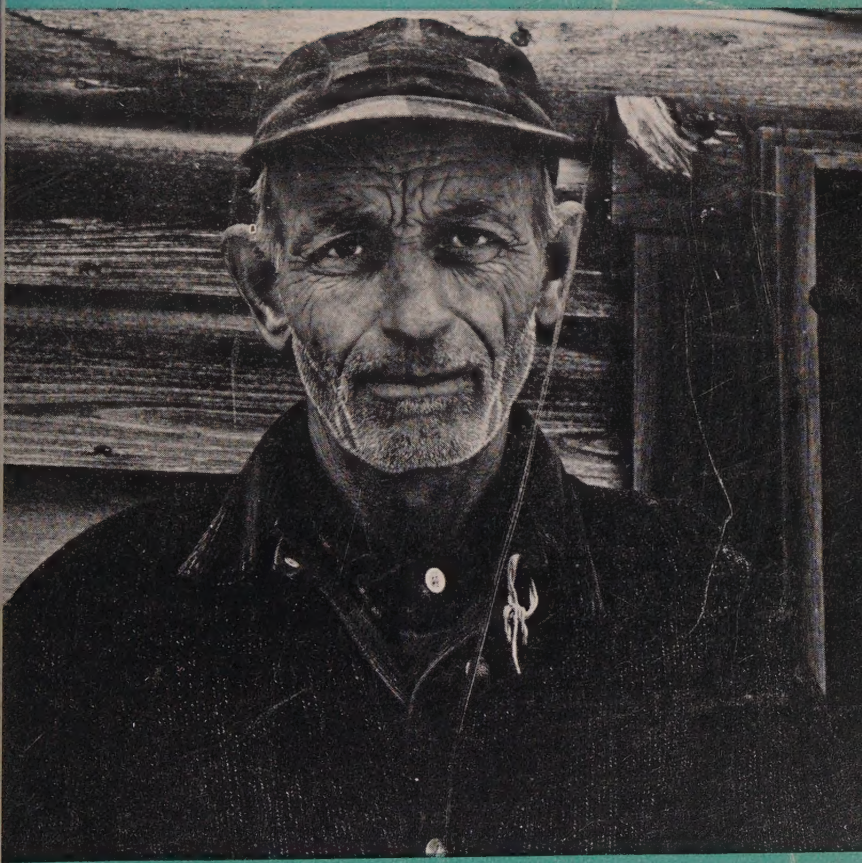
APRIL
1949

lasses & MAINSTREAM



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JSTICE ON FOLEY SQUARE, by *JOSEPH NORTH*

AN, NATURE AND MUSIC, by *NORMAN CAZDEN*

EATH OF A SALESMAN' — *Isidor Schneider, Samuel Sillen*

hat We Saw in Europe: *WILLIAM GROPPER, THOMAS McGRATH, YURI SUHL*

Conference for World Peace

WHEN this issue of *M&M* appears, the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace will be in session at the Hotel Waldorf-Astoria in New York. Held under the auspices of the National Council of the Arts, Sciences and Professions, this gathering of progressive intellectuals will seek a basis for common action on peace as it affects culture. The presence of such distinguished guests from abroad as Dmitri Shostakovich, Paul Eluard, J. D. Bernal and A. A. Fadeyev will symbolize the world community of interest in the fight for peace.

The Call to the Conference, sponsored by several hundred leaders of progressive American thought headed by Dr. Harlow Shapley, emphasizes that not only war itself, but the preparation for war disrupts cultural advance and perverts creative talent. It affirms that the American people want peace, and that the only realistic basis for peace is the re-establishment of American-Soviet understanding and co-operation. The Call invites men and women of all parties, all people of good will, to join in this common effort for peace.

The holding of this conference at this time testifies to the deep desire of the overwhelming majority of Americans that the cold-war policy be brought to an end. In highlighting the specific threat of this policy to the scientific and cultural life of the country, the conference registers the will of writers, artists, scientists, educators, and other professionals to end the atmosphere of intimidation and political reprisal that is stifling freedom of thought and expression in America.

As a magazine dedicated to peace, democracy and cultural freedom, *M&M* greets this conference as an event of historic significance, as a force that can effectively mobilize the people against the war-makers. We shall discuss the work of the Conference in our next issue.

—THE EDITORS

VOLUME 2, NUMBER 4

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YURI SUHL, author of several volumes of Yiddish poetry, has spent six months in Poland gathering material for a book on postwar Jewish culture in Europe.

GENEVIEVE TAGGARD'S poems are from her last book, *Slow Music.* The poems, copyrighted by Miss Taggard for 1944 and 1946, are reprinted by permission of Harper & Brothers.

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Cover: The portrait of a Vermont farmer is by Paul Strand. Of this photograph, Genevieve Taggard wrote: "For Paul, whose picture of Ed Bennett lay behind 'Exchange of Awe'" —a poem which appears in this issue.

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.*

A Prize for Ezra Pound

EZRA POUND won his poetry prize the same week that Fritz Kuhn won his honorable discharge. These awards, both sponsored semi-officially by the Administration, were most timely. They pointed up Harry Truman's new definition of treason. The Constitution says "Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying war against them, or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort." As Truman would have it, "Treason against the United States shall consist only in levying peace against them, or in adhering to their friends, giving them aid and comfort." Hence the laurel wreaths for Pound, who broadcast for Mussolini, and Kuhn, who headed Hitler's Fifth Column here. Hence the Presidential rage against William Z. Foster and Eugene Dennis, who not only fought fascism in World War II but are today struggling to keep America from taking the road to death of Germany and Japan.

The case of Ezra Pound shows how far advanced is the moral and intellectual rot of capitalism. The $1,000 purse for Pound was furnished by the grateful kin of Andrew W. Mellon, the aluminum monopolist, who served as Secretary of the Treasury for Harding, Coolidge and Hoover. In the bi-partisan spirit, it was a Truman-appointed Librarian of Congress who chose the jury of poets to judge "the highest achievement of American poetry" in 1948. To make sure that this slap in the face of the American people should really hurt, the Library of Congress emphasized that this is the first time the government-sponsored award has been made. In St. Elizabeth's Hospital for the mentally ill, Pound must have for the first time suspected his sanity when he was paid off in dollars instead of lire.

Actually, of course, he did not write his *Pisan Cantos* in 1948, but during his sojourn in an American military prison in Pisa awaiting

his return to this country to stand trial for treason. This trial he escaped three years ago when he was committed to the mental institution. Thus, the same government that grants him political reprieve on grounds of mental disorder also grants him a prize for "the highest achievement of American poetry" written concurrently. The esthetics of a nervous imperialism has found its symbol.

But this is by no means the worst feature of the Pound award. The poet-judges were most self-righteous about their decision. They were in fact saving Western Civilization, said T. S. Eliot, Robert Penn Warren, Allen Tate, W. H. Auden and the other jurors. Of Pound's embarrassing position we are quite aware, they emphasized. However, to permit "other considerations than that of poetic achievement to sway the decision would destroy the significance of the award and would in principle deny the validity of that objective perception of value on which any civilized society must rest." And this brave stand, which makes the honoring of Ezra Pound equal to the survival of civilization, was not unappreciated. The New York *Herald Tribune* warmly editorialized that the prize "reaffirmed the principle that the value of art is independent of the moral character of the individual who produces it, as it may be independent of the subject matter with which it deals."

I may note in passing that this noble passion for separating art from both its creator and its subject matter is never applied by the bourgeois critics to anti-capitalist art. Their concern for "objective perception of value" is illustrated by such artistic judgments as "fellow-traveller," "flip-flopper," "Kremlin stooge," etc. The privileges of pure art belong only to the renegade of Radio Roma and his tribe.

BUT the crowning insult is that the honored poems themselves, far from being independent of Pound the fascist, are plain and simple attacks on Jews, Negroes and the American people as a whole. I say plain and simple, and some may raise an eyebrow, knowing that Pound is famed for his obscurity. This obscurity of Pound's is very tricky. To be sure his prize-winning poems are a weird hodge-podge of incoherences, fractured images, borrowings from a score of better poets, quotations from the Chinese (in Chinese) and a dozen other languages. But when Pound is talking fascism he talks it straight. Here is how he offers the Nazi line that "Aryans" are gulled by the Jews into

war against the fascists—the same line he preached over Mussolini's dio to American troops:

> "from their seats the blond bastards, and cast 'em
> the yidd is a stimulant, and the goyim are cattle
> in gt/proportion and go to saleable slaughter
> with the maximum of docility. . . ." (*Canto LXXIV*)

nd note the "obscurity" in this passage:

So that in the synagogue in Gibraltar
. . they respected at least the scrolls of the law
from it, by it, redemption
@ $8.50, @ $8.67 buy the field with good money...." (*Canto LXXVI*)

refrain from using worse examples to dirty up our pages, and I apolo- ize to the reader for giving this one final instance, simply to make lear what is being "honored" here:

"said the nigger murderer to his cage-mate" (*Canto LXXVI*).

And naturally all this filth is mixed in with tirades against Commu- iism that recur on every other page.

Yes, that is how it stands with the Library of Congress award for "the highest achievement of American poetry." That is what the *Herald Tribune* defends by claiming the value of art is independent of the moral character of its creator and of its subject matter. This is the sort of "objective perception of value on which any civilized so- ciety must rest," according to the jury of poets.

And who were these judges? They weren't picked up in a gutter. They form, as the *Herald Tribune* glowingly affirms, a "distinguished" group, the cream in fact of bourgeois poetry in the United States today. And that is what makes the award to Axis Ezra all the more expressive of the decay of values in the literature of imperialism.

There is T. S. Eliot, the Nobel prize-winner (since this is a banner year for awards). Eliot is a pure artist who grows purer in the eyes of the bourgeoisie the more openly he speaks as the laureate of Churchill.

Is it any wonder *he* voted as he did, this darling of the decadents who has written that "reasons of race and religion combine to make any large number of free-thinking Jews undesirable" (in *After Strange Gods*). In a lecture at the University of Virginia Eliot congratulated Southerners for being far away from New York because "you have been less industrialized and less invaded by foreign races"; and he told the Bourbons of the South that "The population should be homogeneous. . . . And a spirit of excessive tolerance is to be deprecated."

Among the other judges were Allen Tate, a latter-day Confederate, author of an "Elegy for Jefferson Davis" and the soberly titled *Reactionary Essays on Poetry and Ideas;* Robert Penn Warren, author of a novel sympathetic to Huey Long; Robert Lowell, the converted Catholic mystic who has placed himself against the democratic tradition in American writing; Karl Shapiro, who in his verse presumes to debate with Lenin in the spirit of "non-propaganda" art; W. H. Auden, who has abandoned his earlier flirtations with the Left for the foggy theology of Kierkegaard.

Thus, in the Pound award, it is not only Pound who is involved. It is Mellon's money, the Library of Congress, the leading bourgeois poets. Above all it is the topsy-turvy notion of treason, the corruption of moral and intellectual values that threatens the American people.

IN FITTING epilogue, one may recall that while Pound was being given the accolade, a professor in chemistry was being bounced from the free university of Oregon State for supporting Lysenko's findings in genetics. The dismissed professor, Dr. Ralph Spitzer, was fired on the ground that he had written favorably about Lysenko in a scientific journal, *The Chemical and Engineering News.* The country needed a demonstration to show how the spirit of free inquiry flourishes here. We had made such a to-do about the Russians that we had to prove our case for the whole world to see and understand. Oregon State has come through in the pinch, under the leadership of President A. L. Strand. Dr. Strand has done the country a service at least as notable as Pound's, and his award will not be far behind, if I know my Truman.

—SAMUEL SILLEN

JUSTICE, Inc.

by JOSEPH NORTH

CHIANG TROOPS FLEE
TO YANGTZE RIVER—*Headline*

A SOFT snowfall muffles Foley Square and the marble skyscrapers loom out of the murk, their spires lost in the topless gray. Pushing against the stern wind you discern in blurred gilt over the Federal Courthouse: *Justice Is The Firmest Pillar of Good Government.*

On the pavement beneath the legend 400 policemen stand in formation. Strictly deadpan, pinched with cold, they stand immobile save when they clap their clenched fists together in that odd, robot gesture policemen have. On the street, the mounted cops trot their sleek high horses. On side streets the motorcycle squads sit like a concealed panzer division awaiting a signal to advance. Stalking before all this, muffled in his blue greatcoat, the police commissioner surveys his army, a veritable Napoleon of a cop.

Justice this year of 1949 owns all the accoutrements of a battlefield. It is as though one has stumbled upon a terrain pregnant with imminent warfare. For this too is battle: crucial, if not as decisive as events the morning headlines chronicle—a surging China departing forever from the orbit of gold, sterling—and blood.

I seek out the police officer in charge of operations who stands clomping his feet on the pavement. "Why all this?" I ask. "Who are you?" he answers, eyeing me bleakly. I flick my press card and repeat: "Why all the cops, what's up, what are you expecting?"

Inspector Krestinsky shrugs. "Expecting? We expect nothing." I refer to the headlines the previous night which forecast outbreaks and spoke of 400 policemen "summoned hastily."

The inspector frowns, looks away. "We didn't expect trouble and don't expect none."

I believe him. They elaborately staged the show of force for home consumption, wily, if crude, propaganda of the federal police-mind

that runs the trial. All the previous night the radio had reiterated it like an idiot who knows but one phrase: 400 policemen summoned to stand guard, 400 policemen summoned to stand guard, 400 policemen. . . . All morning the presses roll with similar headlines. All the day millions of Americans hear it, read it.

As I stand at the base of the marble stairway, I see eleven men approach—young, hardy men in life's prime. They mount the steps with a firm tread, almost jauntily. They have come from their homes, have kissed their wives and children goodby—come to Foley Square to stand trial. They are the Communists—the dangerous men.

The police cavalry rides stiffly back and forth; the footmen maintain their stolid vigil. The automatics bulge their holsters; the shotguns lie in the sidecars of the motorcycles.

Eleven men, workingmen, workingmen's leaders, Marxists, enter the revolving door into the building, armed, yes, with invincible weapons: zeal and a conquering idea—the betterment of man. They are indicted on charges of "conspiring to teach" the forcible overthrow of the government.

I look at the government: it is 400 policemen armed to the throat like Barbary pirates. How many will realize, I wonder, that the wrong defendants are in the dock?

MICHIGAN AUTO PLANTS SHUT DOWN

LONG, red plush curtains drape the six tall windows of the courtroom and facing you on the inevitable eminence is the judge's polished desk and his high, crimson-backed chair beneath the gold plaque of the bald eagle that oversees all federal courts. The judge's desk is bare save for a pitcher of gleaming silver. The courtroom resembles the lobby of the Third National Bank on the Market Streets of a thousand towns. Marble exudes the heavy air of durability the architect sought as symbol of capitalism's postulate that it has achieved permanence in a relentlessly changing world. Justice in the dollar-state resides in stone houses. No architect's book spells it out, but privileged custom has decreed that the courthouse should overawe.

The court attendants assume the inanimate quality of the heavy wall: they face you in the aisles with curiously stony faces devoid of ordinary human qualities. One resembles a gargoyle, another stands like a Buckingham grenadier, unmoving save for his marble blue eyes.

"Stand up," the gargoyle croaks. "Rise for the judge."

"Sit down," the grenadier mutters. "Sit down, you."

They glower at the spectators who are jammed together in four rows that hold less than fifty persons. Public trial, the Bill of Rights says, doesn't it? Public, isn't it? The atmosphere resembles that of the ornate funeral homes crammed with marble statuary and thick, plush rugs that lead noiselessly to biers.

THREE PROFS FIRED
FOR RED IDEAS

THE reporters scurry here and there, their eyes alerted for every face. Standing like a seven-foot Golem at his appointed seat in the newspapermen's section is Howard Rushmore of the *Journal American.* His cocky, officious air proclaims that this is his day. A few seats in front of you lounges paunchy, jowelled and loose-eyed Frederick Woltman of the *World Telegram,* the Pulitzer Prize winner crowned for his services as a journalistic police spy. He had embraced Rushmore in an odd, ceremonious greeting when they met in the corridor before the courtroom.

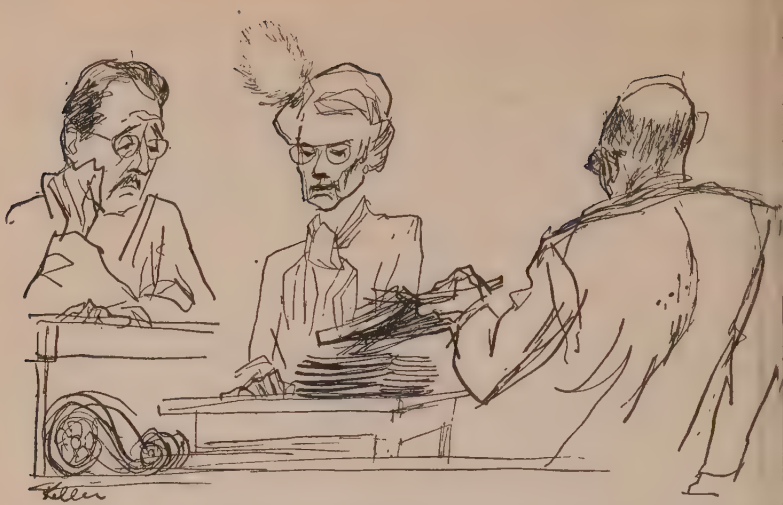
Their day, their gloating faces exclaim.

COMMUNIST STEEL WORKERS
FIGHT PAY CUTS IN INDIANA

TRIALS are indices to eras. Ancient Rome comes clearer when the Apostles describe Jesus in Pilate's court. The judge's bench, raised above the common man's head, recalls the dominating power that has sat on such tribunals through the ages: thus the magistrate presided coldly over the Massachusetts witches; thus Judge Thayer surveyed the gentle faces of the shoemaker and the fish-peddler. I think of the Leipzig courtroom and Dimitroff.

And now the American Communist leaders. They sit in a wide arc flung across the courtroom, the graying head of Eugene Dennis in the center, the handsome brown face of Councilman Benjamin J. Davis on one side, that of Henry Winston on the other; Gus Hall at one end, John Gates at the other. White, Negro, they compose the symbol of that unity without which there can be no progress in our time.

"I wish to recognize your faces," the judge says. He peers at them through his glasses. So a Cardinal must have spoken when they brought Galileo before him.



TRIAL WITHIN A TRIAL: Defense Counsel A. J. Isserman asks Mrs. Ruth St Clair, executive secretary of the Federal Grand Jury Association, to identif lists of 17,822 names hand-picked from business directories by the organizatio for jury panels. Judge Medina (*left*) looks on.—Sketched in the courtroom b Charles Keller.

The past peers into the future: fearful, uncomprehending. Yet com prehending enough to threaten the brutality of ten prison years.

SEE INDONESIA GUERRILLAS
CONTINUING FREEDOM FIGH

THE judge's face is a mask. Behind it operates the complex psych of a bourgeois intellectual: the guileful lawyer, the classic scholar the Long Island gentleman, the protagonist of the status quo, and in the final analysis the political hack. It is said that his popularity with students rated high when he taught a cram course: he loved to illumi nate torts with a smutty story. But he can parse a Latin sentence and quote Virgil as he does in a colloquy with Defense Counsel Harry Sacher. They say he knows his law: he is the author of numerous law books and yet—before he achieved the eminence of his bench he vigilantly defended two notorious racketeers, Fay and Bove.

His mop of hair is iron gray and his mustache droops; he preens it thoughtfully as he listens to the defense. His eyebrows arch fre

quently as he rocks gently, his hands folded on the desk. Doubtless he has been selected for this case because he is adroit in the ways of the law, because his temper is under strict control, and because he has proven his regularity—the man who abides by the machine. He was successful, they say, earned $100,000 his last year of private practice.

His Honor loves to speak of his own predilections: "I like to follow a case as it goes along," he confides to defense counsel. He is full of confidences at the trial's outset. "I love to . . . It is my custom to . . . I am in the habit of, you know . . . It has entered my head that . . ." He strives for a homey, yet classic, colloquialism, assaying the role of a gentle Francis of Assisi, endlessly patient, low-toned, an understanding uncle. The press revels in it from coast to coast.

Beneath the mask a master operates. Gently he fortifies his bias: "This is just another criminal case," he says. "I shall try it like another criminal case." Press pencils scribble. Endless guile swirls behind the calm front.

The world knows these men stand trial for their ideas. Every man who can count his fingers and toes, as William Z. Foster says, realizes that the Communists are in the dock for no crime they committed but for the philosophy they espouse. The indictments charge they published books, that they spoke, that they met, that they propagated the ideas of Marxism-Leninism. Every observer knows that a political party is on trial: do they know that this is the first time in American history the government has summoned a political party to sit in the prisoners' dock? Do they know what that portends for all Americans? Do they know why this phenomenon occurs today—not yesterday—but today in the time of the Marshall Plan, in the time of the "new, bold" plan to civilize the colonial lands with a latter-day Krag? Does America know? Does it suspect?

"Just another criminal case," the judge intoned.

COURT FREES BURKE, THOMPSON ASSAILANT

THE tone of the trial is established the moment it opens. Plainclothesmen sit among the spectators, among the reporters, even among the guests of the defendants. A stool-pigeon sits within arm's length of defense counsel. He is a long, bony man, dead-pan, hawk-nosed, with a pair of ferret eyes that dart about the courtroom. His

presence augurs what is to come, a night-court procession of paid renegades, stool-pigeons, police spies. Several of us recognize him. I had encountered him on Rivington Street in the Lower East Side scribbling copious notes in a black notebook at protest meetings held by harassed Puerto Ricans who had been waylaid by hoodlums while police turned the other way. Others knew him as the man who spirited the degenerate Robert Burke from the Bronx courthouse a week or so before, when the decision had been reversed after the criminal had been found guilty of attempted assault on the seven-year-old daughter of Communist leader Robert Thompson.

And there sat this stool-pigeon, recruited from the police underworld, on the judge's side of the bar, near the bench, within earshot of defense counsel. Amicus curiae—for the government.

Richard Gladstein, lawyer for two of the defendants, objects to his presence, points his finger at the stool-pigeon, orders him to rise. The judge hastily intervenes: "I am the one to order people to rise in this court." And he bids the stool-pigeon to remain in his seat. Defense counsel, one after the other, argue that the air of repression in this court—the armed police outside, plainclothesmen inside, stool-pigeon at their elbow—intimidates them.

"Oh," the judge replies airily, "I see no intimidation here." Amiably, he pooh-poohs defense counsel's plea that nobody with firearms be permitted in the courtroom. Gently he dismisses their appeal that the stool-pigeon be removed from the premises. He waves aside their contention that the virtual army of policemen—"equivalent to two and a half companies of military police"— inevitably affects the psychology of the jurors, already prejudiced by the press and by their station in life, who must make their way through armed cordons to enter the building.

He rejects their request to delay the trial another ninety days, another sixty days, another fifteen days. He denies their plea to postpone until William Z. Foster recovers sufficiently to attend. "Your Honor," the lawyers say, "the illness of Mr. Foster removes from our presence the one man whose knowledge of Communist Party history surpasses all others and his absence renders adequate preparation impossible." Motion denied.

They plead that the frenzy in the land stirred up by the press renders a fair trial virtually impossible. They ask for postponement on

that score. Motion denied. He rejects the motions swiftly, in his muted, organ-roll of a voice, gently, as though defense counsel were recalcitrant children and he, an indulgent father, is obliged regretfully to curb their prankishness.

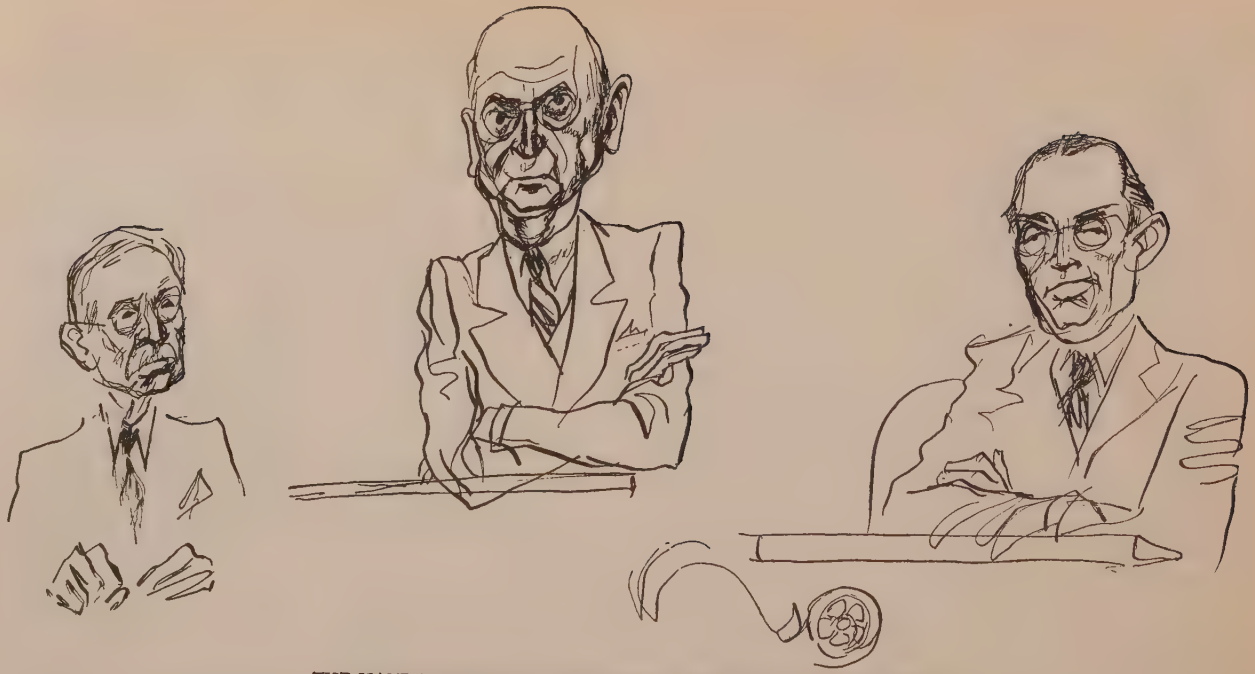
He adds a postscript on the need for the police outside. "I would be jostled by the crowds on my way to lunch," he observes. He looks up at the clock: the hands are at 1:00. "Time for lunch," he says heartily and rises. As he crosses the street to his favorite restaurant, newsboys shout headlines that Hankow has fallen.

FREE GREEKS SET
TO HOLD TOWNS
THEY CAPTURE

LAW is mummery here: a fateful cotillion in costume, the intricate steps prescribed by ancient rules. The judge has decreed from his high tribunal that this is just another criminal trial. The courtroom is cased within heavy walls and oaken doors to fortify that illusion. "What the newspapers say has no bearing on this case whatsoever," the judge maintains. All concerned in this case are presumed to wipe their brains clear of bias; leave their emotions, their predilections, their conditionings outside the stout doors like muddy boots. History, he contends, stops short of Room 110. The heat or cold of the day is not to enter; the strife and contest of men disappear once the attendant ushers you through the door.

But since the defendants are on trial for their ideas—Marxist ideas—it is not amiss to recall some of Marx's ideas. He wrote of the jury system in bourgeois society a century ago when his friend Gottschalk and his comrades were in the dock:

> "'But the conscience of jurors,' their expostulation will run, 'their conscience . . . is any greater guarantee necessary?' Ach, mon Dieu! Conscience depends on consciousness, on the entire form of a man's life. A republican has a different conscience from a royalist. A 'have' has a different conscience from a 'have-not.' A thinker has a different conscience from that of one who never had a thought. When property or other qualification alone decides who is called to the obligations of a juror, his conscience is likewise a 'qualification' conscience. That is the point: the conscience of the privileged is a privileged conscience."



THE HAND-PICKERS ON THE STAND—*Drawings by Charles Keller*

EUGENE CANTIN, honorary president of the Federal Grand Jury Association which works to keep "Negroes, immigrants and whatnot" off juries.

JUDGE JOHN CLARK KNOX, father of the penthouse jury system, directly represents five billion dollars as trustee and director of banks and corporations.

J. DONALD DUNCAN, Federal jury commissioner, is a big international capitalist with interests in Franco Spain, Germany, Italy, France, Belgium and Africa.

Apt a century ago, apt today. As apt as his colleague Engels' comment:

> "Manifestly all legislation is directed to the protection of those who have as against those who have not. Statutes are necessary only because there are have-nots. . . . Hostility to the proletariat so regularly forms the basis of a statute that judges very readily acquire this sense . . . and are the judges with whom the proletariat comes chiefly into contact."

Yes, Marxist ideas, and they cut keenly to the bone, afford a key to the reason for this trial. The indictments are brought by a Grand Jury dominated by such notables as Thomas Clyde, scion of the capitalist who founded the Clyde-Mallory steamship lines. I watch Clyde on the witness-stand, called under subpoena by the defense. He is currently unemployed, he says straight-face. Other millionaire witnesses repeat this dodge. By the canons of this court they tell the truth. They are not working, true, their bonds are working for them, but the judge bars such questions.

Not only were the servitors of Wall Street on this indicting jury: Wall Street itself sat in judgment on those who contend it is rapacious, immoral, the source of war, of poverty, of fascism.

Trial by your peers.

BRITISH WRITER REFUTES LIES ABOUT SOVIET "FORCED LABOR"

PROSECUTOR John F. X. McGohey must consider Communists unpredictable cusses. Here they are, hauled into court, a Damocles sword of ten years' jail over their heads and their very first act is to behave as though they are the prosecution and he, the Government, the defendant. What can you do with such people?

The Communists open by challenging the array—the legal term for contending the jury is illegally selected. The Sixth Amendment to the Constitution provides for a public and fair trial; law and custom decree that juries must be chosen at random from registered voters' lists to represent a cross-section of the people.

The Communists transform this into a trial within a trial. Within a twinkling, the authorities are on the defense and they must argue desperately that the New York federal judicial system is pure as Judge Medina's soul. The Communists bring mountains of evidence

to prove that the federal dispensation of justice here is controlled by the privileged wealthy. "We are proving a conspiracy," says Defense Counsel George Crockett, a Negro, "a conspiracy of the federal authorities to deprive the workingman, the Negro, the Jew of his rights to serve on juries."

"I shall be astonished if you prove discrimination," the judge replies. No, he knows nothing of the jury system here. He is not a political man, he contends, and these details are unknown to him. "I have been a very busy man," he explains, "since my appointment to the bench."

No, he knows nothing of the complex working of that crucial little barrel that lies as evidence before him, the revolving barrel from which the jurors' names are selected.

"Our contention is, Your Honor," Defense Counsel Richard Gladstein tells him, "that if you should fill this little barrel with dandelions and daisies you can put your hand in all day long and never pull out a rose."

He charges that the jury system is so rigged that the names going into that barrel are already predetermined in pattern. The defense offers some 237 pieces of evidence for the record that in the past decade more than half of all jurors come from the propertied classes: corporation executives and their associates, whereas only six per cent are from the laboring class. They prove that for years no notices went to potential jurors in Harlem or the Lower East Side—save for token representation.

Proof upon proof. As it piles up inexorably, the judge resorts to a dodge, his eye cocked on the press box. His former calm is frayed, a hectoring note edges his voice; he grows acid, querulous. "It enters my mind," he says once and repeats it a score of times in various ways, "that you are procrastinating . . . your evidence is confusing . . . I cannot understand . . . you are seeking to wear me out. There is a danger of that, but I promise you shall not succeed."

Each time he scolds, and the occasions mount with the evidence, the press responds. The headlines cite his chidings in fulsome detail—and the relevant, the damaging testimony is omitted, or so truncated as to make scarcely any sense. From coast to coast the press continues to speak of the judge's infinite patience, his long-suffering kindliness, and he becomes a martyr; the defendants, heartless persecutors.

WALLACE WARNS COLD WAR
SPEEDS ECONOMIC CRISIS

A CONSUMMATE actor must sometime drop his masquerade and become flesh and blood. It happened here when the foundations of the government's defense of the jury system began to rock as its witness, Jury Clerk Joseph F. McKenzie, took the stand. The dapper Tammany politician in bow-tie had testified in response to Prosecutor McGohey's question that he chose jurors fairly, without discrimination of any conceivable sort. Of course workingmen, Jews, Negroes were selected. Of course, of course. . . .

It must be recalled that the Communists' lawyers had argued in court, last October, before Federal Judge Murray Hulbert that the case should be quashed because the indictments were brought by an illegally constituted Grand Jury. The judge denied the motion on the grounds that the jury was chosen "at random from lists of registered voters." McKenzie had sworn to that effect in an affidavit then.

Defense Counsel Sacher stood before the government witness: "Will you be good enough," he asked, "to tell the court whether you ever selected the names of a potential juror from Westchester County from a list of registered voters?"

McKenzie: "Not during my time."

Sacher: "What is that?"

McKenzie: "Not during my time."

Sacher: "Then this affidavit is false, is it not, in respect to jurors selected from Westchester County? Is that right? Is this affidavit false in so far as it applies to Westchester County?"

McKenzie: "That is correct."

Then came an astonishing moment. The low-pressure judge leaped from his chair, his black robe flying, and he exclaimed: "It is not false at all. What is the use in saying that?" He ordered the lawyer to argue that the affidavit was "perhaps misleading."

"No," Sacher insisted. "I say it was false and untrue—designed to deceive the court. That is my charge. And this witness has just admitted that the affidavit is false in respect to jurors from Westchester County."

The Court: "And I say it is not."

Sacher: "You mean the witness says it is false and you say it is not false?"

A few moments later Sacher pleaded: "I implore your Honor, may I now proceed with the witness?"

The Court: "Yes, but I am not going to let you characterize something as false—"

Sacher: "I did not. He did, your Honor. He said it is false."

The Court: "I know—" and he continued, "I am supposed to be here protecting the witness in a reasonable way. . . ."

Sacher: "What about the defendants, your Honor?"

The judge, startled, added as an afterthought: "The defendants, too, certainly."

All this is from the official transcript. Practically every newspaper in the country ignored the judge's unparalleled effrontery. The New York *Herald Tribune* carried not one line. The New York *Times* after twenty-seven paragraphs and 1,500 words by Russell Porter cautiously gave it one sentence, the last: "When Mr. Sacher, a little later, got Mr. McKenzie to admit he had made a false statement in an affidavit filed in a preliminary motion last Fall, the judge said the clerk's statement was not false at all."

And that was all. Multiply this a thousand-fold and you get a notion of the manner the trial has been reported in our free press.

LAY-OFFS, PRICE BREAK
SPREAD CRISIS JITTERS

SO THE judge has commingled trickery with brutality, as Marx once wrote of capitalism. When it suited his purpose he gently argued a passage in Virgil with Mr. Sacher. When his minions faltered, he barked like a Tammany boss at an underling: "It is time now, Mr. Sacher, to show you I'm the boy who's running this show." And again, "If you don't like it, you can lump it."

So the first six weeks of the trial passed. Throughout it all the defendants watched closely every twist and turn of the proceedings. They sat behind their counsel, proposing, suggesting, directing the legal moves.

There is something of grotesque unreality here. These men, alleged criminals, enter the court each morning and leave each afternoon to hasten to their customary duties. Councilman Davis remains in close contact with his constituents, attends the sessions of City Council; John Gates rushes to his editorial office where he directs a metropolitan daily newspaper; Irving Potash leaves the courtroom to attend

conferences with employers in bargaining for better union standards; Robert Thompson presides over the leading committee of New York's Communist Party; Eugene Dennis begins another day at 4:30 when the court proceedings halt abruptly. And so do all his colleagues. They bear almost a superhuman burden, carry it well, in stride. You see them smile, laugh, joke in the corridor during the brief recesses. They are full of the juice of life, and none of the arduous turns and twists of the trial gets them down.

Men without illusions, they have vision and live familiarly with reality. They know the prosecution has assembled a knavish army of stool-pigeons, paid informers, renegades, police spies to take the stage at the next phase of the trial. They know the impatient press is straining to get at the lurid headline. But they know, too, that courageous thousands in the land will not rest until the truth is carried to the people. They know, too, that events march with seven league boots and all roads do not lead to Wall Street. History has filed a brief of amicus curiae on their behalf.

JOBLESS IN NATION PASS
5 MILLION, DATA PROVE

IN OLD Boston 1,500 New Englanders sat in a hall on Washington's Birthday and acclaimed Henry Winston with the cheers their ancestors once gave Frederick Douglass. Mayor Curley, hastening to Faneuil Hall, passed the meeting, noted the crowd and the surging people outside who sought to enter. When the mayor arrived at his meeting, he found twelve disconsolate people awaiting him. "But," the mayor of Boston brooded aloud, "the Communists. They had 1,500. And if the hall was big enough they would have had another 1,500." AP and UP carried the story over the wires. The news agencies are exquisitely sensitive to the connotations of what happened in Boston. The eye of the hawk is on every move the people make. They know the masses in their millions have not caught as yet the overriding significance of the trial. And they hope they can commit the deed in the dark.

But Boston was a lightning flash. It has challenged the brave and clear-eyed in a hundred cities who know that no trial was ever won in court. They know the verdict will not be brought by those who read the pages of Blackstone: it will be pronounced by those who read the faces of their children.

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How Pure Is Music?

by NORMAN CAZDEN

THE doctrine of "pure" art is expressed as a belief in the independent life or "autonomy" of art forms, in eternal principles or values given in esthetic beauty in and of itself; or, more simply, as an emphasis on purely formal or technical aspects of art works, or self-sufficient laws of design and proportion.

Yet in isolating the purely formal properties of art works we depart sharply from the real base of artistic creation; we ignore the inextricable relations between those forms and the human substance of which they are the media of expression. To understand the arts or even merely their forms, we must consider at each stage of analysis their relation to the men whose handiwork they are. We may not separate forcibly what man in the very act of creation has united. In searching for means and media of expression, men are guided first of all by an accumulated tradition, and thus they largely employ forms that have proven effective in social experience. When these forms become inadequate, men throw them aside and invent new ones. The form is a tool or a method; it exists only because of the use which man has for it. It is out of the needs of man in his historical and social living that artistic expression arises. Historical man, and not form, is central to art.

For example, the fugue is often described as an ideal form representing a perfect union of law and imaginative freedom, of melodic independence and collective harmony. But if the fugue thus represents an eternal and universal esthetic principle, let us ask, how does it happen that the poets of ancient Greece or the flutists among the Iroquois, neither of whom were lacking in musical accomplishment, did not compose fugues? Or, if it be held that the perfection of fugal form was in their time not yet discovered, why then does the fugue not predominate today in musical composition, when its properties and construction are widely known and codified?

The answer lies, not in formal analysis, but in social history: the gue bears the indelible stamp of the era in which it had meaning. was born of the union of church motet and ricercar, on the one and, and the popular round and chase on the other. (In this light we ain a clearer picture even of its formal aspects: the historical fugue, or example, does not typically possess the textbook earmarks of entries the fifth—the textbooks, of course, presenting "pure" formal prin-ples but omitting history). Changing and growing with the social eeds to which it was suited, the fugue was abandoned as a significant usical usage when it no longer corresponded to the expressive re-uirements of the *galant* concert audiences.

N THE doctrine of "pure" art a crucial role is granted the theory of music, and in particular the "law of nature" to which the shap-ng of musical forms in the large sense is constantly being "reduced." here are two important reasons for the special place accorded music n this connection. One is that music is generally reputed to be the urest of the arts, that is to say, the most abstract, the most remote rom mundane influence on its forms, the most concerned with ideal eauty for its own sake, the least subject to a reflected influence or o a portrayal of ordinary matters.

The other main reason for the crucial status of music in esthetic heory is the striking appearance it provides of the domination in rt of formal principles which rest on an objective, scientific founda-ion. Where the doctrine of "pure" art comes up for discussion, it is oon pointed out that the creative use of musical material and struc-ures seems to be controlled by definite laws inherent in the nature f tone. Here is an art medium, therefore, in which principles of ormal design, of beauty and proportion, cannot be merely accessory o the human purposes of art. These principles seem to arise instead ut of real and demonstrable laws of proportion in the immediate, hysical sense: they are an extension of the laws of acoustics.

Formative principles in music thus appear to have a scientific valid-ty, a constancy and universality that cannot be brushed aside as llusory verbal construction. This is the meaning of the "law of nature" n music for the doctrine of "pure" art, which we now examine.

We hear a sound because something is vibrating, say a string or a column of air. Musical tones usually differ from ordinary sounds

(noises) in that the vibrations are regular. The different speeds of regular vibration, measured as frequencies (number of complete vibrations per second), correspond to our hearing of lower or higher pitch. Thus the tone called *middle C* has a frequency of 261.63, the *D* above it has a frequency of 293.66, *E* has 329.63, and so on (these are the tones of a piano, tuned to the standard *A*=440). Actually the situation is much more complex than this, but we need not go into further details.

Now the relation among musical tones, as in a chord, may be expressed as a *ratio* of frequencies. The common chord (major triad) *C-E-G,* which musicians regard as the model of tonal harmony, may therefore be described in terms of its physical constitution as comprising the frequency ratio 4:5:6. According to the "law of nature" theory, the *harmonious effect* of this common chord is due to the *simplicity of the ratios* involved: the numbers 4, 5 and 6 being taken as the lowest whole numbers that will express three different tones. The musician finds no objection to a scientific account which thus verifies his own experience of harmonic beauty. On the contrary, he seizes upon this account as a material proof of his judgment. Not without reason, therefore, is the *C major chord* termed the "chord of nature."

The first important result of the "law of nature" thus concerns the theory of consonance. The "natural" principle of consonance may be stated as a tendency to perceive an harmonious agreement among sounding tones when their respective frequencies are in simple integer ratios. From this principle have been derived the relations among harmonies in motion, and also the organized balance of melody lines: these are said to consist in an inevitable gravitation towards tone combinations which are expressible as simple integers. The principle of tonality or key-center, fundamental to the music with which most of us are familiar, follows likewise from this rule of numbers.

The above "natural" origin of harmony is confirmed by another acoustic phenomenon, the overtone series. A single resonant musical tone, such as a low *C,* is accompanied automatically by a group of overtones, which are not heard separately, but which enter into the quality (*timbre*) of the single tone. (Horns and trumpets operate on this principle.) The overtone series produced by low *C* includes a higher *C,* the next higher *G,* another *C,* then *E* and *G*—as it turns out, a series consisting of the now familiar simple ratios 1:2:3:4:5:6

In other words, the single low tone *C* actually contains an expanded common chord. No wonder then that ecstatic odes have been written in which the overtone series is declared to be the natural model of all musical harmony, now and forever. Once again, the common *C major chord* deserves the name "chord of nature."

The musical scale (major scale) may also be explained as a natural formation consisting of a maximum number of usable tones which have the simplest numerical ratios among them, hence a minimum disturbance of consonance or harmonious agreement. The formula for the "pure" major scale, corresponding to the notes *C-D-E-F-G-A-B-C*, is given by the ratios 24:27:30:32:36:40:45:48. The observed intonation of scale degrees (singing or playing "on pitch") is supposed to conform to this formula automatically, if we allow for a psychological limit to accuracy.

These are the main natural properties of tones and their psychoacoustic relations which are held to determine, scientifically, the larger aspects of musical form proper. They constitute the underlying language structure or system which emerges in music as harmony and melody, and which leads also to further proportion and design: principles of repetition and variation, of rhythmic balance and melodic contour, of thematic treatment and development and modulation scheme, and ultimately of symphonic structure.

FROM the above sketch we may derive the following meaning: Beauty in music consists in obedience to certain laws of formal proportion, these laws being given in the nature of the material sounding medium of musical art, in the nature of tone. These natural laws which govern the *form* of musical art have nothing to do, therefore, with any presumed human content or purpose. They are absolute and immutable, eternal and universal in their control over the art. Music is an art of pure formal beauty: such appears to be the verdict of science as well as of esthetics.

Yet if we stop to consider what is omitted in the analysis, we get the feeling that the description is not adequate to the realities of the art it purports to explain, and that somehow the scientific experts are being misguided or misinterpreted; with the result that, difficult as the field of discussion appears, we can rest satisfied only after a thorough testing of each detail. Indeed, what has been omitted is the art of music. For, inescapably, if there exist certain eternal, universal

and inflexible forms of intrinsic beauty in musical structure, then the history of music fades into a chronicle of meaningless accidents or of unsuccessful attempts at art: since psycho-acoustic laws show no sign of change from one period to another. The differences of musical usage as between one tradition or one culture area and another becomes likewise meaningless, for these same laws are universal in their application.

When we add together these evidences of independence of time and place in the life of mankind, we find that music as "pure" as that can have no human value, content or purpose. It cannot be the expression in a tonal medium of the thoughts, the emotions, the traditions, the manners, the attitudes of particular people in particular circumstances and ways of life. In a word, such musical art ceases to be a cultural product; it is emptied of reference to human beings.

We are dealing with a curious paradox. The doctrine of "pure" art seems at first glance to be pure speculation, somewhat remote from the range of the exact sciences, and beset with the errors of idealist reasonings. Yet this doctrine is seen to be propped up by the "law of nature" in music, which is given us with formidable scientific precision. The point at which this paradoxical connection breaks down —and this is the intent of our discussion—is precisely at the interpretation of the scientific data believed to verify the "law of nature" hypothesis. For the interpretation given above, and still widely held, is grossly false and misleading, and it is time its implications were swept away to make room for a proper theory of the arts.

As to the breakdown of the "law of nature" hypothesis, recent definitive work of laboratory scientists, physicists and psychologists, leaves no doubt in accepted scientific opinion.* The facts and figures involved, however, are scattered in highly technical journals, and are but slowly becoming known to thoughtful musicians. The significance of the available data to musical problems and to general esthetic theory has yet to be developed in terms of a broader historical orientation: a task beyond the scope of most laboratory workers in the field.** For the most part, theorists of music continue to repeat the legend

* For brief summaries of the difficulties, see: Paul R. Farnsworth, "Sacred Cows in the Psychology of Music," in *Journal of Esthetics and Art Criticism*, vol. 7, no. 1, September, 1948; also Llewellyn S. Lloyd, *The Musical Ear* (London, 1940).

** Some suggestive results, however, appear in: Carroll C. Pratt, *The Meaning of Music* (New York, 1931). What is essentially "vulgar" mechanical materialism in the "law of nature" hypothesis is effectively criticized from the standpoint of Gestalt psychology.

the famous "chord of nature"; while for many prominent com-
osers today, and lesser ones too (the list would include Hindemith,
choenberg, Krenek, Alois Haba, Roger Sessions, Henry Cowell), to
scard that legend would require a drastic revision of their formalist
rections. We are concerned, therefore, not only with presenting the
cts, but with their implications, and with the philosophic errors
at led to earlier difficulties.

It turns out, indeed, that the *manner* in which the "law of nature"
ypothesis breaks down points directly to a positive basis for esthetic
eory. That is, in order to explain the facts now known about the
nnection between the laws of sound and the laws of music, the
eory of esthetics must give up the self-consuming analysis of purely
rmal or ideal categories and look instead to the science of human
lture and its history.

TAKE the equation of consonance to simple numerical ratios. We find that musical consonance does not consist in an absolute ysical relation at all. (Thus, according to all standard harmony texts, *-E flat* is consonant, *C-D sharp* is dissonant; yet these are played by e same pair of keys on the piano, i.e., the acoustic relation or ratio identical.) Actually, the term consonance properly describes a sychological response in the listener, and not a physical event. Now art form, such as music, arises as a cultural phenomenon; it is essen-lly a product of human beings living in historical societies. A psy-ological response such as consonance in music must therefore be response conditioned by the cultural or social-historical setting of usic. It can readily be decided what consonance might be in its ure" or "natural" state, if we imagine it apart from this cultural tting: it would not exist, for the art of music would not exist.

In the known conditions of real music, the response of consonance not at all determined by the presence of simple numerical ratios the perception of tones. It is subject rather to prior conditions which e may sum up as those of a system of musical relationships. This stem of musical relationships comes into being as a traditional cul-ral mode of musical art in a given society; it derives from history, d not from acoustics. The consonance response of an individual tener is determined by the total conditioned assimilation of his sponses to usage, i.e., to the prevailing musical system. Consequently

these responses are much the same for listeners within the same culture area and historical period, but they vary widely among diverse cultures and in the course of history, just as language systems vary.

We may term the system of musical relationships predominant in recent Western culture the *tonal system* proper. By this we mean that its most important and distinctive formal characteristic is the principle of tonality (music in a key). Within the historical limits of this tonal system, we observe a response termed consonance. And *this response coincides at no point with the predictions of the "law of nature,"* that is, the most consonant relations are not those expressible as simple frequency ratios. The simplest ratios, 1:2, 2:3, 3:4 correspond to what musicians call the octave (*C-C*), *the fifth* (*C-G*) and the fourth (*G-C*). But the most consonant relations in tonal harmony are not these, they are the full major and minor chords (*C-E-G* and *A-C-E*) occurring at certain rhythmic moments. Even the common major chord *C-E-G* mentioned before as having the theoretical ratio 4:5:6, is not the simplest relation possible with three different tones: a simpler one still is the "six-four" chord *G-C-E*, with the ratio 3:4:5, and this chord happens to be treated as a *dissonance* in tonal music.

Thus the most elementary rule of the "law of nature," the superior consonance given by the simplest ratios, is violated in the ordinary and fundamental harmony of tonal music. (Actually, the violation is more extreme than we have indicated, since the tones *C-E-G* as used in tonal music do not really give the pure ratio 4:5:6, but something far more complex—with the result that it sounds *more in tune!*) As for the minor chord *A-C-E*, its role in the tonal system is as fundamental as that of the major chord, but no one has succeeded in finding any simple ratio for it. This has baffled the "law of nature" theorists no end, since they cannot get around our acceptance of the minor chord as a consonant and beautiful harmony. To make matters worse, consonant chords will not even stand still while we measure their acoustic ratios. The very same chord will appear consonant or dissonant according to its context: *C-E-G* is mostly consonant in the key of *C*, but it has a markedly dissonant tendency in the key of *F*, with no change in its ratios.

What about consonance response beyond the confines of the Western tonal system? Very simply, it does not exist, and the terms consonance and dissonance have no real reference. These terms did

originate in ancient Greek musical theory; but they were applied to measurements for tuning, and had no meaning at all for harmony. In the history of Western tonal music, changes in the meaning of consonance have led to endless theoretical confusion, because of a search for "natural" explanations (simple numbers); there was no understanding of how the formal structure of music—yes, the *form*—itself reflects social trends. The "interval of the third," as *C-E* (ratio 4:5), was classed as a dissonance in the 13th century, but it is the principle consonant "interval" in the 18th. The "interval of the fourth," as *G-C* (ratio 3:4, "simpler" than the "third"), was considered the most perfect "consonant" relation in the parallel *organum* of the 9th and 10th centuries; but students of 16th century counterpoint learn to treat it as a dissonance.

It is suggestive to note that harmony in "thirds" appears to have been indigenous to the folk music of northern and western Europe during the middle ages, while the learned *organum* in "fourths" was a grafting of intellectual and theological notions upon sacred modes which were an outside (Oriental) influence imposed upon European musical culture. Seen in this light, the merely formal or technical interchange in the consonant status of the "third" and the "fourth" in musical harmony takes on a new, historical meaning. Certainly the direction of the change, let alone its possibility, flatly contradicts the theory of an everlasting natural basis of "pure" musical form.

And so it is with the further derivatives of the "law of nature" when we compare them with real musical procedures. The relations among harmonies in motion constantly go against the supposed gravitation towards "simple ratios." Thus the "fifth" *F-C* (ratio 2:3) normally moves to the "sixth" *E-C* (ratio 5:8) in the key of *C*, instead of the reverse. Even a single note, with the most perfect ratio possible (1:1), is dissonant rather than consonant when it is the "leading-tone" of the key, as the note *B* in the key of *C*.

The meaning of the overtone series for musical harmony has also been sadly deflated, for all the wonderful speculations that have flowered from its simple physical facts. The overtones are not a "natural model" of the common chord: they do not give rise to harmony at all. If we sound three synthetic "overtones" as simple pure

tones in frequency ratio 4:5:6, we do not hear a *C* major chord; we hear only a single low *C* of ratio 1. (The identical result is obtained also from "dissonant" overtone ratios such as 7:8:9.)* It is a fact that the overtone series has an important bearing on the sonorous quality or *timbre* of musical tones, but it is not the source of harmony, nor of any formal element. (If it were, the situation would be even worse for the "law of nature" theory; for the overtone series is theoretically infinite in extent, hence any "dissonant" combination at all would be proven "consonant" by irrevocable decree of nature!)

The principle of tonality, or key-center, which governs the relations of harmony in recent Western music, does not arise from lesser phenomena that may be observed in the laboratory study of isolated tones. Tonality appears only on a total cultural level as a product of the history of the art of music. None of its effects, therefore, belong to laws of acoustic proportion; instead, we find innumerable traces of its historical origins. Thus, the institution of tonality was savagely opposed during the later 16th century by the power of the Counter-Reformation, which found in the innocent motion of simple blocked harmony (like in later Protestant hymns) an inevitable association with the lowly secular music of the time, such as the popular and sentimental Italian love songs. Such association did not, of course, promote a proper frame of mind for worship. The use of a key in our music of today shows simply that the popular mode won out.

IT IS similar with the major scale. All the riggings of number-magic have been invoked to prove that the "simple" scale formula 24:27:30 . . . :48 is of natural origin. There is nothing very "simple" about that formula, even in its own terms: the numbers are more "complex" than the most dissonant combinations possible in our music; and in practice, the mathematics of the scale is considerably worse (on the piano, for instance, scale tuning is based on the twelfth root of 2). Not even an attempt is made to include the equally important minor-scale stems from the laws of acoustics; let alone a host of less recognized scale usages (e.g., "bending" notes in hot jazz).

Just about every musical scale in history, anywhere in the world, has been rationalized by its users on the ground of an alleged and ***unique*** natural basis. Since recent Western usages have no more

* For details of the experiments along these lines, see: Harvey Fletcher, *Speech and Hearing* (New York, 1929), pp. 246-9.

validity in this respect than any other, we may well seek elsewhere for the source of the scale now in use.* Nor need we seek very far. The major scale which is now lauded as the veritable dictate of acoustics as well as ascribed to well-nigh divine creation was but a few centuries ago rudely castigated as improper for musical use: it was called the "lascivious mode." Why? Because it was prominent in street songs and in dance music of the common people. Its use in "high" art was therefore violently attacked by the guardians of church music because it intruded upon the sacred associations of their traditional modes.

In this perspective we can see the futility of purely theoretical accounts of musical structures as though they were merely acoustical forms. Just as the rules of a language do not come about as a result of the scientific discoveries of grammarians, but rather from the practice of the people who speak the language, so a musical scale is not imposed upon art by the theorists of pure form, but comes into being as the way people sing and play music. In the face of all the arguments and intricate reasonings as to what ought to be the case under ideal conditions, experimental results *in the most rigorous mathematical form* show conclusively that singing and playing in theoretical "just" intonation ("on pitch" according to the "natural" scale) is consistently observed only in the breach.** Not only is "just" intonation impossible of achievement, but it is found that intonation patterns actually follow a positive and quite different principle which derives from the overall properties of the present tonal system.

And the larger aspects of musical form proper, more obviously than the elementary structures of which they are composed, can be understood only in terms of the special historical conditions in which they arise. There are no "pure forms" of beautiful proportion in music. Even where such formalism corresponds to the private intent of certain present-day composers, it is not achieved, and the attempt is itself a reflection of an historical situation (withdrawal of the artist from the arena of social communication). In a word, *musical form is*

* A far more modest and sagacious account of scale structure and origin is given by Al-Farabi, an important Arabic theorist (872-950 A.D.), in his "Grand Treatise of Music." By a "natural" scale he means one in current normal usage. "Which people can distinguish that which is natural from that which is not? They are for us the inhabitants . . . of the realm of the Arabs. . . . Among these peoples, life, customs and upbringing are normal, whereas those of others are abnormal"—a refreshing breadth of view when compared with European scribes of the time, not to mention of our own.

** For the facts and figures, see the analyses of singing and of violin playing by Harold G. Seashore and Paul C. Green in *University of Iowa Studies in the Psychology of Music*, vol. 4, 1936.

essentially a repository of an historical human content. Herein lies the deeper significance behind the usual estimation of musical art as the most abstract, the purest, the most highly integrated medium of artistic expression. The content of music is not at all as obscure as the doctrinaires of "pure" art have pretended. The social values of music are writ large on every level of musical form and structure.

The art of music is not merely a play of "pure" esthetic forms, a kaleidoscope of agreeable combinations of tones, designed to amuse in the manner of prettily colored pebbles. It is a creative expression whose very formal, technical characteristics bear the stamp of the men who produce it and of the particular social and historical circumstances of its production. *The content is embedded in the form,* as it were, in this most highly integrated of the arts. The formal aspects of music are shaped first of all in the collective purposes of men. The modes by which elementary musical materials are organized stem from an existing system of relationships, from the meaningful language of music peculiar to a given culture. It follows that a more rigorous study of the role of social trends in shaping the development of the arts forms the necessary base for esthetic inquiry.

IN SUM, let us submit that the "law of nature" in music, seized upon by idealist philosophers of esthetics as the crucial "scientific" proof of the doctrine of formal "purity" and "independence" in the arts, provides us instead with the clearest proof of the inadequacy of the "pure art" doctrine. On the contrary, an examination of musical form in general, and in particular of the treatment of tonal matter for purposes of artistic expression, demonstrates first of all the complete dependence of musical form on the historical, human substance which is its sole reason for being. Surely we are neither so obtuse nor so naive as to continue to derive the periodic balance of musical phrase rhythms, for instance, from an hypothetical absolute principle of "pure form" when we have at hand the periodic dance patterns in conjunction with which such phrase rhythms first appear.

The concept of an autonomous realm of "pure" esthetic thought is an illusion bred in the deplorable separation made in theory between forms of esthetic expression and that which the forms are designed to convey. Let us be candid with ourselves: our primary interest lies, not in the external trappings of art, but in the humanity from whom and for whom all art comes into existence.

WAY OF LIFE

"Magistrate Murphy, in denying a motion by Mr. O'Brien [attorney for the Long Island Railroad] to dismiss the complaint, told the attorney: 'You represent a cold-blooded, heartless corporation whose primary concern is to make money.'

"'That's the American system,' Mr. O'Brien replied. 'We haven't gone over to Russia yet'."—*Reported by the New York* Times.

FLASH

"BEVIN BACKS MISERY DRIVE"—Headline in the Newark *Star Ledger.*

IT'S FUNNY THAT WAY

"You remember after the Jackson Administration, from 1828 to eight years later, they had a tremendous panic in the Administration of Martin Van Buren, who followed Jackson. And after the war between the states 1873 came along; and then in 1893—for no good reason at all that anybody could ever understand—we had another one. Then in 1907 we had a bankers' panic, which was one of the funniest ones we ever had in the history of the country, and at that time I was working in a bank out in Kansas City. And they had the most difficult time in 1907 that I ever heard of. And nobody understood the cause—the why or wherefore of it."—*From President Truman's address to the National Planning Association.*

COME UP AND SEE ME SOMETIME

"CAMDEN, N. J.—*Arthur E. Armitage, president of the College of South Jersey, has offered the institution he heads as a living memorial to some philanthropist. The price? Just a flat million dollars, was the sum quoted by the college president. 'We are not so enamored of the name of the College of South Jersey that we wouldn't be very glad to change it if some wealthy person wants to make a generous endowment,' Mr. Armitage said. 'Trinity College leaped at the name Duke when the tobacco millions were dangled. We'll be delighted to call ourselves Goldthorp, or Asbell, or Richmond College or anything else, if it will bring in a real endowment.'"*—From the New York *Times.*

IS WAR *inevitable?*

by GERHART EISLER

TO THE arsenal of imperialist war preparations there has been added a shameless falsification of the teachings of Marx, Lenin and Stalin regarding the question of war. Platoons of writers in the service of Wall Street are trying to tell the people that Marxism-Leninism proclaims the inevitability of an armed collision between the two social systems, socialism and capitalism. The "menace" of a peace offensive is now systematically countered by American diplomats with the cry that bona fide Marxists must believe that war is inescapable. Evidently only brass-hats, G-men and stool-pigeons—all devoted students of dialectical materialism—are permitted to "teach and advocate" Marxism without getting indicted. The latest expert to testify on the socialist view of war is "Historicus" in the semi-official quarterly, *Foreign Affairs.**

Indeed, certain people have become very active on the assumption that war is "around the corner." This was indeed the biggest of Cardinal Mindszenty's many errors. He counted too surely on the armies and atom bombs of the holy alliance which under the leadership of the American imperialists, blessed by the Pope, would restore a monarchical church state in Hungary. Such errors have been made and undoubtedly will continue to be made by the various detachments of international reaction. Paid and seduced by the "American Colossus," every landowner who loses his latifundias considers himself a sort of roving delegate of the United States, encouraged by "the inevitably coming war."

But it is not only the reactionaries and their agents who are "victims" of the preachers of inevitable war. Real victims, unfortunately,

* See the reply to "Historicus" by George Siskind in the February issue of *Political Affairs.*

can also be found among progressive people who lean on the capitalist press for their knowledge of Marxism-Leninism. And the effect of this fatalistic belief in the inevitability of war between the U.S.S.R. and the United States is highly dangerous. It has the effect of disarming people. You don't fight an earthquake; you don't fight the coming of winter. And is not the fight against "inevitable" war all the more senseless since it is a very difficult fight, involving dangers and sacrifices, demanding great courage, intelligence, and determination? The question is not merely rhetorical. In Hitler Germany, before the outbreak of the Second World War, a widespread form of capitulation to Nazism was this same concept of inevitability. Nothing could be done, many people argued; to fight would mean useless sacrifice; everything would be done by the "brave" men *during* the war and *after* the war.

The American war party has every interest in advancing this theory of the inevitable war, and to mask as its cause a distorted Marxism-Leninism. It is an argument for gigantic armaments and the development of a peace-time war economy, with its tremendous burden upon the people. It is an argument for re-nazifying Germany and re-militarizing Japan, for intervening in behalf of every reactionary clique and class and scoundrel, for building far-flung military bases. It is an excuse for destroying traditional civil liberties, *and for the gradual transformation of the bourgeois-democratic state into a semi-fascist, military police state.*

Every attempt of the government of the Soviet Union to come to an understanding with the United States is haughtily snubbed. No talk with Stalin! No outlawing of the atom bomb! For war is inevitable, as the Marxists supposedly say, and the hot war is only a question of time.

The truth about Marxism-Leninism, however, is just the opposite. The organ of the Communist Information Bureau is called *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy.* And indeed, in so far as it depends on the Marxists of the world, there *will* be lasting peace. For Marxists are the deadly enemies of every imperialist war. They do not consider war as an instrument to accelerate the coming into power of socialism. They firmly believe that the socialist and capitalist systems can live side by side without war. Let us not forget that in the thirty years since the end of the American intervention in Russia in 1919, the United States and the Soviet Union lived together in

peace. They were even allied in the crucial war against Hitler and Japan!

THE whole history of the Marxist movement and of the first socialist state is inseparably connected with the fight against imperialist aggression. The split of the Second International occurred at the outbreak of the First World War because the true Marxists refused to become camp followers of the warring imperialists, unlike the majority of the Socialist leaders of all lands—the same type of Socialists, by the way, who are today the main agents in Europe of the Wall Street war-mongers. The first act of the young Soviet government after it came to power was the appeal for peace of November 8, 1917, written by Lenin, in which all peoples and governments involved in the war were asked to begin immediate negotiations for a just peace, without oppression of any nation, without seizure of territory.

Lenin and Stalin repudiated the "theory" of the Trotzkyite provocateurs that the socialist state would unavoidably be destroyed if the "world revolution" were not successful in at least the main capitalist countries, and that therefore the task of the Red Army was to serve as an instrument for bringing about this world revolution. To be sure Lenin and Stalin valued most highly the support of the young socialist state by the workers and toilers of other nations—remember the resistance of the British workers to British intervention on the side of Polish reaction; recall the importance of the German revolution of November, 1918, which wiped out the blackmail treaty of Brest-Litovsk. But the two great Marxist leaders always emphasized the possibility of building socialism in one country, especially in a country as huge and potentially rich as the Soviet Union, without intervention in other countries in order to bring about "the victory of the world revolution." *Lenin and Stalin saw in peace the essential factor for the building and development of socialism and communism in the Soviet Union.*

The history of the Soviet Union has proven the fundamental correctness of this Marxist view.

During the years of the intervention against the young Soviet Union socialist economy could not be developed. Only after the ending of the war of intervention (1921) "could the Soviet Republic turn to the work of peaceful economic development. The wounds of war had

be healed." (*History of the C.P.S.U.*) Similarly, during the terribly destructive war of Hitler Germany against the U.S.S.R., the socialist economy could not make such tremendous strides forward as in the years of peace. Only after this war was ended was the Soviet Union able to turn to new advances. As Stalin said: "Having terminated the war with victory over the enemies, the Soviet Union has entered a new peaceful period in its economic development." A *peaceful* period in its economic development! Not a new war economy for preparing aggression against the U.S. or anybody else!

That the Soviet Union did not come out of this war as a helpless, broken-down beggar, as the open enemies and the false friends had hoped, but strong and today economically stronger than 1940, is only another proof of the tremendous power of the socialist system. *However, only hopeless idiots will assert that the Soviet Union "needed" this war in order to become stronger.* Without this war, without the necessity of sacrificing millions of lives and billions of dollars, the *young* socialist Soviet Union would be much nearer to the surpassing

Forrest Wilson

of the industrial production of the *old* capitalist United States.

For that is one of the decisive differences between a socialist and capitalist state. In a socialist state armaments and wars of defense are hindrances—historically unavoidable hindrances as long as powerful imperialist states exist—to the tempo of economic development. There is no class, clique or person who can make one penny profit from armaments and wars. Just the opposite: the amount of material and human labor used for armaments and for defensive war cannot be used for the development of social, material and cultural progress for the whole nation as well as for the individual. Also, there can never develop in a socialist society the crisis of overproduction which capitalism has periodically experienced since 1825—a crisis which again today casts its shadow upon American capitalist economy.

Hence, no wars and armaments are necessary for "full employment" and to divert into imperialist chauvinism the social tensions arising from exploitation and economic crisis. No capital export is necessary for a socialist economy. All the people and the wealth of the country are involved in accelerating the development of socialism and in enriching the life of all.

ALL these material and moral reasons make the socialist state the main fighter for disarmament, the consistent advocate of peaceful relations between the socialist and capitalist states, for compromise and understanding.

Proposals for disarmament were made in the name of the U.S.S.R. in the defunct League of Nations by Litvinov—but in vain. And with the word "succotash" Warren A. Austin has recently answered the proposals of the Soviet representative in the United Nations for outlawing the atom bomb and for a one-third reduction of armaments and armed forces of the five permanent members of the Security Council. If the war party succeeds in starting a murderous world war this word "succotash" will be remembered as the cynical token of American imperialism when the people are burned, poisoned, gassed and when cities and villages are destroyed by "succotash."

The preservation of peace as a basic principle of socialist policy has been affirmed again and again by the Marxist leaders. Lenin, for instance, declared in 1921 at the Ninth All-Russian Congress of Soviets that "we shall do everything in our power to guard further peace

talin, in the tradition of Lenin, declared at the 17th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1934:

"In the midst of this eve of the war hullabaloo which is going on in a number of countries, the U.S.S.R. during these years has stood firmly and indomitably by its position of peace, fighting against the menace of war, fighting to preserve peace, going out to meet those countries which in one way or another stand for the preservation of peace, exposing and tearing the mask from those who are preparing for and are provoking war.

"What did the U.S.S.R. rely on in this difficult and complex struggle for peace? (a) On its growing economic and political might. (b) On the moral support of millions of the working class in every country who are vitally interested in the preservation of peace. (c) On the common sense of those countries which for this or that motive are not interested in disturbing the peace and which want to develop commercial relations with such a punctual client as the U.S.S.R. (d) Finally—on our glorious army which is ready to defend our country against attack from without."

In the interview with Harold E. Stassen in 1947 Stalin was asked whether he had not declared at the Plenary session in 1937 and at the 18th Party Congress in 1939 that coöperation between the two systems would be impossible. Stalin answered in unmistakable terms:

"*There was not a single Party Congress or Plenary session of the Central Committee of the Communist Party at which I said or could have said that coöperation between the two systems was impossible.* I did say that there existed capitalist encirclement and danger of attack on the U.S.S.R. If one party does not wish to coöperate then that means that there exists a threat of attack. And actually Germany, not wishing to coöperate with the U.S.S.R. attacked the U.S.S.R. Could the U.S.S.R. have coöperated with Germany? Yes! But the Germans did not wish to coöperate. Otherwise the U.S.S.R. could have coöperated with Germany as with any other country. As you see this concerns the sphere of desire and not the possibility of coöperation. It is necessary to make a distinction between the possibility of coöperation and the wish to coöperate. The possibility of coöperation always exists. But there is not always present the wish to coöperate. If one party does not wish to coöperate then the result will be conflict, war."

Stassen: "It must be mutual."

Stalin: *"Yes I want to bear testimony to the fact that Russia wants to coöperate."* (My italics, G.E.)

Stalin re-emphasized this position in his answer to Wallace's open letter last year: "In spite of differences in the economic systems and ideologies the co-existence of these systems and the peaceful settlement of differences between the U.S.S.R. and the U.S.A. are not only possible, but absolutely necessary in the interests of universal peace."

THE Marxist-Leninists have no doubt that peaceful competition between the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies on the one hand and the capitalist states on the other hand *will prove more and more the superiority of socialism over capitalism,* its material, cultural, social and political superiority. No wars between the two systems are "necessary" to accelerate the triumph of socialism over capitalism. No wars are "necessary" to induce the oppressed and exploited to fight for the improvement of their existence against the oppressors. The hard necessities of life, their own experience with their exploiters and oppressors plus the *unfolding examples of the superiority of socialism will teach them to advance on the road toward socialism.*

Marxist-Leninists are fully convinced of the triumph of socialism in the world; they believe in the unlimited possibilities of advance in the Soviet Union and in the countries developing toward socialism; they see in a new war an obstacle to this advance; they know that such a war would destroy tens of millions of toilers of both systems and of all lands and the work of their hands and brains. And it is exactly for these reasons that the Marxist-Leninists fight for peace, for disarmament, for an end to the chauvinist imperialist poisoning of the people—in brief for peaceful co-existence of the two systems, for peaceful co-existence of the United States and the U.S.S.R.

This stubborn and complicated fight for peace is not the tactic of weakness, *but is born of strength.* No concentration of imperialist forces against the Soviet Union can be greater than in the Second World War, when the German and Japanese imperialists ruled Europe and a big part of Asia. *It was the socialist system, the Soviet Union, comparatively speaking weaker than today, which beat Germany and the main land forces of Japan.*

To the strength of the Soviet Union, much greater today than

during the Second World War, have been added the hundred million people of the People's Democracies, the victorious Chinese revolution, the strengthening of the national liberation movement in numerous countries as well as the strengthening of the Communist movement in the capitalist countries. True, U.S. imperialism came out of the Second World War stronger, *but stronger only in relation to the seriously weakened capitalist and imperialist forces in the world. Actually it is weaker in relation to the socialist and progressive forces, in relation to all the nations and peoples that have broken away from the imperialist system or are in the process of breaking away.*

These changes in the relation of forces between the two camps after the Second World War are decisive in comparison with the situation before that war.

Before 1941 the relation of forces between peace and war was such that war could not be avoided, given the *firm* resolution of the imperialists to start and provoke war. The camp of peace under the leadership of the Soviet Union was already able to crush the aggressors, but not yet able to prevent the war. Now, after that war, this tremendous strengthening of the camp of peace, again under the guidance of the powerful Soviet Union, has a much greater chance of preventing the outbreak of a new world war. Were the decision in the hands of the rulers of the U.S. and Britain alone, war would indeed be unavoidable. But this is not the case. The policy of the imperialist leaders is one of aggression and the unleashing of war, but, as Stalin noted, "the horrors of the recent war are so fresh in the minds of the people, and the social forces standing for peace are too great for the Churchill disciples of aggression to overcome them and turn them towards a new war."

The increased material and human power of the forces of the peace camp, together with the general desire for peace of the peoples within the capitalist system, makes the fight for peaceful co-existence incomparably more hopeful than before the Second World War. *Never in the history of imperialism has the fight against a new imperialist world war had a better chance to succeed than in the present period.* Provided, that is, one casts off, especially in the U.S., fatalism and skepticism, those arch killers of activity.

For each one of us is a force in this ever changing "relation of forces." Our persistence and our activity in this battle for peace

strengthens the peace camp; our pessimism about the success of such a battle, our fatalistic capitulation to the war-mongers, our sectarian "stewing in our own juice" strengthens the other camp.

The question of whether there will be this terrible new world war can never be decided in the abstract, can never be answered in advance with yes or no, but only by the results of a world-wide battle for peace which goes on in a hundred ways and forms, in each country with different strength, with ups and downs.

The American imperialists, of course, feverishly try to change the relation of forces favorable for the preservation of peace. And this is the meaning of the new pact for imperialist aggression, the new Anti-Comintern Pact, called this time the "North Atlantic Defense Pact." In calling the Soviet Union an aggressor, in slandering Marxism as the inciter of war, they are closely following the tactic of Hitler and the German imperialists, who also tried to mask their aims with the myth that Marxism and Bolshevism (plus the Jews) had aggressive designs upon the poor Germans.

BUT, we are asked, how does the Marxist doctrine that the peaceful co-existence of the two systems is not only possible but even makes easier the advance of the victory of socialism and communism square with the Marxist assertion that all roads lead toward communism?

The results of the two world wars prove what is meant when we say "all roads lead to communism." The result of the First World War, which broke out against the will of all genuine Marxists, was the triumph of socialism on one-sixth of the earth. Socialism developed from a Marxist prediction into a historic reality. A new age had begun.

The result of the Second World War, which again broke out against the will and against all the efforts of the Soviet Union and all genuine Marxists, was the breaking away of other states and peoples from the imperialist system. This breaking away—by no means at an end—could not be prevented by the imperialists, thanks to the existence of the Soviet Union. The crisis of imperialism which started in 1914 has become ever sharper, ever more fateful to the imperialist rulers.

A third world war would be a life-and-death fight between the forces of progress and reaction; it would bring incalculable misery to the peoples of the world. *Any one who hopes for such a war in order to "accelerate" socialism is either a provocateur or a hopeless fool.* All seri-

ous Marxists will therefore fight against advocates of a new world war, under whatever mask they may appear. At the same time no true Marxist can have any doubt that a third world war would result in a further weakening of the imperialist system and rally larger masses around the Marxists and the countries led by Marxists against those guilty of this new crime.

Their stubborn fight for a lasting peace does not mean that the Marxists have become pacifists. Socialism is a system of peace, but it has nothing to do with petty-bourgeois pacifism. If attacked it will fight back tooth and nail. This the first workers' state did successfully after it came to power, and then against the German and Japanese aggressors. There can be no doubt that the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies and all the nations breaking away from the imperialist system would do the same tomorrow if attacked. *The fight for peace can never mean that the victorious workers will "peacefully" give up their power, their advance towards socialism, their independence.*

Nor does the fight for peace mean that the workers give up their struggle against the exploiters or that the oppressed peoples and nations capitulate. Such a capitulation, even if possible, would not strengthen the peace front. On the contrary, it would encourage the exploiters and oppressors in their desire for war. Resistance to oppression blocks the war-makers. Witness the frustrated sigh of the American imperialists because the victory of the Chinese Communists is "robbing" them of a base for war against the Soviet Union. Witness their outcries that the militant spirit of the French and Italian workers is making the "value" of France and Italy so doubtful in a war against the Soviet Union. And who can deny that the heroic battle of the Greek people for their independence is strengthening the peace front?

THE fight for peace does not mean that progressives would refuse to support certain wars: wars of a liberating character, wars of the oppressed against the oppressor, such as those of the Indo-Chinese against the French imperialists, the Indonesians against the Dutch imperialists, the Malayans against British imperialism, the Israelis against the Arabian henchmen of British imperialism, or the revolutionary war of the Chinese people against Chinese reaction backed by U.S. imperialism.

Marxism demands an exact evaluation of each war on the basis of concrete data. As Lenin wrote:

> "Each war in which both warring sides oppress foreign countries or nations, fighting for the division of the loot and for 'who should oppress and rob more' cannot be called anything but Imperialism . . . War is the continuation of the policy of this or that class, and in every class society, slave or feudal, or capitalist, there have been wars which continued the policy of the oppressing classes. But there have also been wars which continue the politics of the oppressed classes." (*Towards Revision of a Party Program.*)

If on the one hand the Soviet Union and all countries advancing towards socialism are orientating themselves toward every force for peace in the world, all peace-loving people on the other hand irresistibly orientate themselves toward the Soviet Union. If the Soviet Union, in which exploitation of man by man and every form of national oppression has been abolished, is the natural friend of all those fighting for an end to exploitation and national oppression, all exploited and oppressed people inevitably recognize in the Soviet Union their historic bulwark.

That is why Marxists say, despite all the howling of the imperialists and their agents, *that the policy of the Soviet Union was and is correct and helpful to all mankind, and that the policy of the imperialists is wrong and harmful to their own people and to all other countries.*

Many Americans began to understand the role of the Soviet Union during the Second World War. And they will understand it again, even if they have been temporarily confused by the poison propaganda of the imperialists. Life—the class struggle—will teach them again, *and even more thoroughly,* the great historic truth that the Soviet Union is not their enemy but their friend and their real ally. The Marxist-Leninist position on peace is a sturdy bridge between the sometimes badly confused, politically backward masses who *desire* peace and those who consciously and consistently *fight for peace.* Those toilers who are today made to believe that the Soviet Union and the Marxists are their enemies, are our friends and comrades of tomorrow who will guarantee the victory of peace and progress.

The Plan

A Story by WARREN MILLER

WHEN the telephone rang (and later, when Lenny was older, he recalled how it all began with that) he was sitting in the big chair with his bare feet up on the seat, knees under his chin, pretending he was not there at all. He watched the rainwater pour, soft as fleece, from the rainspout at the corner of the sunporch roof, and rain dripping from the cherry tree and the green lilac bush at the far corner of the garden; but could not from that window see the oak tree nor, near it, the heavy slab of cement with the iron ring rusting in its darkened center, where he played in sunny weather, where he pretended now to be.

The phone rang and Mama, in the kitchen, made a sound of impatience; he heard the rasp of a pan against the enamel-topped table, and the dull sound of a wooden bowl set down. It rang once more before Mama appeared at the kitchen door, her hands white with flour and a smear of it (like irritation itself) across her forehead. And at the same moment Papa appeared from where? Lenny asked himself. From the store? the parlor? Both doors were open and he could not judge—Papa said, "I've got it," took the receiver from the hook, and Mama went back to her kitchen.

Papa said, "Yes," smiled at Lenny, then turned and faced the telephone, his body all line and angle, the way he always sat when he spoke on the phone. "I'm listening, Harry," Papa said, and now Lenny knew that it was his, Lenny's, father on the other end of the line.

He heard Papa's voice going on: about a name . . . "a name serves a function, Harry . . ." but he did not listen, really; dreamed now of sunlight, the oak tree, the cistern cover with its iron ring. I could dig a hole in the oak tree, he thought, I could have a house there and Papa could bring me food. . . .

". . . the birth certificate," Papa said. Mama came in from the kitchen then. "What is it?" she asked, but Papa went on talking.

"Is it Harry?" she asked.

"If you've signed it, Harry, then the thing is *done.*"

Mama turned to Lenny. "It's your father," she said, and Lenny smiled at her, that curious smile of adult restraint he had learned from Papa. And seeing him, the so young face with the old man's smile, her heart went cold within her and she remembered the terrible night she gathered up all her personal possessions and moved herself and her things into a room separate from Papa . . . oh the outrageous thing he had asked of her. And she looked at him now seated, so lean and dignified, before the phone; so passionless now.

"How did you spell it?" he asked.

"Did she have it yet?" Mama hissed. "Did she?"

"B-r-i-g-i-t," Papa spelled, and Mama asked was it about Stella, and did not wait for the answer she knew would not come but took the phone from Papa's hands and cried, "Harry . . . ?"

Papa gave her his chair and walked over to Lenny.

"I'm watching the tea cups," Lenny said, staring straight at the china closet.

"Well, that's one way," Papa said, but Lenny did not turn his head.

"What do you think your father told me, Lenny?"

Ask me no questions I'll tell you no lies, Lenny thought; it was an expression he had heard the day before—Sticky Onefreck it was who said it to his sister. He and Sticky were playing near the creek and went under the bridge and Sticky's sister said what were they doing under there, and then Sticky said it and they both laughed. But he sensed its impropriety, connecting it, as he did, only with Sticky and peeing in the creek: it was not the kind of thing to say to Papa.

"What do you think, hmm?"

"I don't know, Papa. What shall I think about?" He had stopped watching the tea cups.

Mama slammed down the receiver and said: "A granddaughter is born to you and all you think of is the rightness of a name."

"Brigit," Papa said.

"What is that?" Lenny asked. Thinking: it's a kind of bridge.

"That's your sister's name, Lenny," Mama said. "Your new sister; you have a sister now; her name is Brigit," she said, for she was not

sure just how much a five-year-old could understand. "Isn't that nice, Lenny?"

"Brigit," he said, trying it.

Mama said what a lovely name, and what a lovely sister; and at that moment the bell rang that meant someone had entered the store and Papa opened the door that joined the house to the store and closed it quickly behind him.

"Don't pay any attention to him, Lenny. He's just covering up. He has a facility for that."

"Can I have a cherry cake now?" he asked.

She brought him the cake, still warm from the oven, and said, "After lunch we'll get Papa to drive us into town, to the hospital, and take a look at this sister of yours. Won't *that* be nice."

ALONE now in the room he was surrounded by furniture, heavy dark chests and sideboards with doors and drawers filled with linen and silver, recipe books and old photographs. The china closet with its lead-glass doors was directly across from him and he watched the cups that hung, brittle and fragile, from their little brass hooks. Once while they were eating, he and Papa and Mama, a cup fell and broke inside the closet, all by itself. The cup had fallen and the handle still hung on its hook. Mama had said: "Oh my good china!" Whenever, since, he was in this room he watched and waited, certain it would happen again. And if Mama were not present when it happened, he planned to go into the kitchen and announce the news: Mama, he would say, one of your good china cups has broken. He was certain there would be some reward for this as, he was sure, there would always be a reward for diligence and patience.

Papa came in from the store; he winked at Lenny and stopped at the kitchen door to tell Mama that the Certo man was there and did she plan to put up preserves and how many bottles would she need? He knew what the answer would be, but wanted to impress her with the need for planning, for always looking ahead. For that was the way he lived his life: no act, no matter how small, was entered into without consideration; everything presented choice and required a decision.

"Lenny," Papa said on his way out, "the Certo man asked about you," and he took out his handkerchief and wiped off the white marks that Mama's floury hands had left on the black phone.

"I hope," Mama called from the kitchen, "that you will phone Steve or Dutch and have them tend store this afternoon. I want you to drive us in and see Stella and this new baby."

Papa said: "She waited five years to have the child; I don't see why we have to rush in today."

"If Stella wanted to wait five years that's her business."

"She might better have waited longer."

Or, Lenny thought, I could hide the food and not have to tell anyone.

"Having a baby in the midst of a depression," Papa said, "and Harry out of a job, is not my idea of planning."

"Some things can't be planned," Mama said.

"Everything can be planned," Papa answered; and Mama said she didn't care about that, she didn't care about that at all and she wanted to tell him right now that she would see Stella and the baby this day if she had to walk.

Papa said it was a long walk for some people and Mama asked him what did he mean by that? what did he mean by that? and Lenny, watching the water pour in a steady stream from the rainspout, said to himself: The roof is peeing. Papa closed the door and went into the store, and Mama stood there with her apron twisted up, wiping the flour off her hands. After they heard the Certo man leave, the bellbox on the wall near the phone jingled once, lightly, as it always did whenever anyone used the store phone; then they knew that Papa was sitting at his rolltop desk, and that he was phoning Dutch. When Mama heard it she took off her apron and said: "Lenny, go up and put on your nice blue suit. You'll want to look nice for your nice new sister and that fine mother you have."

MAMA had a fondness for Stella now, although she had never liked her much when Stella was a girl, not nearly so well as the two younger daughters, Mildred and Sally. But Stella was the only one who had stayed near home after marrying and Mama appreciated that, and was thankful; for whatever would she have done that time Papa locked himself in his room for three days and would not come out for food, whatever would she have done without Stella?

Mildred and Sally, those pretty girls, had left home before Lenny was born, and all he knew of them was the letters from Sally and the picture postcards that arrived, not very often, from Mildred. Mildred

had run off with the olive oil and castile shampoo salesman who used to stop once a month, regularly, even though Papa bought nothing from him. Papa always told him that the Italian grocer, Mr. DiCarlo, his good friend and lodge brother, carried olive oil because he had calls for it; while he, Papa, had the Slav trade and could not *give* away olive oil and castile shampoo. Later, of course, everyone knew that he was not trying to sell Papa anything. After Mildred went off they received a postcard, twice a year or so, with never more than a few words: *Regards from Carthage, Illinois;* or, *Albany, New York is certainly a fine town.* Lenny would look at the colored photographs for hours, the statue in the courthouse square, the tall hotel, the historic scene. But Papa would finally take it from him, add it to the small bundle of Mildred's other cards, and put it in his desk drawer along with the letters from his brothers in Austria, now dead; and the letters from friends he had not seen for years, whose faces he barely remembered.

Sally was the youngest daughter and Papa had raised her like a boy: she never wore a dress till she was sixteen, her hair was kept short, and she played second base with the Polish boys' baseball team that practiced on the hill behind the Catholic church. But when Papa sent her into town to go to Business College she had to wear a dress and let her hair grow. Mr. Hildebrandt, who ran the college, said he could not and would not have her come to class wearing knickers. When she was eighteen she was helping Papa unpack some boxes of penny candy and on the Inspector's Slip in one of these boxes she found a message: *I am not tall but I am dark and handsome—I am 32 years old—Albert McCoy, Canajoharie, New York Plant No. 1.*

Sally wrote him a letter in her business college script and he answered at once, enclosing a photograph. He came down to see her two weeks later and they were married. Albert McCoy carried her off to Canajoharie and all of Papa's plans were ruined. He had expected that at least one of his sons-in-law would have come into the business with him. He had planned to expand, to open a beer distributing agency. He had gone so far as to clean out the part of the barn where the horses had been kept, and here he had planned to store the cases and kegs in neat and orderly rows, with a peg on the wall near the door to hang the tally sheet on. And when he saw this could not be, and when the man from the bank came to see him every week, and when finally they took away from him all the long rows of gray workers' houses he had

owned, he went up to his bedroom and locked the door, and for three days he ate nothing. Stella came then (it was a month before Lenny's birth) and she said: "Papa, for the sake of your unborn grandson let us come in and help you." She brought up a tray of food and said, "Papa, open this door." He unlocked the door and she spooned him the soup as if he were a baby.

The man from the bank still came to see Papa. Papa would point to the poster with the blue eagle on it and say: "It helps. Everything helps. As long as we keep order we'll come through. That blue eagle is the symbol of recovery." And on Wednesday evenings Mr. DiCarlo came over, sometimes with a bottle of red wine, and they discussed conditions and the N.R.A. Mr. DiCarlo told how his heart was breaking every day when the children came into his store with holes in their shoes and their bare feet showing.

"I give them a piece of candy. I put something sweet in their mouths," and he turned up his eyes with pain and suffering, too intense to express. He sighed and said, smiling, "I heard, on radio, my famous countryman, Mr. Jimmy Durante; he explained to us the science of economics. 'What Is a Depression?' he asked us. And he told us. 'A Depression,' he said, 'is just a hole in the ground.' Many people laughed," Mr. DiCarlo said, and added, smiling shyly, "I, also, at the time." He sighed.

TWICE a month they went into town to the Public Forum at the Y.M.C.A., to shake hands with all their friends and listen to the speeches. Papa always took Lenny. He sat between them in the front seat of the car, feeling warm and protected and certain that life would always be so, regulated and sure, a thing to be trusted, dependable and, even though he was aware of death, without end. Aware of death for he had seen Pet Nowak in the coffin, his dark hair sleek and perfect, with a lily and a bible in his hand; and Mrs. Nowak rocking and lamenting in the corner of the room. "My Pet! My Pet!" she cried, even though it was she who had locked him out the night he came home drunk and he had to sleep on the ground, in the garden where, in summer, the sunflowers and bitter carrots grew. In the morning he was covered with frost, the back of his dark suit white and stiff with it, and the germs that were to kill him already clinging to his lungs.

At the meeting Papa and Mr. DiCarlo bought a pamphlet written

by the "man who had seen the Depression coming," and then they sat down on a hard wooden bench. Through the windows, from the locker room below, they could hear the boys yelling and their coarse childish curses. Finally the chairman rose and turned his pocked face to them.

"Friends . . ." he said, and Lenny heard the basketball bouncing in the court beyond the wall, the cheers (high and trembling like frightened birds), the referee's whistle, the slapping sound of sneakers on the lined board floor.

There was applause after the chairman's speech and in the midst of it an old man stood up and raised his hands for silence, as if the applause had been for him. "Every problem can be solved," the old man cried, the voice wavering like his shadow behind him.

They shifted in their chairs and looked embarrassed at one another. Mr. DiCarlo shook his head sadly, his mouth open a little, not in surprise but in wonder, as if to say: *Will this happen again? Will he be here always?*

"I'm sorry, Mr. Turner," the chairman said. "You're out of order. We must respect procedure. . . ."

"Now I'm only going to take a minute," the old man said. "I just want to tell you how I see this. . . ."

The chairman shrugged and sat down. Papa looked at Mr. DiCarlo and Lenny giggled. The old man in his brown suit looked, Lenny thought, like a bird, a little old bird, flapping his wings but unable to fly; something had broken.

The old man explained how he was going to take a big roll of money, all thousand dollar bills, and he'd call a meeting with Henry Ford and Rockerfeller and Dewpont and he'd "just peel off a few leafs of that there green cabbage . . ." he paused now, laughing and expecting laughter, for he was an old man being modern, but no one laughed. The chairman said, "Thank you, Mr. Turner; thank you." But the old man did not hear and went on telling how he would solve this thing with his cabbage, and what he'd say to old man Morgan. He held up his hands for silence, but there was no noise; he waited for laughter but no one laughed. And finally, abruptly, in the middle of a sentence, he sat down and the chairman thanked him again.

They drove home the dark ten miles with Lenny drowsing between them, and they spoke of planning and order and need until they

stopped at Mr. DiCarlo's store and said goodnight. Then Papa drove slowly down the unpaved road and put the car in the stable and, softly as conspirators, they entered the dark hostile house, up the stairs and down the unlighted corridor, silently passed the closed door of Mama's room, then into the large front bedroom where Lenny slept with Papa in the big double bed.

Beside the bed was a large heavy wardrobe, double-doored, each door a mirror. Lenny looked at himself, smiled, yawned, stuck out his tongue. Papa told him he better get undressed and better get to bed. Papa pulled down the stiff white coverlet that soon would be stained with blood, opened the wardrobe door, the mirror that would soon be shattered, brushed his coat and hung it carefully on a wooden hanger. He took the coins from his pockets and stacked them in even piles, put his soiled handkerchief in the laundry bag and took a clean one from the dresser drawer. He sat on the edge of the bed, wound his watch and put it under the pillow. He undressed at the foot of the bed, in the dark.

The street light at the corner shone through the window and illuminated the head of the bed and the high wooden carved headboard that almost reached the ceiling. Lenny could make out the carved figures, the nymphs and satyrs, and the garland in the center with Cupid's arrow fixed in its bow.

IN THIS room now putting on his blue suit he wondered how his sister would look and if they'd let him play with her. He heard the storebell ring and thought: That must be Dutch. And then heard Mama coming up the stairs to dress.

"Dutch is here now, Lenny."

"I heard him, Mama," he answered, not unkindly.

"We'll be able to leave as soon as I get dressed. We'll have a quick lunch."

"Isn't Papa going to take his nap?" he asked, for Papa took a nap every afternoon, for an hour.

He heard Mama's closet door slam, and she said, "He'll live out his life even if he does miss his nap one afternoon. Don't you worry about it."

He stopped at her door but did not look in. "I'm dressed now. I'm going down to see Dutch."

"Don't get yourself dirty," she said.

Dutch was playing solitaire on the counter and talking to Papa who sat at his desk with the big ledger open before him, but he was not looking at it.

"They're only keeping a maintenance crew at the mill now," Dutch said. "My sister's husband is on it, but they are going to let the furnaces go out next Monday. They got notice yesterday."

"If they would only realize . . ." Papa said and shook his head, never finishing the statement.

"The way I see it," Dutch said, "it's going to be years before they start those furnaces again. Me and Steve are thinking about joining the C.C.C."

"Militaristic," Papa said, but it was a mechanical response; he seemed not to be listening to himself.

He took the ledger from the desk and held it on his lap, still not looking at it: the long rows even and neat, of slanting figures, the fine green lines. (Like a map, Lenny thought, who was enamored of maps.) He had all the bills from the wholesalers stacked on the right side of the desk. He opened the deep bottom drawer, where, tied in bundles, were all the receipts for the last twenty years. He put a rubber band around the unpaid bills and dropped them into the drawer.

"Hey, Lenny," Dutch said, "you been taking ugly-pills? No boy could just naturally be so ugly." Lenny laughed, pleased that Dutch had noticed him.

"I don't take ugly-pills, Dutch."

"You don't?" Dutch said, and he put a red nine on a black ten.

"I like candy, though."

"Who doesn't?" Dutch said.

Then Lenny and Papa went into the house for lunch and Dutch remained in the store playing solitaire; and after lunch, on their way through the store to go to the car, Papa told Dutch that if he wanted cigarettes to just help himself.

"You know where to find them, Dutch," Papa said.

WHEN they came back from the hospital Dutch went home and Papa went up to his room.

He's going to take his nap now, Lenny thought.

Mama came into the dining room with an apron over her good

brown dress. "That's a lovely sister you have, Lenny. I hope you will always love her."

He did not know what to say. He smiled at her and she went back to her kitchen.

"Now I'm going to bake a cherry pie," she said.

He watched the cups in the china closet for a while, and looked out the window at the foglike, soft, silent rain. The store-bell rang and Mama said, "He *has* to have his damn nap . . ." and she went into the store. It was then, alone in the room, he heard the sound and stood up and said, "Papa?" and walked to the foot of the stairs and said "Papa?" again. He was not frightened, but walked slowly and soundlessly up the stairs and along the dark corridor to the front room. He pushed open the door but did not enter and would never enter again, and saw in that terrible moment of illumination the blinding white bedspread and Cupid's arrow poised and Papa on the bed with the black revolver in his hand that had opened his head and let enter the final disorder.

WHAT WE SAW IN EUROPE: 1

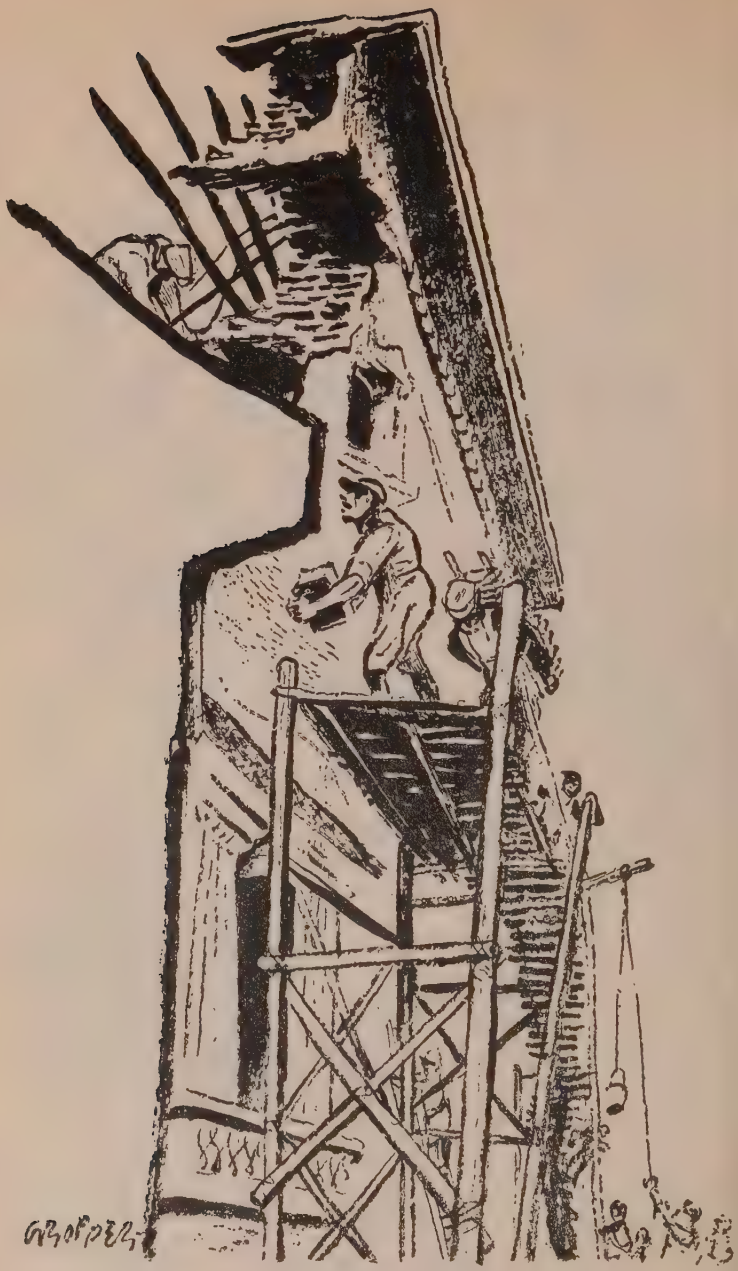
Poland: Four drawings by

WILLIAM GROPPER

GDANSK

WROCLAW

THE OLGIN CO-OPERATIVE SHOE FACTORY, WROCLAW



WARSAW

The LIVING...

by YURI SUHL

ITZYKEL is the name of a Jewish boy in a children's home in Poland. There is nothing unusual about the name; there is something disturbing about the size of the boy's body. If you should ask him how old he is his reply would startle you. "I am ten years old," he would say, and quickly lower his eyes to avoid your incredulous glance. Too many people have made clucking sounds of sympathy with their mouths, or shaken their heads in astonishment when they learned that this small boy was already ten. He does not know that his body is at least five years behind his age, but he is painfully aware of a discrepancy between the two.

But what has stunted his growth? Why are his ten years not reflected in his limbs? If you should really want to know, Antonina Bernhautova, director of the home, would tell you. The telling would not take very long and would, perhaps, be wordless. Just a very meaningful nod of her graying head; a pained look of her blue, penetrating eyes; or a helpless spreading apart of her arms, as if to say: Where does one begin to tell the story of Itzykel?

It is not a unique story. It is the story of thousands of other Itzykels, most of whom are no longer living today. It is a six-millionth part of an unparalleled tragedy called Six Million Jews. No one can tell that whole story.

But Mrs. Bernhautova can tell you about Itzykel. She will tell you that Itzykel belongs to the category of miracles—miracles of survival. Not miracles wrought in heaven, but miracles compounded of the heroism and sacrifices of the liberating Red Army.

Together with seventeen other Jewish children of similar age, Itzykel, who was seven years old at the time, starved, emaciated and with hardly enough strength to breathe, was being sped away in a Ger-

man military truck to the ovens of Maidanek. The incessant rumble of guns all around him had no special meaning for him. It had become the natural accompaniment to his daily existence. How was he to know that now those guns were signalling to him a message of liberation; that there were other trucks, not so far behind his, rushing to overtake it; that life was racing ahead in the track of Death to capture it and crush it?

The German truck came to a sudden halt. The driver and guards dismounted hurriedly and fled, abandoning the vehicle and its human cargo. The children huddled together on the floor of the truck, too exhausted to stir, too stupefied to question the meaning of the sudden standstill.

An hour or so later, when a Red Army man pushed aside the canvas flaps of the abandoned truck he found them still rigid in their misery. The red star on his cap was of no significance to them. Every soldier was a German. They greeted him with the glum indifference of men sentenced to die and too tired to want to live. They waited for him to shout a command that would stir them into motion.

It was only after he had lifted them tenderly out of the truck and then offered them chocolate that some began to cry. Now they were confused, bewildered and suspicious. Other Red Army men came over and one addressed them in Yiddish. German soldiers had never spoken Yiddish to them. German soldiers had never offered them chocolate. German soldiers had never smiled at them. Suspicion gave way to a feeling of security. They became little human beings again.

THE children were taken back to the nearest liberated town to be cared for and begin life anew. A year later, when a model Jewish children's home was established in Pietrolesiu, a small town in Lower Silesia, they were transferred to that home and have been there ever since.

Now Itzykel sleeps in a clean, sunny room, with cheerful pictures on the walls, and he plays in a spacious, well-equipped playground. He goes to school, sings in the chorus, attends a class in arts and crafts and eats plenty of wholesome food. His body is rapidly catching up with his years.

But there are some things he will never recover—his parents and his relatives. Most of his playmates are more fortunate than he is. Some

have at least an aunt, an uncle or a cousin; and some are even lucky enough to have one parent. But Itzykel has no one. Sunday is visiting day for the relatives and the happiest day for the children. For Itzykel that day was the saddest of the week. But last summer he "discovered" an aunt and now he too is eagerly looking forward to Sundays.

The story of Itzykel's newly acquired aunt could serve as an illustration of the delicate problems such children present, and of the intelligent way these problems are met. One Sunday morning he became ill. He ran a fever. He was taken to the isolation ward of the home and a doctor was called in. The doctor's examination revealed no organic causes for his fever. Yet the fever was there. As a precautionary measure Itzykel was kept in isolation for the rest of that day. The next day the fever disappeared and he was well again as though nothing had happened.

The following Sunday the thing repeated itself. Again the doctor could not trace the boy's fever to any organic origin, and again the fever persisted. It now became clear to Mrs. Bernhautova that Itzykel's "illness" was his way of withdrawing from the rest of the children and their visitors. That very afternoon she went to Bielawy, a town two miles from Pietrolesiu, and discussed the matter with an acquaintance of hers, an elderly Jewish woman. The next day she called Itzykel into her office.

"Can you guess why I called for you?" she asked the boy.

Itzykel shook his head.

"I have some very good news for you," she said. "When I was in Bielawy yesterday I discovered an aunt of yours! She has been looking for you all these years and didn't know that you were so close by."

"An aunt?" His eyes widened with surprise. "What's her name?"

Mrs. Bernhautova told him the woman's name and added: "She's coming next Sunday to visit you."

Itzykel's eyes began to glisten. He lowered his head.

"Aren't you happy?"

"Yes," he said, and ran out of the office. Within a few minutes all the children of the home knew of Itzykel's aunt.

Next Sunday Itzykel did not run a fever. He was busy preparing to meet his aunt. He rose early to polish his shoes. Soon after breakfast the woman arrived from Bielawy and brought gifts for the boy. She spent most of the morning walking and talking with him. They walked

in full view of the other children whose relatives were visiting them. After lunch Mrs. Bernhautova treated them to a ride around town in the home's own droshka. From that day on Itzykel's Sunday fever was cured.

Itzykel is too young yet to extract any meaning from the expression: poetic justice. Yet he is experiencing it daily: he lives in a house which only four years ago was a Hitler Youth Home. Young as Itzykel is, he is already old enough to comprehend the difference between the soldier who sat in the driver's seat of the truck that sped him to Maidanek, and the soldier who overtook that truck and gave him back his life. The understanding of this difference, and the significance of it, is daily broadened and deepened in Itzykel's mind by the songs he sings, the stories he is told, the tender care he receives and the very air he breathes. For Itzykel is growing up in a People's Democracy.

WHAT WE SAW IN EUROPE: 3

... *and the DEAD*

by THOMAS MCGRATH

PARIS was overwhelmed with rain. It was the cold season of annual peace and good will, just after Christmas. We had just had dinner and we went to this particular bar for coffee because George expected to meet someone there. It was no special kind of place. When I had been there once before it had been an Existentialist hangout. Now it had been redone in a half-hearted sort of way, the Existentialist decorations —disjunctive objects hanging from wires—had been removed, but the place wasn't going to be cheerful ever. Outside it was still raining. The girl behind the bar was picking her teeth. The radio started kicking out some swing music. George talked to a newspaperman. Then X came in.

He was a very dapper-looking man with a beard and the whitest hands I had ever seen. He wasn't the man George was waiting to see, but he was someone who had not been around for a long time. We shook hands all around, George and the newspaperman went on talking, and X and Frank and I sat down at a table.

"What are you drinking?" X asked. "I feel that this is the sort of occasion where I buy." He spoke very exactly and very carefully, like a school teacher who never forgets his profession.

"What about you?" Frank asked. He believes it is proper etiquette to find out what the host is drinking before ordering.

"I think I'll have some pastis," X said judicially. Then: "I've got some money in my pocket for a change."

We got the drinks, pastis for X and cognac for the rest of us.

"It's good to be back in Paris," X said.

"You got a job with the Army, didn't you?" I asked.

"He became a ghoul," Frank said.

"I'm in charge of a group that is preparing bodies of dead GI's to be sent to the States," X said smiling. "Not a bad job either." He carefully poured water into the pastis, watching the color with the eye of a scientist. "We're disinterring them and shipping them back, you know." I remembered having met him before. He had seemed like a nice guy, lacking a sense of humor.

"Did you run out of bodies?"

"No, no," X said. "The job is still holding up. I'm just in for the week end."

"It doesn't sound very pleasant," I said.

"You get used to it. It used to bother me a lot at first. Especially the smell. I didn't think I'd ever get it off my hands."

He lifted them and sniffed at them delicately. "We wear rubber gloves, of course, but once you get a whiff of corpse you get the feeling you're carrying it with you. Perfectly clean."

He held out his hands toward us. They were very white with the whiteness that comes from wearing gloves and they looked as if they had just been recently washed. The nails were beautifully clean and well-cared for. We smelled them. There was no smell except that of soap. X got out a cigarette and fitted it into a holder, sniffing at his hands again. "Can't quite get over the idea that they might smell bad," he said smiling.

GEORGE and the newspaperman are talking of the war. They have discovered that they were once on the same island somewhere in the Pacific, George in a bomber outfit and the newspaperman on some kind of Navy racket.

"Jesus, you ought to have seen the poor bastards floating around in the crud when we came in there," the newspaperman says.

"It's really not a bad job," X goes on. "The pay is good, of course, and out in the provinces you can save most of it. There's nothing to spend it on, you know. And then you're out of doors all day. It's very healthy. I'm in better shape now than I have been for a year."

"It doesn't sound too good to me," Frank said. "You have to mess around with those stiffs, don't you?"

"Not much. We have work gangs, you see. Frenchmen. They do all the actual heavy work, the digging and so forth. And then we have a crew of embalmers who take care of the corpse once I've identified him."

"You mean you just check on what's on the cross over the grave and then ship the body west?"

"Oh no. I have to make certain, you know. I have to see that the information corresponds to what's on his dog tag. I have sort of to get down in there, you see, and get the dog tag off him—"

"Is there anything there to get it off of?"

"Oh yes. It's surprising how well preserved some of them are. Of course, that's not so good from my point of view. I'd rather there were just the bones, you know. It'd be a lot easier, cleaner. What I really don't like is when the dog tag has slid around or inside somewhere. You have to get hold of the chain and jerk, you see. Sometimes the head comes off."

"I don't suppose you ever get them mixed up," Frank asked.

"The dog tags?"

"The heads."

"Oh no. Once I've got the dog tag we just take him out of there and have him taken to a place where the embalmers can get at him. You know, I've learned a lot about anatomy since I took this job. I know damned near every bone in the human body now."

BEHIND us George and the newspaperman are discussing current events and the state of west Europe. "Is it true," George is asking, "that American troops have been taken out of Germany and sent to Greece?" It is a rumor that has been going around for quite a while.

"The embalmers are an odd crew. They're all over from the States and you'd think they were at a morticians' convention. Of course,

coming over here was a little like a holiday for them. They work, of course, but not too hard, I suppose, and they have their fare paid going and coming and get good wages. Most of them are from the Middle West one place or another. Some of them regular Babbitts. My God, they're on a continual party. I don't see how they stay sober enough to do their jobs."

"It looks as if the bodies out there were doing everybody a good turn," I said. "You're getting good pay, the French get some work out of it, and those embalmers are all singing 'How you gonna keep 'em down on the farm?' "

"Well, it has to be done. They want them back in the States."

"What I can't see," Frank said, "is how there's any work for those embalmers to do. Aren't the corpses past the state where anything can be done with them?"

"Some of them are pretty far gone, that's true. Others, as I've said, aren't in such bad shape. I'm not sure what the morticians do, precisely. Besides getting drunk, that is. You see, with most of these stiffs the skin is still there. Some of them are still rotting, you understand. Those are the worst to handle. You break through the outside and you get into some pretty nasty stuff. But with others it's sort of as if they had dried up. The skin is intact, or intact in part. Over the ribs usually. It's rather as if all the fluids had gone out of him and there was just a kind of sack with bones in it."

He finished his pastis and nodded to the girl behind the bar. "I've discovered that the story that the hair keeps on growing is a fallacy," he said, waiting for his drink to arrive.

"I think the state of the corpse depends on how he's been wounded, you know," he went on. "You get so you can tell immediately how he got it, even if there's no exterior sign of it. The ones that go the fastest, I think, are those who got stomach wounds. If they've had an arm or a leg blown off, that might be missing. Some of them hardly seem to have been wounded at all; you can't find a thing wrong with them—at least nothing noticeable. Maybe when the morticians get them up to the table and start doing whatever it is they do to them, they find out. Of course, those might be the ones who took a shell hit nearby and died of concussion. You see some queer ones. There was one who had his head squashed out flat. You couldn't tell it was a head at all, except that it was where a head should be. I imagine he got run over

by a tank. Then there are the ones who got hit between the legs—I supposed that's what happened—they've got their hands down there usually. You don't think how many ways there are of getting killed in a war until you see them one after another that way. The ones that are burned are bad—tankers probably—they're holy terrors. Para troopers whose chutes didn't open. Ones that got a shell hit so that they had to be gathered up in a blanket. Ones with their jaws or noses shot off—fifty-seven varieties."

Now George and the newspaperman are talking about the next war. The newspaperman thinks he will go back in the Navy. "The next war won't be a Navy war," he says.

"I'm going into the paratroopers myself," George tells him. "I was a gunner in the last one." He goes into a long explanation of why a paratrooper in the next war will have a high survival coefficient.

"You'd be surprised how much stuff you find in with one of those stiffs," X says, fingering his beard with his too-white hand. "You see wallets lots of times, occasionally with money in them, often with pictures. You see letters in there with them quite often, sometimes letters that they must have got only a day or so before they were killed, sometimes ones they must have carried around for a long time. Side arms sometimes. I suppose if they were messy, they just left them there. Once I found a can of C rations. The damnedest thing of all was when we ran across some GI's that the Army had hanged."

"How can you tell when they've been hanged?" Frank asked.

"The rope is still around their necks. These were all men from the quartermaster corps."

"I don't suppose it matters a hell of a lot to any of them whether they have a rope around their necks or not."

"Not now it doesn't. Big ones and little ones, thin ones and fat ones, there's just one common denominator."

"What?"

"The smell." He brought his hands under his nose again and smiled at us. "My God, you've never seen anything like the food out there," he said. "You can get an honest-to-God English or American breakfast out there at my hotel. Plenty of cream. Butter. Anything you want, really. I'm getting fat and saving money."

"You're going back out again then," Frank said.

"Oh I may for a while. I've just come in to see about another job, though—a good one if I can get it. E.R.P."

"What kind of a job?"

"Well, I'm not sure. I've had a letter from them, you see, asking me to come in and be interviewed. A friend made some inquiries for me and suggested my name."

"What sort of jobs does E.R.P. have?" I asked.

"Oh, almost anything you'd want, I suppose. In my case it would have something to do with oil. I was doing that before the war, you see. European representative for one of the big companies. That's my field, really."

"Do you have the job yet?" Frank asked.

"No, I haven't had the interview yet, but I'm rather confident. There can't be so many men floating around Europe who know a devil of a lot about it, and oil is pretty important today, especially with things the way they are in Europe, shortages and so forth. And of course if there's another war. . . ." He shrugged.

"There should be money in it," Frank said. "I don't suppose those E.R.P. people work for nothing."

"I rather think the salary would be all right. It should pay a lot better than the one I have now. Of course, this other one would last quite a while yet. There are still a lot of corpses buried around France one place or another."

He finished his drink and picked up his hat.

"I said I'd meet someone at the Montana at nine-thirty," he said. "It's just after that now. I'll see you fellows around. I'll be in town a couple of days anyway."

AT THE door he turned and smiled. "I hope I didn't leave any of the smell of my profession on you," he said, lifting one of his dead-white hands towards us, palm outward, fingers spread as if he were admiring his nails. He pulled the door open and went out.

You could see the shine of the light on the street. Outside it was still raining a little. George and the newspaperman went on talking about the next war. The men who were dead (either with or without their heads, with or without all their members, with or without a rope around their necks) were lying on the tables of the drunken morticians.

POEMS BY
Genevieve Taggard

POET

Tragic meaning was my altitude.
Took it for mine, felt it lift
Very high, learned to live holding it behind diamond eyes,
In brain, in balance, let it eat at the vitals,
Seeing and willing events in crystal focus:
Large stars convening for nativity-eve.

Then saw the magnetic hope, and saw
Rays of power. From the saffron corpse of the tragic
Saw the new babe born, lusty, contorted.
Saw cohorts of clouds circling, dispersing,
Again circling; and space circling the perilous birth,
Until peril deepened, stained hope's country scarlet.

So refused the usual small role, knowing the nature,
The large terrain of the time. Since it is vision, since it is
Mine to say what it is, how quiet the eyes
Seeing, and the mouth open and saying:
This time, these people, the crisis hurrying
Near the defile of the evil story, this, soon and new.

Then dare to descend as by parachute, sheer
Drop down to place assigned, sheer down to fact.
Completely to relinquish vision and its piercing virtue.
Fall to the weight of one day with one life for gift.
Drawing the line from zenith to earth's tiny inches.
Suffer the limitation of beginning action. So on

Linked in unit of slow going; in the line as it stops;
With stop after step, the signal awaited. One
In the lock with all, chained but never slave.
Here sweat out struggle nothing-sweeter than history.
Web of feet working over dark bloody ground.
Heart plunging neatly, spasm on spasm.

1943

EXCHANGE OF AWE

Deep cup of this cave
Heeds the moon,
Heeds the sun, tips down and up
With the tides. (So the cave rides,
The world, all gilded, glides.)
With sun, tide, moon,
With orb, quarter, crescent and the crescent wave,
Asleep, inert, a-tune.

Sunrise, the babe leaps forth,
Moonrise, he meets the maiden,
Tides, he suffers and riots,
Darkness, he recoils and dreams,
Recoils, descends
Toward the image within the image,
To devour the flower of rage,
To eat dust and taste blood,
Tight in the brackish fluid,
Brute, blind, in broken story a slave,
In the cave, the tight cave.

At noon his shadow merges with his fellows,
At noon, he toils and is heavy,
At noon he is slain and made many,
He is dismembered, he is eaten
And of others, he eats.

So he is born of man
In the realm and meaning
Of myriad man. Forgets
Oblivion, the cave,
Its residue, its after-birth; forgives
The tides their prod, accepts
Penetration of the sane sun; loves
Authority of the task,
Its antagonist fiber; dreams
His deep acquaintance with the stuff of things; adores
The burnished withering moon.

Marvelous now is man.
Wrinkles next his eyes,
Stubs of his ten fingers
Grow the exquisite skin of self.
Odors of love and sweat,
Voices of youthful creatures
Fill cups with winey light
Sweet to the lips; he drinks,
Groans in his excess
Lies prone to procreate.
Within is a great wave cresting,
The glee of the master.
He strides, an exuberant creature,
Happy at pitch, the crescent of his spanning,
Sober, with labor; defeat his skidding shadow.

Adjusted by the moon to wane,
A-down, a-dark,
Rejoicing and desponding,
Elate, afraid, shod with electric spurs,
Petitions not to die.
(For after he is slain his feeling is immortal.)
Mortal, lofty, in him, the human spirit
Repeats, repeats, petitions not to die.

Hark, and afar he feels return
The tug of tide and sun
The shock of setting moon
In solemn orb and wave, and these reply:
Lie down in nothing's cave,
Obey the grave. Undo thy self. Obey.
Now he is closing,
In mystery withers away.
Half-harking he shrivels, shrinks,
He is cradled, laved.
He is near nothing,
A nothing vast.
Now he is near pure nothing,
He is that nothing he knows never, never,
That nothing that is,
Bliss within bliss
He is no one
He is unspun.
Asleep, inert, a-tune,
A-down, a-dark,
Where pull and fuse
Forces of the tide, moon, sun.
(A gliding tide,
A moon
A swooning sun.)

1945

SALUTE TO THE RUSSIAN DEAD

Genius is like radium. A drop held in hand
Burns . . . Stuff of incandescence, of rarity, diamond, alive . . .
This, diffused in the blood of men in the ranks,
In the step of millions, in the hands
That serve the huge machinery of war . . .

Genius, running red on the wads of grass, sodding the crisp weeds,
Stain-darkening spring flowers, painting and spattering the snow-terrain,
Genius in the blood, pumped from the human heart
Through delicate thin veins . . .
And so is genius delicate,
Quick to die like grass and quick to weary like the body,
Needing cheer and sustenance like a child at the breast . . .

Now in this war genius is as common as red, genius quickens
In all and takes the color of blood. It is passion.
It will give itself utterly. It will not turn slave.
It is red and human and hot.
This planet
Is nothing without this hero-beating heart.

A few writers die near the front and we are sorry.
Artists suffer—but not as artists. All suffer.
We remember that all men must die. We remember
That these did not die sorry for their deaths.

For those who never made books or small poems,
We will cry loudly, feeling an agony in this necessity.
Whatever is good and tangible and fair in time to come
Begins here, where they die in their blood, in their genius.

1942

books in review

An Irish Shout

INISHFALLEN, FARE THEE WELL, by Sean O'Casey. *Macmillan.* $4.75.

SEAN O'CASEY, "the flying wasp," as he once called himself, is not much written about. For every reference to him by contemporary critics you will find five essays on Yeats and ten guides to Joyce. Allowing for the stature of these, the ratio is still strange. Could it have something to do with politics?

It is not just that O'Casey is a Communist. It is that he never lets you forget it. He tells you so; but even more, he forces you to think his way, to see beyond and below the show of things, sensing an Ireland which, though it beats, has yet to be born. And he is living witness of a cultural tragedy rooted in—as he has shown it to be—political and clerical reaction.

One cannot help matching Ireland today with the new democracies. In the latter the revolution is on the march under the flags of the working class; the bourgeoisie cannot regroup and make its stab at power; the church is confined to its spiritual territories; culture is cared for and honored, and people are turned toward the immediate future for their poetry.

In Ireland the revolution fell into the hands of the nationalist bourgeoisie, the struggle against partition was weakened by the sabotage of class unity between the Catholic workers of the south and the Protestant workers of the six northern counties; the bishops swarmed over the infant Republic, buzzing, seizing and censoring until every lively book was banned, and the best writers, O'Casey among them, left the country to join others already abroad. The home of a great national cultural revival, a center of world literature, was turned into a dusty provincial nest, and if one should listen for a note or two these days, he would hear nothing but high mass and low mass. The real singers are gone. The terrible beauty will have to wait until the red star shines to announce it.

That is O'Casey's message and the philistines of the hierarchy have always curdled at him for it. Here is how they once wrote of him in *The Catholic World, a Monthly Magazine of General Literature and Science* published by the Paulist Fathers: "He is a Protestant, in itself a fact worthy of note, for although one finds

Protestants in the Dublin slums, these people are anomalies. Their spiritual condition is due either to a pervert ancestor, or to a marriage into the former British garrison, for Ireland has had many a poor Madam Butterfly. . . . Not being a Catholic he lacks that mental stability which the poorest cannot but find in the fixed moral standards of a Church which insists upon the importance of the purely supernatural."

Rather than be smothered under a blanket of such moral standards, O'Casey went to England and has been there ever since, a great-hearted figure in the world's literature of exile. Yet it is hard to think of him as an exile; his work is not at all marred by nostalgia, self-pity or a bitter and morose spirit toward his homeland. There is a wonderful directness and effervescence about him, whether he is writing of personal experience or intellectual matters, an absolute lack of pose or inhibition almost unique in modern letters, where the frankness is nearly always self-conscious and the "daring" has to be justified by a philosophy.

O'Casey's art is a kind of restoration to innocence, a proof that it *is* possible for the writer to be unconstrained in his feelings without doing violence to his form. But there is nothing naive about O'Casey, nothing Saroyanish, back-to-nature-fiendish, starry-eyed or pseudo-cute. He has led a hard life and he has a hard mind. Science is no monster to him, but a tool that must be taken out of the claws of those who want to put it to monstrous uses. He celebrates the material world and man's desire to redeem himself by mastering it.

Inishfallen, the fourth volume of his autobiography, records a difficult time of transition in O'Casey's life. His mother died and he was almost too poor to bury her. The national revolution which, as in the dream of Connolly and Jim Larkin, he hoped would go forward to a workers' republic, was first diverted into a fratricidal struggle over the English treaty and then caught in the backwash of Free State gentility. His play, *The Plough and the Stars,* produced at the Abbey, was shouted down for its realism by the old romantic rebels with whom he once stood in the days of the Easter rising; because he refused to idealize his characters they accused him of insulting the honor of Ireland.

O'Casey felt himself stifled by two "systems of censorship": the group around Yeats, "a censorship of brittle badinage and dainty disdain for anything written different from what they wanted, or were used to, because they had tried it themselves. The other was a prelatian-led crowd of ding dong dedero devotees, roaring out opposition to everything outside of what Father Tom, Dick, or

Harry thought proper to put in poem or book. Holy water would soon be raining down for forty days and forty nights, and the sooner Sean got into the ark of England the better. . . ."

But all this time he had been watching the fortunes of the Russian Revolution, following the path from which his own people were for the moment cut off. "The Press was full of the death and defeat of the Red madmen; then, suddenly, they fell silent; and Sean knew that the Red Flag was high in Moscow and Petrograd. O, Silver trumpets ye be lifted up, and call to the great race that is to come! Yeats, Yeats, they are sounding now, though your ears are cocked in another direction. Sounding loud and brave, not for all ears yet; but for the many to hear; and Sean's were the first of the Irish ones to hear them."

O'Casey was never a man to stand on the bank of history, trying the stream with a delicate toe. He jumps in with an Irish shout, splashing the fastidious spectators ashore. Dock worker, hod carrier, stonebreaker, playwright of the working class, he shuttles from private life to public event, tying the sufferings of his family to the hard fight for socialism or showing how many —sometimes paradoxical — forms the national struggle may take in its individual participants.

Like history, like life, he is full of surprises, startling remarks, ribaldry, embarrassing memories and jokes directed against himself and his side as well as against his enemies. He has no high horse to ride and he doesn't like to waste his time maintaining dignity like a big house. But O'Casey's freedom and play, like his puns, are more than simple caprice. He is a terribly commonsensical man, whose complexities and ironies must be taken in the context of his very clear, unequivocal beliefs. A smaller man would not or could not venture upon them for lack of confidence and passion.

The same confidence determined his relations with Yeats. He contrasts Yeats' avoidance of social reality with Lady Gregory's awareness and acceptance of it (he calls her lovingly "this brave old Commissar of Galway"). He describes Yeats in his mystical period with critical humor: "chatting in a lordly lilt about Utumara, Brahmin Mohini, birds born out of the fire, the two inflows to man's

nature—the one common to him and all animals which is natural; and the second, which is intellectual, coming from the fire. Yeats murmured about coming through the fire as if it were but coming through the rye, going on from that to chatter about *anima hominis* and *anima mundi* and spirits that walked only once on a Sunday, while his listeners cocked their ears and bowed their heads, murmuring, Lord, Lord, thou hast the words of infernal life." Yet he never joined the crowd of Yeats' detractors, remembering "the fine, silken mantle of poetry draping the shoulders of the poet."

O'Casey's language, so well exemplified above, is not the lyrical prose of a frustrated poet. With all its marked rhythms, rhyming, alliteration, proliferation of adjectives, puns and other word play, it is strictly functional. What O'Casey borrows from the speech of the Irish people and what he gains from the genius of Joyce —an acknowledged debt—he puts to his own intellectual uses. Sprung from the people, his language is made to serve them. His puns are always more than a form of fooling. When a religious fanatic, dead from his holy exertions, is awarded genteel praise by an Irish knight, O'Casey intones, "Blow, crumpeter, blow!" He describes De Valera "helping to spray prayers at a church gathering." An episcopal declaration appears in the morning papers "fresh with dieu." "Back to the muddle ages," says Chesterton, "rushing out of a pub after a quick one."

His images expand with association; they are "ambiguous" enough to satisfy the fussiest contemporary critic. Undernourished school children are given a noonday meal free "so that corporal charity could put another feather in its cap. . . . Mrs. O'Kelly following with a tray of bread from which each youngster took a slab of bread as she passed them by. Pippa passes, and she does the job nicely, though no song ripples from her lips."

Other times the language has the flair of good street speaking: "gay lads on altar steps, on platforms, in pulpits, at cocktail parties, proclaim, chant, assert, and demand full recognition for 'freedom of expression, and the sacred rights of the individual.' Well, we can hazard a guess as to what would have happened to H. G. Wells if the Vatican had had supreme control of things as they once had—he would have gone up in smoke!" A dash of vulgar reasoning to give pause to the mourners of Mindszenty. At a time when T. S. Eliot is commanding us not to let a pin drop to disturb the holy laws and orders, it is fine to have a little fresh barrel-organ music like this.

There are fugues, too, like the threnody on the death of his mother, in which the sense of loss and the tribute of love alter-

nate with the rich acceptance of sorrow without illusion or false consolations. Or like the passage in which the killing of a young Republican by Free State men is played against the love-making of a duck and drake in a city pond.

O'Casey's immortality is that of a materialist. The dead are reborn only in the lives of others. And even then, not all the dead. Just those who hated death enough to earn the memory that perpetuates them. For, hating death, they gave to the comrades with whom they shared life all the courage, gayety and affection they could muster. O'Casey is a singer of every such man among the dead and the living.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

Bombshell

FEAR, WAR, AND THE BOMB, by P. M. S. Blackett. *Whittlesey House. $3.50.*

TO SAY that Professor Blackett has pushed back frontiers is to pay him small tribute. He has done more. By giving us perspective he has given us stability hinged on the strong confidence that man can conquer the bomb. This is indeed a profound reversal from the conviction that the bomb has conquered man; that human life is obsolete, awaiting its own doom at its own hands. So much of what has been printed about the atom bomb is pivoted on this myth that in the West reason falls before terror and the future becomes a shroud stitched by atomic scientists. If only because he ruptures this Spenglerian mood in its new form and exposes the American plans for "controlling" the bomb as being part of Washington's cold war, do we owe Blackett a full measure of gratitude.

It is not fortuitous that an Englishman has written this book and not an American. None of the leading American physicists, for all they have said about the bomb, would at present dare openly to reach his conclusions. Interestingly enough, not a word of the book has its source in other than official and easily available documents, and these mostly American in origin. The question looms large: If Blackett could arrive at his conclusions with the use of these data, what has kept Americans with the same material from arriving at similar verdicts? His brilliant use of the *United States Strategic Bombing Survey,* and the almost complete failure of American analysts to use it, is additional evidence of how science in America, certainly in the realm of physics, is being subjugated to the military.

The *Survey* is a point of departure leading relentlessly down a road at whose end lies the corpse of Douhet—the whole tattered concept of strategic bombing, and victory through push

buttons. Yet no American atomic scientist of wide reputation will travel that road, for it takes courage to face ostracism from the academies not to speak of the charge of Soviet influence.

That Blackett has been maligned in England shows that the same pulverizing pressures which operate on scientists here also operate there. But with a difference. Britain's inferior technology coupled to the more important fact that in the event of war that country would become a "cushion in time," a compact target, makes her more sensitive scientists resentful of such fantastic American plans as would convert Britain into a pawn on the Pentagon's chessboard. I believe this to be the reason for Blackett's impulse to reduce to real terms and to actual size the meaning of the bomb in international politics and in warfare itself.

In effect Blackett has become the challenger of American military logic and, as its prosecutor, he is liberated from having to defend Mr. Lilienthal or Mr. Baruch and the whole mythology they have created. If Blackett thus runs the risk of being called a spokesman for Mr. Vyshinsky, as Waldemar Kaempffert has done in the New York *Times,* he may take satisfaction in knowing that he has done something worthwhile in the fight to keep England out of war and war out of the world.

There is, of course, far more in the book than the solid arguments that the atom bomb is not the absolute weapon changing the nature of warfare. There is in Blackett a keen perception of politics. He lifts the mystery of why Washington decided to drop the bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (It was the superfortress "Grande Artiste" which launched the plutonium load on the latter.)

Mr. Truman, through the little known Franck Committee report, had been warned by the scientists (you could still do such things four years ago) "that the gain resulting from the expected shortening of the war would be offset by the inevitable worsening of international relations." More: the Imperial Army had lost supremacy in the air, shipping was blockaded and Japanese industry crippled. Coupled with this was Soviet preparation for a campaign in Manchuria which would have smashed—as it did— any resistance on land.

Nevertheless, the atom bombs were dropped in a great hurry, forty-eight hours before the Soviet Union declared war on Japan. All this to insure, as Blackett puts it, "that the Japanese government surrendered to American forces alone," that American control of Japan would be complete and that joint Allied commitments, especially with the U.S.S.R., would be vacated in favor of unilateral

American rule. Blackett writes:

"It must have been perfectly clear that the timing of the dropping of the bombs, two days before the start of the Soviet offensive, would be assumed by the Soviet Government to have the significance which we have assumed that it, in fact, did have. If it was not intended to have this significance, then the timing was an error of tact, before which all the subsequent 'tactlessness' of Soviet diplomacy in relation to the control of atomic energy pales into insignificance. That the timing was not an unintentional blunder is made likely by the fact that no subsequent steps were taken to mitigate its effects. . . . So we may conclude that the dropping of the atomic bombs was not so much the last military act of the Second World War, as the first major operation of the cold diplomatic war with Russia now in progress."

Thus we have established by a most thorough scrutiny of the evidence how and who it was that initiated the diplomacy of attrition whose first sparks the American delegates let fly a few weeks before at the San Francisco Conference of the United Nations. It was this hostile approach to the Soviets which shaped Washington's proposals for international control of the bomb and of atomic energy. Blackett sees the Baruch plan as a forerunner of the Truman Doctrine—a plan essentially false although cunningly contrived to give the appearance of generosity.

The plan could not succeed because no great power, the U.S.S.R. specifically, could submit to a machinery of control which would make it "subservient to a group of nations dominated by America." Under the Baruch plan the United States would be able to store its bombs until a late stage in the process of putting the control project into effect, while the Soviets could have no assurance that when the "stage was reached at which the bombs should be disposed of, some technical point would not be raised to justify retaining them. In the meantime, she would have thrown her land and economy open to in-

spection and so inevitably to military espionage."

The whole plan presumed in part that America must gain complete security for itself at the expense of the interests of other nations. To a kilowatt-rich country like the United States, says Blackett, the use of atomic energy may not seem as urgent as it does to others seeking to raise their standard of living by employing new sources of power. The Soviet social structure allows for the absorption of these new sources while in the United States the owners of the existing power supplies are reluctant to permit the emergence of a new competitor in the form of atomic energy. And this becomes the nub of the matter, for the United States can insist that military security is more important than a source of energy.

For the Soviet Union and for other countries, the American position as expressed in atomic control plans becomes, therefore, intolerable.

Blackett, of course, is right in his broad outlines of the atomic energy picture based on a comparison of power sources of the U.S. and U.S.S.R. To it, however, must be added the singular fact that even if Soviet energy production were as high as American, atomic energy sources would still be welcome. A socialist economy is capable of adopting new energy developments to relieve manpower and to bring a greater total wealth and comfort for all Soviet citizens. By the same token, America with its relatively abundant power output could use, under an economy in which power production is not calculated on profit return, billions more kilowatts than are now available.

One wrong conclusion that may be drawn from Blackett's per-capita-kilowatt method of analysis is that the Soviets are weak *vis-à-vis* the United States and the atom bomb. (From the book's internal evidence such conclusions are farthest from Blackett's mind especially since he is fully aware of how the Red Army demolished at Stalingrad the Wehrmacht which had almost the entire power resources of the European continent behind it.)

But the U.S.S.R.'s strength is clearly evidenced by the proposals it has made for the control of atomic weapons. They have expressed an attitude of firmness, despite the menacing speeches of Washington's delegates to the U.N., linked to concessions which would keep the way open to eventual agreement not only on the elimination of the atom bomb but on a general reduction of conventional armaments. And behind these specific proposals lies a knowledge of the trend of forces in the world that adds enormous strength to the anti-imperialist position, forces that cannot be estimated in terms

of meter readings or energy consumption.

In this space, I cannot do full justice to *Fear, War and the Bomb.* For it is a book whose footnotes, charts and appendices are as absorbing as the text and worth comment all their own. It is a work, too, that lends itself to quick reading in three or four evenings or it can be studied steadily for a month. The book's vitality comes from the toughness of its argumentation, based on the actual experience of the war and on an earnestness to see peace in the world by meeting its realities. Professor Blackett has already won the Nobel Prize for his distinguished work in cosmic radiation. An even greater honor in tribute to this plea for sanity would be the widest possible distribution of his book.

JOHN STUART

Downhill

THE GOD-SEEKER, by Sinclair Lewis. *Random House. $3.50*

IF SINCLAIR LEWIS is at last caught, held and tamed by the very society which he has condemned, it will be high tragedy, at least to some. That the red-headed boy from Sauk Center, Minnesota, alive to every fraud, should become at last the defeated old man, wise in the very ways he once scorned, may afford laughter for the gods but it would be bitter to his admirers. They at least will not concede that it is the way of all flesh—merely a case of hardening of the arteries. If the man who wrote *It Can't Happen Here* lets it happen here without one word of protest, it is sad enough; if he doesn't know it is happening here, it is worse; if, paralyzed into silence by the feeling that he is confronted by both fascism and communism and, not liking either, he surrenders to fascism out of abject confusion—that is even more tragic.

If this lament seems irrelevant when applied to Sinclair Lewis, the advocate of racial equality, the scourge of the fake and the flatulent, I can only ask that the doubter read *The God-Seeker.* In it Lewis seems to advance the parable that even though capitalism is evil, and even though that evil multiplies to a degree that enslaves and plunders the American people, one cannot oppose it; one cannot, no matter what the evil, in Lewis' words, commit "treason to his own rooftree." Under this reasoning, it seems to me, there could have been no American Revolution, no freeing of the slaves, no German opposition to Hitler, no fight for freedom and change anywhere at any time.

Some may say, although I feel sure Lewis wouldn't, that in holding him responsible for the views of his protagonist I am not playing fair. Others may object to taking as contemporary comment a novel whose time is bounded by 1830 to 1856. But Lewis has never

been renowned for subtlety, and this book with its dictum against revolt is parable, plainly meant in part for current commentary. A writer's latest mood may be judged by his latest book.

This novel is the story of Aaron Gadd; of how he believed passionately as a youth and more temperately and reasonably with the years; of how he did indeed go the way of all flesh, or the way of much middle-class flesh at any rate, seeing high visions when young, comfortably pursuing money when older with only a reasonable, safe, unembarrassing remnant of his vision remaining.

It is the story of how Aaron Gadd went to Minnesota as a missionary to the Dakotas, perceiving soon enough that the Indians were being destroyed by the white man's pursuit of profit, by his theft and murder. At first Aaron is sympathetic to the Indians. He tries to help Black Wolf, a Dakota brave intent on leading his people to freedom. Aaron, still sympathetic to Black Wolf's design, goes to see Cesar Lanarck, the fur trader who serves as Mr. Lewis' symbol of the growing forces of business and monopoly. Lanarck tries to lure Aaron away from Black Wolf's plan of freedom and says, truly enough, that the business man is destined to take over the country, lock, stock and barrel.

" 'Today, the man of business,' Lanarck says to Aaron, 'is not only nobility but judge and priest and scholar and soldier. Out of his means he supports all the poets and thought-mongers, and he can command their supposedly independent knowledge and judgment. He is the only man who can rove the world as he wants, or even read as he wants, because he is responsible to no one.

" 'To prove that, I'm going to start you reading just the sort of metaphysicians who would wipe me out, if they could! They start out as rebels, sniping at me and my tribe from behind rather ill-trimmed hedges, and end up as our court jesters. . . .' "

Aaron, still young and impractical (although he ends the book as Lanarck's partner) withstands for the moment Lanarck's blandishments. But he suddenly caves in when he finds that Black Wolf means business. In a lengthy indictment, which holds as much amused despair as outraged ferocity, Black Wolf describes that lust for profit that slaughters "millions, women and children along with the men." By using modern terminology and modern reference, Lewis gives his phillipic modern meaning:

" 'Most Indians,' Black Wolf continues, 'hold everything in common except clothes, weapons, tents and food. . . . Especially we hold in common all land. . . . But the whites devote their highest energies to taking possessions from one another, greedily hiding such supplies as they cannot use.

" 'The idea of "commerce," of a lifetime of profiting by the needs of

others, is so incomprehensible to nearly all Indians that we do not quite grasp its horror. . . . Among us a liar is often driven from the tribe, but the degenerate whites regard the skillful lying of their political leaders with amusement and even admiration.'"

The indictment goes on and on and Aaron, afterwards, is convinced of its essential truth. But when Black Wolf says that he plans revolt against the corruption he has described, Aaron says: "'Then we'll have to fight you, even those who hate it. I'll do all of the little I can to bring justice to the Indians—I agree they haven't had it—but I'm not going to betray my own people and spy for the enemy, even if they have a good case. I don't like traitors for virtue's sake any more than I do traitors for pay.'"

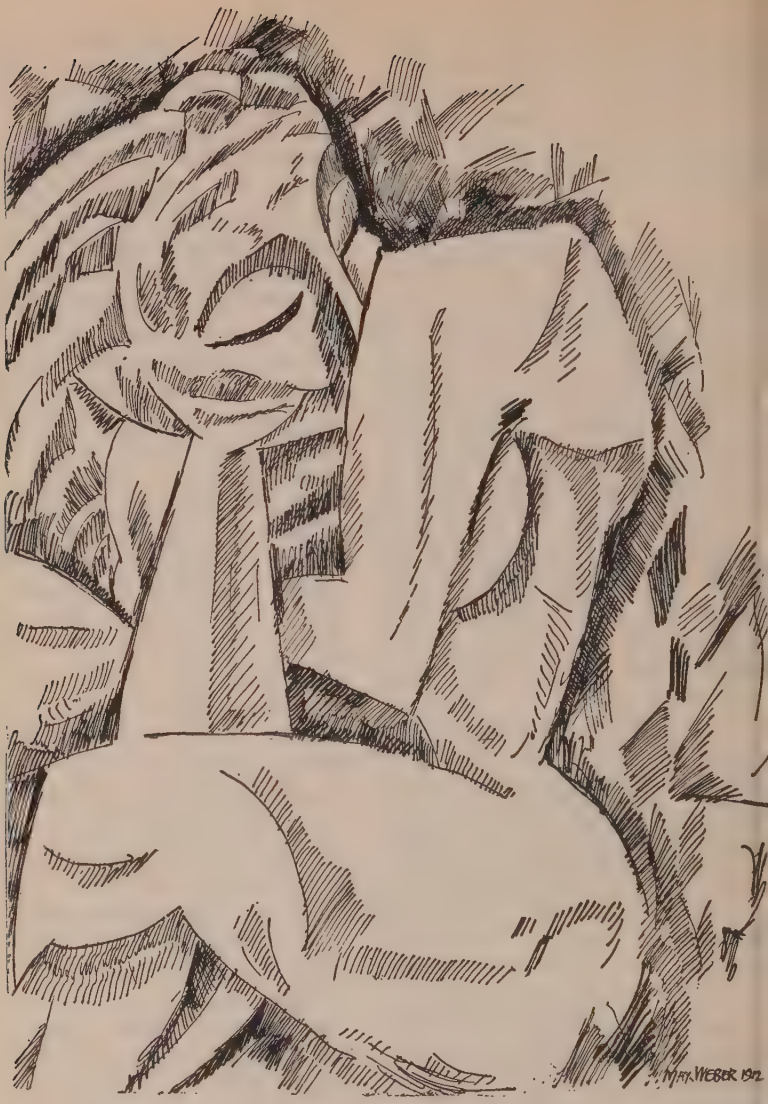
And later he says to Black Wolf: "'No, I am your friend even if I'm not your fellow-traveler on this desperate journey.'" Still later Aaron concludes that his refusal to help Black Wolf "might be treason to the truth," but that is better than "treason to his own roof-tree." It does not apparently occur to Lewis that treason to the truth is in fact the worst of all treasons to one's own roof-tree—that it finally destroys it, and all those who live beneath it, too.

This conclusion of Aaron's is the climax of the novel and from then on it runs steadily downhill until at the end he is happily married, a father, a prosperous builder and a contented partner to the pleasantly corrupt Lanarck. In a decent way, and with the acclaim of all right-minded men, he occasionally helps a runaway slave on his way to freedom and Canada. Once he organizes his employees into a trade union and if this does justice to Aaron Gadd it sure as hell does violence to history; just as the novel as a whole, written on the run with an astonishing carelessness of characterization and structure, does violence to the art of fiction.

LEWIS was from the first embarrassed by the righteous man. He seemed to be forever afraid of a righteous cause because a righteous cause made righteous men and righteous men were prigs and prigs were sissies and sissies he regarded as Babbitt did. This distrust of the righteous and their cause was perhaps healthy enough when its target was a hymn-howling fundamentalist, but when it becomes elevated to a static principle and indiscriminately includes anti-fascist fighters, then it ceases to be a literary quality and involves the life and death of our country.

Lewis is at bottom a romantic and it is as a romantic he views history. He has always loved Babbitt as much as he hated him. But now he is in danger of surrendering if not to Babbitt at least to Babbitt's fears.

RICHARD O. BOYER



Max Webe

art

MAX WEBER

by WILLIAM THOR BURGER

AFTER forty years of artistic activity, Max Weber has been given a retrospective exhibition at the Whitney Museum. Weber is one of the pioneers of modernism in American art. He has played a most important role in the formation of contemporary American art and in the economic and social struggles of the American artist. It was Max Weber who, returning from Paris in 1908 and full of new artistic ideas, had the first exhibition of modern art by an American artist at the Haas Gallery, a framer's shop which he rented for the occasion. And Max Weber was the first national chairman of the Artists' Congress during the Thirties, when artists were united in a common struggle for their own economic survival and the cultural enrichment of their country.

Max Weber's work is still rich and more exuberant than at any other period in his life. As we look back over the accumulated products of so many full years of activity, we are struck by the aliveness and versatility of an energetic and sensitive personality. Here is an artist aware of the significance of the artistic and social movements of the age in which he lives.

The oils, watercolors, gouaches, pastels, drawings, woodcuts, lithographs and sculptures collected in this exhibition take us back through the years to 1909. In Europe he had absorbed the art of the past and met the young men who were creating a revolution in contemporary art. As a student of Henri Matisse, he came into contact with *Fauvism,* the first step in the art of the twentieth century. In Paris he also found a kindred spirit in Henri Rousseau. His previous training with Arthur Wesley Dow in America and his own feeling for primitive art prepared him for this new search for simplicity in form and color.

Weber grew up as an artist in the atmosphere of quest and revolt which characterized the early years of this century in Paris. The whole modernist movement was an attack upon the established standards of bourgeois taste. However, even though these artists in fighting against the academic in

art also lashed out at the restrictive and philistine features of bourgeois life in general, they accepted individualism, one of the basic concepts of bourgeois ideology, without question. And upon it they built a whole superstructure of self-expression, unintelligibility and social irresponsibility which became the ivory tower of modern art.

In questioning a life they found empty and standards they found false, they did not seek the solution in social change, but turned within themselves for an inspirational esthetic answer. Like the others, Weber sought an answer to the anarchy of capitalist society in the controlled order of formal manipulation. Like the others, he spent his formative years in search for such order through Fauvism, Cubism, Futurism, and primitivism.

The influence of Matisse is especially strong in the early work of Weber, but even here it results in personal experimentation and expression. Weber has often been wrongly labeled as a minor imitator of the great innovators of modern art. Though he has drawn from other men and other arts, he has translated this material into a personal idiom. Weber's experiments have always shown an individual direction. Whether he borrows from Cézanne or Picasso, the finished product is marked as a Weber by a quiet lyricism, a delicacy, an opulence of color.

Among his earliest works the "Still Life with Bananas" (1909) recalls the full-bodied painting of Courbet. Compared with it, the pale and posturing crystalline women of "The Geranium" (1911) seem like figures in a poetic dream of an anemic fairyland. The works of these years are the efforts of a young artist finding his way from Matisse to Cubism.

Beginning with 1913 and extending through 1917, Weber was involved in a personal translation of analytical Cubism with Futurist overtones, in which he attempted to capture some of the febrile activity of city life. Curiously enough, these are among his best works, ordered on the whole, though capricious in spots, with a muted though sonorous range of colors that goes beyond the monochromy of Picasso and Braque. All of them exhibit an intricate and dynamic rhythm which is closer to the work of Duchamp and the Futurists than to the more delicate and static equilibrium of the Cubists.

With the end of the First World War, the series of charmingly decorative woodcuts, rooted in new contact with primitive art, ushers in the next period in Weber's development. He turns his back on the purely formal experiments of his earlier years and evolves a style which is more realistic and a mood which is poetic and at times vaguely biblical. It is a reaffirmation of his ties with the past

Max Weber

in general and his Judaic cultural roots in particular. Artistically, he turns from the Fauvism of Matisse and Cubism of Picasso and Braque to the progenitor of them all, Cézanne.

For the next twenty years his art continues within this vein, becoming richer in color, more complex and assured in composition and handling. It is a period which abounds in monumental figures, idyllic groups, solidly painted still-lifes, spacious landscapes and many vibrant Hassidic themes. This is the time of Weber's maturity when he produced such fine canvasses as "Alone" and "Winter Twilight" and the delicately tender miniature gouaches, which are among his best and most individual creations.

During these years Weber turns to the Hassidic themes of religious ecstasy which are remembered from his ghetto youth. Lloyd Goodrich, who wrote the catalogue for the exhibition, makes much of the "racial quality" of these works, as have so many other commentators on Weber's art. The question of the intention and the effect of these works presents a serious and complex problem. Merely changing the misguided use of the word "racial" to "cultural" does not resolve the problem. It is obvious that Weber paints his Jewish themes out of a deep personal sympathy and emotional intensity. The fact that his rabbis and dancing Hassidim may appear to some as stereotypes is not so much his fault as that th memories of the ghetto past, h ing served for so long as thema material evocative of Jewish l become increasingly nostalgic a unreal as symbols of Jewish ex ence.

Goodrich has been led to mark, "To a Gentile, Weber's titude may seem to have an e ment of caricature, but he hims disclaims this vehemently, and tually his attitude here is no diff ent from that towards other su jects." The fact is, however, th the distortions of the figure crea an effect which may be ambiguo

Through the depression years the Thirties, Weber took an acti and leading part in the struggl of artists. And at this time h work, like that of many of his co temporaries, reflects the soci scene through the inclusion of ne thematic material in such pain ings as *At the Mill*, *The Build* and *Refugees*. The new social co tent is never explicit, and the ge eral lyrical tenor of his art is n especially conducive to an incisiv or powerful statement. Yet th work of these years shows a growt in strength and integration.

Some of the finest and mo monumental of his landscapes al date from that time, as if he ha absorbed the affirmation of th period of social progress eve though his art did not achieve direct representation of the strug gle of the time.

With the Forties, Weber's a suddenly shifted, along with th

general tendency in American art, away from realism and the social theme back into the realm of abstraction. His wild and irrational line and his gargoyle figures seem an effort to keep step with contemporary developments. His color, which throughout his art has been his most personal quality, remains rich and has become even more brilliant and gayer.

Like so many contemporary artists whose sympathies are with the people and the progressive movements of the day, Weber is torn on the rack of a contradiction. The intellectual and emotional necessity to express the social ideas he holds most dear as a human being must come into conflict with the accumulated esoteric forms which have grown out of the isolation and individualism of the artist in contemporary society. Frequently inclinations toward the social, the heroic and the popular are caught up in a language which is too personal, too intimate, to express them freely.

In this respect Weber shares the dilemma of every serious artist who has worked for years in a formal tradition which has had relatively limited social force. In his effort to encompass larger areas of human thought and experience he is often confronted by—and sometimes halted at—the boundaries established by this tradition. But his passionate social awareness makes him constantly affirm his alliance with those who have begun to break through.

theatre

Death of a Salesman

by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

BY ITS very indifference to box-office taboos, by being a tragedy, by allowing a place in his title to the word "death," by doing without those alleged prerequisites of a "hit"—the light touch, the reassuring ending, the romantic star—Arthur Miller's new play, *Death of a Salesman,* emphasizes the truth which, on Broadway, has to be demonstrated over and over again: that there is a rapt audience, a large audience, an S.R.O.-tickets-six-months-in-advance audience for a serious play.

There is so little concern to titillate that the story is given away in the title; there is no "surprise," no other plot trick, no contrived suspense. In a few minutes the audience knows what is going to happen, and its emotions are engaged entirely by the deepening realization of the meaning and the impact of the tragedy. Seldom has there been a play whose dramatic effects have come so wholly from an absorption in reality.

For these, and a number of other significant reasons, *Death of a Salesman* is an important event in the theatre. But, to make the reasons clearer, it would be well to begin the discussion with a synopsis of the play.

Its chief character, Willy Loman, is a salesman, so undifferentiated that what he sells is never given—it could be apparel or ice-cream freezers. When the play opens Willy returns, unexpectedly, and at night, from a selling trip he has set out on that morning in his car, his "territory" being nearby New England. While heading north he has had a blackout at the wheel, nearly driving off the road. Having recently had a number of accidents through such blackouts, the recurrence has unnerved him and he has turned back and crawled home at ten miles an hour.

Willy is sixty-three and the accelerating strains of a tense and frustrated life have brought him to the breaking point. Apart from physical breakdown, what is collapsing in him is the sustaining dream of riches and esteem which he has been able to invoke against reality but which he has had to invoke recently with a frequency and a frenzy that his mind can no longer take.

Willy, like most salesmen—and his typicality must be constantly

kept in mind—is not a born salesman. In many ways, though he seems so well adapted to it, though he has assimilated so much of its mythology, selling is a violation of his nature. His real occupational pleasure is in working with his hands; and the one, indestructible esteem that he has and that survives into a last befuddled nighttime planting of his backyard garden, is that he has improved and kept his house in repair with his own hands.

But that house, on which he has spent all his creative and only satisfying labor, is never wholly his. When he first bought it on an amortization mortgage it had had an almost suburban privacy; but it is now fenced in by surrounding apartment house walls. Payments are still due on it, as on the refrigerator, the electric washer, the car. And matters have been so calculated, in scaling the time payments, that when a thing is paid up it is worn out.

Up to now Willy has been able to carry on despite the strains, the frustrations, the disappointments. His adaptation to work that he has no heart in, to a competition that requires a brutality and cunning that is beyond him, as it is beyond most people, has worked tolerably well. The adaptation, helped on by a complete acceptance of the system and its values, was a swaggering good humor, a display of confidence that he never quite felt, a good humor that served mostly to oil his own way.

On his return that evening, the precipitating cause of his tension slowly forces itself on a mind in which consciousness and sub-consciousness have lost their borders. He is harassed by the presence of his two sons, particularly of the one-time football hero Biff, on whom he had anchored his dream and who has turned out a helpless, hopeless drifter. What Willy now has to face up to is that it is he—though not through any avoidable act of his own—who has disappointed his son, made life a fraud to him, and not merely the other way round. With that realization follows the no longer postponable recognition of his own failure.

In this crisis of self-realization three alternatives present themselves to Willy: To give up the road, as his wife pleads with him to do, and take the easier, inside job he is entitled to, since his trade does not afford pensions; a new business scheme, a sporting goods partnership for Biff with his brother, which momentarily revives Willy's buried dream, and the backing for which is to be solicited from a former employer of Biff's; and, the last way out in every sense, the one way left to Willy to make up to a patient wife whom the exigencies of his salesman's life have forced him to betray in every sense: the suicide by which he will be able, through his insurance, to provide security for her last years.

The first alternative is quickly

disposed of by the callous heir of the business to which Willy has given forty years of his life. Too insensitive to stop playing with a new gadget, he pretends to demonstrate it to Willy while finding the words with which to fire him —his gracious way of providing Willy the vacation he needs. The second alternative ends in a still more dreadful debacle. For the final alternative he receives permission during a hallucinatory dialogue from the memory image of his brother Ben, who has become Willy's incarnation of success— Ben who struck it rich in the African diamond mines. "It's a good deal," says Ben, approving the $20,000 suicide, Willy's one way of getting round the system, success through self-destruction. And we hear him roaring off in the death car.

WHAT makes Miller's dramatization of this typical enough tragedy so important an event in the American theatre? It is important, first of all, as social criticism. Miller has taken as his chief character a symbolic figure of American life, the salesman. His is the profession that makes all business kin and that more, perhaps, than any other, symbolizes capitalist values—the life-denying values of a society in which every act is, to some degree, thought of as a business transaction so that a preacher can be said to "sell God," literature can be so analyzed (as I have seen it done under the joint auspices of a university and a big advertising agency) that Shakespeare is equated with a super-salesman; and in which, finally, even a lover can be seen as "selling himself" to his beloved.

And what symbol does Willy, himself a symbol, live by? That of his successful (but dead) brother Ben, the man who "went into the jungle at the age of nineteen and when he came out at twenty-five, he was rich." The jungle and the dubious years in it of which no one may speak except that he came out of it rich! And how did he win his success? All that Willy's memory can provide is the brief wrestle Ben had with his athlete nephew at their first meeting when Ben threw the boy by a trick, admonishing him: "Never fight fair with a stranger!" What a judgment of capitalist society is summed up in Willy and Ben— its failure and its success!

Basically Willy's tragedy is one of frustration, the frustration of a man struggling not so much for success as for human dignity in the terms in which it is defined in our society. And part of the extraordinary power of the play, which leaves its audiences sobbing as no play on Broadway within my memory has done, is that this frustration is universal. Miller has touched a palpitant, suffering area of life in which capitalism has affronted man's inner dignity and has disappointed his inner hopes. It is a point of universal self-identification seldom achieved in

the theatre at a level so deep and in an area so real.

In expressing this frustration which goes so deep and is so universal, Miller has turned from the naturalistic method he used effectively in *All My Sons,* to a carefully controlled yet remarkably bold use of symbolist and expressionist techniques. We are so used to thinking of techniques merely in their stylized forms that Miller's technical accomplishments have, so far, been overlooked by the critics, though I believe they will come around to it in later summations and revaluations.

For example, we are so used to thinking of symbolic characters as rigid figures all in black or in otherwise unrealistic costuming, making angular gestures and enunciating cryptic rhetoric that, at first glance, Miller's carefully unobtrusive symbolism actually escapes attention. And we are so used to the expressionist treatment of memory and the sub-conscious processes through the physical flashback and the *Strange Interlude* aside that Miller's fluid interpenetration of remembered, with current action, is hardly thought of as a technique at all. It occurs so fluidly and so naturally.

Because of this effectiveness of his methods, so effective as to escape notice, Miller's technical advances are likely to have a considerable influence on American playwriting. They are, perhaps, the first successful application of ideas that have waited for employment in the mental corridors of the theatre for a generation.

In a sense every character in *Death of a Salesman* is symbolic; but the corollary must also be recognized that every one of its symbolic figures is a real character. Thus Willy's line of merchandise is not given and he is stripped down in other ways so that he can be effective as a generalized figure, as a symbol, as are also the two sons; but, on the other hand, the most obviously symbolic figure, Willy's brother Ben, who appears in Willy's mumbling day dreams to an accompaniment of flute music, is a real character; he is dressed, he behaves, he speaks as a smug, successful speculator might be expected to.

The value of this symbolism, which never overbears the realism, is that it adds a dimension that dramatists have groped for and very few have reached. It brings to the stage horizons of dream and despair that are among the most difficult of the realities of life for the artist to encompass.

In other ways it gives an enhanced and magnified sense of reality. The play's extraordinary use of memory images somehow brings the spaciousness of a whole lifetime into a dramatic action whose formal time span is a night and a day. In scenes such as the invocation of the archetypal, eighty-year-old salesman who died "in harness" in a Pullman car, ordinarily inaccessible ranges of feeling and suffering are realized.

I am aware of other points of view on the play, particularly on the question of its effectiveness and significance as social commentary, and I welcome their expression. *Death of a Salesman* will be a theme for discussion in the theatre for a long time.

The production in *Death of a Salesman* could hardly be bettered. Elia Kazan's direction is here at its most sensitive. His old skill in the pacing and in particular, the defining of scenes through lighting, reaches the point of genius. Mielziner's setting with house walls that dissolve and solidify at need, is quite perfect for its purpose.

The acting could hardly be overpraised. Lee Cobb's performance in the part of the salesman is as real an embodiment as I can remember seeing; and he adds to the dialogue provided by Miller a truly wonderful expressiveness of gesture.

Mildred Dunnock as the wife acts with a sort of infallible sensitiveness; and Arthur Kennedy is deeply convincing in the uneasy role of the disappointing son. Of the remaining performances one can say that not only are they done with great skill but they have the added value of fine ensemble acting.

(*Clifford Odets' new play* The Big Knife *did not open in time to be reviewed in this issue; it will be reviewed next month.*)

Another Viewpoint

by SAMUEL SILLEN

ARTHUR MILLER'S exciting first play, *The Man Who Had All The Luck,* lasted only a few nights on Broadway. It was stupidly flogged by the same newspaper reviewers who ransacked the lexicon of praise for *Death of a Salesman.* The fact that their fateful thumbs are now up, where they belong, instead of down does not mean they have ripened in judgment. Nor does their virtually unanimous pleasure that "Mr. Miller does not blame the system" (Brooks Atkinson) mean the play is as socially innocuous as they make it out to be. But I do believe that while, on the one hand, the critics were compelled by the artistic power of the play to acknowledge its stature, they were aided, on the other hand, in sidestepping its implications by shortcomings in the drama itself.

I want to note here some of the problems it raises in my mind. The reader, I hope, will assume from the outset my own positive appreciation of the play, which I found very moving, technically resourceful, rich in the idiom of plain Americans. The play does embody a criticism of the social order which bred false values in Willy Loman, squeezed the juice out of the man and tossed away the rind. Where, then, does it falter?

The answer may best be approached through the climactic scene of the Boston hotel-room where Biff Loman discovers his father with a half-robed pickup. The scene, coming toward the end of the play, is again and again anticipated as the key to the rupture in the central relation between Willy Loman and his son. Much earlier in the play Biff had said, in answer to his mother's question as to why Willy threw him out of the house: "Because I know he's a fake and he doesn't like anybody around who knows!" By the time we reach the flashback Boston scene we know it will project the turning point in Biff's and therefore Willy's life. What made Biff at seventeen suddenly reject the father he had adored; what precipitated Willy's tragic decline over a fifteen-year period? "What happened in Boston, Willy?" the young man next door insistently asks.

What happened, as Biff had already suggested to his mother, was that the falsehood of Willy's life was revealed to the son. In the scene Biff cries out: "You fake! You phony little fake! You fake!" Now the playwright's point is not, of course, that Willy is a fake in the conventional sense, but rather that he has lived by self-deception. One postulate of the play is that Willy, by accepting the false values of bourgeois society, has become a trapped man, like so many other petty-bourgeois who live by the ideals of Dale Carnegie.

The internal logic of this postulate calls for a revelatory scene in which the relation between Willy's illusion and the fakery of his milieu is heightened by Biff's awareness. We anticipate a scene that knits the threads of all our previous experience in the play. Instead, Miller introduces a new element as the crux: that is, Biff's shock at the discovery of his father's infidelity to his mother.

The traumatic impact of this discovery, basically altering the human relationships of the play, is not soundly motivated, and in fact goes against the grain of our previous knowledge of Willy and Biff. Willy had not especially put up a façade of morality. In fact, he had encouraged Biff in a casual attitude toward girls, and Biff is certainly not presented as a young man whose whole life can be rechanneled through such a discovery. Unlike the play as a whole,

the scene struck me as remarkably contrived and hollow.

Its significance goes deeper, however. It has the effect of shuttling the play on to a new rail heading away from the social postulate. The scene, instead of confronting the audience with insight into the web of personal and social relations—the interrelated fraud—opens the way to the widely held interpretation that this is the tragedy of an individual alone—"the inner frailties and shortcomings of the individual." (John Mason Brown.) The drama edges away from its own challenges. The resulting loss is inseparably artistic and social.

In retracing the play one can see how forced a value Miller has placed on the scene—for example at the opening of Act II, where Willy orders his wife Linda to stop mending a silk stocking (since he gave stockings away to the Boston woman), or in Act I, where Linda in quite a different connection mentions a woman and Biff exclaims with a start: "What woman?" For a play with quite a different burden of potential meaning, Miller has astonishingly underlined an episode that will not prove to be overwhelming.

Not altogether unrelated is a second weakness, the portrayal of the family next door. Willy's neighbor Charley is a man who has in fact achieved the conventional success that Willy envies. My point here is not at all that the introduction of a "successful" middle-class type is inappropriate; the existence of this type in real life is as incontrovertible as the existence of the Willy Lomans. But I wonder if Miller has successfully woven Charley and his son Bernard into this play. I wonder if his portrait has not also served to cushion the blow of the play rather than to sharpen it.

Charley is resentfully envied by Willy even though his life is not enviable. "My salvation is that I never took any interest in anything," says Charley. The kind, conventional man next door has been alternately described as a neuter and as a dead man. Yet it is he who in the requiem over Willy's grave pronounces a key verdict on his friend's life: "Nobody dast blame this man. A salesman is got to dream, boy. It comes with the territory."

What appeared at times to be the ironic juxtaposition of the two personalities, one a "failure," the other a "success," surrenders to a blurred benevolence that moves the audience away from the meaning of the play. And this is reinforced by Charley's son Bernard, who studies hard and ends up as a lawyer arguing a case before the Supreme Court. Here again the problem is not that of a conventional success, but the conventional use that is made of it. Bernard has studied his lessons and made good. He is the counter-

art to Biff's rootlessness, this boy who had idolized his friend Biff but followed the well-grooved trail. He is an incarnation of one pattern of middle-class virtue. For Willy symbolizes the dream of success through "winning people," Bernard symbolizes an equally middle-class dream of success through dutiful plugging.

Where illusions seem to be reflected through one family, they are built up through another. And while of course neither Charley nor Bernard has anything but a minor impact on the audience, they are escape valves for the pressure of social criticism at the same time that they do not serve to heighten the tragedy. They, too, serve to confuse the relation of the individual and social components of the tragedy.

Throughout the play there is a valid and healthy insistence on knowing oneself, culminating in Biff's cry to Willy: "No, you're going to hear the truth—what you are and what I am!" Yet I would raise this final question. Has Miller given comfort to another middle-class illusion—the opposite side of the coin represented by Willy—the fear of over-reaching oneself, of striving beyond one's own "nature"?

Clinically, Willy could achieve health only by the recognition of his limitations, and he must indeed as Biff says burn up his phony dreams. But here the social postulate of the play demands a con-

sciousness that the dream is no an individual failing; it is not i rebellion against the illusion bu the source of the illusion, socia relations, that final health can b achieved.

Here, of course, Miller is limite by the fact that he is dealing wit middle-class characters who can not within the premises of th play achieve such understanding And certainly it would have bee a mistake to insert a character o a conversion of consciousness in organic to the play. But to me at least, there is absent an over tone that carries with sufficien force, and I think it is significan that in the requiem, which is a sor of chorus commenting on the trag edy, there is no extension of the play's action itself.

THESE views on the shortcom ings of the play help explain t me why it is that the critics ca go away celebrating the "non-so cial" character of the work. There are sufficient ambiguities in the thinking of the play to afford a diversity of interpretations in the light of the prejudices with which people come to it. I think it will be fruitful to discuss this prob lem. Rare indeed is the Ameri can play that offers so much food for thought. I want here to repeat that I have not attempted to cover the positive achievements of the play described by Isidor Schneider, with whom I join in applauding this outstanding drama.