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lasses & MAINSTREAM

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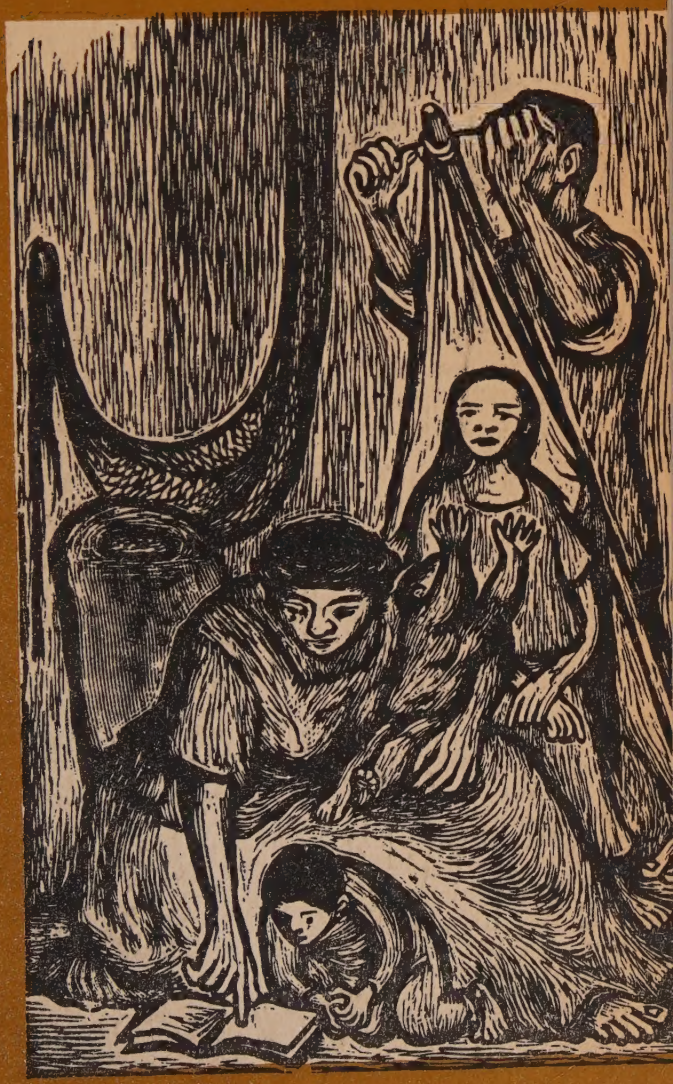

nger Ahead for Organized Labor—WILLIAM Z. FOSTE

Howard Fast *writes:*

An Open Letter to the American People

June 15, 1948

My Fellow Americans:

In a sense, it is presumptuous of me to attempt to speak to all the millions of good people who inhabit this land. For many months now, almost all of our newspapers have been closed to me; the magazines too, and the radio as well. To slander a man; then to permit him no answer, no defense; there is the simple rule of "free press" in today's America.

Yet I would be remiss indeed if I did not raise my voice concerning the refusal, yesterday, of the United States Supreme Court to hear the appeal of the board of the Joint Anti-fascist Refugee Committee. This is not a time for silence and forbearance.

In a few days, eleven men and women will go to prison. Their crime, for which they are being punished, is twofold. First, they are anti-fascists; second, they have devoted years of effort to healing the sick, to feeding the hungry, to aiding the lame and the halt who have fought for Republican Spain. For this, they are branded as criminals.

For two years, we, the board of the Joint Anti-fascist Refugee Committee, have been hounded and persecuted and questioned, *and no other facts but those I list above emerged.*

Hundreds of pages of sworn committee and court testimony have been taken. *Yet no other facts but those I list above emerged.*

There are those who say we are foreign agents. They lie in their teeth! There are those who say we are un-American. I call them

(*Continued on inside back cover*)

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DON LUDLOW, a former agricultural worker and organizer, has had several stories published in *New Masses.*

Note: William Gropper is now in Europe. His regular feature will be resumed upon his return in the Fall.

COVER: A woodcut by Leopoldo Mendez, noted Mexican artist and one of the founders of the Taller Grafica Popular.

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.*

Your TRIAL

by JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

ON MAY 21, 1948, I stood in a Washington courtroom and heard myself marked as a common criminal and sentenced to spend one year in jail. A man's spirit is wounded by such an experience. In a sense, the condemnation by a court of justice, which under our form of government is supposed to represent the interest of the people, is as humiliating as the physical indignities of a term in prison.

Yet I realized that this public condemnation, robed in the majesty of the law, is one of the most potent factors in enforcing thought control and intimidating dissident opinion. The thinker and the artist are duly warned; the penalties that await non-conformity are illustrated. Knowing this, I felt, as I am sure all the other defendants in these cases have felt, a deep sense of pride and responsibility. The prosecution is a portent of the times. But the defense is also a portent. It is a warning to the men who are plotting fascism. It is an affirmation of the liberty of conscience, the unrestricted right to think and speak, that Americans have fought to maintain and extend through all the years of their history.

It is not a light matter to face a year's confinement. But it is better than to confine one's mind within the limits established by a Congressional committee. It is not pleasant to live in a cell. But it is better than living with a guilty conscience.

The issue is so clear that one wonders how there can be any confusion about it, or any disagreement among people of good will concerning the necessary course of action. Yet the clamor of confusion is all about us. It is especially apparent in the field of culture. Many American intellectuals are disturbed by the current attack on civil

rights. They recognize the danger of such fascist legislation as the Mundt Bill. They regret the "excesses" of the House Committee on Un-American Activities and they sympathize with its victims. But, while they attempt to defend democracy, they accept the ideas and prejudices of the enemies of democracy. In the name of the free conscience, they endorse conscienceless lies; in the name of rational thought, they cherish irrational fears; in the name of honor, they spread dishonest prejudice.

THE disease that infects American culture today is Red-baiting. This is the moral illness, the blindness of our time.

Hitler used propaganda against Communism in order to seize power in Germany. But Hitler is given more credit than he deserves for the invention of the foreign-conspiracy myth. He merely repeated, more loudly and with mechanized means of communication, the lies that had been the stock-in-trade of reaction for almost two hundred years. At the end of the eighteenth century, defenders of monarchy in Europe asserted that the American and French revolutions were organized by a secret world movement, with a frightening apparatus in every country, and with the aim of destroying civilized government, subverting religion and introducing free love. The attack on Thomas Jefferson and the democratic movement in the United States was an echo of the European propaganda. Like Red-baiting today, it was a "foreign ideology," imported to serve a privileged group intent on subverting the new American Constitution.

During the nineteenth century, the charge of a world conspiracy was levelled against the Masons, the Catholics and the Jews. When the people of Russia ousted the Czar and established their own government, the old fantasies, reinforced by the forged *Protocols of Zion,* were revived as "evidence" that the international conspiracy begun with the rise of rationalism in the eighteenth century was moving across the world and that the Jews were involved in the plan. The propaganda justified the Palmer raids, the suppression of democracy in Europe, the encirclement of the Soviet Union and the support of Hitler in Germany.

The intellectual who accepts Red-baiting today is betraying his inheritance. He is bowing to a prejudice as irrational as the fear of witches in seventeenth-century Massachusetts. No doubt, there were

many worthy scholars in New England who believed in generosity and tolerance—"but, after all," they may have said, "one cannot be generous toward a witch, tolerance cannot excuse a person who speaks with the voice of the devil."

Red-baiters use the same argument. Marxists are apparently possessed with devils, for it is assumed that they have secret powers of persuasion transcending the ordinary methods of argument and organization.

In Germany in 1933, the subservience of the intellectuals was a symptom of the mortal sickness of the nation's culture. There were honorable exceptions. Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, Heinrich Mann, Lion Feuchtwanger, Berthold Brecht, and Ernst Thaelmann and Gerhart Eisler—these and many others were also Germans.

We know that the German scholars and writers who obeyed Goering and Goebbels were guilty of treason to their country and to civilization. Yet the lies circulated by Goering and Goebbels are repeated at American college commencements, impressively clothed in the language of philosophy.

THE hour is late. The Mundt Bill is a frontal attack on the whole body of American culture. Under its provisions, it can be a crime to own a copy of Tom Paine's *Rights of Man.* One could spend ten years in prison for reading Walt Whitman's *Salut au Monde.* Seven thousand people went to Washington to protest against the Mundt Bill. An honorable number of educators, scientists and authors have also protested. But the vast majority of American scholars and writers are silent—or give their tacit approval by endorsing the illiterate prejudices on which the bill is based.

Scholars and writers have a primary obligation to practice their professions with integrity, with respect for truth and moral values.

The concept of morality, like other great basic concepts—democracy, peace, human progress—has been twisted and distorted by the propagandists of reaction. Words are among the first victims of the cold war. Democracy used to have a simple and accepted meaning. It now means support of dictatorships in China, Greece, and even Franco Spain. Democracy in the United States is defended by wiping out civil rights. Peace is to be achieved by the use of atomic bombs. Human progress is measured by corporate profits.

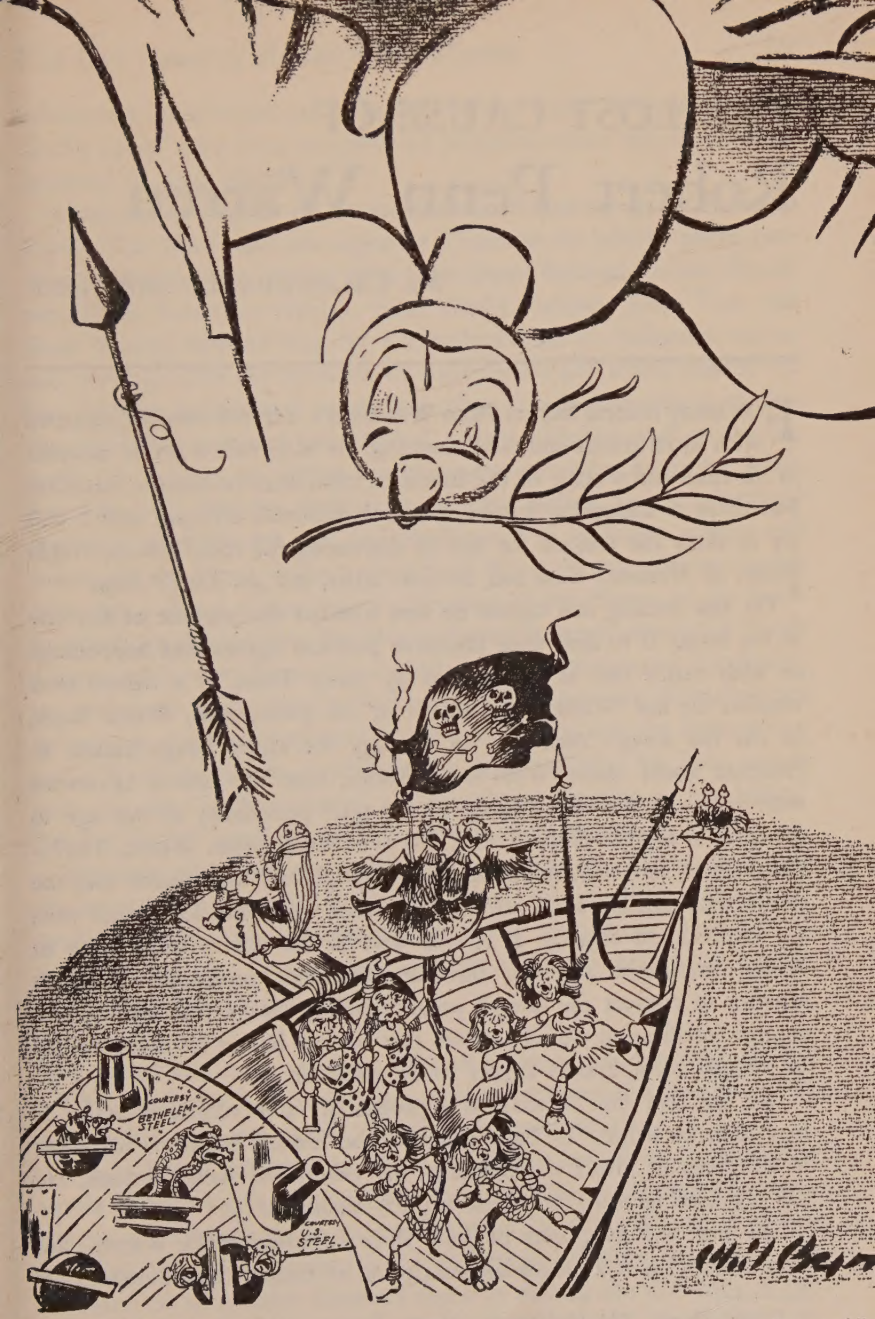
One does not expect any moral sensitivity among the men of Wall Street, the jugglers of stocks and cartels, who are dictating American policy today. But what of the custodians of culture, the guardians of the word? One wonders how a man can call himself a writer and admit authorship of such a film as *The Iron Curtain!* Perhaps in this case the writer can be excused on the ground that he is immured behind the iron curtain that surrounds Hollywood, that he is deprived of all reading matter except the Hearst *Los Angeles Examiner,* and that when he was sent to Washington to do research on the picture he was locked up in the State Department and given the impression that the United States is no longer a democracy.

In a broader sense, the picture is a symbol of the sickness that threatens our American culture. The first picture made under the direct orders of the Thomas-Rankin Committee, its release is timed to aid the passage of the Mundt Bill. *The Iron Curtain* reduces the anti-Communist lie to the dimensions of a B-thriller. But it never had any other dimensions. The movie emphasizes the absurdity that is inherent in the ancient, disreputable myth.

The scholar and the writer have a primary obligation to use words honestly. They have a greater obligation to know the realities behind the words. The scholar and the writer are entrusted with a fateful responsibility as the guardians of culture. No threat of thought control, police censorship or prison can absolve them from their responsibility.

We who are fulfilling our responsibility feel that we have the right to ask a question of the men of thought, the scholars and scientists, artists and writers.

Are you faithful to your trust? Are you defending your heritage?



"And the dove came in to Noah and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf."

THE LOST CAUSE OF
Robert Penn Warren

by CHARLES HUMBOLDT

FOR many readers Robert Penn Warren is a novelist deeply concerned with social trends and their meaning. He is, in fact, a severe moralist of his time and a critic of the effects of capitalism on human relations. But there is something equivocal about Warren's critique, and I will try to show the reasons for this in discussing his three novels, *Night Rider, At Heaven's Gate* and the best seller, *All the King's Men.*

On first reading one cannot be sure whether the purpose of any one of his books is to deal with objective political figures and happenings or with man's fate as exemplified by them. Thus, in a debate over whether or not Warren's treatment of his protagonist, Willie Stark, in *All the King's Men* was an apology for Huey Long, Robert B. Heilman could claim, with some justice, that the hostile reviewers were trying to lower a tragedy of the split personality of our age to the level of a proto-fascist tract (*The Sewanee Review,* Winter, 1947). One cannot, however, share Heilman's complacent assumption that the critics who smelled a rat are all philistines who have lost touch with the tradition of tragedy. It is true that Willie differs from Long in several important respects; but the difference represents Warren's attempt to convert the latter's pseudo-tragedy into a real one. It is a strange justification which implies that history has to be distorted for its alleged metaphysical kernel to be revealed.

We are told that Warren is a profoundly misunderstood artist. It may then be helpful to have access to the hidden intent of his work in the form of direct statements of his values and social outlook. He has provided us with two quite explicit examples.

The first is a biography of John Brown written when Warren was twenty-four.* It is a rancorous description of Brown as an irresponsible

* *John Brown*: *The Making of a Martyr.* Payson and Clarke, Ltd. 1929.

adventurer, opportunist and killer, and of the Negro slaves as so many "kinky heads" who were incapable of bothering about the moral issues involved in their liberation.

A year later, Warren was a contributor to the anthology *I'll Take My Stand: The South and the Agrarian Tradition,* in which twelve professional Southerners, among them John Crowe Ransom, Donald Davidson, Frank Lawrence Owsley, John Gould Fletcher, Allen Tate and Stark Young, asserted that the encroachment of an industrial society was proving to be the ruination of their region and would destroy the last precious remnants of antebellum glory. Their proposals to combat the inevitable ranged from political action ("violent and revolutionary"), to appeals to "throw out the radio and take down the fiddle from the wall. Forsake the movies for play parties. Seek a priesthood that may manifest the will and intelligence to renounce science and search out the Word in the authorities." Warren's own offering to this Mass for a dying culture was a discussion of the Negro in the South in which he claimed that the Negro during Reconstruction had "sadly mortgaged his best immediate capital . . . the confidence of the Southern white man with whom he had to live." Even now the Negro belongs by temperament and capacity to the small town and the farm where he is "likely to find in agriculture the happiness that his good nature and easy ways incline him to as an ordinary function of his being." Let the Negro (small n) sit beneath his own vine and fig tree.

Eighteen years after the publication of this book, Warren dedicated the second of his novels, *At Heaven's Gate,* to one of its contributors, Professor Frank Lawrence Owsley, a leading member of the school of historians engaged in producing apologetics for Southern slave society. He had not changed his stand.

WE SHALL now see how Warren's values are concealed in his novels by certain literary devices, ambiguities handled with such talent that one almost doubts their premeditation.

Night Rider, published in 1939, is an historical novel. Its ostensible theme is the struggle of the tobacco farmers of Kentucky and Tennessee against the tobacco trusts during the years 1904-08. Warren describes the founding of a protective association of planters, and later the organization of a secret fraternal order to enforce the decisions of the legal body against the companies and those farmers who refused to

join the tobacco strike. The Night Riders destroyed the plant beds of "hillbillies"—their name for the scabs—and carried out virtual military operations to dynamite warehouses storing "hot" tobacco.

Warren's handling of his subject has an almost documentary authenticity. The names of certain characters, Mr. Christian and Captain Todd, for instance, are those of counties involved in Night Rider activities. The program, recruiting and forays of the Riders are related in detail and with fine perception, as is the sellout of the farmers by Senator Tolliver, followed by his physical and spiritual degeneration.

But this is not the real theme of Warren's book. It is only the setting and occasion for the conflict in the soul of Percy Munn, a young lawyer who has been drawn into supporting the farmers' cause by Mr. Christian. The latter is a man with great reserves of will and energy which he uses, without guile, to overcome Munn's doubts and fears. Munn gradually quiets his feeling of having been betrayed into acting and involves himself in the affairs of the farmers, assuming a leadership which had been hitherto inconsistent with his character. Yet in so doing, he sets in motion a series of events and contretemps which destroy others and finally himself.

A catalogue could be drawn up of the ironies ensconced in these incidents. What purpose do they serve? The book suffers from them, since an historical tragedy has degenerated into a tragic romance. The fate of the characters is no longer determined by their relation to social forces, but springs from accidents, random denouements and intensely personal quirks and obsessions. The objective struggle has become subordinated to the spiritual questions Munn asks and inflicts upon himself. He is overwhelmed by his inner hollowness, from which he tries in vain to escape through action. So Munn's emptiness has become the focus of the book, the objective struggle of the Night Riders takes a back seat, and all social meanings tend to vanish. It is curious to watch so large a design disintegrate as Warren's penchant for quixotic pathos takes precedence over the real events which are more than sufficient material for his drama. The writer, more than his character, has gotten out of hand.

Munn is preoccupied with the realization that he is unlike Mr. Christian, Dr. MacDonald, military commander of the Riders, and the latter's father-in-law, Professor Ball (Warren's Southern substitute for John Brown). He has no center to his life, no trust in his own

feelings and convictions. He is always searching for some unmoving point within himself, some core of certainty which will justify his desires. He sees the members of the Association bound together not so much by their common economic interest as by loyalty and brotherhood, and yet he is disgusted because that brotherhood is sealed by drunken men "slapping each other on the back and mixing their stinking breaths in song." There is a great deal of the alienated intellectual in Perse Munn.

In contrast to Munn, his fellow conspirators are not disturbed by scruples and self-inspired anxiety. Nor was young Willie Proudfit, whose saga of the Oklahoma Territory and further west is intended to recall the untroubled conscience of the frontier. This recitation by the man who shelters Munn when he is a fugitive from the militia is a fascinating *tour de force* in the use of folk idiom. It is also the key to the "positive" characters, whose clear and innocent will-power it is Munn's tragedy not to be able to attain. As Munn is Warren's romantic hero, these are his epic heroes, Achaeans of pure English and Scotch-Irish descent, with Willie Proudfit as half Ulysses, half Sinbad.

The social significance of Warren's attachment to such men becomes more apparent in his second novel, *At Heaven's Gate.* But before passing on to that, one must note the special vulgarity with which Negroes are treated in *Night Rider.* Professor Ball relates how his wife kept him from naming one of his daughters Desdemona because was it right "to give our baby the name of a young woman who had been connected with a man who was colored, even if the man wasn't exactly a negro? I agreed with her. I said we ought to spare even the tenderest sensibility." What makes this worse is that the anecdote is quite gratuitous on Warren's part. It is not at all necessary to the development of Ball's personality. Similarly, there is an episode in which a Negro, for whose death sentence Munn is responsible, protests his innocence of a murder. The scene is injected with pointless and offensive comedy. The doomed man is made to resemble one of Shakespeare's clowns. If there is poignancy, there is also poison.

IN *At Heaven's Gate* the epic stage is menaced with distinctly modern alarums and excursions. The bickering knights of *Troilus and Cressida* have replaced the robust and relatively uncomplicated warriors and voyagers. The story is a take-off from the actual career of Luke Lea

of Tennessee, former U.S. Senator and bank manipulator, who served a term in jail for his part in the $17,000,000 failure of the Asheville [N.C.] Central Bank and Trust Co. Between Bogan Murdock, aristocrat, landowner and banker—man of strong will and no honesty—and his yes-man, Jerry Calhoun, son of a small farmer, bank executive—man of good will and no integrity—there is a scale of minor characters. These express, in one fashion or other, either their bewildered or cynical acquiescence in the schemes of Murdock, or their desperate wish to escape the web he has spun for them.

The meaning of their lives is not expressed by the characters so much as it is left to two figures who represent opposite poles of the dichotomy between moral quality and the facts of life. They are Willie Proudfit's successor, the fool-in-Christ Ashby Wyndham, and Duckfoot Blake, a Thersites who is party to the corruption he exposes with his cynical banter. Since the first is socially ineffective and the second personally corrupt, the history related under their auspices is again a series of ironic episodes. The only hope is in escape, as in Jerry Calhoun's reconciliation with his father against whom he had harbored death wishes, and to whose eviction from his farm by Murdock he had been a passive partner. Back to the land and home to bed in his father's house. This note of private hope is the very seal of Warren's disillusion.

At Heaven's Gate is a novel of angry despair, bitterly critical of the role of capitalism, of banks and brokerage houses, in the degradation of a peaceful region devoted to farming and handicraft. Once the tribe of Murdock moves in, everyone becomes subject to its values; defiance means to die or to become ridiculous. Those who are not sucked in are cast out, to wander like helpless or comic ghosts on the fringes of society. The working class—the only force capable of effective resistance—does not exist for Warren.

But first, let us remember that every disenchantment implies an illusion which it may either unmask or perpetuate. The final scene of *At Heaven's Gate* is the clue to the fantasy that Warren nurses despite his futile rage. The swindler, Bogan Murdock, using the death of his daughter to distract attention from his own guilt, makes a public statement on the virtues of loyalty and courage. He stands under

> ". . . the portrait of a man who, more than a century ago, endured cold and hunger, who killed men with his own hand, who

survived steaming malarial swamps and long marches, who was ruthless, vindictive, cunning, and headstrong, who was president of his country, who died in the admiration, or hatred, of millions of men. There is the painted face: the sunken flesh over the grim jawbone, the deep, smoldering eyes, the jutting beak of a nose, and the coarse crest of greyish hair, like an old cockatoo."

The portrait is that of Andrew Jackson, and Warren has focused his homage upon him in such a way as to highlight only those of his characteristics which make him appear like all other predatory slave-owners of his time. So all the satire turned upon Murdock is negated by abject admiration for his lineage. Warren cannot tear himself away from his dream of a golden age of the South, when feudal relationships determined the form and custom of society and natural aristocrats presided over the noble yeomanry and ruled the spawn of Africa. His despair comes only from fear that the Junkers have allowed bonds and shares rather than tobacco and cotton to determine their mode of existence. He cannot reconcile himself to this inevitable outcome; what perversity could have persuaded them to sell their heritage for a place on the Stock Exchange? It is Warren, rather than Murdock, who points to the old cockatoo to bring them to their senses. Somehow the gesture lacks confidence. The disparity between dream and reality seems to overwhelm him, and the hope that one can go home again is inverted in literary devices that mock it.

WARREN'S second novel is an advance over his first. He has come to grips with specifically modern situations and contemporary individuals. His insights have deepened. There was no one like Duckfoot Blake in *Night Rider*. The seams of Bourbon society were not split as they are in *At Heaven's Gate*.

But the gain is not held. Frightened by the chasm he has come upon, Warren hurries to close it by raising a nest of concerns, of "tragic" questions, whose eternal nature diverts him from their historic context. Why do men want power? What is a man worth if he has no will, if he cannot act upon his convictions? If history is blind, what use is there for a man to act? Must he not act anyway to assert his belief in himself? Even if everything matters, as Duckfoot Blake says, what if a man is powerless in his exalted knowledge? What is left but the nostalgia of heroes, the romance of heroes, the loyalty of heroes, the

faith of heroes, the death of heroes—or the deep sleep of a quasi-hero in his father's bed? There is something quite Teutonic about these attitudes, as well as in the partly sardonic glorification of peasant mentality, and the longing for a pure, though brutal past. Only Warren's sophistication keeps his obsession in check.

Irony is the means for preserving this fixation in an acceptable form. In a textbook on fiction, co-edited by Warren and Cleanth Brooks the same year in which *At Heaven's Gate* appeared,* irony is defined in strictly literary terms:

> "Irony involves contrast, a discrepancy between the apparent and the real. Irony of a situation involves a discrepancy between what we expect the outcome to be, or what would seem to be the fitting outcome, and the actual outcome. The use of irony is not in consideration of human complexity but to intensify the implications of the conflict and raise the issue above the level of merely dogmatic and partisan vilification."

Warren points out that Shakespeare endowed his villain, Richard III, with many qualities admired by his Tudor audience, that Simon Legree was a Yankee, and that the greatest act of brutality in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is the massacre of Fascists by Loyalists. (The use of the latter example is an instance of Warren's calculated perversity; he wants us to gather more from it than he seems to.) In this version irony has a purely didactic function. It pretends to throw light on the problem of judgment, to make people realize that it is not as easy as they think to pass verdicts on others. Actually, it does much more. Despite the book's denials, this use of irony paralyzes judgment. Once the implications of the conflict are divorced from human complexity, and the issue is raised above "dogmatic and partisan vilification"—in other words, abstracted from the conditions of real life, from history, class struggle and the social basis of ethics—one can have nothing but a procession of pointless coincidences, surprises and reversals of fortune, subject to arbitrary ecclesiastical pronouncements. Irony is not even a mode of observing the world; it is a device for arranging the form of its disorder in plays and novels.

Irony, used in this manner, is bound to become mechanical. It does

* *Understanding Fiction,* by Cleanth Brooks and Robert Penn Warren. F. S. Crofts and Co. 1943.

not grow out of incidents but produces them; or, rather, the god of irony, the author, spins them at will. Fascinated by his own skill, he forgets that the reader may become wearied of these repetitious shocks and expected bolts from the blue. It would be a mistake, however, to regard Warren's irony as just so much literary machinery. If it were, he would not, at the risk of good taste, be so tenacious of it. It is also the trade mark of his reactionary historical outlook. If one views progress as retrogression, then all thought is paradoxical and all intentions carried out must produce their opposites. The result is a kind of dialectic in reverse, a drama grinding backward to a halt, bogged down in yearning for the past, fear of the future and disgust for the present.

IN *All the King's Men,* Warren's philosophy has become explicit and his human relationships are congealed in a system which will illustrate it. This is both the most accomplished and the most rigid of his books, that in which the most rounded characters appear only to have metaphysics take charge of their actions. This contradiction leads to a deeper one. The stature of a tragic character depends upon his significance, upon the stir his rise and fall in the world create in the world about him. But the social base of Warren's hero, Willie Stark, is cut away from him in order to make him the central figure of a divine comedy. His importance as a metaphor grows, but one begins to doubt his authenticity. He becomes more complex, and this might seem to keep him bona fide, but the complexity is more conceptual than human in its intent. The mask of tragedy is a mask indeed, an iron mask clamped over the social realities of our time.

Willie rises to power by shedding his innocence. Power gives him the chance to do good, to "build me the God-damndest, biggest chromium-plated, formaldehyde-stinkingest hospital and health center the All-Father ever let live." He is destroyed by a good act—his refusal to throw the contract to a corrupt builder—which sets in motion a train of events leading to his assassination. All else in his life—his demagogy, his corruption, the contradictions in his character—are subordinated to this irrevocable paradox. Huey Long has flown out the window, and even Stark is not himself. For all the vigor of his personality, he remains a flask into which are poured evil and good. He

receives the former like a revelation and the latter as a doom. His transformations are as mechanical as the irony which ordains them.

To make him tragic, Stark is invested with a consciousness that resembles Warren's own thinking. When the young surgeon, Adam Stanton, hesitates to accept the directorship of the hospital because he does not want his hands soiled by politics, Stark gives him a lesson. He tells Adam there is one thing you can't inherit: "Goodness. Yeah, just plain, simple goodness. Well you can't inherit that from anybody. You got to make it, Doc. If you want it. And you got to make it out of badness. Badness. And you know why, Doc? . . . Because there isn't anything else to make it out of."

Of course Warren is not identical with Stark, just as he is also not the a-hero, Jack Burden, the ex-reporter who explains Stark while serving him. He does not accept Stark's philosophy in the same way that Stark does. Stark acts; Warren despairs. But Stark dies of that despair. The absurd fate, History, takes its toll. Sartre would applaud at this point.

History is absurd: Willie's righteousness leads him into corruption. His corruption empowers him to make the upright decision that ends in his death. His love for his son brings about the boy's death. Jack Burden's loyalty to Stark accomplishes the suicide of Judge Irwin, whom he loved and who turns out to be his true father. "Little Jackie made it stick all right." Burden, who loves Stanton's sister Anne, proves to her that her father, while governor, covered up for Judge Irwin when the latter took a bribe. Anne uses his evidence to disillusion Adam so that he will accept Stark's offer of the directorship. This enmeshes her with Stark, whose mistress she becomes, and, in turn, makes her an agent of Stark's death, since Adam kills him when he learns of their affair.

Irony enters the domain of ethics as well. Judge Irwin has made Jack heir to an estate which the judge had saved by his single act of dishonesty. From this, and from the wretched failure of the "saintly" man whom Burden had always believed to be his father, Jack concludes that goodness tells him nothing since he cannot live by it, but that evil, if it is strong, is excused by its good effects. Here the justification of the means by the end is utterly distorted by its reduction to a frame of private interest. Moreover, the sophistry is invested with aristocratic pathos. Judge Irwin tells Jack that Governor Stanton protected him without his being aware of it. "I just wanted you to know about the

governor. That his failure was a defect of his virtue. The virtue of affection for a friend." (Burden can never, even at the very end, shake himself of the haunting notion that "a man's virtue may be but the defect of his desire, as his crime may be but a function of his virtue.")

The judge would rather shoot himself than tell Jack that he is his father in order to prevent Jack's exposing him. He is a gentleman of the old school. So we are taught that there was once honor among thieves; today, alas, there is none since there are so few gentlemen. What is defended here is not human weakness, the single misstep against carping morality, but a vestigial class whose members systematically condone such acts since that class must preserve itself by means of them.

BURDEN has worked out a similar defense for Stark. The latter is no fascist like his prototype, Huey Long, but a Robin Hood with a weakness for graft. Burden accounts for him by the theory of historical costs.

> "All change costs something. You have to write off the costs against the gain. Maybe in our state change could only come in the terms in which it was taking place. . . . The morally bad agent may perform the deed which is good. The morally good agent may perform the deed which is bad. Maybe a man has to sell his soul to get the power to do good. . . . The theory of the moral neutrality of history. All that was a high historical view from a chilly pinnacle. Maybe it took a genius to see it. To really see it. Maybe you had to get chained to the high pinnacle with the buzzards pecking at your liver and lights before you could see it. Maybe it took a genius to see it. Maybe it took a hero to act on it."

It has not taken us long to go from Faust to Superman. In the time of the dying off of the gentlemen of the old school, there will always be a faithful knight to ascend the chilly Zarathustrian height and return with some elegant vision that assures him his dynasty will go on. And what if the vision turns out to be Hitler or Willie Stark? That, Burden would say, is what I mean by an historical cost. But then how far are we from Huey Long after all?

The story of Cass Mastern, a Civil War ancestor whose tale Burden

has unearthed, provides a further irony. Mastern's affair with a friend's wife has brought misery to sundry people; as for Burden's not seducing Anne Stanton in his youth: "My nobility had in my world almost as dire consequences as Cass Mastern's sin had in his. Which may tell something about the two worlds." Burden's wry nostalgia is cousin to Warren's desolate attachment to the myth of yesteryear.

It is too simple, then, to say that Burden is a character in his own right and that therefore his philosophy cannot be attributed to Warren. This is to deprive the book of seriousness and Warren of his office as moralist. Burden is both a character and a chorus. The morass of thought into which he has fallen—a mixture of full-fledged idealism and pragmatism, with a brief interlude of mechanical materialism—prevents him from acting according to his convictions. At the same time his philosophy has become a system standing apart from him, explaining him and Stark, justifying them in the light of history.

The contradiction is resolved miraculously. After Willie's death, Jack regains his faith, marries Anne, and takes in to live with them the old "saint" whom he had once believed to be his father and whom he had despised. He has attained the old man's "Fullness of Being." One of the Humpty Dumpties has been put together again. Not by horses and men, but by theology. Similarly, Willie, on his deathbed, is allowed to whisper, "It might have been different, Jack." He too is converted, patched up and saved. But for this to happen he must be lifted outside the realm of necessity. The process of his corruption was never clear, and the conditions of his power were glossed over. Now his moral rebirth is sudden, obscure and unbelievable. Willie is not Huey, but he is not Stark either. At this point he represents no one. His dying words do not move us because they do not belong to him. They constitute Warren's attempt to by-pass the dilemma to which his philosophy of history has driven him. If history is absurd, why should men live in an "agony of will"? To be saved, Warren answers, to be saved though they are doomed.

To lend support to this doubtful salvation, Warren produces still another symbol. Willie's son, now dead, has had an illegitimate child. Mrs. Stark adopts the infant whom she names Willie, "because Willie was a great man." That is what she and Jack must both believe. The wheel has come full circle. Mechanical irony is conquered by shamefaced faith, and foolish history redeemed by senseless judgment.

THIS conclusion should surprise no one familiar with Warren's social bias which has changed little since the dedication of his heart to the Old, the feudal South. One can trace a line of descent from Mr. Christian through Bogan Murdock to Willie Stark, and from Perse Munn through Jerry Calhoun to Jack Burden. Warren's admiration for what the first three have in common—strength of will, ability to act ruthlessly—outweighs his qualms about Murdock's and Stark's predatory natures. In Munn's, Calhoun's and Burden's emptiness we see reflected Warren's distaste for his own passive role of an intellectual and his ambivalent surrendering attitude toward male power. "I saw the face. Enormous. Bigger than a billboard. The forelock shagged down like a mane. The big jaw. The heavy lips laid together like masonry. The eyes burning and bulging powerfully." Willie Stark is a kind of provincial Heer Peeperkorn.

Where does this power come from? From the folk, the yeomanry of the South, with what John Crowe Ransom calls its "vast quantity of inertia." Warren's genuine love for the poor Southern farmers as individuals has inspired some of the most unaffected and poignant scenes in his novels. But the social role he assigns to them deforms their significance. They are at once the mob, repository of all prejudice, and the great roaring crowd whose mystical voice brings the listener to the verge of truth. As bulwarks against progress, unknowing agents of the will of a ruling class, they become the objects of its spurious affection. As people deceived, they are the butt of its contempt. "Poor, murdering, miserable, God-damned bloody bastards," Duckfoot Blake calls them. And so shall they remain, says Warren, in effect. Even when they become workers they must preserve their provinciality, shunning class consciousness at all cost. No more for them than for the Negro—always the scapegoat, comic relief or prop —is the way open to the genuine development of their creative powers. Only with the past shall their future lie.

In this respect Warren is like those feudal socialists of whom Marx and Engels wrote that "their chief accusation against the bourgeoisie amounts to this, that under the bourgeois regime a class is being developed, which is destined to cut up root and branch the old order of society." His critique of bourgeois society is half loathing, half reproach. The blindness of history expresses at one and the same time his wish that time could be reversed and his despair that it cannot be.

One should not be fooled because he exalts that despair and calls it hope.

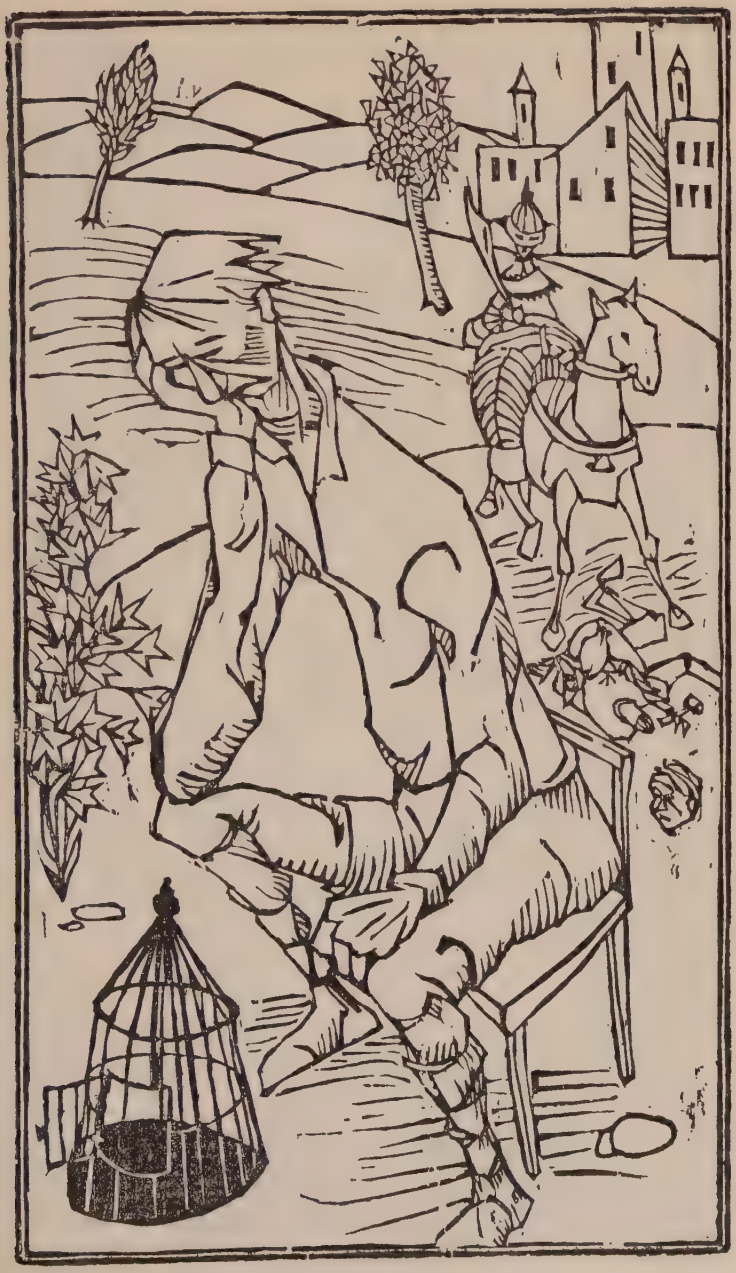
It would be easy to praise Warren for the surface triumphs of his art, or to discuss one or another defect of his impressive talent. We are concerned with something more basic: his faulty, fragmentary grasp of history. We assert that there *is* a science of man and his social life; that history is not lawless and accidental; and that the material circumstances which determine or limit men's exerting of their separate wills are not mysterious, but subject to study, prediction and change. Freedom lies in knowledge of, not in flight from, the conditions of existence. Every contest of wills gives rise to ironies, but irony is no god, deciding the nature or outcome of the clash. Certainly the class struggle, supreme conflict of human wills and interests, has other causes and another destination.

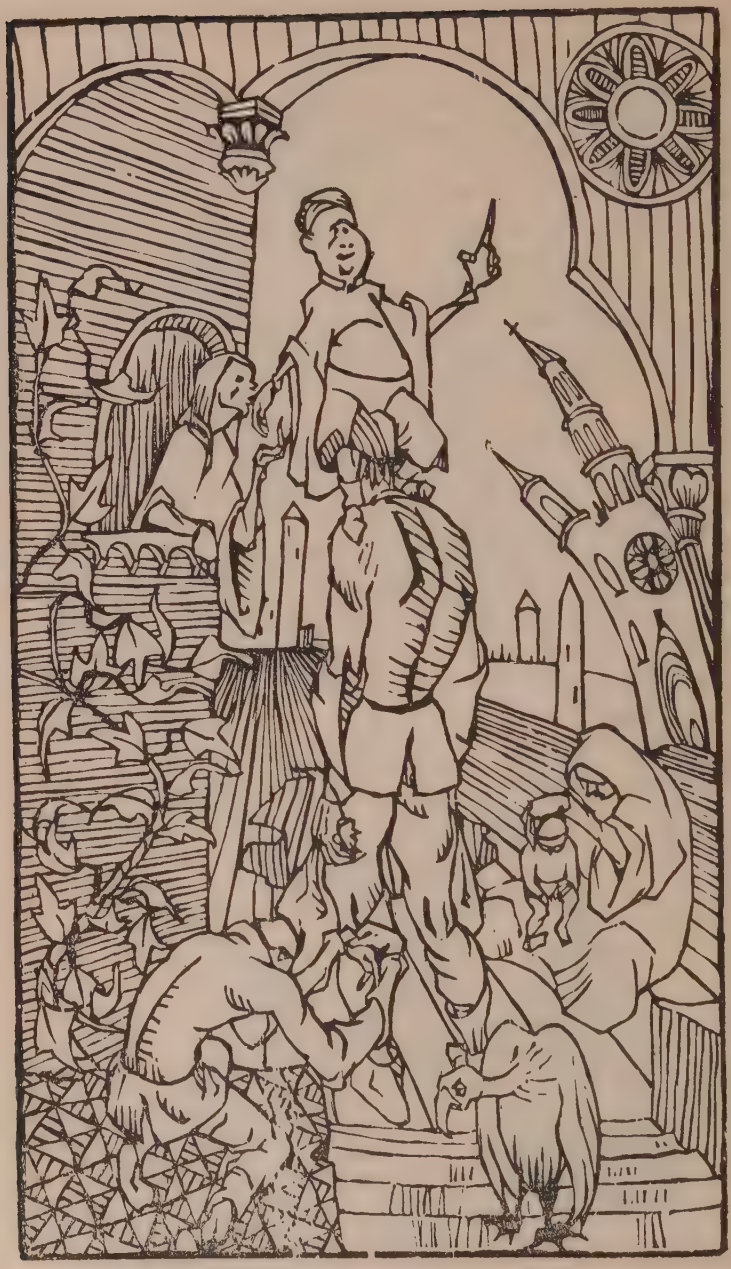
If Warren understood this, he might look beyond the death of the Old South and its outdated form of exploitation which he views so romantically. He might then see that the small farmer, on his land or dispossessed from it, is not a deluded yeoman and that the Negro is not a lost clown lacking only his own vine and fig tree. For together with the working class it is they who will help put an end to the nightmare society of capitalism which Warren disdains, as well as the quasi-feudal remnants to which he clings.

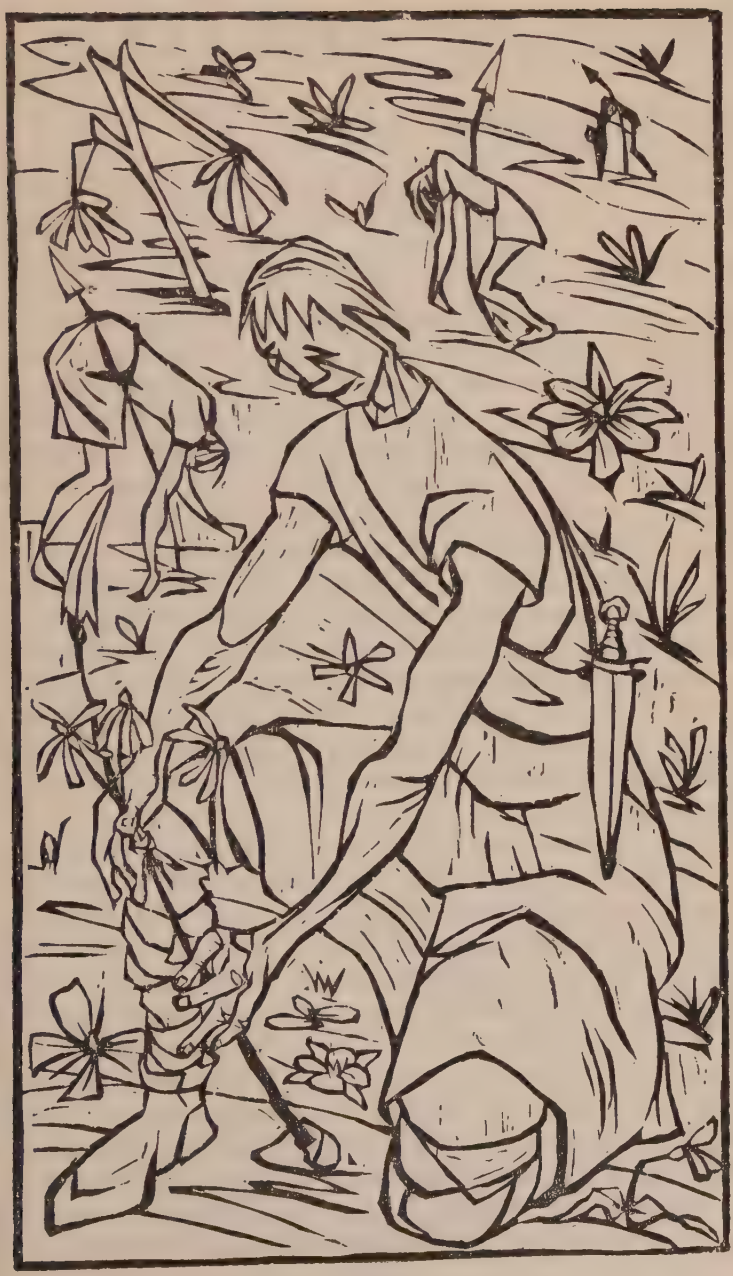
THREE WOODCUTS

by

LOUISE KRUEGER







DANGER AHEAD
for Organized Labor

by WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

ORGANIZED labor in the United States is now slipping into a dangerous position which, if uncorrected, will gravely undermine its strength. This is caused by the fact that the old-line conservative and Social Democratic heads of the A. F. of L., C.I.O., Miners, Machinists and Railroad Brotherhoods are supporting the bipartisan, imperialist foreign policy of big business. They are poisoning the labor movement at its heart and have already seriously weakened it ideologically, industrially, politically and organizationally.

American imperialists, in their drive to subjugate the earth, realize that the world democratic forces are the main obstacles to their expansionism. Hence, they are striving to defeat the Soviet Union, the national liberation movements of Asia, the new democracies of Europe, and the Communist parties and trade unions of the world. Allied internationally with big capitalists and landlords, the Vatican, avowed fascists and right-wing Social Democrats, they are driving the world toward fascism and war.

By the same token, big business is carrying on an offensive against democracy in this country. For if the American ruling class is to push its imperialist policy successfully abroad, it must have a reactionary regime at home. Its foreign and domestic policy dovetail. Monopoly capitalism, therefore, with consistency is striving to militarize and fascize the United States and to plunge it into war against the U.S.S.R.

The present dangerous position of organized labor in the United States develops from the fact that by supporting American imperialism's offensive abroad, the leaders expose the workers to the full force of the monopolists' offensive at home. This surrender has weakened the unions, strengthened the bosses, and seriously increased the danger of fascism and war. Organized labor is the backbone of this

nation and in this decisive moment of history the whole position of American democracy is at stake.

Labor Betrayed on the International Front

One of the basic tasks of the labor movement in this crucial postwar period is actively to defend world peace and democracy against the forces seeking to destroy them. The whole position of the labor movement depends upon its vigorously carrying out this fundamental and historic task. But, save for a minority of Left and progressive union leaders, the officials of the main national divisions of the American labor movement are grossly betraying this responsibility. Behind this treachery to the working class and to the American people lies a more or less conscious desire of the labor bureaucrats to share in the spoils they foolishly think are to be won by U.S. imperialism in its expansionist push.

Wall Street finds the reactionary trade union officials especially effective in poisoning the workers' minds. These labor imperialists are now busily peddling to the workers the monstrous falsehood that the United States is being attacked by an aggressive Soviet Union; they are ardent champions, too, of the criminal absurdity that the monopoly-dominated Truman government with its fascist allies is fighting everywhere to defend world democracy; and they are shouting that the Marshall Plan, whose real purpose is to arm Europe for war against the U.S.S.R., is a beneficent program designed to bring about economic recovery. In short, every lie that abets the program of world conquest is being handed out by the servile labor leaders. All this seriously undermines the peace will of the people of the United States and of other countries.

One of the most destructive tasks alloted to the labor imperialists by big business is to weaken and split the progressive labor movement in Europe and elsewhere, which the capitalists recognize as an especially powerful obstacle to their program of conquest. Conservative leaders of the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. have taken on this disgraceful job with gusto. They are striving to ram American imperialism's program down the throat of an unwilling working class in various countries. As a result, the past year has witnessed some of the most outrageous instances of union-wrecking and strike-breaking, engineered by the chief American labor centers, ever known in history.

Acting in the same spirit as the authors of the Taft-Hartley Law, the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. leaders have decided arbitrarily that, so far as they are concerned, Communists cannot be officials of trade unions in Europe or anywhere else in the world. Consequently, during the recent great strikes in France and Italy, American trade union leaders through their overseas agents, Irving Brown of the A. F. of L. and James Carey of the C.I.O., brazenly called upon the workers to disregard the strike calls of their democratically-elected Communist leaders. Openly and unblushingly, they also organized the present split in the French trade unions. The A. F. of L. is similarly busy seeking to smash the Latin American Confederation of Labor in order to advance the cause of U.S. imperialism in Central and South America. And both the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. are maneuvering to disrupt the World Federation of Trade Unions over the question of the Marshall Plan. In their destructive work the conservative and Social Democratic leaders of the C.I.O. have become practically indistinguishable from the ultra-reactionary jingoists who head the A. F. of L.

How deep these labor leaders have sunk in their subservience to the war plans of big business is graphically illustrated by the activities of Clinton Golden, for many years a high official of the A. F. of L. and C.I.O. Mr. Golden, attached to the U.S. military mission in Greece, calmly sat in Athens while the fascist Royalist government passed laws providing the death penalty for strikers and executed thousands of workers, peasants and intellectuals fighting for the most elementary liberties. The boss press has thanked Mr. Golden.

A striking feature of this whole situation is the cynicism with which American capitalists are accepting as a matter of course the lickspittle attitude of the top labor leadership toward their war plans. In many countries of Western Europe the hard-pressed employers frequently entrust lackey right-wing Social Democratic labor leaders with highly important posts in government and with other "responsibilities" and "honors." But not so here in the United States. American monopolists have only contempt for their labor lieutenants, much as they need and utilize their services. They scornfully ignore the clamors of the aspiring labor bureaucrats for "a share" in administering the Marshall Plan and, of course, they give these workers' leaders little or no recognition on their political election slates. The bosses simply issue orders on foreign policy to the labor conservatives, secure in

the knowledge that the latter will dutifully carry them out—with grave injury to the American labor movement, to democracy and world peace.

Labor Betrayed on the Domestic Front

THIS servile support of an imperialist foreign policy necessarily has serious consequences upon the very fiber of the American labor movement. The reactionary trade union leaders are caught in the iron logic of the situation: in supporting U.S. imperialists abroad they cannot combat its reactionary manifestations at home. Therefore, inexorably, as supporters of big business' international program of world conquest, the labor misleaders are also betraying the most vital interests of the workers and the American people.

The reason for this is clear: the bourgeoisie in driving for world domination finds it necessary to set up a police state in the United States. Hence, the conservative union leaders, corrupted as they are by the support of the monopolists' foreign policy, are making little or no resistance to the systematic building of fascism that is now going on in this country. They are making no serious effort to support the increasingly assailed Negro people, nor to combat the rising wave of anti-Semitism. They are tamely submitting to outrageous "loyalty oaths" for government workers as well as other systems of thought control. They even endorse (as does the A. F. of L.), or refuse to fight with all-out mobilization (as does the C.I.O.), the dangerous activities of the House Un-American Committee. They often out-do even the capitalists themselves in the Hitlerite practice of Red-baiting. They (especially the major leadership of the C.I.O.) are falling more and more under the warping influence of the Catholic hierarchy. And they bestir themselves but feebly as the reactionaries strive to railroad the highly dangerous Mundt Bill through Congress.

At the recent convention of the Textile Workers Union-C.I.O. there occurred an incident, minor in itself, which illuminated the ideological decay widespread among top trade union leaders. Emil Rieve, Social Democratic head of this union, when confronted with resolutions condemning lynching, segregation and the Ku Klux Klan, prevented action on the grounds that they were "controversial" and also because of his expressed concern about the feeling of possible Ku Kluxer's among the delegates themselves.

The conservative upper layer of union leaders, politically enfeebled

by their allegiance to imperialism, are incapable of making a solid fight even against the fascist-like Taft-Hartley Law which strikes at the vitals of the trade union movement. This law could have been killed had the top leadership actively mobilized labor's forces against it at the time it was being considered by Congress. It also could have been nullified if the trade union leaders had resolutely refused to sign its infamous anti-Communist clause as the progressives and Communists proposed. Instead, the A. F. of L. union leaders fell over each other's necks in hastening to put their names to the slave law, and the right-wing C.I.O. chieftains were not far behind. Only the Miners and the left-wing C.I.O. unions have made a determined stand against the law.

As a result of this subservience a veritable rain of Taft-Hartley injunctions is now falling upon the workers, the strike rights of the unions have been seriously impaired, and the unions are more and more falling under the control of the reactionary government. The recent smashing of the Miners' and Railroaders' national strikes by the Truman Administration indicates the dangerous degree of domination that the government now exerts over the unions.

Similar to the situation after World War I, a strong movement for class collaboration, which injures the unions' fighting spirit, is developing among the trade union leadership. Philip Murray, in the June issue of *The American Magazine,* expresses this enervating tendency as follows:

> "In fact, we have no classes in this country; that's why the Marxist theory of the class struggle has gained so few adherents. We're *all* workers here. And in the final analysis the interests of farmers, factory hands, business and professional people, and white-collar toilers prove to be the same. Even the division of industrial workers into 'management' and 'labor' turns out to be somewhat artificial. Management, as we've discovered, involves plenty of labor; and labor involves considerable management."

Because of the lack of a fighting policy by labor the employers are making serious inroads into the legal status and organizational position of the trade unions. Under the Taft-Hartley Law they have knocked out the so-called closed shop, and now they are attacking various other forms of the union shop. A particularly sinister development in this respect was the ruling of the National Labor Relations Board up-

holding the laws within thirteen states which ban the union shop. Since the death of Roosevelt the labor movement has lost much ground in the basic matter of union recognition.

The present intense drive of the imperialists to super-militarize the United States is also meeting with but a feeble and dying resistance from the A. F. of L., C.I.O., Miners and Railroad Brotherhood leaders. The brass hats are taking over key government posts by the score, gigantic military appropriations are following one another rapidly in Congress, the country's youth is being mobilized as never before in peace time and a wild warmongering rages throughout the land. Yet the conservative labor leaders are constantly yielding to, when not actually supporting, these dangerous developments. And this is logical, for since they are ardent backers of Wall Street's foreign program how can they oppose its war preparations at home?

THESE labor leaders are also incapable of effectively defending the workers' interests within industry. Despite the prevailing "boom" economic conditions, the workers' real wages and living standards are declining while prices and profits soar to record heights. Confused and vacillating, the labor betrayers offer no united front against the employers. Each union fights its wage battles alone. The reactionary leaders condemn with Red-baiting every sign of the workers' militancy.

Meanwhile the employers, contemptuous of their labor lackeys, quickly take advantage of the situation. They are encouraged to stick the knife ever deeper into the body of organized labor. Although their own profits are sky-high the employers, following the arrogant leadership of U.S. Steel, are stiffening their resistance to demands for wage increases. The Ford Company even demanded that its workers accept reductions. The 100,000 packinghouse workers, notwithstanding a two months' strike, were unable to break the opposition of the big packers to an adequate wage increase. Increasingly, also, the employers are fighting the unions with their traditional weapons of court injunctions, police violence, strike-breaking, open shopism, company unionism and the like while A. F. of L. and C.I.O. leaders moan about the bosses' "unfairness." The workers are paying in lowered living standards and in weakened unions for their leaders' support of imperialism.

One of the most dangerous current features of the labor movement is the practice of "raiding." A. F. of L. and C.I.O. unions raid each

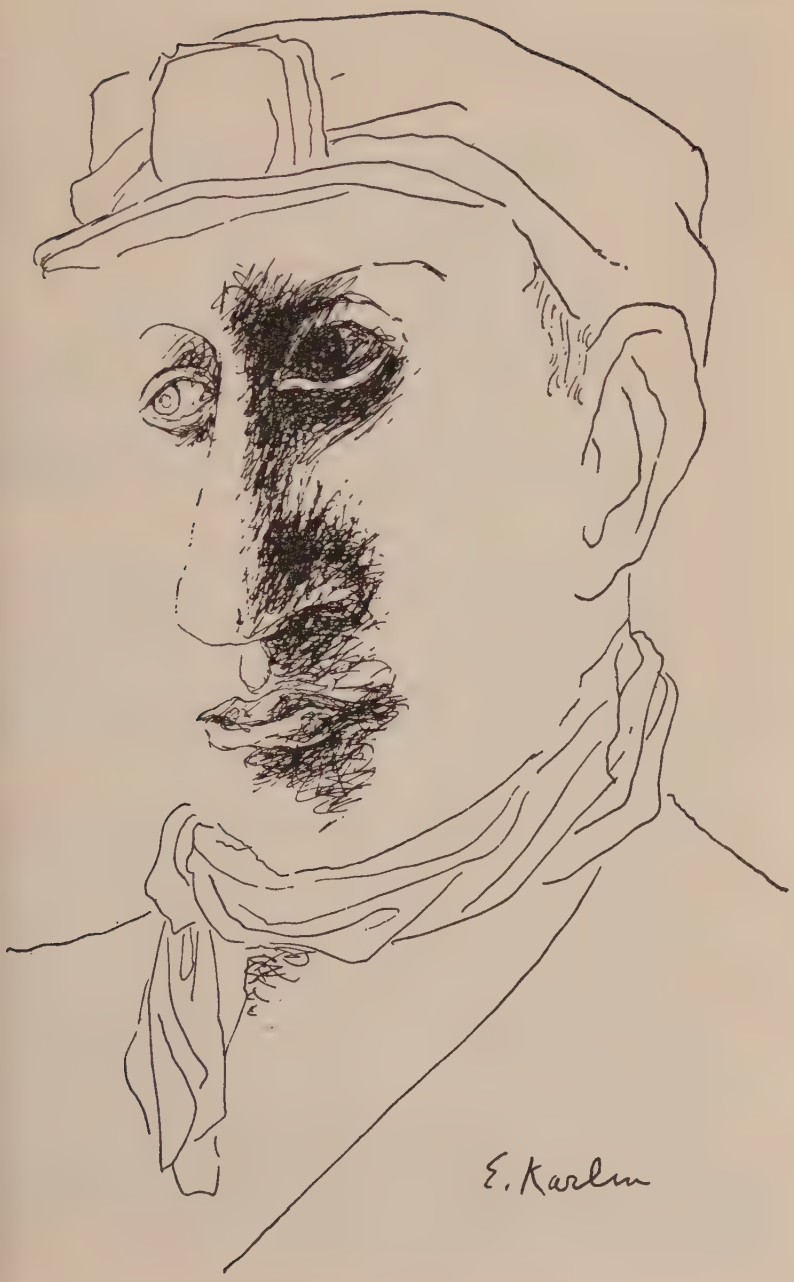
other to the detriment of all workers concerned. Within the C.I.O. itself raiding is prevalent especially against Left and progressive unions. Murray is doing nothing to halt this suicidal practice. One of the worst aspects of the current raiding was that carried out by unions that had signed the Taft-Hartley anti-Communist clause against those that had not signed. Thus the raiding unions betrayed the whole fight against this vicious measure. Today's union raiding is much worse than traditional jurisdictional quarrels between the unions, and unless it is halted soon it can create the most serious damage for the entire labor movement.

On the political field, the conservative leaders of the labor movement are displaying a similar bankruptcy. Although both old parties are manifestly dominated from stem to gudgeon by big business, these labor leaders are trying to keep the workers tied to the Democratic Party in the coming Presidential elections. They are obviously prepared to support, directly or indirectly, even the unspeakable Truman should he be nominated—a man who has broken several national strikes, who was largely responsible for the passage of the Taft-Hartley Law, who has long sabotaged the workers' fight against the rising cost of living, who is going along with reaction in its systematic building of fascism in this and other countries, who is one of the most jingoistic warmongers in the United States, and who has betrayed every plank in the Roosevelt platform upon which he was elected. The policy now being followed by the conservative labor leaders, if there were no counteracting mass influences, could lead to no other result than a resounding defeat for labor and a sweeping victory for fascist-minded reaction in the November elections.

The Resistance of the Rank and File

The surrender by the top labor leadership to the war program of U.S. imperialism, in both its foreign and domestic aspects, is making the position of the trade union movement increasingly precarious.

This, however, is only one side of the picture. There are broad rank-and-file currents resisting the betrayal of their leaders. Although undoubtedly large masses of the workers have been contaminated by the intense war propaganda, and many confused workers honestly believe in the Marshall Plan, nevertheless huge sections of the trade union membership are definitely taking a stand against the surrender-


E. Karlin

to-Wall Street line of their leaders. In this developing rank-and-file upsurge lies the hope of the trade union movement.

The fighting mood of the workers is being shown on a variety of fronts—by their resistance to the growing militarism, by their active participation in the developing struggles of the Negro people, and especially by their many big strikes and wage movements in the coal, meat-packing, auto, communications, railroad, maritime, printing, fur and leather, farm equipment and other industries.

The most significant political expression of this widespread mass discontent is the new party. The Wallace movement represents not only the lining up of a large section of the American people generally against the bipartisan Wall Street bloc in Congress and the Truman Administration, but it is also a far-reaching movement of the more progressive-minded labor leaders and rank-and-file workers against the present betrayal policies of the higher labor officials in their dealings with big business.

At present the trade union support for Wallace officially comes from some fifteen Left and progressive C.I.O. unions, totalling about 1,250,000 members, plus a wide but as yet not clearly tabulated scattering of unions and members in the more conservative A. F. of L., C.I.O., Miners, Machinists and Railroad unions. Undoubtedly a very large section of the membership of organized labor would by now have put their unions officially on record for Mr. Wallace had they a democratic opportunity to do so.

The leaders of the conservative unions are fighting the new party movement almost with desperation. They are spending money as never before in support of old party candidates, and they are literally deluging their own organizations with Red-baiting. In this respect the C.I.O. leaders are not a whit behind those of the A. F. of L. Indeed, Philip Murray is going to the unheard-of lengths of actually threatening Left unions with expulsion from the C.I.O. if they continue to oppose Wall Street's Marshall Plan and its reactionary political candidates. The recent Boston convention of the Steel Workers' union, of which Mr. Murray is the head, was a menacing example of control by a bureaucratic machine thoroughly saturated with imperialist policies and dominated by the Catholic hierarchy. The slugging of Nick Migas, a protesting delegate, was a dastardly action and a danger signal of a declining trade union democracy.

In order for organized labor to counteract its present drift into a critical situation and to exert its tremendous potential progressive strength, drastic changes in policy must be made along at least three major channels.

First, the Wallace new party must be built by mobilizing widespread support from the trade unions. Organized labor in this country has now reached the point when continued backing of the Democratic and Republican parties can only be disastrous. The workers must finally break the shackles that are now holding them to the two old parties. It is of the greatest significance that just as the conservative trade union leadership has surrendered to the foreign and domestic program of U.S. imperialism, the Wallace movement, by a corresponding logic in the opposite direction, is challenging the policies of Wall Street on both the international and home fronts. The new party is, therefore, a tremendous force for the revitalization of the labor movement.

Second, the trade unions, in addition to developing a new political line, have a most urgent need for more militant and co-ordinated policies among themselves on the industrial field. The present practice, in the C.I.O. as well as in the A. F. of L. and Railroad unions and other independent unions, to go it alone on wage and other demands is abysmally stupid and can only lead to serious defeats. In the face of the tremendous financial resources of the employers, their high degree of monopolization and their new spirit of truculence, and also in view of the current wave of warlike reaction in this country (for which organized labor itself is largely responsible), there is the urgent need for united labor action by the unions in defense of the workers' interests. Especially the present insanity of intra-union raiding must be stopped. An end, too, must be put to the developing dangerous tendency to suppress democracy in the unions, and a halt should also be called to the deadly practice of Red-baiting.

Organized labor, in short, must understand that the easy-going days of the Roosevelt regime are over. Now it must dig in and fight. The workers are facing a ruthless capitalist class determined to establish its world rule at any cost, and determined, too, to build a reactionary regime in the United States. Trade unionists have to realize that they must develop a fighting movement, or else. Unless it corrects its present industrial tactics, labor is in for some costly lessons from the hands of employers. Let the deplorable condition of the trade union movement

in the late Twenties be a warning of where the lickspittle, class-collaboration policies of the top leadership will lead if not corrected by progressive rank-and-file resistance.

Third, in addition to better political and industrial policies, there must be an ideological renaissance in the trade union movement. The present dangerous situation, with the decisive leadership of labor tailing after the big capitalists and following them tamely in policies that lead to fascism and war, is the inevitable result of our having a conservative upper trade union officialdom. Organized labor must have a strong core of leaders with a Marxist-Leninist outlook. It must begin to break with lingering N.A.M. theories of "free enterprise"; to discard Keynesian notions of a "progressive capitalism"; and to rid itself of the influences of the hypocritical "socialism" of such Social Democrats as Dubinsky and Reuther. A strong body of leaders who understand the general principles of Marxism-Leninism is necessary in order successfully to lead the working class in these days when innumerable complex problems are increasingly being cast up by the decaying and declining world capitalist system.

THE American trade union movement, with its 15,000,000 members, has tremendous potential strength. But its vast numbers are not, of themselves, final guarantees of the progressive health and strength of the movement. The German trade union movement was proportionately even stronger than ours, but Hitler easily conquered it because of the betrayal policies of its right-wing Social Democratic leaders. The progressives in the trade unions should be warned, therefore, of the present dangerous tendencies in the labor movement. They have a special responsibility and an urgent need for clear-headedness and concerted action. They must not fall victims to the illusion of mere numbers, to the notion that the great size of the trade unions renders them invulnerable to the attacks of the reactionaries. There must be a revitalized, re-invigorated labor movement. Otherwise, in spite of its numbers and strategic position, organized labor can, through wrong policies, suffer serious degeneration and weakening in the general direction of a spineless, state-controlled, boss-dominated trade unionism. The unions must stop their retreat and resume their advance. The present reactionary, imperialist policies of the top trade union leaders spell danger ahead for American organized labor.

POEMS BY

Paul Eluard

CRY OUT

Here action is simplified
I have overthrown the inexplicable land of lies
I have overthrown lightless gestures and impotent days
I have brought to light the propositions read and heard
I begin to cry out
Each spoke too low spoke and wrote
Too low

I have thrust back the limits of the cry

Action is simplified

For I strip from death this view of life
Which gave death place before me

With a cry

So many things have disappeared
That nothing more will ever disappear
From what deserves to live

Now I am sure that summer
Sings under cold doors
Under opposing armors
The seasons burn in my heart

Seasons men their stars
All trembling at being so alike

And my naked cry goes up one step
On the immense stairway of joy

And this naked fire which weighed me down
Returns my strength sweet and hard

Here there is fruit ripening
Burning with cold frosted with sweat
Here is the generous place
Where only dreamers sleep
The day is fair let us cry louder
So the dreamers may sleep better
Enveloped in the words
Which make fair weather in my eyes

I am sure that every moment
Ancestor and son of my loves
Of my hope
Happiness surges from my cry

For the highest search
A cry of which mine is the echo.

DO YOU DOUBT THE CRIME

A single rope a single torch a single man
Strangled ten men
Burnt a village
Vilified a people

The gentle cat installed in life
As a pearl in its shell
The gentle cat has eaten her kittens.

TRAINED BY FAMINE

Trained by famine
The child always answers I eat
Are you coming I am eating
Are you sleeping I am eating.

Translated by Lloyd Alexander.

HE SPEAKS OF LOVE AND ITS POWER

In the midst of my torments, thrust between me and death,
between my despair and living's sweet compulsion—
there is this wide injustice, this human misery
that I refuse to condone; there is my anger,

there are the maquis, color of Spanish blood,
there are the maquis, color of Greek skies,
and bread, and blood, and sky, and the right to hope
for all the innocent ones who hate only evil.

Always the light is about to be put out
and life is forever about to become dung;
but endless spring goes on being reborn
in buds out of darkness and gentle warmth returning

to steal resistless through the frozen barricades
of the egoists, thawing their atrophied senses:
I hear the genial chatter of laughing fire,
I hear a man say he has never suffered.

You who were my body's sentient consciousness,
you whom I love forever, my soul's inventor,
who refused to tolerate force and inhumanity
but sang your hope of goodness on this earth,

you dreamed of freedom: I but continue you.

Translated by Robert Brittain.

The FURNACE

A Story by DON LUDLOW

AS THE young man drove his car across the valley and up the canyon toward the flickering, yellow smudge that stained the night sky, he felt happier than he had for many months. The sweet night odors of live-oak and eucalyptus were in his nostrils and he ran his new words over his tongue. "Graveyard," he said. It sounded eerily interesting; and, so far, it was pleasant. He'd be off in the early hours of the morning and those, he thought, were the best hours of the day. Then he said, "Furnace Charger," and smiled. That was a good title. Everyone would ask: "Furnace Charger? What in God's name is that?" He smiled again.

He had seen many pictures of men working around furnaces. The magazines came out every now and then with pictures of big muscled men working in the glow of hot metal. He was glad that he was well built; he wouldn't be ashamed of his shoulders in any company. When he thought of the men he became a little tight inside. They would probably be full of horseplay and give a greenhorn a bad time. He caught himself running a few curses over his tongue and laughed aloud.

Then he thought of the personnel man's words: "You work on the average only twenty minutes per hour." The man hadn't explained; in fact, behind his obviously assumed friendliness, he had been startlingly cold and reticent about everything.

When he told the man his name was James Lind the personnel man's eyebrows had raised slightly in recognition and a little twist that was almost a smirk had flickered at his mouth. When he saw the smile he was glad that he hadn't taken out the letter of introduction his father had written. Not that he was ashamed of the name—it had flashed in proud lights over the main street of the town before he or

the personnel man, or even the "plant," for that matter, had existed—but the four letters had grown smaller, less significant, as the huge neon signs moved in to surround them. And now that they were completely darkened he felt a little—well, not shame, but confusion, and a definite anger that his father's failure should be smiled at.

He had not taken it like his father had—his father had actually cried when the lights went out for the last time—and he had been forced to cheer both himself and the old man. "Times are changing, Dad," he had said. "The big outfits are the new thing. You started at the bottom; so can I."

He had chosen the plant because it was big and therefore must have more room at the top; but when the personnel man had questioned him on his experience he was startled to find that he knew practically nothing useful. Yes, he could run a typewriter . . . No, he was not a typist . . . Yes, he could run an adding machine and keep small books, but he was not a bookkeeper . . .

He had felt himself turning red under the exacting questions and when the man suddenly remarked: "We have an opening for a furnace charger, James," he allowed the man's condescending familiarity to slip over his shoulder and had nodded quickly.

"It's labor," the personnel manager had said, "but you only work twenty minutes out of the hour."

He had nodded again and had said, "Yes. I'll take it."

When the man had handed him his card he had smiled and said, "There's a union, of course, but you're not required to join it."

Lind had nodded and smiled in return.

THE young man's thoughts came back to his driving, and when the car lights struck a high fence that crossed the canyon, he turned and drove into a big parking lot. Leaving the car, his new lunch box in his hand, he faced the valley. He could distinguish the main highway by the long line of car lights, but the town was only a smudge of neon glow. He searched, but could not even imagine where the dark spot that had been the store might be.

After checking in at the guard house by the main gate, he stopped outside to pin on his badge. Being numbered jarred him a little, but the guard had irritated him. The man had checked him in without breaking a conversation he was holding with another guard. Then, as

he had turned to leave, he had called directions after him, and had explained the use of the time clock in a loud voice.

But as he walked up the unfamiliar road he forgot himself in the effort of finding his way. He had come early, to give himself time for orientation, and he was walking alone through the dark. Smoke lay heavy here. From the valley floor it had been pleasant to watch as it rose in a great column from the cleft in the hills, but here it dragged long tails that reached the ground, and the odor gave his nose and throat a dry, sour taste, like over-smoking. Stumbling along the broken road, he was aware of a certain strange feeling that came from the swaying lights. They made the darkened buildings heave and roll in a weird night-dance, and the multiple tones of steam and air whistles cried and burped at him.

There was a small, dirty bulb glowing dimly at the near end of the building, where he was to work, and under it he found an entrance. As he stepped through the door the enormity of the structure startled him. The distant end of the building was lost in darkness, and the ceiling was a high cloud of billowing, yellowish smoke, stabbed with flashes of orange light.

He had expected to find men in vigorous action, but beyond some steady, driving, forceful sounds, the place was strangely lifeless. Of the fifteen men he could see on the main floor, only a few were moving. In the gloom, at the far end of the building, two men were swinging mauls against a huge stack of grey, metallic slabs, with unbelievable slowness. Near him, sitting on the ground, their legs outstretched, were two men. They were rolling red clay and some black substance into small balls. He raised his eyes to a slatted, steel catwalk against the outer wall and saw a man pacing before a thirty-foot-long panel board.

James Lind stepped toward the two ball rollers and spoke: "I'm a new man," he said, "Furnace Charger."

The two grimed faces looked up at him, blank as galley slaves. Then one of the men raised a gloved hand and pointed toward the rear of the building. Lind felt himself blushing, and he turned to stride hurriedly toward a group of men standing midway of the building. As he walked, a blast of heat caught him in the face and he realized that what had seemed a cement wall, when he entered the building, now appeared as a two-hundred-foot-long concrete block. It rose ten feet above the floor, and it seemed to be a cauldron of smoke and flame.

As he reached the group of men they suddenly sprang into action. They lunged with a long steel lance at the concrete wall, and he stood, uneasily, watching their apparently futile antics. The men gave off a unified bellowing sound as they lunged, and it occurred to him that they sounded like animals. Then the long lance pierced the concrete and the men fell forward to their knees with a loud grunt. They rose quickly, and sprang back, dragging their lance with them. From the puncture started a trickle of liquid opalescence. It was a color he had never seen before, and he watched the trickle increase to a stream that split and ran down clay chutes into a pair of large, bowl shaped sand beds. He stood, transfixed by the color, his mind trying for a word. Then he felt a hand on his arm, drawing him back, and he realized his face was being seared.

When he looked up he saw the men watching the flow, their mouths open, sucking air, their right hands extended at arms length to break the heat. He stepped away, trying to duplicate the stance, but he could not place himself properly, and turned his back.

"I'm a new man. Furnace charging," he said to the man who had touched him. The motions of the men with the lance had suggested the thought and he had taken it for granted that this was where he was to work.

The man turned and looked at Lind's face, then down at his new work jeans. "This is Tapping," he replied. "Charging's there." He pointed with his chin to the raised section beyond the sand pits. "You can wait in the wash room. It's cooler." The man pointed on down the building, and turned back to watch the flow.

Lind felt a surge of anger. There had been nothing unfriendly in the words, but he felt that there was disdain in the brief look and the tone of voice. He wrenched himself free of the group and walked self-consciously toward the dark end of the building. He suspected that the men were looking at him, perhaps coldly, perhaps amusedly; but when he turned to round the end of the cement wall and glanced back, they were all standing as he had left them, hands raised in their strange salute to the heat.

HE FOUND the wash room and entered into the familiar cool of air conditioning and the slightly sour odor of the shower baths. He sat down on a bench in the locker section, feeling worried and lonely.

"Christ, what a way to live," he thought. He felt a shudder run through his body. "Well, it was starting at the bottom—by God if it wasn't."

He glanced at his watch. The hands marked ten minutes before twelve. The door opened and a man entered. The man was of medium weight, wiry, quick, square of jaw and shoulders. In his hand he held a small notebook. "Are you Lind?" he said.

Lind rose. "Yes," he answered—he clipped his tongue on the verge of saying "sir"—"I was employed this afternoon as a furnace charger."

"My name's Burke," the man said. "Foreman."

Lind nodded and wondered if he should offer his hand; but the man went on: "You never worked here before?"

Lind said, "No."

"What have you been doing?" Burke asked.

"My father's business."

"What kind?"

"Just a store."

The foreman pulled a small looseleaf notebook from his pocket and shoved it at the young man. "Look at this," he said. "You can read figures can't you?"

Lind flushed and looked at the book while the man pointed out the five neat columns.

"I'm putting you on Number Four," Burke said.

Lind did not like the word "putting," but he nodded.

"Look at that Number Four column," the foreman went on.

Lind could see the variation in the percentages. The fourth showed a slight low.

"The lazy bastards are letting it blow," the foreman continued, speaking rapidly. "Look at the temperature. Look at the grade. Look at it." He paused, then went on, "They're burning enough iron to build a battleship. God damn it, it's got to stop." He snapped the book shut.

Lind's mind was whirling. The figures were plain, but what did they mean—"burning iron . . . blowing—" He blinked his eyes and opened his mouth, but the foreman interrupted: "You're a white man, you've got brains, keep your God damned irons out of the fire and plug the blows." He turned toward the door and then looked back. "The crew will show you what to do," he said. "Remember, Number Four. I'll transfer you to a better job as soon as I can." He jerked the door open and was gone.

Lind was impressed but slightly resentful. He would need to know more about the things the foreman had squirted at him like water from a hose.

WHEN the graveyard crew began crowding into the washroom Lind gazed at them with unbelief. He had never before seen such a nondescript collection of men. They were large, small, broad shouldered, narrow shouldered, thin, stocky; and all of them looked dull and tired. They went silently to their lockers and began pulling out masks and leather gauntlets and heavy shoes. They threw the equipment on the floor, then undressed and began struggling into as many as three pair of black, Frisco jeans. They put on old sweaters and sweat stained hickory shirts, to become clumsy lumps.

Except for the lack of rags tied around their feet, Lind thought, they might have been exiles of the Czarist regime, preparing to plod the snow packed roads to Siberia. Their cheeks were sunken and their eyes seemed to be uniformly dark, nervous and feverish. They dressed completely, including the gloves and masks, before leaving the room; and when they pulled down the masks their identity disappeared behind the black, molded fiberboard, leaving only their size to distinguish one from another.

No one had spoken to him, although each had glanced his way at one time or another, and he suddenly realized that he must make an advance or they would all be gone and he would be forced to trail after them like a white sheep in a black band. He chose a face and moved toward it. The man had removed his outer clothing and was standing before his open locker in a long woolen union suit and stockinged feet.

Lind cleared his throat. "My name is Lind," he said.

The man was feeling through the clothes-jammed locker, apparently trying to feel out the driest of at least a half-dozen sweat-stained shirts. He turned, holding two of them in his hand, and smiled. He was not young but his teeth were strong, his eyes black in a dark brown face.

"I, Joe," he answered. His voice was soft, with a ch sound for the J. "You go on work here now?"

Lind smiled and nodded and said, "Yes."

The man smiled again. "You got some dress?" he asked, and held up the two shirts.

Lind shook his head and unconsciously drew back. "You tell to me—" he started, then caught himself and began again: "I'm working on Number Four furnace," he said, "Burke told me someone would show me how."

"O.K., I show," the man said. "You get dress quick. The man he work now is mad we late." He shoved the two shirts forward.

"No," Lind protested, "these are old clothes." He ran his hand over his dark sport shirt and shrugged.

"No, no," the man answered, "you burn to hell. Goddamn, you burn to hell." His voice was filled with excited concern and he grasped Lind's arm and forced the shirts into his hand.

As Lind drew on the two shirts and one pair of the patched jeans the man forced upon him, he felt revulsion. Then he felt shame; after all, the man had given him his best and driest. But he turned up his own collar to protect his neck. The shirt cuffs, hanging down against his hands, made his skin feel hot and uncomfortable.

The man dug out a battered mask and a pair of heavy gauntlets from an open locker, and showed Lind how to fit the head piece of the mask to his skull. Behind the mask, and embedded in the clothing, his body stiffened with a feeling of claustrophobia. He wanted to tear away the strange harness, and even in the cool washroom sweat burst from his pores. He was two-thirds blind, his only vision directly ahead through the narrow glass panel, and he felt something resting uncomfortably against his mouth. He raised the mask from his face and saw a small, well-chewed block of wood riveted to the black fiberboard.

"You hol him in the teeth," the man told him. "He doan fall down."

Lind shifted the mask so the block rested against his chin. The gloves were dry outside, the leather fingers bent into a permanent clutch, but inside there was a feel of fungus-like slime.

The room was filling with the relieved shift, and Lind felt a gentle pressure on his arm. He twisted around, turning like a wry-necked chicken, before he could see the man standing beside him. The man's mask was down now, and Lind stared from his glass panel at a grotesque face with great red circles for eyes and a red grinning mouth with pointed teeth.

The man saw Lind start and raised his mask. "The young one, he paint the face," he said, "we go now."

Lind jammed his shoulder painfully against the pipe railing as he turned to follow the man up a flight of iron steps. It was the first physically induced pain he had felt in some months and it angered him. He felt himself hating the personnel man and all this stupidity with a cursing, bitter hatred; and then his head and shoulders cleared the protecting wall.

BEFORE his eyes, and ten paces from him, was a smouldering pool of fire. It was twenty-five feet in diameter, its surface level with the floor; and from the center, in triangulated formation, rose three huge carbon cylinders. Flames that ranged from a nauseous yellow to a pure violet raced over the dark surface and leaped high in pursuit of thick clouds of escaping gas. The fire had been banked by the retiring shift but the heat blast staggered him. He was forced to grasp the stair rail and pull with his hands to make his feet carry him into this brutal force. His guide did not stop now, either to encourage him or direct him; his feet on the concrete surface of the furnace level, he began running toward a narrow aisle that opened between the pit and the red tile wall. The man ran crab-like, his body twisting at the waist to face the heat, and he held up one gauntleted hand to protect his exposed ear and neck.

Lind started to follow, but he could not make himself run. His reason shouted at him to do as the other had done, but his body revolted. He did not raise his hand to protect his exposed flesh, and the heat lashed him. Half way to the smoke-filled aisle he whirled about to escape. When he turned, the heat struck his neck and drove him in a stumbling run back to the rail. It was cooler there, and he hung for a moment, half sobbing, the saliva running from his open mouth. He was not thinking of the men now, or what they might think; nor was he conscious that for the first time in his life he had turned tail to run from something; he was only a little sick, and he was afraid.

The heat itself, beating on his back, forced him to turn and face it. His mask was askew, blinding him and when he straightened it he found the small block of wood between his teeth. Something about the feel of the rail against his back stiffened his courage, and he clamped his teeth on the mouthpiece. He could see through the small, smoke-filled aisle, now; and just beyond the edge of the pit he saw the dark

figure and the grotesque mask of the man named Joe. He was leaning away from the fire at an insane angle and making signs for Lind to come through. He pointed to the side of his face and laid his palm against it; then he clapped his hands together twice, and reaching out his arm full length he jerked his thumb toward his body. Lind understood the motions. He had known before that it was the thing to do but something had happened. He gripped his teeth tighter into the mouthpiece, raised his hand, then began charging toward the aisle.

The few seconds it took to pass the pit seemed like slow, dehydrated minutes. At the narrowest spot the heat struck through his clothing like raw flame, and the faint odor of scorched cloth rose under the mask. Then he felt his arm grasped and he was whirled into the howling blast of an icy hurricane. The wind came from a small airplane propeller, its outlet coned down to eighteen inches. He felt the mouthpiece of his mask jerk violently at his teeth, then he was pulled from the draft and led toward the second pit.

He did not hesitate this time. Between two fires now, the heat was impossible. He knew what he was lunging for and burst through the next aisle to throw himself with a whirling motion into the new stream of cold air. When he felt chill replacing the heat he stepped from the blast and saw four men seated on the bench behind a low, protecting wall. Their legs were outstretched, their masks down to relieve the strain on their necks. They did not move and might have been asleep.

The man, Joe, was standing at a water cooler, his mask up, gulping cupfulls of water and throwing salt pills into his mouth before each gulp. When he finished he held the paper cup in the air stream and let it snap from his hand. It sailed over the charging floor, past the furnace, and dropped from view down to the tapping floor. When he saw Lind watching him, he smiled and pointed at the furnace. Then he raised four fingers. Lind nodded, and the man motioned for him to come and drink. When he approached, the man pointed at the salt pill dispenser and shouted in his ear, "Drink many salts," he said. "Many, many."

When Lind had finished drinking he turned and found that the man was already seated on the bench, his mask down, his body relaxed. He could not see the dark eyes through the glass and he wondered if the man had gone to sleep like the rest. He thought of the foreman's words about the crew's laziness, and he felt uneasy. Common sense told him the company hadn't hired all these men to sit on a bench and sleep.

He moved out to look at the fire. It was warm behind the wall, but not hot, and he stepped forward with his mask tilted up from his face.

The heat struck him viciously and he threw himself backward into the air stream. His mask came down with a snap and the mouthpiece smashed against his lips. He twisted from the wind blast to the shelter of the wall and pulled off one glove. As he stood dabbing at his split lip, the first man in the line raised his mask, and Lind saw that he was a Negro. The man did not smile; he only pointed at the mouthpiece of his own mask and made a biting motion with his large, white teeth. Then he lowered his mask.

Lind turned away, angered by the pain and the impersonal demonstration. "Why are these lumps just sitting," he thought, "there must be something to do. Why in hell can't they at least show me what it is."

HE LOOKED at his watch and was startled to find it was only fifteen minutes past twelve. The continuous, trembling roar of the fan and the furnace strained his nerves for action. He fitted his mouthpiece between his teeth and eased himself into the air stream again. He found that he could move from the shelter if he stayed in the blast of cold air; and leaning his back against it, he moved out toward the pit. There were two metal screens standing at the edge of the fire and behind them were two neat piles of a conglomerate that appeared to be rock and coke and shaved spirals of steel. Big scoop shovels and a push broom lay on the pile, and a half-dozen long, iron rods lay on the floor, their flattened, hooked ends at the rim of the pit.

As he stood, watching from the security of the cold draft, a feeling of isolation and near peace came to him. There was less darkness on the surface of the fire pool now than when he had dashed by it, and the flames were shooting out more of the violent and red tongues. He was thinking how beautiful almost any fire is, when a column of flame suddenly burst from midway between the lip of the pit and the nearest electrode. It rose with a screaming roar, crashing red coals against the metal screen, and shooting its howling flame and cinders high into the cantilever roof beams. He threw his body away from the bursting volcano only to find himself out of the airstream. Clawing for the cold air he stumbled in panic over the long irons and fell sprawling.

Before he could rise, a figure sprang from behind the wall and

leaped over his body. The man heaved up one of the irons and lunged at the pit, prodding violently at the edge of the volcano. As Lind regained his feet and backed away toward the fan, the man heaved the white-hot iron from the fire and turned to the pile of conglomerate. He grasped a scoop shovel, and spreading his legs wide to bring his shoulders closer to the floor, he began shooting a stream of the material into the howling volcano. The first shovelfull was spit back with a vengeful rattle but the next and the next stayed. As a man continued to work the shovel, the violent roars ceased, and the man threw it down and worked with the iron again. Lind, watching from the safety of the wind blast, saw smoke rising from the man's body. Then, just as it seemed that his clothing must burst into flames, he sprang back and leaped for the air stream.

Lind did not realize that he was splitting the air, diverting it from the blistering body, until the man came lunging at him and threw him violently aside. Stumbling, he crashed into the wall by the bench, and when he turned there was a screaming rage in his mind. He threw off his mask and gloves, and crouched; but the man who had charged into him was bent over before the fan, grasping the edges of the wind tunnel with both hands. He had thrown off his mask and the wind was roaring over his head, making a shower of the sweat that was still bursting from his face. His back was rising and falling with his great gasps for breath, and Lind could see that his knees were buckling under him.

When he stooped to pick up his mask, there was shame on his face, and he looked toward the men on the bench. The one second in line raised his mask, and Lind saw that he, too, was a Negro. He looked up at Lind for a moment and then smiled. Then he pointed toward the furnace and puffed his cheeks and blew.

Lind blushed and nodded, and then mouthed the word, "Blow."

The Negro smiled, lowered his mask, and let his body relax again.

When the Negro at the fan turned his back to the wind to dry his shoulders, his eyes met Lind's. The man's chest was still heaving violently and his lips were drawn back from his teeth in a grimace, but his eyes were calm. He took off his gloves and held them billowing in the blast, then he threw them to the floor. Lind felt his throat tighten. The man, except for his temporary exhaustion, looked powerful, and there was no sign of doubt in his eyes.

"If they'd only stop this God awful noise," Lind thought, "maybe men could communicate with one another—come to an understanding without being brutes about it."

Then the Negro raised his big hands before him, and, like a ring fighter, shook hands with himself toward Lind. The young man drew in a sharp breath and then pulled off his right glove. He had never met a Negro on a basis of equality before, but he found himself stepping toward the man, his hand extended. Then, as he reached forward, the wind whip snapped his hand down. He was startled—it looked like a deliberate insult—but the man's mouth burst into a wide laugh at the ironical whimsy of the thing. Then, smiling, he stepped from before the fan and shook hands with Lind. Still holding the young man's hand he leaned over and shouted into his ear: "You'd better sit down. It's hotter than you think. You're losing a lot of water."

Lind nodded, and went to the bench, taking his place beside the grotesque mask of Joe. He refitted his headpiece, then pulled the mask down and relaxed. Sitting still he could feel the sweat trickling down his body, soaking through his many layers of clothing, wetting his shoes and gloves.

THE minutes dragged and as the furnace "blows" continued to burst, the men ahead of him, one by one, dashed out to repair them. When they were finished and cooled they returned to the foot of the bench. Nervously, his muscles twitching, Lind sprang up as each blow roared, to stand in the air stream and watch the operation. Then the man called Joe attracted his attention. Pointing at his own knee and elbow joints he shook his head sidewise and grimaced in pain. Lind understood that he was telling him the cold air would give him rheumatism, and he forced his body back to the bench.

By two o'clock he was first in line. Between his nervousness and the heat his clothing had become a soggy mass, and he sat with closed eyes to avoid the sting of the sweat that ran from his eyebrows. Then he heard the bellowing roar of the furnace and sprang from the bench as he had seen the others do. He threw himself into the air blast and let it shove him out toward the pit. He had been waiting for this, wondering if he could drive his body into the frenzied action necessary to plug the blow; but when he saw the pit he stiffened in panicked

unbelief. Half the surface of the huge pit had collapsed into a raging, boiling inferno that would take tons of conglomerate to plug; and as he stared, the other half of the pit heaved and slid downward in a gummy mass. He could see the base of the three huge electrodes now; and they were alive with hot energy, showering stars like the Fourth of July sparklers he had played with when a child.

He turned back from the brutal heat, choked with the realization of his impotence against this thing. He was wondering what would occur if the foreman should arrive to find him standing stupidly staring; but when he turned, he saw that all the men were on their feet. They adjusted their masks, and tucked the collars of their shirts high around their necks. Then, one by one, they moved slowly out, turning their bodies in the air stream before moving toward the pit. One of the men looked at him and clapped his hands together, then pointed toward the floor. Lind realized that he had been standing with his hands held out like an appealing child, and dropped his arms.

Judging by the actions of the men this must be a regular part of the process. He wondered if the five men were laughing at him and realized that there was no way of knowing. Feeling shame, he turned toward the fire and snatched up one of the irons. It was eighteen feet in length and an inch in diameter, and the weight of it staggered him. He could not find the balance that would allow him to lift it, and as he struggled he became aware of the odor of scorching cloth. He dropped the iron and ran back into the air stream. The men parted, allowing him the full central blast, and when he turned again he saw two men spring out. Each held one of the long irons balanced evenly in his gloved hands. The men threw their bodies at the pit, dropping the end of the iron against the lip as they lunged. The end of the irons bounced from the brick-lined concrete rim, shot forward, sliding through the men's hands, to crash into the wads of gummy conglomerate that clung to the electrode. The gummed slag fell, and the men backed away quickly, dragging the irons from the fire.

All the men were working now, pushing, prodding and hooking to clear the electrodes before refilling the pit. Lind quickly moved in with the rest. He threw his iron and it bounced properly, but the hooked end buried itself in a fiery mass. He threw himself back to the looped hand grip and jerked violently. The great mass slipped from the electrode and fell, carrying the iron down and jerking him forward

to the edge of the fire. Struggling, he recalled the words of the foreman —"keep your God damned irons out of the fire"—and the vision of the grade column in the man's book flashed to his mind. He fought on, panting, cursing, slobbering in the intense heat. Then, as though he had pulled loose the bottom of the furnace, the iron was released and he staggered back across the floor.

When his heels hit the pile of conglomerate he fell, but he still clutched the iron. He scrambled to his feet, his smoking clothes burning his skin, but with a feeling of pride that he had not released the iron to the fire. Then he saw the foreman. The man was not dressed to face the heat, and he was crouched in the shelter of the screen looking out at Lind. His arms were waving and his mouth was opening and closing in fury. Lind could hear shrill yelps piercing the roar of the wind and fire. The man was pointing at the iron, and Lind saw that the hook and at least two feet of the rod were gone.

"So what, you smug son-of-a-bitch," he screamed into his mask. In rage he started toward the foreman, but a dark body intervened, and he felt a scoop shovel pressed into his hand. He saw the mask with the large, red eyes and the grinning mouth, and he whirled about and began using the energy of his hatred to spray conglomerate into the pit. In his fury he continued to heave scoopfull after scoopfull into the fire until one of the men motioned for him to stop. When he dropped the shovel, exhaustion bent his knees. The mask bit was out of his mouth, and his tongue lolled between his teeth like that of a dog; only his tongue was hot and dry, and it felt swollen, as though it would never fit behind his teeth again.

Without stopping to reduce the temperature of his body he rushed at the water cooler. He pumped a half-dozen salt pills into his palm and threw them into his mouth. Then he poured water into himself until the pain of his distended stomach forced him to stop. The other men were still working, smoothing the surface of the pit and sweeping the floor clear of the crut scattered by the charging. He returned toward them, intending to help—to try, at least, to do his share.

Any thought that he had had of leading, or raising the percentage, was gone now; he only wanted to hang on, somehow to stagger through this nightmare and see the morning. Halfway to the furnace violent cramps knotted his stomach. He instinctively headed for the pit to vomit but his arm was grabbed and he was turned toward the remains

of the conglomerate pile. A hand lifted his mask from his face as he fell to his knees on the pile. The water spurted through his mouth and nose, and the undissolved salt pills rattled against his teeth, escaping his agonized stomach.

WHEN he had finished he felt himself being led blindly back to the bench, and hands forced him to lie down. He resisted for a moment, but the hands were heavy on his shoulders. Then he heard the sound of the fan being snapped off and a voice spoke: "Take it easy, Bud," the man said, "take it easy. I been watchin' ya, an' you're runnin' aroun' like a rooster wit his cock out. Screw da guy wit da book. Dis is a man killer. You'll bump off like a weed in a dust storm, ya don't lay off da horsin' aroun'."

Lind tried to answer but the fan was snapped on again and the sound of the wind smothered his feeble protests.

By the time Lind was able to stand again the furnace was in order. The five men had cleared the charging floor, replenishing the piles of conglomerate from the hopper chute. The scattered irons were laid out as he had first seen them, and the one he had burned had been thrown aside for the welders.

The men returned to the shelter of the wall, cooled themselves, drank and took salt pills. Then they sat down in their regular position. Everything was the same as before except Lind. His body was racked, first with chills and then with hot flushes. The odor of the heavy yellow smoke that was again pouring from the furnace was not just unpleasant now; it was painful to his lungs, and nauseating. He tried to look at his watch, holding it close to his eyes, but a strange stupor seemed to have engulfed his mind. He found himself trying to remember what the numbers and the various hands meant. The sweep second hand, jerking its way around the dial, interfered with his thinking, and he dropped his arm. Then the man called Joe placed his lips close to Lind's ear.

"T'ree and a half," he said. "You, me, we eat. Other one, he eat after."

Lind gripped his mouthpiece before leaving the bench, and as he passed the fire on the way to the iron stairs leading from the charging level, his hand came up automatically and his legs pumped into a run.

In the quiet, liquid coolness of the locker room, he flopped down

on a bench; but the man, Joe, pulled him to his feet. "He too cole here," he said. "You break your meats, you go work again."

Lind rose wearily and followed while the man led him through a dark passage into a warm, gloomy, low-ceilinged compartment. It was beneath the charging floor, and the sound of the furnace was still a grumble, but the fan howl was gone. The two men sat on the ground, their backs against the cement pillars, and opened their tin lunch boxes.

The man looked at Lind's thick meat sandwiches and spoke: "You hongry?" he asked.

Lind shook his head. The odor of the food hurt his stomach.

"Here," the man said, "you eat." He took a large chunk of lettuce and a thin crusted turnover from his lunch box and placed them on wax paper by Lind's knee. "He hot like hell," the man said, pointing to the turnover. "He make the belly cry like a sonomabitch. This one," he said, pointing at the lettuce, "he make him happy again." He smiled at his joke and Lind forced his lips to bend.

Then the man said, "You got tse?" He was uncapping his thermos.

Lind shook his head. "Coffee," he answered.

The man frowned. "Coffee, he makes the belly to vinegar. You hot, you drink tse." He smiled again and filled Lind's aluminum cup with hot tea. "When you cole you drink coffee, whiskey, bull pees—" he shrugged his shoulders, "you drink anysing; but you sick, you hot, you drink tse."

Lind drank the tea and then smiled. He shoved his lunch box toward the man without speaking. The man picked up a sandwich and the two began eating, silently.

When they were finished the man named Joe looked across at Lind. "You know Book?" he asked. "You know Boss, Book?"

"You mean Burke?" Lind asked.

The man shrugged and smiled. "Book," he said, "lilly black book." He made a motion as though to draw a notebook from his pocket.

Lind smiled at the pun the man's accent had invented. Then he said: "That damned fool. No, I don't know him and don't want to."

The man smiled, but shook his head. "He no damn fool, he pretty wise."

"He's a God damned, stupid fool," Lind interrupted. "Why should he put a new man on a low furnace if he wants to raise the output and the grade?" He was feeling better after the tea and the hot food,

and his resentment at having lost the end of his iron in the fire was chewing at his pride.

The man shrugged. "Numer Four, he's all time bad," he said. "Any man sick, any man don't know, Book, he say 'Numer Four'."

Lind frowned and the man smiled again, then continued: "Big Boss never say, 'Book, one furnace good, other all bad,' he say, 'Book, what the hell's matter Numer Four?' He say, 'Unos, dos, tres, fife, he's O.K.' he say, 'what the hell that Numer Four?' Book say, 'Them lazy bassards Numer Four, me give plenty hell, they say "screw you" by the finger.' Big Boss laugh and slap Book on back, then go way." He paused, his hands raised. "You look, you see." Then he added: "Book, he go school learn—he go school learn book; he work, he learn trick."

Lind laughed. "He told me he'd transfer me as soon as he could," he said.

"He give you new job you get too good Numer Four," the man answered. "You too goddamn dumb, you too Goddamn sick, you stay." He paused, then his eyes flashed. "You go crazy, fight the fire, you go dingo the head, he make you ball roller." He waved his arm toward the tapping floor. "You see him? You look. You sit on floor make play like lilly one, like lilly bebe."

Lind lowered his eyes. The vision of the men sitting on the floor making the clay furnace plugs made him a little sick. When he looked up, the man, Joe, was smiling again. "You doan fight the fire you O.K. You fight him he chew you Goddamn leg off. You got irons. You got scoop. You got meat. You ain got no Goddamn book."

Lind nodded and when he returned past the furnaces to the bench, he ate salt pills and drank water, and tried to relax between the blows and the furnace drops.

WHEN daylight came, there was no sign of it on the bench. The struggle with the heat, the brutal, endless roar, the heavy labor, had stupefied all the men. The one little game of snapping the paper cups through the air stream had stopped, and the floor around the water cooler was littered with trampled waxed paper. In the work there was no variation. After the first blow, and the first furnace drop, it was repetition. Lind felt that the heat of the furnace was more intense, that the wind from the fan was stronger; but he knew it was the same. He was still nervous—thoughts of the foreman still came to

him in faint flashes—but his weary muscles ignored the little intelligence he could still muster.

Then, at seven o'clock, the foreman appeared before the bench. He snapped off the fan switch, but when he spoke he shouted as though it were still howling. The clipped speed of his words hurt Lind's ears, and his lips snarled behind his mask.

"Your furnace is losing heat," the foreman shouted. He looked at the book in his hand. "Number Two electrode isn't dropping properly. It's burned too low for weight. The crane's bringing in a new one." He snapped the fan switch and left; following the air stream to the stairs that led down into the comparative cool of the tapping floor.

There were no words from the weary men, but as they rose from the bench, one put his hands between his legs and lifted his bagging, damp crotch toward the retreating foreman. Another turned his back toward the man, lifted one leg, then stooped sharply, with a straining motion. They all moved out slowly to drag long sheets of corrugated metal close to the pit. Two brought up a huge tool with a ten-foot handle and a friction clamp band. Another pounded the lid from a black steel bucket marked "Cement."

One of the men motioned to Lind and they went to a tool box and lugged back a vanadium steel end wrench. It had a six-inch jaw and a six-foot handle. With the equipment laid out, the men returned to the air stream and gazed toward the high panel board, waiting.

Lind, trying to anticipate the operation, examined the furnace. He saw that the lower edge of the large metal cap covering the shorter electrode was no more than three feet above the surface of the fire now. He was startled to find that he had been working for almost seven hours without noticing the framework and the huge conduits that surrounded and hung over the fire pit.

He left the group of men and walked to the rail that overlooked the tapping floor. His eyes roved the length of the building, taking in the ten sand pits and the men who were working. It seemed that nothing had changed since he had entered the building. There were four men shaping the sand in two of the pits, and the ball rollers were still sitting, their legs straight out before them. The tapping crew stood as though they had not moved throughout the night. They were still saluting a stream of fire that squirted from the wall. If any of them had spoken or changed position there was no way he could know it.

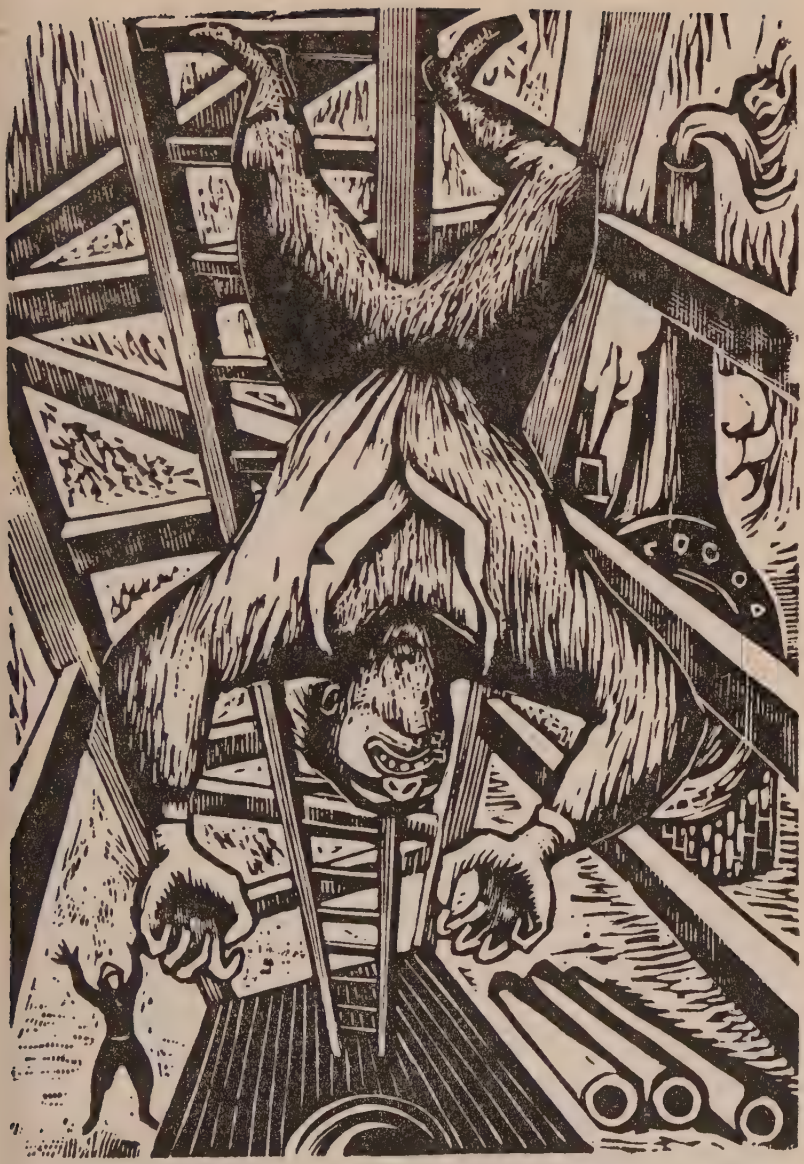
Then the traveling crane piped sharply and Lind raised his eyes toward the smoke-clouded ceiling. The operator was leaning from his cage and the red glare of the fires gave his face a strange, greenish hue. He had a chain hitch on a great, black cylinder and he was swinging it carefully in toward the Number Four furnace. When it was over the charging floor he eased it down so gently that Lind thought it was still suspended until he saw the cable slacken. When it was freed the hook shot up quickly to the level of the furnace framework, and the craneman, leaning far out of his cage, peered through the smoke and manipulated the "crab" over the short electrode.

Then the furnace suddenly stopped its roaring. With the lessened sound Lind heard a thin shout from the panel board catwalk. He looked up and saw the foreman running down the stairs waving his arms. But the crew was already in action. With the current off, the pit lay quietly under its darkening surface, and the men threw the corrugated metal sheets over the smoking mass around the Number Two electrode. When they had the section covered, the men shoveled conglomerate over those spots where the flames slipped through the cracks. Then they stepped back to wait for the crane to remove the metal cap from the threaded top of the electrode. The hook dropped quickly and accurately to the proper level and then swung to catch the five-inch loop of the eye-bolt at the top of the cap. It swung three times, striking the ring but failing to catch.

LIND had his face tilted up, watching the effort of the crane operator as he manipulated the hook around the eye bolt. Then he heard the voice of the foreman shouting in hysterical tones. "The juice is off," he screamed. "We're losing heat, God damn it, get a ladder. Get that hook in. Get that cap off." He ran toward the men, and two of them moved quickly to throw a steel ladder against the framework of the pit. They stood holding it firmly, their feet planted to keep the ladder from slipping on the cement floor.

Lind could see no sense in the operation. From the framework, where the top of the ladder rested, it was ten or more feet to the hook; and when he heard the foreman shouting at him to climb the ladder and place the hook, he stood dumbfounded. "Move, God damn it," the man shouted, "move. We're losing heat."

When Lind failed to move the man screamed it at him in Spanish,



Leopoldo Mendez

and Lind realized that the man didn't know and didn't care whom he was talking to. Rage shook him and he clenched his fists. Then he whirled about and dashed for the ladder. He grasped the rungs with his hands and stepped up; but his foot, instead of finding the first rung, struck something that gave with his weight and came down hard against the floor. When he tried again, and the act was repeated, he realized that he was being deliberately tripped.

He turned his head and saw the red eye-rings of Joe's mask. It was moving slowly, almost imperceptibly, from side to side in a negative. Then he was shoved aside and a man ran quickly up the ladder. Lind stepped back to watch, still wondering how the top of the electrode was to be reached. He watched the figure of the man hesitate on the framework, then crawl fast, snaking on his belly over the conduits that arched the pit. Then the man's movements slowed and he was only inching his way. Lind could see smoke beginning to rise from the man's clothing. He saw the figure stop moving and his breath escaped in a harsh bellow. He sprang toward the ladder, recapturing his mouthpiece as he ran, but before he could touch the rungs the man's body slumped sideways on the conduits and plunged down, to bounce and slide on the hot sheet metal.

Four men lifted him almost instantly, but Lind had seen the man's arm drive through the conglomerate that covered a curled edge of sheet metal. They carried the unconscious man into the air stream and Lind followed, beating at the flames that wrapped the man's arm. Through the narrow eye slit he could not see what he was doing, and when the man was laid out on the floor, Lind spit out his mouthpiece and tore his mask from his face. Then he saw the charred arm he had been beating with his gloved hands. The flesh was gone to the white bone. He backed away, his eyes staring in horror, his gloved hands held out from his body. He crashed down onto the bench and sat there, blankly. As he sat, he saw the leering face of Joe's mask and felt his gloves being drawn off, and saw the man carry them toward the pit.

Then he saw the big Negro shifted onto the stretcher and saw the wind whip a shower of sweat from his face as he was lifted into the blast of the fan. Half consciously he heard the crashing of metal as the corrugated sheets were jerked from the fire; and later he heard the

voice of Burke shouting to the men to let the day crew place the new carbon. Then the furnace roared again as the current was turned on.

He was still sitting, his jaw slack, when the day shift came slowly in. Their appearance aroused him and he stood while the man named Joe helped him fit his mask to his face. "We go now," the man shouted in his ear, "We done. We go home. We drink lilly whiskey. We eat. We sleep." He shoved Lind before him, past the furnace and down the stairs to the shower room.

WHILE Lind sat limply in the room, crowded now with the retiring shift, the man named Joe helped him from his clothing and shoved him under a warm shower. Then the man sat down to undress.

Reviving under the warm water, Lind watched the man, Joe, as he pulled off his gloves and his hideous mask. Lind was startled. The man's face under the light was lean, hollow cheeked. He hadn't noticed that before going to work. His hair was gray, and as he peeled off his soggy clothes the man seemed to shrink away, layer by layer. When he stripped off his woolen union suit Lind saw his thin, almost skeleton body. He was dry, shriveled with age and the fire. Only his eyes were still fully alive—dark, shining.

The man sat waiting until the room was clearing, then he moved toward the shower head beside Lind. The younger man saw tears on the sunken cheeks; but the man looked at him unashamed. "Too bad, that black man," he said.

Lind nodded, his throat choked up a little.

"Maybe you go hospital see him?" the man asked.

Lind nodded again. He hadn't thought of it but surely he would.

"When you go maybe you tell him you doan like Book?" the man said, "He doan know that."

Lind looked at the man for a moment. Then he smiled. "I'll tell him," he said.

PROBLEMS OF MARXIST CULTURE: II

RELIGION and NATION

by GEORGE LUKACS

In the first part of this article, published last month, Mr. Lukacs discussed questions of esthetics, tradition and ethics, with particular reference to the political and intellectual situation in the new democracies of Eastern Europe. This is the concluding installment.

PROBLEMS OF RELIGION

WHILE we assert that practical and political collaboration with the greatest possible number of religious-minded persons can and must be initiated, it is clear that the gap which separates the religious and Marxist conceptions of life and the world cannot be bridged. In this respect, too, it is easy to fall into two extremist errors.

There exists a leftist opposition against the correct tactics of Marxist parties in seeking close collaboration with all democratic-minded men and groups, irrespective of their philosophical or religious beliefs. To rule out the necessity for such co-operation is sectarianism and narrow-mindedness. Lenin, who preceded us by a generation, warned that it was impermissible to allow the genuinely revolutionary forces to be split in the economic and political struggle by disagreements over very secondary or illusory opinions. At present, it is a question of fighting against the last traces of fascism and attempts to restore it, and of building the new democracies; and it would mean lending aid and comfort to reaction to stress and aggravate in theoretical controversy the differences of attitude in general world-outlook.

On the other hand, a wrong evaluation, an exaggerated appreciation of this truth, gives rise to unnecessary concessions to the religious-minded, as for example to think that it is possible, on the philsophical level, to come to a common understanding with the various religions with respect to moral problems. We believe that such a point of view

is wrong. No one would deny the great historic significance of Christian ethics, as for example the Sermon on the Mount, the Gospels, etc.; but here too the gap remains unbridgeable, because against any concept of the transcendental, or any other-worldly aid whatever, we pose the concept of the self-edification of humanity.

The rejection of any illusions with regard to these differences cannot and should not, however, in any way prevent a concerted *advance* in tactics. In any case, it is untrue that by making philosophical concessions, by masking the philosophical contrast, one can create an atmosphere of greater confidence between Marxists and religious-minded persons. In reality, such concessions cannot but be considered hypocritical by the religious-minded; hence, from the tactical point of view, they can have only a negative influence. On the other hand, clarity in philosophical questions, united with sincerity in political collaboration and an honest desire to overcome all theoretical differences solely by democratic methods, can create an atmosphere of mutual confidence.

Marx and Lenin clearly recognized the social basis of modern religious sentiments, that is, their social nature. They arise by virtue of the terror, the apparent lack of any way out, and the lack of security under capitalism. In this light, the fact that during the period of fascism, World War II, and the postwar period religions increased in influence, should not surprise us. Marxists must therefore direct the attention of the masses who are now in motion toward what is socially essential in our period, toward effective liberation, toward the annihilation of fascism, toward the struggle against imperialism and war. All this is well known to anyone who has studied the problem. From the theoretical point of view, it is necessary to recognize that this is not in contradiction to Marxism (which is atheist in that it is materialist). It must be understood that the social roots of religions can be liquidated only on the basis of the criticism made by Lenin, but in a very slow and uneven manner; and that, until this is done, the materialist education of the vanguard of workers and peasants can, in fact must, continue without let-up; and that, in the final analysis, an alliance with honest progressives who are religious can be solidified only on this basis.

A SPECIAL problem that can only be touched upon here is the modern atheism of one section of the intellectuals. This atheism

developed gradually in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. At the outset it was only a question of subjectively painful discouragement and despair; but little by little it became the religious atheism of Nietzsche or of some of Dostoyevsky's characters. Today Heidegger and Sartre have given us a philosophy of religious atheism. Nihilism has been an increasingly active element in this evolution and, parallel with it, the constant inclination of that mental state to accept every reactionary and decadent spiritual trend.

We believe that in this direction a full-fledged ideological struggle is necessary, demonstrating that such atheism does not in fact stand in the way of reactionary conceptions. Indeed, atheism to us is only one of the many consequences, one of the negative consequences of materialism and of the fact that the world is based on spontaneous dynamism, as materialism asserts. From the moment in which humanity awakens to social consciousness, there exists a conscious and self-conscious dynamism of society. God has disappeared without leaving a void. In Nietzsche and the characters of Dostoyevsky, on the contrary, God has died. Formerly, the world was full of meaning, full of God; now the world is without God, empty and meaningless. To Heidegger and Sartre as well, there is no God, but for them, too, the world is empty, abandoned to itself. The demand for religion has remained and of necessity had to remain, since its social basis—the error and uncertainty of life—is the fundamental "ontological" fact of this philosophy. That is why, notwithstanding its atheism, it always tries to satisfy in a mystical-mythological manner the demand for religion. Despite his atheism, Heidegger was able to accept completely Kierkegaard's concepts of a theological nature.

Marxist atheism, on the other hand, forms part of a social practice that will one day offer all men a life in which religious demands will have completely disappeared. They no longer exist for those who are consciously struggling with this future period in mind. And since the real world in such cases is considered as the battlefield of the self-liberation of man, the world without God no longer appears as a world of bleak desperation. There then arises a full sense of this-worldness, in which all the true spiritual and moral values, hitherto existing in a religious or semi-religious form, are set in full relief. From the concrete fact that man builds himself with his own labor and from the perspective that humanity has been awakened to build

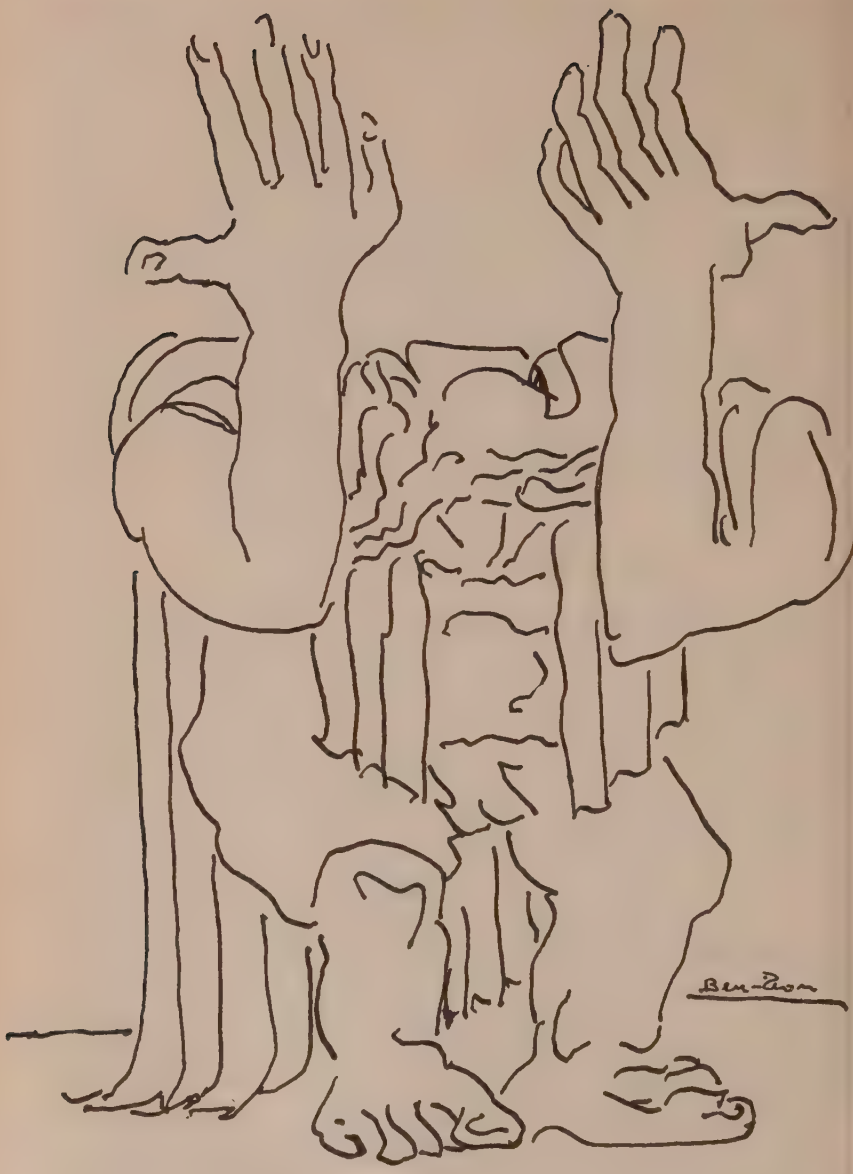
itself with its own consciously collective labor, there flows the serene but deeply felt self-consciousness of the evolution of humanity, the consciousness that we are at a turning-point in history; and such a sentiment contains the moral aspect of that fundamental perspective in which the prehistory of humanity is about to end.

Since the world-historical process is a unified one, religious atheism was born in the same world situation as that which gave birth to Marxism. But the former is but a mystical caricature of that situation. Kierkegaard consciously wrote a caricatural counterpart of the youthful writings of Marx. This polarization of attitudes is reflected in all problems: to Marxists, atheism is a moment in the general process; to religious atheism, what counts is the philosophical-religious problem of the individual isolated in capitalist society. Marxism declares itself for this world. Religious atheism says: *"God is dead; or: there is no God.* Hence, man must play the part of God." Thus it leads necessarily to an eclectic unification of nihilism and mysticism.

PROBLEMS OF THE NATION

WE ARE witnessing a general upheaval in which problems everywhere show an affinity even if we take into account the widest national differences. Everywhere the fight for the establishment of new democracies raises quite similar economic and social problems; and everywhere it sets in motion, for or against, equivalent social forces. That is inevitable since the similarities of class aims and class movements cannot help but produce similar groupings and similar tactical problems. Yet—and this is not a contradiction—everywhere quite distinct national differences are revealed. In general, the aspirations of the workers and peasants are similar, but the means of realizing them are quite diverse. (Think, for example, of the different attitudes of the Socialists in France and Italy, or of the different effects of capitalism on the agrarian regions of the various countries.) This situation should not surprise anyone: did not the *Communist Manifesto* warn that even the international revolution of the proletariat would initially manifest itself in national forms?

But the situation today goes beyond that foresight, and for reasons of historic necessity. Most of the European nations arose with the formation of the bourgeoisie and under the leadership of the latter.


Ben-Zion

The culminating point of that development was the Great French Revolution. It is a characteristic fact that for a long time, even during the monarchist Restoration, the word "patriot" was practically synonymous with "revolutionary." This situation did not change until later, with the complete triumph of the bourgeoisie and the definite consolidation of its power. Beginning then, national aspirations no longer coincided with the progressive movement; national currents moved increasingly toward the oppression and exploitation of other peoples; and the interests of the laboring masses, even when they coincided with the broad national interests, were subordinated to the restricted desires of the reactionary ruling class (for example, the big land holdings in Italy, Hungary, etc., as a cause of mass emigration). The dialectical contradiction, however, grew sharper and sharper between the alleged national interests and the interests of the people and humanity.

Proletarian internationalism was the first polemical reply to this state of affairs; and it often aroused heroic movements of the proletarian vanguard. It had profound roots in the character and social conscience of the working class and profound historic justification. But—as two world wars have shown—it was incapable of producing an effective opposition to national sentiment inflamed by imperialism and unbridled chauvinist demagogy among the broad masses of the people and even among the workers. A victorious counter-blow to imperialist chauvinism can be given by the working people only by denouncing the present dialectically contradictory character of national life and pointing this out in practical reality.

THIS contradictory character was clearly shown in the Second World War. It is a time-honored truth that every people is in reality made up of "two nations" with diametrically opposed interests. The preparatory phase of World War II and the war itself set this contrast in even sharper relief. The policies of the "two hundred families," the nationalism of the ruling class, lead to the destruction of the nation itself and are in obvious contradiction to the sincere national sentiments of the masses, including the non-proletarian masses.

These policies brought about real and open betrayals of the nation; they directly disarmed nations in their struggle for their real vital interests and even for their national existence (Poland, Yugoslavia,

France). As a result of the rash adventures and brutal excesses of chauvinist imperialism, these policies brought other nations to the edge of the abyss and endangered their very national existence (Germany, Italy, Hungary). What in preceding epochs was betrayal of the nation on the part of small groups (*e.g.*, the emigration of the nobility at the time of the French Revolution), is today a mass phenomenon led by the two hundred families under the inspiration of Wall Street policies. By contrast, we see a national rebirth (economic, political and cultural) wherever the struggle between the "two nations" has ended with the triumph of the "lower nation," with the victory of the working people.

Thus, the struggle between the "two nations" has found a genuinely national terrain. The opposition of the national sentiments of the people to imperialism and chauvinism assumes an ever clearer form: it becomes the defense of the true national interests. But the recognition of the true national interests and the precedence given them imply at the same time the overcoming of the *zoological individualism* of capitalist nations, of the nihilist ideology of "sacred egotism" and "heroic realism." At the same time, the true national sentiments awaken. The effective interests of the nation are defended by the "nation" (oppressed until our own day), by the people hitherto excluded from deliberations concerning national destiny (up to now an object not a subject of this destiny), and no longer excluded from the creations of international culture and from participation in that culture. Today the "two nations" confront one another; and that means the rebirth or the dissolution of each country.

Some Marxists oppose such a conception of the situation and the tasks deriving from it in the name of socialist internationalism. But they forget one thing above all: socialism has already been achieved, as demonstrated by thirty years of the Soviet Union, which is a fraternal union of national life of many large and small nations. They forget consequently that the achievement of socialism does not mean the leveling down of nations, but on the contrary has already produced the flowering of national cultures, which up to now have been atrophied. And this has been accomplished without weakening the socialist unity of the Soviet Union; on the contrary, the latter has been strengthened to an extraordinary degree. This process, paralleling the sharp contrast described above between the "two nations" within the capi-

talist countries, permits us to define our position with respect to national problems. If we consider the new democracies as a new and special way to socialism, we may say that this position has never been more clearly presented than at the present time.

Those Marxists forget, moreover, that the affirmation of the nation conceived in this manner in no wise contradicts genuine internationalism. Marx said almost a hundred years ago that no nation that oppresses another nation is truly free. Freedom, and consequently freedom for national life and culture, is only possible on the basis of recognizing the unity between the nations effectively constituted by the working people and the interests of concrete internationalism.

In the era of anti-feudal revolution there was everywhere a democratic internationalism of this type which remained at the same time national—from Anacharsis Clotz to Petöfi, from Gottfried Keller to Chernichevsky. Their aspirations were wrecked in concrete political life because the revolutions led always to the rule of the bourgeoisie and the development of aggressive chauvinism, to the oppression of their own peoples as well as of foreign peoples. The social-political structure of the new democracies, if properly applied, permits the realization of that old revolutionary democratic ideal. And such a realization opens the way, at the same time, to the socialist brotherhood of peoples. The specific newness of the new democracies consists in the fact that they are beginning to achieve this new form of unity among the peoples even before socialism has been attained; while in the Soviet Union this was achieved only after socialism was victorious.

THIS set of problems imposes serious tasks on Marxist philosophy. Marxist historical science must effectively represent the national past through the struggle between the "two nations," as the way that leads to our present. Philosophy has as its task the elaboration of this problem and a careful application of it. The whole national heritage must be re-studied: that which has served and still today may serve oppressive chauvinist traditions must be implacably rejected. At the same time, we must take care not to be too narrow in judging men of the past; even if they were seriously victimized by the ideological prejudices of their times, even if in various questions they made mistakes or came close to making them, nevertheless they represented, in the essence of their thinking, the progressive currents.

It is also well to recall that in the last few decades every national problem has been consciously cloaked in mysticism. A task of Marxist philosophy is to take from the concrete history of a nation the principles and trends of that specific nationality. Thus one discovers not only an important source of national rebirth but also recognizes the historic character of certain typical national weaknesses; one sees how these have been produced by the economic, political and cultural development of the nation's history and thus one is in a position to find ways of correcting them.

We say to the Marxists who refuse to pose the problem in this way that all this has a bearing on the labor movement. Significant personalities like Paul Lafargue or Antonio Labriola, like Franz Mehring or George Plekhanov illustrate the strengths and weaknesses of the national labor movements of which they were a part. One may add that for a general understanding of the international labor movement it is very useful to trace the ties that bind the works and activities of Marx and Engels with the German labor movement, and those of Lenin and Stalin with the Russian labor movement and national culture in general.

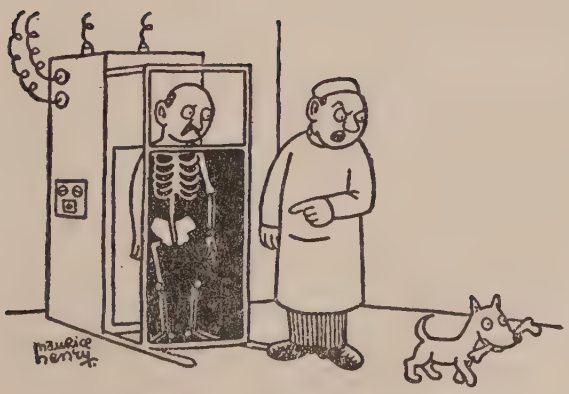
Here too there is a dual possibility of error. We have already mentioned the dangers of abstract negation. On the other hand, in the question of national development as in religious questions there is a possibility of inadequate criticism. The error of the first type cannot be corrected without the utmost vigilance and, if necessary, without conducting a fight against the second type of error. For undoubtedly one of the reasons for abstract negation of the nation is the overriding fear of the "chauvinist socialism" of 1914 and its consequences. A satisfactory solution may be found only if we remember that today we are in a different situation, while a new road is now opening toward socialism.

This entirely new situation, which I have tried to analyze by indicating its main problems, places great tasks before Marxist philosophy. But there is another difficulty. On the one hand, the solution of these new and complex problems demands an unusually profound and concrete analysis based on a more rigorous mastery of an enormous amount of data. On the other hand, there is the no less imperative need of rapid and many-sided popularization. Thus we find ourselves facing a double danger: on the one side, academism detached from

life, on the other vulgarization. But we will find the correct path by studying the method of our classical writers, Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, who have always resolved this apparent dilemma dialectically. In particular, it must be remembered that generalizations must never be made at the expense of a concrete analysis of the facts. Marxism must not become—and Engels, around 1890, already warned us against this danger—a pretext for not studying history.

I should like in conclusion to give a word of advice, fruit of my long experience, to the Marxist philosophers of the new generation: it is impossible completely to master the philosophy of Marxism if one does not have an exact knowledge of the principles, methods and results of Marxist economics. Half a century ago Lenin wrote that it was impossible to understand Marx's *Capital* without having studied Hegel's logic. I think that Marxist studies have undergone some change since then. That is why I allow myself to modify Lenin's words: it is impossible to understand in its true meaning Hegel's logic or any other philosophical work of the past or present if one has not studied the economic writings of the Marxist classics.

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



letter from abroad

Shanghai

WITH sorrow we send you this report about the recent Shanghai Student Incident. More than 200 of our colleagues were arrested and many were injured. One student was tortured to death, it is said. Of the arrested, twenty-six have been taken to the Garrison Headquarters where they were tortured and tried by a special military court on the charge of being so-called "Communists and subversive agents." The government is to launch a nation-wide purge campaign to rid the universities of the democratic forces and to persecute all progressive youth.

The incident arose when 3,000 students of the National Tungchi University and another 2,000 students of various universities were attacked by more than 3,000 police and troops with full battle equipment. The issue behind the incident was the students' desire to choose their own student councillors for their self-governing body, whereas the Tungchi University authorities insisted on appointing the councillors. The Tungchi students had planned to go to Nanking to protest to the Ministry of Education against the dismissal of their representatives, and the other students went to the University to give the delegates a send-off.

Before going to Nanking, letters had been written to the Municipal Administration and the Police Headquarters asking for protection, and to the school authorities urging them to resume negotiations. On the day before the delegation was to leave for the capital, the students asked the school officials to reconsider the matter; but no reply came from them.

So the students met on the campus and were immediately surrounded by thousands of armed police. At 11 o'clock Mayor K. C. Wu arrived, and tried to dissuade the students from going to Nanking. The students asked him to order the withdrawal of the police, but he refused. Then

he said that only ten of them could go to the capital. When the students insisted that under Article 16 of the Constitution people have a right to petition, the mayor answered: "The Constitution will only be effective after the election of the President." The students then said that they were not interested in debating with the mayor, but wanted to go to Nanking and solve their problem. At this moment the mounted police rode in and one student from Futan University, Chang Yu Ming, was trampled and seriously wounded. The police also tore up the banners of the students.

Representatives then asked the mayor whether he came as a mediator or to stop the students from exercising the right given them by the newly-passed Constitution. The mayor said he came as mediator. To show their trust in the mayor the students calmed down and waited for an answer while the talk went on.

It was finally agreed that a committee chosen by the students would meet with representatives of the school authorities, together with Mayor Wu. It was further agreed that an answer should be given to the students before 2:30. The students' committee waited until three o'clock, but none of the mediators representing the school authorities came. Seeing that the mayor was not at all sincere about mediation but was simply trying to delay and fool them, the students lined up and insisted on going to Nanking.

Then the mounted police, several thousand in all, unsheathed their sabers. One student from St. John's was arrested because he took some pictures, and four students from Tungchi were also dragged away. The students shouted: "Don't take our fellow students!" The committee asked the mayor to release the students, but the mayor replied that no one had been arrested. While the talking was going on, and right in front of Mayor Wu, the mounted police again rushed at the students, swinging their sabers. The students dispersed into two groups; those on the right fell into the creek on the roadside, and the others fell against the barbed wire. Cries and shrieks arose, and the tragic scene was beyond description. Some people at the rear of the students threw stones at the police, who increased their savage attack on the unarmed boys and girls with sabers, rifles and batons, kicking and beating everyone they could get hold of. One girl was slashed across the face; another was cut on the head and blood streamed down. There were over forty wounded, three of them fatally.

The students re-gathered in the school building, their hearts full of

sorrow and anger. After some discussion it was decided that a strong protest should be sent to the government, demanding that medical expenses for the wounded students should be met by the government, and that the arrested students be released and the police immediately withdrawn.

Representatives from different colleges were sent to talk to Mayor Wu. The mayor did not say a word about the beatings but under the pretext that he himself had been beaten, demanded that the students should unconditionally resume classes, the expelled students be surrendered to the police together with those supposed to have beaten up the mayor, and the list of all student leaders. The representatives were detained and students asked to give their answer within half an hour.

When the students heard the demands of Mayor Wu they were so angry that for a few minutes nobody spoke. Everyone thought, "We have been beaten and arrested but still these bloody executioners are not satisfied!" Then they started to sing; and short skits telling of what had happened were instantly written and acted.

Outside, the police tightened their encirclement; over 1,000 police, soldiers and special agents rushed into the meeting. A few teachers spoke, asking the students to surrender their expelled colleagues, but the students demanded that withdrawal of the police should take place first. But the police did not go away. Instead they began to arrest the students, mercilessly beating them, dragging the girls along by their hair as they fell to the ground. One student shouted: "Fellow students, don't get discouraged!" and immediately he was seized, beaten and dragged away. His last words were: "They stabbed me with sabers." Thus scores were taken to the cars and driven away. Shrieks and cries filled the air.

This went on from ten o'clock till two. Then the whole college looked like a conquered city; policemen stood at the cross-ways and corners, questioning everyone that passed.

We were all students. What did we do to deserve such maltreatment? We were unarmed; we only wanted to petition peacefully. We accuse the government for these bloody atrocities. We protest against such ruthless measures. We ask for support from all our friends.

—CHANG LIAO

right face

THE WINNAH!

"The candidates differed widely on one point—whether the Communists were outlawed in Czarist Russia. Both apparently were right."—*Minneapolis* Morning Tribune *reports the Dewey-Stassen debate.*

GOSH ALMIGHTY

"The willowy blonde used to get about 750 fan letters a month. So far, Miss Mayo may count in 2,000. Even the Sultan of Morocco, Ben Duis Youssef, has had his attention drawn to the raptures of Virginia Mayo in a bathing suit. 'You are not only a big actress, but a companion in my gay and sad moments,' he wrote. 'Please be assured you'll always be for me the most striking proof of God's existence.'

"'Gosh,' gulped Virginia with a tug at the hem of her bathing suit."

—UP's Hollywood correspondent talks to a screen star.

POPPY-COCK?

"MONTREAL. Eugene Markey was sentenced to nine months in jail and fined $200 for illegal possession of narcotics. Defense counsel asked leniency because Markey, an organizer for the U.S. Seafarers' International Union (A. F. of L.), had come to Canada to fight communism."—*A Canadian Press dispatch.*

BENIGHTED

"The Ovambo societies at first appear to be communistic in nature, for the law of the tribes insists that food and clothing must be made available for all, and there are effective 'socialistic' provisions for the care of the infirm, the aged and the blind. . . . The Ovambos hang on to their old customs solely because they are guarded against the influence of European culture by being segregated in a native reserve."

—Dr. Edwin M. Loeb of the University of California reports from Africa to the New York *Times.*

WE INVITE READERS' CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS DEPARTMENT. ORIGINAL CLIPPINGS ARE REQUESTED WITH EACH ITEM.

books in review

Vinegar Joe

THE STILWELL PAPERS, *by Joseph W. Stilwell. Edited and arranged by Theodore H. White. Sloane. $4.00.*

"WHAT will the American people say when they finally learn the truth?" General Stilwell asks toward the end of the diary covered by this volume, just a few weeks before his recall from China. If he were alive today he would partly know the answer. It would contain these elements:

First, the American people have not yet learned the truth about China and one of the main reasons has been the endless and shameless lies fed them by their own government and by the same reactionary militarists and publicists who had so much to do with wrecking Stilwell's plans during the war.

Secondly, the answer would have to recognize that the obstructionists during the 1941-44 period in the Far East emerged during the closing phases of the war against Japan as the dominant voices for that theatre of war in American, British and Chinese circles, both militarily and politically. Since V-J Day they have seized the victory over fascism and turned it into its opposite. Today they replace the Nazis and the Japanese fascists as the chief enemy of democracy.

In the third place and following from the first two, the answer could not escape the ugly conclusion that ever since the end of the war America's ruling circles have been throwing their full energies into supporting the Chinese persons, groups and institutions most active in weakening the war effort against Japan. What may have been inexcusable inefficiency, laxity and corruption during the war—and this goes for highly placed Americans as well as Chinese—can now go by no other name but treachery, treachery to democracy in the postwar period.

If the *Stilwell Papers* are read as widely as they deserve to be, they will make a substantial contribution toward spreading the truth among the American people. If they invoke a fraction of the response among the readers that the first-hand situation did upon the author, we will see far larger sections of the people demanding

an end to the outrage now being perpetrated by the bipartisans toward China. The Stilwell mission and the cause of a democratic victory in the Far East were undeniably frustrated by the circumstances which brought about the recall of this great general. The publication of his papers will impart new energy to the revolt which smolders through the country against the American imperialists and their Chinese puppets.

To judge from his diary—unusually short, pungent jottings—and his somewhat longer letters to his wife, Stilwell was a practical, courageous man faced with as tough a war assignment as was given any man and determined to see it through to success. His comments are more descriptive than analytical. The descriptions are hard-hitting, caustic, often bitter. They have been fairly extensively quoted in the reviews which have already appeared. To give an example or two: Chiang Kai-shek "is an obstinate little ass," an "insect," "this stink in the nostrils," or "a grasping, bigoted, ungrateful little rattlesnake." Wavell "impresses me as being a tired old man." As for Wedemeyer, "the young man sure does appreciate himself." Scores of others, including President Roosevelt ("cordial, pleasant and frothy"), come in for like comment.

Occasionally Stilwell had the inclination and time to search behind the immediate impression. In the summer of 1942 he writes: "The Chinese government is a structure based on fear and favor, in the hands of an ignorant, arbitrary, stubborn man. It is interlaced with family and financial ties and influences, which could easily tear it to pieces if pulled out. Faced with emergency, it has no alternative but to go on, and none of these interlocking interests predominate to the extent that any one of them could take over and clean house, even if the necessary patriotism were present, which it isn't. Only outside influence can do anything for China . . ." In another place Stilwell concludes: "To reform such a system, it must be torn to pieces."

There are other such passages which show that Stilwell was occasionally trying to get behind the scene; the demands of the situation and his own honesty forced him to look beyond the immediate lousing-up process. Yet there is no deep understanding revealed in these reflections. They go behind the veneer to the structural woodwork, but not to the design or purpose of the establishment. For instance, Stilwell never discusses the nature of feudalism. How can one speak understandingly about China without mentioning the feudal institution? There is also that recurrent thought, "only outside influences can do anything for China," which bespeaks a lack of understanding of the concept of national liberation generally

and specifically of the Chinese Revolution.

Stilwell's criticisms of Roosevelt, which go well beyond the comment quoted, actually reflect the concern of many honest observers with the whole conduct of American Far Eastern policy during the Roosevelt period. Our evaluation of the broad outlines of the Roosevelt foreign policies before and during the war must take into consideration the long years of appeasement toward Japan, the utter neglect of China's interests until the months immediately preceding Pearl Harbor, and, during the war, not only the knuckling under to Chiang Kai-shek and his American cronies in the Stilwell affair but also the failure effectively to curb the reactionaries' influence in the course of the fighting.

Stilwell and his policies were the victims not merely of Chinese venality and British imperial interests. This disastrous episode had its roots in a long history of American ignorance coupled with greed. China was one of the frontiers of the new world into which Roosevelt seems never to have ventured. Before and during the war his policy toward the China scene never transcended the makeshift.

Stilwell had a plan for China during the war and his own record would indicate that others, such as Stimson, supported him. From the *Stilwell Papers* it would be incorrect to say that Roosevelt

opposed these policies; rather it should be said that he devoted insufficient attention to them to provide the political conditions necessary for their achievement. Stilwell's plan was simple and realistic: aid and equip those Chinese able and willing to fight the common enemy. This meant cooperation with Yenan and it implied drastic reforms within Kuomintang China — reforms sufficiently drastic to bring some measure of fighting efficiency out of the Chinese regime without destroying it. This plan was never put through; it was scrapped when Stilwell was repudiated. Stilwell foresaw the result: civil war after Japan's surrender.

It is natural that among progressives Stilwell's name should have been so often linked with that of another great American soldier, Evans Carlson. Both were distinguished military men whose experiences in China led them to abominate the stupidity and corruption of the Chiang Kai-shek regime. Yet it seems to me that the two men cannot be equated in their grasp of social, political and economic forces. General Carlson acquired a deep understanding not only of Chinese society but also of the motives and methods of Wall Street imperialism. Before his untimely death he had already become an outstanding leader and spokesman for the national liberation movement of China, for the anti-imperialists in this country and for the cause of world peace and democracy. The *Stilwell Papers* do not reveal such depth of political understanding nor zeal for social progress. Having said this one must still recognize Stilwell as a rare American of courage, simplicity and foresight. His papers make exciting and important reading. They have been ably edited by Theodore White, who has inserted his own illuminating commentary to provide continuity to the author's abbreviated notes.

FREDERICK V. FIELD

Nihilism and Freedom

LITERATURE OF THE GRAVEYARD, *by Roger Garaudy. International. $.25.*

IN *Literature of the Graveyard*, Roger Garaudy (a member of the French National Assembly) has used the classic vehicle of polemic to make an important statement about "the problem of freedom," which in France, he says, "has become the center of all our political and philosophical debates." He takes more or less for granted the reader's knowledge of his four opponents: Jean-Paul Sartre, François Mauriac, André Malraux and Arthur Koestler, and uses them as points of departure for a discussion of the vital question that has so long troubled the mind and tormented the emotions — the question of what degree of choice

we have in the exercise of our will. He knows that this problem is central not only in life, but in writing, for how are writers to move characters on the infinite stage of life unless they have some adequate conceptions about human responsibility, freedom of will, and the natural and historic forces within which the will operates?

In France, the whole problem was brought to a head during the Resistance and the post-Resistance adjustment. Then writers had to face one of the main issues in the problem of freedom. Sartre wrote in 1944: "Never were we freer than under the German occupation." At that time, he explained, it was a question of "saying no." He gloried in the Resistance because it gave him isolation: "This total responsibility, in total solitude, is it not the very unfolding of our freedom?" But this single totality of resistance ended, and the time came for less easy choices, for the strength of daily work, for labor and for affirmation in building and reconstruction. Now it was time to be for something, not against something, and to be with people and not in solitude.

The issue, after the war, was not just a vivid pressure in France alone: the problem of freedom was felt everywhere. The freedom of denial was freedom that refused to work within a frame. It was a state of choosing in the void. But real freedom, Garaudy says, has two conditions: history

and science. "We are the heirs of history. And history means other people, the dead and the living; they have handed down to us equipment and techniques which are imperfect but which do exist. They are called the social system; and they co-ordinate the efforts of man, even though they are doing it rather badly at the moment."

But the literary nihilists want nothing of history and people. Malraux writes of a character: "Could he but break away from the drab and dusty life of those around him, and at last attain something beyond . . ." And Sartre refuses to find anything determinate in the past. "The sense of the social past is perpetually in reprieve," he says in *Being and Nothingness.* Men cannot be judged until all men are dead. Freedom, to these naysayers of literature, is in conflict with history. It is also in conflict with science.

Sartre finds no reality, no self-development, in the real world: "What characterizes matter is its inertia. That means that it is incapable of producing anything by itself. A vehicle of movements and energy, these movements and this energy always come to it from the outside: it borrows them and yields them." Of this statement the late Paul Langevin said that it lagged two thousand years behind the development of the sciences. With such a belief there can be no self-determination, no development from within, and human beings, who are themselves forms of matter, can have no real freedom or choice. Freedom, Garaudy believes along with Langevin, "is not a question of a retreat from or a disavowal of determinism." There is no need to make "mechanistic determinism and absolute free will" into "polar notions" which exclude freedom. Affirmative freedom is one by which man perceives more and more connections in the real world and "handles them with more sureness and power." It means "scientific and technical power over the real world."

Garaudy says, speaking of himself in a general sense:

> "In the development of our science as of our history there are moments, if not of rupture, at least of uncertainty. Or rather, moments of less certain and less probable choice. They are not the stuff of my moral life. They do not even have a place of outstanding dignity in moral life; they are the slag. They reveal temporary gaps, either in my personal intelligence or in science. I am freer the more lucid and the better informed I am; I am freer when I can say with more certainty: I cannot choose otherwise. Spinoza, and after him Hegel, taught us that to be free means to bear within ourselves all the reasons for our action."

We need only read Dostoyevsky's *Notes from Underground* to

feel the pitiable experience of the revolt against reason, which Dostoyevsky himself admits is sick—a revolt that deifies the void:

"Man everywhere and at all times, whoever he may be, has preferred to act as he chose and not in the least as his reason and advantage dictated. And one may choose what is contrary to one's own interests, and sometimes one *positively ought* (that is my idea). One's own free unfettered choice, one's own caprice—however wild it may be, one's own fancy worked up at times to frenzy—is that very 'most advantageous advantage' which we have overlooked."

The sick, unhappy human being in Dostoyevsky's *Notes* stands as the image of the "writers of the graveyard," the contemporary nihilists. Garaudy has analyzed them carefully and says, finally, we have had enough of them. This philosophy "robs us of the virile and positive joy of adherence and creation . . . it disarms the individual by mystifications of dilemmas without solutions . . ." it is "the secret of all anxieties and despairs."

The freedom that leads us toward the future considers the individual "neither zero nor infinite," but a contributing part of a great brotherhood. "The advent of a new world will radiate all the more human warmth if each individual has participated in it with all his humanity."

MILLEN BRAND

Fighting American

GENE DEBS, *by Herbert M. Morais and William Cahn. International. Cloth $3.00; paper, $.65.*

TO ONE who can say concerning the events it portrays: "all of which I saw and part of which I was," the reading of this book has been an experience for which I am very grateful to the authors. They have done much more than make good their modest claim to "present merely the main facts in a simple, readable form." They have caught and expressed the vital spirit of Gene Debs. In their pages he lives and moves, and speaks to us as years ago he did to millions who were oppressed by the same forces that now, in the fullness of their strength, threaten our lives and liberties. Beyond that, with few but sure strokes, they have filled in the economic background which shaped this man's life and work. So the reader sees clearly the main course of history in that period, understands how it developed and used the native capacities of Gene Debs, and what he in turn put into it for our further use. This book is not a record of the past. It is a force for present needs.

We who struggle now against all the powers of darkness for the future of humanity need occasionally to renew our strength by remembering that with us is an unseen host, from all lands, who have fought the same good fight,

whose deeds made ours possible, whose spirit flows into us. In the vanguard of that great company are two from our land, Abe Lincoln and Gene Debs. When Debs spoke, men who were old enough were reminded of Lincoln—the appearance, the manner of speech, the spirit. One, shaped by the backwoods, the frontier village and chattel slavery, fought the extension of the slave power and saw with prophetic eye the future struggle with the money power. The other, molded by the industrial town and the wage slavery of the "robber baron" period of our capitalism, fought the consolidating money power whose attempted extension now threatens the peace and democracy of this nation and the rest of the world.

Into the continuing struggle to so organize human society that all the children of men may have equal opportunity to develop all that lies in them and all that this world makes possible, Lincoln put the dynamic concept of democracy as the people's power—their right and their capacity to rule the whole of their lives, and all upon which their lives depend. Debs added his unerring insight concerning the essential elements of the kind of labor and socialist movements needed to bring dynamic democracy into its next stage of development. He saw, and made millions see, that industrial unionism based upon the class struggle is the forerunner of industrial democracy, provided it

is accompanied by political organization also based upon the class struggle. For him there was but "one hope and that is the economic and political solidarity of the working class."

For these aims, as this "story of a fighting American" makes clear, Debs fought, despite many defeats, with unfailing courage and endurance to his last breath. Against the combined power of big business and its press. Against all the might of the government that, by the report of its own commission, broke his peaceful strike with planned violence and twice sent him to prison. Against the A. F. of L. leadership for neglecting the unskilled and unorganized, and for collaborating with capitalist leaders in the National Civic Federation. Against the leaders of his own Socialist Party for losing contact with the industrial struggle, failing to see the significance of the Bolshevik revolution, and not affiliating unconditionally with the Third International.

If this man were among us today he would be rousing the rank and file of the industrial unionism he helped to build against those leaders who are trying to regiment them behind a capitalist political program that leads straight to war and the destruction of democracy. He would be denouncing with words that scorch like fire those Judas Iscariots of the socialist movement who spend so much energy vilify-

ing the Soviet Union that they have none left to withstand the massed offensive of capitalist reaction against the lives and liberties of the people.

Debs became a militant socialist by way of experience, not theory. He said that he saw the class struggle "in the gleam of every bayonet" in the railway strike, before he knew what its name was. But has any Marxist ever demonstrated in his life more clearly the back-and-forth relationship between theory and practice? Was ever the inseparable interaction between leader and people more clearly shown? He did not like to be called a labor leader. "When I rise," he said, "it will be *with* the ranks, not *from* the ranks."

As this book shows plainly, behind the fighter for the rights of labor and all suppressed minorities, behind the militant socialist, was Debs the man—the biggest of his generation. When men spoke of him—his intimates, those in his own time who had known him all his life, the intimates of the prisons who all became his friends —they used the words "love" and "lovable." He himself used more revealing terms. In court, before he was sentenced for opposing the First World War, he said: "Years ago I recognized my kinship with all human beings." Before then he had said: "I am for socialism because I am for humanity." At the last he made it more specific: "My heart is, has been, and will be, with the working class."

That is the key to his leadership and his place in history: the selflessness that is complete identification not merely with a great cause but with the human beings the cause fights for. Lincoln had it. And the Carpenter of Nazareth, whom Debs understood despite all that the churches have done to conceal his true nature and mission from the people. They were alike in the great compassion they had for the victims of the exploiters, and it left them with no softness when they faced the oppressors of the poor. Debs could understand and pardon the President who kept him in prison, but when it came to the man for the sake of whose profits the workers were shot down ". . . a rich plunderer like Pullman is a greater felon than a poor thief."

In every chapter of this story there is stimulus and guidance for all who fight on the side of the people in the last period of the great conflict whose early phases absorbed the energies of Gene Debs. Everywhere trenchant sayings like these: "The Rockefellers have the dollars but we have the votes." "Great issues are not decided by the courts but by the people." And for those now under sentence for their convictions, and the others who will be, this from his utterance when he heard that the Supreme Court had upheld his ten years in prison: "I despise the Espionage Law with every drop of blood in my veins, and I defy the Supreme Court and all

the powers of capitalism to do their worst. All hail to the workers of America and the world! The day of emancipation is dawning!"

HARRY F. WARD

If a Body

ABIDE WITH ME, *by Cedric Belfrage. Sloane. $3.50.*

LINCOLN HOPE, son of a small-town undertaker, came to realize that something ought to be done about the American standard of dying. Death, too, could be made a big thing in the American Way of Life. The remarkable story of how he became top tycoon of the undertaking industry is told in Cedric Belfrage's new novel, *Abide With Me.*

To humdrum spadework in this field the hero brought Inspiration. "WHEN GOD CALLS A LAMB YOU CALL PRIMROSE 8900." No one else had had the vision to launch a Crypt of the Month Club, not to mention a Pre-Transition Plan. Soon no town was complete without a Vale of Hope. Then came the Pets' Vales where everything that was available to human loved ones was supplied, including Perpetual Flower Service and "Slumber Rooms."

The Truman Doctrine broadened the horizons for this enterprising pioneer. With the aid of a sympathetic State Department, Vale branches were opened in

Istanbul and Athens, "conveniently located next door to the U.S. Military Mission."

The single-minded Lincoln Hope is not a single-dimension character. He is a type as real as Elmer Gantry. His right-hand man, Rev. David Dorney, is an acid-etched portrait of the ex-radical turned Red-baiter.

The satire is broad, but it is also sharp. And along with Free Enterprise, Jim Crow and the Un-American Committee are taken for a jolting ride. You'll enjoy it.

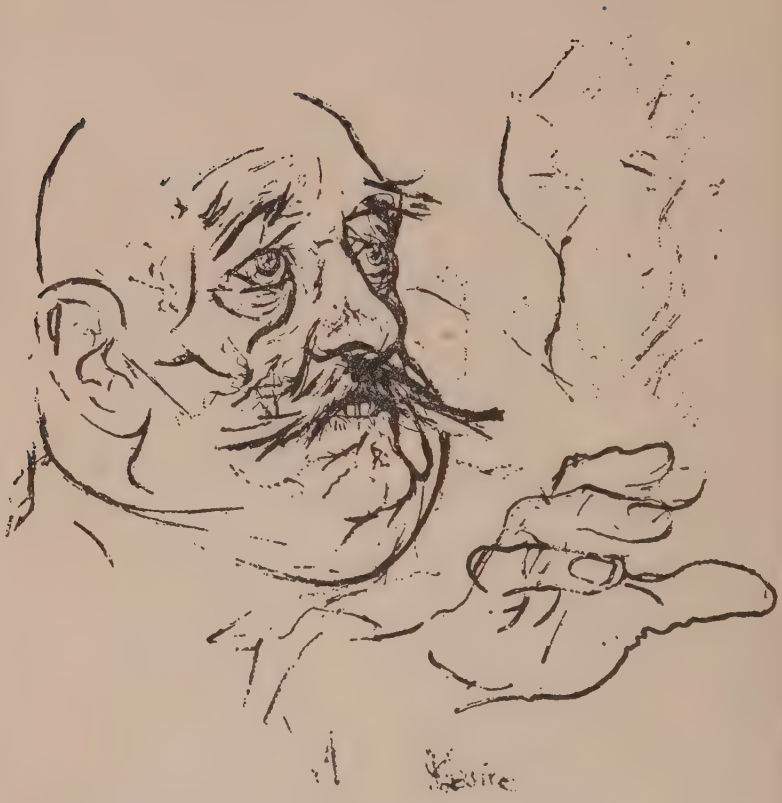
LLOYD L. BROWN

In Brief

THE PATTERN OF IMPERIALISM, *by E. M. Winslow. Columbia University Press. $3.75.*

THE author attempts to demonstrate that the roots of modern war do not lie in capitalism but rather in an atavistic "pattern of political thinking and behavior." He fails.

Marxism has been damned incessantly and banned repeatedly, but it has not been refuted. This latest attempt at refutation is no more successful than its innumerable predecessors. It is noteworthy, however, for its absence of vituperation and for this classical manifestation of the current state of bourgeois ethics: "The upward struggle for freedom as it expresses itself in the so-called 'black market' is again expressing itself in the economic sphere."



(Courtesy of the Downtown Gallery)

Jack Levine

art

Three American Painters

by JOSEPH SOLMAN

BEN-ZION has had two exhibits running concurrently, at the Bertha Schaeffer Gallery and the Jewish Museum. New work was recently shown at the gallery while the museum has a large display of biblical pictures which Ben-Zion has painted over a ten-year period. The museum, at 92nd Street and Fifth Avenue, is holding its show through September.

The group of works devoted to themes from the Old Testament is one of the most deeply wrought allegories in our time. Avoiding both preachment and sentimentality, these pictures are full of wrath, compassion and dignity, the labor of an artist caught in a dark tide of history. For much of this work is freighted with contemporary overtones just as are the symbolic satires of Max Beckmann, the Christ themes of Rouault, or, in literature, the Joseph trilogy of Thomas Mann.

Ben-Zion concentrates on the Prophets, showing them stern, agonized and stoical by turns. Sometimes we find a Prophet pointing to a new road, other times bound and strangulated by despair. "Prophet On the Ruins," formed like a monumental stone slab, seems immobilized by grief. "Mocked Prophet" shouts defiance at the stars. In another picture we meet Joseph harassed by his brethren, undergoing the apprenticeship for his later "prophetic" duties. Ben-Zion's prophets, embattled, zealous, heroic through centuries of struggle against oppression, are projections of the will and conscience of mankind. Appearing now they symbolize the fight of the Jewish peoples to preserve their new land of Israel.

The artist's pictorial vision is communicated in terms of black, heaving contours, stark, large-scale patterns, and color that is sometimes as deceptively simple as a child's. Were it not for the use of dramatic textural sonorities, certain of his works might resemble massive color woodblocks, so elemental are their design motifs. Others, however, are especially vibrant in color, like "Ruth and Boaz," full of blue and green harmonies, or "Jacob's Dream," one of the most affecting works

of the artist, in which a lucid gray night showers golden stars over the wheatfield where Jacob lies sleeping. For sheer color variety, "Susannah and the Elders" is an entrancing modern adaptation of a theme so often used by the old masters.

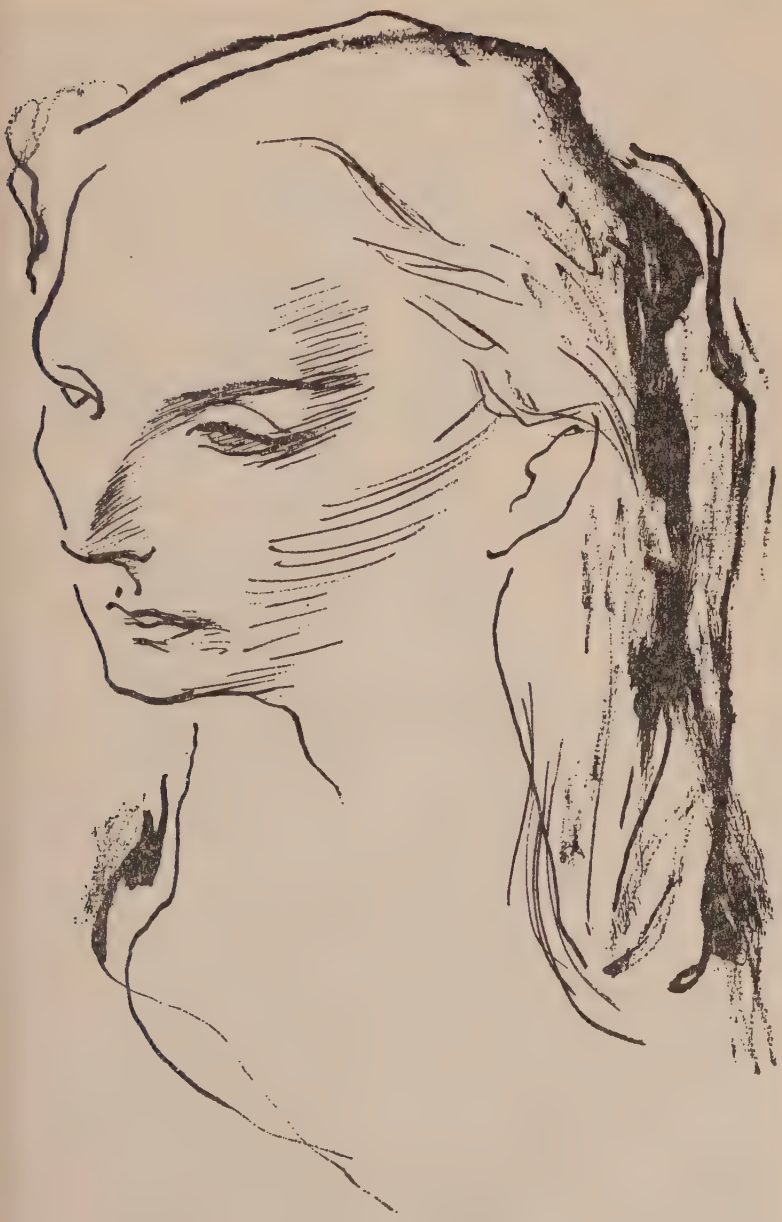
Ben-Zion's coiled outlines, broad, brusque or serpentine, appear to have their stylistic origin in the Hebraic script itself. Language, we know, derives from pictographs, as the first forms of Egyptian art clearly show. Ben-Zion recovers those latent, primitive rhythms which eventually congealed into language, and formulates, in stark allegory, the drama of our day. Here is one of the few imposing figures in American art today.

JACK LEVINE, whose occasional pictures in large national exhibitions have skyrocketed him to fame, has just completed a one-man show at the Downtown Gallery. In the huge canvas "Apteka," a prizewinner at the Carnegie Institute, the reasons for his success are apparent.

Levine possesses a remarkable flair for the decrepit elements of city life—broken streets and parboiled characters, and paints them with a nervous brilliance that captures both the city's tempo and its local color. "Apteka" is a street scene with drugstore window reflections, fire alarm post, road repair flags, motley buildings and other typical urban symbols. The painting unquestionably reveals a keen vision as well as a commanding force of statement, but the dazzling technical virtuousity reveals more surface power than depth.

Possibly aware of this, Levine has relinquished what might be an easy formula for success and has entered a new stage of development, or rather several stages at one time. In pictures like "Tombstone Cutter," "Every Inch a Ruler" and "Battle's End," the artist seems to be experimenting with technical ideas out of Rubens and Tintoretto. This phase can hardly prove too fruitful since textural brilliance has long been one of Levine's major resources.

However, in pictures like "Royal Family" and "Improvisation in a Greek Key" we get a freer, more imaginative use of line and color. These pictures contain a dramatic expressionism more closely allied to contemporary forms. It is not solely a question of "modern" versus "old master" here, but the problem of what forms may release the fullest resources in an artist. In the last mentioned works Levine uses a psychologically sharp draughtsmanship and rich surface texture to illuminate his bitter social comments. The "Improvisation in a Greek Key" has its share of pyrotechnics, but it is also a work of slashing vigor and overpowering satire. It is a canvas constructed



(Courtesy of the Chinese Gallery)

Earl Kerkam

in large and simple forms which add to its dynamism, and, in my opinion, chart the more fruitful course for the artist.

EARL KERKAM'S paintings, unfortunately, do not create much stir in the art world. His subtle draughtsmanship, his delicate tonalities and fine paint surfaces are not in the mode. His love of nature is even more unfashionable. Yet it is a distinct pleasure to see a sensitive painter revealing new beauties in old, casual objects.

Kerkam uses an economy of line and broad washes of prismatic color to delineate the dignity or pathos of his people. Sometimes he does not build every section of the canvas to its full compactness, leaving areas gently sketched in. His smaller canvases are the most complete.

Rare poetic portraits that are full of a Corotesque charm, mother-of-pearl still-lives that are quickened by a note of red or orange—these give more than a measure of solace for some of the brassy abstractions one continually encounters. The recent competition among painters as to whose canvas will make more noise than his neighbor's is rapidly reaching the saturation point. Sometimes it takes courage for an artist to withstand the current and paint with the full belief that art can still be nurtured by man and nature.

music

Festival and Folk Song

by SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

THE Fourth Annual Festival of American Music, produced by Columbia University in conjunction with the Alice M. Ditson Fund, had a progressive character absent in previous years. Yet the description of most of the music presented was that unwittingly given by Robert Ward, one of the composers represented, in talking of his own Second Symphony: "In general the main concern of the younger composer has been to find the structural framework most appropriate to the new rhythmic, melodic and harmonic materials that our musical fathers have left us. In that search, guidance has been sought from all music of the past."

Notice the accent on "our fathers" and "the past." Art always tends to be dominated by the past, unless the composer fights for the right and opportunity to deal with living, contemporary themes and to bring these themes to a mass audience. Certainly capitalist culture, whether run by the businessman for profit or by the philanthropist for prestige, tax-exemption and general cultural uplift, offers no such opportunities. The Ward symphony had some pleasingly jazzy rhythms and melodic curves, but was more of a divertimento than a symphony, and too long for its thin emotional content.

Most of the other works presented (I missed the Roy Harris "Mass for Men's Voices") were likewise competently academic. Quincy Porter's viola concerto, beautifully read by violist Paul Doktor and conductor Dean Dixon, sang its way pleasantly throughout its four movements, without ever revealing any particular musical personality. Otto Luening's opera, "Evangeline," was the kind of work that would get an A plus if written by a student of a class in advanced composition, but was a great bore on the stage. Its libretto is even thinner in characterization and more sentimental than the Longfellow poem; its action was as unimaginative as a high school tableau. The music consisted of Canadian folk songs, Gregorian melodies and what perhaps were recreations of American Indian music put into a Puccini-like continuous orchestral and vocal texture, with lines like

"Have a drink of cider," "Evangeline, I love you" and "All people must get off this island tomorrow" given exactly the same kind of musical expression.

At the chamber music concert, Lukas Foss proved with his Quartet in G that the youngsters can be as academic as the graybeards. Robert Palmer's Sonata for two pianos sounded a little fresher, going back to the less familiar eighteenth century instead of the nineteenth for its structural ideas. Harold Shapero's Quartet with its thin-textured polyphony went for its model a couple of centuries further back. As sheer sound the work had its moments, for this composer is a master of the fine science of economy in handling musical materials.

The Third Symphony by Wallingford Riegger had genuine quality. An atonal work, it is musician's music, for its very idiom is drawn from the post-Wagnerian music of this century, not too familiar to most listeners. It was tightly organized, concentrated music, with a strong emotional experience at its core, music of deep personal lament and agitation, pointed up by driving, march-like passages that brought up memories of the late war.

Aside from the Riegger symphony, the outstanding event of the festival was the choice of Dean Dixon to conduct the orchestral concert, and the award of a thousand dollars to this greatly talented Negro conductor "for distinguished service to American music." That Dean Dixon is one of the best American conductors was apparent from the sounds he drew from the CBS orchestra, and from his readings of such complicated scores, each so different from the others, as the Riegger symphony, the Ward symphony and the Porter concerto.

Undoubtedly the honor and the money will come in handy, as Mr. Dixon's "services to American music" were rendered mainly through the American Youth Orchestra, which he organized at his own expense. But what he needs and deserves, even more than an award, is a steady job conducting an orchestra, a job he can handle better than most; and it is a sad fact that our major radio and concert symphony orchestras will not hire even a Negro instrumentalist. If this award initiates a drive to eradicate the feudal mentality and Jim Crow that permeate our musical life it will have served a real purpose. I am afraid, however, that it may tend to make people forget Jim Crow as it operates in official musical cir-

cles, just as these "American music festivals" obscure the fact that the American composer is given no living role to play in our normal concert life.

I MISSED the concert of folk music arranged by Alan Lomax and performed by Peoples Songs musicians, going instead to a musical performance called "Tomorrow Is Good Morning," presented by the Folksay group of the American Youth for Democracy. This was a pleasing affair, and yet a little disappointing. Oddly enough, this presentation was also, in its own way, too much dominated by the past. Consisting of folk songs and square dances, with a loose continuity written by Irwin Silber, its atmosphere was of the Thirties, with memories of Sandburg's *The People, Yes,* Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath,* the songs of Earl Robinson, Woody Guthrie and Huddie Leadbetter. Even the trade union picnic scene was more typical of the organizing drives of those years than of the more complicated struggles today.

The stage presence of these fine young people, the sensitivity of the singing and the exuberance of the dancing were all highly enjoyable. But many of the performers went through the recent war and are taking part in trade union struggles today. Yet none of this experience made itself felt in their work.

It may seem that such demands are inconsistent with the use of folklore. But the very character of folklore is that to use it one must change it, and keep its cutting edge sharp. It is too easy for yesterday's folk music, a product of hard-bitten struggle, to become today's quaintness and charm; yesterday's double-meaning poetry to become today's myth and fairy tale.

Folk song and dance are not in themselves meant for public and stage performance. Their great quality is that they are a people's art, created by people for their own use, for their own social and improvisational entertainment. The honesty and artistic simplicity of this poetry, music and dance loom up mightily in comparison with the manufactured entertainment that Broadway and Hollywood mostly provide. But the stage gives this material an artificiality which can be circumvented only by putting the human imagery of this art into a new, contemporary and meaningful structure.

These members of the A.Y.D. have taken on a herculean task, that of combating the power of the monopoly-produced, pseudo-popular art with an art that American youth can rightly call its own. They put on a good show. They will put on a better one when they think more deeply about the experiences, contemporary or historical, that are most real to them, and which they want to re-create for the audience out in front.

HABIMAH

by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

CERTAIN facts are important to an understanding of Habimah. One is that, like the Jewish theatre in general, Habimah is an expression of Jewish national feeling; another, that Jewish national feeling, until comparatively recent times, had only religious expressions available to it. The Jewish theatre originated in the Purim play, that is with the most national of the Jewish holy days, one celebrating escape from an ancient Hitler. Up to two generations ago, Jewish communal life was centered in the synagogue.

If this is understood, then two features of Habimah will become clear: the presence in its repertory of so many plays based on rabbinic lore and Old Testament history, and the special assurance with which these plays are performed; and, secondly, the strongly ritual quality of the productions.

Gorky, who was one of Habimah's devotees when it was still in Moscow, took note of this. He wrote, "It brings me back to the early days of the Moscow Art Theatre. I believe the Habimah actors have one advantage. They have the element of ecstasy. The theatre for them is a rite, a worship."

Thus we have in Habimah a national content that derives from a religious source, but a source that itself had become strongly national, and a sophisticated, modernist style that has a curiously ecstatic fervor. To understand the latter a knowledge of Habimah's own history will help.

Habimah's first actors were young Hebrew teachers who conceived of the theatre as a means of reviving the language. They organized Hebrew dramatic circles in Jewish communities throughout eastern Europe. The Russian revolution made possible a swift maturing of these amateur groups. In Moscow they were supported by Lunacharsky and Gorky. Stanislavsky, establishing them as one of the four studios of the Moscow Art Theatre, assigned to them, as director, his pupil Vakhtangov, who holds a place in the Soviet theatre next only to that of Stanislavsky himself.

Vakhtangov was not only a great director, but his personal situation produced an innate and spontaneous understanding of Habimah's aims. An Armenian, his own people had barely escaped extinction and were now experiencing a national revival as one

of the Soviet republics. His devotion to the theatre was fervent, and his compositional techniques, which used stage groupings, voice, gesture and movement in almost ritual forms, were exactly suited to Habimah's aims.

Vakhtangov died and Habimah left Moscow to become, eventually, the national theatre of the Jewish settlements in Palestine. A supporting membership of many thousands has given it the equivalent of state maintenance. Like the Soviet theatres its organization is collective; and, like them, it participates in the life of the community, often leaving its fixed stage to perform in barns and on truck platforms in the fields.

The travail of Israel's birth has been a long one; consequently the wonder of conscious beginnings, the sense of being the theatre of an emergent nation remains with Habimah. No doubt this has kept the sharply patterned Habimah style from stiffening into abstractions.

The Habimah productions are composed in a way that makes Broadway's look untidy. Every grouping of the actors is calculated to make a beautiful symbolic or significant picture against the set. Forms, shadows and highlights are used consciously, but in fertile variation. Small scenes involving a few actors may be set high above the stage itself in panels cut out by lights. The sets may contain frames so that, at whatever depths the action takes place, it acquires a new setting. This makes for an extraordinary fluidity; it is scene changing without scene shifting.

The delivery is declamatory, perhaps more than is necessary. I had the feeling that it has an ulterior purpose, a teaching purpose since, even in Palestine, the Hebrew language is still being learned and Habimah aids in the study.

At times the stylized sets and arrangements of stage properties seem extreme; yet they wear well since they are never without function. Thus, some of the curtain frames are slashed with insets of contrasting colors and angles; but these relieve a severe regularity that would otherwise have been monotonous, and they contribute special significance to the action that is brought under them. In *The Dybbuk* there is a long table at which the rabbi and his synod are to sit. It is placed perpendicular to and at a sharp, rising angle from the auditorium. The mind is first disturbed by this unconventional and unrealistic placing of a table. But as the synod is seated and the angle makes each face visible, as a parallel placing of the table would not, the unreality of the slanting table is forgotten; the device has thoroughly justified itself.

Probably the chief distinction of Habimah is the handling of groups. The beggars' dance in *The Dybbuk* is surely one of the greatest stage compositions in history.

Groupings in all the plays approach that level. But it remained for the *Oedipus Rex* to prove its remarkable effectiveness in the solution of one of the tormenting problems presented by the Greek theatre—the chorus, so integral to the plays as the Greek dramatists wrote them, and so hard to integrate into the modern theatre. Habimah's experience as a collective and its sense of the community has enabled it to express the communal sense of the chorus and thereby to fulfil its dramatic function as no other modern theatre has done.

Four plays from the Habimah repertory were presented here: *The Dybbuk* which deals with the exorcism of a poor scholar's spirit which has taken possession of the promised bride torn from him by her wealthy father; *David's Crown,* dramatizing the murderous ambitions of King David's sons that filled his last years with tragedy; *The Golem,* a myth of medieval Prague, dealing with the rescue of the Jewish community by an invincible image of clay animated by a rabbinical spell; and the *Oedipus Rex* of Sophocles. Of the four *The Dybbuk* impressed me most.

To the qualities of Habimah, already noted, one may add a strong social sense which might have been expected of a theatre that had its origins in revolutionary Moscow. In *David's Crown* it manifests itself in a study of royal degeneracy; in *The Golem* of the social responsibility of the intellectual, in those days, the Rabbi. Its sharpest expressions were in *The Dybbuk* — the satirically pointed waddling of the overdressed women of the magnate's household, the rehearsal of the simpering, rich son-in-law, and above all the amazing beggars' dance, mounting to frenzied protest against the rich who cheat even in their charity.

This social sense, it seems to me, is the chief difference between Old Vic's production of *Oedipus* and the Habimah's. Olivier's Oedipus made Old Vic's the better, for Shimon Finkel's Oedipus is colorless. Since the role holds most of the stage, the dull performance drags the whole production down. But in other respects, particularly in the choruses and in the general conception, Habimah seemed to me superior. Old Vic's conception was anthropological; its setting, with its dominating statue of Apollo in the style of the Greek primitives, stressed the archaic; so did the text used, the abridged Yeats' version which dwells on doom and tones down the questioning and protest in Sophocles' text. Habimah not only uses a complete translation but stresses the sense of the community. Oedipus' emotions and decisions are founded in social responsibility. In this Habimah comes closer to the Greek conception. The Greek theatre, after all, was a communal expression in a sense that no modern theatre has even approached.

(*Continued from inside front cover*)

un-American—for I know of no better Americans than my fellow members of this board, none more loyal, none more devoted to those splendid principles that once made the very name *America* such a good sound in the ears of all men.

That we are going to jail is not a matter of great consequence. We personally accepted these jail sentences rather than surrender our principles and the principles of our nation to the ethics of the Un-American Committee. But the reasons why we go to jail are a matter of great—indeed tragic—consequence to all Americans.

For, with our imprisonment, anti-fascism becomes a crime under the law of the land. Charity becomes a crime. To aid the sick and the hungry becomes a crime—if the politics of those you aid are not the politics of the Un-American Committee.

This is the burning, terrible shame of America today! This is what we cannot and must not accept! I need not and will not apologize for my native land. I know it too well and love it too deeply. Tens of millions of you have read my books; I need not testify to you that I have never written a word except out of love and concern and respect for the land which gave me birth and sustenance. I cannot remain silent while a group of evil men attempt to make that land an abomination in the eyes of free people everywhere.

My voice will be heard. The voices of the ten brave men and women whose sentence I share will be heard. And yours must be heard too—for this is a long step toward the beginning of the awful night, that terrible and inhuman night which has descended upon so many nations, and which men call *fascism*.

HOWARD FAST

This issue was already on the press when we received this message. We urge our readers to wire or write President Truman immediately, asking for an executive order cancelling the jail terms of Howard Fast and his ten colleagues.—The Editors.