of eternal spring,/ Vitamins, villas, visas for dogs/ And art for all." All four dream in unison of Auden's perennial strong man-savior and give their estimate of humanity:

> ...they thought of Man, of the torpor of his spirit, the indigent dryness of his soul, his bottomless credulity, his perverse preference for the meretricious or insipid...

By what right, one wonders, does anyone classify among present-day liberals the author of such views, a writer who repeatedly sneers at the humanism of the Enlightenment, of Rousseau, of Whitman? On what basis do critics assert that the class ambiguities which have led to this *cul-de-sac* of mysticism and misanthropy are a source of artistic strength?

Let us turn from Auden's mummified existentialist man to Maxim Gorky's complete, unambiguous man, the man who has taken his side with the forces of life, who "conscious of being the builder of a new world," needs no external savior—neither bohemian, nor élite-fascist, nor existentialist-theological.

> . . . man and only man is the creator of all things and all ideas, he is the miracle-worker and the future master of all the forces of nature . . . sacred is his hatred of all the trivial rubbish which he himself has created; sacred is his desire to do away with greed, envy, crime, disease, war and all enmity between men on earth; and sacred is his labor.

The City of Man will be built by those who speak with the voice of Maxim Gorky, not with the whine of W. H. Auden.

CALIFORNIA
Close-up

by VIRGINIA GARDNER

THE fascists of Southern California are like its vegetation. They have a quality of lushness—like the geraniums, which do not grow seemly fashion in pots but take up whole yards, and even as gnarled old bushes still thrust out their splashy flowers. There is nothing subtle about California's flora and fauna, and its people are, like its scenic beauties, apt to be spectacularly what they are.

You can see the mountains from anywhere in Los Angeles, if the smog lifts, which it does on occasions, and they are imposing. Imposing, too, grand and sturdy as the lofty mountain ranges, are certain giants among the progressives here, figures like Reuben Borough and the Negro publisher, Charlotta Bass, both grown a little gray in the course of a couple of decades of political upheavals and grassroots progressive movements.

Like its athletes and its progressives, the flowers of Southern California are oversized. The New Englander here grows nostalgic, and so does one from the Ozarks, for such minor delights as seeing bare branches against a sky, or the first violet of spring, or the wan cowslip, or pale May-apple blossom, or spring beauties pushing through last year's leaves. No, here the eyes are overwhelmed. A brilliant purple bougainvillea takes over a whole side of a house. A poinsettia is not a single poinsettia on a spindly stem seen only at Christmas; it is a double, triple, a huge bon-bon of a poinsettia, on a tree as high as a house. Palm trees do not just grow casually. No, their identical outlines must repeat themselves theatrically wherever real estate values are up, and they are as excessive as nature in Southern California. If there are roses, and there are—even at Christmas—they are not on bushes, but trees, or at the very least a vine which tumbles over porch and dooryard and dangles roses with the profusion, and the size, of cabbages.

In the same way, the fascist growth is showy and to be seen from miles around, even through the smog created by the commercial press of Los Angeles. Nevertheless the fascist upshoots, including the years-old Un-American Committee of the California legislature, and its new advisory committee of citizens, a coalition of Truman Democrats, Warren Republicans, big business men and labor spies, have a hold only on Southern California's topsoil.

The product really indigenous to California's soil is its progressivism. It has been proved again in the qualifying for the ballot of the third party, the Independent Progressive Party. And while such rock-hewn progressives as Borough and Mrs. Bass were leaders in it, the achievement of a new party is also proof of the abundance of progressives, unknown, unsung heroes and heroines in a Gideon's army which filed 464,000 signatures on petitions—the same week Leo Isacson was elected to Congress in New York.

There is no easy explanation of how they did it, these housewives, college kids, small business men, doctors, men and women in the shops and others who devoted Sundays, and evenings, and lunchtimes, to getting signatures. They undertook the impossible, and did it. Robert Kenny, one of California's biggest vote-getters, was quoted as saying when the signature campaign was conceived last summer, that it could succeed only if people learned to walk on water.

Kenny, the state's most charming and maddeningly independent progressive, was not the only leading liberal of the state who was bearish on a third party, however, and the professional politicians were dumbfounded when it qualified. Indeed, a glumness was general even among IPP leaders as well as well-wishers up until January—among everyone but the determined, and angry, men and women who carried around the petitions. In the slums of the Mexican-American communities, where live the most cruelly exploited of all minority groups here, they found many among the 370,000 Mexican-Americans in Los Angeles County who also were angry. Up and down Central Avenue, reputed to be the longest thoroughfare in the country in a largely Negro district, where unemployment is gaining steadily and assuming frightening proportions, they found plenty of anger.

Into the vast South Side, heart of Los Angeles' rubber, steel, auto, aircraft, furniture and packinghouse centers, where Wallace buttons now are blossoming out on shirts and sweaters, the petition circulators

went. In the largest Jewish neighborhood, scarcely a home but had one signer. In January, after Wallace announced himself a third party candidate, the circulators renewed their efforts, and in the final weeks, petitions piled in. Los Angeles passed its quota, and kept on. Then there were the agonizing weeks while the petitions were checked by the Registrar's office, and then the announcement. Weary, trigger-tense men and women sat back and tried to grasp what their accomplishment was, to sense the hope they had flung across a nation.

CLASS lines are sharply drawn here, probably more so than in states whose growth has been less rapid, although there is a great shifting. Comfortably settled retired farmers came here, were induced to speculate with their savings in the boom times, and in the depression found themselves old and penniless. Many came here and made fortunes. More came, and continue to come, to occupy trailer camps. You see hundreds of these little trailer communities, not temporary but permanent, on the South Side, with barefoot, ragged children playing about, summer and winter.

The great corporate agricultural interests and their Associated Farmers, and the great oil companies, dominated by Standard Oil of California, have controlled the state politically since early days. Before that, it was the big farmers and the Southern Pacific Railway. The SP used to pick the state's legislature.

Revolt against the political-machine parties is not something new in California, as Borough describes it. "Old Hiram Johnson had a Progressive party. He created a third party and licked hell out of the Republican machine. He kept his registration in the Progressive party, cross-filed in the Republican, as we can do out here, got the nominations in both and won, while the Republican slate was swept in with him." Johnson campaigned up and down the state, at every cross-roads, on the slogan, "Kick the S. P. out of politics." And they did.

It was two years after Johnson became governor that Borough, a young newspaper man, came out here to make a name for himself writing politics for the liberal Los Angeles *Record.* The progressive fight went on—within the Republican party—and the power trust was beaten and municipal power and light was won.

The next great upheaval in California's political history was the Upton Sinclair revolt, which came soon after Roosevelt's election. In

August, 1933, Sinclair re-registered from the Socialist into the Democratic party, and wrote a book, *I, Governor of California,* a fantasy which almost proved true. Borough became the editor of *EPIC News* at the outset. It swiftly climbed from a struggling 20,000 to a mass circulation of 400,000. The last three issues sold over a million copies each. Money poured in, and all was turned over to the organization; clubs were formed in assembly districts; elections came, and the EPIC slate swept Los Angeles County—all but three of its chosen assemblymen won, including Jack Tenney and Sam Yorty, both turncoats who sold out before many years had passed. Yorty preceded Tenney as head of the Un-American Committee.

"Our mistake was that we kept within the Democratic party," said Borough. "We never took over the machine. It absorbed us, bought off many of our men we put in office. Gradually EPIC fell apart. Except for Assemblyman Gus Hawkins and Vernon Kilpatrick, most of the men we put in betrayed the people."

Borough has great reverence and admiration for Sinclair, but pointed out that he meant only to write a book in the beginning. "When Upton saw that people were moving, that they were stirring like a field of wheat in a wind, and then saw the whole state on fire, he became scared to death, I really think." He smiled.

In 1938, when Culbert Olson was made governor, the state overthrew forty-four years of Republican rule. At the same time Los Angeles progressives won a fight to recall the corrupt Republican Mayor Shaw. Olson betrayed the people almost before he occupied the governor's chair. His first act was almost his last progressive act—the freeing of Tom Mooney. As for Mayor Fletcher Bowron, the incumbent, he took a little longer to turn reactionary. No wonder that Californians are ready for a new party.

ALL during these years vigilantism and police terrorism in Southern California made macabre history. The Merchants & Manufacturers, organized in Los Angeles in 1896, had proclaimed the city home of the open shop. With the aid of police lieutenant "Red" Hynes and his "Red squad," the M & M fought to keep it an open shop city. California's criminal syndicalism laws were not just idle laws. They were used to break up strikes and jail workers. Anita Whitney, Communist leader, was convicted in Oakland, among others. When William Z.

Foster and James W. Ford, Communist Presidential and Vice-Presidential candidates, came to Los Angeles in 1932, Foster was arrested for trying to speak, and cops, by the simple expedient of locking arms in numbers and blocking the entrance, prevented crowds from attending a banquet in honor of Foster and Ford.

Leo Gallagher, noted labor lawyer here, was arrested by Hynes for trying to tell a Negro poet he would defend him. The poet had been arrested when he attempted to speak about the Soviet Union. So great was the hysteria spread by the Los Angeles *Times* and Chamber of Commerce, a jury found Gallagher guilty. But the judge gave him a new trial, remarking there was no evidence, and the case never came to court again. In 1933, Gallagher was slugged and beaten in City Hall by Hynes and his squad. He had gone with a delegation to protest to the City Council the raiding by American Legionnaires of a peaceable meeting in the John Reed Club of Hollywood. (Last winter Legionnaires raided a Democratic club meeting in a citizen's home in the suburb of Glendale, but they were tried and convicted for violating the election code, and the ringleaders fined.)

In 1934, a reign of terror began again in Imperial Valley, where 5,000 Mexican-American, Japanese and Filipino lettuce workers went on strike for a living wage. It was at this time that A. L. Wirin, attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union, armed with a federal court injunction restraining the sheriff from breaking up a workers' meeting in Brawley, was kidnapped, taken into the desert, beaten, robbed, his automobile pushed over an embankment, and left miles from any habitation by the Legionnaire vigilantes.

With the clean-up instituted by Mayor Bowron in his early days, and the growth of the labor movement, particularly the CIO, the long fight of progressives against police terrorism and other hoodlum tactics bore fruit. But as they saw their open and armed force cut off, the "Red squad" and the "snooper squad" done away with, the M & M moved in another direction. And from 1940 on, California has had an Un-American Committee. Its leader, State Senator Tenney, was seen in action aiding the producers during the Hollywood studio strikes. Tenney, who once had headed his union, the Musicians Union, in 1938 —before he was overwhelmingly defeated in 1939—had later become attorney for the California Taxpayers' Association, the real estate lobby, and now used his committee to fight labor.

Tenney's current "subversive" list includes literally hundreds of organizations and every progressive leader in the state. But he goes beyond the bounds of California—his list is nationwide in such fields as literature, education and films. In 1945, Gerald L. K. Smith told the Los Angeles board of education that "my good friend, Senator Jack B. Tenney" would vouch for his character.

Some of the recent fascist acts in Southern California have been attributed to Senator Tenney's inspiration. When a new version of the flaming cross, a hammer and sickle, was burned by a mob of young men on the lawn of Judge Stanley Moffatt, the judge said he blamed Jack Tenney because of the propaganda Tenney was using in an effort to defeat his election. Judge Moffatt is the IPP candidate for Congress from the 18th district, cross-filing for the Democratic nomination. The vandalism occurred one day after Tenney's committee unleashed a Red-baiting attack on the judge. In the same "report" Tenney dreamed up, it was declared that the new party was entirely the "creature of the Communists." The Progressive Citizens of America also was Communist, Tenney "found." (Of course it is no secret that individual Communists played a part in the signature campaign here, and that they are not excluded from membership in PCA, which also played a part in the campaign. And the Communist Party organization of Los Angeles is the country's second largest.)

SENATOR TENNEY himself resembles a large, plump, overripe fruit of some variety, with a double-breasted suit draped around its most bulbous portion, and watery blue eyes set in its exposed end. The flesh below the eyes looks as if should you poke it in it would remain that way. The mouth is wide and the lips are thin and flaccid.

I have heard midwesterners say that tomatoes out here are much bigger than tomatoes at home, that they are beautiful, that they are luscious. But they don't smell like tomatoes, or taste much like tomatoes. This is not the case with Senator Tenney. He smells like Representative J. Parnell Thomas, very much like him. He simply smells more like Thomas than Thomas does.

The most recent Tenney committee hearings were held the February week that the IPP filed its almost half a million signatures. The press devoted columns to the hearings, played down the IPP.

The Tenney committee procedure was similar to the Thomas com-

mittee's in the Hollywood cases. Instead of the voice of Robert E. Stripling, the old Dies committee counsel, you heard the more sonorous voice of Counsel Richard Combs reading dossiers. Tenney, like Thomas, brushed aside most of the witnesses' statements, not even allowing them in the record, let alone to be read aloud.

But more important, the hearings bore another resemblance to those in Washington. Heretofore California's progressives tended to ridicule Tenney or appease him when called before him. But for the first time, witnesses seriously challenged him. Heartened by the attitude of the Hollywood Ten, witness after witness refused to be blitzed into giving yes or no answers. By the time the hearings were ended, Senator Tenney was completely routed.

Twice Tenney had the ebullient William Esterman, counsel for the Actors' Lab celebrities Rose Hobart and others, and now an IPP candidate for Congress, thrown out bodily by policemen. Before hearing the witnesses represented by another attorney, John McTernan, Tenney put him on the stand and subjected him to a long inquisition. But he saved the real going-over for the lawyer's wife, Katherine McTernan, teacher of economics at People's Education Center.

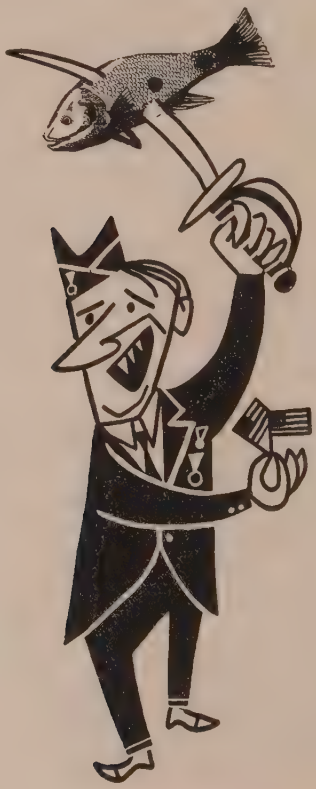
Mrs. McTernan readily admitted the thoroughly-recorded fact—in numerous engraved invitations and elsewhere—that the American-Russian Institute had held a reception in her home for visiting women Soviet dignitaries. But she balked at saying whether she attended a meeting the following night for the same guests under the same auspices in the Unitarian Church. This, she said, was a matter of her own private conscience. "I don't know that I am accountable to this committee for the meetings I go to." Tenney taunted her. She had "something to conceal." She was "ashamed and worried." But Mrs. McTernan was unshaken. She said she felt "free to assemble with people where and when I like until I break a law." She said that "if the agents of Mr. Tenney's committee are taking the license numbers of the people who are present at meetings" she felt all the more obligated to answer the question as "conscientiously" as she had done.

When he questioned her again and again, she said, "It seems to me that this is approaching browbeating." The Senator threatened her with contempt citation. He threw the $64 question at her. She said she knew the Bill of Rights "and I do not at this time want to show in any way that I can be intimidated into violating the principles and values of

our American tradition." Tenney's reply was a sneer, and to tell her "the committee is well aware of the fact that you are a member of the Communist Party," and to tell her that in 1940 the committee sent twenty-eight persons at Stockton to prison terms for refusing to answer that question. The audience was hushed, tense.

Mrs. McTernan's voice was low, it shook occasionally, but her eyes blazed anger. Taking a deep breath, she said, "I would like to say that this whole committee and its whole set-up is an effort to intimidate people against acting, teaching, thinking in some way that you do not approve, and I think that it is very, very wise of me to point out that there are certain political liberties in the United States that we all should and can live by."

No, the lot of a progressive in California is not an easy one. But neither is the fascist's.



BLESSED ARE THE RIGHTEOUS . . .

ED: "I don't blame the gent for going out of business. Well, you know what I blame the gent for? When he stands around saying, 'All the world's all wrong, I ain't good. I don't make enough money. Meow, meow, meow.' But if a guy goes out and hustles and tries to get a little dough, I'm for it. I may laugh at him, and I may say in amazement and astonishment —for instance when I see some joint charging ten bucks for a steak—."

PEGEEN: "Ha ha."

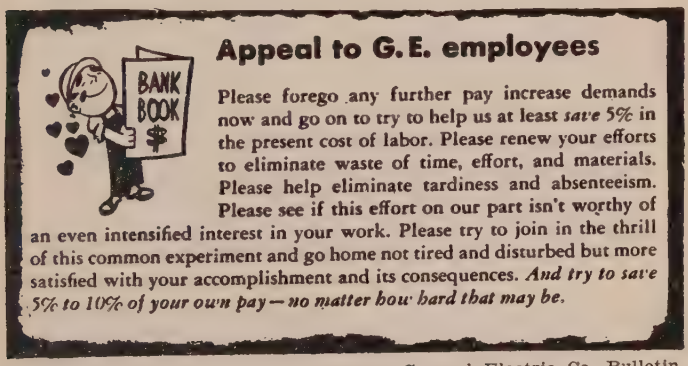
ED: "But I admire the guy. I admire a burglar. I'd admire a guy that steals a hot stove."

PEGEEN: "You admire a burglar?"

ED: "Yes. I admire free enterprise."

—*A recent broadcast of The Fitzgeralds (WJZ, New York).*

BLESSED ARE THE POOR . . .



From a General Electric Co. Bulletin.

BLESSED ARE THE PURE IN HEART

"MORALLY UNOBJECTIONABLE FOR ADULTS: *Adventures of Casanova, Brute Force, Brute Man, Dishonored Lady, Kiss of Death, Killer McCoy.*

"MORALLY OBJECTIONABLE IN PART FOR ALL: *Best Years of Our Lives, Gentleman's Agreement, Monsieur Verdoux, Open City, The Searching Wind, Shoe Shine.*"—From the current classification of motion pictures by the Legion of Decency.

Three Poems

by THOMAS MCGRATH

A WARRANT FOR PABLO NERUDA

With the fury of cinders, with the despair of dusty
Great meat-eating birds stuffed under glass, with
The public stealth of rust on wedding rings
The shriveled bureaucrats with flag-false eyes—
Smug as one-legged guides of the blind

Or politicians impersonating men—
Water their withered bible, loosen the night's black
Knife and now on the polo fields of the rich
Exercise the clanking hounds of illusion
And oil up a warrant for the twentieth century.

They are hunting for you, Neruda. And who now
Will stop them from stuffing the wild birds of the forest
With the blue fission of national neuroses? Who
Will found the myth of Copper? Who at Magellan's
Delta remember the ritual of forgiveness?

No one but you. No one but you. It is just.
They must hunt you, because of what they have forgotten:
The name of the buried miner. (The bronze face of wheat,
The river of indulgence that flowed from O'Higgins side,
Dries in their heads like moss in a filing cabinet.)

And what of Bolivar's tears, curling like purple chips
From the lathes of usury? They go with you to the high
Andes where police cannot marshal a true man to hunt you—
No, though the Supreme Court, unhappily sane
And naked, run through the downtown streets, shouting

That laws have become just, black white, odd even—
No. The Conspiracy of October Lilacs is against them;
The Fronde of Innocence cocks a summer rifle.
The Union of Barley is on strike, and everywhere
An alchemy of resistance transmutes your flowering name.

FIRST BOOK OF GENESIS ACCORDING TO MARSHALL

On the first day they drowned the orphans,
The blue-eyed ones, in threes, in diplomats' pouches.
The dollar stood at four pounds of flesh in open market
And all markets were opened by the President,
Officially, on the first day.

The second day some opposition
Was begun by workers. These were all shot down
By students of the Radicals for Vandenberg movement.
Two million died in sin mortal and venial and
In hunger on the second day;

And were buried, noon, on the third day
In two speeches, given by the Secretary
Who said they were foreigners, et cetera. The Poet
Laureate was observed hustling et cetera,
Officially, on the third day.

The fourth day was unofficial. Five
Officials of the Western Democracies were
Purchased, and some English peers. A brown rubber Bible
In a goldfish bowl was presented to a king.
The goldfish died on the fourth day.

The fifth day was the Apocalypse
Of Peoria. But the invaders
Turned out to be a seal with a bicycle bell and two
Margarine golfballs in a birdcage. The Mayor
Had to resign on the fifth day.

On the sixth day Congress with a gun
At the taxpayer's head asked not to be provoked.
It wasn't. The Society of Atomic Widows made
The Statue of Liberty a charter member
Regretfully on the sixth day.

On the seventh day *Time* held out hope
That orphans with black-roofed mouths would not be drowned—
Or those in West Europe at least. Later the President
Took over the portfolio of Usury
And Wretchedness that seventh day.

But in the new week Congress could not be sure:
They had bought statesmen but would they stay bought?
They founded the feast of the Transformation of Liberals
But the very birds were beginning to rebel,
To sing a strange language,

And on the cold plateau of Spain, by the broad Yalu,
In hamlets on the tidy fields of France,
The accursed poor who can never be bought
Clothed with their flesh against the Pharaoh's sword
A terrible infant, child of their desire.

VISION OF THREE ANGELS VIEWING THE PROGRESS OF SOCIALISM

And the first with his hands folded and a money belt for a truss
Said looking into east Europe: Well I will be damned and buggered,
Having been a banker in real life, to see how those burrowing beggars
Live without mortgages or rents and with no help from us.

And the second who had been a soldier in civilian life said: Jesus
Christ they'll never believe me when I tell the boys in the squad-room
That no one down there says sir, and they won't believe what's harder,
That even bughouse nuts don't want to be Julius Caesar.

And the third with the teamster's cap and calluses on his wing
Said: I fell away from the flesh and into the hands of heaven
But the working stiffs down there are finally getting even
So I'll stick around until Judgment. Heaven is a sometime thing.

Persimmon Seed

A Story by YOSHIO ABE

MY FATHER came from a province in Japan which was famous for its *kaki,* the Japanese persimmon. The potter Kaki-emon, who had caught the glorious color of *kaki* in the autumn sun in his pottery, had lived and toiled in the nearby village, and the drudgery Kaki-emon had to suffer still persisted when my father left Japan. I asked him why he left the *kaki* country for America. He grinned and said meaningfully: "If it wasn't for *kaki,* I wouldn't be telling this story here."

My mother looked at him suspiciously and continued to darn stockings. I adjusted myself in the chair and propped my elbows on the kitchen table. The stove standing behind my mother still gave out heat from the cooking although we had finished supper before it got dark. The oil lamp flickered. There was no radio in the parlor and no refrigerator in the kitchen in those days. The night wind howled by the barn.

"*Kaki* is beautiful but never so beautiful as in the autumn sun in Japan," my father began his story. My mother kept on darning. I pictured the Japanese scenery with fascination.

My father was walking on the dirt road in his straw sandals, a handcart trailing behind him. The evening sun was pleasantly warm upon his face, and the black crows were homing westward in the sky. My father never stopped to think why he was happy whenever he walked toward the sun. He arose in the morning and clapped his hands to worship the rising sun, and went to the field which lay eastward from his father's cottage. He came home from the field when the sun was low in the west. He walked in the sun, worked in the sun and came home with the sun. And he was happy; he was eighteen, and he would become somebody in the village before long.

He was especially high spirited today on his way home from a new

experience in the city. He idled on a thought about the sun and happiness. Happy men always faced the sun. Was it because you never stepped on your own shadow and nothing interfered with the communication between the sun and you? Was the shadow a reflection of your own evil spirit? Was the shadow a stumbling block on your way to happiness? A priest of the Buddhist temple in the mountain would tell you that desires are evil shadows cast upon you by your body. You could not escape from this world and attain Nirvana as long as you were bound in the flesh.

"But," my father protested, "I am happy coming home from the city with lots of money and goods." The nestling sun was benevolent upon him. "Every fish-eating priest is tripe," he concluded, and bounced himself, hanging on to the cart-handle.

The dusty road skirted a wood which was gay with autumn color. My father would spot a chestnut tree by its yellow leaves. It seemed only yesterday that he gathered chestnuts in the woods with village children. But the excitement of the thorns in the chestnuts no longer attracted him. It seemed only a day ago that he scurried to gather mushrooms in the mountain filled with the scent of fallen leaves and fungus. But the quiet of underbrush in the mountain no longer lured him. He was not a village urchin with running nose and shining sleeve but a man about to rise above the commonness of the villager. Think of what he had accomplished today. He had been entrusted with his neighbor's rice to sell on the sly because his neighbor was a tenant farmer who had no right to cash his crop before the landlord came to collect the rent in rice. But he needed the money to send his daughter, who suffered from rickets, to a doctor. The sale had been successful. Now my father looked about him with pride although there was no one to cast an envious eye upon him. Only the handcart rattled to please him.

The road swung into the field. Beyond the harvested field lay a cluster of brown straw-thatched roofs of peasant houses, like mushrooms. A layer of long and flattened smoke hung over the roofs. It was the village from which his mother had come.

My father looked searchingly at the village. He squinted, and remembered his bad eyesight. Then he sighted a small figure squatting by a well which had a long swing-arm standing above it. The well belonged to one of his remote kin, but he could not make out who it was.

Suddenly the figure stood up and he saw that it was a girl. She put her hand up to shade her eyes from the sun and observed him. He recognized her. She was the one who giggled when he slapped her buttocks in the dark of the harvest dance last year. He tried to call out, but lost his voice. The girl looked about her and when she found no one was around watching her, she waved her hand at him—a daring gesture from a tradition-bound village girl. He answered by waving his hand, too, and lost his balance in the frame of the cart-handle. He jerked the cart in punishment. He swaggered. The girl was apparently giggling. She had her kimono tucked up to her hip to protect it from the splash of water, and her underskirt was eye-filling.

"I'll never forget the scene. It's still before my eye. The color of the scene—the girl standing by the well under the persimmon tree in the evening sun, the flaming red of her underskirt, the golden hue of *kaki,* and everything shining. I can even remember her jet black hair shining in the slanting sun." My father sighed.

He was a hard man, but now his eye lost its fierceness. He was looking at something remote which I could not see. There was a new child-like luster in his eye. I could become very friendly with him with the kind of eye he had now. My father lowered his gaze to the table, then followed the movement of the needle in my mother's hand, and looked up at her teasingly.

I glanced at my mother, asking if the girl he mentioned in the story might be she. She pursed her lips, and slowly shook her head. I did not like the glare in her eye. It was the same look she had once when a lady from the city asked my father to carry her in his arms because she had sprained her ankle in the mud.

"You never told me this story before," my mother said reproachfully.

"I'm telling you now," my father assured her calmly.

MY FATHER decided to buy the girl a trinket on his next trip to the city. He would show her his deep concern. With this happy thought in his mind he continued to journey home, his handcart lightly rattling behind him.

When he approached a defile, he looked back at the village once more. It was sunk in the evening haze and no longer showed the maiden by the well. Instantly he was very lonesome. All the surroundings seemed hostile and the road home unnecessarily long. My father

Illustration by Al Blaustein

sighed. Alone in the shadow of the mountain through which the defile cut, my father sighed again. Then he heard a rustle in the bush. The spot was notorious as an evil place where spirits and goblins abounded. My father was more than frightened when a voice addressed him.

"Oi, Asa! It's been a long time since we've met."

My father was startled and jumped aside.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the voice in the bush. There was a rustling of leaves and breaking of twigs. "I did not mean to frighten you, Asa."

A cold sweat running down his side, my father, Asa-taro, stood transfixed in the middle of the road and waited for the voice to materialize. The apparition became a man, no longer an incarnation of Tanuki, the badger, of whom my father was afraid. The man was his maternal uncle, Tomo-emon. My father sighed with relief, although his uncle was called a good-for-nothing in the village.

He was always popping up with a new-fangled idea for improving agricultural methods, but he was only an afternoon farmer himself. Tomo-emon was shunned by his relatives and the villagers.

Now he urged Asa-taro to walk homeward, and started to walk alongside him. Tomo-emon carried a cloth bag which bulged with its contents. After the ceremonious inquiry into the family's health, Tomo-emon changed to a buoyant tone and said, "It's sugar persimmon. Here, take it."

A bag of *kaki* from a hog! Asa-taro should have sensed a trap right then and there, but his mind was foggy from weariness after the long and hectic day. And the day was drawing to its close when the evil spirits lurked to meet the night.

Asa-taro was afraid. He needed an assurance that he could reach home safely. No matter what his reputation, Tomo-emon was his uncle, after all. "Thank you, uncle." He was grateful.

He took the bag of persimmons from Tomo-emon. He tried to tie the bag to the cart-handle, and fumbled. He could not manipulate his fingers on the bag-string.

"Let me," Tomo-emon offered. Instead of tying the bag to the handle bar, Tomo-emon held it in his hand and smiled a wry smile which was more like a sneer. He said, "I'll carry it for you."

Tomo-emon nodded. "Mind if I eat one?"

"Please do. It's yours. You don't have to ask me."

"I gave it to you, and it's not mine."

"Why so formal between uncle and nephew?"

"Well. . . ." Tomo-emon hesitated and then said, "That's right." He untied the string and opened the mouth of the bag.

The two of them walked out of the defile. An open field spread under their feet; there was no sun to be seen in the west. Asa-taro became frightened again. He shouldn't have wasted his time in the city haggling with the cloth merchants. He looked at the road winding downhill with mournful eye. Tomo-emon played with the *kaki* he had

taken out of the bag in his hand. "I'm going to the next village. I'll go along with you to where the lane forks off to your home," he said.

"Yes. Thank you. I must hurry." Asa-taro was irritated by the leisurely way his uncle walked beside him. "My mother is waiting for me."

Asa-taro hurried, and pushed by the weight of the cart on the downhill road, he stumbled. Tomo-emon grabbed the cart-handle and steadied him.

"What's the matter, can't you see?"

"I can see all right. Damn the public road officials. The grade."

Asa-taro did not want to show his weakness, especially to his uncle who might take advantage of it if he could. Tomo-emon kept playing with the *kaki* in his hand, a smirk on his wizened face. Squinting over his shoulder, Asa-taro watched his uncle with apprehension. "Why don't you eat it?" he asked shortly.

"I will. I was just thinking about a girl who said she liked you. I have a very sharp eye. Don't let me think you don't know this girl. She was washing clothes by the well when I left the village," Tomo-emon said in an undertone.

Asa-taro did not reply. He was confused. It tickled him to hear that the girl for whom he had decided to buy a trinket was in love with him. But, he reflected, would she say such a thing openly to the man who was shunned by her folks? How did Tomo-emon come to know of his feelings? Had his uncle watched him all the while? Asa-taro felt a pain in his heart.

"If you are not afraid of the darkness, come and see me some night," Tomo-emon continued nonchalantly. He watched his nephew from the corner of his eye. "We'll sneak up to her house under cover of darkness, and as I know the way to her bedroom, I'll let you slip in. Yeh? I'll stand watch while you sleep with her, and if her family should wake, I'll make a big noise so that you'll have ample time to escape. Well, how's that sound to you?"

Tomo-emon had almost won Asa-taro over.

"DID you go and sleep with that girl, did you?" My mother raised her voice suddenly. She had pricked her finger with the needle, and she sucked the hurt finger as she said it. Her voice came from the corner of her mouth and her white teeth flashed while the finger was resting on her lip. "Disgusting story," she said.

My father laughed till the tears came. My mother looked helplessly at the pile of stockings in front of her.

He wiped his eyes with his big discolored thumbs. His hands were always dirty no matter how hard he scrubbed them. My mother chided him often for his uncleanliness. She wanted to raise a decent family and I was not supposed to follow my father's example. My father's hand smelled of the earth, and I liked it. We dirtied ourselves, father with earth and I with grime—we were a headache to my mother.

"No, no. That's not the point of my story," my father said placatingly to her.

"You never told me this story before—how should I know?" protested my mother.

"No. I never slept with the girl." My father looked at my mother with a teasing twinkle in his eye. "You miss the whole point of the story."

"You haven't come to the point yet, huh, Papa?" I said wisely, and pouted.

"No. It's yet to come," he said, and I liked the way he looked at me. It gave me a warm feeling of being trusted.

"You shouldn't tell him such stories. He's a baby still." My mother held the threaded needle in mid-air.

"There's no harm in telling a most natural thing to him. But that isn't the point." My father showed his irritation in his voice. I knew he was tired from the long day in the field. "The point is, Tomo-emon was cooking up something which I did not suspect." He hurried back to his story. "I did not know his scheme but I was annoyed by his insinuation—using the girl as a decoy. Understand? So, I said to him, why don't you eat it—the *kaki* he was tossing in the air, you know."

"Yeah, but it's a pity just to eat it when both of us can amuse ourselves with it," said Tomo-emon.

"How can you have it and eat it at the same time?" demanded Asa-taro.

"Now, you're talking, Asa. I knew you were a bright kid since you were this high. You catch on quick. You'll rise above your, er, unscrupulous father, er, your worthy father," he added hastily.

Tomo-emon rubbed the *kaki* in his hand. He polished it deliberately as if he were kneading a rice cake in his hand, while he carried the cloth bag under his arm. He nodded to himself.

"*Kaki* has many seeds," he began contemplatively, "as you very well know. I'm not going to tell you the old wives' tale of the battle between the monkey and the crab over *kaki.* This is more practical. It's a civilized world we're living in today. Right? None of that old stuff. Now, you guess the number of seeds in this *kaki,* and I'll do the same. I eat the *kaki,* or if you want to, you eat the *kaki.* And as you eat, count the seeds. If the number of seeds is odd, the one who guessed even loses. Understand? It's the game of odd and even. But the game doesn't end there." Tomo-emon paused, and weighed the *kaki* in his hand. He continued with an obvious lightness. "You bet a small amount of money when you guess. See? You double your money if you win."

"Ah, it's a gamble. I don't play with money," Asa-taro interrupted angrily.

Tomo-emon gaped. This little chunk of awkward youth was costing him no little effort. He snorted and said with disgust: "Like father like son. Huh. I mistook you for a man. Evidently you still drink your mother's milk. No girl in my village will sleep with a half-grown man like you."

"You take that back! I stand on my own feet and nobody looks after me but myself. You know what I've. . . ."Asa-taro checked himself. He sensed the danger of revealing his success in the trade.

"All right," Tomo-emon shouted, and smiled inwardly. "If you think you are a better man than your father, show your manhood by coming to my village in the dark of night and sneaking up on that girl. That's the test. But show your courage now by competing with me in this innocent game of chance. I am your uncle, Asa. I don't want to take your hard-earned money away. It's only to amuse ourselves. There is no harm in playing with money. What is money for but to buy something? You buy your chance in this game to get more money. You're lucky in everything, girls too. Well, shall we try one game and see how it is?"

Asa-taro knew that his resistance would wear out eventually. He clung desperately to the idea that Tomo-emon would not dare to cheat his own nephew. Besides, he needed someone to accompany him home in the darkness. "Play small, so that no one gets hurt," he said timidly.

Asa-taro did not realize the gathering speed of the darkness because he was winning in the game. His suspicion melted under the warmth of money. His uncle placed the coins in his hand after each

game was over, impressing him that the game should be strictly on a cash basis. As soon as Asa-taro realized that he could not see the *kaki* seeds, he demanded that the seeds should be placed in his palm to be counted. Tomo-emon readily consented. And Asa-taro began to lose heavily. His chance to regain his losses remained in the number of *kaki* in the bag, and they were dwindling.

The pitch-black night surrounded them and moved along with the quarrelsome voices in its center. Asa-taro was almost crying. He was desperate. Tomo-emon became abusive. They felt the *kaki* in the darkness and passed the seeds from hand to hand. The road, like a wisp of white smoke, loomed in the darkness but Asa-taro was not following it. He ditched his handcart several times and cried out for help. Tomo-emon kept on persuading Asa-taro to quit because he had lost his head over the game. When it was apparent that there were no more coins in his nephew's purse, he said he did not want to take any more money away from him. Asa-taro had lost not only his money but also his father's and neighbor's as well. And the last *kaki* had disappeared.

Asa-taro broke into tears. He begged. He whined and protested. He clung to his uncle's arm and pleaded with him to lend him the money he had lost.

Tomo-emon laughed. "Are you a man? Like father like son. Tell your father." His laughter sounded like Tanuki's. And without a goodbye he disappeared altogether. Only his laughter remained after the night had swallowed him.

Abandoned in the darkness, lost in the hateful night, Asa-taro cried over his fate. He could never see his people again. If only he had not slackened his suspicion of the humbug who claimed that he could introduce him to the girl who stood in the evening sun by the well under the persimmon tree! If only he had not been afraid to travel alone in the darkness! If only he had not wished to add a little more to his money! Ah desire, source of all evils as the priest of the Buddhist temple said, had ruined him. He cried until his little sister came to meet him with a lantern.

When he got home his mother insisted that Asa-taro had been possessed by an evil spirit, probably the Tanuki, and had thrown away the money like a madman. His father did not take his eyes off Asa-taro and held his peace until his wife had finished. She wanted to go out

in the darkness and retrace Asa-taro's path which would surely be strewn with money instead of *kaki* seeds.

His father came to Asa-taro at last. He held a lamp over his head, and scanned his son's face. He sniffed, his nose touching Asa-taro's mouth. And he nodded significantly to himself. He smelled a piquant odor like *sake* on Asa-taro's lips which had tasted many persimmons in his desperation to win back the money.

"You're drunk. You fool. You have gone out of your mind—spending money on wine and women in the city, and blaming it on your uncle! I never thought my own son would turn into a cowardly sneak, taking advantage of his uncle's bad reputation to cover up his misdeeds. And my neighbor's money! You silly ass. Get out, get out of this house! You have ruined my face, you ass!" His father thundered: "Get out! I shall never call you my son until you return with the money."

"AND that's why I came to America," said my father. He looked at the ceiling where the shadow of the lamp played, and rubbed his small nose with his thumb. If it was the end of the story I was not satisfied. I watched him. He tweaked a hair in his nose, and grunted. My mother lifted her head sharply, and bit into the last stocking she was mending. She cut the thread with her teeth. My mother always protested against father pulling hairs from his nose; she was afraid that I might follow his example.

"Were you really fooled by Tanuki, the badger, or did your uncle cheat you?" my mother asked him slowly.

"I was fooled by my youth," Father stated philosophically. "The potter Kaki-emon saw beauty in *kaki,* and I in money. So I was cheated."

"Where did you get the money to buy a steamship ticket, Papa?"

My father looked at my mother with surprise, and then they both turned toward me. I was warm in their sight, though the night wind howled outside.

"Tomo-emon gave me the money to buy the ticket," my father said off-handedly. I was surprised to hear that. "When Tomo-emon learned that I was kicked out of my home, disowned, and that I was looking for passage to America to vindicate my shame, he gave me the money.

Not only the money he had taken away from me but also some of his own."

I was more puzzled. It did not make sense that Tomo-emon who had cheated my father would give him money to come over here. Tomo-emon was the villain; his charity shattered the picture I had of him. "It's funny he'd give you money. I wouldn't, if I were him," I protested.

"Tomo-emon was despised in the village because he rebelled against poverty. He scorned the hard-working people who produced nothing for themselves but misery. He wanted to get away from the country, but his attachment to the village was stronger than his rebellious spirit."

"Then why did Tomo-emon want to cheat you in the *kaki* game in the first place?"

"It was an old family feud. Tomo-emon held a grudge against my father who was a very shrewd man. He could not forgive my father for marrying his sister against his wish. He took every chance to revenge his bitterness upon my father. I was the target of his revenge that night. Otherwise he was a good uncle to me. When he learned that I was disowned by my father, he was satisfied, and in order to put my father to shame, he advanced me the money."

"You don't hold any grudge against him, Papa?"

"No. He was a peculiar man, but a good soul, in a way."

"Dead?"

"Yes. And I never repaid him," said my father gruffly. "Well, that's enough for tonight."

My mother stood up as if by command and gathered the stockings in her apron. I ran to her and offered to help. She motioned with her chin for me to open the bedroom door.

"The crab in the fable is wiser than Papa. The crab planted the persimmon seed and beat the monkey at his game," my mother said ironically.

"Tell me the story of the monkey and the crab and the *kaki* seed," I implored her, tugging at her skirt and following her into the cold bedroom.

"Papa did not tell you that you cannot bite into a green *kaki*. Ach, *kaki* is very bitter when it's young!" she said good humoredly.

I heard my father laugh in the kitchen, and I laughed too, though I didn't know what my mother meant.

books in review

HERO'S DIARY

NOTES FROM THE GALLOWS, by Julius Fuchik. *New Century.* $.60.

JULIUS FUCHIK was a Czech, a professional journalist and a poet. In the time before he died, slain by the Nazis for the sin of loving his native land, he wrote down what he saw and thought. So it was that, working at his precious and beloved craft to the very end, he left us an invaluable document and record of what those taken by the Gestapo saw and suffered.

Fuchik was well equipped for this last generous work. A creative writer, a figure known and loved throughout his country, he was also a political leader, a member of the Central Committee of the Czech Communist Party. He was taken by the Gestapo in 1942. Only a few weeks passed before one of the guards, a member of the people's movement, managed to pass him pencil and paper. Already, in the interim, Fuchik had been cruelly beaten and tortured, tested to the very marrow of his soul.

As he tells it, the guard whispered to him, ". . . would you like to write? Not for present publication, you understand, but for the future. How you got in here, whether anyone betrayed you, how certain ones behaved. Just so what you know doesn't pass out with you."

And Fuchik comments, "Would I like to write? As though that weren't my most fervent desire!"

And so, for the year that followed, Fuchik set down, in fragments, in almost random notes—a disconnected yet wonderfully related narrative of his prison experience. The result is a unique, exalting, terrifying study of men put to the highest test, a document of the inestimable worth of the human spirit liberated from the dross of ignorance, fear and superstition, and a covenant between the Communist Party and the human race. It is in the light of these factors that this last will and testament of Julius Fuchik must be considered, and it is in the light of these factors that it must be judged. That Fuchik wrote well should, of course, be stated. He was a working journalist, and I would hazard the guess that he considered it a duty to handle the tools of his craft adroitly, even on the way to death. Yet the point is not whether he wrote well or

poorly; the point is that he catalyzed the bravery and unselfishness of thousands like him—and that he did so with love, compassion, and such faith in the process of life itself as has rarely been set down in print.

That is why, in today's Europe, the notes of Julius Fuchik are like a bell that rings from one end of the continent to the other. That is why, across the face of the earth, men of every color and every race are reading Fuchik, drawing new sustenance out of his boundless and quiet strength.

And I think Fuchik knew that something of this sort would happen. As a writer, I can sense his love for the word, his belief in the cool and irresistible logic of the written proof. He did not want to die. Every word he wrote reflected his passion for life, his abiding love for his fellow man, his adoration of lovely Prague, his supreme interest in his work as a Communist. He wrote to perpetuate himself; he wrote so that his love might continue, so that his work might continue, so that even when his heart ceased to beat, he would still be a Communist and a fighter for freedom. He was no student of "unconscious creation." He fashioned each word as a weapon and sent it forth to do what it could. Nowhere in his book is there a trace of self-pity, of cheap sentimentality, of fraudulent emotion. The prose is like the man, proud, upright and conscious of its purpose.

Like thousands of other Communists, Julius Fuchik died so that men might be free. Several times he makes the point that he differs only in voice. He is allowed to leave his testament behind; nameless and silent, the others died, and therefore he speaks for them.

I cannot write objectively in these times of Fuchik's book. I can only take his hand, which is so strong in death, and thank him. He leaves the world to the living, and the fight he bequeaths us is a fight worth making. Thus he put it in his own will:

"I press the hand of every comrade who lives through this last battle, and those who come after us. A handclasp for Gustina and for me; we who did our duty.

"And I repeat, we live for happiness, for that we went to battle, for that we die. Let grief never be connected with our name."

HOWARD FAST

Freedom's Partisans

TO BE FREE: STUDIES IN AMERICAN NEGRO HISTORY, by Herbert Aptheker. *International.* $2.75.

IN THIS book, Herbert Aptheker has made some of the most important of the new contributions to the history of the Negro in America. As he says in his introduction:

"The Negro's past runs through the warp and woof of the fabric

that is America. His history must be understood not only because it is the history of some fifteen million American citizens, but also because American life as a whole cannot be understood without knowing that history."

And he goes on to remark that what is needed now is prolonged and rigorous research into the still largely untapped source materials. Nothing can replace this basic procedure, if Negro history is to be lifted above the level of "fantasy, mythology, wish-fulfillment and bigotry." This book makes a notable contribution and touches and changes many aspects of heretofore received Negro history.

First, it shows that the Maroons, the guerrilla movement of slave rebels which we think of as being confined to the West Indies and Central America, were really prevalent in the United States during the whole period of slavery. Then he takes up the extent to which slaves bought their freedom, and the legal basis of this curious procedure. He traces in the Abolition

Eugene Karlin

movement the rise of militancy, which culminated with John Brown and the Civil War, and shows how far the idea of fighting for freedom was prevalent, both among Negroes and whites. He examines the reports of Negro casualties in the Civil War, and shows how they have been underestimated and why the casualties were so great. The author makes some inquiry as to the number of Negroes in the Union Navy, and has an interesting chapter on the effort at organization among Negroes during the year 1865. His book ends with a study of the almost unknown Negro leader in Mississippi, Charles Caldwell. It will be seen that here is a series of studies throwing new light upon American Negro history.

The number of groups of Negroes, who, in the South itself, in its swamps and mountains, fought continuously for freedom from 1672 to 1864 is astonishing and contradicts "the ancient cliché still reiterated that American Negro slavery was characterized by placidity." The figures about the buying of freedom by slaves are interesting and especially the fact that the slave code recognized certain rights of property among Negroes in nearly all of the colonies, and that from the earliest days an astonishing number of Negroes bought their freedom. For instance, it was said in 1830 that of the Negroes in Cincinnati 476 had purchased themselves at an average of $450 each, representing a total expenditure of almost $250,000.

Mr. Aptheker names a number of persons who bought themselves and others. Alethia Turner, once a slave of Thomas Jefferson, bought herself, her sister, ten children and five grandchildren at a cost of $5,250. John C. Stanley, a free Negro of North Carolina, bought and paid for twenty-three persons. Sometimes Negroes raised this money by lectures in the North, and many of the most distinguished Negro leaders, like Richard Allen, Fanny Coppin and James Derham, had their freedom bought and paid for by themselves or their friends.

The story of militancy in Abolitionism is of great interest. Even among Quakers resistance to slavery was tolerated. In New England and the rest of the United States at the time of the Haitian Revolution; among white people North and South, and Negroes like Horton, Young and David Walker, fighting for freedom was defended. Wendell Phillips advocated it time and time again, as did Theodore Parker, David Ruggles, Congressman Giddings, Henry Highland Garnet, until the climax was reached in the martyrdom of John Brown, the insurrectionary movement among Negroes during the Civil War, and their acceptance as recognized soldiers.

Mr. Aptheker points out that the usually received figures as to losses among Negro soldiers during the Civil War need revision. In addition to soldiers, an estimate

says that something like 200,000 to 250,000 men and women were in the army's ranks as workers and spies of some sort. In the Union Navy, an estimate made in 1902 says that the number of Negroes enlisted was 29,411.

Most interesting in the book is the account of conventions which took place among Southern Negroes in 1865, in practically every Southern state. They made intelligent demands, rejecting colonization, welcoming the support of white allies, and protesting against unfair labor practices. They asked for the right to vote, to testify in courts, to own land, to obtain an education, to bear arms, to receive better wages and to eliminate all invidious distinctions based upon race.

The book closes with the remarkable martyrdom of Charles Caldwell, who fought inconspicuously but consistently for freedom and stood up to white men as only a brave black man could do. The whites, said his widow, marched into her house and went where his and his brother's dead bodies lay and cursed them, and danced, and threw open the windows and sung their songs and challenged the dead to get up and meet them!

This is an inspiring book. It is small enough to be read of an evening, but its carefully arranged notes and references may well be the starting point to a new series of studies of the role of the Negro in American history.

W. E. B. Du Bois

DOWN TO SIZE

THE TIME IS NOON, by Hiram Haydn. *Crown Publishers.* $3.50.

A QUEER thing has happened to heroes of American fiction. They used to start small, medium, or moderately large on the first page and end big on the last. Now—the more they shrink the larger they're presumed to be. And if, like Mr. Haydn's hero, they can finally achieve the dimensions of a pre-school child, incapable of serious belief in any virtues but his own, suspicious of all disciplines, radiant with self-importance, they will be greeted by Mr. Orville Prescott of the New York *Times* with little cries of Lo! and Oh, and acclaimed by other critics as giant facsimiles of The Independent Man. We have met him before, near the period of Mr. Haydn's novel—1929—but he had not shrunk so much then. He was merely the "disappointed" or "ironic," sometimes genuinely tragic man retreating into himself from a culture strangled by ticker-tape.

But revulsion to ticker-tape is an old tale by now. Mr. Haydn's 1929 hero has been transplanted to a more modern literary setting of ideas, which gives him an opportunity to retreat also from a force that is more evident and powerful than in the days of Hoover: the actively progressive movement typified by the Communist Party. By the time *that* shrinkage is completed, the hero has attained to proportions that would fit him exactly into a Max Lerner editorial.

We cannot complain, however, that Mr. Haydn has started his man small. When we meet Sol Krassovsky on page 101, he is a sound and militant radical, a student who uses his column in the college paper to expose the trustees' attempt to place God in a team with big business and athletics. For this he is expelled from school and beaten nearly to death by a student group of wealthy anti-Semites and sadists—the best written scene in the book, as credible as it is ferocious. Going on to New York, Sol meets up with some Communists, is attracted to their Marxism, and goes so far as to write three book reviews for *New Masses.* A breathless hint is dropped that he might even become a party member.

But at that point Mr. Haydn steps in—it is time for the dwindling to begin. As usual it begins with a process that has virtually become an occupational disease of deserters: Sol is "disillusioned." In his case the process is swift and exceedingly simple; he has only to discover that a staff member of *New Masses* (a "hatchet-woman") has revised the last paragraph of one of his reviews. Now this is undoubtedly a serious matter (as a former hatchet-woman

of *New Masses* myself, I should like to say that I usually found it more effective to eliminate last paragraphs altogether), and one can hardly blame Sol for taking his independent mind over to a *liberal* monthly where the editors, full of chuckles, contentment and cute metaphors, have "more fun than a barrel of monkeys." They send Sol to cover the Gastonia trials, assuring him that they want only Truth, he need never worry again about party lines.

Sol should be perfectly happy now; but here an odd thing occurs. As a rule, a person disillusioned with a program or a movement more or less forgets it. He goes on to something else, as Sol supposedly has done, and if the rejected organization comes up in discussion he can talk about it, if not dispassionately, at least confidently and without undue sweating. Not our disillusioned liberal. From Gastonia he sends articles running on for pages, which start with good journalistic exposes of the North Carolina fascists, proceed to analysis of monopoly power, and end at tortuous length with that demon of conscience lodged in his self-content, The Party. His efforts to be "fair" to its members almost made *my* palms sweat. Theoretically their program is fine . . . oh, yes . . . their rank-and-file is "sincere"... no doubt . . . but their leaders—Ah! their leaders are "professionals," and professionals have no

business leading. They become power-thirsty, forsaking the spirit of their beliefs for rote, their love of people for cant about the people. And the "amateurs," full of fine, careless rapture, become their prey. Until Sol can find a political movement led by the pure and amateur in spirit he will keep a stranglehold on his own independence even if it is throttled to death.

But . . . is he not a man of action . . . isn't the menace of power-systems immediate? the need for action urgent? . . . Again the pores open, logic is returned to the wringer, and conscience gets one more twisting. The word morality begins to stud the paragraphs with the result, unfortunate for its author, that readers may be prompted to look more closely at the moral pretensions —not to mention the modesty— of a man who professes to tell the full truth about a movement whose rank-and-file he doesn't know and whose leadership he judges by a few individuals who have offended him—the morality of a man who, to prove his point, must invent a Communist leader ("close to Moscow") and provide him with attitudes that would betray him to any real Marxist as an invention.

However, "morality" does furnish Sol an escape from his dilemma. He concludes: the restoration of democracy, the curbing of monopolies (somehow) are only half

our task; the other half, just as urgent, is for each individual to arrive at "the full recognition and acceptance of oneself," throw off fear, and emerge untainted and free. When that is accomplished (somehow), organization will no longer be dangerous, in fact it will be quite useful. We last see Sol strolling with his girl at night just after the stock-market crash, philosophizing happily about millions of feet coming and going, old and new eras, the need for leaders with amateur hearts, and so on. The gadflies of how and when have ceased their buzzing; Sol is now as "free" as the day he was born.

I forgot to say that there are four other characters in the book who receive as much space as Sol. However, they serve mostly as his foils or as props for the 1929 setting of gin parties and stock-market orgies. Mr. Haydn is at his best, outside of the scene I mentioned, at recreating the punch-drunk business atmosphere of that day, when the writing of ads was seriously compared with the mission of Christ, and only Bruce Barton *understood* God. Lathrop, the liberal character who moves through this atmosphere packing his private ivory tower of Walter Pater and his quaking rebellions with him, promises an interesting study in political cowardice until the author quickly reduces him to the case history of a gigantic neurosis.

Incidentally, if Mr. Haydn prefers amateurs in politics, he seems to have a passion for them in the science of the unconscious. His heroine is a Little Lost Girl with a yen for self-destruction, who gets herself beaten up by brutal males until Sol rescues her; a good deal of labor is expended to make her seem intelligent, decent, and wistful under cruel and tragic confusions, but she still reminded me of the movie heroine who, discovering that her husband is a murderer, frantically does everything but call the cops or get the hell out of the place. Nor is her appeal heightened when she too sinks into the arms of Narcissus and decides that her immediate life task is to "really meet up with herself"—a decision soon followed by a bathtub scene wherein she talks to her toes, possibly with the laudable intention of working from the bottom up.

Reviewers have made much of the book's pace and change of scenery, its characterization and sweep of ideas. It is true that the scenery moves here and there from Miami to Greenwich Village; that the Southerners say "I declare," the Jews say "sacrifice, shmacrifice," and genteel women stick the little finger out when drinking coffee. Some of the detail has more color and edge, but the bulk of it almost makes you wish the paper shortage were more drastic. For characterization Mr. Haydn relies heavily on two

devices: having the characters discuss each other, pointing out things the reader wouldn't get otherwise, and having them think about themselves.

The ideas are conveyed mostly by the flat method of direct argument between characters, with each viewpoint carefully given a spokesman. If a Communist novelist used such a device—or that of Sol's dispatches to his magazine—he would be hooted to death by the critics as a crude propagandist. But just reverse the ideas, and look!—it's art. Mr. Haydn's artistry covers 561 pages and says that you can't have mass movements and struggle without people, that people are human beings, therefore not perfect, so you can't have mass movements and struggle. If I felt that way I wouldn't like Communists either.

BARBARA GILES

BONUS MARCH

ANOTHER SUCH VICTORY, by John D. Weaver. *Viking.* $2.75.

UNNOTICED though it is by critics who write on Trends and on Young Writers there is a healthy literature in America dedicated to the social scene and to actions in which the capitalist crisis in the United States holds the center of the stage. It is the fashion among Sunday supplement critics to relegate such novels to the Thirties, and to dismiss them as deplorable bypaths into which too many American writers ventured. And to a new generation of readers there seems to be a certain truth in this. For what passes for literary criticism today, mainly from "independent radicals" independently writing for Luce and the New York *Times,* is concerned with "moral values," "the quest for certainty," "the penetrating studies of evil," —a literary criticism which is evidence, among other things, of an endless, articulate vacuity. To such criticism John D. Weaver's second novel, *Another Such Victory,* offers no meat and it may, therefore, go unnoticed.

Yet it is a novel which deserves attention, for it brings us up on a national experience which should be on our minds these days. It is a story of the bonus marchers of 1932, gently and unpretentiously told, as it is experienced by a young veteran, his wife and child. It takes them from their entrance into Washington with a contingent of weary veterans from a mid-western state to their forced departure after the ignominious battle against unarmed men led by Hoover and General MacArthur, the man on the Hearst horse. It is this victory to which the title of the book ironically refers, and it serves as a warning to another generation of veterans faced with depression and war. "Another such

victory," Weaver quotes Pyrrhus on the frontispiece, "and we are undone."

Weaver, who is a former newspaperman, writes leanly and with the ease of a reporter who has found a good story to tell. His novel has pace and atmosphere and reads well. He manages to get within the small compass of his story the factual account of that Washington spring, the venal politicians, the national crisis sweeping through the debates in Congress, the threat of fascism and the incompetence of big business in the face of a depression it had spawned. It is on this level that the novel is most successful, for it speaks directly to us, giving us the feel of an election year so close to our own. "Now we are paying for our little presidents," says a skeptical newspaperman.

Less successfully, the novel is also the story of Parker Hoyt who is trying to find a place in American life for his family. He hopes that with the payment of the bonus they will have a chance to start anew, but the nation's capital offers a series of object lessons on the forces that stand between him and his family and the clean, honest life they want to lead. They are tear-gassed and beaten out of their camp with the others but, simple and uncorrupted, they cling to their aspirations for a decent home and way of life. The time they spend in the bonus marchers' camp trying to make a

home out of a tent on muddy ground presents the reader with a cross-section of the problems that poverty, the greed of capital and official indifference create for workers. Since 1932 Americans have seen the rise of organized labor and the achievements of the New Deal but so much of 1932 is still with us. MacArthur and Hoover have survived.

The faults of the book derive from what at first glance seem its virtues. It is gentle and unpretentious but it is so because Weaver is too consciously writing about average people. Average people are not necessarily little people and if Weaver is right in avoiding false heroics, he is wrong in glossing over the complexities of character. Too often the hero's experiences seem simple homilies to prove how fine a liberal he is. Though Weaver is not lacking in sympathy for his people his failure to present them deeply suggests a lack of faith in them for fear of what he might discover, just as his lack of a sharp point of view seems a desire to remain on a wavering, liberal middle-ground. The impact of the book is blunted by these weaknesses. He tells us that the bonus marchers' motivations and actions were naive and confused but his own view mirrors theirs. In the final scene when the veterans are being driven from their camp by the Army, one of the characters reiterates the point of the book—the

necessity of taking a stand. That kind of point needs to be filled in. Except for his fine, damning satire of General MacArthur's role there is often a clucking, grandmotherly air about his attitude to the tragedy of the bonus marchers.

There are times when the material that a writer chooses must be counted as crucial in judging his work. That, essentially, is what gives *Another Such Victory* its importance for us today. It should be read.

JOSÉ YGLESIAS

Naked Empire

BASES & EMPIRE, by George Marion. *Fairplay*. Cloth $3.00; paper, $2.00.

"I AM only interested in rescuing an elementary truth from the grip of a national myth," says George Marion at one point in his sizzling, pepper-pot of a book. The national myth would have it that the United States abhors territorial expansion, and every schoolboy has heard Secretary Marshall vehemently repulse the charge that we are an imperialist power. The truth, which Marion establishes with a ruthless passion and power, in the great muck-raking and debunking traditions of earlier times, is that *"American military and other de facto controls extend to 14,725,000 square miles outside our own borders and embrace a population of 667,815,000 'subjects'."*

The fact is startling, and the book as a whole is startling. It combines a philippic against the moralizing hypocrisy of the press, with discursive survey into the history of American expansion—all in all a primer for those who want to stop the cold war before it knocks us all cold. It has a humor which crops out of the polemical marshalling of facts. ("Today you can stick a pin anywhere on the map and prick an American general or admiral.") And it significantly coincides with the vast American stirring expressed in Henry Wallace's movement, which, as Marion usefully reminds us, is the embodiment of a plank in the Democratic Party's platform of 1900: *"We assert that no nation can long endure half republic and half empire, and we warn the American people that imperialism abroad will lead quickly and inevitably to despotism at home."*

This little book, the free enterprise of a newspaperman who has clearly been wanting for a long time to get away from the copy-desk and put this all together, reveals the American Empire without its clothes on. It has the admirable directness of the little boy watching the imperial parade in the famous fairytale. No wonder that the mighty New York *Times* (which is relentlessly pursued in these pages) has not only refused the book a review, but even rejected a paid advertisement. And

wherever the national boycott is broken, the cries of outrage reveal that the sting penetrated deep into the flesh.

Marion's method is journalistic, with all the inherent qualities of journalism, and the defects of those qualities, too. Its strongest points lie in telling the almost incredible story of the "invisible thread of dollar diplomacy" which "meet at highly visible American bases." The way in which world-girdling bases have been established on the territories of other peoples, accompanied by the ceaseless propaganda of Soviet aggressive intentions, is the book's main story. And while Marion's sources are not always original, the information is assembled to build up to a climax in Chapter 14, which calculates all the islands and ports in which the United States has military, naval or air privileges, weather communications or civil aviation rights (which are part of the octopus for all intents and purposes). And by simple addition, Marion establishes the fact of indisputable imperialist advance.

The historical discussion is not always in perspective; there is some confusion between the expansion within our continental limits which coincided with the hey-day of our democracy, and the period which marks America's "thickening to empire." Too much, and largely borrowed material, is devoted to particular phases of American policy, such as the Open Door in China. And for the purposes of the argumentation, Marion grants too readily the Soviet sphere of influence in eastern Europe—the so-called Trieste-Stettin line—omitting a genuine discussion of whether the Soviet Union can be called imperialistic at all, and omitting also the nature of the indigenous changes in the eastern European countries themselves during and after the war.

Perhaps this flows from a deeper flaw: the character of imperialism in the United States, its basis in the monopoly structure of the economy, is hardly explored. And this accounts for the inadequacy of the treatment of the Soviet Union. But these are questions of omission, rather than commission. And it would be the sheerest dogmatism to fail to recognize the vital value of Marion's work because it is not something which would have taken another book to write.

American Marxist pamphleteering in our time has a long way to go to reach the effectiveness of some of De Leon's work, some of Sinclair's books, some of the crusading, rambunctious exposé quality of the earlier Socialist movement. Marion's contribution has that quality. It is the kind of work that should be loaded into an old truck and taken from town to town, handed out at the county fairs and the village crossroads. It was published by the author himself, but it ought not be left to him to sell it singlehanded.

JOSEPH STAROBIN

In Brief

THE RISE AND FALL OF THIRD PARTIES, by William B. Hesseltine. *Public Affairs Press.* $2.50.

THE scientific objectivity of this anti-Wallace blown-up pamphlet may be gathered from its bibliography on the American Communist Party: James Oneal, Earl Browder, Benjamin Gitlow, Eugene Lyons and Louis Budenz. Do Professor Hesseltine's students at the University of Wisconsin study the American Revolution from the viewpoint of Benedict Arnold?

NEGRO VOICES IN AMERICAN FICTION, by Hugh M. Gloster. *University of North Carolina Press.* $3.50.

THE author declares that he "has tried to permit no theory—economic, political, social or philosophical — to influence his approach." The result: an undistinguished book consisting largely of synopses of Negro writings tied together with critical comment which adds nothing to previous work in this field.

BOURKE COCKRAN, by James McGurrin. *Scribners.* $3.50.

AN uncritical biography of a somewhat independent conservative prominent in American politics from Cleveland to Harding. There was enough independence in Cockran to move him to oppose the annexation of the Philippines and to champion the cause of Tom Mooney. The brief chapters concerning these events are of particular interest.

ON THE WORKER'S BACK

PHILIP EVERGOOD

by JOSEPH SOLMAN

PHILIP EVERGOOD'S art has so often been the object of a curious antipathy on the one hand and uncritical adulation on the other that a closer examination of the artist seems necessary in order to set his work in focus.

In the case of Evergood we are dealing with a man who combines a singular earnestness of purpose, an ebullience of spirit and an emotional candor with a great capacity for indignation against social injustice. He has perserveringly created an indigenous art, free from any of the regulation "schools" of painting, be they modern or conservative. In fact, Evergood comes close to being a complete "independent" were it not for certain stylistic preferences which indicate his traditional base.

Evergood's nudes, for example, hardy and buoyant, full of odd linear constrictions and translucent paint surfaces are the modern counterparts of the figures of Lucas Cranach, sixteenth century German master. And once we recognize Evergood as a descendant of certain early Flemish and North Germanic painters, the clue to his work becomes apparent.

This tradition, in the work of men like Cranach, Bosch, Van Leyden and Gruenwald, is full of folk humor and fantasy, narrative display, episodic comments on daily life and a sharp portrayal of both macabre and sensual details of man's existence. Rich enamel-like paint surfaces and a linear distortion more for psychological than plastic purpose are among the methods emphasized in their work. Such a lusty profusion of humor, fantasy and realism sometimes overreaches itself, if unchecked, and becomes melodrama or straggling narrative. But, mastered and controlled, this type of art involves more completely the psychological aspects of human beings, brings to the fore an intimate revelation of fascinating details from life, and makes for a compelling vigor of statement. This is best exemplified in such a master work as the "Mocking of Christ" by Hieronymus Bosch at the Philadelphia Museum.

The North European tradition, in contrast to the main currents of Italian and French cultures, lacks what we generally term classic balance, simplicity and monumentality of forms, taste, rigor

and selectivity. It provides, on the other hand, an expressionist vitality and psychological power of detail that critical "taste" has long relegated to a secondary place in the plastic arts, due partly to the dominant popularity of the Grecian, Italian and French traditions.

This may explain, to some extent, a resistance to Evergood's painting on the part of some observers. Evergood's art is seemingly reckless, overflowing with elements of sensuality, malevolent satire and naive humor. His paint surfaces crackle with energy and may contain strident passages alongside of pearly nuances. His drawing, original and expressive, is often characterized by outlines fixed rigidly on the canvas. A solid assortment of his work, recently exhibited at the A. C. A. Gallery, reveals the widest variety yet shown by the painter.

In a few cases Evergood heavily underscores his point by an almost pulpit-like indignation with the theme of his picture, as in "Famine Investigation," a portrayal of a huge official banquet. But in "Dream Catch," which pictures a Negro boy holding a large fish in a rowboat sailing past red bridges, the artist evokes a truly poignant mood, full of fresh poetry, sentiment and intricate paint structures. "Snow City" represents a ghoul city with a few vultures flying about, the entire scene wrapped in a tender snow as though the city's wounds were being gently numbed. This painting is extremely sparse, yet quite magical in its effect. A "Summer Landscape" reveals Evergood in a disarmingly casual mood and the result is a poetic joy. In fact, I do not recall seeing any of the artist's "straight" landscapes which are not full of instinctive poetry. He should treat us to more of them.

His "Nude by the El" is by all odds the summit of his achievement in the studio genre. This is an unadorned "life class," with a nude model lying on a coral couch, a few members of the painting fraternity working at their canvases while the city's El trundles past the open windows. Transformed into rich complexities of color, full of quaint surprises like the mirror reflections and the view from the window, this noisy, gimrick studio puts on a joyous air of pageantry without for a moment losing its identity. Here is an example of a social painter lending vigor and human warmth to a studio tradition long suffering from anemia.

"Grand Stand Play" is a capricious fantasy *à la* Bosch wherein some animals are celebrating the atomic dispersal of man's universe. Playfully and colorfully painted, this fantasy is very well sustained. When Evergood turns to a more wrathful mood, as in "Ship of War" the picture has

he power of an eruptive cartoon r poster and nothing more. The urid colors and decorative shapes prevent any interplay or deepening of the first obvious impact. The "Laughing Worker" is a curious lapse in Evergood's work. It s tense and labored in drawing, trident in color, an idea ill-conceived. Is it possible that when he painter sets out with too preconceived an idea he tends to become awkward or artificial? I am ure a simple, direct portrait by Evergood would have resulted in warm, genuine portrayal.

A most fortuitous combination of Evergood's gifts is revealed in his single largest work of the how, called "Victory." A large body of railroad workers are apparently hailing the conclusion of successful strike. There are arge-scale distortions here but hey lend vigor and humor to the panel. The locomotive is painted so that it attains an almost human quality. The picture is as alive as a blaze, broadly painted, combining expressionist and primitive elements of painting as only Evergood can do. It is in this canvas, along with the aforementioned "Nude by the El," "Snow City" and "Dream Catch," that a new breadth and maturity in the development of Evergood's art is revealed. A sense of spaciousness, fuller integration of form and symbol, a deeper sense of humanity seem to pervade and add a hint of mellowness to these pictures.

theatre

Three Comedies

by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

IT HAS been an old contention of critics of the Left that tricks and gags are not essential to box office success, and corroboration is constantly supplied by the success of substantial plays. Since seeing Allan Scott's *Joy To The World* I think the contention might be amplified as follows: Even where tricks and gags are used it is not essential that they be meaningless; they can make a social point and remain "box office."

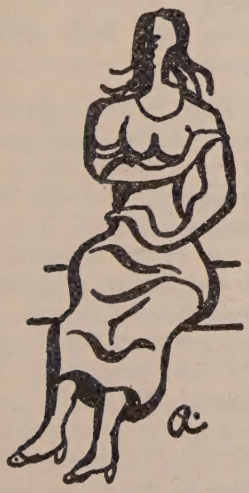
For *Joy To The World* has a hoked-up plot and improbable characters, and its lines are choked with gags. Yet it makes important points with understanding and force: that the real censors of the films are not the manipulated cranks and prudes but the controlling money interests who put the smear of immorality and the Great Red Label on everything progressive; that this censorship ranges from the indirect to the direct, from the bribery of easy money to the blacklist.

The setting of *Joy To The World* is Fabulous Hollywood and few stock items are left out. You get the lavish bosomed, lavish lipped and generally lavish cutie, announced to be just over jail-bait age and panting to trade favors; and you get Superman Soren, the genius-type film executive, (as opposed to the other standard type, the moron). Soren dictates to two secretaries, the second to fill in when the first must take time out to uncramp her fingers and unravel her brain. He continues, into the small hours of the night, spouting an inexhaustible geyser of epigrams into a dictaphone. Conferences with Soren begin with a round of pills for high blood pressure, ulcers, and the other medical evidences of business achievement. Soren keeps the conference and several phone conversations going simultaneously, and manipulates financiers, temperaments and celebrities with stage magician finesse. Soren knows and foresees everything—except, of course, the simplest things.

Thus he neglects to find out, beforehand, what is in a speech ghosted for him; and on discovering it, during the delivery, to be

a radical anti-censorship speech, he does not anticipate the consequences. When the ghost is to be called to account he does not know who he is, a fancy ignorance that serves no real dramatic purpose except to add a few curls to the plot. Finally tracked down, the ghost proves to be of feminine gender, demoralizing good looks, a Hypatia brain and a Joan-of-Arc heart. The complications you can expect set in and the action corkscrews between Love and Truth and a Career and Sin.

But above this froth, playwright Scott manages to sound his anti-reaction message loud and clearly. Even though the play ends on an unrealistic note (the dilemma of the blacklisted genius is solved by the intervention of a penitent capitalist), enough reality remains to make the play worth seeing. Alfred Drake as Superman Soren and Marsha Hunt as the Supergirl have succeeded in making lovable roles which no one could have made believable; Myron McCormick as McKeon, the sardonic publicity man, Clay Clement as the sinister Chairman of the Board and Morris Carnovsky as the penitent producer, turn in skillful performances of somewhat more credible roles.



THE THEATRE GUILD'S production of Shaw's *You Never Can Tell* is distinguished by a beautiful performance of Leo Carroll as the wise waiter. The remaining performances range from competence to silliness. In his affected directing, Peter Ashmore tried for the mannered period style that did so well in recent productions of Oscar Wilde.

You Never Can Tell is not one of Shaw's major works. It is a lesser *Man And Superman.* The play, however, is so well written, it manages its mistaken identity plot so craftily, it satirizes minor bourgeois snobberies and stupidities so efficiently, that it rates as one of the good things now running on Broadway.

Shaw has proved vulnerable to more lethal weapons than faint praise and his curious cold shouldering by the critics is one of the ironies of the season. To patronize Shaw is ludicrous—and suspicious. Is it resentment against a dramatist long identified as the proponent of socialist common sense, who has never joined in the anti-

Soviet rioting by the Intellectual Mob?

I WAS ABLE to see only one of the productions of the Dublin Gate Theatre, the visiting Irish repertory company which made a good impression during its brief stay. The play I saw, *Where Stars Walk,* was probably the worst, but fine acting made it a memorable evening. As with other good repertory productions it had the extra dimension of ensemble performance.

Though brightly and skillfully written, *Where Stars Walk* proved to be a corrupt and unwholesome affair. It is folk legend as it now fares in bourgeoisified Erin. We see it here in a Dublin salon, diluted with mystical gibberish pressed out of a ouija board and resorted to as a refuge from spiritual unease. There were moments when it seemed on the point of becoming what could have saved it, a sharp and witty satire on the squandering of the Irish folk heritage by the Dublin bourgeoisie.

But actor-playwright Michael Mac Liammoir missed. His imitation of Irish Renaissance, of the days when the vigor of revolution was in it, became indeed a satire but by indirection, a self-satire to be read between the lines.

Briefly this is the story: A boudoir poet's play about a pair of legendary lovers, shadowily symbolizing the ancient greatness of Erin, is to be performed by a retired actress who queens over the salon. These two and a nicely caricatured group of Dublin sophisticates, and a visiting English idiot who sees Irish charm in everything, including Irish boredom with Irish charm, are conscious of failure all through to the end when the play is performed —and forgotten. In the meanwhile the authentic legendary couple, reincarnated as two house servants, are occupied with the interesting discovery of each other and go off, immediately after the performance, on a pre-ordained tryst in the Land of Faery

Where nobody gets old and godly and grave
Where nobody gets old and crafty and wise
Where nobody gets old and bitter of tongue
And she is still there busied with a dance
Deep in the dewy shadow of a wood
Or where stars walk upon a mountain top.

These lines of Yeats, repeated as a theme at the opening and close are the author's cues to the play's significance. But what actually is that significance? It is the negative use of folk material, its rich faith and fantasy, as nostalgia rather than hope. Compare this use of folk lore with Soviet use as shown in the recent film, *The Stone Flower.* Here man enters into the world of fantasy not in flight, but as into a spiritual mine from which to add to the beauty and riches of the world of reality.

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