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lasses & MAINSTREAM

this Issue:

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om GIL GREEN

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J. K., *Newark, N. J.*

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The Editors are especially pleased to publish the articles by Gil Green and Virginia Gardner this month which marks the Thirtieth Anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party, U.S.A.

COVER: Children of Mexican migratory workers in Texas, photographed by Ernest Paget.

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An Aesopian Letter from GIL GREEN

DEAR LLOYD:

Thanks ever so much for your letter. Henry, Gus and I enjoyed it. But pray, why did you refer to us by our first names? Was it carelessness or bravado? Certainly you must be aware that times have changed radically. What may have been correct and proper in the age of B.M. (Before McGohey), is entirely improper now. Today any mention of people by their first names can lead to dire consequences—the charge of participating in a conspiracy.

Don't laugh. Just follow our trial and you will see what I mean. Why just the other day a witness on the stand had the temerity to refer to Gus Hall, whom he knows intimately, by his first name. Medina immediately screwed on his special cross-examination look and asked the witness, "Do you mean to say you call him Gus?" And when the witness answered "Yes," the Judge turned on his own inimitable I-knew-they-were-guilty-all-along expression.

Nor does it make any difference that you've known me for twenty years—or that we have always called each other by our first names. In fact, the only reason this letter does not begin with a "My dear Mr. Brown" salutation is that your carelessness has already fully exposed our clandestine relationship. Hence, the damage has been done. A brand new file bearing your name has been added to the forest of files in the Washington headquarters of the G-Men. This file is located in a special ultra-secret section marked "Extra-Dangerous Conspirators, or Men Who Are Known By Their First Names." (By the way, Lloyd, what in the deuce does the G in G-Men stand for? I've tried everything, but the only word I can think of is Gestapo. I know it can't be that—or can it?)

As I write this, I recall another instance of political naiveté on

your part. Some months ago, just as the trial began, an article of yours appeared in *Masses & Mainstream* mentioning that you first met me at a school organized by the Young Communist League. Tut, tut, Lloyd, how could you? Don't you know that the word school has become a naughty word and strictly *verboten?* If Goering reacted violently to the word culture, his imitators here are most allergic to the word school. And when that word is preceded by the adjective Marxist, they either burst a blood-vessel or go batty *à la* Forrestal. Yes, indeed, Lloyd, mentioning schools was a serious *faux pas* on your part. But enough of this criticism.

It is now exactly three haircuts and four days since my American way of life was abruptly and arbitrarily changed. The reason? I simply expressed my amazement and chagrin when the court ruled out of evidence a particularly germane article. There was nothing contemptuous in what I said, or in how I said it, but apparently His Honor had a guilty conscience. Subsequently, about ten days later, His Majesty—I mean His Honor—saw the light and permitted the self-same article into evidence. One would have assumed that once the article was let in, I would have been let out. But that did not happen. So at this point we're both in—the article in the court record and I in safe-keeping.

MY NEW status has not only changed my way of life, it has also changed my thinking. I've begun to realize that we Marxists are far too materialistic in our outlook. Before my recent experience I used to pooh-pooh men like Stuart Chase who insisted that much of the strife and struggles of our modern world are not to be traced to inherent and irreconcilable contradictions, but to what he so aptly and brilliantly termed "the tyranny of words." I now know better. I can see more clearly that if Henry Ford's workers hate his guts, this cannot be ascribed to such Marxist concepts as "exploitation" or "the class struggle," but to something far simpler. It's because Ford is constantly characterized as a "capitalist," "monopolist," "tycoon" or "boss." These words all have an unhealthy connotation that can only lead to hatred, antagonism and strife. Don't you see, if there were no such words as "monopoly" or "trust," how could anyone be "anti-monopoly" or "anti-trust"?

Perhaps you would like to know how I came to this realization. Let me start from the beginning. As you recall, neither Winston, Hall nor

I was sentenced by His Honor. We were just "remanded." Now at first we thought it was the same thing. But that's only because we underestimated the science of semantics.

To be remanded is quite different from being sentenced. A sentence follows a conviction and a conviction is bad because then you're a convict and when you get out you're an ex-con. However, when you're remanded, you're not convicted, you're only recommitted into custody. So you see there is a tremendous difference between the two and we daily thank our lucky stars that we were remanded and not sentenced.

There are moments after curfew rings and the lights go out at 10:00 P.M., when I lie and ponder this matter. True enough, remand is a much more pleasant word. But had I been sentenced, would I be anywhere else than where I am? And the answer is, yes. Had we been sentenced for contempt we would have gotten thirty days as did Johnny Gates and thus been out of here by now. But then again, who wants to be like John Gates? He was sentenced. He's an ex-con. While we're only remanded.

A change of words can make a world of difference. Let us take the word jail. An ugly word. And the word prison, too. No wonder men object to being taken from their families and friends to be housed in places bearing such names. Words like jail and prison are definitely not conducive to making people feel happy and content. They're not like the word home, for example. And so, presto, we do not stay in a jail, but in a home—a Federal Detention Home. See the difference? —the gentility of it? Now it truly can be said that "Stone walls do not a prison make"—but a Federal Detention Home!

Recognizing the solace to be found in a mere change of words, I tried to be helpful. I decided to refer to the jail—pardon the nasty word—as the Exclusive West Street Men's Club. I thought this more fitting. After all, what kind of a home is it without either a woman or a kid?

But I must admit that this effort on my part has not been too successful. In the first place the men here are very backward—they say that this onion by any other name would smell the same. And in the second place, let me confess, that try as I will I'm compelled to agree with them.

This new-words-for-old movement affects everything. The *Daily*

Worker refers to us as "prisoners." But this is just another Communist exaggeration. Prisoners? Perish the thought! There are no prisoners here—only inmates. And what a difference in morale this makes. Or when the *Daily Worker* says that we travel to and from court each day wearing handcuffs, that too is inaccurate. They're not handcuffs—just stainless steel bracelets.

And so a semantic revolution is taking place that may in the long run augur of greater significance than a social revolution. Why change things, when you can more easily change words?

NO, LLOYD, I'm not going stir-crazy. What then is all this nonsense about? Simply this. If there is anything that has nauseated me during the course of this lengthy trial, it is the pervading official court atmosphere of two-faced sanctimonious hypocrisy, where words are used to conceal meaning or to convey the opposite of what is meant.

When the Judge for example says to the Defense Counsel, "All right, I will hear you," it usually means, "Talk away for all I care, it will not make any difference anyway."

I'm thinking of such phrases as: "These defendants are cloaked with a presumption of innocence throughout the course of the trial," which everyone in the courtroom knows to mean the exact opposite.

Or, "The burden of proof is on the prosecution. It must prove the guilt of the defendants beyond a reasonable doubt." But is there a single person at Foley Square who believes this to be the case? In our trial the burden of proof is on the defense as His Honor one day inadvertently blurted out.

Or, when the court says, "I am giving the defendants a fair trial," this only means, "I am giving the defendants as fair a trial as I think they deserve."

Or, when the Judge says, "How many times must I repeat that a political party and political doctrine are not on trial, only these eleven defendants," he and everyone else concerned knows that the *only* reason the defendants are on trial is because they are the leaders of a working-class political party with its own political doctrine.

Or, when His Honor meets acquaintances or sees delegations, he invariably puts on an aggrieved martyred look and says, "Oh, you'll never know what I've been going through! But I intend to survive it!"

Imagine the sham and hypocrisy involved! What he's been going

through (!). Is he in the prisoner's dock? Are his liberty and rights in jeopardy? Is he a victim of this heresy trial? Is his political party in danger of being outlawed? And yet this pious humbug dares to talk about what he's going through!

"But I intend to survive it," says he, as if there were any doubt on that score, or as if someone was trying to prevent this. Of course, he'll survive it. Why shouldn't he? He wouldn't give this trial up for anything. He glories in it. Overnight he has achieved "fame." He has become the darling of every reactionary force in the country. A few reactionary newspapers have even had the effrontery to mention his name in connection with the vacancy in the Supreme Court.

Survive the ordeal! What ordeal? He loves it.

Of course, not everything is as he would like it. There are unpleasant and embarrassing moments. The defendants and their attorneys are rude and uncouth rascals. They have a most annoying way of constantly talking about democratic rights. They persist in accusing their accusers. Why can't they be good boys and submit quietly and gracefully to this legal raping? And the fact that they do not, is this not sufficient proof that they are "deliberately and wilfully obstructing the administration of justice"?

It is no accident that it is Medina, the Judge, and not McGohey, the Prosecutor, who has become the central "hero" of the trial for the reactionary press, including the Hearst papers. And yet, it is McGohey who represents in the courtroom the direct and open assault of reaction against the Communist Party.

Why then is not McGohey the main "hero" of these forces? Because in the present stage of reaction in the United States a McGohey is completely helpless without a Medina. A famed Cuban jurist, after visiting the courtroom at Foley Square, aptly observed that in this trial there were two prosecutors but no judge. But the important thing to note is that not even a dozen prosecutors would suffice if there were not one wearing the "fair," "objective" and "impartial" robes of a judge.

That is why the reactionaries in and out of Congress were so incensed against Judge Kaufman of the Hiss trial. They sought to impeach him because his rulings did not guarantee a conviction. For them a judge's role is to pretend to be impartial, to put on an act of being fair, while in effect being the opposite. In other words, their model of a judge is Medina.

Of course, Medina has no easy task. To pretend to be unbiased and fair and at the same time to *guarantee* a conviction in a frame-up as clumsy and monstrous as this one, is a truly Machiavellian task. And that is why the reactionaries everywhere sympathize with him and publicly defend him as a paragon of patience and virtue. And that is also why His Honor is most sensitive of all to criticism of his judicial conduct, especially public criticism. For if the public ever gets to realize that the black robe of judicial purity is only worn to conceal the soiled clothes of prejudice, this trial will stand exposed for the ghastly mockery of justice that it is.

A trial such as ours can only be gotten away with so long as the vast majority of the people still think that we're at least getting a fair trial and that justice will be done. The very length of the trial itself is used as an argument to "prove" that in the United States even Communists can get a fair trial and that therefore the Constitution and its Bill of Rights are still sacred, inviolable documents, nowise threatened by reaction. But what has a few months more or less got to do with it? Had the trial lasted but a single day, and the indictment thrown out on that day, that would have truly constituted the fairest trial of all!

THE important thing to realize is that Medina is more than a judge in a particular trial. He has become a symbol of the present stage of reaction in this country. This is a stage in which open, bald-faced pro-fascist reaction cannot hope to be successful in any direct appeal to the people. The people are opposed to witch-hunts, spy-scares and heresy trials. They want civil rights, democracy, peace and economic security. Reactionary anti-democratic attacks can be gotten away with only when dressed up in democratic garb. To tear off the mask of two-faced hypocritical demagogy, whether of a Medina or a Truman, is the key to exposing and blocking the path of growing reaction in the United States.

I had to get this out of my system, Lloyd. I'm sorry you had to be the victim. My best regards to Lily and my love to your two beautiful daughters. Regards from Henry and Gus.

Until we meet again,

GIL


ON SAFARI
WITH
HARARI
SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE
-A- CONNECTICUT YANKEE
"THE NATION"
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
R. I. P.
"UNWORTHY" AMERICAN MOTHER-HOOD

PSYCHOANALYSIS:

A Reactionary Ideology

This article is the collective work of eight psychiatrists who are members of the Communist Party of France. Their names and professional identification appear at the end of the article, which was originally published in the June, 1949, issue of La Nouvelle Critique, *a Marxist monthly.*

In making this article available to American readers, we hope to stimulate a discussion of the serious ideological issues which it raises.—THE EDITORS.

PSYCHOANALYSIS in 1949, taken as a whole, appears first of all as an ideology which is being spread among the broadest social strata by means of the most varied propaganda techniques.

A certain type of press and cinema cultivates the "snob-appeal" of psychoanalysis. The analytic technique has been tried out by the ruling class—to its advantage—in social conflicts. In the United States no secret is made of the fact that to the psychoanalyst or psychotherapist using the methods of analysis is attributed the magic power to characterize as sick the behavior of human beings who aim at changing the social order. Congresses of technicians study problems which belong to the field of politics: at London in 1948 the problem of "world citizenship" was linked to that of aggression and guilt. Solutions were oriented toward proposals to the World Health Organization that it conduct a study of the "mental health of peoples" —the conflicts in the modern world having been presented in terms of pathology.

The political orientation represented by these tendencies has aroused rather widespread opposition in psychiatric circles, in the name of a scientific attitude which refuses to be swerved from its true mission or to allow itself to be perverted. This opposition had widespread repercussions at the London Congress, but it was stifled.

This systematic exploitation of psychoanalysis, its direct interventions in a field where the class struggle is most in evidence, and the substantial financial support which it enjoys, openly place the problem in the realm of politics. The forces of peace and progress are bound to be disturbed at such a situation. They feel it necessary to ascertain to what extent there has developed—under the cloak of allegedly scientific activity—an ideology implying more or less admitted aims of social conservatism or regression; and, in this way, to unmask the contribution—deliberate or not—made by these devious methods to the war danger and to class oppression.

In this situation we who in our scientific and professional life are brought in constant contact with the problems raised by psychoanalysis and who are likewise engaged in the struggle for man's liberation have felt it our duty to bring to a head "the question of psychoanalysis."

"PURE" SCIENCE AND TRUE SCIENCE

FIRST of all, we should like to make clear the orientation and framework of this study.

It is not a question of trying here to draw up a balance sheet of the positive achievements with which Freud and his successors have aided our techniques and our knowledge of man. Each one of us has demonstrated the practical value he attaches to these achievements. And if we insist on this point—which in our eyes is superfluous—it is because we know that an emotional attitude opposing our philosophical point of view and the practical activity flowing from it seeks constantly to accuse us of a sectarian position. An ideology which "condemns" scientific facts is not ours. We ask our critics to remember this once and for all and to see whether, in attributing these intentions to us, they are not substituting their own tendencies for the idea they form of us.

We must emphasize that the object of what follows lies less in the discussion of a positive or negative contribution by psychoanalysis than in the criticism of its ideology by an effort at methodical research which will reveal the facts in a new light, in order to integrate them into a broader, strictly scientific framework.

We assert that to us the notion of "pure science" is really an intel-

lectual fraud. We believe that a problem such as the one we are undertaking to deal with here cannot be clearly posed unless this point of view itself is clarified. To us *true* science is radically opposed to this usual notion of "purity." The mind which calls itself scientific proves itself to be non-scientific to the extent that it pretends to ignore its dependence on the entire real world with its beliefs and its illusions. More seriously still, to the extent that it refuses to render an accounting to all society. The refusal, for example, to discuss the total implications of positions which claim to be "objective" because they *call themselves* scientific constitutes, in fact, a political stand. We protest here, in the name of the scientific spirit, against the attitudes that are so current today, according to which an activity, a discipline, or a doctrine arrogates to itself the right to reject social criticism because of the simple fact that it calls itself "scientific." It may be "bourgeois science," if you wish, but not science.

As for us, we mean to bring *useful* testimony to all men of good faith who consider that this world is badly made, that social injustice prevails, and that the dangers of war hang heavily over us all. We mean to give weapons to those who fight for peace and freedom. To that end, we declare publicly that everything which our professional skill and researches enable us to think and say should be made available to the men to whom we owe them, for the purpose of submitting these views to their criticism. As opposed to those who claim to give humanity, from the heights of their narrow learning, good rules to achieve happiness as conceived in the framework of their conceptions of a good society, we put forward the conception that men make their own happiness with teachings born of their struggles against the actual instruments of their oppression. We mean to assert no truth which men cannot themselves check; no opinion which they are unable to judge. In the present instance, we mean above all to help them to see how an attempt is being made to deceive them; how in our field too the ideology of the ruling class tries to lull the protests of the oppressed class.

Appealing finally to those who work in the same general field as ourselves, to our psychiatrist colleagues and technicians in the social sciences, we ask them to consider our present step with genuine objectivity. The road we have taken, the pledges we have given,

the dangers of which we have become conscious, the determination we are showing in shedding a full light on the results of our self-criticism seem to us—without immodesty—to have some value as an example. While we should like to help everyone by denouncing all forms of obscurantism, we should like specifically for those active in our special field to work toward clarifying a new orientation. If the warnings we are sounding seem valid, if the orientations we propose seem fertile, then the merit of a doctrine which is not founded on illusions but only on the real movements of the real world must be recognized; so must be recognized our solidarity with those who put this doctrine into practice. This fact is basic for us: our struggle for the liberation of the human beings we treat, which in certain clinical aspects means reducing their freedom, can only in our opinion achieve its full effect in the struggle for the freedom of all people.

THE CLASS CONTENT OF PSYCHOANALYSIS

SOME of us, together with a great number of non-Marxist psychiatrists and psychologists, thought at first that a criticism of psychoanalysis would have to lead to a distinction between certain data of psychoanalysis considered valid and what is usually called its "metapsychology"; or, with Dalbiez, between the psychoanalytic method and the Freudian doctrine. That, in general terms, was the position taken in the resolution of the "rationalist psychiatrists" drawn up on the occasion of the London Congress.

Nevertheless, if certain *facts* brought out by psychoanalysis—provided that they are verified by other scientific disciplines—seem to us capable of being integrated into psychological science, we have become convinced, as a result of our self-criticism, that the *ensemble* of psychoanalytic theories is tainted by what we may call a "mystifying principle."

Whatever some psychoanalysts who sincerely believe in the disinterestedness of what they call their science may think, it is not possible to dissociate psychoanalysis from the political use made of it, though some are ready to repudiate this by terming it a falsification. In this connection, Freud's own position should be considered: "As a psychology of the depths, a theory of the psychic unconscious,

it [i.e., psychoanalysis] may become indispensable to every science dealing with *human civilization and its great institutions such as art, religion, and social order.*" (Freud: *Psychoanalysis and Medicine,* p. 235, French ed. *Italics ours.*)

In fact, the development of psychoanalysis, including the content of its theory and technique, is so intimately bound up with the history of social struggles that this position cannot be repudiated.

1. Psychoanalysis was born in Vienna, in a period and in the framework of a society demonstrating in exemplary fashion the decadence of the bourgeois patriarchal family, in which the "sexual taboo" went hand in hand with a crisis in sexual morality. Thus from the outset Freud took over and developed the theme of sexual liberation—the demand of an important section of the bourgeoisie of that period. In this sense, the birth of psychoanalysis is very specifically linked with the needs of a social class.

2. The history and development of the psychoanalytic movement have further strengthened these connections. Thus at the present time its favorite zone of extension is in the Anglo-Saxon countries.

3. The evolution in time of the central themes of the psychoanalytic ideology is also characteristic.

The revolutionary appearance of the theme of *sexual liberation,* which was put forward at the beginnings of psychoanalysis, has given way to themes of *guilt,* linked with the growing importance of the notion of the "super-ego." These notions are defined in relationship to the analytic system itself; or with reference to a social ideal which is only the reflection of the social structure of the moment, arbitrarily chosen as a norm. Thus, religious ideology has been able to find room for psychoanalysis; priests have called themselves psychoanalysts; and psychoanalysts have collaborated on dogmatic religious magazines. In a word, social conservatism has here found an ideological weapon.

With social struggles sharpening, the theme of *aggression* has come to the fore. In the present state of affairs, it is the central theme with which all the others are linked. The elimination of aggression or its utilization for the defense of the social order—as the case may be—is today proposed as a panacea for the solution of the malaise of civilization, for the problem of "world citizenship," and for the problem of peace—even at the cost of police or military methods against those whose "aggressivity" refuses to diminish. Aggression

is thus presented on the ideological and political level as an evil when it threatens the existing order and as a good when it buttresses that order. So the present orientation of psychoanalysis is such that it becomes in fact—on the individual level—a technique for adaptation to bourgeois society; and on the social level, a weapon of ideological preparation for a new world war against the forces of democracy and peace. Thus the present extension and popularization of psychoanalysis develop as a crisis phenomenon proportionate to the decay of the social system from which it was born.

4. It is nevertheless clear that, in the face of the basic changes demanded by the broad masses, this ideological weapon would be blunted if it did not appear and claim to be revolutionary, if it did not claim to be the bearer of a democratic—even a socialist—future. "We are in the presence of two conceptions of man's liberation: Marxism and psychoanalysis," Henri de Man has written. In 1949 the importance of the role of the Social-Democrats, especially of certain elements in the British Labor Party, in this political-analytical offensive lends it its full significance.

5. What, in 1949, is the practice of psychoanalysis? A tiny minority of sick persons can benefit from technically effective cures, a minority delimited by its financial means. Money—financial sacrifice—is constantly presented as necessary to the cure, thus further aggravating the class character of the technique itself. The situation becomes truly scandalous when one realizes the real and literally lamentable conditions in which patients of proletarian origin are now being treated.

6. This crisis phenomenon of capitalism may be found even in the recruiting of psychoanalysts.

The psychiatrist-to-be feels the malaise which the sharpening of the class struggle creates in the middle class and is forced to make a choice. He questions himself anxiously about the problem of being in the world. He notes that the body of doctrine offered by classical psychiatry is splitting wide open in every direction and does not correspond to the facts that are now known. Finally, he finds himself at grips with innumerable material difficulties—as a government functionary left to himself in some provincial institution, he is badly paid in relationship to the seriousness of his studies.

Psychoanalytic theory and practice present him with a way out

on the personal level; they offer an explanation for his uneasiness, a conception of the world, a general theory of the pathological facts, and especially congenial conditions in which to practice his profession.

Hence the present admiration of young psychiatrists for psychoanalysis reflects the difficulties corresponding to the political, ideological, and economic aspects of the general crisis of the middle class.

Thus it clearly appears that the birth, development and present spread of psychoanalysis are linked with the sharpening of class conflict. Psychoanalysis extends wherever the ruling class has to try to paralyze the efforts of the rising class and to calm the uneasiness of social strata beset by a choice which they cannot avoid. The fact that the evolution of the basic themes of psychoanalytic ideology is linked with its origins and with social evolution poses the question: To what extent is this class content expressed in the heart of the theory itself?

A MYSTIFYING DOCTRINE

CLASSIC psychoanalysis is based theoretically on three fundamental concepts: the unconscious, instincts, and complexes.

The myth of an unconscious "in itself," existing as a real thing, has been too much criticized for us to belabor the point. Likewise, the materiality of instincts has been adequately refuted. The progress of biology is marked by constant conquests in the field of instincts to the advantage of behavioral learning. Today it is clear that what is called "instincts" corresponds in reality to behavior depending as much on the organism's development as on the conditions of its environment. All those who cling to the notion of "instinct" do so in relationship to energism. Here, despite certain protests by Freud, we see the kinship of psychoanalysis with modern mystical philosophies—whether they are based on the finger of God, the will to power, the *hormé* (impulse), or the *élan vital.* Here it is a question of the reification and—to put it bluntly—of the mystification of the dynamic character of vital processes, which is the essence of every idealist philosophy. There is no other way of characterizing this dynamism in scientific terms than in the statement by Engels: "Life is the mode of existence of albuminous substances." It is a mode of existence and not a property apart; it is living matter and not life in matter.

The same criticisms may be made of the theory of complexes which is indissolubly linked with that of the instincts. A single example is enough to show the pseudo-transcendence of the complexes. Thus today we know that the Oedipus complex is neither universal nor constant: the work of Malinowski, showing its absence in Melanesian societies, proves that behaviors related to this complex, when they exist, are linked with the social and historic conditions on which the family structure depends.

In a general way, if certain human behaviors may be characterized as the reproduction of past behaviors, the notion of automatic repetition—fundamental in psychoanalysis—is mythical when it refers to complexes and instincts considered in themselves, hypostatized with regard to the real conditions and the real history determining the behaviors thus indicated.

If we examine the circumstances which generate unconscious conflicts through which the individual and in particular the child lives—circumstances which psychoanalysis attributes to instinctual conflicts —we see that they all result, directly or indirectly, from the myths prevailing in a given society.

This fact is especially obvious in everything concerning sexual life and the taboos surrounding it. It is to the extent that sexual morality is the expression of these taboos, to the extent that it is of religious inspiration, and to the extent that its prohibitions correspond to myths —in a word, *to the extent that it is made mysterious*—that it is held responsible for engendering "sentiments of guilt." Sexual prohibitions which bring about "repression" are not necessary; they are disproportionately enlarged if not totally unmotivated. The complexes they provoke correspond to objectless, fantasy-like conflicts.

Freud's most valid contribution consists in the discovery—behind certain psychopathic manifestations, simultaneously as cause and as content—of fictitious situations profoundly felt by the individual. But just these situations have a characteristic in common: they correspond to the classic definition of the myth: ". . . facts which history does not clarify and containing either a real fact transformed into a religious notion, or the invention of a fact with the aid of an idea." (Littré)

But Marxist criticism has long since shown the origin and significance of myths and the role they play in society. They simultaneously express and conceal the sufferings of society. It is not surprising to

find them in sick people whose illness resides essentially in certain modes of their relationships with other members of the collective. It is neither mere accident nor a basic trait of the human mind that myths and symptoms speak the same language. They are the product of the same concrete situations, transposed from the collective level to that of the individual. Thus a profound analogy is revealed between the mystifying ideology and neuroses. The latter appear when a class ideology decays, when historic evolution arouses in certain individuals a consciousness which leads them to challenge the magic power of the myth. Neurosis is the emptiness, the frustration, the anguish—both felt and denied—resulting from the disappearance of the myth.

Psychoanalysis cannot perceive this profound significance of neurosis as a moment and an aspect of the class struggle. Constantly discovering myths at the origin of symptoms, it tends, on the contrary, to consider them more and more as their necessary and adequate causes; and finally, to confirm their existence as entities immanent to man.

Lacking a Marxist perspective, psychoanalysis fails to recognize the essential fact that these constitute only *intermediary factors* across which social reality reaches the individual. Far from corresponding to its pretension of constituting a psychology of the depths, it remains a psychology of "appearances," which, borrowing from its own terminology, considers the "manifest content" of its interpretations their "latent content."

If it is true that to the sick person, the child, or the dreamer his images and fantasies may appear as realities, to believe in and cling to these imaginary creations, to pose their reality in themselves and outside the consciousness which imagines them, means by definition to be delirious; it is a mode of alienation in the individual. So long as psychoanalysts persist in these fantasies, so long as they only explain them by concepts which, although they are more general, are no less mythical, they will not be free of delirium. In limiting itself to the world of images taken for reality on the criterion of these images themselves, psychoanalysis comes back to a vast vicious circle. If it has often shown the play and pernicious power of myths, it has not been able to go beyond and escape from the mystifying ideology in which it has shut itself. A psychoanalyst may have confessed this when he said that analysis takes a detour which means in effect "to induce in the subject a guided paranoia."

The least one may say of the analytic approach is that it blocks at the highest point the freedom of ascribing to the facts any causes other than those postulated by psychoanalysis itself. Thus is explained that constant wavering which troubles the most enlightened minds and makes them constantly explain the most general phenomena by obsessions with or longings for the myths of humanity, which have become the fetishes of psychoanalysis and not the objects of rational research . . . and in which the mind is fascinated by its own theoretical creations.

In any event, the analytic technique can only lead the patient to the halfway mark, at the point where he becomes conscious of the myth which weighed on him but not of its profound sources. It only offers him an artificial liberation in an imaginary world. It is really absurd or dishonest, for example, for a doctor who is a convinced Catholic to analyze the guilt-feeling of a patient.

The absence of any distinction between the mystifying ideology which analysis finds beneath the symptoms and a genuine moral and social ideal tends to give the patient a social adaptation, the only criterion of which is "success."

AN IDEALIST CONCEPTION OF THE RELATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

IF OUR first criticism of the psychoanalytic doctrine is thus based on its irrationality, our second deals with the individualism which basically characterizes it.

For it is clear that by clinging to the myth of instincts it cannot leave the individual level. Every doctrine tending to explain the relations of the individual and society on the basis of a conception of the "nature" of the isolated individual immediately falsifies the heart of the problem. Thus psychoanalysis has been led to construct a general theory of men's behavior and a history of civilization. In the words of Georges Politzer: "It tries to explain history by psychology and not psychology by history."

Even more: today, in 1949, it no longer limits itself to interpretations but intervenes directly in the class struggle: social movements are ascribed to the aggressiveness or "resentment" of their leaders, and war to the sado-masochism of certain heads of state. Psychoanalysts of

good faith who deplore this can do nothing about it. This political intervention of psychoanalysis is implied in its doctrine, in the individualism which permeates it.

Remember that if one cannot neglect the role of individuals in a social movement, this role cannot be explained in its concrete historic characteristics by the individual alone. "What depends on the individual is the choice which his 'psychology' will make among the given historic possibilities of a period. Nor can this 'psychology' be separated from the concrete history of humanity. 'Psychological mechanisms' pick out some for the role of heroes and others for the role of cowards; but these 'mechanisms' also have their historic genesis and their social conditions for existence." (Georges Politzer)

When one tracks down psychoanalytic theory to its roots, one finds in fact the consciousness of a solitary individual. In practice this individualism amounts to the negation of every possibility of changing the social system. The individual is helplessly handed over to the established order in the bosom of which he is made to believe in his freedom. As Hesnard says, it is a question of "an individual feeling himself free even in the necessary social constraint."

It seems paradoxical that under these conditions some individuals have seen in psychoanalysis a dialectic conception which may even confirm socialism. Here the argument consists of trying to call the metaphysical opposition of the instincts of life and death a dialectical contradiction. Likewise the problem of the relations of the individual and society are presented in this way. That is the source of the chatter about "the synthesis of Marxism and psychoanalysis."

Such a position implies that the individual is the negation of society and society the negation of the individual. Nevertheless, by clinging to the psychoanalytic myth of the instincts, these writers have not left the level of individualism: in reality, the individual remains in their conception a kind of heterogeneous entity with respect to society, another entity. It is clear that there cannot be dialectic relations between them. This tendency corresponds to a particular form of bourgeois ideology in our time, which seeks to oppose social reality to the psychological demands of individuals. This individualism is a theme of political propaganda, by which it seeks to discredit socialism.

The dialectic movement which one can observe in studying psychic phenomena is, in reality, the individual's development in the course

of his history: various crises of childhood or various stages of development reflecting various periods of biological maturity, as well as transformations in psychological aptitudes and social relations. At each period the new stage is a dialectic overtaking of the former stage, and there is no reason to look for an essential distinction between the biological or social modes of these transformations.

AN ESOTERIC TECHNIQUE

Now it is possible for us to get to the core of the psychoanalytic technique. There we will find the mistakes and dangers already indicated in its theory.

It is clear, for one thing, that the conditions under which the psychoanalyst is initiated into his profession tend to organize within him a *mystifying frame of reference:* that of the instincts and complexes considered as realities "in themselves."

If psychoanalysts finally do consent to discuss their theory, they consider their techniques of psychoanalysis as strictly inviolable, and any blow directed at them as the gravest transgression of their beliefs. That is why they forbid the non-initiated to practice their profession. They approach it by means of this person-to-person situation, which is a specific characteristic of their method and based solely on the analytic system itself.

This system of explanation, reducing the human being to his impulses and their repression, to the persistence and reliving of unconscious past situations, continues to the end. The techniques or cure is dominated by the interpretation given by the analyst to the patient under analysis. There is therefore a permanent risk that the patient may cling to the mystifications contained in the frame of reference, a risk which is especially serious in the concrete conditions under which analysis takes place.

If it was a considerable achievement on Freud's part to have made sexuality an object of study, the mystifying error was immediately introduced when psychoanalysis made of the metaphysical conflict—instinct-repression in the unconscious—the motive force and explanation for human behavior.

Likewise, if it is probable that in stressing the importance of the relations between doctor and patient, and even the methods of transfer,

Freud discovered one of the conditions of all psychotherapy, that by no means justifies his theoretical frame of reference.

Psychoanalysis is also in great part responsible for the fact that psychiatry, and to a certain extent all psychology, have moved away from the study of psychic manifestations considered in relation to social structures. Concentrating attention on the individual processes through which these structures act, it is particularly responsible for the neglect or abandonment of everything that is collective action—in medicine and mental hygiene as well as in child study.

AN ORIENTATION FOR RESEARCH

IN FINISHING this analysis, we will try to map out *an orientation for research* which may further clarify the meaning of what we have written above.

Remember first of all that the basic criticism we have made of psychoanalysis leaves no room for eclecticism.

If Freud and his pupils have had the undeniable merit of having revealed to psychiatrists the importance of certain facts, these take on a new meaning as soon as they are detached from the psychoanalytic doctrine and properly situated in real life.

So it is with the importance attributed to family relations in the forming of personality. Here Freud's achievement above all has been his insistence on the importance of the earliest childhood; but the explanations offered have remained mythological to the extent to which the behavior and development of the child's personality have been explained in terms of instincts and thus detached from the social reality which family life constitutes.

It seems possible to resume the study of child situations and behavior by re-integrating them in this reality. Concretely, it would seem rather easy to find in the specific structure of the patriarchal family and in the parent-child relationships within that family the source of situations which generate aggression. The primary conflicts experienced by the child arise clearly either from the dominance of the father-patriarch or from the various aspects of a basic situation of "possession-frustration" directly inspired by the parental conceptions which resemble in embryo the fetishes by which the parents are themselves victimized. Other disturbances in the emotional development of the

young child to which psychoanalysts have legitimately drawn attention are themselves closely related to the concrete situations which are the expression of the contradictions in capitalist society. Thus, for example, the behavior of frustrated, anxious, "over-protecting" mothers toward their babies only reflects the present situation of numerous women whose social status is going through a serious crisis.

In a more general way, the very type of neurotic family we encounter in our professional practice is by and large identifiable with the bourgeois family as it depicts itself and with its closed and tormented world. In this sense, the decadence of the "paternal imago" to which Lacan has drawn attention constitutes only a superficial and limited aspect of the multiple changes in the bourgeois family, which reveal the crisis in which it finds itself.

Its contradictions and its ideological confusion are especially revealed in its behavior with regard to human beings depending on it: its own children. That is why the same mixture of coaxing and authoritarianism, of yielding and passionate demands, the same inability to propose a valid goal, an ideal, any possibility whatever of being integrated into the collectivity, are always found behind parental attitudes described by psychoanalysts in the history of their patients' neuroses.

These considerations show us the path along which—beyond analysis—a genuine psycho-social study of the etiology of neuroses could be undertaken; and, to some extent, a study of psychoses and the development of a genuine "mental hygiene." This would seek, not the negation of the situations revealed by analysis and mystified by it, but research into factual circumstances and the ideologies that provoke them.

An example of this research, of which we can only state the principle here, might be found in studies on "infantile maladaptation," which is such a burning problem at the present time, and on "family dissociations" with which it is generally linked. An analysis of the real factors (material conditions and myths) in this "dissociation" would prove to be infinitely more fertile than the obscure notion of a kind of "eternal conflict" between the marital pair, to which most authors now seem to have recourse.

Likewise, the importance of so-called transfer-behavior cannot be denied. The concept of transfer-behavior would completely change its meaning the moment the problem of the relations between doctor

and patient was placed on the level of the social conditions of existence. It is likely that psychiatrists who work for government institutions, once they are given the means to treat their patients, will be able to use transfer-behavior for therapeutic ends. In these new conditions, the kind, duration and cost of the cure will appear in an entirely different light. Here then is a new fertile path for research: to place oneself, in order basically to re-assess the problems of transfer, in a social perspective, by a criticism of the analytic experience based on attitudes external to the Freudian doctrine.

But the framework of such knowledge is that of our society; and such research, a few of the aspects of which we have just sketched, cannot be undertaken unless the material possibilities it demands are pooled and followed through by a new social type: "the doctor whom one does not pay." These possibilities are bound up with a radical change in the shameful condition of the mental patients in our society and in the help given them.

It is by the same kind of thinking and the same concrete effort that we will be able practically to treat people who work for a living, and to elaborate non-abstruse psychiatric techniques and "de-mystified" psychological therapies.

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(Translated from the French by Joseph M. Bernstein.)

Summer Idyl, 1949

by MERIDEL LE SUEUR

Every spring the water pours off the land like sorrow from the deforested regions where the tall trees no longer hold moisture in their roots and the suitcase farmers have plowed under more land for bonanza wheat harvests. It is the same this year. The buses detour, the land is eroded, the midwest Chamber of Commerce organizes against the Missouri Valley Authority.

When you start going west it is the most morning morning of the world, the sunlight in front of you, the shouts of morning lying over the green world, the flat wheat and dairy land stretching ahead, the valleys rising and rolling like squalls at sea. There she lies, the earth and her people growing the wheat for which the world hungers. The bus whizzes through Main Street, beginning and ending on the prairie, past the old men on the courthouse steps, the ample mothers and beflowered young girls and the prairie wantons. The sight of the countryside to those who live close to it is as immediate as touch, as love, and pain and time of the past, undulating to Cambrian horizons like tremendous ghosts, the corn hills of the Sioux, totemic communal effigies in the green declivities, our own ghost towns, forgotten villages of our birth become prophecies of a future, fears of your own body, your own hunger projected, your skeleton foretold.

A country can die as a man and woman can. It can become strange as a corpse and full of decay and your mind can dissolve in fear without a sound like a stone dropped in water, sinking. You can all look strange to each other, immersed in fright, immobilized in the hidden flood accumulating and surfacing.

THE river was rising and the bus would be held up. There was that genius of communal warmth which, sadly, in American life is invoked only by disaster, when some kind of reality and love rises like a submerged and magic ship. At the trailer camp a lean man walks back

and forth, sniffing the air, runs his car radio, listening to the river and highway patrols. His face twitches, he cracks his knuckles, his eyes are unfocused as if, as they say in Kansas, he had an eye out east and west for cyclones. "Awful," he says, "Won't get through till morning. Terrible. To be stopped by a river. I'm a self-made man and a river can't stop me. Thought I could beat the river but failed. Held up twenty-four hours. Got to get there tonight. I just made a bet I'd get there."

"Who did you bet with?" I ask.

"With myself," and when I ask him if he has important business at his destination, he says he has no business there and doesn't know a soul and just bet with himself. . . .

I VISIT the tavern in the corn field. Inside there is a great bar with dark cooled air, fragrant with women and liquor. You see these now all over the midwest, in the countryside, with a curtained upstairs and below the corn, tunneled under, gambling rooms with glass and chromium. In this underground labyrinth below the corn roots much money changes hands, and city machines far away are enriched in corruption. The hub of the mineral and agricultural country feeds the Capitalist horse and is not even enriched by its droppings in return.

It is startling to move from the bright sunny afternoon to the smoky dark, reflected in the many mirrors, and mysteriously upon you are invisible eyes as if down the barrel of a gun, asking who you are. As I sat on the bar stool a flash of sympathy passed between me and a blonde girl at one of the tables who was talking to two men. She has a delicate face that suggests frailty if not illness. "Look at me," the older man is saying to her. "My nerves is frayed out. I ain't an old man. I ain't as young as you," he says bitterly to the other, a young man, thin as a grasshopper, with a mouth like one, a sharp slit tongue as his mind leaps lasciviously from one excitement to another, unsavory lusts, appetites, rumors, which make him vicious as a mad locust. "I tell you," the thin man says, leaning across the girl who rears away from him, "It's the Jews. Roosevelt was a Jew. The Communists are Jews. Hitler was OK on the Jews, maybe he went a little too far maybe he didn't."

"I suppose the Poles and the Irish are Jews too," the girl laughs, tossing her delicate head, "Oh the fox is on the town." She looks at me and laughs and shakes her head toward some invisible and ironic god. They both press upon her like vultures—how about it honey how

about a time tonight huh? She says, "I got some big stuff tonight not with the little foxes and you better not let Al see you. They ordered half a dozen blondes and half a dozen brunettes at the big house tonight."

The grasshopper whistles, "Meat order. Say I wish you'd get me in with those big boys. They're gonna stop communism all right. I went to a meeting in K.C., a secret meeting. They aren't sleeping, the big boys. String along with me honey. I'm gonna take them. I'm all jacked up about the future."

She tells him what he can do with his future, and comes over and sits beside me on a stool and I order a drink for her and she tells me she was a school teacher, has a child, sings at night here in the tavern, has a boy friend, Al, who will come to take her to the "Big House," and who is in the big house, O—big gang stuff they pay twenty-five an evening, order so many blondes, so many brunettes when they entertain, got a country estate that would knock your eyes off, old prohibition gangs now own the countryside, bought up her dad's farm too, two of her brothers died in the war and she's glad they're dead. She is interested in writing, if she could write what she knows and somebody would print it, it would be plenty! She says maybe she could take me along as a friend, if Al is willing. After two more drinks and some more badinage with the two salesmen, and some other girls had gathered at one of the tables with make-up kits, a horn outside announced Al and I followed them out.

"A friend of my mother's," she said to Al. "You know I thought while we wait for the act we could talk." He didn't answer, but he didn't say no and she gave me an ironic wink and I got in beside her and the other girls got in back and Al drove like a bat out of hell all the time with a trigger finger touching Bernice's thigh until he let out a howl and she said coldly so my skin prickled, "This pin goes in about four inches to the hilt."

We came to a big sign which said "Farms Incorporated," drove through an iron gate not connected with any fence and up to a mansion set in the woods and Al drove to the rear and we all got out and went through a kitchen crowded with cooks and waiters and mounds of shrimp and chicken and a whole roasted pig on the table and barbecue spits beginning to move. I went with the girls. Most of them worked at other jobs during the day, did this at night "when they could get it." The whole place was sinister and for reasons one could not

name was full of violence and fear. "I hate these people," Bernice said close to me with her curious clairvoyance for what you were thinking. "Pigs, swine," she said. "You don't know. They save us for the stunt."

I could hear laughter from the house. We all sat depressed, some of the girls slept . . . Bernice talked to me as if a river in flood, as if she told me in the small time her whole life. We ate dinner brought in on rolling tables, turkey plates, and the girls ate ravenously. The place was lighted, the voices of men, music came from the front of the house, big shiny cars were parked in a lot to the side, outdoor lights went on over a great swimming pool and Bernice told me to go through the poplars, not be seen by anyone, stand at the end of the pool in a driveway there and Al would pick us both up afterwards.

An invisible orchestra began to play and I stood in amazement. In the middle of the pool a huge lotus opened and inside the five brunettes stood picked out in the roving spots. They were naked and after dancing plunged into the water. There was laughter as one of the guests fully dressed jumped in after them.

I was grabbed from behind and my arms vised to my sides and held and then Al's voice said, "Oh it's mother's friend." "You're pretty strong, Al," I said, "Where did you take your training?" "I been a pretty good fighter," he said, "ain't so bad yet. More money in this stuff." I asked him what stuff was that but he shut up and I said I'd never seen so much food in my life and he said that was nothing this was a small party, I should have seen the fowls frozen with roses and live gold fish and the whole steers cooked in wine. "That's my boss, everything up brown . . . when he gives he gives plenty, thousands of pheasants, frozen shad, I tell you this is something big, bigger than you know, and I'm in on it. I seen checks. I could tell plenty."

"If he's so big why can't you tell me his name?"

"Don't be nosy, mama's friend, it'll come out in time. . . . Here they come."

Into the light, chased by drunken men, ran a flock of naked girls. The light picked them out going in and out in the shadow and sometimes they cried out and the drunken cries of the men mingled with the music. Then I saw that the drunken men had sling shots and pockets full of stones and they stopped and aimed at the running girls. Some circled back, fell to the ground under the hunters. The lights played in long streamers on this incredible scene. I saw Bernice running towards us, circling wide into the shadow of the tall trees. She

ran swift with that strange tenacious energy in her now alive to escape. Al got a cloak and waited to fling it around her and a voice, cracked and strange, called like a monstrous baby—"Honey honey let me find you." It was worse than some bestiality, that high feminine voice, and then the fat blind drunk face pierced by light, the queer sling shot in his hand. Bernice shivered in the cloak and I felt ashamed of my own fear seeing that she was laughing and her teeth shaking, and that she did not hold fear but the instinct and health of the history and the country from which she came, and lived, and slowly died.

WE RAN to the car, Al threw it in gear and tore out with that violent way in which he drove, and we flew through the countryside into the breasted hills that I could tell were still warm from the day and spoke of hiding places of strength and maternal curve against a sky strangely lighted as if from some burning city. Bernice snuggled into the bandit protection of Al and she turned in the dark, her small face white and the fearful eyes big. "I play and sing at the tavern." "Gee you sure got union hours," I said.

I shouldn't have said it. Al looked at me suspiciously. "I'm gonna send my boy to college." "College," Al snorted. "Yeah, college," she said. "Ain't no need of college by the time he's gone to his first whore." She pulled away from him, her anger like a whip against me. "Your friends ain't gonna have it your way, not by a long shot, not at all." "Shut up," he said looking at me suddenly as if he had done wrong to take me. Bernice leaned my way and began to laugh and Al slammed on the brakes as we pulled into the tavern gravel. When Bernice didn't stop laughing he slugged her at the nape of the neck so she fell over the wheel as he got out and slammed the door. She shook herself like a cat. "Forget it," she said. "Want to catch the show? I'm the Mildred Bailey of the Border."

"Maybe I shouldn't go in," I said.

"Oh Al? Don't let him scare you," she said. I went in and saw the young men two deep at the bar, without women, waiting for her. There were several amputees from the last war. They clapped, formed a pool around her in a curious impersonal mass lust, and she rose on the platform in the light, with the polished glass and bottles aglitter around her, adjusted the heavy accordion, flourished and chorded with that flow of steel strength in her and she sang to the young men of the double cross, the giant in the mountain, in the heart, chained, weeping,

tortured, no one speaking of him except in covert weeping, in the shadow, in the obscured and broken word. Something hidden and emerging as violence and cruelty creeps in the song and the young men listening, the money world holding them off from even tragedy, and the smell of carnage smelling sweet as lavendar proclaiming that we have friends who tell us, but really Lazarus, rising stenched from the mortgaged land, from the house made a phantom by absentee owners who suck blood from afar, from neat sell-outs and atomic explosions in distant lands and dead we never count.

A country can die as a woman can . . . I touch her shoulder and she turns from the young men, her corn silk hair belling and her eyes starting alive toward me, her hands upon me and the haunting and clinging of the asking upon my flesh. "I'll see you again," she says holding me, "I'll surely see you again. Come back again. You must come back." Through the smoke I saw her watching me to the door, and I felt the eyes of Al and the other eyes down the barrel of a gun. I turned to face all the hatred, and the eye of bouncer and stool and bodyguard and raised my hand and she gave me a curious nod, throwing her head back in that satiric salute and defiance.

BACK in the trailer camp my nervous betting friend was still cracking his knuckles and I suggested we go out and see them get the cattle out of the lowlands. It was dark and the night was fragrant and full of flood menace and men working happily together in disaster. We came quickly to the blocked road and beyond the drama of isolated farm houses, floundered heifers rescued, boats full of squealing pigs. Trucks piled up on the road and some slept in the marooned cars or played cards or sang or made love and some others were selling sandwiches and peddling anything they could buy up cheap. On the edge of the flood a little old tavern stood on stilts used and prepared for water, and now full of men and juke box music and my friend was very nervous until he asked a patrol cop what to do and we went into the tavern, flavorsome of men, beer fumes and that intangible and wonderful sudden blooming excitement always emerging in our life in disaster. A glow rose and emanated communally, shone on every face brightening from the swamps of its own despair, and for the moment a common danger was like a campfire in a freezing prairie, in which they stood illumined, welded from separateness to communal

warmth and mutual aid, for the moment freely aiding each other without prejudice or fear or remuneration.

The farm men and boys, still burnt from corn planting, beards and eyes bright with fatigue and excitement, some of them with no sleep for nights, told many a tale as the bartender filled the glasses and bottles popped and secret moon came out of pockets. The railroad men in their blue-billed caps were there because trains were stalled behind the flood.

"I'm going down to see them get the cows out of the swamp and they say a woman is marooned on top of an outhouse. I can skirt around. I see like a cat in the dark." The fear and anxiety flicked across him like a cat o' nine tails, and as I knew he would, he said he'd wait, and he called after me that he'd make a bet with himself that I'd be back in half an hour.

I stepped off the highway and into the fragrant moist and terrible darkness. I was frightened, alert and excited. In five minutes I might have been on wilderness road full of the shouts of men, the grunting of animals, the baying of dogs and the labial sound of water. Animals fled and birds moved in the thicket and owls flew over the bottom land.

I came through a thicket and could see a light rotating across the water which was black as flint, and it struck the green signals of drowned corn. The light I saw was from a small row boat where two men crouched and illumined a woman with her arms lifted, wild, upon a floating outhouse, tipped crazily as it strained from some snag and she lurched upon it in song, raising and lowering her arms, as she cried and prayed in a powerful hog-caller's voice, as she cried unto the Lord from Mount Outhouse and the men were a little tickled and awed.

"Millie, do you hear?" one of the men in the boat shouted through his cupped hands and she answered, "I hear the voice of God. I am safe in the arms of Jesus."

"Well, why not leave her? Her old man has been dead four years."

"Shut up and pull that rope tighter. I can lasso her down. She weighs as much as a brood sow. Shut up and row."

I was startled by a man's shout almost upon me and I saw rearing in the dark the frightened faces of bellowing cows as he drove them up onto the levee and in a frenzy the unseen shouting man bellowed

steadily, screamed and beat their rumps, keeping them from committing suicide in the moiling water. He came into the play of searchlight, pulled back to the ground against a roped tug of a heifer. He was parallel with the ground as he pulled them up the levee, and I could hear the terror and struggle of man and beast in the water.

A kind of primeval fear made me turn back. I could see the glow of the tavern neon and I stepped into a bog to my knees in real panic and felt caught as if by the suction of hands and at the same time I heard an awful sound that froze my blood. Like a hundred women screaming, it ripped the night. I saw then, as I pulled my legs out of the bog, a farm house on higher ground and a small light from one of the windows and the screams seemed to come from there. I made for higher ground and the house and perhaps there would be a fire, and perhaps someone was in pain, hurt—the cries came strangely like cries in childbirth. I looked in the window before going to the door. A dim flashlight, which someone had tied with a kerchief to keep it focussed, threw a light from the floor, adding to the terror of the scene.

It was a big abandoned farm kitchen literally alive with frightened rabbits which had sought refuge there from the flood. Two young men with bloody naked torsos shouted from ferocious faces and ran the rabbits into corners where they clubbed them, then slit the skin from stem to stern, skinned the coats off them and threw them into a pot steaming on an old stove. The rabbits ran toward the light, turned and seemed to look at me just before the blow struck them between the lily cavity of ear and the round eye pooled with fear.

I turned and ran back into the swamp, away from the yelling men, the praying woman, the grunting animals and was emitted onto the road almost instantly and the cars still lined against the flood and my friend with his watch open. . . . "Holy Mackerel," he said. "Thirty minutes to the dot. Who won? What did you see?"

"Flood," I gasped. "Flood." I could not speak of the sudden brutality, heroism, despair and *something* that stands often speechless, eyeless, behind our life, the cry, the club, the flood.

THE fly cop tells my nervous friend, still cracking his knuckles, that you may be able to make it through now on another highway. He asks me to drive through with him. It's somebody to bet with anyhow. We drive into the flood. There is still a road that is not yet

covered. He drives like mad, as if pursued by a thousand devils. He is excited. We'll make it, he keeps saying. We'll surely make it. We get to the broad meadow land, now covered with water, but men are working with sandbags and markers have been put along each side so you won't drive off the road, and you can still go through. . . . A tall young man solemnly signals us to drive on.

"Hello," says a man sticking his head in the window. He has a strong Indian face, and the excitement of working all night, of battling with others against a river. That night at least he has been a part of a struggle with others.

"How is it?" I ask.

"Good." He flashes white teeth. "You're just in the nick. I'll clear the way, I know this road like my hand. Take it easy. Good. Good. Water comes to the hubs we'll make it. . . . I'll just see you across."

The men along the way stand knee-deep in water, saluting, shouting down the flood.

Antonio Frasconi

"LOOK, THEY ARE COMING!"

(From *Crossroads*, Bombay.)

THE LOS ANGELES CASE

Meet Five Communists

by VIRGINIA GARDNER

LOS ANGELES—While in New York the federal government is prosecuting the leaders of the Communist Party and claiming for one thing that membership in the party is illegal, here it is jailing on contempt of court men and women who refuse to answer questions before the grand jury relating to their knowledge of the Communist Party, its local officials and membership lists. To their claim that answers to the questions might incriminate them and make them subject to the same prosecution as in progress in New York, government prosecutors and court replied: "But the Communist Party is a legal party." Judge Pierson Hall ordered twenty-one men and women to jail without bail, on either indeterminate sentences "until they answer," or for terms ranging from one year to eighteen months. At this writing all are out on bond ordered by a higher court pending appeal.

In a speech before the Lions Club, the prosecutor, U.S. Attorney James Carter, said that if these people were Communists this was all the more "serious" because "they look like ordinary Americans." Mr. Carter well knows that many of those who have been subpoenaed *are* Communists. Many of "The 21" whom he regards as particularly sinister because they look like ordinary American citizens, *are* ordinary American citizens who have for years been spokesmen for the Communist Party. This experience of not declaring their affiliation is one requiring real self-discipline in their case, accustomed as they are to proclaiming their membership proudly.

In interviews with a cross-section of those who are Communist spokesmen among "The 21," I asked what led them to Marxism and active work as Communists. I would like to tell you about five of these men and women.

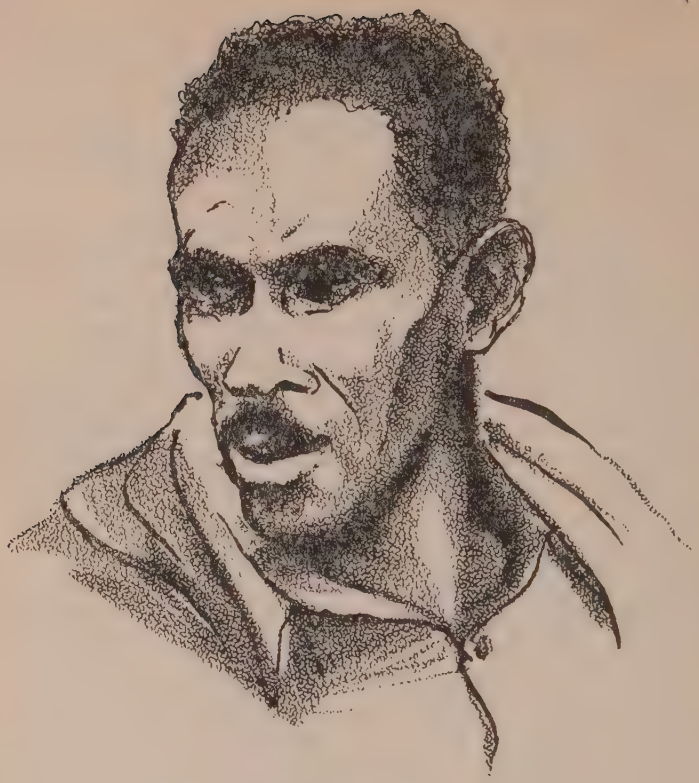
ON A HOT summer day in Nebraska the banks of the Missouri River were tree-shaded and cool around Wall Hill, where the Omaha Indian reservation was located. Diving and racing with the best of the teen-age Indian swimmers was a boy whose smallness was

apparently no handicap—no more than was the fact his skin was a shade darker than theirs. By the time he was of school age Frank Alexander could speak their language as well as his own. At the district school Frank and his brothers and sisters, ten in all, were the only Negro children. The pioneer white homesteaders and the Indians alike had only friendly relations with the family.

Frank's father was known far and wide for his fine horsemanship and his expert knowledge of horse flesh. He was a horse-trader primarily, his farm on the banks of the Missouri being something to remain in only between long horse-trading excursions. He roamed, and he took his family with him—until eventually he roamed away by his romantic self and left his Scotch-Irish wife to keep the family together by the only means open to her—doing other families' washings. But for years in his childhood, which began in Sand Hills, Nebraska, Frank and the rest of the children had the wonderful thrill—doubtless not so exciting to his mother—of long excursions into North and South Dakota and elsewhere. Always eight or ten horses were tied behind the covered wagon in which the family rode, and once in a long while their father, "a little guy, tough and wiry," would fill his pipe and tell stories of his past. When he died in 1942 at the age of 102 years, an Omaha newspaper carried a big spread on his life story, Frank recalled. He had been one of the first Pony Express riders, carrying the mail on a route which took in parts of Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska. Born of a slave family which bought its freedom, he had traveled north; during one of the periods when he worked on farms he had been foreman to a prosperous Illinois farmer and married one of the farmer's fourteen children, Frank's mother.

It was not until the Alexander family moved from Nebraska to Sioux City, Iowa, where Frank finished grammar school, that he experienced discrimination and segregation, and it came with a shock. "My mother was a very religious woman," Frank said, "a Methodist, I think. But she never turned the other check." Then, with a smile: "I remember her going up to the principals more than once and offering to beat them over the head after some treatment given her kids."

The family was poverty-stricken in the midst of a prosperous agricultural community. To eke out their mother's funds from washings, all of the children hired out to farmers for fifty cents a day. There followed, for Frank, a year in junior high school in Flint, Michigan, living with an older brother; but he had to quit after that, running errands



FRANK ALEXANDER

through the Buick plant's foundry, then the only place where Negroes were employed in the auto plants. Then little more than a child, Frank went "on the road." For four years or more he hoboed through the eastern states. He heard a bit of radical philosophy now and then from other 'bos, who he now thinks were Wobblies, but Frank was easygoing.

It was through a brother, who had begun organizing farmers in Iowa in the lean pre-Roosevelt years and had worked with Mother Ella Reeve Bloor, that Frank first was introduced to progressives. In 1933 Frank joined the Communist Party in Los Angeles, and "ever since I joined I've always spoken publicly as a Communist—but never as often or before as broad groups as since I was in jail." In the Army,

he was known as such and "always respected, in fact, called in for several interviews with generals—our 93rd Division had four during the war—simply because they knew I had fought in Spain and wanted the benefit of my experience." Busted once when he took up the issue of segregation in the theaters in the South Pacific, he was reinstated after only two weeks. He received a commendation from his commanding officer. He has been a Party organizer since the war, led various delegations which played a part in the successful fights to obtain jobs for Negroes at the Bank of America and in Safeway stores in outlying districts. Alexander is a carpenter by trade, a member of the A. F. of L. Carpenters Local 634. He was the first Negro elected as a delegate to the Los Angeles Building Trades Council.

Unassuming, easy, mild-seeming, forever holding his beautiful baby, Neil, in his arms, or his equally beautiful five-year-old Joan by the hand, almost as fond of others' children as his own, Frank is a scrapper. "I can't remember a time I wasn't in a fight." Into his thirty-eight years the veteran of two wars, wounded in both legs at Fuentes de Ebro, Frank Alexander has crowded a couple of ordinary lifetimes of struggles. Yet he retains a sweetness, a relaxed quality, which makes him easy to work with, and, according to his lovely, fragile-looking little wife, Lil, easy to live with.

Frank's proudest moment was when, after he and the others of the first eight jailed without bail won their release, they attended a Civil Rights Congress rally. Joan, looking about the big hall with its packed 1,800 seated, caught his hand, asked ecstatically, "Are they all our friends, Daddy?"

"IT TAKES years to develop someone in the real sense." Phil Bock values words, weighs them, and they often acquire a new meaning to his listener, I thought often of these words of his in connection with his own story, gleaned in the course of two long interviews. Without glibness, soberly, Bock conceives of himself as in the process of being tested.

At twenty-eight, Phil is top leader in the youth section of the Communist Party of Los Angeles County. Despite the jutting chin, stocky build, a formidable war record as a bombardier, with a Distinguished Flying Cross and minor decorations, he is soft-spoken, shy with women, and has charm of the quiet kind, his smile slow.

Involved in the revolutionary movement in old Russia, Phil's father,

a Jew, fearing for his life at the hands of the Czar's police, fled Paris, became an expert jewelry craftsman, then went to New Yo where Phil was born. "My father is an individualist," said Phil. "H retained his intellectual adherence to socialism. But he rarely joine anything in this country. Highly talented, he sought to be 'ind pendent.' He was always leaving an employer, starting out on his ow being bought out when, for lack of capital and wordly ways, he wou founder. He would develop something special in his line—and s someone he worked for take it as his own, exploit it, often at gre profit. Always taking part in the battle of ideas, always sympatheti my father found it difficult to take part in organizational activity

His mother was "just my mother" until he was grown. "In th Army, I learned to appreciate my mother. I began to get letters fro her—and she had never known how to read or write. Without en couragement from anyone, she had begun going to school at nigh The letters, at first laboriously written and little more than a fe words, became more and more fluent. And—while I was in the Arm she joined the Communist Party." He smiled slowly, flushed. "Yes he added casually, but his eyes betrayed the casualness, "she now always popping back and forth to Washington with delegations, alway ringing doorbells."

Phil attended City College of New York for a year and a half, an worked in shops for a couple of years before he went into the Army He helped organize a shop making bullet drawing dyes, the worke joining the United Electrical Workers (C.I.O.) and upping their $1 a week wage to $20 by their efforts.

After completing his fiftieth mission in June, 1944, Bock, promote to first lieutenant in Italy, made an analysis to improve bombin which won the high praise of Brigadier-General Fay R. Upthegrove and in an order from Upthegrove to the commanding officers of hi 304th Bomb Wing, it was recommended for their study and applica tion. Bock learned from returning bombardiers that it was carried ou his analysis becoming the basis for a new training program for re placement crews.

Out of the Army, Phil enrolled in the University of Southern Cali fornia Law School. "Officers' pay, and the Browder period with it emphasis on legislation, had given me illusions. Not that a lawye can't make a contribution.

"But the party had given me years of training." And he repeate

PHIL BOCK

the earlier phrase: "After all, it requires years for development."

He had been in the Young Communist League at sixteen, in the Communist Party at eighteen or nineteen, he had been a club chairman and a member of a Y.C.L. section committee.

"After a year in law school, while I made good grades, I was uncertain of the purpose of what I was doing," he said slowly, his hazel eyes narrowing reflectively. He ran a hand through his short-cropped hair.

Meanwhile, he had become active in the American Youth for Democracy. A cross had been burned on the lawn of a Jewish fraternity at U.S.C., and the A.Y.D. had developed a fight on the Klan which became ever wider, culminating in a big meeting in Exposition Park

where Robert Kenny, then state's attorney, spoke. At U.S.C. in this period, the first youth and student clubs of the Communist Party were being formed.

Phil quit the study of law, went to work in sheet-metal shops, and was elected head of the Midtown Section youth clubs, the chairman of the youth commission of the county Communist organization. Only then did he first speak in public as a Communist. In his scrupulously honest, modest way, Phil reviewed some of the important decisions in his still young life. At sixteen he had wanted to be an

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HEADQUARTERS 304TH BOMB WING (HV)
APO 520 U.S. Army

373.11 D-HVW-6 19 October 1944

SUBJECT: Improvement of Bombing.

TO Commanding Officer, 455th Bomb Group (H), APO 520, U.S. Army.
Commanding Officer, 455th Bomb Group (H), APO 520, U.S. Army.
Commanding Officer, 456th Bomb Group (H), APO 520, U.S. Army.
Commanding Officer, 459th Bomb Group (H), APO 520, U.S. Army.

One of the bombardiers who came to this theater in January, 2nd Lt Philip Bock of the 455th Bomb Group, at the conclusion of his tour of duty set forth in a letter to his Group S-2 his reactions to his combat experiences. In that letter which he titled "Suggestions to Improve Bombing", he correctly estimated the importance of a number of related factors vital to the successful conclusion of our missions. Much of what he says hits the nail so squarely on the head that I am forwarding his letter to all units of this command. I want every group and squadron commander to read it and pass it on to the bombardiers, pilots, and navigators, and also to the S-2's, for whom it was originally intended. The ideas set forth therein are so well thought out and expressed that the letter should be of use to all of us in our combined efforts to improve our bombing. He points out specifically certain means of perfecting instruction, in target study and orientation, as well as other features of operational and intelligence training, which we can profitably take to heart. But more than any one of these is his main point, the continued stimulation and development in every one of us of the fighting spirit, and a determination to hold our aim fast and clear, the putting of our bombs on specific pin-point targets.

Fay R. Upthegrove
FAY R. UPTHEGROVE,
Brigadier General, USA.
Commanding

Incl: Ltr, Lt Bock.

ABOVE: A photostatic copy of General Upthegrove's letter recommending that the units of his command study and apply Phil Bock's suggestions for improving the fight against the fascists.

artist. There were those who thought he had talent. He worked away at it a while, but abandoned it and went into the Y.C.L. "For me—I'm not talking about others—I couldn't divide my interests, I couldn't have an art career *and* a political life; it had to be all or nothing."

Then the war came. "None of us kids had even been in a plane, flying was a thing none of the kids from our environment could envision." He himself had a deep-seated fear of height. "Because it seemed hardest, almost impossible, for me to achieve, and because I had a sort of youthful, romantic idea of how fine it would be to be a Communist serving as a flyer, I made the choice." After the war he figured, "No more romanticism. I'm done with all that now."

He flushed, sought for a word, watched my pencil come to a standstill. Then, glancing up, smiling, he said directly: "I still was taking my stand in sort of indirect ways—without ever facing it until I quit law school. I did think for a while I could pull my punches." He squared his jaw, reminding me of the way he looked in that midnight session of court October 25, when a deputy marshal snapped handcuffs on his wrist. "I think I can say that all the choices I made were calculated with one goal in view—trying to serve, to make a Communist contribution. But only when I accepted the Youth Commission chairmanship, publicly speaking for and identified with the party, did I feel that I'd finally got on the highway."

His experience in jail deepened this feeling. "Some men get in a fight at the drop of a hat, but I guess I'm timid by nature," he smiled disarmingly. "In jail, I felt, 'This is it. There's no more hiding places down here.' Life became simpler—if you know what I mean."

I REMEMBER Lillian Doran's beaming smile, her twinkling legs in their thick white cotton jail garb as she came at a crisp pace down the corridor when I interviewed her. I told her I had interviewed her husband, and what he said about Terry's reactions. Terry is six, Paul three. She smiled, but let the tears fall. Suddenly, unself-consciously, she brushed them away with a childlike gesture, remembered my presence, went on talking.

A graduate nurse, now back on duty in a local hospital, with a housekeeper caring for her energetic sons, Lil Doran is thirty-one, and a living refutation of the canard that the Communist Party makes automata of people. Bubbling over with humor, she is at the same time profound; she has candor, admits to being subjective at times,

LILLIAN DORAN

praises certain men extravagantly—particularly her husband and Henry Steinberg, who taught her how to work—is tough on men in general, even Communists, in apraising their understanding of women's problems. And always, Lil can laugh at herself.

Born in Waterbury, Connecticut, Lil is from a middle-class family. Her childhood, spent there and in Cannonsville, New York, until she was nine, when they moved to Los Angeles, moved along placidly enough. She came into the progressive movement "on an intellectual basis, not through struggle," influenced by an older sister. "I joined the Y.C.L. here when I was sixteen, before I was really convinced. What attracted me about these young people was the overwhelming knowledge they had about things I'd relegated to adults. For the first time in my teen-age life I felt completely at ease." This was the time when Celeste Strack, honor student, now head of the women's com-

mission of the Communist Party in California, and others were kicked out of Junior college and U.C.L.A. because of their leading part in the peace fight. Then Lil, among the students at U.C.L.A. who had fought for her reinstatement and won, was expelled. There followed experience with W.P.A. sewing projects during the depression, her marriage at twenty, her subsequent training as a nurse.

Norman, her husband, was in the Army, Terry was not quite three, and Paul only four months old, when Lil overnight took over the job of organizational secretary of the Communist Party in the lively 19th Congressional district. "I thought I could never do it," recalling her first experiences in addressing street-corner meetings, and all the other things Steinberg, chairman in that district, goaded her into. "But it was because I had the two children that I learned ways to get other mothers out of the kitchen. Everyone had to accept the fact I had the children, everyone had to take a share in caring for them. Out of it developed discussions about women's problems, ways of pooling child-care, conferences where women let their hair down. We learned that some men said their wives were 'too tired' to go to meetings."

Out of the discussions came the conclusion that "our major responsibility as parents was that our children grow up to understand what we're fighting for."

This young woman does not oversimplify the problems of being a good parent—or being an orderly housewife, however. She feels that, aside from her nurse's training which taught her to organize her time, she has an advantage over many mothers. She and Norm had five years together before Terry was born in which to reach an understanding "on our positions on marriage," and to "cement relationships." Each knew that both of them had to be active politically. It was no solution either, for one to stay home and baby-sit for the other. "Often we went to a movie together, too—or if someone like Elizabeth Gurley Flynn was in town, as she was recently, we went to the meeting together and simply relaxed and enjoyed it together."

"I know it isn't simple," she said, "but I think too many families don't count in that $1.25 or more a night several nights a week as a regular, fixed expense they accept, just as they do having a telephone, or buying an icebox on time. I have always cheerfully paid out a good share of my nurse's income for sitters. I will not see my husband cut down his political activity for mine. In our case sitters are as es-

sential an expense as meat or butter for the adults, and far more so than new clothes."

On her own account she alluded to that day in jail when I had seen her cry. With characteristic honesty she plunged into a subject close to the heart of all active Communist women who must defend, often to comrades, their own activity in the face of accusations they are not giving enough time to their children. This time her eyes were dry, and blazing, as she said, "I've been told I did not really want my children, that I resented them. I have always said that what I was doing I was doing for the future, the future of my kids as well as others, and that I never would turn back because of my kids.

"This became real to me in jail," she said, her eyes shining. "I never felt so close to my kids. There was a leap in my understanding of them. And I proved to myself for all time that I don't resent my children."

Terry, she said, has been closer, more affectionate, warmer, since she got out of jail than before. "Young as he is, he has learned a lesson in class struggle." Terry was in the picket line outside the jail when his mother was released and saw women rush up and hug her, heard them sing "Solidarity Forever," even passersby joining in, so heady and elated was the crowd. One day after her return, she was taking Terry and a little playmate to the grocery. "Are you the new mamma?" asked the playmate. "And is it true his other mamma went to jail?" Before Lil could reply, Terry did. "You bet she was in jail, and this is the mamma," he said. The other boy persisted. Why? "Because she helps poor people," Terry explained, a bit impatiently from his superior knowledge.

Even Paul, the baby, is thinking in terms of picket lines. He asked his dad where he was going the other day. He was off work, but had to get his paycheck. "I'll have to go stand in line and get my check," he said. Said Paul: "And I'm going to hold the sign."

"SOME people come into the Communist Party from experience or struggle. I was in it always," said Henry Steinberg simply. "There isn't a time I can remember when I wanted to be rich, or succeed in a bourgeois sense. I can't remember a time when my parents pushed me in any but a socialist direction." From the time he was a year old, he was being carried around to meetings by his parents in St. Louis,

HENRY STEINBERG

where he was born, and where there was a sizable Socialist movement at the time—thirty-five years ago. Conveniently for the parents, Henry was the sort of baby who slept through the most impassioned speeches. He vaguely remembers being lifted forward by his parents at a big picnic to shake the hand of the great Eugene Debs. And he clearly remembers the Palmer raids as they struck St. Louis. The family lived just half a block from the Labor Lyceum. As they approached to attend a meeting, they heard a commotion inside, and out came the police and all the early arrivals, under arrest.

Henry was ten when he began delivering the newspapers, the *Morning Freiheit* and the *Daily Worker*, which then came in bundles from New York and were taken round door to door by Henry. His father

got the first autographed copy of the *Freiheit,* raffled off—it is such events that stand out in his childhood memories, not boating on Forest Park's lagoons, or playing ball. There wasn't much play in Henry's childhood— though he did play on Central High's basketball team.

After his parents separated, Henry helped his mother as bread-winner, selling papers, while his mother continued—and still does here—to work in the needle trades, active in the union and the Communist Party. Graduated from high school, Henry sold papers for seven years, calling *"Post, Star, Times,"* in the snow and sleet of St. Louis winters and the heat of St. Louis summers, at a big stand on the edge of Forest Park at Skinker road. Long before this he had worked after school selling papers—since he was eleven, in fact.

When the municipal primaries were held here and almost 35,000 persons voted for Steinberg for board of education, he was in jail. An aggressive person, thirty-six years old, good-looking, with an incisive way of speaking, Henry has immense popularity on the east side where he was chairman of the party for the Boyle Heights area from 1939 to 1944, when he went into the Army despite the fact he had three of his four girls then, and was a worker in a war industry. Since the day he joined the Communist Party here in 1938 he has been widely known as a Communist. Characteristically, when I interviewed him in jail, he attributed his recording-breaking vote as a Communist candidate to the party, to the work of the people, particularly the women in the party. He didn't mention himself. "By the way," he said in his matter-of-fact, impersonal way as I left him in the jail, "you might say that the candidate thanks all those who voted for him."

I talked to people who had worked with him, and to his pretty wife, Bea, a former dancing teacher who met Henry in the Y.C.L. here. "The most outstanding quality Henry has is his love of people," Bea said. "I used to complain a little when people called him in the middle of the night because they'd had a family spat. But I learned to accept it. He'd have a fit at my expressing it so, but he's a regular psychiatrist for the district. And if someone's out of a job he breaks his neck to get one for him; if a family needs a house he has to find one, that's all. He says, 'If I expect these people to work well, and I do, they have to have these human problems settled'."

An interesting thing was revealed about Steinberg in jail. It was agreed that of all the men, he was able to relax most completely. He

slept like a top (or as he had as a baby at countless meetings) on the floor of the crowded jail—or in the bunk which he acquired later. He could easily adjust, as he did in the Pacific with the Army. I asked him why. "Why not?" he replied. "There's nothing for us to do in here. It's up to the people now, and our lawyers."

"And are you organizing your time here now, putting yourself on a schedule?" I asked. Henry grinned. "I am not. I'm playing gin-rummy."

WHEN Delphine Smith and her husband, Walter, a steelworker, made up their minds in 1938 to try to join the Communist Party, there was one difficulty. They didn't know a Communist. They found the Communist Party of Los Angeles County listed in the phone book. They thought of going in from neighboring Torrence, where they live, and applying. But how would they be received? "For one thing, I was always being told I looked like a frivolous woman," laughed Delphine, who does. When she was released from jail after nine days, dainty and pert in a clinging knit dress and high-heeled sandals, a reporter turned to me and asked: "You mean a dame who looks like that is a Communist?"

The Smiths tried something else. Walt approached the fellow in his plant who had given him a few copies of the *Western Worker* and a pamphlet on women in the Soviet Union. These had been devoured by Delphine. "I thought, 'Gee, that's what I always felt. If this is what the Communist Party stands for, I'm for it.' Walt had been a Wobbly in the old days on the west coast and always believed in socialism. 'Yes,' he agreed when I asked him what we were waiting for, 'we always tell red-baiters we're reds, so we might as well join up'." When Walt summoned the nerve to ask the fellow worker if he knew how one went about meeting a Communist, he sent a party organizer to the Smiths' home.

"When I went to my first meeting," Delphine said, "everyone seemed awfully learned and I felt awfully dumb. Looking back on it, I can see they weren't. They were just ordinary people, and I was just ordinarily dumb. But boy, did I begin to study!"

She enrolled in the Workers School in Los Angeles, had the good fortune to be taught and encouraged by the late director, Eva Shaffran, and applied herself with the same stubborn doggedness that she applied when, early in the war, she took a government training course as

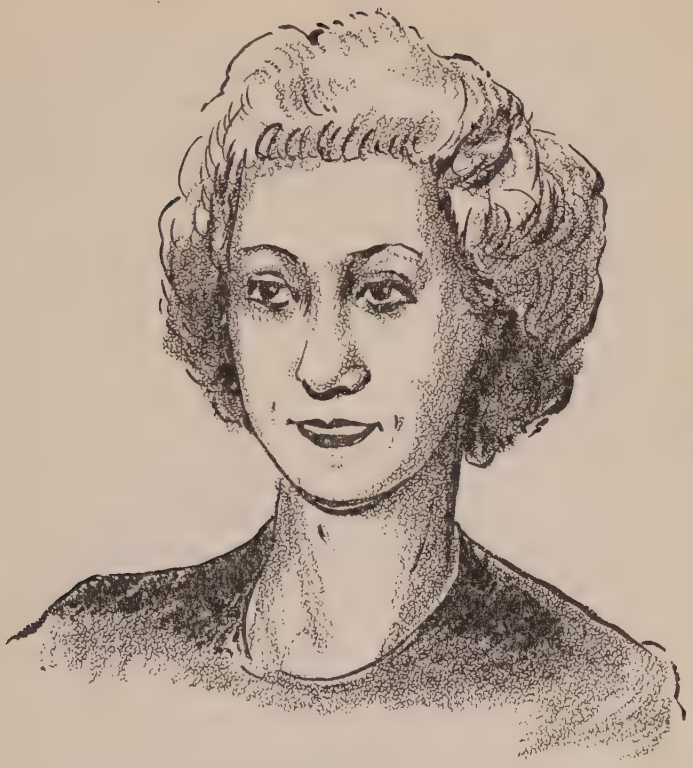
a machinist and in time became the only woman to work on a machine in shipyards in this area. This was at the Todd Shipyard & Dry Dock Corporation in San Pedro, after other jobs, including one in the big El Sugundo Douglas aircraft plant. In her union, the Industrial Union of Marine & Shipbuilding Workers, C.I.O., at Todd's where she remained until March, 1946, she was elected to the executive board. As a committeeman, or assistant to the shop steward, she helped in bringing about upgrading of Negroes. Her biggest thrill came at a party convention when, nominated for some office, a Negro fellow worker from Todd's spoke of her fight for Negro rights.

One of Delphine's childhood memories is going with her father to Salem, Oregon, where he was born and where his family still is widely known, and observing a plaque in the stone of a college dedicated to one of his forebears. Her father, now dead, was Ross Murphy, and according to a document in the family's possession, a copy of which I have, he came from pre-Revolutionary stock, bristling with Revolutionary heroes. His grandfather was descended from one of three Baptist clergymen brothers who fled to Virginia from Ireland after being persecuted by the Benedictine monks.

Delphine was reared a Catholic. Her mother was Lucinda Ortega, daughter of a well-to-do rancher. The first Ortega in this country was the captain of the first ship which landed with its cargo of settlers from Spain at Santa Barbara. One of two children, Delphine's childhood was happy and comfortable while the family remained together —first in Arlington, California, where she was born, then in Bishop, where the water comes down from the high Sierras and where her father ran the sub-station for the power company.

When she was nine years old her parents separated—her mother never said why. Her mother and aunt and the children went to Oceanside, where the women cooked for a great ranch employing 150 men, and Delphine helped with the endless piles of dishes. She remembers watching her mother arise at 4 A.M. and begin work over the big kettles. When she was twelve years old, she herself went to work in a packing plant, grading lemons—long days, and at the end of a week she received her wages, $12.

After other cooking jobs, her mother eventually married again, and her steelworker husband was buying a home for them in Torrence; Delphine was working for the Rubbercraft Corporation, and things



DELPHINE SMITH

were looking up—when the depression came. He lost his job, they lost the home; she lost her job, there finally was nothing left to sell, no income—and finally, no food. Delphine remembers the day when, preparing to go out in search of a job without even coffee, she found that there was no soap. Overboard went the notion that "at least you can keep clean." When the water was shut off, a neighbor ran in a hose from her house so Delphine and her mother could flush the toilet. The stepfather had departed for another town to search for work by then, eventually returning. The two women finally sought relief, after struggling against the "disgrace" of it—"and found all our friends in the relief lines." Came the period of prying investigators, then, finally, Roosevelt, and the State Emergency Relief Administration, and Del-

phine as head of the family got work sewing shirts. W.P.A. came along, and still she sewed, but by then her brother with his wife and baby had moved in. And so it went—the old depression story.

"I had lost my interest in going to church during these struggles," Delphine recounted. Becoming ill, she went to her old family doctor, was ordered to eat eggs and milk and meat, told sternly she was starving herself to death. "I couldn't understand his attitude, as if I did it for a lark," she said. "I still understood nothing of the class struggle. Everything puzzled me. I fought, but I didn't know how to fight with others. I got a job at a tomato canning plant for a few weeks. The wages, $2.50 a week. The boss pointed out we ate all the tomatoes we wanted for lunch."

Along about this time, Walt, whom she had known as a family friend for years, asked her to go to a dance. She couldn't, she had no stockings. But Walt came over anyway, and kept coming.

Once in the Communist Party, and learning the answers, still things were not always easy. Delphine rushed pell-mell into things, made mistakes, was criticized, then felt crushed. Eva Shaffran's confidence in her helped her to develop. She learned to take criticism, and in the war years she developed by leaps and bounds, became labor secretary for the important harbor area, was educational director and on the executive board of the harbor section, and on the county committee of the Communist Party from 1944-48. And during all her work as a machinist Delphine was known as a Communist.

"In ten years I have missed exactly three club meetings, except when I was in a hospital," she said. "I've no use for people who are too busy to attend meetings. And in Torrence, where we were the only Communists in 1938, we now have two clubs, one of them industrial." Since her jail experience Delphine has spoken before many union meetings and conventions as one of The 21, and always as a Communist. "But the most thrilling experience was to see my mother walking on a picket line and reading the *People's World* for the first time. My Mom, out of the kitchen at last, and marching for civil rights. It was worth going to jail for," said the irrepressible Delphine.

right face

CONSOLATION

"But unemployment, while on the increase recently, still is only slightly above average when viewed in the perspective of the last hundred years."—*Rader Winget in the Dayton* Daily News.

EDUCATION

"One dean said, 'Students today don't know right from wrong.' One encouraging feature, he found, is that Communism is rare among students."—From "Let's Explore Your Mind," by Albert E. Wiggam.

CALCULATION

"DETROIT—Detroit set up initial machinery for a purge of Communists in city government. . . . The charge that set off the anti-Red movement was rather nebulous. Donald J. Sublette, Secretary of the City Civil Service Commission, estimated that 150 of Detroit's 30,000 employees were Communists. He took estimates made by the House Un-American Activities Committee on Communism among Federal employees and applied these statistics percentagewise to Detroit."—*From an A.P. dispatch in the Cincinnati, Ohio,* Enquirer.

COMMENDATION

"When Ezra Pound infuses his poetry with half-baked fascist and anti-Semitic concepts, ill-conceived though they are, he does so in defiance of a world without culture."—Kurt List in the Social-Democratic *New Leader.*

INFILTRATION

"The Commissioners of Public Instruction {in Hawaii} adopted a policy warning teachers to be on the alert for the possibility of Communist propaganda coming into the schools from sources outside the system. The occasion for this action was a pro-Communist essay written with outside help by a Kaimuka High School student and delivered in a D.A.R. speech contest. A portion of her speech was based upon comments of Dr. Cyril Garbett, Archbishop of York, as quoted in a London paper and in the Honolulu Advertiser."—Joseph R. Farrington, delegate from Hawaii, as reported in the *Congressional Record.*

We invite readers' contributions to this page. Original clipping are requested.

ADVERTISING JIM CROW

by WALTER CHRISTMAS

I HAD occasion to return to Europe after the war. The people with whom I lived in Belgium, no doubt with friendly intentions, presented me with a subscription to *The Saturday Evening Post.* When I finished the copies, they would leaf through the colorful pages displaying the luxuries and mechanical wonders of America.

My living with them made my hosts aware that Negroes, too, lived in America and were a part of its culture. They asked why none were ever shown enjoying the pleasures and gadgets of life in America. When, after many weeks, a Negro at last appeared in an ad, it was a distinguished-looking, gray-haired man who smiled benignly as he carried a tray with a Hiram Walker whiskey and soda set-up. My Belgian friends brought the ad to me, remarking that the Negro was handsome, but what was his profession? I explained that he was a butler and that butlers are servants.

Sometime later, a soap ad showed a Negro washerwoman hanging her mistress' snowy white wash on the line. This time I had to answer the question as to whether all Negroes in America were servants or comic characters. This was part of the soldier-brought propaganda they had heard during the war and here was an American publication repeating the distortion in skillful pictures they had little difficulty understanding.

Here, in the United States, we have become conditioned to accept a strange world. It acts as a constant lure and many of us have developed desires to become a part of it. The inhabitants of this world are so-called average Americans. They are tall, blonde, God-like creatures, well-proportioned and happy. They smell of fragrant soaps and seductive perfumes, live in well-appointed, sun-filled homes with frigidaires, space-saving, stainless steel kitchens. The children, smaller editions of the adults, mature on vitamin-filled packaged foods and sleep on air-

foam mattresses under electrically-heated blankets. No economic disturbances threaten the security of this world where the poor are anomalies and "labor" is a hyphenated word used only with "management."

Every day two million dollars are spent to maintain our belief in and acceptance of this world. The advertising business is big business. Together with the press, movies, radio and literature, it seeks to mold our way of thinking. It is a vital propaganda weapon in the hands of the nation's rulers.

If the American scene presented by advertisers is distorted in relation to the nation at large, this is even more viciously the case in the handling of the Negro minority. Every ad dealing with this subject stamps upon the mind the menial, second-class "place" of the Negro.

The American public sees these distortions and, by and large, accepts them as truth. When questioned, many people point out that Negroes do perform the tasks depicted in ads. This, to a degree, is true, but they forget that the *only* fashion in which Negroes are ever presented, when they are shown at all, is as loyal servants, comic buffoons or grinning redcaps.

At the founding conference of the Committee for the Negro in the Arts a group of advertising experts made the following observation: "In the opinion of our committee, advertising's greatest offense is its denial of the Negro's proportionate existence in our society. . . . Not a single advertisement which purported to depict a cross section of the public contained the figure of a Negro. In street scenes, in crowded railroad stations, in groups of workers, nowhere was a Negro to be found."

In an ad for Imperial Whiskey, a group of workers is shown in a distillery; not one is a Negro. An American Airlines ad shows a town meeting; no Negroes participate. A group of waterfront workers is shown in a Studebaker ad; again no Negroes. Of the hundreds of Army recruiting posters, not one has shown a Negro. According to the ads, Negroes are simply not a part of the American public.

This refusal to recognize the Negro is a studied and deliberate act on the part of advertisers. Commercial artists can cite cases in which Negroes were painted out of crowd scenes. An artist whose layout called for a photograph of a basketball team in action chose one show-

ing Negro players. This photograph was not used in the final ad. A commercial artist was commissioned to paint a scene of typical Americans gathered around the Liberty Bell. He purposely drew in several Negroes. The drawing was used, but the Negroes were not part of it.

In a study prepared for the Writers War Board in 1944, the Bureau of Applied Research of Columbia University cited this statement as the general attitude of advertisers: "We naturally draw on typical Americans because the greatest bulk of our ads are directed at typical Americans." One advertising executive said: "Basically, it is commercial. You want to sell to the greatest number of people. Therefore, in your advertisement, you present someone they will want to emulate." Another insisted: "You'd lose your audience if a colored man appeared in the ad. However, in a picture of the Old South, whiskey ads and so forth, one puts in an Uncle Tom for atmosphere. Negro servants are used to suggest the Old South, Kentucky, gracious living and all that."

After studying the report, the Writers War Board concluded that advertising "is openly and self-admittedly addicted to the Anglo-Saxon myth because of a reliance on 'snob appeal.'"

Recently, in an ad by James Gray, Inc., a mail advertisement outfit, there appeared a cartoon of a shabby, eye-rolling Negro biting into a piece of watermelon. This was used to illustrate what "bite" means to lithographers. This ad appeared in the March 13, 1949, issue of *Printers' Ink,* and the March 25 issue of *Tide,* both trade publications. Following this, a series of lectures on advertising copywriting was conducted by a representative of James Gray, Inc., at one of the New York hotels. At several classes anti-Negro jokes were told by the lecturer, giving a further indication of the attitude of advertisers to one-tenth of the American population.

I MADE a two-week survey of widely circulated magazines like *Newsweek, Life, The Saturday Evening Post* and *The New Yorker,* and found that this pattern was rigidly adhered to.

Life, for the week of April 25, 1949, in a total of 136 ads, has none dealing with Negroes. The following issue of this organ of the "American Century" (May 2, 1949) contains two typical white chauvinist displays. On page 28 is a particularly vicious ad put out by Sight

Savers, a subsidiary of Dow-Corning in Michigan. Here we have a cartoon of an English gentlemen on a safari with the inevitable popeyed African "native." The Negro holds a rifle in his hand, but he quakes with fear at the appearance of a lion. Meanwhile, the white man calmly polishes his plasses. Page 141 has a full-page Army recuiting ad bearing the caption "America's finest men choose U.S. Army careers." Several types of soldiers are shown, beginning with General Omar Bradley. Not one of the soldiers is a Negro. Obviously, Negroes are not among America's "finest men."

Newsweek for May 2, 1949, features two examples of the happy-Negro-menial approach. On page 33 is an ad advising us to travel by Pullman: in one of the four photographs is the smiling, white-jacketed, Negro Pullman porter assisting a woman from a train. On page 64, in an American Cyanamid Company ad, is another Pullman porter grinning as he shines one of several pairs of shoes. The caption reads, "No, sir, there's nothing like *good* leather!"

The Saturday Evening Post, for the week of April 23, 1949, in a total of 187 ads, has one containing Negroes. On page 68, International Trucks has an ad with photographs of an American safari. (Again!) Some of the "natives" are shown loading one of the trucks while others peer with disbelief under the hood of another truck. Here the menial angle is combined with the simple-minded-black-men stereotype dear to the hearts of all imperialists.

The following week (April 30, 1949) the *Post* presents, among its 134 ads, a variation of the Pullman ad which appeared in *Newsweek.* Here, the Negro smiles happily as two passengers dismount from a streamlined coach. On page 75 our old friend, the smiling porter, is again encountered. This time in a Fels-Naptha soap ad as he enjoys a joke told by a traveling salesman. This issue also contains the Army's the-finest-men-are-white ad.

The New Yorker, for the week of April 23, 1949, in a total of 199 ads, contains one in which a Negro appears. Facing page 11 is a Studebaker ad in which a group of people admire two automobiles which have just drawn up before an inn. In the background is the familiar, white-coated Negro—bearing the luggage to the rooms. In the following issue (April 30, 1949), in a total of 205 ads, appears an especially objectionable one from the "House of Dornan," an exclusive shop which sells men's ties from five-fifty up. Here (and again!) are found

two African "natives" done in cartoon. They are complete with the traditional eyes, lips, spear and bones through the hair. One wears a tie and the other is asking. "Does your tie label say Richarde?"

If there are any so naive as to believe that this consistent anti-Negro pattern of advertising reflects ignorance rather than intent on the part of Big Business, the proof to the contrary is readily at hand. Since the war, the advertisers have seen in the growing Negro press and national magazines a medium for reaching the Negro consumer. Some of the largest of them—Lucky Strike, Chesterfield, Philip Morris, Pepsi-Cola, Colgate—display in this field specially prepared ads which present the Negro with dignity. In a recent series called "Famous Firsts" the makers of Lucky Strike acclaim with portrait and text some of the outstanding Negro figures in American history. Chesterfield hails Joe Louis, Jackie Robinson and other Negro athletic stars. Pepsi-Cola displays another series, "Leader in His Field,"—a recent one depicting Dean Dixon, "outstanding musician and conductor," with a record of his notable achievements.

Needless to say, these ads are never placed in any of the general circulation magazines; their suppression clearly reveals the calculated, white chauvinist policy of the advertisers.

IN RECENT times mass protest and pressure from the Negro people and white progressives has compelled the advertisers to abandon some of their most blatant anti-Negro presentations. Several years ago the American Tobacco Company put out a product for distribution in the Northwest states called "Nigger Head Tobacco." The protest that followed was strong enough to force the company to withdraw the product. The makers of Noxema once used a form letter bearing an offensive cartoon; after prompt and vigorous protests, the company withdrew the letter and apologized through the Negro press.

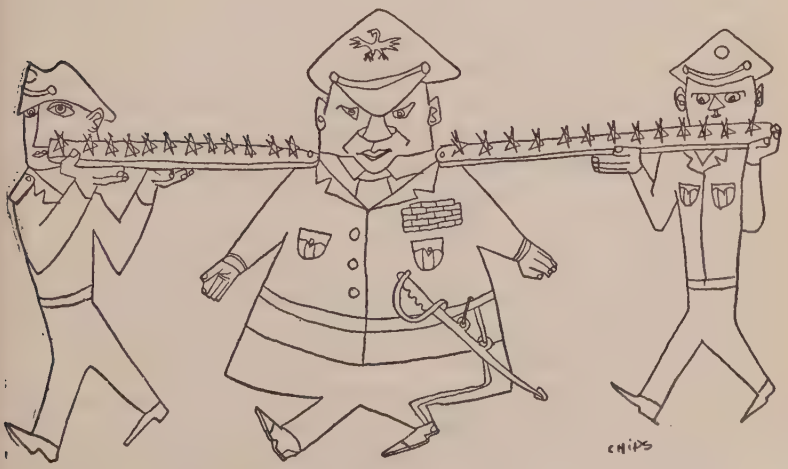
Protests do not always bring results. David J. Sullivan, formerly advertising manager of the New York *Amsterdam News,* a Negro newspaper, cites the case of the Whitman Candy Company which, in 1943, sponsored a product for distribution in Philadelphia. The candy was called "Pickaninny Chocolates." Protests in this case, according to Mr. Sullivan, were not heeded but eventually the product proved to be a financial failure.

The Quaker Oats Company has persisted for many years with its

"Aunt Jemima Pancake Flour." Despite continued protests, the company still uses the figure of a "mammy" and the distorted dialect, "happyfying" and "temptilating." This company has been the most consistently offensive over the longest period of time. Although it has refused to remove the objectionable figure from the package, public opinion has compelled it to alter the portrait from the original minstrel-type caricature. But the chauvinist connotation is still implicit. To join with Aunt Jemima, we now have "Uncle Ben's Rice" with the male counterpart of the "mammy" on the package. And still going strong are such old standbys as the "Gold Dust Twins."

The advertising hucksters of Big Business consciously work to maintain the continued oppression of the Negro people as part of the "American Way of Life"—capitalism. And they practice what they preach. In a survey made two years ago, the Committee for the Negro in the Arts estimated that of the 20,000 persons employed in the advertising industry exactly thirty-six were Negroes, for the most part used in minor capacities, mainly menial.

A necessary part of the struggle for Negro liberation and against white chauvinism and imperialism is the fight to silence the raucous voice of Jim Crow in the ads. Here is a challenge—and duty—for every progressive American.



Go As Simply As This

A Story by YOSHIO ABE

I ENTERED the alley in the shadow of the city night. A duck-walk covered the muddy street, and the rain pattered on it. The alley smelled of back street breath—sour stench of pickle and beans, and dead fish and rat, sweet odor of decaying wood and mud, and above all, the night soil. I sniffed and scoffed in the night. The smell reminded me of my home.

I found the address easily in spite of the dark rainy night. It was a crouching, matchbox-like two story shack, which hid itself behind a lighted street. I stepped across the covering of a drain ditch and opened a latticed door. A haggard woman stood inside the door as if she had expected me all along. She did not wait for me to explain my visit. She patted her breast and stroked the loose hair off her nape. She said, "We were waiting for you to come. Just somebody, anybody. We didn't know what to do."

"Is the upstairs man in?" I was already jittery, but put up a false bravery.

"I was just going over to the neighbor's to ask whether to notify the police or to wait for you to come. But my God, I'm relieved. Come on up, my husband is upstairs with your friend. He's dead."

I sighed, and was stepping backward when she grabbed my hand and pulled me toward her. "No, no. You're not going away and leave us with the dead. We don't know what to do with him."

"I . . . I'm going to tell his . . . his relatives," I said. I did not know what to do next: I'd forgotten Mori's instruction completely. All I wanted to do was to get away from this pale woman who stood with a dim light behind her.

"Yes, yes. You must get in touch with his relatives. But can't you pay your respects to your silent friend before you go? Do his relatives live in the city? That's strange. He never mentioned them,

and they never visited him. He was always by himself. Maybe he was disowned? You know? Come to think of it, his keeping to himself was kind of strange."

"I'll be back right away. I must hurry to let his relatives know of his death. I cannot waste time. . . ."

I shook her off and hurried out in the rain, her voice chasing after me. What a queer night. I'd set out to meet Mori's friend who was in hiding. He had not appeared for two days. He did not come out to meet me on the appointed street corner. And now—this. I was but a greenhorn in this game of hide-and-seek. Why do these fellows risk danger of being arrested, tortured, sent to the big house, and even killed? And a man is dead, practically, on me. I walked in the rain, drenched in the thought of these people. I was cold, miserable. Why didn't I stay home. I just wanted to be on good terms with Mori, a stranger in my life, who had visited my home—an untouchable's home—and shared dinner with us.

I MET Mori again at the appointed noodle shop. "I'm glad you were not arrested," he said. He was not upset—had he expected me to get nabbed? "But why did you come back without paying respect to the dead? Afraid?"

"No. I thought it was more important to get in touch with you first."

"Didn't I instruct you to search his room if he had been arrested and destroy any evidence? He wouldn't leave any trace of it, of course, but by the looks of the room and his landlady you could have gotten information of the nature of his arrest. It was very important to know. That's why I sent you. This is a man-size job. You must remember."

"What are you going to do now? Can I . . . can I help you in any way?" I was still afraid, but I couldn't help saying it.

Mori looked up from his empty noodle bowl; his one-eyed stare was as warm as the warmth of the noodles we ate, as sharp as the sting of the pepper we sprinkled on it. I could not forgive myself for offering to help. The food did not entirely warm up the cold gap in my stomach. The fear. This was no longer an adventure. I remembered the deserted street in the rain. No one came to meet me; I was alone. The sour stench of the house in the back street where an old woman gripped my hand and pulled me toward her, her hand as cold as death itself.

"I'd like to . . . to go home," I said. My voice quivered.

"Why?" Mori was surprised.

"I . . . I don't feel good."

"No!" he grunted. "You mustn't. I need you." He stopped talking as abruptly, and dropped his voice as if talking to himself. He dropped his formality too. "He was my senior in college. He was the one who opened my eye to the reality of the world. He is gone, and. . . ."

Could I leave this man alone with the empty noodle bowl, the rain outside, his friend dead?

"I want you to stay with me tonight, and help cart the body away in the morning," he said.

I went home and told my mother that I would be spending the night with a friend. I was back in the dark alley an hour later.

THE staircase creaked under me, and it was clammy under my feet as I climbed up to the dead man's room. The thin old woman stood at the entrance below and complained, "I hate the dreary wet night. Good thing that I didn't try to match the vegetable man's daughter with a weak-hearted man, who would die. . . ."

Her voice trailed behind me. I imagined for a moment the creak under my feet was the agony of bones crushed by the torture of the Thought Control police.

"Shut up," said a man, perhaps her husband, somewhere in the darkness.

There was a girl in the room. I had thought there would be only Mori watching over the dead for the night. The girl was sobbing. Mori looked up and acknowledged me, but said nothing. He seemed to be absorbed in listening to the depth of the girl's sobbing.I sat at the foot of the bed and gingerly looked around the room.

The room was bare except for a small writing table. I was deep in thoughts about this man who died in an empty iciness, devoid of human warmth. After he was gone, a human warmth seemed to be surging in to fill the gap. Mori had his chin pressed to his chest, listening to the sobbing which touched every empty corner in search of a tiny crumb of consolation that the departed could not or did not afford himself in this room. He must have spent his life on the streets, coming back here only to sleep. I cast my eyes upon the floor and kept silent.

I tried to picture a man who denied himself the comforts of life

and fought for other people's good. Hadn't he any other choice? I tried in vain to find the answer till the seam and the texture of the tatami floor blurred in my eyes. I thought I was strong. But here is a stronger man—dead.

"You may go now. It's late. You have tomorrow to think."

For a moment I thought he was talking to me. I saw the girl silently stand up from the dead man's bed.

"Tell father I am always thinking of him," he said to her. "I am not keeping away from him just to prove that I am right, and take revenge upon him. This is not a personal matter. I am aiming at the bigger thing. Change the world, so that we can live in peace instead of invading other people's territory, making life miserable for them and for us."

"Why must you defend the Chinaman? You are Japanese and. . . ."

"Yes, I am Japanese and love Japan. That's why . . . don't you see I love my people more than the traitors love money and brutality? I thought you had understood the meaning of Isamu's death."

This was the first time I heard the name of the dead spoken.

"You have taken Isamu-san away from me! You are responsible for his death."

"I am sorry, very sorry you feel that way. I cannot say any more, because I feel the loss a great deal more. Go home now, and try to understand the meaning of his death. And remember this, he did not die. Now, go. . . ."

"He died alone. How terribly lonesome he must have felt!"

"The tie we knit, the bond we swear to hold is something you cannot see with your naked eye. You must live it in order to touch it and feel it. He died among us; he is living among us."

Mori's voice soaked through me like rain. I looked at him; he was looking directly at me instead of the girl to whom he was talking.

"Enough of silly slobbering. Take good care of yourself and mother too. Now, dry your tears. I'll come with you to the streetcar stop."

"No, you don't have to see me out. I can go home alone. Yes, alone, as Isamu-san was when he departed." She looked away from Mori. "But when can I see you again? Mother wants to see you awfully bad. She has not been well lately, you know."

"Come, I can talk to you outside."

As Mori stood up, he avoided my eyes and said hurriedly, "I'll be back shortly, don't worry."

He stooped down and picked up his clogs by the strap. I had left mine in the vestibule when I came up. A newspaper was laid by the bed to protect the tatami floor from the mud on the clogs. And the black mark of the clogs was visible when they were taken away. A headline in the newspaper told of a victory for the Imperial Army in Manchuria. Mori waited while the girl touched her face with a tiny handkerchief, combed her hair and adjusted the front of her kimono.

THEY seemed to have been gone for quite a while. Left alone with the dead, a new fear creeped in me. I wasn't ready for this kind of life—leaving my clogs in the vestibule to betray my presence here, being moved almost to tears by the girl's sobbing. The sound of rain on the roof became louder. I lit a cigarette and tried to concentrate on looking at the smoke. Behind the smoke there was an unformed dream of mine, dispersed by the sound of the patter of rain. Mori came back when my third cigarette was snubbed out.

"My sister cannot understand why he had to die alone in this dingy alley when he could have led a peaceful and comfortable life. She cannot understand us. Why we must fight in the underground." He looked at me with the dark look which clung to me like a slug on rotten wood. His face seemed to be covered with his lost eye.

"I don't understand it either," I said. I wanted to irritate him, to provoke an answer from him.

There was a lengthy silence. I fumbled in my sleeve, but decided not to hide my embarrassment behind the smoke-screen of a cigarette. I looked at his lap instead, and muttered, "I don't know myself why I came here tonight."

"You know why, but you don't want to express it," he said, and folded his arms.

"No," I said, "I don't know why I should sit by the dead and watch the dreary night pass by. I fell asleep when my own father died. He slipped from a scaffold and broke his neck. He was a carpenter. I was mad at the whole world. He didn't have good things in this world, and left us none. He left us with. . . ." I hesitated to say it out loud. Did Mori know I came from an Etta family, the despised of society? "But I didn't weep. I feel weaker, now. And I am angrier than when I was at my father's deathbed. But I don't know why."

Mori looked steadily at me. I'd never thought his single eye could be so beautiful as it looked now. It had the subdued luster of the shaved gun metal I handled everyday in the factory where I worked as an apprentice.

"Maybe it's because you came to us when we had no friends. Maybe it's because I like you. I don't have any brothers in my family. I don't know. I didn't come here to be with the dead, but to be with you. I guess that's why I'm here."

He did not answer but kept on looking at me with the kind of expression which my father and mother had never shown me. I felt that he understood me.

MORI looked away from me with a faint smile playing over his strong lips. The smile disappeared when he looked at the bed. He said very slowly, "He died with the knowledge that we would inherit his fighting spirit and tighten our bond to keep up the struggle. That is why I said that he is still living among us. We are the inheritors of his fight. . . ."

Mori paused. He did not look at me. He stared at the soiled bed cover whose flower pattern was indistinct from the blue background.

"One summer while I was still in high school," he continued, "I went on a fishing trip in Seto. My uncle, who had come home from the South Sea, was with me. It was a peaceful vacation until one morning my uncle hooked my eye with his fishing line. I wasn't paying much attention to fishing that morning. We usually went fishing in a boat, but that day we were surf-casting. My uncle was very proud of his new fishing tackle and he was enjoying it tremendously.

"I was thinking of the fisherman's wife who used to come to the inn, where we stayed, to do the washing. I met her on the village road on my way to the fishing spot. Her husband, drunk as usual, was beating her with his big fist, and their children were crying and whimpering. Their eldest son had been taken into the army, and the poor woman was saving what her son was sending home from his meager tobacco money. You know how much the recruits get. You buy a book and you have nothing left for the rest of the month. Her son spent nothing but sent home his pay each month. She had been saving it in order to meet the expense of his wedding, which was to take place when he returned. The quarrel started when her

husband, who had been dringing heavily since the boy was taken away from them, discovered that his wife had a nest-egg. He beat her and dragged her on the sand by her hair, and finally pried open her hand which held a purse. He staggered away to town. The fisherman's wife gave out a long wail on the sand, which sounded like my uncle's reel when the line was cast. . . .

"Suddenly, I saw a thunderbolt, and I leapt forward. I was strung by my eye on my uncle's line. And to make a fisherman's tale out of it, my eye was practically out of the socket. The sharp pain was that of the fisherman's wife. I didn't know whether the pain was in my eye or in my heart. When I came to my sense, I heard my uncle shouting, 'You idiot!' He was furious. 'You daydreaming idiot, you!'

"Yes, it was a tragic daydream. I lost an eye. But afterwards I discovered that I was able to see better with one eye than with two. I saw for the first time the contrast between my leisurely existence and the misery of the rest of the village people. The pain of the fisherman's wife and the sorrow of the disillusioned father gave me a new lens through which I could see better."

Mori looked up at me. I could not flinch from his stare.

"You are not a real man unless you have known the pain of the world. I opened my eyes by losing one. But to go on with the story. . . . There was no hospital on the island. There was a quack in the town, but neither I nor Uncle would trust him. I waited for a steamship to call the next morning. It came twice a week, and I was lucky in a way that it did come the next day, although that didn't save my eye. My uncle cursed and apologized at the same time. To make up for it, he promised to lay aside a substantial sum of money to carry me through college. He was to secure me a high-salaried position upon my graduation and, if I consented, match me with a millionaire's daughter. I saw my uncle as he really was, and I hated him. Beneath his respectable breath he cursed the poverty and ignorance of the poor fishermen, and behind their backs he flirted with their wives and daughters, who worked at the inn. I consider him my enemy now. He is collaborating with the militarists in Manchuria, manipulating and exploiting the Chinese as well as the emigrant Japanese. Well, when I went to college, I was ready for Isamu to guide me through the Marxist study group."

When his voice dropped, a musty smell of rained-in house crep

over us, but I could not erase the scene Mori pictured before me. A sudden commotion downstairs shattered my thoughts to pieces. An angry man was shouting at the landlady.

Mori snatched up the clogs and the newspaper and hurriedly whispered to me.

"Hurry—through the window. Be careful of the slippery roof. Someone will get in touch with you. Goodbye, and keep safe. You will fight our fight . Hurry, but wait outside the window, before you slip away, to make sure of my arrest."

He shoved me out to a wash-line balcony. He threw the crumpled newspaper after me. The wooden plank of the balcony was cold under my feet. I climbed a rail and got on a tiled roof. Still hanging on to the rail, the clogs in one hand, I looked around in the darkness to determine my way of escape. I would run the length of the roof and jump down to an alley. It must have been near midnight, but I could see a red neon light of a cafe where the roof ended. The red light smoked the rain and the hazy reflection on the wet roof seemed to be signalling my fate. I crouched, avoiding the light from the dead man's window, and peered into the room. A dripping from the end of a bamboo pole caught the back of my outstretched neck and I almost jumped up.

Mori's hunched back was immobile; he was standing before the landing of the staircase. I was thankful for his protective back, but how small I felt. I should not be running away. *He* must escape, and I must remain to help him. He is more valuable than I. He is the leader. He has steeled himself longer than I in the movement. But he has the dead man on his hands. Will I be able to carry on his fight, after he is gone?

Mori's umbrella was inconspicuous in the dark of the staircase, but it was standing straight and defiant.

Crisis in Britain

by FRED PATEMAN

FROM the time they get up to the time they go to bed, the people of Britain just cannot avoid having "the crisis" thrust upon them. The radio puts out a never-ending stream of news and comment about it, the billboards in the street cry out "Save more!" "If you don't want it, don't buy it!" When a worker punches the clock at the factory or looks up from the machine, there is a poster or a slogan to jog him in the ribs with the command "Work harder!" and his wife out shopping has the family ration books as an ever-present reminder that things are still tough in Britain.

Things have been this way since in the early hours of morning after V Day, the spree-weary Britisher went to sleep with his mind made up that the dawn would bring a new era of peace and prosperity for his country and the rest of the world. Instead, there have been four years of austerity, with crisis following crisis so quickly that nobody really believes in crises any more. This time it is the dollar crisis which holds the center of the stage—the failure of Britain and the countries associated with her in the Empire and in Western Europe to sell to the United States enough to pay for food and raw materials they have to buy from her.

Sir Stafford Cripps, who has almost dictatorial powers to deal with Britain's economic affairs, was laughed at for his description of the "present trend of world trade highlighting the deep-seated maladjustment between the sterling and dollar areas." His pomposity deserved a horselaugh, but his analysis of the root of Britain's troubles was frighteningly correct.

Up to the turn of the century Britain's manufactured goods and her Empire's raw materials sold easily all over the world. With the dollars, the francs, the pesetas they earned, she could buy all the food she wanted and still have cash left in the kitty for investment overseas

With the emergence of North America as a great industrial center the position began to change. The United States and Canada could supply themselves with all the manufactures they required and have plenty left over to export in competition with British goods. They found their own sources of raw materials. They bought less and less from Britain in proportion to what they sold to her. For something like forty years now the British Empire has been buying more goods from the dollar countries than she has been selling to them.

At first it did not matter very much, for Britain had a nice-nest-egg of investments overseas which brought in a sizeable dollar income. She made a lot of dollars by selling insurance through Lloyds and her merchant ships, carrying the trade from the New World to the Old, helped to swell her income. These "invisible exports" as they are called over here made up the difference between the dollars her goods brought in and the dollars she spent on food, oil, tobacco, cotton and timber.

Two world wars set Britain back still further in relation to the United States. To pay enormous dollar debts, overseas investments had to be sold; thousands of her ships lie rusting at the bottom of the sea. The U.S. merchant fleet is now earning millions of dollars that British ships earned in days gone by. The gold dug from the soil of South Africa and Australia has run in a never-ending stream into the vaults of Fort Knox. As far as gold and dollars are concerned Britain is stone broke.

Temporary relief was brought a short time ago by Marshall dollars and the high level of business in the United States. During this period British manufactures, Malayan tin and rubber, Australian wool, South African diamonds, sold better in the United States than they had for years past. But when the recession began in America, earnings from these sales dropped to half their former value. Britain's dollar gap became wider than the Marshall bridge. Sir Stafford Cripps decreed that dollar purchases must be cut whatever the cost in reduced rations or even reduced employment. As a temporary expedient these cuts have been accepted by all concerned, but there are big conflicts developing over the policy to be put forward as a more permanent solution when Anglo-U.S. talks are resumed between Mr. Snyder and Sir Stafford Cripps in September.

Concerned in the main with Britain's economic position, Sir Stafford

is not prepared to give way unconditionally to Mr. Snyder's view that multilateral trade should be resumed. A nation dependent on imported food must be guaranteed that food before any other trading can be undertaken, and only bilateral pacts such as those made with Argentina and Canada can give that guarantee unless Britain is ready to be content with "charity" supplies from some super-Marshall plan.

Nor is Sir Stafford, for the time being at least, desirous of surrendering the prestige of sterling by devaluing the pound, as American opinion has been pressing him to do. At best devaluation could bring only temporary respite, and in the long run must lead to a price-cutting war in which the British would come off worst and the American workers only a little better.

But the prospect of permanent cuts in purchase of dollars supplies is not only anathema to the United States, it is even less attractive to Canada, who sees in it ruin for her farmers who have depended so much on the British market. In the communique issued after the London talks, only the faintest glimmer of criticism by Canada was allowed to appear, but behind the conference doors there was a major battle on this issue which even now is only adjourned for a further meeting.

WITHIN the ranks of the Cabinet there is considerable division of opinion as to what line is to be taken in the September conversations. In a typically wordy and diffuse speech to the House of Commons closing the debate on the dollar crisis, Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin indicated that he at least was prepared to sell British economic independence for a mess of pottage.

Referring to political co-operation with the United States he said: "We have not yet carried this co-operation into the field of exchanges as we must now do." In another passage he said there were three economic systems, the Russian, the sterling and the dollar blocs, adding, "the best contribution which we can make to the world is to reduce the number to at least two."

These passages can only mean that the Foreign Office is moving in to stifle even the faintest sign of revolt within the Treasury, and that Mr. Bevin's personal presence at the September talks is designed to insure that the growing economic friction between Britain and America should be eased by British concessions. It is a common question in Westminster whether the Chancellor's main struggle during his en-

BEVIN

forced stay in Switzerland will be with his stomach or with his conscience.

So similar is the situation to that in 1931 that talk of a coalition between some members of the Government and the Tories has reached a stage where Aneurin Bevan, the Health Minister, felt compelled to make a speech of violent denial. Until he denied it, no one had taken the rumor seriously, but now people are wondering whether there is anything in it after all.

In none of its recent acts nor in its draft program for the forthcoming General Election, has the Government shown any signs of socialist thinking. Even in the proposals for solving the present situation, Mr. Attlee's Cabinet continues its unavailing efforts to make capitalism work. The difference between the Conservative proposals and the Government's are differences of degree rather than of form.

Although production in Britain has increased by one-sixth in the last two years, the Government says that every single worker has got to produce more. The Conservatives say work longer hours.

Although prices have increased faster than wages and money is very tight in the industrial areas, the Government says there must be no further increases in personal incomes. The Conservatives say cut wages.

The Government has reduced the housing program to 200,000 houses a year, it has postponed school building and new hospitals, it has restricted the application of the new Health Service. The Conservatives say reduce the burden of Government expenditure.

The Government, while congratulating itself that unemployment still stands at the very low figure of 1.5 per cent, admits that there may be pools of workless forming in the future. The Conservative view was put more brutally by the business journal, *The Economist,* when it said: "A moderate degree of unemployment would do a great deal of good. . . . In conditions of overfull employment labor costs are pushed steadily upward."

Set out coldly side by side like that, the fundamental similarity between Government and Opposition policies is easy to see, but for the British man in the street it is obscured by the fury of the mock battle taking place day by day in the Chamber of the House of Commons and on the hustings of local by-elections.

THE only real opposition to the Government comes from the Left. Led by the five expelled Labor Party M.P.'s, Pritt, Platts-Mills, Solley, Zilliacus and Hutchinson, who have banded themselves together into a Labor Independent group and the two Communist M.P.'s, Gallacher and Piratin, there is the first stirring of a wider support for a socialist solution to the crisis.

These leaders have faced up to the conflicts now underlying the whole of Anglo-U.S. relations, conflicts which the Government has been only too anxious to hide. First they point out the hopelessness of the task Sir Stafford Cripps has set the nation by demanding an increase of exports to the United States at the same time as the United States itself is showing signs of an approaching slump. There is no guarantee that the import cuts announced only a few days ago may not speed up the American recession and lead to its spread into our own factories.

Instead of attempting to sell more to the West, the Left proposes an increase of buying from the East, especially from the Soviet Union

and other socialist states who can supply much of the wheat, food and other raw materials which at present cost dollars Britain does not possess. The main snag here is the "stop list" of goods which Marshall countries are forbidden to sell to the Eastern Europeans—a list which quite naturally includes the machine tools and raw materals the latter want in return for food.

Not all the food and raw materials at present supplied by dollar countries could be obtained from the East, so the Left proposes that in addition colonial territories should be given their freedom and encouraged to develop their economies to supply Britain with more than they do at present. Nominally with this end in view, the Government is already laying down large scale enterprises in Africa, such as the groundnuts scheme, but all the plans are on the basis of increased exploitation in the classic manner of imperialism. Already these schemes have run into the opposition of the Colonial people, who are not prepared to row in with Britain unless they are permitted to do so on equal terms. The measure of their opposition is the long war in Malaya, still not nearer its end than when large-scale reinforcements were sent there months ago, and the widespread unrest in Africa, typified by recent outbreaks on the Gold Coast, in Uganda and in Kenya.

The Left points to the huge figure of 760 million pounds being spent this year directly on the fighting services, a figure which has been considerably inflated by commitments entered into under Western Union and the Atlantic Pact. If Government expenditure is to be cut, here is the place to cut it, at the same time releasing for the factories thousands of young men who are now wasting eighteen months of their lives as conscripts in the armed forces.

Reduction in prices could quickly be achieved by restriction of profits which in the last two years have increased by 420 million pounds. To attempt the Conservative solution of reduced wages would mean unemployment on a scale not seen on this side of the Atlantic since before World War II.

So far, advocacy of this program is confined to the comparatively small Left group in the House and some of the most far-seeing of the members of the constituency Labor Parties. But very wide sections of the movement, including some of the powerful trade unions, are supporting one or another aspect of it. The vast uneasiness which is

growing in the ranks of the Labor Party could easily coalesce around such a program. Nobody in Britain is more conscious of that fact than the leaders of the Labor Party themselves. Hence their haste to expel from the party the advocates of this socialist alternative and the ferocity of their attacks upon the 40,000 strong Communist Party.

Because the British Labor movement has always worked by rule of thumb, confusion reigns supreme. Some of the big trade union conferences have decided out of loyalty to the Government to support the policy of restriction of personal incomes and a few hours later have formulated a demand for a substantial increase in wages for their members. Others have endorsed the foreign policy of the Government and in the next breath condemned the extra six months conscript service this foreign policy brought about.

The normally docile Transport & General Workers Union, whose big card vote is the ever-present shield of the Labor leaders at party conferences, after running true to form by deciding to throw Communists out of official positions and backing Mr. Bevin's foreign policy, proceeded to demand more trade with Russia and more vigorous restriction of profit margins. It ran completely amok when it discussed the nationalized industries, plumping hard for direct trade union representation on the governing boards in spite of impassioned pleas that the men being chosen for these jobs (mainly former employers) were the men who knew best how big industries should be run.

IN SPITE of all these criticisms and differences with the policy of the Government, it still remains "our Government" to the mass of the working class. They believe that most of the unpopular policies their leaders have pursued have been forced upon them by circumstances outside their control. When things get easier, when the crisis is over, they will return to its old Socialist policies and usher in the new era.

Labor leaders play on this deeply-rooted loyalty whenever they find themselves hard put to it to justify their actions. Nearly always they are successful, but occasionally, as in the recent series of dock strikes, they try it once too often. High in the ten commandments of British trade unionism is one which reads "Thou shall not scab." The dockers obeyed that commandment in support of striking Canadian seamen and all the appeals for loyalty to the Government shattered themselves

on the rock of the men's more fundamental loyalty to the principles they have held as sacred for the last sixty years.

By its series of expulsions, however, the Government has prevented any serious opposition within the Labor Party itself to the policy of appeasement of the middle class which forms the basis of next year's election program. The few minor nationalization projects it contains—insurance, sugar and water—have been put in mainly as a sop to keep up the spirits of the more active members on whom the party depends for the hard work of door-to-door propaganda which provides the backbone of British electioneering.

Final drafting of the program is left in the hands of Herbert Morrison, main exponent of wooing the middle class, who plans to secure its endorsement at a special jubilee conference next February when the main emphasis will be on jubilee junketing rather than on serious political discussion.

Mr. Morrison suffered a severe shock at the extent of the losses suffered by the Labor Party at the local elections in the Spring of this year. He believes a number of middle-class voters who swung over to the Conservatives on that occasion will be won back by a "moderate" policy next year. But the basis of Labor support in Britain is working class and Mr. Morrison may find his moderation losing more working-class votes than the problematical gain among the more well-to-do.

It would be a mistake to give too much importance to the local election results. Voting takes place on the basis of much smaller areas, local issues loom much larger, great numbers of people never bother to cast their votes. As a result, they can do no more than indicate a general trend of opinion. A general election held at the same time would probably have returned the Labor Party to Westminster with a reduced majority, but with a working majority. With anything likely to happen between now and next Spring it is impossible to forecast accurately what the chances will be then.

Much depends on what kind of policy the Conservatives put forward. If Mr. Churchill has his way, and he probably will, they will rely entirely on a few generalizations like "Set the People Free," "End Spendthrift Socialist Rule" and so on. Such slogans do not cut much ice nowadays, however useful it was to the Conservatives in the past to use them instead of a worked-out policy to which the electors can hold a Government. They will not win more votes from Labor, although they

may rally many of the middle-class votes Labor has already lost.

A great deal depends also on Labor's budget which will be presented just before the election if present plans hold good. Should the crisis have eased sufficiently to allow Sir Stafford Cripps to make some concessions on income tax, purchase tax and tobacco, many of the votes lost in the local elections will be won back.

NEXT year the Communist Party will be entering the lists with 100 candidates instead of the twenty who went to the polls in 1945. In some areas they will get a considerable vote, especially if there is any easing of the international tension in the meantime. The failure of the highly organized anti-Communist campaign in the trade unions has set Mr. Morrison thinking furiously when he tries to estimate the effect of this increased Communist election bid, which includes contests against every leading member of the Cabinet.

The elections of 1950 will be touch-and-go for the Labor Party. They should at least just scrape home, unless Mr. Morrison in his anxiety to placate the middle class succeeds, as he may well do, in knocking the fight out of the solid working class phalanx on which his election machine has always depended.

GOODBY, MR. CRIPPS!—A French comment on the British crisis. (*Action*, Paris.)

A SOVIET FABLE

by SERGEI MIKHALKOV

The Monkey Jocko somehow found
A most peculiar Coconut:
Enough to eat, for all around,
And make life gay and pleasant. But—
The Monkey wields it as a threat
And tries to scare all others: "Whoa!
"Suppose it dropped on someone's head!
"And burst! And spread!
"There'd be no cause for laughter
"Thereafter. . . .
"With plenty damage to the fur below!"

"Quite so," remarked Old Mole, in passing
"It is a fact none dare dispute:
"This sort of nut might be harassing.
"You own a most impressive fruit.
"Yet—what if someone else has got
"An even more imposing nut?
"It might be wise to cast a glance
"In neighbor's garden, where, perchance,
"Basking in sunlight, you might see
"A baffling Watermelon—or, maybe
"A Pumpkin—ripening, so hard and hale
"That, by comparison, your Coconut would pale!"

The Moral of this fable is easy to perceive,
But—if you want me to be more specific,
I'd say: 'The Devil isn't really as terrific
'As some would like us to believe!'

(Translated from the Russian by Ilona Ralf Sues)

books in review

Vagrant Spar

LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT, by Vincent Sheean. *Random House. $3.75.*

"Sometimes Sidi Mohammed, my friend the scribe, endeavored to teach me Arabic; Caid Absalem taught me prayers. I could say 'Ash-hadu anna la ilaha ill Allah wa anna Mohammedan rasul Allah' as well as the next one. When the chiefs chanted 'La ilaha ill Allah' I chanted with them."—Vincent Sheean, in *Personal History.*

VINCENT SHEEAN is a child of his time: a bourgeois child. Born near the turn of the century he has seen — and he owns as quick a pair of eyes as any fashionable commentator of his day—the stuff of his age. Mule-pack, ocean liner and superbomber have borne him to five continents, several revolutions, half a dozen minor and two world wars. He has been a witness to twentieth century history: what of his testimony? The late afternoon of his life (about which Rayna Prohme warned him) found him in the garden of Gandhi with a realization of God.

Sheean has gone to Gandhi as utterly, totally, irrevocably as Sheean can. He has experienced *darshan,* "the specifically Hindu mystery," and won its glow of "supra-personal happiness." Bravely shouldering his way through the starving children of Asia, cognizant of "material conditions as bad as any to be found anywhere, and an unhappiness that almost exudes from the people," he discerned the manifestation of an older force than that of "electromagnetics."

Lost in the immensity of his discovery—"a vagrant spar in a high sea"—he has found himself far from where he had "originally intended" to take his place. He is done with what he calls the materialism of the nineteenth century. "That brief nightmare" is now over, and the mystery of life has come unravelled. Hitherto, he "had relied upon reason and evidence too much."

For Gandhi, for *dharma* ("which explains," he says with relish, "why even the most oppressed classes make the best of their lot") he has abandoned the earthbound plodders of science. He went to the Mahatma to find some clue of a different reality, "something in which the relentless opposition of material forces

need not endlessly and forever lead to ruin."

He is liberated. "I had always had my doubts about dialectical materialism because it was too machine-like, too dogmatic; I now knew that it was simply wrong. It left out of human history the chief element; its humanity."

And there, amid the bony millions of India withering for a crust of bread, but shut off from them by the high walls of Gandhi's garden, he cried, "I believe in God."

That is his prerogative. But his conversion is a matter of some public interest.

Sheean's conversion is no isolated phenomenon. There is a pell-mell flight from reason, "from evidence," among many of his contemporaries. And essentially it is the same flight—from the unbearable facts of life to the Nirvana of unreason, the balm of the supernatural.

And what do they find unbearable? The hunger and misery of countless millions? The cupidity of the powerful? The war-fever of the Pentagon? The night-riding of the hooded Klansman?

Scarcely. An age is ending: a new one is being born. And the light it exudes blinds eyes inured to the dark of yesterday.

Sheean grew to maturity in these final years of capitalism. His years coincided with the rise of imperialism and today he witnesses its phosphorescent decline. Sheean has examined its decay, described—at times with some prescience, as in *Personal History*—the emergence of the new. The longer he looked the less he liked what he saw and like Lot's wife who looked back he has been transformed: not to salt but to soul.

He stood witness in the early years of revolutionary China: he knew the man-made miracle of Stalingrad. He has seen a hundred millions in Europe move from the dark latifundia of the baron to the limitless horizons of socialism. He has seen the truth and it has unhinged him: "I had thought myself grounded in a rationalistic view from which I could never depart." But he managed to depart.

Many others like him are departing *en masse*. Hence the misanthropic vogue of Sartre, of Koestler, of Monsignor Sheen, and now, of Gandhi. Hence the silence as a Pope excommunicates scores of millions; as Cardinal Spellman exorcises the separation of church and state. Hence the silence as a political party stands on trial in Foley Square for the first time in our national history. Hence the infinite forebearance as inflamed mobs assault Negroes in their homes.

A man's religion is a matter between him and his conscience. But it is in public domain if his flight to the cloister binds him to

muteness before the assault of public enemies. Then he becomes an accessory to crime and must be regarded as such.

All this traffic with mysticism is part of the infinite rationalization which is the chief property of so many of our intellectuals. They have an escape clause in their contract with truth, and are making full use of it. They have not compromised; they have surrendered.

Like many others in the Thirties I was moved by Sheean's *Personal History*. I turned to it after reading *Lead Kindly Light* and re-read his closing, imaginary conversation with Rayna Prohme, the Communist whose idealism and beauty shook him.

"But I'm not a revolutionary." he cried. "I can't do anything about getting the new machine. I . . ."

"You don't have to!" Rayna replies. "All you have to do is to talk sense and think sense, if you can."

But the sanctions for talking sense have grown heavier these years in America. Particularly for the comfortable writer whose thoughts are weighed at ten cents per word.

Sheean knows that. He said so, in *Personal History*. Recall his flight to London after Rayna's death. Revolutionary Russia, China had moved him then, and Rayna was the embodiment of the new. But after strolling in Cambridge "with its lovely stillness, its grave, reflective innocence" he became transmogrified. "The effect of England upon me, at a moment so critical was like that of a brake applied to a wheel."

Churchillian England suggested the imperative question:

> Why should you, leading an externally agreeable life under the bourgeois system of society, try to do something to change it? What does it matter to you if Chinese coolies starve to death, if boys go into the coal mines of Lancashire at the age of twelve, if girls in Germany die by the hundreds from tuberculosis and occupational disease in the chemical factories? What do you care if the steel workers in Pennsylvania are maintained in conditions of life equivalent to slavery? Can't you forget about all that?"

The ethic of Churchill provided the answer: "You'll probably never starve; you can earn enough money with your silly little stories to lead a pleasant life: why not do so?"

And he asks himself the clinching question: "Am I prepared to give up all the pleasures of modern Western culture, everything from good food to sexual liberty to Bach and Stravinsky, to work for the welfare of other people's grandchildren in a world you will never see?"

The answer, he concludes, was "decidedly no."

Though Gandhi can scarcely be regarded as the archpriest of modern Western culture, (by which

Sheean means universal capitalism) the author's perceptivity confesses that the "Western World" will find Gandhi as acceptable as Pope Pius. And he can ponder *ahinsa* (love), enjoy *darshan,* and still make the pages of *Life* and *Time* and be selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club.

I had hoped, for I remember Sheean in Spain, that he could at least stand firm on the side of sense. But that was a vain hope.

JOSEPH NORTH

Gene Debs

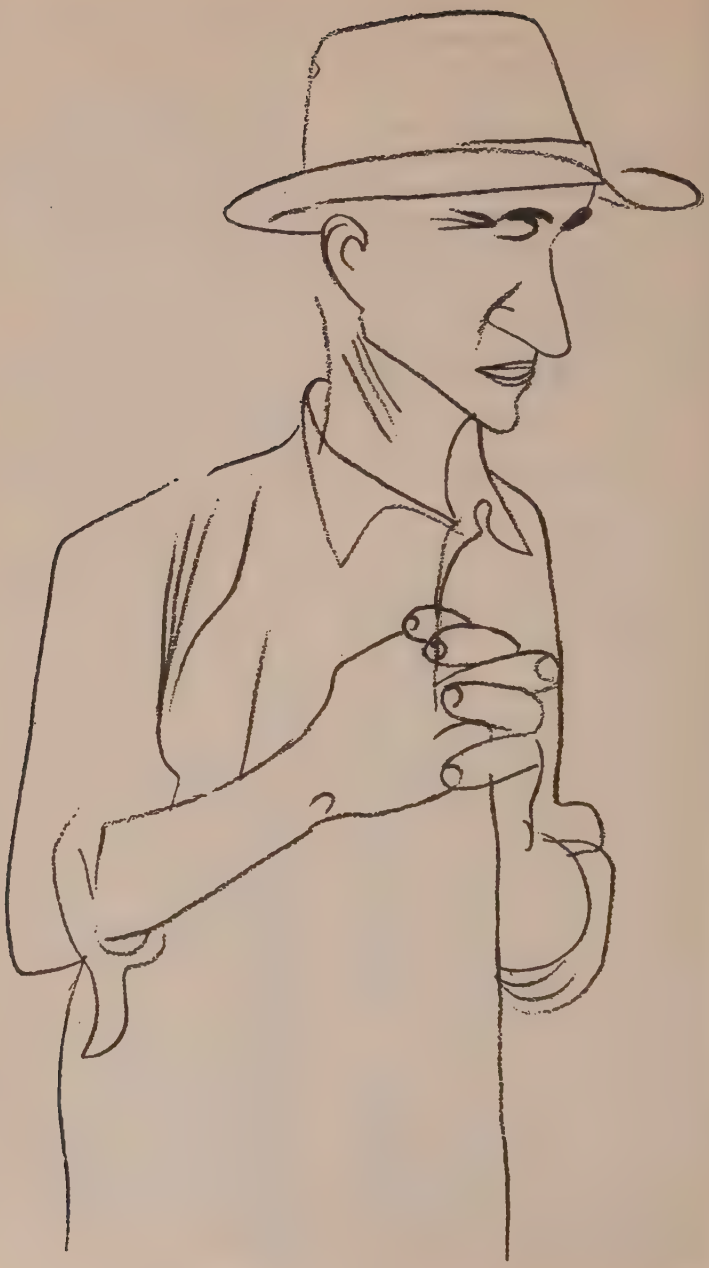
THE BENDING CROSS: A Biography of Eugene Victor Debs, by Ray Ginger. *Rutgers University Press. $5.00.*

IN HIS lifetime, as this book reminds us, Gene Debs was called a dipsomaniac by the New York *Times* and a self-seeking dictator by the New York *Tribune.* But now that he is safely dead, these same papers warmly remember him as a "beloved Hoosier." Is this remorse? Have the capitalists grown more tender-hearted since they threw Debs into jail in 1894 and again in 1919?

This switch in affection has a different cause. It is part of an effort to blot out the real experience of the American working class. Since the country's "real troubles" only began with the Communists, the Pullman Strike ("Gene Debs' Revolution") and opposition to the imperialist war of 1917 ("Gene Debs' Treason") are now to be viewed as unfortunate misunderstandings; Debs was after all a warm-hearted idealist to be absorbed in "our" tradition along with Alan Pinkerton and Theodore Roosevelt, whom Debs called both a coward and a hypocrite.

This ghastly nonsense is given no comfort by Ray Ginger's biography, despite the efforts of reviewers to make both the book and its subject seem innocuous. It is a work of meticulous study of all available source materials, written out of deep respect for Debs though not uncritical of his shortcomings. One could wish for a sharper partisan edge in this work, but through its restrained technique, its concern for facts and for letting facts speak for themselves, the biography builds up an effective image of a fighting socialist colliding head-on with American monopoly capitalism. It is by far the most satisfying biography of Debs that has appeared, and at the same time a contribution to American labor history.

Above all, the story of Eugene Debs smashes the myth that socialist ideas are alien to the United States. Debs became an irreconcilable enemy of capitalism through his own experience as an American worker and working-class leader. He began with the



Ben Shahn

illusion that the system of class oppression could be reformed; he was to learn that only the overthrow of capitalism could bring peace and a decent life to the American workers. To be sure, Debs' grasp of scientific socialism was never profound, and his limited equipment in Marxist theory was to hinder his full effectiveness as a working-class leader. But the basic lesson of his life, the basic urge of his selfless activity, was the necessity of socialism for America.

And reading his story today, one is chiefly impressed by the continuity between his struggles and those of the Communist leaders who face jail, as he did, because they cannot be crushed, silenced or bought off in the struggle against capitalist oppression.

Debs too was convicted for "contempt of court." He too was indicted for "conspiracy." His words concerning these trumped-up charges following the Pullman Strike of 1894 are recalled in this biography; they should be re-examined in the light of the trial in Foley Square today:

"In going to jail for participation in the late strike, we have no apologies to make nor regrets to express. I would not change places with Judge Woods, and if it is expected that six months, or even six years, in jail will purge me of contempt, the punishment will fail of its purpose." The whole proceeding, he said, is infamous and "not calculated to revive the rapidly failing confidence of the American people in the Federal judiciary. There is not a scrap of testimony to show that one of us violated any law whatsoever. If we are guilty of conspiracy, why are we punished for contempt? I would a thousand times rather be accountable for the strike than for the decision."

Again, in 1919, when he was sentenced to prison for having opposed the imperialist war, he issued a broadside to the papers:

> "The decision is perfectly consistent with the character of the Supreme Court as a ruling class tribunal. . . .
>
> "Great issues are not decided by courts, but by the people. I have no concern in what the coterie of begowned corporation lawyers in Washington may decide in my case. The court of final resort is the people, and that court will be heard from in due time. . . ."

The people must make their voice heard through their own party, and even before he became a Socialist Debs was urging the American worker to break away from the two-party system. Having h i m s e l f campaigned for Grover Cleveland three times, he spoke from the heart when he said: "I have been a Democrat all my life and I am ashamed to admit it. I want every one of you to go to the polls and vote the People's ticket." And in the Socialist Party itself Debs was increasingly

in conflict with the reformist wing, the "trimmers" and "self-seekers" who wanted to obscure "the class character of our party to make it the more acceptable to the middle class." The right wing twice tried to deny him the Party's presidential nomination.

The evidence in this biography overwhelmingly refutes the claims of the Social-Democrats that he was one of them. The militant Debs refused to become a tool of the bourgeoisie, and he would have had nothing but contempt for the pseudo-socialists of the *New Leader* who are today preaching war against the Soviet Union and support of imperialism's policy of world conquest. Since Upton Sinclair has once again, as in 1917, joined the *New Leader* pack, it is worth recalling Debs' letter rejecting Sinclair's request the he join in supporting "preparedness." Debs wrote:

> "Any kind of an army that may be organized . . . under the present government will be controlled by the ruling class, and its chief function will be to keep the working class in slavery. I have not the least fear of invasion or attack from without. The invasion and attack I want the workers to prepare to resist and put an end to comes from within, from our own predatory plutocracy right here at home."

While Morris Hillquit and Victor Berger found Woodrow Wilson a "champion of democracy," Debs remained loyal to the working class, along with Alfre Wagenknecht, Charles Baker ar Charles E. Ruthenberg, who lat became a founder and nation secretary of the Communist Part

As this biography makes clea Debs sharply differed with th right wing of his party on th question of the Socialist Revol tion in Russia. He wrote in *Th Liberator* concerning the Bolsh viks:

> "For five years they have stood wi more than Spartan courage against th foul assaults of the whole crimin capitalist world.
>
> "They have waded through hell their own blood to banish hell fro the earth and bring peace to th world. . . . The Russian Republ stands triumphant, gloriously triur phant on its fifth anniversary, a beacc light of hope and promise to all ma kind."

Debs, who criticized his r formist colleagues for their Re baiting, wrote William Z. Fost in 1922 that when he recovere from his serious illness he wou be with Foster "shoulder to shou der in [his] stand for the work ing class and industrial freedom

Thus, while Debs was not Communist, the thrust of his min and work was away from the cla collaborationists and toward th working-class fighters, centered i the Communist Party, who refuse to compromise with class oppre sion.

In presenting the facts of Deb life with fullness and truth, Ra

Ginger has made a valuable contribution. He has come up with some new material, including a much richer portrait of Debs' family relationship; and after the melodramatic inventions of Irving Stone, it is good to read a book which soberly and sympathetically examines Debs' relations with his wife Kate. The volume is written in a style that is mercifully unadorned with rhetorical flourishes. Ginger has perceived that the drama is in the facts, and these he has presented simply and lucidly. The book deserves a big audience.

SAMUEL SILLEN

In Search of a Hero

WORLD FULL OF STRANGERS, by David Alman. *Doubleday. $3.00.*

DAVID ALMAN'S third novel reveals his growing power as a writer, yet, at the same time, the effect of the work as a whole is to leave the reader with a puzzled "What does it add up to?"

There are scenes in *World Full of Strangers* that are tremendously moving. In the early sections of the novel, Alman's warmth and love for people comes through in deep-toned, rich writing about an Italian-American family on New York's lower east side. Or again, later in the book, there is a swiftly paced, powerful piece—almost a short story that can stand by itself

—about the desperate journey of a wife trying to raise enough graft money to save her parolee husband from having to go back to jail. And when, in a flash of unexpected action, the outcast heroine makes a desperate but futile attempt to win acceptance, the effect is poignant and deeply moving.

Clearly, Alman has gained in stature in terms of effective pieces of writing, but as for the total impression, unfortunately, there is a fuzziness that is quite disturbing.

It seems to me that *World Full of Strangers* suffers principally from the lack of a hero, or a heroine, capable of affecting other people. From this stems the lack of action, the static quality that mars the book.

Tony, a former shipyard worker, returns from the army to find his girl, Christine, has had a baby. The father, a married man, is John Guss, social worker turned cop. For the first fifty-odd pages there is action, cause and effect, change, and then the story grinds to a halt for lack of a hero or heroine capable of *doing* anything. Tony, wracked by hate and love, can't get himself to defy the bourgeois mores of his family and the neighborhood, so Christine is left to take care of the child on relief and suffers total rejection.

The problem of Christine's out-of-wedlock baby is presented with no inkling of the social relationships which have made illegitimacy a "moral" problem, no revelation of the male superiority core of Tony's reaction to "his" girl's infidelity. In bourgeois ideology woman is man's property and, like all private property, his rights thereto must be protected by a moral code. The woman who violates that code must be punished, must suffer. Alman may have intended a biting commentary on bourgeois ethics by his story of Christine's suffering, but it doesn't come through. For 290 pages she suffers while Tony tortures her and himself with sporadic visits.

Meanwhile, the seducer-turned-cop goes from bad to unbelievably bad. In these days of police brutality, of cops who enforce Jim Crow and segregation by murderously beating Negroes, there was real promise in Alman's undertaking a portrait of a corrupted, vicious policeman like John Guss. But the promise isn't fulfilled. Guss is painted with one pigment, a monochromatic badness smeared on so thick, he becomes distorted and unbelievable. His consummate evil act leads to Christine's being raped, and her eventual suicide.

And through all this, Tony does nothing. There is trouble brewing at the shipyard where Tony works, and he *inadvertently* is instrumental in starting the strike in spite of a sell-out by the union

bigshots. Tony can't *consciously do* anything that will alter things, just as Christine can't do anything but suffer.

Where there is no conscious will in characters, there can be no dynamics in action, no growth, no point of crisis. It is significant that Alman can't get his hero to meet John Guss in a crucial scene. He meets Guss in the street one day and bites a stiff upper lip, and that's that.

Christine and Tony aren't defeated in struggle; they break under a load of inner weakness. "Ah, Tony," says his sister-in-law, "he's a fake. I love him, but he's a fake. He listens to his stupid brothers and friends, and he does what they want him to do."

Alman, I am sure, will not appreciate this "favorable" comment on the book in the New York *Times:* "What he is saying is that, though the actors in the life drama squirm against their environment, there is a brute force in society stifling their cries. . . . Some of the inevitable resignation to authority is reminiscent of Kafka's *The Trial* . . . guilt feelings induced by poverty. . . ."

I know that Alman, who is president of the militant Contemporary Writers, has no desire to write of people who merely "squirm," of "inevitable resignation to authority," or "guilt feelings induced by poverty." In order for his real talents to come through, Alman must solve the

problem of finding a hero of affirmation, a hero capable of carrying the solid weight of a novel that can reflect the true class relationships of our time and the way things are going.

WILL HAYETT

Panova's People

THE TRAIN, by Vera Panova. (Translated by Marie Budberg). *Knopf. $3.00.*

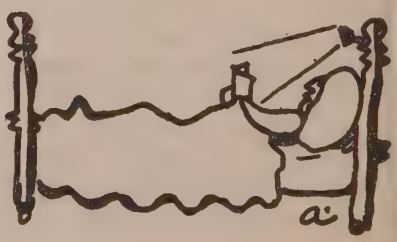
AS IN the case of Sholokhov's *The Silent Don,* Vera Panova's *The Train* has been greeted in America because in the eyes of the reviewers it is not what a Soviet novel should be. This fact is more revealing of American critical mentality than it is of the work of Soviet authors, for it is certainly true that Miss Panova's characters do not fit the mold created by those who choose to believe the inhabitants of the U.S.S.R. live on dialectics and slogans and exhibit rigid behavior patterns laid down from above.

On the train, which is a hospital train, we meet the people who work it: the doctors, clinicians, nurses, mechanics and engineers who service both the train itself and its precious burden of wounded soldiers being returned from the front line to base hospitals in the rear.

We spend four years on that train, in company with these people. The wounded carried by the train are like the patients in a hospital—they come and go and we catch glimpses of their faces, snatches of their personalities. But each patient is deeply characterized; each is different; each is examined in the core of his particular dilemma before he is carried from the train or walks from it unaided.

This is a novel without a formal plot. The train moves from the rear to the front, where it is bombed and strafed; later it is transferred to rear area duty only, where it moves back and forth from one part of the Soviet Union to another. It becomes an almost self-sufficient unit; it even carries live pigs to supply fresh pork; chickens are slung beneath the carriages in cages (and they lay eggs) and the staff is thinking of growing onions.

It is the staff that is Miss Panova's chief concern. Their lives have been disrupted by war and are seared by privation. The commissar, Danilov, is separated from a wife he thinks he never loved; the nurse, Lena Ogorodnikova, is madly in love with her young husband, Danya, and she loses him—



in more than one way. There is Dr. Belov, the commandant and Dr. Suprugov, the ear, nose and throat man, now doing surgery. There is the older nurse, Julia Dmitriyevna who falls in love with the vain and opportunistic Suprugov and gets nothing in return.

These people do not exist in a "Grand Hotel" pattern. The threads of their lives are not all gathered together at the end of the narrative and tied into neat little knots. They are less involved with each other, emotionally, than they are involved with their missing wives, husbands and children —and with their country.

And it is this intense identity between the people of the hospital train and their native land that gives the novel its enormous drive. The staff becomes a unit—in much the same sense that an arbitrarily gathered squad of infantrymen come to form a collective. That collective can disintegrate or it can coalesce, depending on the depth of understanding which exists among its separate individuals. In *The Train* the coalescence is the central facet of a gem-like story; a story of disparate characters bound to each other by common danger, common understanding, common determination not only to survive, but to do the best kind of job of which they are capable.

ALVAH BESSIE

Facts

LABOR FACT BOOK 9, by Labor Research Association. *International. $2.00.*

TRENDS IN AMERICAN CAPITALISM, by Labor Research Association. *International. Cloth, $1.25; paper, 75¢.*

THE NEGRO HANDBOOK, edited by Florence Murray. *Macmillan. $5.00.*

WHAT do you really *know* about the United States? The three factual arsenals under review will leave very few bread and butter questions unanswered.

For example: Did you know that the latest official figure for the median income of American family units was $2,920, while the Bureau of Labor Statistics itself found the minimum income needed by a family to be $3,500? Did you know that the average annual earnings of a full-time industrial employee comes to less than $2,600, while the yearly earnings for workers in agriculture, forestry and fisheries totals under $1,300? Did you know that government statisticians themselves acknowledge that *each year,* right here in the United States, 325,000 people die whose lives could be saved if they had adequate medical care? Are you hazy on the actual provisions of the Taft-Hartley law? Do you know what are the aims and what is the strength of the Association of Catholic Trade Unionists? Do you know, in terms of dollars and cents, what is meant by discrimination against women workers? These, and a thousand other vital questions, are answered, fully and authoritatively, in *Labor Fact Book 9.*

The two other volumes supplement and complement this basic source book. *Trends in American Capitalism* is the best available analysis and description of the movement of profits, capital formation, productivity, wages and standard of living in the United States for the past generation.

Miss Murray's *Negro Handbook*—like the *Labor Fact Book,* a biennial work—is characterized, too, by the highest degree of accuracy plus careful concentration upon significant areas of interest. In addition to data documenting the special oppression of the Negro people, material will be found here on the organizational network created by the Negro people, the status of the Negro bourgeoisie, the Negro in the labor movement, in the armed forces, in politics, literature, science, radio, the arts and sports.

All the volumes are arranged well and fully indexed. These works represent ammunition for all progressive-minded people. And like ammunition, only use will realize their potential. Arm yourself with these books.

HERBERT APTHEKER

films

THE GAMBLER and *GATSBY*

by WARREN MILLER

IN THE Twenties, when British and American intellectuals first became aware of the presence and potentialities of the motion picture, they suggested that the film might very well prove useful as a means of bringing a taste of literature and drama to the uncultured masses. The film was to have a missionary role: the naked masses, receiving first the Hoover-aprons of the movies, would then demand the warmer accoutrements that only the "live" theatre could provide. For example, the English novelist Dorothy Richardson wrote, in 1927, that the film's "service to the theatre is nothing less than the preparation of vast, new audiences for the time when plays shall be accessible at possible rates in every square mile of the town."

This statement assumes for the theatre an inherent cultural superiority; it reveals a complete misunderstanding of the film art. The motion picture is not an auxiliary to another art; it is an art form in its own right. The ultimate aim of this art is to create its own literature.

Yet, it would be stupidly snobbish at this point to insist that Hollywood ignore those novels and plays that have cinematic possibilities. To bring these works to the screen, to render them cinematically and artistically, is not, however, to do a service for literature but for the film art. Recently, Hollywood has made two attempts to treat works of high literary value.

The first of these was MGM's attempt to treat Dostoyevsky's magnificent short novel, *The Gambler.* It was announced several months ago that Christopher Isherwood was preparing the script. Since it was he who wrote *The Berlin Stories,* one had some grounds for hoping that the novel would be treated with intelligence and skill. The result is now with us, playing under the title of *The Great Sinner;* it is one of the most tedious films ever made. It provides us with such typically Dostoyevskian utterances as: "Darling, it's been a beautiful chapter."

Interestingly enough, the novelist receives no screen credit: an introductory screen message informs us that it is based on the

life of a famous writer. One would like to think this the result of Isherwood's flickering conscience. We are asked to be lenient with butchery because the corpse is nameless; this curious ethic may be the result of Isherwood's deep delving into the *Bhagavad-Gita.*

Of course, Isherwood had everything against him from the start. He had chosen for him an essentially unfilmic work: action and conflict are within the mind, the story does not develop in dramatic scenes that rise to a climax, there is no hero—at least, not in the Hollywood sense. The story was chosen, I suspect, on the grounds that it was about a man who had a "craze" for gambling—like *Lost Weekend,* you know. Finally, it was directed by a man who, apparently, has concluded that there is nothing for him to learn from the work of his great predecessors.

At one point, in the shop of a woman pawn-broker, we get a quick scene from *Crime and Punishment,* including the axe. Unlike Raskolnikov, the film's hero is saved from the bloody deed by a dizzy spell. Dostoyevsky's epilepsy has been changed to a genteel *vertigo,* just as his enormous and terrible Christ has been reduced to a small gold saint worn around Ava Gardner's magnificent throat.

Technically, the film is pedestrian. The camera is used without imagination, the penetrating whirr of the roulette wheel, which could have been used so effectively, is ignored, as is every possibility for an exciting use of sound and editing. It is a shameful, unforgivable treatment of one of the classics of world literature. One does not demand a rigid fidelity to the action of a given work, but one should require that the spirit of a work be retained.

SCOTT FITZGERALD and the 1920's are closer to us than the milieu of *The Gamblers,* but Fitzgerald's *Great Gatsby* fares almost as badly at Hollywood's hands. It is a little better because the Fitzgerald novel more easily lends itself to cinematic treatment: conflicts are resolved in physical actions; the setting, place, dress, the kind of car a character owns—all this is important to the story. But the result, nevertheless, is a routine motion picture.

The failure must be ascribed to a misunderstanding of Fitzgerald's fine novel on the part of everyone concerned, to a director who sees no difference between the stage and the screen, and to the script writers, woefully inadequate to the task of being as good as Fitzgerald—a task they recklessly and needlessly imposed on themselves by adding a number of scenes to what they evidently consider a skimpy novel.

These added scenes insured the

film's failure; they are the inevitable Hollywood flashbacks that explain what requires no explanation, or so little that a few lines of dialogue would suffice. They serve only to interrupt the movement of the story. Fitzgerald understood this and disposed of Gatsby's early years in under two pages. *Gatsby* is a short novel, but it is a very rich book; to reduce it to a ninety-minute film would require a great deal of compressing and excising. Even so there would have been substance enough to enable a talented director to bring out a notable film.

Richard Maibaum, who produced and co-authored the screen play, has let it be known publicly that ". . . the yardstick for all we did . . . [was] . . . 'Would Scott approve?'" And he concluded "We hope devoutly that Scott approves."

Whatever were Fitzgerald's failings, vulgarity was not one of them. The film script is compounded of vulgarity, the cheap, the phony; of everything, in other words, that Fitzgerald, in his best work, scrupulously avoided.

Gatsby, the book, is about a man's dream and its resolution; basically, it is a love story; it is also the story of another man's recognition of evil. The movie *Gatsby* is about a gangster; he decides to go "straight" by pleading guilty to a crime committed by someone else, but he is killed before he can do it. But the theme of the novel is Fitzgerald's vision of America, and Gatsby, of course, is part of this; having reduced the novel to the dimensions of a thriller, the film makers lose the novel's value and meaning, its tone and spirit.

The film ends with a reading of Proverbs 14:12, the one about the way seeming right but the end being death. At the end of the novel, Gatsby dead and Nick about to return to the Middle West, Fitzgerald writes:

". . . I became aware of the old island here that flowered once for Dutch sailors' eyes—a fresh green breast of the new world. Its vanished trees . . . had once pandered in whispers to the last and greatest of all human dreams; for a transitory, enchanted moment man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, compelled into an esthetic contemplation he neither understood nor desired, face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder."

The trees that have vanished were cut down to make way for the tasteless imitation castle built by the wealthy brewer. The new world's "fresh green breast" is becoming a wasteland; this is symbolized by an oppressive figure of desolation:

". . . a certain desolate area of land. This is a valley of ashes—a fantastic farm where ashes grow like wheat into ridges and hills and grotesque gardens; where ashes take the form of houses and chimneys and rising smoke and . . . ash-gray men who move dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air."

In the film, for a moment, we see a heap of rusting tin cans.

Above this desolation appears a sign, an advertisement for an oculist: two gigantic blue eyes surrounded by an enormous pair of spectacles. Blind eyes. "Like God bought himself a pair of eyeglasses so he could watch us better," one of the movie characters remarks, as one of Fitzgerald's never does.

One of the high points of the novel, a short scene that reveals a great deal of Fitzgerald's intentions, takes place when Gatsby introduces Nick to Wolfsheim. Later, Nick asks: "Who is he? . . . an actor? . . . A dentist?" "No, he's a gambler. . . . He's the man who fixed the World's Series back in 1919."

Fitzgerald's narrator, Nick, says:

"The idea staggered me. I remembered, of course, that the World Series had been fixed in 1919, but if I had thought of it at all I would have thought of it as a thing that merely *happened*, the end of some inevitable chain. It never occurred to me that one man could start to play with the faith of fifty million people. . . ."

This scene is cut out, as is the important brief meeting of Nick and Tom after Gatsby's murder. Tom is responsible for Gatsby's death and Nick thinks:

"They were careless people, Tom and Daisy—they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness . . . and let other people clean up the mess they had made. . . ."

Only in an occasional line by Betty Field do we get an echo of the novel's special quality; she is the only one who seems to have caught it. Alan Ladd, as Gatsby, is ludicrous.

theatre

Violence Off-Stage

by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

THIS was to have been a survey piece on the work of the four off-Broadway theatres that have made this the brightest theatre summer New York has seen in many years. The piece was to have included a consideration of The People's Drama's second production, Bertolt Brecht's *The Private Life of the Master Race,* which was to have followed their spirited production of John Wexley's *They Shall Not Die.* But New York's fascist underworld went into action and disordered this schedule. *They Shall Not Die* continues; the Brecht play has been postponed; and my survey piece will have to wait an issue.

In my review of *They Shall Not Die* I spoke of the deliberate use of the play by People's Drama as a weapon against legalistic racism in the courts. Just as the play had been used, and with good effect, as a weapon against the frame-up of the Scottsboro boys some fifteen years ago, so it is being used today as a weapon against the frame-up of the Trenton Six. I do not think it is far-fetched to say that the production has had some part in the recent reversal of the court decision in that case.

That the play is a weapon has since been demonstrated in still another way. Gangs of hoodlums from New York's fascist underground considered it weapon enough to call for a battle. And they set out to counter the weapon with their own typical racists' weapons—fist and club. They might have added the rest of their armory, the knife and the torch, but for the determination of the theatre company.

The hoodlums invaded the lobby, and followed members of the cast on their way home. They beat up George Taksa, the company's manager and Irving Packewitz, one of the members of the cast. At one performance they drove the audience into the street. But their attempts to terrorize the company into stopping the production have failed. And audiences have marched with the actors, to the subway stations, to prevent further violence. Three

of the hoodlums have been identified and arrested.

Instead of closing down the production this attempted intimidation has succeeded in extending the play's run. It was to have ended, after a previous extension, the week in which the attack was made. Now, renewed audience interest, and the resolution of the company, has led to an indefinite extension. In the case of Henry Scott, a Negro member of the cast, this involves a considerable sacrifice. He was to have left, after the run, to take a starring role in the *Deep Are the Roots* road company. But he continues, instead, with the *They Shall Not Die* production, to keep up the fight against the racists.

Readers who may not have seen the production thus have an opportunity to see this history-making play that has dramatically demonstrated, outside its auditorium walls, its power to strengthen the hearts of the decent and to hit the indecent where it hurts.

I would also urge them, if the plays are still on, to see two productions that compare with the best theatre offerings now in New York— the Interplayers production of O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie* at the Carnegie Hall Theatre and the Studio Seven production of Strindberg's *The Father.* More detailed consideration of these and other off-Broadway productions will appear in next month's issue.