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The Schlesinger Fraud, *by* **HERBERT APTHEKER**

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—THE EDITORS.

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Drawings by Bustos, George, Heller, Morado, White, Zalce.

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COVER: The photo of Benjamin J. Davis, Communist and American Labor Party candidate for re-election to the City Council of New York, is by Edward Starr.

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Peekskill

by HOWARD FAST

"GERMANY AWAKE!" That was in back of our minds, deep back, somewhere in the memories overlaid by almost twenty years, with one great war and many small wars in between, with Hitler mouldering in the earth, and Mussolini remembered as something strung up by the heels, like a stuck pig. But when we drove through Peekskill, at half past seven, on the morning of September 4th, we saw the banner slung from housetop to housetop; the dead filth was alive again. "Wake Up America!" it said. "Peekskill Did!" That way the day began which none of us will forget very quickly.

For me, however, and for a few hundred others, it began a week before, on Saturday, the 27th of August. I must tell about that too, for I feel that things can be better understood, and should be better understood. On the 27th of August I discovered that it is not enough for a writer to write of things, no matter how well he observes those things, no matter how clearly he sees those things, no matter how well he tells his tales. A point comes in the anti-fascist struggle where even the most truthful observer must take another step; this I discovered at Peekskill. I had not discovered it before, not during the war, not through any of the many things I had seen and put down on paper.

I was asked to be the chairman of the first scheduled concert, in Peekskill on the 27th. I was spending my vacation in Croton, and I thought it would be nice to be a part of a concert where Paul Robeson sang, in a bowl of green hills and meadows, which is a better amphitheatre for such singers than a concert hall.

I also considered taking my five-year-old daughter with me, since she loves Paul so much, and since an occasion like this would be

well worth remembering. Neighbors up there advised against it. "There have been threats by the Legion," they said. I left the little girl at home, not because I believed in the threats, but because I thought the concert would last too long.

The point is, I didn't believe in the threats. Fascism was an abstraction, an abstraction I understood, but an abstraction nevertheless. For a week before this, I had read in the *Peekskill Evening Star,* a dirty little sheet, typical of our corrupt and rotten press, exhortations to prevent the concert. "The time for tolerance," said this miserable rag, "is over." But hadn't the *Journal-American* issued this same frantic call for violence again and again, and to no effect?

I spent most of that day swimming with my children; we had dinner together; and then I went to the Lakeland Picnic Grounds where the concert was to be held. I arrived there at seven o'clock, an hour before the scheduled time of the concert. One more car was admitted after mine. Then the road was closed—by storm troopers, and no other term fits. Storm troopers they were, some in uniform, some in plain clothes, all of them fitted out with the historic equipment, the brass knucks, the billies, the rocks, the wooden clubs, the lead pipes, and the filthy slogans. Between five and seven hundred of them closed the road, locked us in, and proceeded to attempt the mass murder of fifty men and a hundred and fifty women and children. Only the first two hundred of us, girls and boys who had volunteered as ushers, some concert goers and their children, and a handful of trade unionists, ever entered the grounds; and for the next two and a half hours after the road was closed we fought the storm troopers. And for two and a half hours, the police stood by; hands off, for the police.

We lived—because we organized and fought and maintained our discipline; and we learned about fascism. Half of us had been in some part of the war, the Bulge, the Pacific, Africa, the C.B.I., but we learned about fascism here, and this was a little worse. The lessons were on our skulls, our faces, our bodies; and at the last, when we stood in a tight circle, with the women and children inside, we saw the literal, the great fire into which our books, our music, our pamphlets were tossed, while the storm troopers danced around in a drunken, screaming frenzy.

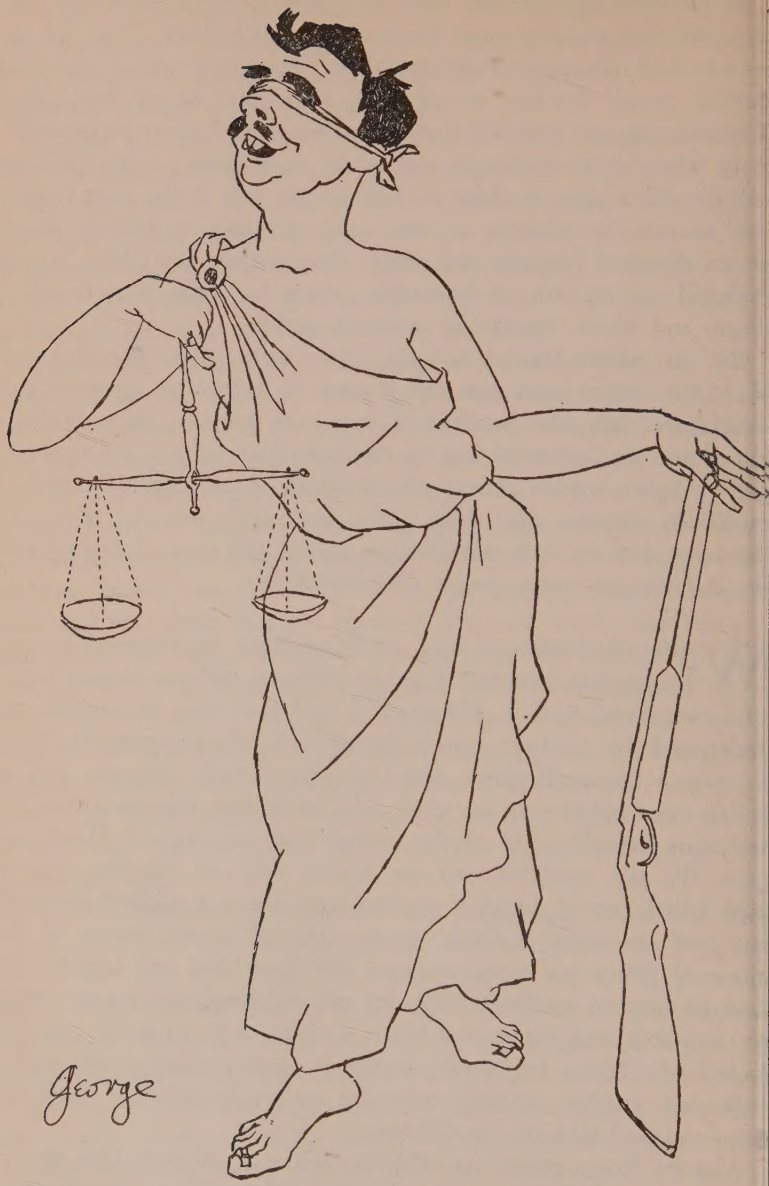
"Wake up, America! Peekskill did."

So we came back a week later, to Peekskill, and we had our concert. We had learned about fascism, so a week later, when we returned, four thousand trade unionists, Negro and white, Jew and Gentile, stood shoulder to shoulder, a living ring of steel. Paul Robeson sang, and Peekskill heard him. We learned about Negro-white unity when thirty-six Negro and white men, alone in the darkness and cut off, fought shoulder to shoulder for two hours, arms linked, and we saw the evidence of that unity, not only in Harlem where fifteen thousand Negroes and whites demonstrated their fury, but in Peekskill on the 4th of September, when we came back together, Negro and white, twenty-five thousand strong.

But we hadn't learned enough. There were twenty-five thousand of us the second time, men and women of diverse backgrounds and beliefs, and only nine hundred of the storm troopers; we were disciplined and we had defending us the best of all fighters, the workers; but we hadn't learned enough of the nature of that peculiar filth that capitalism excretes, that thing called fascism. It was the nature of the beast that we were unwilling to admit; and again I almost took my children and other people did take theirs.

WHEN THAT DAY was over, we knew more, we understood more. Twenty-five thousand of us are different, and our blessed, beautiful, wonderful land is different too; and that must be known and understood. For in the course of that day, the 4th of September, 1949, we saw a thousand police, state troopers, sheriffs, deputies, county police, town police—we saw them join forces with the storm troopers and turn the aftermath of the concert into an orgy of blood and pain. We saw ourselves and our friends and our children covered with blood, beaten, blinded, maimed—we saw a battlefield stretched out over ten miles of road—we saw the sub-human frenzy of the union of police and storm troopers, Ku Klux Klan and Legion—we saw the hospital wards fill with our cut and bleeding—we saw what we had only read about, and when a storm trooper's knife cuts the eyeball of a Negro lad in two, so that it opens up like an egg, and a policeman watches, smiling, there are no words sufficient. This we saw—and, as I said, we are different.

And the Negro people are different—make no mistake. This abomination at Peekskill, the logical extension of Foley Square, was directed



DEWEY AT PEEKSKILL

against them, and against the Jewish people and against the Communists, and they are all different. I am different, and I am not just a writer anymore, and this is something writers who read this must understand, that from here on we must make of our writing a sword that will cut this monster of fascism to pieces, or we will make no more literature. Understand the difference! They thought the people would run, but they didn't run; they stood like a mighty rock—together, Negro and white, Jew and Christian, Communist and Progressive. And the Jews learned that fascism in America is one with anti-Semitism, even as the Negroes learned that fascism in America is another face of Jim Crow. Even as the workers learned that the Communist Party of the United States, like Communist Parties everywhere, will not retreat, will not cower, will not give ground.

On Saturday, the 27th of August, in Peekskill, and on Sunday, the 4th of September, the progressives who came to hear Paul Robeson stood forth for America, for what is best and noblest in America. And the workers know, the Negroes know, the Jews know! The press will scream—but the truth proves out.

Yes, it proves out. There were two busloads of Negroes, and they went, on that same Sunday, to Hyde Park, to spend an hour or two in the library of a man they remembered and loved; and coming back to New York, their buses entered the Peekskill area, and suddenly their day's outing was turned into flying glass, blood, and blinded children. . . .

So the truth proves out. We learned and we grew, and we are wiser, more sober, and less afraid. We have a governor in Albany who welcomed the storm troopers, aided them, and put his cheap stamp of white-washing approval on their work; but we have a people in our state who do not want fascism and are willing to pay a price to halt it. Halt it we shall!

PROLOGUE TO A NOVEL

Morten the Red

by MARTIN ANDERSEN NEXO

We are happy to present the Introduction to Nexö's new novel, Morten the Red, *which was begun under the Nazi occupation of his homeland. The book, a sequel to* Pelle the Conqueror, *will be published in this country by Gaer Associates.*—The Editors.

BY CHANCE an open letter from Morten to Pelle has come into my hands. As far as I can see it has never been published, and it is even doubtful whether Pelle read it. It is directed, as it were, to his deathbed, and it is impressive to read this message between two men who at one time were as intimately associated as if they had been Siamese twins but who were forced apart by circumstances. If we look back at these two men's actions and conduct from the turn of the century, the differences between them seem enormous, and we find it hard to understand how they ever worked together. Pelle, heavy and upright but reticent of speech, so slow that he almost seemed to be chewing his cud and so veiled that one never knew when he was leading the masses or when they were leading him. And Morten, open and forthright, clear in all his outlines, about whom one could not be mistaken.

Morten was no hypocrite; it never occurred to him to hide his opinions. When Pelle reproached him for this during their heated encounters, and stated in front of their hearers that Morten was no politician, Morten answered with a smile: "I suppose you mean no diplomat. Diplomacy is for people who are steering between different political views." In Morten's opinion it was Pelle and his group who were not politicians; they wanted to compromise day by day with the future, and that would wreck them. The man who carried a real cargo and knew his course did not need to sail with dark lanterns.

Perhaps, after all, the main point was this: Pelle did not quite trust the masses and did not believe they should be told everything. They were not mature, and besides it gave the opposition a chance to discover one's plans. On the other hand Morten wanted the rank and file to have complete power and responsibility; the movement should be clear to everyone. Confused ideas were to him an evil; the proletarian battle was a battle against chaos. Nor did he feel there was anything to hide from his opponents. On the contrary. The more clearly the program for a new age was visible to the whole world the better for the workers' movement.

This letter also gave striking evidence of Morten's bravery and his shining faith in the future. The contrast between Pelle, conceding everything and, as it were, dying, and Morten, with his unshakable faith in the future, moved me deeply and made me start a work that for a number of years has been within me as a constant urge, namely to write the story of Morten's and Pelle's manhood days, describe the strange relation between their destinies which were to follow the same path but which separated and yet could not entirely leave each other—a path always intersecting so that those who journeyed on it were continually in collision.

As I said, I have wanted to do this for many years. Pelle, Ditte and Morten were for me a sort of trinity, and in that trio Morten was the man of the new generation. But it was always an effort. For a time Pelle's brilliant success blotted out everything else: there seemed to be no room for anyone but him in the proletarian movement. And when he not only rested on his laurels but seemed to come to a standstill and lived by talking big about what had been achieved, it was really difficult to see any path ahead. Everything was foggy, and in the fog the workers went round and round treading on each others' heels. Now there is a clear vision again; Pelle and what he represented was only a phase which is now disappearing. Now everyone can see that their results were more apparent than real and that the attempt to unite the proletariat and the bourgeoisie was a barren hope. Those ideas that got Morten in wrong with the crowd and often isolated him entirely have been proved right. There *was* a path ahead, and it was in that direction that his whole being and his words pointed.

But it is not so simple to begin a large new task when one is past seventy—even if one has both the will and disposition. One feels

so much resistance, not recognized before: the machinery creaks; it is hard to start; it will not function at its best. One can no longer always strike while the iron is hot, nor work night and day full tilt when the foundation finally is laid. And then there are so many distractions, more now than ever. The sun is shining outside, the tomato plants seem to be crying out for the removal of the excess shoots so that the fruit can ripen, the hedge should be cut once more this year. Enjoy the light and the air and physical toil before it is too late—that is the inner call that one continually feels.

I have settled down in the garden so as to satisfy some of that elemental craving for existence and at the same time get started on my task. But there is not much peace for concentration; this ordinary day, usually so still and calm, has an undertone of excitement that affects both landscape and human beings and makes the light quiver.

The planes buzz incessantly above my head; now they are booming away to the west, now they are holding maneuvers up above, circling around one another and turning somersaults like birds at play. In my thoughts it is not far from them to the war fronts where men are killing one another according to contract and being rewarded according to the size of the pools of blood they can produce with their hellish machines; and it is a still shorter distance to the millions of weeping women and children on the home front. Blood and tears, those are the undertones of our existence today, and even this peaceful landscape must vibrate to them.

Out on the road the wagons roll past with their loads of peat; that is the world war. The farmers greet me with a nod or a wave of their whip—that too is the world war. Till recently they treated me as if I did not exist—or even worse; now that the country is occupied they have forgiven me.

It is late summer. The heat of the day increases; but there is something capricious in the air, a change between the moods of spring and autumn that indicates the passing of the real summer. The grain is piled up; it is quivering with moisture and cannot be brought inside. The harvest is sparse, after a hard winter and a dry spring; it looks as if nature too was helping to produce an age of savagery and famine. Everything indicates a severe winter with hunger and cold for the poor, that is for most of the people of Denmark, "the fortunate land."

On the lawn my little girl is playing, digging in the beds and emptying the earth from her toy pail onto my paper. "May has got something to eat for you," she says, "I'm sure you'll be glad. Do you love me?" Every few moments she comes and puts her chubby little paw on my thigh, asking if I love her. What a question! She is a gift, a caress from life itself to one who does not wish to give way to old age. As she dashes untiringly from one thing to another her voice goes on incessantly like a sweet-sounding bell. A little two-year-old child! And yet she changes everything, makes me forget both the war and the occupation, makes the day and the sun even brighter.

There is something about a home, sheltered by dear and faithful hearts, that makes one invulnerable. A great deal of poison can be hurled at a man without injury when he is protected by the warmth of close friends. This last year has brought a little of everything; well-intentioned malice seems to flourish here. But it has all rebounded from the walls of our home: after every deluge outside we have become more happy within.

On the road families are cycling past, late summer visitors on the way from the fjord to the capital. They are as brown as Indians from their stay on the beach; nothing can stop physical culture. Nor bravery either. They often shout a word of abuse over the fence or talk loudly to each other so as to insult me. "They ought to ride him on a rail!" cries a well-burnt father, cycling in the midst of a group of old and young women and children. And his flock shriek their happy assent. "Father, is that the house I ought to spit on?" asks a boy who sits in front of his father on a bicycle.

MY WIFE appears at the garden door. Tall and erect, she stands there gazing at me with kind eyes. I can see that she has heard what has been said. She comes over, puts her hand on my shoulder, and steals a look at the manuscript. "Can't you get peace for your work?" she asks considerately. And suddenly we both burst out laughing. "When will they learn wisdom? Now they have something more serious to think about than their fury about Finland. I don't admire your countrymen now," she says.

"And I don't admire yours," I answer with a smile, pointing to the air. An airplane approaches with a loud noise; it flies so low that the air-stream loosens the lightning rod on the chimney. We both duck

involuntarily. "A great big bird!" May calls out from the bed where she is digging. "You would be better indoors," says my wife, looking up at the lightning rod. "There you'll have more peace from your countrymen and mine too."

We use this expression, but neither of us is so patriotic that the slightest disagreement could arise between us on that account. We have both learned to distinguish between a people and its rulers; on our travels we have learned that people everywhere are kind, peaceful and helpful even where a government is brutal and belligerent. *Our* countrymen cut across national boundaries; they are found scattered widely in every land. Many a prejudice and enmity has risen from patriotic feeling; certainly it has seldom been a source of peaceful rivalry—rather of stupid self-glorification. It makes one feel human to get rid of nationalistic blinkers. So that one can still love one's country, love what she can and ought to be—not a careful mother for some of her children and an unnatural parent for most of them, but a good mother to them all. Yes, it will be a better and a more valid patriotism if one does not approve of everything that grows within the country but only that which is worthy. In my opinion, if a Danish quality is to be of value, my German wife must also be able to esteem it; and then it turns out, after we have discussed it, to be ultimately a universal quality.

I can hear the caterpillar close by; crunch, crunch, he is eating away at the cabbages we should have for the threatening winter, a winter dangerously lacking in vitamins. Looked at superficially, the whole thing is merely an innocent game of beautiful butterflies—and its inevitable concomitant phenomenon, the ruined cabbages. What if we united here at home and killed the butterflies? Life has enough beauty without them, and the cabbages would be better off—also the poor. The butterflies might well be spared from the Danish scene—and all the other splendid parasites too; the nation as a whole would be better off—in vitamins, in character. It is horribly deficient in both. That is perhaps why it is so hard to imagine our country different from what it is.

A strange swelling sound gushes forth through the open door, a chorus of a hundred thousand voices mixed with tears, as if from a sinking world. It is the "all-song"; my son has turned on the radio: "The King of Kings" and "God Protect Denmark." From the whole

country arise prayers that seem to come from the dwellings of the damned; the radio collects them all; the nation calls on heaven through a tube. It sounds terrible—something like the wreck of the *Titanic*—and a touch of the Oxford movement! Has the Danish nation no other means of meeting adversity than to rise up, hold one another's hands, and sing "Nearer My God to Thee"? Or are they just supers, in the hands of cynical stage managers? Oh, if only for once the sounds could go the other way too! Then, with all the strength of my lungs, I would shout into the radio to the Danish people: *Help yourself and God will help you!*

The country people behave in different ways. Some react hysterically to the events, look furious and go around haphazardly uttering enigmatic threats. They usually wear high boots and like to rush off on motorcycles. Some of them have been in Finland as volunteers but do not wish to talk about it; they have no scars. But in most people there is not much to see; they do not join in the "all-song" but mind their own business; their eyes reveal that they are turning affairs over in their minds. They are inquirers, and the inquirer does not commit himself to any side. During the Finnish War they turned their heads aside when they passed by; now, after the occupation, they give me a nod and stop for an occasional chat. Most of them are *L.S.* people [a reactionary organization of landholders] and are more or less embittered; but they will not open up.

HERE too many friends pass, workmen and clerks, vacationers coming back or victoms of the rapidly increasing unemployment. I can recognize them by the greeting they give me as they go by. And by their packs; nearly all have some camping equipment: a little tent or sleeping-bag tied on the back of their bicycles. These comrades are not spoiled. Some of them have camped as volunteers in Spain and their scars and deformities still show.

And some of them look in for a little while to rest. "What do you think of the situation?" is usually their first question. "It's grim, isn't it A good thing we have Russia." This gives them a feeling of security that nothing can disturb. They differ on the whole from all the others because of the bright view they take about what is happening; neither persecution on the part of employers and the secret police nor the prospects of even stricter regulations against themselves can depress

them. They are thin—and alert; they all belong to the groups that are at present the worst off in the country and at the same time make the greatest sacrifices for what is their dream—a better Denmark for their children and grandchildren. To realize this dream they make raids on their own poor existence, often take the very bread from their mouths and feel all the richer. They are the finest material from which to build a new nation, this group of men and women who are looked upon as lepers by the rest of the community and treated accordingly. If they did not exist, I should feel myself terribly alone outside of the precincts of my home.

When Heinzle comes in with sandwiches and beer or coffee, they refuse to take anything; they don't need anything, they have just eaten a couple of biscuits in a ditch or dispatched a good bowl of porridge before they left home. But all the same they can . . . "you can always eat something in these damned times! We haven't been full enough at any time these last few years to refuse a decent meal."

They follow Heinzle with their eyes as she goes in. "You have a good comrade there—and so have we. And she's the daughter of a military man—and German too. Then why the devil shouldn't you hold your head up in spite of your age and everything else—with nice kids and a fine wife? The other day I ran into an old-timer with a pension—a fellow who was in the movement once but has left us, you know. He said you had been there from the beginning; and you were always surrounded by a bunch of children. You came along with a new wife and a new bunch of kids each year, he said."

"No, only every twentieth year," I replied with a smile.

"Well, I don't see why you shouldn't. Just you keep young. We need you terribly." And in leaving they shake hands with a friendliness that warms the spine.

A good many unemployed pass by, those who have given up everything and gone off on the road. They come from nowhere and have nowhere to go; they just go around in a circle in their idleness, with the gangling pace that is peculiar to them—and stop at the gate. There they stand staring with empty gaze in front of them, a little vague; then they move along or come in, fumbling and retiring as if they have lost all sense of direction. It is sad to see these homeless creatures approach a human habitation, exhausted and hungry, with their hesitating glance, with a fatalistic expectation that they will find a dog

at their heels or a servant about their ears. They usually go in pairs; it lessens the chance of getting something, but loneliness is even worse for human beings than hunger.

THERE were two here this morning, one tall and one short. They stood inside the gate, walking as if they had fallen from a strange planet and could not adjust themselves. They moved vaguely towards the house, but went past the main entrance to the back; then they emerged again on the other side, just where I was sitting. "Did you look at the kitchen garden?" I asked. "I beg your pardon, but we are out of work," said the shorter one, reaching to his head, where at one time I suppose there had been a cap. "We didn't see anyone sitting here and so we looked all around to find the kitchen. Excuse me, but where is the kitchen?"

"It's over at the other side, and there's food there. I expect you are hungry."

The little fellow laughed; his companion gave a grunt. "That's a very mild way of putting it," he said. "You don't fill your belly by walking the roads. Even if you can imagine the ditches are full of the nicest food—nettle salad and rose of sharon to steep in schnapps, and a lot of tripe like that—that's all right for a cow, but not for folks like us. Well, we'll find the kitchen door all right, comrade. Don't be afraid, sir, that we'll steal anything from the garden. We may be hogs, but we don't root."

"Just sit down here and I'll get you something to eat."

"You know they yell with fright sometimes, the womenfolk, when we knock. And the men get mad as hell when they see us. It's not easy for a man out of work to fit into the world."

The little fellow does all the talking; the taller one grunts his assent. They have sat down at my table and are taking it easy; their faces have lost their apathetic expression; their eyes have a human look. I can see that they are wondering what sort of man I am; they keep on looking at my papers.

"I don't suppose that's your will you are making," the shorter one suddenly says with a twinkle in his eye.

"We might call it that," I reply with a smile.

The big fellow bends over him and whispers something in his ear, putting an enormous paw in front of his mouth.

"Jesus!" exclaims the little fellow, jumping up. "Here's my book to show I was a Party member." He pulls a ragged object from his pocket. "Of course I'm not a member any longer; a tramp doesn't belong anywhere; but I *was* one. And my mother still is; every Sunday she runs up and down stairs with the paper, although she is over seventy. I daren't show myself at home; she'd bawl me out because I haven't kept up my membership. But, what the hell! A tramp! But all the same I can have my own honest opinion, can't I, comrade?" He pokes the big fellow jokingly.

"Aw, shut up," mutters the other.

"I'll tell you, he's a Stauningite; he believes in Chamberlain and Blum and all that riffraff. He almost sold himself to Mannerheim to be chopped up, but they didn't dare to take him there in the cattle market where they pick the ones that are going to be slaughtered. He looked too ragged; so of course they thought he was a Bolshevik and only wanted to go up there to put lice into the fur coats of the Finns."

"You know that's a lie," says the big fellow uncertainly.

"Oh, is it?" replies the shorter one. He pauses suddenly as my wife comes out with a stack of rye sandwiches and coffee.

"That looks like something good," says the big fellow as he starts eagerly on the food.

"Yes, so far we haven't begun to mix bark in the bread here in this country; but I dare say we'll come to it. We already have a lot to thank *you* for—your health, comrade!" He raises his cup to his tall friend.

"We slept in a barn last night," he says turning to me. "On a big farm away over to the east. The farmer chased us off when we asked for a night's lodging. He said to us jeeringly: 'We are cleaning up; now you'll have to work in this country instead of running around begging.' 'We want to work,' I answered. But when it came to a showdown he had nothing to offer us. So we beat it, but one of the laborers came after us and took us in the back way to the barn. Do you know the big farmer gets margarine cards for the people of the township? When the order about margarine first came out they had to eat dry bread for their sandwiches, but then they kicked up a fuss and threatened to leave. They said there was plenty of butter made on the farm. Butter! The farmer nearly had a fit! But then the situation was saved. Your health, comrade! Hats off for our labor government!"

Soon after they had gone an enormous policeman comes in. "Have you had a couple of tramps here?" he asks arrogantly; he scarcely bothers to take his hat off.

"There are so many people coming and going. Perhaps we shouldn't agree about which of them were 'tramps'."

"I expect you know who I mean. We can't have people running around begging on the roads. They've got to work now."

"For nothing, I suppose?" I reply with a smile.

He stands there looking at me with a bulldog expression. For a moment he looks as if he will attack me. Then he turns around and goes out through the gate. Once on the road he seems to sniff the scent, then he jumps on his cycle and disappears westward—the same way as the two men had gone. What was it his expression reminded me of? Where had I seen that bulldog type before? I remembered: in the old Prussia, before the First World War.

TODAY seems to be bewitched. Scarcely have I taken up my pencil and written a few lines when the garden gate flies open with a bang. A powerful weatherbeaten head of hair on top of an equally weatherbeaten face rises up from the bushes along the entrance, then a pair of naked muscular arms—and bare knees like the pistons of a locomotive. Turning the corner as if he was going to run me down, he jumps off right in front of me and flings the fully loaded cycle aside. "Good day—and goodby too!" he says, pressing my hand with desperate strength. He always seemed strong and resolute; today he seems to be an accumulation of will-power and energy—almost of latent despair. I cannot avoid the thought: what if he should break loose and run amuck!

I have known him for a long time and have always rather liked him. Today I am a little anxious about him. He has been out of work for years, doing a little fishing in Roskilde fjord and keeping the wolf from the door for himself and his family by communal help. It was neither life nor death, and now he is tired of this confounded down-hill process. "You go quietly to the dogs," he says, "and before you know it you are at the bottom and never get up again." Now he is on his way to town to try and sell a liter of blood; he has heard that they are buying human blood for twenty-five kroner a liter at the blood bank. He curves his strong naked arm so that the veins swell on the

upper part. With the twenty-five kroner he will buy a bag of used sea-clothes and try to get a sailor's job on the Baltic—there's no other prospect just now. Once out there, he can desert—and desert again if necessary. If things go well and he gets to where they are sailing with contraband, then his fortune is made. Out there a stoker gets a thousand kroner a month and more. It's touch and go, of course, but why shouldn't he manage? "No one can eat me," he says with a revealing smile. "I have a wife and child, a fine little lass like yours there—so one has to risk something. They have never gone hungry—I'm proud of that, I can tell you. I'd rather smash a window and help myself. Many a time I've almost done it. When I've earned four or five thousand kroner I'll buy a small farm. Then we'll always be sure of food."

His plan seems pretty wild to me. But I have not the heart to advise him against it. Everything else is just as crazy, here at home and in the nearby countries; so who can take the responsibility of giving advice and showing the way where there is no way? And perhaps he will win through anyhow.

All the same it is best to move inside; out here I cannot work; the day makes too many demands on one. First I must give my roses some of that fine horse-manure that is lying outside after so many peat-wagons have passed. Formerly cars dashed by every moment; now the horses have once again taken possession of the roads. The asphalt is full of imprints from their shoes. Horseshoes are supposed to bring luck, and the peat has at any rate brought money to some who were pretty badly off here. But God help those who get the last of the peat, the poor in the town; it costs money even to be cold in winter. "One man's living is another man's death"—that should be the Danish slogan today.

"Well, there's something comes out of the war," says a peatcutter as he stops his cart for a moment to watch me getting the manure. "But otherwise there doesn't seem to be much for us to earn this time. What does an author like you think of it? You know more about what's going on in the world than the next person."

"Do you think so? But it's not so long ago that I wasn't allowed to have anything to say. You burned my books, and some of you even thought I ought to be shot for my opinions."

"Well, after all that didn't happen. And now the new authorities have confiscated our rifles." His eyes twinkle as he says this.

"Yes, so that you shouldn't carry out your threats against me."

He gives me a searching look. "Surely it's not as bad as that? But it's all right; it will be all right. If only there could be a little something for us farmers too."

"You have the peat, you know."

"No, that's just a little extra. If only it costs as much as coke!" He says giddap angrily to his horses and drives off, but when he has gone a little way he turns around on his load and waves his whip.

POR LA PAZ!

As we go to press, the American Continental Congress for Peace is being held in Mexico City. In our next issue we will present the notable speech made there by Pablo Neruda and a first-hand report by Lloyd L. Brown who is representing *M&M* at the Congress.

The woodcuts reproduced on the following pages are from a folio of anti-war drawings prepared for the congress by members of the Taller de Grafica popular.

—The Editors

ATOM BOMB, *by Alfredo Zalce*

IMPERIALIST "AID," *by Arturo Garcia Bustos*

MARSHALL PLAN, *by J. Chavez Morado*

The Schlesinger Fraud

by HERBERT APTHEKER

DURING the past few years the best publicized American theoretician of the self-titled non-Communist "left"—or the N.C.L., as the group is fondly called by the State Department—has been Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. Winner of a Pulitzer Prize, associate professor of history at Harvard, a founder of Americans for Democratic Action, Mr. Schlesinger has also been a frequent contributor to such distinguished periodicals as *Collier's, Saturday Evening Post, New Leader, Partisan Review, Nation, New Republic, Saturday Review of Literature, New York Times Magazine,* and Henry Luce's *Fortune* and *Life.*

Just now there appears the essence of these numerous papers in a volume entitled *The Vital Center.** This is a good occasion to examine the methodology, argument, and program of Mr. Schlesinger, particularly in view of the fact that he epitomizes the N.C.L. intellectual.

While engaged in this enterprise I thought of Dante's description of the battle between a serpent and a man in the bowels of Hell, wherein finally the man sinks down himself a serpent and glides hissing away. For Mr. Schlesinger is terribly concerned about a being he calls a Communist. This creature, he says, is possessed by "a consuming envy," "a passion for violence," "an appetite for gangsterism." The Communist is also, this psychoanalytical expert finds, a "lonely and frustrated" person seeking among other things "sexual fulfillment" from assorted comrades. That "the personal word of the Communist is worthless" is, of course, clear, and while after all this one would have thought it superfluous, Mr. Schlesinger nevertheless makes quite explicit his conviction—which he seems to feel is very important—that "cooperation with him is impossible."

* Houghton Mifflin Co., $3.00. This will be the source for all quotations from Mr. Schlesinger, unless otherwise indicated.

In the midst of this gentle chiding, Mr. Schlesinger pauses to scold Communists for their "vituperative" language! As for himself and his fellow N.C.L.'ers, he modestly remarks that they seek "to fight for honesty and clarity . . . to restore a serious sense of the value of facts, of the integrity of reason, of devotion to truth."

Never did Marx speak more truly than when he said that "the greater the development of antagonisms between the growing forces of production and the extant social order, the more does the ideology of the ruling class become permeated with hypocrisy . . . the more does the language used by the dominant class become sublime and virtuous."

LET us begin our examination of Mr. Schlesinger's method, of his "devotion to truth," by giving a few typical examples of his use of quotations. The professor of history is writing of Lenin:

> "With his call in 1902 for the professional revolutionary, he set in motion the Communist process of taking the revolution away from the people. We need, he said, a 'small compact core, consisting of reliable, experienced and hardened workers, with responsible agents in the principal districts, and connected by all the rules of strict secrecy with the organizations of revolutionists.' This tight, disciplined élite, plotting in secrecy and mistrusting the world, impregnated Bolshevism with conspiratorial obsessions which easily survived the conquest of power in 1917. This conspiratorial paranoia has become the conditioned reflex of Communism."

Now, what did Lenin say, and in what connection, that leads Mr. Schlesinger to point to this passage as a seminal one in the paranoia characteristic of Communists? The date is indeed 1902 and the place is Czarist Russia. Lenin is discussing *not* Party activity, but trade-union activity (illegal at the time) and specifically is criticizing the cumbersome and elaborate rules for trade unions proposed by the St. Petersburg Economists. In this connection Lenin wrote:

> "A small, compact core, consisting of reliable, experienced and hardened workers, with responsible agents in the principal districts and connected by all the rules of strict secrecy with the organizations of revolutionaries, can, with the wide support of the masses and without an elaborate organization, perform *all* the functions of a trade union organization, and perform them, moreover, in the manner Social-Democrats desire. Only in this way can we secure

the *consolidation* and development of a *Social-Democratic* trade union movement, in spite of the gendarmes." ("What Is To Be Done?" in *Selected Works,* II, pp. 133-134; italics in original.)

If Schlesinger had quoted Lenin honestly, what would have become of his argument?

Again, Schlesinger "quotes" Lenin. He is intent upon boldly exposing the deceitfulness of the Bolsheviks, and so he offers this as from Lenin:

> "Between 1903 and 1912, there were periods in which we were formally united with the Mensheviks . . . but we *never* ceased our ideological and political struggle against them."

When and in what connection is Lenin speaking? The time is 1920, and Lenin, in his *"Left-Wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder,* is arguing against sectarianism; he is showing how the Bolsheviks united with others in particular struggles but maintained their independent position and their right to criticize. So, Lenin says:

> "Between 1903 and 1912 there were periods of several years in which we were formally united with the Mensheviks in one Social-Democratic Party; but we *never* ceased our ideological and political struggle against them on the grounds that they were opportunists and vehicles of bourgeois influence among the proletariat."

Again, Schlesinger "quotes" Eugene Dennis in an effort to prove that Communists have no honest interest in winning immediate gains for the masses. So, he writes:

> "Eugene Dennis put it simply in his post-election analysis: The 'main dangers' at present, he said, 'are that Mr. Truman will make concessions on domestic social issues.' The choice of words illuminates vividly the Communist attitude toward the welfare of the common man in the United States."

Mr. Schlesinger cites as his source for this quotation the *New York Times* of November 14, 1948. When one turns to this paper one finds that the only words of Mr. Dennis directly quoted by the *Times* are "main dangers" and that the remaining "choice of words" offered by Mr. Schlesinger as Dennis' are the paraphrasing of Dennis by that non-partisan newspaper! The *Times* states: "The 'main dangers' at present, he says, are that Mr. Truman will make concessions on domestic social issues. . . ."

When we turn to what Eugene Dennis did say (as reported in full

in *The Worker,* November 14, 1948, from which the *Times* says it is "quoting") we find it to be quite unlike what the *Times* sought to imply and directly contrary to what Mr. Schlesinger asserts.

> "What, we may now ask [wrote Mr. Dennis], are some of the main dangers in the post-election period? For one thing, the Dewey-G.O.P. defeat undoubtedly creates some temporary illusions about Truman, the Democratic Party and the new Congress. But while the Administration may make certain maneuvers and concessions to the people . . . and may go easy on frontal attacks against the trade union movement it will proceed with the North Atlantic-Western Union war alliance and with other key aspects of the imperialist bi-partisan war program . . . *the key task in advancing the cause of peace, security and democracy, is the fight for partial economic and political demands on the broadest united front basis*" (italics in original).

Observe that a central feature of Schlesinger's misquotations is the calculated omission of any reference to the repeated calls for mass unity—Lenin, "with the wide support of the masses"; Dennis, "broadest united front basis." This is in line with one of Schlesinger's central motives—to prevent such unity among all progressives in the face of developing reaction, to persuade the people that, as he puts it, "cooperation with the Communists is impossible."

Occasionally Mr. Schlesinger, to vary the monotony, borrows quotations made out of whole cloth by fellow-mythologists. Thus we find Lenin saying: "Trade unionism signifies the mental enslavement of the workers to the bourgeoisie"—but this is from David Shub's *Lenin* as shoveled up by Schlesinger, and Shub's work has as much in common with Lenin as the quoted sentence has with this one: "The workers' organizations for carrying on the economic struggle should be trade union organizations; every Social-Democratic worker should, as far as possible, support and actively work inside these organizations." (Lenin, *Selected Works,* II, p. 128).

Soon Shub will be borrowing from Schlesinger, and *New Leader* or *Life* readers will learn that Lenin said: "Nothing has ever been more unsupportable for a man and a human society than freedom." True, Lenin "says" this in the course of an Orwellian fantasy spun by Mr. Schlesinger in which he concocts a three-page long conversation between Lenin and Lincoln. Here the historian at last soars freely, unrestrained even by the fetters of misquotation.

Schlesinger's mendacity takes forms more direct than that of misquotation or fantasy. Space limits us to two examples: In the course of proving the iniquitousness of Communists he says in reference to Dr. Max Yergan, that they "beat him up physically and looted his office." This is a bare-faced lie. I was and am a member of the Executive Board of the Council on African Affairs and actively participated in the successful struggle to remove Dr. Yergan from his position therein as Executive Secretary. It is true that Dr. Yergan—being unable to explain very serious financial irregularities—turned to Red-baiting. It is true that in the course of this he *accused* members of the Board of having assaulted him and looted his office, but it is also true that the police authorities—not unfriendly to Yergan—found his story so obviously concocted that they refused even to begin proceedings on these fake charges.

Again, to prove the deviousness of the Communist Party, Mr. Schlesinger twice asserts that it opposed the enactment of the Mundt-Nixon Bill in 1948 only in order to obtain its passage, a display of pathological reasoning that I have already analyzed in *Masses & Mainstream* (September, 1948).

All this our Pulitzer Prize historian offers in his noble attempt, as he puts it, "to restore a serious sense of the value of facts"!

THERE IS another quality in Mr. Schlesinger's writing that requires brief notice, and that is his insufferable arrogance. (One is prepared for this by his touching plea for humility.) He exemplifies this by tossing aside the monumental work of the Webbs, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization,* the finest flowering of fifty years of devotion to the social sciences, as "dreamlike." He proceeds instead on the basis of his own laborious researches in the files of Hearst's *Journal-American* to weep for the apathetic, tormented, enslaved Soviet peoples. Similarly, the opinions on the struggles in Spain of Señor Del Vayo, outstanding authority and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Spanish Republic, are dismissed as "devotional essays," while "the role of the Communists in delivering Spain to fascist tyranny" is buttressed by citations from George Orwell, associate of Trotskyites in the P.O.U.M. in Spain.

In some instances Schlesinger's arrogance becomes positively laughable. Thus, this bourgeois-begotten, -nurtured and -bound intel-

lectual describes Karl Marx as "so characteristically a bourgeois intellectual"! Again, in "explaining" the absence of unrest and rebellion in the hell he calls the U.S.S.R., he remarks that "modern science has given the ruling class power which renders mass revolutions obsolete"—this at a time when the "modern science" of world imperialism has stood in impotent rage before the revolution of the Chinese people.

Schlesinger's *general technique* of argument is worth some attention. It consists largely of slipping the maximum number of falsifications into the minimum number of words. We offer again some typical examples.

In his introduction to a recent collection of the *Writings and Speeches of Eugene V. Debs,** Mr. Schlesinger states: "His own career disproved his repeated assertion that capitalism would destroy political freedom." To the mind of Schlesinger the fact that Debs was a Presidential candidate while an inmate of a Federal penitentiary "proves" the existence of political freedom! We shall return to Mr. Schlesinger's concepts of freedom shortly, but here we want to point out not only the absurdity of the sentence, but its dishonesty. For reading it, one would believe that Debs had asserted—repeatedly—that capitalism "*would* destroy" political freedom. Debs never said anything of the sort, for Debs was a Marxian Socialist, and he understood the class character of the bourgeois state. He knew and spent much of his life trying to show the American people that where there was capitalism there *could not be* "political freedom"; rather than saying that capitalism would destroy political freedom, he said—repeatedly—that the achievement of this freedom in any real sense was possible only with the elimination of capitalism and that the struggle *for* this freedom was simultaneously a struggle *against* capitalism.

Returning to *The Vital Center,* we find the following paragraph: "There is even a clause in the [Communist] Party constitution forbidding 'personal or political relations with enemies of the working class.' But this does not have to be invoked often. Most Communists voluntarily renounce non-Party friendships and activities."

Here Mr. Schlesinger is trying to establish the "lonely," "frustrated," and generally abnormal character of American Communists. Notice the method: you point to the Communists' principled opposition to enemies of the working class and then equate such enemies with all

* Hermitage Press, N. Y., 1948.

non-Party people. Later, however, when he wishes to show the insidious, conspiratorial character of Communists, Schlesinger dilates upon their "infiltration into mass organizations."

The facts, of course, are simple and the Party's constitution is quite explicit. It says (Art. IX, sec. 4): "Personal or political relations with enemies of the working class and nation are incompatible with membership in the Communist Party." And further (Art. IV, sec. 11): "Every Party member in a mass organization shall work to promote and strengthen the given organization and protect the interests of its members."

One more example. Schlesinger speaks again: "Police raids, F.B.I. penetration and civil persecution have fortified the Communist belief that they are a small and ill-armed band, acting in a ruthlessly hostile environment, and justified in using any methods to advance their cause." The unguarded reader might at first glance take this to be some sort of mild rebuke against the current rape of civil liberties by the Truman administration. But observe: The "raids," "penetration," and "persecution" have but "fortified" the already existing Communist "belief" that the Party members are really "justified in using any methods to advance their cause." Observe, too, the charged word, "ill-armed." Well, given the cause of Communism to be, as Schlesinger repeatedly says, chaos and tyranny, and given the existence of a belief among Communists that any methods are justified in advancing such a cause, does this not make heroes out of the raiders, penetraters, and persecutors of such an organization? Is this not ideological preparation for more Peekskills?

Before entering into a specific analysis of the ideology and program of Mr. Schlesinger, there remains another Schlesingerian tactic to be examined. Our scholar is fond of creating his own definitions to suit his particular argument. Two examples of this will be offered.

The first example concerns the term *Lumpenproletariat,* and in examining the paragraph in which Schlesinger's definition appears, the reader will observe the use to which he puts his definition.

> "Marx recognized [writes Schlesinger] that many workers were not Marxists and so invented [!] a classification called the *Lumpenproletariat* in which were dumped those who did not live up to theory. Lenin recognized this too and so invented [again!] a disciplined party which announced itself as the only true representative

of the proletariat, reducing non-Communist workers to political non-existence."

Surely, even in this era of a bourgeoisie gone berserk, no more vicious nonsense has been packed in so small a space as in that last quotation. With some effort we restrict our comments to Mr. Schlesinger's newly-discovered meaning for *Lumpenproletariat* and refer him to the *Communist Manifesto,* with which the history professor must be familiar notwithstanding Harvard's well-known and understandable fear of Marx and Engels. In that *Manifesto,* Marx and Engels wrote, a century ago:

> "The 'dangerous class,' the social scum (*Lumpenproletariat*), that previously rotting mass thrown off by the lowest layers of old society, may, here and there, be swept into the movement by a proletarian revolution; its conditions of life, however, prepare it far more for the part of the bribed tool of reactionary intrigue."

A second interesting definition offered by Schlesinger is that of the term "exceptionalism." The definition comes in the midst of and as part of his futile effort to show the foreign nature of the Communist Party, and while he is lauding the "independence" of Jay Lovestone and Benjamin Gitlow. "The heresy of 'American exceptionalism,'" writes our scholar, is that which holds "that special circumstances in the United States might justify occasional deviations from the Moscow line." Now Mr. Schlesinger, the historian, must know that the most consistent and vocal opponent of "exceptionalism" within the Communist Party has been William Z. Foster, and one would think that adherence to the most elementary tenets of the historical profession would lead him to the writings of Mr. Foster. There he would not have wanted for a definition and an analysis of "exceptionalism." Thus, he would have found, for instance, Foster stating, in discussing Lovestone: "In our Party he developed his theory of 'American exceptionalism,' the substance of which was that capitalism in this country had become so strong and progressive that it was no longer subject to the general economic laws governing the recurring capitalist crises." (*On the Struggle Against Revisionism,* (N. Y., 1946), p. 35).

This corrupt methodology stems from its function. Arising from a decaying social order and attempting to serve as a bulwark of that order, the method fits the ideas.

Schlesinger sees himself as the ideological heir of Theodore Roosevelt (for whom he has much praise), of the Roosevelt who in anger once berated J. P. Morgan for his blatant reactionism which made it so difficult for him to preserve the Morgans. The heirs of Theodore Roosevelt face the task of preserving a capitalism forty years older and so much the more rotten.

Schlesinger makes this quite explicit. In a volume wishfully entitled *Saving American Capitalism,* he wrote: ". . . to reform capitalism, you must fight the capitalists tooth and nail," while the book's editor, in its preface, remarked: ". . . the authors in this volume have in common a disposition to save capitalism. . . . The difficulties increase as, with spreading economic chaos, the rest of the world abandons private enterprise."*

Schlesinger feels this sense of urgency very keenly. Early in his *Vital Center* he warns that

> "The dynamism of capitalism is trickling out in a world where the passion for security breeds merger and monopoly . . . the capitalist system has begun to destroy the psychological interest in its own survival." And he reports that, "Our lives are empty of belief. They are lives of quiet desperation . . . in a society turned asocial."

How, then, rationalize "a disposition to save capitalism"?

There are several steps for the Schlesingers. First, one destroys the alternative—socialism—verbally, of course—by the methods we have already examined. Then one destroys the *possibility* of discovering any other alternative. And how is that accomplished?

It is accomplished, basically, by building a system founded upon the idea of the inherently and hopelessly corrupt nature of Man. Schlesinger does *Masses & Mainstream* the honor of quoting it as representative of his ideological opposition. He cites the conclusion of an analysis of Auden which appeared in our June, 1948, issue:

> "Let us turn from Auden's mummified existentialist man to Maxim Gorky's complete, unambiguous man, the man who has taken his side with the forces of life . . . 'the miracle-worker and the future master of all the forces of nature' . . . The City of Man will be built by those who speak with the voice of Maxim Gorky, not the whine of W. H. Auden."

* Seymour E. Harris, Ed., *Saving American Capitalism* (N. Y., 1948).

Mr. Schlesinger disagrees and finds man to be "a creature of doubt and ambiguity, undone by 'the fire and treason crackling' in his blood." It is in this "nature" that he finds "the root of all evil"; it is in man's incessant and insatiable "will to power," in his aggressiveness, which "underlies all social arrangements," that he locates the trouble.* Man's native inadequacies are aggravated, Mr. Schlesinger finds, by industrialism, which requires the modern man to "organize beyond his moral and emotional means." It is "the fundamental cause of our distemper" for "in the end industrialism drives the free individual to the wall." This explains Schlesinger's nostalgia for feudalism: "The protective tissues of medievalism . . . consoled and fortified the bulk of the people"—a remark that would have interested the serfs who, despite their consolation, followed Huss, Tyler, and Muenzer.

The inherent deficiencies of man exacerbated by industrialism and its "technical necessity for organization . . . sets in motion an inevitable tendency toward oligarchy." This tendency exists "under whatever system of ownership" and "no loopholes have yet been discovered in the iron law of oligarchy."

There has been, then, an "unwarranted optimism about man," which has led to the erroneous belief that social reform is possible "by argument," or that "a change in economic institutions" might be relevant to efforts at liberation. And everything returns to the basic postulate: "Most men prefer to flee choice, to flee anxiety, to flee freedom."

So we have this situation: men are incurably evil and this deficiency has been made more tragic by the fact that industrialism has increased the moral and emotional demands made upon this very imperfect being. Given this nature, and seeing it as basic to society's inadequacies and injustices, the socio-economic realities of any society are largely irrelevant to man's real well-being. The tendency towards oligarchy is irresistible and the idea of progress is an "illusion." In sum, to quote a favorite phrase of Mr. Schlesinger's, "all important problems are insoluble"; and this, he insists, must be understood, for based upon this understanding comes man's salvation since "the good comes from the continuing struggle to try and solve them, not from the vain hope of their solution."

In the midst of all this, what has become of Mr. Schlesinger's

* The similarity of this view to that of Reinhold Niebuhr's "sin" is obvious.

"democracy" and of his devotion to "freedom"? These have become not "phrases against capitalism," which Lenin accused his era's philis tines of using; no, in our era and in the United States, the philistines, these men of "hollow gut," as Heine called them, use phrases *for* capitalism. Here and now capitalists are so distraught and so desperate that they frown more and more even upon lip-service to anti-capitalist slogans.*

WE FIND, therefore, that to Schlesinger, the present social order in America—despite "The sin of racial pride [!] which still represents the most basic challenge to the American conscience"—*is* "democracy." "The job of liberalism" is to "devote itself to the *maintenance* of individual liberties and to the democratic control of economic life. . . ." [My emphasis—H. A.] And for this "liberalism" Schlesinger finds that "class conflict is essential if freedom is to be preserved, because it is the only barrier against class domination." Observe, class struggle proves the *absence* of class domination. As a result, in the United States, "The capitalist state . . . has become an object of genuine competition among classes. . . . The function of the state, in other words, is to define the ground rules of the game. . . ." Who made the rules? Who enforces them? Who owns the ball park? Who owns the equipment? Who pays the players and umpires? To whom is the price of admission paid? What is at stake in this "game"? Do not trouble Prof. Schlesinger with such problems —he has already told you they are "insoluble."

Once in a while Mr. Schlesinger forgets himself. Thus, while building up his neutral state overlooking a social order with the greatest

* The American Social-Democrats understand this very well. We will give one example, of very recent vintage. The source is the official organ of the American Social-Democratic Federation, the *New Leader*, of August 27, 1949. Here we find an article entitled "Portrait of a 'Sewer Socialist'" by Anatole Shub. The "sewer socialist" is Irving C. Freese, Socialist Mayor of Norwalk, Connecticut. "Freese calls himself a 'sewer socialist,'" gaily writes Mr. Shub, "and says he's proud of that epithet. . . . In the words of a prominent merchant, 'Freese isn't *really* a socialist . . . he's a sort of non-partisan.' . . . His comptroller is a Republican, his corporation counsel a Democrat." Concluding his joyous piece, Mr. Shub quotes the hero himself: "Right now, a lot of business people are supporting me and they are not ashamed of it. [*They* are not ashamed!] They know it will be a long time before we take their wealth away. . . ."

degree of concentration of wealth ever achieved in history,* he nevertheless will remark: "Never in American history have any administrations served the business community so faithfully—one might well say, so obsequiously—as the Republican administration of Harding, Coolidge and Hoover." And in 1946 Mr. Schlesinger said: "It looks very much as if the conservative businessmen and politicians now running the two parties have, by spontaneous and convulsive agreement, united to drive meaning out of politics." (*Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1946.) And whom did the administrations of Grant, Hayes, Garfield, Arthur, Cleveland, Harrison, McKinley, Roosevelt, Taft and Wilson serve: the Molly Maguires, the debt-ridden farmers, the Negro people, the Haymarket martyrs, the Homestead dead, the Pullman strikers, the coal miners, the steel workers, the Palmer Raid victims, the unemployed, the dead and maimed of two imperialist wars?

I think Professor Schlesinger knows the answer to these questions. I say this because his program does not envisage benevolent behavior by a nebulous and impartial "state." No, on the crucial front of civil liberties we find this vigorous remark: "The Attorney-General's list of subversive groups (whatever the merit of this type of list as a form of official procedure) provides a convenient way of checking the more obvious Communist-controlled groups. . . ." He adds to this two points: he feels that the Attorney-General was "foolish" in including the Socialist Workers Party—Trotskyists—in his list, and that he was negligent in *not* including "organizations like Progressive Citizens of America, which have a large proportion of non-Communist members but rarely, if ever, oppose Communist objectives."

The question of Negro liberation is never even posed; he devotes one page to a Myrdalian lament concerning the "sin of racial pride," and to a sneering reference as to how Communists allegedly "use" Negroes—a reference illuminating Mr. Schlesinger's own concept of the Negro people.

Fascism he finds to be a lower-middle-class movement of an in-

* This is not the place to document this remark, and so universally recognized is its truth that perhaps extended documentation is not necessary. It may be pointed out that the Federal Trade Commission in a report entitled "The Merger Movement" issued July, 1948, reported that, as of 1947, 78 manufacturing corporations had more net working capital *than the total assets of ninety per cent of all manufacturing corporations.* The same Commission in a report issued in August, 1949, stated that 113 corporations owned 46 per cent of the assets of all manufacturing corporations, of which there were some 55,000.

digenous nature, while Nazism was, compared with Communism, an "incomplete" totalitarianism having at any rate the virtue of being "candid."

As to foreign affairs, Mr. Schlesinger feels "the United States is assuming today more vigorously than ever before the role of international champion of political democracy." (*Atlantic Monthly*, October, 1946.) What Mr. Schlesinger's "democracy" is we have already seen, but, in the area of foreign affairs he spells it out for us quite carefully:

> "Without American support no colonial empire can survive. But the abrupt end of empire may well have disastrous economic consequences for the colonizing power. *American funds might well assist in the peaceful expropriation of the imperialists,* helping tide both the colonies and their former possessors over the period of economic readjustment" (my italics—H.A.).

But, while Mr. Schlesinger sees the possibility of Great Britain peacefully getting out of Malaya and Spain out of Morocco and France out of Indo-China—with the inhabitants of these lands just lounging around, of course, while their futures are settled—he does not envisage the possibility of international peace generally. No; war, too, is a problem, an important problem, and since no important problem can be solved, war cannot be prevented. The search for peace, like the search for anything else of social importance, is doomed to failure. Perhaps this is well, for, remarks Schlesinger, "The pursuit of peace . . . easily passes into its bastard substitute, anesthesia."

And this is the voice of *The Vital Center;* this is the voice of the American "Third Force."

The meretriciousness of Schlesinger's method befits the iniquitousness of his ideology. And both methodology and ideology are fitting off-springs of Schlesinger's program—a program groomed to the needs of a ruling class seeking war and fascism.

John Brown

by THEODORE WARD

NOTE: *The following excerpt is taken from Mr. Ward's work in progress* for which he received a Guggenheim Fellowship for 1948-49.*

In May, 1856, when the struggle between the Free Soil and the pro-slavery forces in the Territory of Kansas had reached its major crisis, John Brown and a number of the Free Soil leaders participated in a decision which eventually turned the tide against the advancing, aggressive slave power. This decision was taken in the camp of the Pottawatomie Rifles, where the men of the Osawatomie district were gathering in answer to the call for the defense of Lawrence when the news that it had been sacked and burned was received. They resolved that henceforth they would deal blow for blow against the pro-slavery men and their invading Ruffians, whom they would no longer permit to kill and burn with impunity. As an immediate consequence, five of the most disreputable of the pro-slavery men were taken out in the dead of night and put to death. John Brown was declared an outlaw, and the pro-slavery men dispatched General Reid and a band of 250 Ruffians to wipe out Osawatomie. In the previous scene, John Brown and his little band of thirty men were seen defending the settlement in a fight on the Marias des Cygnes, where despite being outnumbered ten to one, they succeeded in repulsing Reid at the cost of but a single casualty. (SCENE 4 ensues that evening.)

ACT I, Scene 4

SCENE: A thicket near Osawatomie in the Territory of Kansas.
TIME: Twilight, August 30, 1856.

In the background the land is undulated with two small hills slightly transverse and sparsely covered with brush, affording an entrance between them Up-Left. Above them is the horizon, dull with the shroud of approaching night. Down-Right is a little fire with a pot boiling over it, and a wounded man wrapped in a blanket on an improvised stretcher. Three others are present—sons of John Brown. OWEN, *the largest, is squatting like a giant, feeding the flames with little bits of brushwood and twigs.* JASON, *of medium height, stands above him, and* OLIVER, *the youngest but already standing six-feet tall in his stockings, is lying against a saddle in front of the fire at right angle to the wounded man.*

JASON (*Coldly, but obviously perturbed*): You can afford to be complacent, Owen. But if you were lying tonight as John, chained like a wolf in that dungeon at Shawnee Mission, perhaps you'd understand the futility as well as I do.

OWEN (*Quietly*): I think you've begun to miss Ellen too much for your own good.

JASON (*Sharply*): Don't try to cast slurs on my feelings toward my own wife. For all you know she and Wealthy both may have lost their lives today, or suffered worse at the hands of Reid's Ruffians.

OWEN: I am sorry—(*He pokes the fire slowly, then goes on*) But, frankly, Jason, I don't understand you at all of late. I've been watching you. But it does no good. What is it that's wrong with you? I can't believe you are thinking of giving up the cause.

JASON (*After a moment, gazing into the distance*): I'm not so certain it wouldn't be a good idea. Perhaps we all should take a tip from Salmon and Henry Thompson and pack out.

OLIVER (*Sitting up quickly*): And leave Father?

JASON: Yes. If we cannot reason with him.

OWEN: Jason, have you forgotten your oath?

JASON (*Sharply*): I don't see that my oath binds me to live the life of a hunted outlaw!

OLIVER (*Rising abruptly*): I've had about enough! I'll go and join

the rest of the men. (*To* JASON): But you'd better watch your step, Buck, and not let Father get wind of this. (*He starts out.*)

JASON (*Arresting him, sarcastically*): I intend to spare any one the trouble of repeating anything out of school, if that will satisfy your mind!

OLIVER (*Stepping toward him coolly*): If that was meant for me, Jason, I will ask you to take it back! (OWEN *gets to his feet.*)

JASON (*Ominously*): Drop this bristling. I warn you. Even if you are my brother, I do not intend to be mauled!

OLIVER: Then take it back or pull your gun!

OWEN (*Stepping between*): There'll be no fighting. Otherwise you'll have to take me on!

OLIVER: I won't stand to be accused of tattling!

JASON: Then don't try to be so self-righteous and censor my thoughts.

OWEN: Oliver spoke out of turn. But you know very well he's not given to bearing tales.

JASON: All right. Perhaps I did imply more than I should have.

OLIVER (*Going*): Well, don't do it anymore. (*Exit* OLIVER.)

OWEN: You shouldn't have threatened him. You know he's only a kid.

JASON: His muscles have outstripped his brain.

OWEN: What can you expect, when he's only seventeen—Furthermore, you should show more respect for Father—What would the men think if sons of their commander should get at one another's throats?

JASON (*Pointedly*): What difference would it make? We've already earned the reputation of being mad dogs.

OWEN (*Coldly*): Now you're repeating the slanders of our enemies.

JASON (*Quietly*): Can you deny their right to make them?

OWEN (*Slowly*): Are you referring to that affair on the Pottawatomie?

JASON (*Eyeing him*): I am.

OWEN (*Stooping again to the fire*): Then I refuse to discuss it.

JASON: Oh, you do?

OWEN: Yes, I do.

JASON (*After a moment*): Well, answer me this: Did Father have anything to do with it?

OWEN (*Annoyed*): You seem not to be able to understand plain English, Jason.

JASON (*Pressing*): But I've got to know.

OWEN (*Sharply*): Then go to Father and ask him.

JASON (*Injuredly*): So I'm not to be trusted—your own brother?

OWEN (*Firmly*): You are seeking an excuse to break your oath.

JASON (*Defensively*): That isn't so. If Father wants to free the slaves, then let him act like it. I am as ready as any of you to follow him into Alabama!

OWEN: That's only a poor evasion, and you know it!

JASON (*Angrily, going*): Call it what you like! (*Halting to turn in bitter afterthought*) I have the satisfaction of knowing my hands are clean! (*Exit Down-Left*) (OWEN *turns to watch his retreat. Then, hearing a rumpus Off-Right, he whirls*)

VOICES (*Off-Right, shouting joshingly, and growing louder*): Look out, Cook. Don't let him get the bearhug on you! Boy, that Cook is quick as a cat—(*Oliver and Cook, wrestling, come on, followed by several others*)

OWEN (*As they threaten to step on the wounded man*): Look out! Don't you see Mr. Partridge! (*The wrestlers tussle their way toward Center*)

BROWN (*Striding in*): What tomfoolery is this? Stop it at once! Stop it! (*As the wrestlers obey, he speaks to* OLIVER): Have you no principle? Or have you gone completely out of your head?

OLIVER: We were only horsing.

BROWN: Dry up! You were endangering the life of a comrade.

OLIVER (*Coolly*): We were doing no such thing!

BROWN (*Stepping in with open palm to strike him*): You dare dispute my word! (*Oliver catches his hand and deftly turns him about, then fastens him in an iron grip around the chest and arms, and lifts him, leaving his father's feet dangling, as he squirms*): Set me down! Release me! Do you hear? Release me at once!

OLIVER: All right. I will. But you behave! (*Setting* BROWN *down, he goes out*) (*Exit* OLIVER)

BROWN (*Turning to watch the boy's retreating figure, his frown breaks beneath a smile*): The young scamp! I believe he would have thrashed me—he is as strong as an ox. (*The men burst into laughter and return to their bivouac*) (*Exit men*)

OWEN: I don't approve of his manhandling you like that.

BROWN: I sometimes forget that although he is only seventeen, the experience he has gained out here in the Territory since last fall has made a man of him—(*Coming in to the fire*) How is the water?

OWEN: It came to a boil some time ago, and I've allowed it to cool a bit.

BROWN: Excellent—(*Going around to wounded man*) Mr. Partridge, I'm going to try and clean and dress your wound. I will be as careful as I can, but you must try and hang on to your nerves. (*He begins to unbandage him*) If you will be patient with me, I think it will be all over in a minute—Owen, take a fork and run it through a wad of the cotton. I will need it as a swab.

OWEN (*Getting cotton, as his father uncovers wound*): How does the wound look to you?

BROWN (*Examining wound*): The bullet entered the lower part of his back and seems to have gone in the direction of the kidney. But it may have been deflected by the spine—At least, that is the best we may hope—Let me have the swab—(*Going on, as he dips it in pot*) Tomorrow, I am going to risk getting him into the Settlement, where he can get a doctor's care—(*Tenderly, to* PARTRIDGE): This will sting a little, my friend. But try and bear it . . . There . . . There (*As he works, there is the sound of a bird call in the distance*)

OWEN (*Turning his head, Up-Left*): There is a signal from the guard.

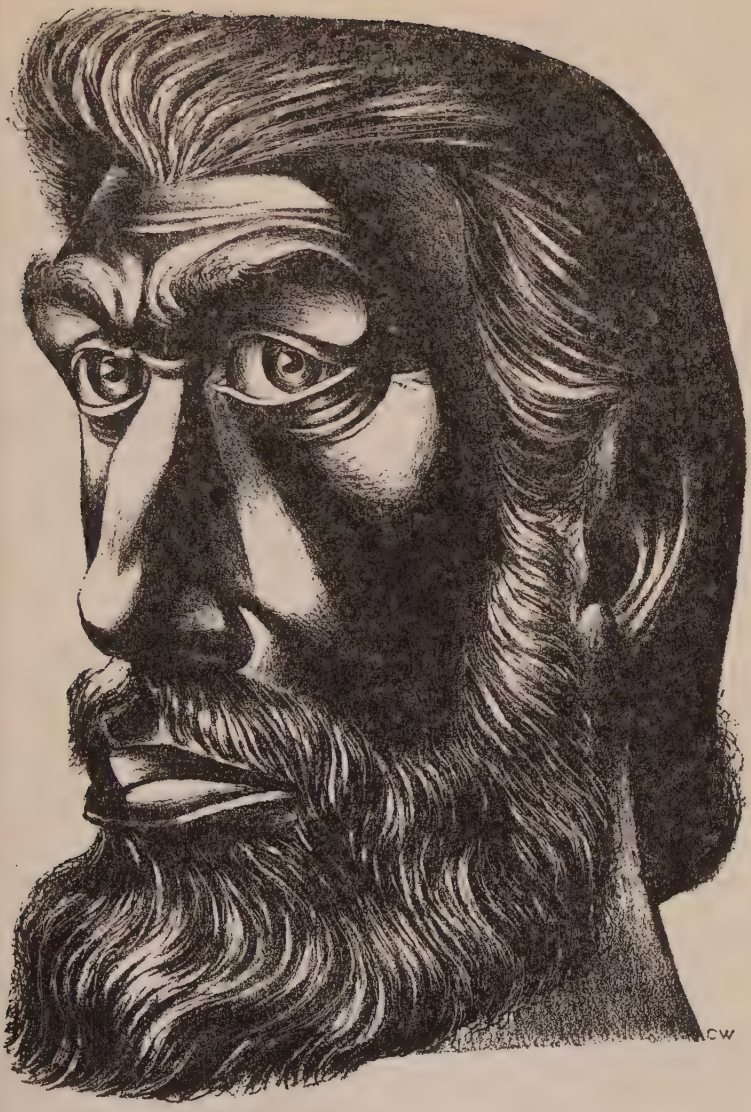
BROWN (*Unruffled and continuing his aid*): Go out a little ways and see what is up. It may be they have spotted a prowler, though it is more likely some friend who has gotten wind of our whereabouts. (OWEN *goes out Up-Left around Center-end of hill*)

OLIVER (*Appearing with* COOK *and others, Down-Right, all armed*): Father, was that the guard?

BROWN: Yes, Owen has gone out to check. (JASON *enters Down-Left—And he glances at him, but speaks to* OLIVER) Come and lift Mr. Partridge a bit, so that I can bandage the wound. (JASON *and* COOK *climb atop hill to look out—and* PARTRIDGE *groans*) Gently, Oliver.

OLIVER: I am being as easy as I can.

BROWN (*Working to bind wound*): You don't know your own strength—(*Partridge groans again*) I am sorry, Mr. Partridge. A



JOHN BROWN, *by Charles White*

woman's hand is needed for your proper care, and I can only do the best I can. One wrap more, and I'll be through.

COOK (*Above*): Here they come.

BROWN (*Working*): Friends or enemies!

COOK: Friends, I guess. It's Owen and some fellow.

BROWN (*Covering* PARTRIDGE *with blanket*): Who is it, Jason, can you tell?

JASON: I think it's Mr. Scanlon.

BROWN (*Goes above to look*): Yes, it's he all right—(*After a moment*): Welcome, Mr. Scanlon. Come in and tell me to what do I owe the honor of seeing you in my camp?

SCANLON (*Entering to join him below*): I'm sorry to tell you, sir. But it's no good news I bring you. (*Coming down of his own accord, he finally goes on*): You have been dealt a hard blow.

BROWN (*Following him*): In what way, sir?

SCANLON: One of Reid's men—Rev'n Martin White—shot your son down.

JASON (*Breathlessly*): Then it's Frederick!

BROWN: Is he alive or dead?

SCANLON: He was dead before he hit the ground.

OWEN (*Deeply moved*): Poor Frederick . . . It doesn't seem possible.

BROWN (*To* SCANLON): Where is his body, sir?

SCANLON: Your kinfolks took it—Rev'n Adair.

BROWN (*Quietly*): Thank God he's not alone or in the hands of strangers—but how did it happen, sir?

SCANLON: They say your son had just come out of Rev'n Adair's when White and his gang met him in the road, and White just spurred his horse on top of him and shot him in the head.

COOK: Good God! How heinous!

JASON: (*Brokenly*): Frederick walked into his death as innocent as a child! (*Unable to control himself he goes out Left*)

OLIVER (*Quietly*): Father, I know Martin White. Let me go down. I will slip into Reid's camp and put him to death with my bare hands!

OWEN (*Agreeing*): He is right, Father, and I will go along with him. Frederick's blood demands it!

BROWN (*Hollowly*): Hang on to yourselves, sons. We must not meet calamity in tears or rage. If Frederick is dead, we must look upon the matter as due to the fortunes of war.

OLIVER (*Heatedly*): War or no war, he must be revenged!

OWEN: Yes, Father. You swore yourself; it must be blow for blow!

BROWN (*Quietly*): If I have unsheathed my sword, it is only in behalf of others, not for myself or the members of the family. We will leave the Reverend Mr. White, as the renegade he is from God . . . to God.

OWEN (*Sharply*): What if there is no God?

BROWN: Do not attempt, Owen, to assail me with your doubts. It would profit us nothing to be revenged, and to do so would only sully our cause—(*Turning*): Mr. Scanlon, am I right in assuming you to be alone?

SCANLON: Yes, sir—why?

BROWN: I have a wounded man here—Mr. Partridge—who badly needs a doctor's care, and I was wondering if you might be willing to take him down into the Settlement—I can send a man along to help you as far as, say, the river.

SCANLON: I'll be glad to. I know Mr. Partridge well.

BROWN: Thank you, sir—Owen, I will ask you to go along with him.

OWEN: Certainly, Father.

OLIVER: It will be easier if three of us go along.

BROWN (*Penetratingly*): No. You will remain here, Oliver. And, Owen, I will ask you to give me your word, you'll go no farther than the bank of the river.

OWEN: If that's the way you want it. (*He and* SCANLON *get hold of the stretcher*)

BROWN (*To* SCANLON): I thank you, sir, for bringing me word concerning my unfortunate son.

SCANLON: You don't owe me any thanks, Captain Brown. You're a man of God, and a mighty fine and good one; and if I had the power, every Free Soil man in Kansas would know it before morning.

BROWN: I have no desire for personal fame, sir, but only to see my duty and to do it. (*To wounded man between them*): Goodbye, Mr. Partridge, and hold fast to God. I think you're going to be all right—Be as careful as you can with him, men. (OWEN *and* SCANLON *exit Up-Left bearing stretcher*)

COOK: Captain Brown. . . .

BROWN (*Turning*): Yes, Mr. Cook?

COOK (*Moved*): I can't express my sympathy, sir, and I suspect

that's true of most of the men here. But I want you to hear something I wrote this afternoon . . . if you don't mind?

BROWN: You say it is a piece which you have written?

COOK: Yes, sir. A poem, which I've called "Marias des Cygnes."

OLIVER: Is it about the fight we had there today?

COOK: You might regard it that way.

BROWN (*Sitting on saddle beside fire*): I did not know you were a poet, Mr. Cook. But it is a good sign when the poets are attracted to this cause. It will be a comfort to hear it—(*As* COOK *draws to light of fire*) though I fear you do not have much of a light to read by.

COOK: I can see very well, sir. (*Reading in a low, solemn voice, and sticking to the sense and mood, rather than the rhyme and rhythm*):

From the bleak New England hills,
From the forest, dark and old,
From the side of murm'ring rills,
Came the hardy and the bold—
Came they here to seek a home,
On the prairie's boundless plain,
Here, to Kansas, they have come,
Found a home—and will remain.

(*the sky begins to redden in the background*)

Rest they here; though clouds may lower,
O'er Freedom's glowing sky,
Fear not they the tyrant's power,
Nor the Ruffian's battle-cry.
If the storm should o'er them roll—
Battle's lightnings round them glow,
Still, with firm, undaunted soul,
They will meet the coming blow!

(*Silence greets his period, as all sit moved*)

JASON (*Appearing, excitedly to break it*): Father, men—look! (*He sweeps his extended arm toward the horizon, which is red from the glow of the Settlement*)

COOK: Good God!

OLIVER (*Running atop hill*): It's Osawatomie! (*The others follow, leaving only* BROWN, JASON *and a companion*)

JASON (*Bitterly*): Yes, the whole Settlement is being reduced to ashes! (*The men above go over the hill*)

MAN: It's the end for me. I'll be wiped out. (*Breaking*) Everything I own is down there—All I brought across the border. All I have struggled to build, trying to get started—All gone! (*Slowly, he turns and goes out*) (*Exit Right*)

BROWN (*Pained*): God sees it!

JASON (*Accusingly*): It's God's punishment!

BROWN (*Missing his meaning*): It is a disaster of immeasurable proportions, considering the hardships which all of you settlers had to endure, and the women and children who will now be left without shelter during the rigors of the approaching winter. But you go too far, Jason, to attribute it to God, who moves in His own mysterious way.

JASON (*Bitterly*): Uncle Adair was right. "Vengeance is mine saith the Lord!"

BROWN (*Hurt*): I see you mean to imply that I am responsible.

JASON (*Inexorably*): Did you have anything to do with those killings on the Pottawatomie?

BROWN (*Quietly*): No. But I approved of it.

JASON (*Bitterly*): You shouldn't have done it.

BROWN: It was absolutely necessary, Jason.

JASON: Sure! Now John's in prison. Frederick is dead. And Osawatomie . . . going up in smoke!

BROWN: I understand your grief and despair, Jason. But you forget that these are wounds which I also bear, and it does not set well on my heart to hear you accuse me.

JASON (*Harshly*): You should have had more compunction than to call those men out and cut them down.

BROWN (*In quiet suffering*): How am I to understand you, son? Are you speaking from the standpoint of the Ruffians who desire to extend slavery, and, incidentally, have my head? Or that of those who believe in Free Soil and the right of our brothers in bond?

JASON (*Sullenly*): You can't confound me, Father. *Murder is murder!*

BROWN (*Pained*): I would rather you had struck me down, son, than have heard you, my own flesh and blood, make such an infernal charge. Yet, I must suppose the fault to be mine in that as your father I have failed to safeguard your mind against belief in such a fraudulent standard.

JASON (*Sure of himself*): You have not done so because you could not!

BROWN (*Quietly*): Let us see if that is so. A moment ago I asked you which side you were on; that of the slavers who differ from the cannibal only in that they have made the discovery more profit can be got out of their captive's sweat than out of his hide when cooked and eaten—those monsters who have the legal right and sanction of government (*the words begin falling like hammer blows*) to beat, maim, sell their slaves like beasts of the field, divide husband from wife, wife and husband from their children, and kill them with impunity—

JASON (*Defensively*): I have not denied the slave's right to be free—I am opposed to bondage and willing to lay down my life to destroy it.

BROWN: Then you are not consistent, son. You cannot honestly straddle the difference between the code of the slave owners and those who, like myself, in keeping with the command of God and the Declaration of Independence, conceive of all men to be free and equal; and on that basis find the perfect right to defend and, at whatever cost, to advance the cause of freedom. It is the selflessness of this consideration which justifies my action and my deed.

JASON: Nevertheless, you cannot deny the majority consider us vile and bloody handed outlaws!

BROWN (*Sharply*): I acknowledge no opinion as of right where my conscience and reason both enable me to condemn it.

JASON: Then you admit yourself an outlaw or a despot!

BROWN (*Sensing at last the depth of the other's defection*): Am I to understand, Jason, that I may no longer depend upon you?

JASON (*After a moment*): Yes. You might as well know now. I'm getting out, like Salmon and Henry Thompson.

BROWN: Then, I may only say, as between you and me—though it saddens me, I am quite willing to leave our differences for the future generations to decide—(JASON *on point of leaving*) But as my last words, Jason, I will tell you this. You have mentioned John and Frederick, who tonight lies cold with perhaps but two souls—and they our kin—in attendance at his wake. Osawatomie and all your property as well as John's have been laid waste, while here we are hounded like wolves with a bounty on our scalps. I will say nothing of the cause of the settlers, nor the millions of our poor brothers in bondage. But I would remind you that such is the result of the opinion of the majority—of the moment—in this benighted land. Perhaps, in

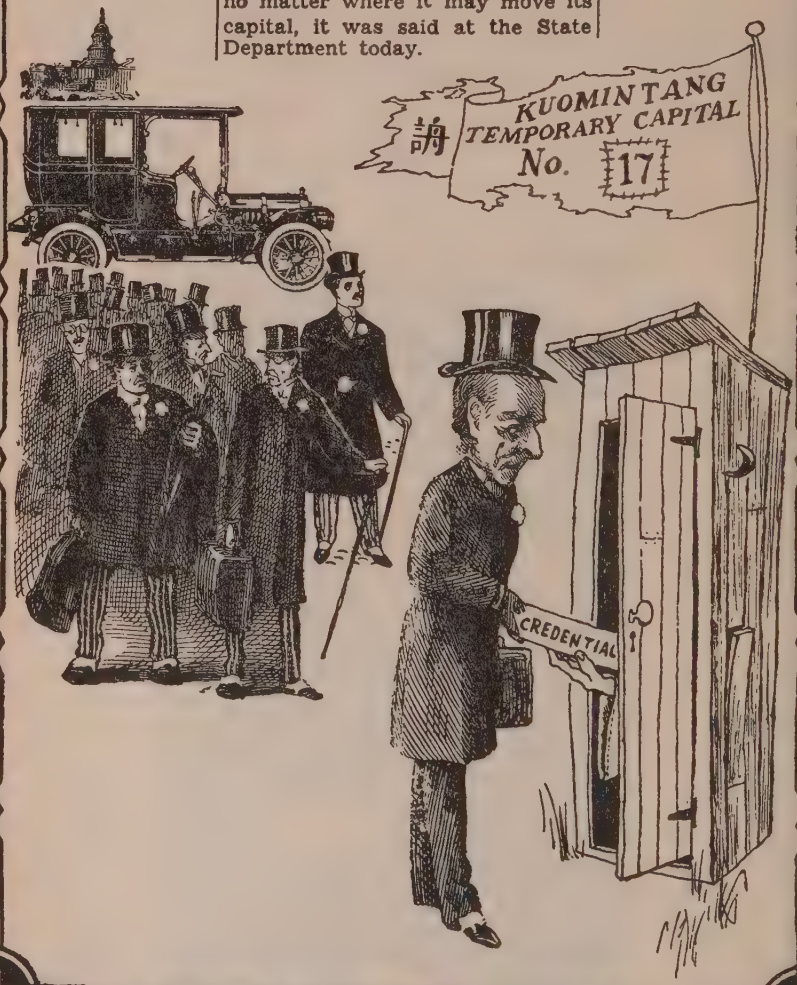
later life, you will come to see that the minority of the moment, when conscious and based upon moral principles, sooner or later, under republican government, is as certain to become the majority as the roots of this dying thicket is certain to put forth their sprouts with the coming of the spring. As to myself and my prospects, I have only a short time to live—only one death to die, and I will die fighting for this cause. There will be no peace in this land until slavery is done for. I will give the slave-power something else to do than extend slave territory. I will carry the war into Africa!

CURTAIN

ON SAFARI WITH HARARI

Special to THE NEW YORK TIMES

WASHINGTON, Aug. 16—The United States Government will maintain diplomatic relations with the Chinese National Government, no matter where it may move its capital, it was said at the State Department today.



letter from abroad

PEIPING

THE first All-China Conference of Writers and Artists opened in this city, China's leading cultural center, on July 2. The fourteen-day conference, attended by over 600 delegates, impressively demonstrated the unity of China's patriotic cultural workers in support of the people's regime. The importance attached to cultural activities by the leaders of the New China was evidenced by their personal appearance at the conference despite the pressure of urgent military and political matters. Both Chairman Mao Tse-tung of the Communist Party and General Chu Teh, Commander-in-Chief of the Liberation Army, came to greet the delegates, while General Chou En-lai made a political report calling upon the writers and artists to keep pace with the tremendous revolutionary advances of the Chinese people.

"After the victory of the revolution, our main tasks are to develop production and cultural education," a message of greetings from the Communist Party of China pointed out. "We believe that through this conference, all patriotic workers in literature and the arts throughout the country will be further united and linked up with the masses of the people for a widespread development of the arts and literature which serve the people."

Culture in China, thirty years ago, was the property of those who could manipulate a stock of classical allusion. The modern movement in culture dates from May 4, 1919, when the Chinese working class for the first time came out in a joint demonstration with the students of Peiping. Since that time, as General Chu Teh told the conference, the main current of the new cultural movement has been closely joined to the Chinese people's democratic revolutionary struggle. However, with the long-standing tradition of the literati and the reactionary rulers in power, the new meaning of culture as people's expression has never been fully implemented.

Reviewing the cultural history of the past three decades, the outstanding historian and critic Kuo Mo-jo, stressed that "The most fundamental feature of the new culture and literature since the May Fourth movement in 1919 is the leadership of the proletariat." At the same time Kuo Mo-jo, as chairman of the presidium of the conference, emphasized the role of the united front among the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal intellectuals:

> "The main controversy of the past thirty years was that between the line of 'art for art's sake' represented by the weak, liberal bourgeoisie and the line of 'art for the sake of the people' represented by the working class and other revolutionary people. As a result of this struggle, the theory of 'art for art's sake' was shown to be bankrupt and the ranks of those who stand for 'art for the sake of the people' under the leadership of proletarian ideology in arts and literature swelled in number and gained the support of the broad masses of the people."

A number of speakers pointed out that important changes in the content and form of art work have taken place following the famous address of Mao Tse-tung on the arts and literature in 1942. Writers and artists in the Liberated Areas began really to serve the workers, peasants and soldiers. The novelist Mao Tun reviewed the militant role of progressive plays, novels, poems, songs and cartoons in the Kuomintang-controlled areas. Nevertheless, literary workers in these areas had little chance of getting into contact with the laboring people and works produced there, even by progressive and revolutionary writers, were often unsubstantial and weak. Since the term "Kuomintang-controlled areas" was rapidly becoming obsolete, said Mao Tun, "a new era of the people opens before us; progressive art and literary workers now have their united camp and complete freedom to work and to develop; we must always learn from our era and from the people, overcome existing drawbacks, reform ourselves and strive for progress."

Reporting on creative work in the liberated areas, the critic Chou Yang said:

> "New forms of art and literature have also been created in line with the new content. The language used has been popularized and writers and artists have learned and will continue to learn from folk forms of art and literature. But this does not mean that foreign

forms will be ignored. All good and useful traditions, both native and foreign, and especially the experience of the socialist literature of the U.S.S.R. must be prized and assimilated. All progressive workers of art and literature must study Marxism-Leninism and Mao Tse-tung's teaching. The works of art and literature in Liberated Areas have not yet attained perfection in form and therefore technique must be mastered. At the same time, formalism and the erroneous thinking that 'technique comes first' should be opposed. New esthetic criteria of people's arts and literature must be established."

LEADING cultural figures who took an active part in the discussions included the ballet dancer Tai Ai-lien and popular film actress Pai Yang, who sat side by side with Ch'i Pai-shih, the octogenarian painter in classical style. Mei Lan-fang, famous for his portrayal of feminine roles in the classical drama, fully endorsed the principle that the drama should strive to serve the people.

Other speakers noted that the primary task of the arts and literature in China is still popularization. The need for more literary works of a high ideological level was stressed by Chen Po-ta, assistant head of the Central Propaganda Department of the Communist Party, who said:

"Without effective revolutionary ideological guidance the raising of the level of literature and its popularization cannot be achieved, because this demands the 'generalization' (that is, the creation of a new artistic synthesis from a Marxist viewpoint) of the material collected from the masses. There are writers who have successfully made such 'generalizations' of a partial view of things, but there are still not many creative works which 'generalize' the overall picture."

Chien Chun-jui, General Secretary of the newly-formed Preparatory Committee of the Sino-Soviet Friendship Association, gave a report on the struggle of Soviet art and literary circles against cosmopolitanism. "This so-called cosmopolitanism," he said, "is a weapon of American imperialism in its attempt to dominate the world. It disdains the independence and characteristics of the various nations and thus weakens their self-confidence and self-respect." After describing the struggle in the Soviet Union against this reactionary ideology, Chien Chun-jui observed that the influence of imperialist arts and culture also exists in China and must be opposed. "We should love

the people and their history and the excellent arts and cultural traditions of China and on this basis create works of proletarian patriotism and proletarian internationalism," he concluded.

At the end of the conference a committee of eighty-seven members was elected as the leading body of the All-China Writers' and Artists' Federation. In its leading resolution the conference declared:

> "The victory of the Chinese people is inseparable from international aid. Without the pinning down of British and American imperialist forces in the west by the Soviet Union and the European new democracies, the defeat in the East of American imperialism and its running dog, the Chiang Kai-shek reactionary clique, would not be possible. We stand firmly with the world camp for peace and democracy headed by the socialist Soviet Union which gives full play to revolutionary patriotism and the spirit of internationalism in order to win lasting world peace and a people's democracy."

The Federation sets itself the following tasks:

1. To participate actively in the struggle for the people's liberation and construction of the New Democracy, and to reflect the growth of the new China through the media of the arts and literature.

2. To eliminate the reactionary arts and literature which serve the imperialists, the feudal classes and bureaucratic bourgeois class as well as their influence on the new arts and literature; to assimilate critically the heritage of Chinese and foreign art and literature and especially develop the ancient art and literary traditions of the Chinese people.

3. To help guide the artistic and literary activities of the masses in factory, village and army throughout China.

4. To launch an art and literary movement of the national minorities within the country; exchange experiences among the various nationalities so as to promote the all-round development of the arts and literature of the New China.

5. To strengthen the study of revolutionary theory.

6. To expand the interchange of culture and art between China and the peoples of all countries in the world, develop revolutionary patriotism and the spirit of internationalism and participate in the movement of the peoples of the world for a lasting peace and a people's democracy.

—WANG LIAO

NO ONE CARES

A Story by LI NA

HUANG TIEN-WEN, nicknamed "No One Cares," was a pilferer, well-known in Harbin. Not infrequently he could be seen crouching under the prison wall, but he never cared. He used to say: "Prison is my home; if I stayed out too long I would feel homesick."

This January he was again in prison. The Judge sentenced him to spend six months in a coal valley, lending a hand in production.

Once in the coal valley he smeared his face with a handful of mud and took to bed, whimpering. He complained one day of an ache in his bones, and the next day he whined about a strain in his muscles. He did not eat with the others but would stealthily leave his bed to prepare a meal when they had gone to work. Two weeks went by like that. One day the trade union chief, Chen, came to the workers' dormitory just as Huang Tien-wen was cooking something. Unable to climb back into bed in time, he said half-heartedly: "Chief, I feel much better, I think I can go to work in a few days."

Chief Chen said, "You'd better do some work or you'll get no food."

"You may assign me work," Huang Tien-wen said. "However, if you don't give me food I can manage to get it by myself just as well."

"What kind of work are you willing to do?" asked Chen.

He replied without the slightest hesitation, "How about ordering me to take care of the water tower?"

The trade union chief burst into laughter. "That is a job for old men. You are young and vigorous. How about something else?"

"You name it. Any kind of light work will do," he said.

"You had better push coal carts. Three persons for a cartload. Since you are not fit for heavier work, team up with two old workers. Young man, why don't you do some work instead of indulging in hopeless

adventures?" The chief gave "No One Cares" a hundred yuan and urged him to take a bath and get a haircut.

The chief also reminded him that work meant having money to buy what one might want.

Huang Tien-wen gave his word, but thought to himself, "Why do I need that kind of money? One deal in Harbin counts for several thousand. Why should I go through all this trouble?"

Very early the next morning he went to the trade union. "Chief," he said, "I am going down to work today. Will you find a rope for me to fasten my robe with? To work one must look like a worker!"

The chief looked at him appreciatively and said, "After a haircut, aren't you a nice looking young man?" He found a belt for him and "No One Cares" fastened the lower part of his robe up to the waist.

"Shall I bring anything else?" he asked the chief.

"Nothing."

He rushed out of the door with great excitement and, as if on a stage, shouted loudly, "With big stride forward I march. . . ."

After registering with the transportation section, he was sent to push a coal cart with two old workers. How could people know how much effort he used? He put on a gesture, hummed a tune from an old Chinese opera, swung his body from one side to the other, sweeping his robe directly toward his two companions. The cart stopped. The old workers said, "Put your back into it!" "Isn't this putting my back into it?" was his reply. But the cart could not be budged. Seeing his companions loosen their hands, he immediately followed suit and said, "Don't old workers want to unite with new workers? If you don't push, what can I do?"

A string of coal carts came from behind. He stood aside and shouted, "Come on, help us, all of you! This cart can't be moved." Some one came to the rescue, but Huang remained by the roadside chewing a cake. From time to time he exclaimed, "Be careful or your feet will be crushed. This is no fun!"

The chief of the transportation section, knowing that Huang often hindered the work, called him back, a fact which he did not find unpleasant. After taking a nap in a heap of hay, he went to see the chief and told him, "Neither of the old men worked, but let me push the cart alone. How could it be moved? I didn't dare criticize them lest they call me a rotten egg."

"Don't lie," said the chief. "I know you are a lazybones. Tomorrow

you'll have to work harder. If you can't do heavy work, I'll send you to sew gunny sacks in the warehouse."

THE CHIEF personally escorted him to the warehouse. When he began to sew, his hands proved remarkably nimble. Before others had sewed twenty stitches, he had finished a bag. The chief felt quite happy to see him well on his way, and before leaving, urged him to work hard.

No sooner had the chief gone, than he put aside his needle and said to the three workers beside him, "Aren't you old women? This is old women's work."

No one paid any attention to him. He spoke again. "Do you want to hear something about Harbin?"

The others said, "Hurry along, it will soon be noontime."

He looked very serious and said, "A penny buys a penny's worth of goods. With ten cents you can buy nice things. Coal cutting earns several hundred yuan a day, while we make only about a hundred. To be serious about this work is really foolish!" Leaning his head nearer the other three, he asked, "Do you people want to hear 'Young housemaid stretches her arms'? Let me sing a part for you."

Then he sang at the top of his voice, "Young housemaid cleans dust in her ante-chamber . . ." and made the needles in the hands of the other three slow down.

After finishing a stanza, he asked, "Is it possible to listen without money? Well, never mind the money. If you will only give me a part of the bags you sew, I'll sing for you every day."

Whenever the head of the section was there, he pretended to work; once he was gone, "No One Cares" immediately turned the warehouse into a theatre.

When the shift was over, he saw a bundle of small brooms lying in the corner of the warehouse, and hid one in his sleeve. Walking past the cooperative store, he was attracted by the smell of stewed meat just picked up from the cauldron. He went in, and, pretending to make a purchase, filched a big slice, together with the piece of cloth which covered the meat. Back in the big dormitory he shouted, "Come on friends, have some meat!"

Someone asked him, "How much for a catty?"* He said, "I bought it by the whole slice."

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* A catty is a Chinese weight equalling about 1⅓ pounds.

There was a worker among them whose name was Yang Li-sun. Everybody called him by the nickname "Foreign Cannon" because he had a low, loud-pitched voice and was talkative and his surname literally meant "foreign." When he saw there was a brand new broom on the bed, he thought, "Those are to be found only in the warehouse . . ." and he asked, "Whose broom is that?"

"Mine," responded "No One Cares."

"Where did you get it?"

"I picked it up on the road," he said nonchalantly.

Another worker chimed in, "This is the property of the warehouse."

He was all anger and said, "Who saw me take it there? Don't spit on people with a mouthful of blood. Is picking up something on the road also against the law?"

Everyone rushed to the spot. "You stole things belonging to others, yet you don't admit your mistake! We can guarantee that the meat was also taken in this way. . . ." "You have spoiled our reputation!"

"How much is a catty of reputation worth?" he asked.

"Call him to account!"

"Call me to account? Only if you don't beat me."

Anger made their faces red and necks swollen. All said in unison, "Let's go to the Trade Union!"

He dusted his robe, lengthened his accent, "Never mind, I'll go with you!" When he saw others bring along the meat and the broom, he said half mockingly, "You said you wouldn't squeal. Can you call this other than squealing?"

They were in the Trade Union. Putting the spoils on the table, they all said, "Chief, you'll see to it!" The story of what had happened was given. The chief said in all seriousness: "Huang Tien-wen, your behavior is really too bad. You have repeatedly broken the regulations of the coal valley. If you take things from others again, you'll be sent to the garrison quarters!"

Seeing that all were very indignant, he began to fear that he really would be sent to the garrison headquarters. He decided to escape this ordeal. So he said, "I am sorry, I swear to you if I make any more mistakes may I be hit by the God of Thunder."

After the angry crowd was gone, the chief said to him, "Old Huang, take a seat and let's have a talk."

The chief rolled a cigarette for him, and while chatting, asked him about his life.

He had come originally from Shuangcheng province, and had worked in the family fields there. Following the death of his parents, he had lived with his landlord. After serving as a soldier for several years, he wanted to find a job in Harbin. But during the Japanese occupation, jobs could hardly be obtained without the help of relatives who worked for the Japanese. He stayed at an inn and thus got acquainted with a group of petty thieves. He had no money and the pilferers encouraged him to steal. After one or two trys, he thought it was not at all bad; for each time one got out, it meant getting money to spend. Then he indulged himself in gambling, opium smoking, taking morphine, and visiting prostitutes. Meanwhile, his wife was kicked out by their landlord and came to him in Harbin. They rented a small room and lived together.

For three to five days on end he did not come home. When questioned by his wife, he would talk of other subjects to divert her attention. He said, "There is no windproof wall. After I had been at it for awhile, my wife began to suspect what I was doing. She wept and wanted to commit suicide. I said to her, I couldn't help it, and I promised to get a proper job and not to steal any longer. But, my chief, unless my pocket is full of money, I can't give up stealing."

The chief asked, "Who takes care of your wife now?"

"I don't know; very probably, she has again been kicked out by someone. When anyone falls into these straits, he cannot take care of other people."

"Do you love your wife?"

He evaded the chief's inquiring eyes, dropped his head and said, "Chief, my wife is a good woman, I am really sorry for her. . . ."

"You should think of your wife and children, work here diligently, and ask her to come."

He said despairingly, "Now my ill-fame has spread a thousand miles, and I don't expect to raise my head again. In one's lifetime, a day passed means a day less. A day spent in the prison or in enduring hard labor also counts as one. . . ."

The chief interrupted, "You are wrong on this point. In the past,

stealing was the result of the failure to find a living. It was something forced on you by the old society. Now we are living in a new society in which everybody has to work. You have not reached thirty, and there is a bright future before you. Old as I am—half covered by the earth as one would say—the harder I work the more I enjoy working. You ought to work conscientiously and just like the old workers you may be cited for your merit and that will also help you get your sentence commuted."

He nodded agreement but thought in his heart, "Probably he is right—but work, what an ordeal!"

The chief added, "Go down to work in the pit so that you can earn more money. With a monthly pay of some eight thousand yuan, you'll be better off."

As soon as Huang went away, the chief sent a cable to his wife at the address mentioned by him, asking her to come and settle in the coal valley.

The idea of "running away," however, dominated his thoughts. In order to "run away," money was indispensable. For a long time he had had an eye on a sack that belonged to one of his close companions, who was called Lee Tze-ming. This man seldom talked, never drank and had a womanly look. All these earned him a nickname, "Big Maid" —which had practically replaced his real name. "Big Maid" had his own peculiar habits. He worked hard and earned nine thousand yuan a month, most of which was spent on clothes. He had a pair of yellow colored leather shoes and a suit of red-lined clothes. The latter had been wrapped up in his sack because it was of no use in an icy winter. Nevertheless he opened the sack very often, just for a look at his possession. "No One Cares" had decided to steal it long ago. Of course he was also afraid of being caught. His second thought was "If caught, the sack is still his; if not, it will be mine. Whoever wears the fur jacket enjoys the warmth; whoever eats the delicious food, contentment. The Eighth Routers are nothing but laughing stocks. To promote democracy. . . . What's the use?"

Now he had set his eyes on the sack, which he thought could certainly be "borrowed" as travelling expenses should the time for a "runaway" come.

That day, however, he actually went down into the pit with the foreman. Once setting their feet on the path leading to the pit, people would often stumble if they lost a single grip. The beam of the head-

lamp gave only a small cone of light. Carelessness here meant crashing one's head. He cursed in his heart, "This is the devil's road! Who on earth invented this way to get into a coal pit?"

The foreman, proceeding smoothly as if walking on a straight path, told him all the way, "It's a little slippery there, there lies the coal...." At last they reached the bottom.

The foreman suggested, "Sit down and have a rest," and assigned him to work in the group of "Foreign Cannon" and "Big Maid." The former, he pointed out, was responsible for the group. Huang was to ask him for any information. He thought, "It's sheer bad luck to be teamed up with him—but I'll not care about that; after all, I won't vegetate here for long."

He saw that the whole face of once smart-looking "Big Maid" was all blackness; only his teeth remained white. The longer he looked at him the more disgusted he felt. "What's there to be happy for? Why not have a look at your face? To be a devil doesn't need any makeup, yet big 'Foreign Cannon' sings all the time." He cursed again in his heart.

"Big Maid," noticing that he was sitting motionless on the shovel, bawled out, "Haven't you seen enough of that? Coal won't drop down by merely looking at it!"

"Foreign Cannon" said, "Come up, I'll teach you how to cut." So saying, he gripped the shovel and scored several strokes. "No One Cares" said, "It's easy to cut like that. I'll show you." He lifted his shovel and struck aimlessly on the coal for a little while.

"Don't brandish a knife like Kway Kung;* concentrate your force on your two arms," said "Foreign Cannon."

Putting away his shovel, he shouted, "Curse his mother, the coal here is like iron, it's impossible for me to cut it."

Again he turned to "Foreign Cannon." "You can cut while I can't. Well, how about another job?"

"Foreign Cannon" replied, "After a day or two you'll learn the business. Now go ahead and sweep away the coal."

"I have never worked like this since I got out of my mother's abdomen; there are altogether seventy-two professions, and what category does this belong to?" he murmured.

To him, the shovel, once lifted, weighed almost a thousand catties.

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* A hero in the novel, *Three Kingdoms.*

He drove the shovel into the coal, and coal and shovel rolled down together. He shouted, "The shovel has fallen down."

"Aren't you doing that on purpose?" asked the "Big Maid."

He said, "When I loosened my hand, it simply slipped away."

The "Big Maid," losing patience somewhat, said, "Don't make a racket; go down and pick it up."

This was what he had been waiting for. Down he jumped, deliberately hitting his head on the ground.

"Ah, my head is broken," he bawled, covering his head with his hands. "Foreign Cannon," noticing the bleeding head, said to him, "Quick, go to the infirmary."

He was quite happy; his plans were going smoothly.

THE same day "No One Cares" and "Big Maid's" sack disappeared at the same time. Two days afterwards the wife of "No One Cares" arrived at the coal valley.

Chief Chen was very much worried. He made the woman stay in a small house near the main dormitory and persuaded her not to worry about her husband. "If he doesn't come back after two days, I shall ask someone to accompany you back to Harbin."

The woman stayed. But how could she go to sleep? It was already very late when she suddenly heard noises from the main dormitory. It was the chief's voice. "I told you that you couldn't get away from here. The people's country is loved by the people. Every three or five steps there are sentries from the children's corps standing guard. How can you get away? Now you ought to believe what I said."

Another voice said, "Why did you run away? Is it bad to ask you to work and to be good? Has the mine management ill-treated you?"

Many voices were heard, "Speak, why don't you talk?"

A very familiar voice said, "It was all my mistake."

The noise awakened the child. She took the child in her arms and walked out. After a glance, she saw that the man sitting on the bed was none other than her husband. She could not refrain from bursting into tears. The man, seeing the woman, was greatly surprised. "Who told you to come here?" he asked.

"You cabled to ask me to come here," the woman answered.

"God knows I cabled to you," the man said.

The woman wiped her tears and said, "The government has treated

you well. They not only advised you to be good, they also gave you money and sent for your family. Why did you still want to run away? These years, what hardship have I not undergone? My family drove me out; neighbors laughed at me. If not for this little one, I would already have hanged myself." The woman sobbed and continued, "After you left home, I waited for you day and night. Seeing that I had nothing to eat at home, I had to be thick-skinned to go to the Landlord's house with the child, but they would not accept us. It was getting dark and was snowing too. I carried my child on my back, not knowing where to go. I cried and begged for help, for we couldn't even stay in an inn. The government said that you were working in the mines here. I thought then there was hope, so I sold that old ragged quilt and came here to see you. . . ."

The woman was unable to go on. The child at her bosom suddenly cried. All eyes went from Huang Tien-wen to the woman, and all were greatly moved. The woman then continued, "And yet you ran away. They treated you very well. I noticed that when I first came here. What is your real intention? Do you deliberately want the two of us to starve to death?"

Huang Tien-wen said, greatly vexed, "That's enough, that's enough. Don't say any more."

The people around interceded, "Don't be too grieved. Go back for a rest and try to talk things over with Huang."

"Big Maid" had time and again risen to try to claim his sack, but after witnessing such a scene, he was moved to the heart; he bit his lips, and then said, "Let it be, I have such strong legs that I can manage to make ends meet. His wife has just come. I ought to let him have it to settle his home."

The next day, Huang came to see the chief with downcast spirit, saying, "My wife would not go back by any means. She wants to settle down here. Chief, look, what am I to do with the food and housing problem?"

The chief said, "Don't worry; we have already got a house for you. It's that red brick house. You may draw a thousand yuan in advance for some cooking materials. As to furniture and utensils we will send them to you right away. The stove is ready for use too."

He said with a smile, "Thank you, my old chief."

The chief said, "Now your family has come, you should go down

to the pit to cut coal, so that you can earn more. If you work twenty-eight shifts you may get a small merit and have your sentence commuted for a month. Afterwards, if you overfulfill your work by thirty percent, you may get a big merit and your sentence will be commuted for three months."

He nodded with embarrassment.

The chief also secretly told "Foreign Cannon," "You'll work together with Huang Tien-wen. After you have got him reformed, you will get a small merit."

"Foreign Cannon" said, "I will get him reformed, and I'll willingly bet a month's pay on that."

The next day, "Foreign Cannon" came to urge him to go to the pit. He was first told to do some light work. Even then, he often stopped working, and stood still, staring at the coal. "Foreign Cannon" did not say anything but kept on working alone. After shift, one would often find "Foreign Cannon" chatting with him. Three days later, he was honored on the blackboard. His face brightened a little.

During the rest period in the afternoon, he asked "Foreign Cannon," "What did you do before?"

"Foreign Cannon" said, "I had the same trouble as you. At the very beginning, I was a well-known sluggish worker. But now I have set my heart on producing. Democratic government doesn't allow any loafer to exist. There is no way out for us in Harbin."

He said, "But it is also difficult to work. When you once shoulder the basket, you immediately have a disagreeable feeling."

"Foreign Cannon" said, "You will become accustomed after a few days. If you made up your mind, heavy work wouldn't be heavy for you any more."

"Foreign Cannon" looked earnestly at him and said, "You are still dreaming about something. It's no use to run away. Many new fellow-workers have just come from Harbin. Isn't it a fact which reminds us that they do not allow us to have any loafers? Let's work hard together; not only may we gain merit, we can also be trade union members."

Huang Tien-wen thought to himself, "Maybe it's right. You won't get anything if you go on stealing, and besides, your wife is here. Go and work. After merit is won and my sentence expires, I may go back and be a small tradesman. I'm really not suited for cutting coal."

"Teach me how to cut coal," he said.

"Foreign Cannon" raised his shovel and explained to him while cutting. "Exert your force on the tip of the shovel; keep the rear part of the handle tight and still, and its front part loose and active; hold your shovel steady, and strike accurately so that you can cut for a longer time; when you feel tired, change to the other hand."

In a little while "Foreign Cannon" struck down a large heap.

Huang also raised his shovel to cut, but the coal didn't come down. He felt a little ashamed and blamed himself, "Such big and broad arms, yet you can't knock down the coal."

"Foreign Cannon" said, "Cut slowly, don't make haste."

He had determined to work. His arms became swollen, and his hands filled with blisters, yet he gritted his teeth resolutely and kept on.

One month went by. He hadn't missed a shift and got a small merit for that.

That day "Foreign Cannon" thrust a handful of banknotes on him and said, "Pay's here. We got ten thousand yuan together. We'll split it. This five thousand is for you."

He took the money and felt that it was much more than he ever had before.

"Old Yang, let's buy two catties of meat. You come to my house for some pies and we'll have a good long chat."

They crossed the street, and went to the cooperative store. There were many people waiting there. He tried hard to push to the front. He looked at the people around him; he no longer had the feeling of being shorter than the others by half a head. "Cut two catties of meat," he cried, and was surprised at his voice being changed too; it seemed much louder and loftier than before.

He took the meat and bought some wine. On the way he greeted everyone he met with "Brother, where are you going?" He felt that today the workers were somehow not interested in him. Why didn't they ask him, "Where do your meat and wine come from?"

This was the first smart thing he did in his life.

To welcome May Day, a collective merit-winning movement spread in the pits.

"Foreign Cannon" led Huang Tien-wen, "Big Maid" and two other colleagues to compete with the 4th group.

The noise of coal cutting, moving carts, and explosives covered the sound of talking. Gas light shone everywhere, and not a single hand remained idle.

"Foreign Cannon" was an old hand. Once his shovel struck, endless chips of coal poured down. But so much coal was cut up that there was a shortage of carts. Everywhere people were crying, "Cart, cart."

Huang said to "Foreign Cannon," "That strip of coal is hard. Let's use explosives."

"Foreign Cannon" cried, "Right, but try to cut a deeper fissure."

Huang Tien-wen lay down underneath the coal layer to dig the fissure, just as happy as a fish swimming in the water.

"Honhh!" the explosive roared. Big pieces of coal poured down.

"Big Maid" got hold of a cart, crying, "The 4th group has pulled out ten cart-loads; we've got to hurry."

Endless rows of coal props stood there like a big piece of forest. Some were already crooked. The coal gave out a creaking sound.

Being resolved to exceed the work of the 4th group, Huang Tien-wen risked his life to thrust himself in to pick up the falling coal.

"Foreign Cannon" warned him, "Old Huang, be careful, coal will fall asunder."

"Don't worry, there's still one or two tons of coal inside. Wouldn't it be a waste if we don't get it out."

In a little while two tons of coal were all pulled out.

Gazing at the shining coal, "Big Maid" happily said to himself, "With such a large heap, we can be sure to beat the work of the 4th group."

Huang Tien-wen helped "Big Maid" to load. He was terribly excited when he saw cart after cart of coal being moved out, and repeated what he had already said more than ten times, "We now eat on coal, dress on coal; who can do without coal? How precious coal is!"

The summing up made at the end of April showed that the group led by "Foreign Cannon" exceeded its task by fifty percent. Every member got a big merit.

ON May Day he went to see the trade union chief early in the morning. "Chief, please come to my house for a talk."

The chief saw his face beaming, hurried to reply, "Good, I will be there in a minute."

When the chief came to his door, he saw Huang was pushing a small home-made cart with his child in it. Seeing the chief coming, he hastened to put it aside and welcomed him to his house.

In his house there was a small home-made table and new straw mats;

on the table he had put some melon seeds, candies, cigarettes, and also two tea cups. The couple earnestly and attentively invited the chief to sit on the bed.

The chief said, "Today is a glorious day for you. I haven't yet greeted you, and you invited me instead."

"Chief, you are just like my father, my wife often speaks of you," he said.

"You are even better than my own father," the woman said.

"I don't deserve the praise," the chief said. "It belongs to the Communist Party. An old saying goes: 'The more we plant opium poppy, the more opium smokers we have; the more kaoliang [grain] raised, the more kaoliang eaters.' The Communist Party teaches people to be good citizens, so there are so many fine people."

The woman said, "We could never forget the Communist Party; it has turned scrap iron into steel."

The chief said, "Your sentence has expired. Do you wish to go home?"

Both of them said, "We will certainly not go back."

Huang said, "This year I have planted an acre of vegetables; I don't have to buy them any more. Besides, my wife is doing some sewing and mending for those in the dormitory, and can earn more than two thousand yuan a month. Look there, chief, these little pigs running outside are also mine. I don't need any new rubber boots; my wife had a pair of old ones mended which are just as good, not only durable, but also economical."

The woman said, "Chief, have you got enough money to spend? If not, please tell us."

Although the man was smiling with satisfaction, there was something in his heart that was not solved. He filled a cup of tea for the chief, and softly said to his wife, "You go out for a walk with the little one; the chief does not come very often; we are going to have a long talk."

"You have private business?" said the woman smiling. Shouldering her child, she went out.

After the woman had gone, silence filled up the room. Huang Tien-wen hesitated as if he had something difficult to say. Then he drew out a package and handed it to the chief, saying, "Chief, please keep it."

The chief was at a loss, but did as he was told.

Huang said, "To be frank with you, chief, I kept that thousand yuan for the purpose of preparing to run away with my wife. Now I won't go even if you drive me out; so that money has become a burden. I would like you to. . . ."

The chief was puzzled and asked him, "What money is that?"

He said, "That's the money from the 'Big Maid's' clothes. I know the 'Big Maid' has already redeemed his clothes. Thanks to you that you didn't let them settle accounts with me and press me for that, otherwise my wife wouldn't have the face to live on, for she is the one who likes to save face." Holding his knees with his two hands he continued, "I have worked together with 'Big Maid' in the same group. Whenever I saw him I felt ashamed to the heart. Please give it to him for me. After that I may raise my head."

The chief comforted him, "Let the past be buried. . . ."

At this moment the woman, "Big Maid" and "Foreign Cannon" came in together saying, "They are calling you to get the prizes."

He went out with them, and when they were about to enter the meeting hall, he softly said to the chief, "Chief, if you can accept me as a trade union member, I will be very much satisfied."

(*Translated from the Chinese by Li Ze-wei*)

Q. E. D.

"Public housing has been receiving its greatest impetus in recent years from the same housing shortage that caused the inauguration of rent control in the first place—so if rent control perpetuates shortages, and shortages lead to public housing, and public housing discourages private building, it would all seem to be part of the same vicious circle."—*Stephen G. Thompson, Real Estate Editor of the New York* Herald Tribune.

WHO IS BEING TORTURED?

"Mr. Speaker, I am sure that many of my colleagues and most of the thoughtful citizens of the United States will agree with me when I say that the sly, tricky manner in which the administration is attempting to keep Congress in session throughout the summer and on until Thanksgiving is nothing in the world but an attempt at legislative third degree. The President is trying subtle torture methods, not unlike many practiced in ancient China. There they wore a man down by drops of water on his forehead, you remember."—*Hon. Paul W. Shafer of Michigan in the House, August* 9, 1949.

REASONABLE

"It is this abandonment of reason by Communists that makes our planet for the time being fundamentally split into two worlds. And on our side of the iron curtain, it is humiliating and salutary to see with what uncanny insight all our present difficulties were foreseen, nearly a hundred years ago, by Karl Marx."—Anthony Standen, in *The Commonweal.*

PERKY

"E. M. Forster, noted English novelist, told a distinguished gathering at the American Academy of Arts and Letters that 'universal exhaustion' might be worth trying, that it might 'promote that change of heart which is a present so briskly recommended from a thousand pulpits. Universal exhaustion,' he maintained, 'would certainly be a new experience. The human race has never undergone it, and it is still too perky to admit that it might be coming, and might result in a sprouting of new growth through decay'."—*New York* Times.

forum

The First American Revolution

William Z. Foster's recent book, The Twilight of World Capitalism, *was the subject of an article by James S. Allen in our August issue. In connection with this a reader asked for discussion of the point made in the book that: "The first of the three American capitalist revolutions was the conquest of the continent from the Indians. . . ." His letter was sent to Mr. Foster, who wrote the following reply to the editors:*

I HAVE received your note of August 10th, together with a copy of a letter you had received from Mr. Gerald Daniels requesting further elaboration from me on the point I made in my book, *The Twilight of World Capitalism,* to the effect that the overthrow of Indian tribal communism in this hemisphere by invading Europeans constituted a revolution. Perhaps, without going into the subject fully, the following brief explanation will make clearer the reasons for my conclusion.

If my contention that the conquest of this hemisphere was a revolution seems "novel" and "original" to Mr. Daniels, this only goes to emphasize the great neglect that our economists and historians have practiced for many years past in this and other American countries on the Indian question. We have not sufficiently challenged the habit of bourgeois writers to look upon the conquest of this hemisphere pretty exclusively from the standpoint and interests of the white invaders. (Thus, for example, the Beards, in their work, *The Rise of American Civilization,* don't bother to discuss the Indians at all.) We have tailed along with their conclusion that the subjugation of the Indian peoples of the Americas was merely a form of conquest, the forcible establishment of capitalism (with its feudal hangovers in many places) over this

whole vast new area, and that what happened to the Indians has little real significance.

But if we will also look at the matter a bit from the standpoint of the Indians, as we should, we must arrive at a quite different conclusion; namely, that for the Indians the invasion was much more than a conquest by hostile, alien powers; for it brought about a profound revolution in their whole way of life. Their existing social system was shattered by the invaders, who thrust upon them a very different order of society.

When the Spanish, Portuguese, English, Dutch, French, Russian and other European invaders arrived in this hemisphere they found that the entire area from Alaska to Cape Horn was thoroughly, if not densely, populated. Estimates of the total number of Indians at the time of Columbus' discovery voyage in 1492 range from five to twenty-five millions, and even more, as I indicated in my book. The existing types of Indian society varied widely throughout the vast expanse of the Americas, from the primitive status of the Indians of the Columbia River basin (whom Morgan classed as being in the upper stage of savagery), to the Indians east of the Mississippi (who were in the lower stage of barbarism), and to the remarkable Indian regimes of Mexico, Central America and Peru (which had reached the middle stage of barbarism). What the invasion from Europe did was to destroy basically these Indian societies and to force their masses, willy nilly, into the grip of a capitalist regime. For the Indian millions this transformation of their social organization constituted a real revolution.

The invasion, or conquest, which took about four centuries to run its full course, did not affect all the Indian peoples in the same way. Those in the West Indian islands (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Haiti, etc.) were almost completely exterminated; various of the Brazilian tribes fled the murderous Portuguese slavers into the deep jungles where they still continue their primitive life; and the Indians in the United States, heavily decimated by wars, massacres and disease, were finally forcibly herded into concentration camps, politely called reservations, and kept there to vegetate and starve. But the great masses of the Indians, notably in those areas where their numbers had always been the greatest, namely in the countries fronting on the Pacific Ocean, all the way from Mexico to Chile, withstood the grave shock of the

conquest, remained where they were, and found themselves catapulted from their primitive regimes into the economic and political relationships of a capitalism just emerging from feudalism.

Those Americans, and they are many, who believe that the Indians are a "vanishing" if not practically an already vanished race, may be surprised to learn that there are at present at least as many Indians in this hemisphere as there were when Columbus landed here—and this without counting the *mestizos,* who are twice as numerous as the full-blooded Indians and who are now rapidly on the increase. The first inter-American Indian Congress, organized by the Pan American Union in Patzcuaro, Mexico, in 1940, adopted for a working basis the figure of thirty million as the number of people in all the American countries who could properly be classified as Indians. Commenting on this figure, the *Boletin Indigenista* (June, 1945), remarked: "If all the persons visibly possessing any trace of Indian blood were to be included in the enumeration, however, the number would probably be between sixty and eighty millions."

One of the greatest epics in human history has been the long and heroic struggle of the Indian peoples all over the hemisphere to preserve their lands, their languages, their religions and their tribal customs in the face of the ruthless drive of developing capitalism. And they have succeeded to an amazing extent in saving many tribal institutions, even when confronted with the great pressure of capitalism in the United States. Nevertheless, the Indian peoples generally are now living within the broad framework of capitalist society, from Hudson Bay to Tierra del Fuego. It is the Indian masses, and their *mestizo* descendants, let us remember, who have, for four and one-half centuries, operated the capitalist (or feudalist) owned mines, plantations and cattle ranches of the whole western belt of countries from Mexico to Chile. (In Brazil and the Carribbean islands, as in our southern states, these heavy tasks fall upon the Negro peoples.) There can be no doubt, therefore, that the transformation of the many Indian peoples, throughout the hemisphere, which was accomplished with untold violence and misery, from their primitive systems of society to the capitalist regime under which they are now living, constitutes a revolution. It is one of the three revolutions by which capitalism mastered the Americas.

—WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Are Publishers Innocent?

[*The July,* 1949, *issue of* M&M *carried an article on "The Literary Marketplace" by Ralph Hodgeman, a New York publishing executive. We invited discussion of his views. The following article was written as a result of discussions among a group of Communists employed in the publishing industry.* —The Editors.]

IF THE PROGRESSIVE writer were to accept the framework laid down in Ralph Hodgeman's article, he would find himself in a dilemma indeed, for it offers no direction, no path of struggle. It places the writer in the center of a conflict which, in Mr. Hodgeman's terms at least, has no resolution.

Just who is to blame for the debased condition of creative writing in the United States today? Basically, says Mr. Hodgeman, it is the American reading public. "Certainly," he declares, "those authors who show up repeatedly on the book club and best-seller lists have a flair for telling the kind of story which contains a variety of satisfactions for a tremendous number of readers. That such readers and their friends look forward to each succeeding novel from the pens of these authors is undeniable." It in no way cancels out this statement that Mr. Hodgeman goes on to add that "given this vast potential audience, best sellers are vigorously and systematically promoted into existence."

Since the current fiction best-seller lists consist almost exclusively of trash with neither literary nor human value, this leaves the serious writer out on a long limb. If that's what the public wants, what can he do about it except give in or starve?

But this point of view, of course, leaves out the essential determining factors in the situation. It is like blaming prostitution on human frailty instead of the economic pressures giving rise to organized vice. What are the factors which Mr. Hodgeman glosses over and which can give the serious progressive writer some direction in his struggle?

First of all, of course, there is censorship. Today, the big money is placing a heavy penalty on artistic integrity. The book clubs, the reprint houses, the movies, and the radio turn thumbs down on serious, progressive material. A publisher, as Mr. Hodgeman points out later in his article, is indeed taking a heavy risk if he tries to buck this combination. Even given two novels of equal literary merit, the average publisher is, under present conditions, fairly sure to accept the more reactionary of the two and reject the progressive one.

The censorship is not, of course, official. Sometimes it is not fully conscious. Yet it operates to exclude from publication almost everything that does not meet with the standards of the House Un-American Committee. What this pressure did to Hollywood is obvious and direct. What it is doing to the book publishing industry is less direct but nonetheless real. The exceptions which issue from the small independent publishers and on rare occasions from larger firms only serve to prove the rule.

It is evident, then, that the writer's first path of struggle must be against censorship.

THERE IS another danger in laying the blame for the publication of trash on the public, and that is the tendency to separate the serious writer ever further from his audience until he comes to feel that he is writing only for that small group of elite which can appreciate serious artistic work. This, of course, tends to narrow the writer's view of the world and to force him into greater and greater retreat from reality until we find, as we do today, that many serious writers have fallen into deepest despair, disillusion, and pessimism.

But is it characteristic of a wide reading public that its taste is inherently low? That is standing the true situation on its head. The entire apparatus of American capitalism is utilized in an attempt to corrupt the American people. The wholesale production of trash in the areas of communication—movies, radio, books—reflects this systematic campaign of debasement. During the war when the American people were united in their struggle against fascism, progressive novels received far wider distribution than they get at present. *Freedom Road,* by Howard Fast, and *Days and Nights,* by Constantin Simonov, are two examples. Not only was the censorship not so stringent at that time, but people engaged in a constructive struggle wanted and needed books which dealt with reality.

Today the theme is escape. Escape from problems that seem too difficult to tackle. Escape from a world where the average citizen feels excluded from participation in public life, where he feels he cannot control his destiny. And so we have a spate of books dealing with the past—not a real past but a world peopled with big-bosomed blondes and swashbuckling heroes who get ahead not in company with their fellows but by beating the game at other people's expense. And so we also get, in all the mass media, stories which glorify violence and which express a fundamental contempt for human life and human dignity. Add up these factors, and we can see that this literature, if we can dignify it with the name, actually expresses the attitudes of incipient fascism.

When we view it in relation to the present political temper of the United States, in relation to the Cold War, the Truman Doctrine, the Atlantic Pact, in relation to the oppression of the Negro people and the drive against civil liberties and the rights of labor, then it takes on a new meaning. This literature is not simply junk, it is a reflection of and an aid to rising American fascism. Concretely, it dulls the awareness of the American people to fascist ideas.

Here then we see another path of struggle for the progressive writer. He must take part in every effort to fight the political reaction which is at the root of the debasement of American culture. He must ally himself closely with every progressive movement which offers the American people a chance to participate constructively in political life, to become active and informed citizens and, hence, eager and serious writers.

Mr. Hodgeman, in his article, makes much of the importance to the publisher's profits of movie, book club and other subsidiary rights. But he treats these as if they were something extra which came to the publisher by chance—in fact he actually uses the words "pluck and luck" in referring to the history of *Gentleman's Agreement.* By ignoring the whole structure of the cultural industries in this country and the source and distribution of their profits, he gives an extremely misleading picture.

Let us take a hypothetical manuscript. It is purchased by a publisher whose capital hires workers, who, in turn, produce and distribute the book. A book club selects it; the movie industry makes it into a movie. Profit is realized on each of these operations. But where does the profit come from? It is created by the workers in each of

the industries. There may be bargaining up on top among the several owners as to who is going to get the lion's share (Mr. Hodgeman's "pluck and luck"), but the profit is realized through the exploitation of the workers in *all* the branches of the industries from shipping clerk to editor to film worker.

Mr. Hodgeman neglects to point out that wages in these industries are extremely low. Highly skilled and highly educated as many of these workers are, they receive little return for their labor. An assistant editor may get $50.00 a week, a secretary in a motion picture office $35.00, a shipping clerk in a book club $37.00, a production assistant in a reprint house $52.00 a week. This is a far cry from the quarter of a million dollars for movie rights which the publisher receives.

Where does the author stand in all this? He receives payment in royalties and for subsidiary rights. This is a reward tossed to him—usually for being a good boy and writing a book along the accepted lines we have discussed above. But generally it is the smallest possible payment. Book publishers, in drawing up contracts with their authors, pay a royalty as low as they can, hang onto as many of the subsidiary rights as they can, and pay as little for them as possible. It is only the well-established author who has enough bargaining power to get any kind of break in his contract. The new author is likely to find that it is a case of publisher-take-all.

Here we see another path of struggle for the author. And that is to make common cause with the workers in the cultural industries in their fight for higher wages. It is a mutual struggle, and the author and the workers are natural allies.

MR. HODGEMAN concludes his article by saying that the future of American writing "cannot be left to the mercy of the market. It cannot depend on the personal sacrifice of authors and the *altruism of publishers*" (Italics mine). Indeed it cannot. But the fight must be carried on in terms of the current political and economic conditions seen as a whole. By extracting and separating a part of them, as Mr. Hodgeman does, the writer is left at the mercy of a market dominated by the ideology of Wall Street and incipient fascism. Writers must view this struggle as an anti-fascist fight. They cannot carry it on alone. They must look for their allies not only among liberal publishers, who, like Mr. Hodgeman, are also deeply troubled by these

contradictions, but basically within every branch of the progressive movement.

Fundamentally, the contradictions described above arise from the fact that the cultural industries in the United States are privately owned and operated to make money. Production for profit rather than to supply the cultural needs of the people means that culture comes to the people from the outside. They do not participate in it —it is not really theirs. Hence, the exploration of new means of independent publication is also a duty of the writer, the progressive reading public, and workers in the publishing field.

We believe the writer must also fight for a society in which the private profit motive will be eliminated from the cultural industries —that is, a socialist society. Herein lies the long-range path of struggle and the ultimate goal for the writer who is fighting against the present perversion and subversion of his art.

But the road to the final goal lies through the immediate fight that confronts us today. The fight against censorship, the fight against the degradation of culture, the fight against exploitation, these are the paths of struggle; and they are inextricably a part of the fight against fascism.

—ELIZABETH M. BACON

Psychoanalysis and Ideology

In an early issue M&M *will continue the discussion introduced in our September issue by the article, "Psychoanalysis: A Reactionary Ideology," written by eight French psychiatrists.*

THE BUSINESS OF MUSIC

by VIVIAN HOWARD

LAST winter a young baritone created a minor sensation among music critics by the simple device of making his New York debut in Carnegie Hall instead of the more traditional Town Hall. This proved that the baritone, aside from any question of his musical ability, had (a) enough money to rent Carnegie Hall and (b) the imagination to realize that the site of his debut would impress even the most bored critics—which it did.

In a profession where the struggle for survival has reached acute proportions, this singer may be given a gambler's chance to succeed. But for every musical artist who survives, many others of equal or greater ability are defeated by a system in which the concert stage is a big business enterprise, and in which the most expendable item is often talent.

There is an axiom in the music trade that it is much easier to become a good musician than to make a living at it. Each year the country's advanced music schools, like the Juilliard in New York, Curtis in Philadelphia, Eastman in Rochester, and Peabody in Baltimore graduate many hundreds of talented students, most of whom hope to make a living as musicians. But the schools offer no information on how to get on the concert stage—or how to win friends among the contractors who hand out orchestral jobs.

The young musician who aspires to concert work must start his career in New York. The indispensable Town Hall debut costs from $1,000 to $1,300, with the artist paying for everything—programs, ushers, tickets, advertising, manager's fee ($175), even postage for Town Hall's mailing list. Since most of the tickets are given away, the concert is usually a total financial loss.

Chief purpose of the debut is to obtain favorable reviews. But the reviews usually consist of two or three paragraphs in which the critic, using initials, cautiously allows that a few pieces were performed with "delicacy and real feeling," while in others the artist exhibited a "wiry" or "edgy" tone. If the reviews are bad, the artist can pack his bags and go home to become a music teacher, or else, if he has the means, he can stay on and buy himself another Town Hall recital in a couple of years. If the reviews are good, the artist collects his clippings and goes forth to sell himself not to the public but to one of two corporations—Columbia Concerts or the National Concert Artists Corporation.

The concert business is in effect a monopoly in the hands of these two managing corporations. There are smaller managers, some legitimate and some shady, and an important newcomer, W. Colston Leigh of lecture business reputation, but none of these yet threatens the big two. Of the 14 million dollars which the public spends every year at concert recitals, more than one-third is taken in by Columbia Concerts, and one-fifth by N.C.A.C. together with Sol Hurok, who books through them.

Arthur Judson, who is president of Columbia Concerts, one of the largest stockholders in the Columbia Broadcasting System, and manager of the New York Philharmonic, has apparently discovered the secret that eluded lesser geniuses like Mozart and Schubert—that is, how to remain solvent in music. He made music big business.

Columbia Concerts and N.C.A.C. are strictly commercial organizations merchandising musical talent rather than shoes. To them a good piece of merchandise is one that can be sold to the public at a profit. They, therefore, much prefer merchandise with glamor and sales appeal to that which has merely unrecognized artistic value. That is why in a book of advice to young musicians, *Your Career in Music,* author Harriett Johnson in all seriousness tells the budding concert star to get the required glamor first through radio or movie success.

Like other corporations, the concert managers are not averse to gathering in every available dollar. A musician can have his debut "managed" by Columbia or N.C.A.C. for a fee of $125. But this does not place him on their list or anywhere near it.

To get on the list, after his debut, he must try to get an audition. And even an impressive audition does not guarantee that he will

be accepted by the manager. An unknown violinist might be summarily rejected, no matter how inspired his playing, if the manager has an oversupply of violin players. An unknown with no money to "promote" himself has almost no chance at all.

It is possible for a musician to turn to one of the smaller managers, but this can be a costly process. Small managers have been known to ask the artist to supply as much as $8,500 in advance to finance a concert tour—this in addition to a 20 per cent commission per concert. Some managers demand a fee as high as $30 a month just to keep an artist's name on their lists, with no guarantee of any bookings.

Suppose, however, that the young musician with good reviews, an impressive audition and a sizable bank account is accepted by Columbia Concerts. What then?

Columbia and N.C.A.C. have two concert circuits, one in the big cities where their leading stars perform, the other called "Community Concerts" (Columbia) or "Civic Concerts" (N.C.A.C.), in the smaller cities. It is the top concert artists, like Vladimir Horowitz, Lauritz Melchior, Jascha Heifetz, and Marian Anderson, who play the big cities, command large fees for each engagement—from $1,000 to $3,500—with sometimes a percentage of the box office receipts. The lesser known artists play the community or civic circuits. These fall into two income groups. Some receive $200 to $300 per concert. Of this they must pay 20 per cent commission to the manager, all railroad fares and hotel expenses, publicity, salary, and expenses for their accompanists. Although they may gross $10,000 for the year, their actual income is obviously much less.

Lower on the scale are the beginning artists who are paid as little as fifty dollars per concert or given a weekly salary. At the end of a strenuous concert tour which requires the utmost in physical and emotional endurance, these musicians are lucky if they break even.

Through Community and Civic, the big managers have sewed up the concert business in every sizable town of the country. The concert series in each locality is organized by the town's "society" leaders, who are usually less interested in music than in providing the occasion for a big, dress-up social event. Subscriptions to the series are sold in advance, and this money is used to engage the artists. Usually arrangements are made for one box office attraction at a high fee

and three or four unknowns at lower fees. Each artist, however, receives considerably less than his listed fee, the difference going to the Community and Civic organizations. Thus the managers cannot lose nor can local "society," which has its "season" just like the boxholders at the Met or the Boston Symphony. That most of the artists barely make a living and that the vast majority of people in the town are effectively excluded from participation is accepted as part of the musical picture in America.

Although concert artists have for years been restless and bitter under the regime of Columbia and N.C.A.C., there has been no place else for them to go. Of them all, only Paul Robeson has come out publicly against the concert system, attacking its monopoly control, its audiences, and its inevitable political censorship.

One of America's leading concert stars, Robeson three years ago had the experience of having 86 concerts cancelled because of his progressive stand in politics. Countless times, as Robeson has said, he has stood on a concert stage, looked at his wealthy, well-dressed audience, the leading manufacturers and "society" people in town, and has realized that his natural audience, a far larger one, is outside rather than in the concert hall.

Robeson has emphasized that only if artists find these new, larger audiences, working-class audiences, can the musical life of America be changed, the monopoly control of the big managers weakened and the opportunities for musical expression increased. This is not impossible; recently in England and other European countries, Robeson himself sang before audiences of 25 to 40 thousand people, and he gave concerts at a dollar top with tickets priced as low as ten cents.

Many young concert artists are looking for the opportunity to have a career outside the Town Hall-Columbia-N.C.A.C. orbit. They have up to now been literally starved out for lack of an audience while the audience is there, waiting, deprived of the best of our musical and cultural talent, with their taste daily debased by the trash of radio and movie entertainment.

Naturally concert artists will have to aim in a different direction musically for workers' audiences. While they must not "play down" to the audience, they will have to play music with a meaning that can be understood. As the audience matures, so will the artists; they will learn from each other.

There is now in process of organization a music group called People's Artists, which plans to break new ground in bringing concert stars, instrumentalists, folk singers, and jazz artists before these new audiences. This group has the active support of Paul Robeson. They expect to present their own productions in New York and from there to go on tour, cooperating wherever possible with trade unions, rank-and-file groups within unions and with progressive organizations. The touring concerts will be flexible enough so that they may be presented either as separate musical events or as part of a larger program.

An ambitious music organization like People's Artists can, if successful, free a certain number of artists from the censorship and hampering control of the monopolies, give them scope for their talents, and make a start in organizing new music audiences. That will be an important step in the right direction.

THE ORCHESTRAL musician has a set of problems somewhat different from the concert artist. He does not need a bank account to start a symphonic career—although in view of the terrific job insecurity in this field, it is not a handicap. He also does not need to come to New York, since he can starve quite artistically in any one of a dozen cities where symphony seasons last only sixteen to twenty weeks.

When a symphonic musician graduates from a music school, he usually goes out to the "bush leagues" for his first year. Perhaps he is taken on in the woodwind section of the Tulsa Symphony and plays a short season there. Then, if he's lucky, he fills in with work in a summer "pops" orchestra. For the year he might make $1,000.

The following year he comes to New York and wonders how to get a secure job on the staff orchestra of a radio network or perhaps in the "mines" (Radio City Music Hall). He discovers it is less important to know Bach than to know a few good contractors and much less useful to have absolute pitch than to have connections.

To keep employed, a musician has to scurry around trying to find jobs. There are no formal announcements of job vacancies. When a vacancy does occur in any well-known orchestra, the other players tell their pupils, friends, and unemployed relatives about it, and these appear, as if by magic, to be auditioned. Sometime auditions are held

after a job has already been filled, for the sake of appearances.

The number of jobs an orchestral musician gets depends, usually, on the number of contractors he knows. A contractor is the liaison man between producer and musicians. If a Broadway musical or a ballet company, for instance, needs an orchestra, the contractor assembles it for him. (There are, incidentally, many conservatory-trained musicians playing in the theatre pits at musical shows.) Working for the big contractors are sub-contractors who are musicians themselves. These sub-contractors are in the best position to get odd jobs for themselves, and it is not unusual to find in an orchestra assembled for a special event, that at least a quarter of the players are sub-contractors.

The largest concentration of musicians is in New York City where there are potential job opportunities in radio, in recordings, television, the New York Philharmonic, Metropolitan Opera, City Center, Radio City Music Hall, many small opera companies and concert orchestras, Broadway musical shows, etc. The other big music center in America is Los Angeles, where the movie and radio industries provide jobs.

Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians, the New York local, has close to 33,000 members. Of this number only about 20 per cent are employed at any one time. Fully half the membership of the Local have given up the idea of making a livelihood out of music but retain their membership in the hopes of getting an occasional fill-in job or merely to keep up their insurance policies.

The Local's membership includes musicians working in the jazz and popular idiom as well as classical music. Actually there is no clear-cut dividing line, and many musicians drift from one field to another. The classically trained bass player who can switch to be-bop improvisations is a lucky man, financially speaking.

Many conservatory-trained musicians turn to jazz because they are denied jobs in the field for which they have specialized. This is particularly true of Negro musicians, who have been virtually frozen out of the symphonic world. There is today not one Negro musician employed on the staff orchestra of any radio network in New York, nor in the New York Philharmonic, nor at the Metropolitan Opera, nor in any Broadway theatre. Throughout the whole country, only one Negro musician is playing in a major symphony orchestra—a violinist with the Denver Symphony.

Women musicians also face rigid discrimination among orchestras of all types. No matter how gifted women are as performers, the great majority of them find that if they wish to remain in music, they can do nothing but teach.

Even the highest-ranking, experienced musicians are haunted by the bitter facts of seasonal employment and lack of security. Although, for instance, the minimum union rate for the New York Philharmonic is $125 per week, only half the players make more than $5,000 a year —the salary of a junior executive in the advertising business. Many of these musicians fill in with extra jobs in ensembles and quartets when they can get them, or they teach, when possible.

IN THE MUSIC business there is no such thing as job stability. True, if a musician is employed in a Broadway show his job is secure as long as the show lasts, but that might be all of one week. In the symphony orchestras, seniority does not exist—in fact musicians are convinced that the first hired are usually the first fired. A few years ago when a new conductor took over the symphony orchestra at Radio City, one-third of the musicians were dismissed, without severance pay. These were competent players, most of whom had been with the orchestra for years.

The steadiest jobs are on the radio networks, but the big networks combined—N.B.C., A.B.C., C.B.S. and Mutual—employ only about 320 staff musicians, with another 200 free-lancers being called in from time to time. On the radio networks, too, jobs are becoming scarcer. New technological advances can make a small symphony orchestra sound like a large one. As a result N.B.C., for example, has cut the number of staff musicians more than half during the past eight years.

The musicians' union leaders, in spite of the terrific unemployment, have not pressed militantly enough for increased jobs. Local 802 distributes its huge welfare fund by pork-barrel methods, doling out money here and there, sending groups of musicians to play in veterans' hospitals—a worthy undertaking but one hardly calculated to create permanent new jobs. No funds have been used to help create and support new permanent orchestras.

What is needed more than anything else is Federal, state, and municipal interest in a plan for the decentralization of music—the creation of musical centers throughout the country. Then musicians in a

city like Erie, Pennsylvania, could find adequate employment at home instead of battling for jobs in New York or Los Angeles. Every city of 50,000 or over should support a permanent, resident music center, with performances of opera, symphony, chamber music and ballet at low cost through a long music season. Such projects would require public subsidy, and if such a subsidy is to be of any cultural value, it would have to be given without strings, without censorship, and without discrimination of any kind.

Under the present set-up, with that over-supply of labor so beloved by free enterprise (40 musicians for every available job), it is no wonder that musicians are cynical and disillusioned about their profession. Their problem is not how to become better artists, but how to remain musicians and still eat regularly.

There is, of course, nothing which compels a musically talented young man or woman to spend ten or twelve years of intense, difficult study in order to enter one of the most highly competitive of professions, with little hope of adequate financial return. That young people still study music and keep on doing so, shows how great is the desire for cultural expression even when sabotaged by the economic system under which it operates.

books in review

Fast's Stories

DEPARTURE AND OTHER STORIES, by Howard Fast. *Little, Brown. $3.00.*

A NEW BOOK by Howard Fast, today the most internationally honored American novelist wherever books are read by honest, progressive people, is always an event of tremendous interest—and this courageous writer's present offering, *Departure and Other Stories,* dedicated to the men of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, is no exception. For here again Fast does what no other American writer whose works have sold in the hundreds of thousands, and millions, is doing today: he presents Communists as human beings, good human beings, heroic human beings; and gives us poignant, exciting and truthful stories about them.

That Fast is paying for his courage is no secret: a jail term is hanging over his head, and the same giant book clubs and newspapers which used to run after him are now avoiding him on the one hand or blackjacking him on the other. But Fast has thrown his hat into the ring of the future; and, more than that, has jumped into that ring with both fists swinging.

Take a story like "Epitaph for Sidney" in the present collection, for example. Here, in Fast's deceptively simple but rhythmic prose, is the story of Sidney Greenspan, Communist, veteran of the Lincoln Brigade, who died fighting fascism in the recent war, in '44. Sidney, Fast tells us, was born in 1915 in New York City's Washington Heights, went to Public School 46, then to De Witt Clinton High School, and then for a while to City College. He came of a poor Jewish family and worked in a dry goods store after school, was active in the student movement, joined the Young Communist League. People were surprised when Sidney went to Spain. He didn't look like much physically, and he definitely mistrusted guns. Sound familiar? Of course.

It's the solid stuff of the radical movement: Sidney represents more than Sidney; he represents a whole generation, a whole special group of Communist citizens whose fundamental life patterns are similar to Sidney's. Yet no one has told their story so movingly and effectively. I showed this story to some old, tough,

Daily Worker readers who had missed it when it appeared in *Jewish Life* and who, after absorbing what went before, confessed they were crying or on the verge of tears when they came to the final paragraph:

"Some of us who knew him, when we heard of his death, thought that we would write down an epitaph for him. Then, in the personal columns of the paper he read and loved, there were many boxes with heavy black lines to bind them in, and whatever the name, there was a reference to the struggle against fascism. That was how we came to put together what we knew and remembered of Sidney; but nothing we could tell and nothing we could compile and no reasons we could give were enough to explain the fabric of him. So we gathered it into a word and wrote: 'To the memory of Sidney Greenspan, anti-fascist, who fell in the people's struggle—from his comrades'."

I think "Epitaph for Sidney" will live a long, long time in our literature.

"Departure," the title story, is the tale of a young volunteer in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade during its last days and is told in the form of a monologue by the volunteer. There is beautiful writing here; the tender words flow in a nostalgia-banked stream, carrying with it some of Fast's most effective and graceful imagery. Other Lincoln Brigade vets, like myself, I'm sure, will be hit hard with empathy, in certain places—and yet, there's an objection—at least I have one. I found it hard to believe in the almost a-political Lincoln Brigader, a youngster who seemed, at the beginning of the story, no different from any other youth caught in a war in which he had no particular interest. Any resemblance between such a young man and those who volunteered to fight fascism in Spain is certainly not characteristic; and this made the transition of the character to one determined to fight it out to the last not too easy to take.

There are three stories in this volume about India: Fast's experiences there during the war evidently had a profound effect upon him. "The Little Folks from the Hills" which first appeared in *Masses & Mainstream,* is only ten pages long; but in those ten pages Fast has worked up a story so skillful in its horrifying exposure of what imperialism has done to India that the reader barely notices the shocking blow aimed at his consciousness until he's finally hit with it. It's a solid hit, too.

The effect of "The Police Spy" is, however, somewhat different. This is a version of a story of the Indian Communist Party which I had heard from GI's who had served in that area, and is told by Fast with relish, wit and high style—up to a point, which I'll

come to later. Here, again, without making any bones about it, Fast presents the Communist leader as the heroic figure that he is, and does this in so real a way that the characterization would be convincing for the non-Communist. There is delicious irony here, too, in the pity the police spy feels for himself, the exploitation he believes he is suffering—being so underpaid for his assigned task of following a fast-moving, tireless, ubiquitous district organizer of the Communist Party of India. There was every element here for a fine satire; but the point at which I parted company from the story occurred when the Communist organizer, though somewhat dubiously, finally organized a police spy "union." More, the police spy, himself, later becomes a martyr for the "union," suffering terrible torture rather than reveal the names of his fellow "unionists" to the government. I simply cannot go along with a story that associates the heroism of so many true sons and daughters of the revolution and the penalty they paid for that heroism—with a police spy! I go along rather with the character in the story who, when told by the organizer "a police spy is human," answers that the question is one of "form and content. . . . The form is human, but the content is a yellow scum."

However, in his third story about India, "The Rickshaw," a fine story, you can feel that same power and delayed action impact of "The Little Folk from the Hills." It has the fierce anti-imperialist drive of Fast's best work. There are other stories I enjoyed, but I didn't care for the very-thin-slice-of-very-pallid-life *á la New Yorker* stories. Some of these, I'm inclined to believe, were originally written for the slicks. A couple of other stories in the volume were first run, years ago, in the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Woman's Day*. This brings up a bone I have to pick with the Little, Brown edition: the lack of an introduction to a collection of stories of such different levels written under widely varying circumstances over a period of ten years.

Despite some of the dross, there is gold a-plenty in *Departure and Other Stories*—including some good-sized chunks which will shine for a long time to come.

BARNARD RUBIN

Florentine Story

A TALE OF POOR LOVERS, by Vasco Pratolini. *Viking*. $3.50.

ANY theory of the novel, to be worth its salt, should be flexible enough to permit wide qualification. A well-bolstered thesis is nice to lay one's head on, but it

may merely prove what we were looking for. Meanwhile we can miss what we did not expect, what we "proved" impossible to realize.

Pratolini's novel is a case in point. Its 369 pages, like its street, the Via del Corno in Florence, are peopled with fifty-seven characters, almost half of whom are central to the story. The tale shuttles back and forth from one to the other of these, so that their figures appear very gradually and the design only at the end. Each scene is short, of necessity, and its effect therefore depends on *how* the characters say as little as possible, not on their being allowed a maximum of expression.

One might assume that here we have the usual "story of a street," liberally studded with laughter and tears, as its inhabitants are sprinkled with low comedy or patronizing sentiment. For *A Tale of Poor Lovers* is quite frankly not a story of the depths of the soul but of the surface of life. Yet we have only to turn the phrase around, to watch the intricate, unstable life of that surface: immediately we see that this upper level, this "superficial" plane is infinitely more complex than we had dreamed. It may even yield more truth than a deep but narrow shaft into the mind.

Such a novel defies summary. It is enough to say that it takes place in the middle of the Twenties, when the fascist regime was still consolidating itself by means

of squad raids and murders. Its cast comprises mainly the families of artisans, small shopkeepers and vendors; one or two workers; crooks, prostitutes, pimps, police and stoolpigeons.

Typifying in her degeneration all the corrupt and tenacious vitality of the old order is a wealthy retired prostitute and Lesbian called the Signora, who maneuvers the fates of her neighbors until overpowered by madness. Of all these people the only ones who do not merely do what they want or what circumstances force them to do, the only ones whose beliefs play a part in their actions, are the Communists. The point is made so unobtrusively, without insistence, that a casual reader might overlook it. But good books are not written for casual readers.

The Communists, like the other characters, are treated naturally, the writer feeling no obligation to moralize about them or treat them as a species apart. Perhaps this is due to the fact that in Italy it is still possible to take a Communist for granted; there are, after all, so many of them. There is a more important reason, too, which determines the handling of the other characters as well. The absence of moralizing comes from Pratolini's rejection of bourgeois morality, especially its readiness to saddle everyone with equal responsibility as though freedom were absolute and oppression illusory.

In this he resembles Gorky and O'Casey, though his style and method are quite dissimilar. Like them he does not try to soften or sweeten his characters, to pretend that hearts of gold lie beneath their rough exteriors. He does not condemn them with forgiveness. He accepts them as they are, at the same time recognizing their enormous capacity for change. Evil for him is not a thing-in-itself, but a symptom of alienated potentiality. Whatever lessens this alienation by creating more human, socially healthy conditions for the individual releases unsuspected creative power in him. So the people of the Via del Corno wither as they are denied love and knowledge and flourish when they acquire them.

This recognition, that the substratum of action is not good or evil nature but potentiality, is a special feature of proletarian writing. Needless to say, such potentiality can only be realized by and through social relations, and therefore morality is never abstract but becomes an aspect of the class struggle.

There is one other resemblance to O'Casey (I am thinking now of the earlier plays): the seeming diversion of the onlooker by comedy, minor quarrels and machinations; this broken into suddenly, almost from the outside, by the tragic episode which transforms everything that preceded it. The mind is not just arrested by the

new development; it must go back and rethink what it had left behind too lightly.

The murder of the blacksmith and Communist, Maciste, by fascist gunmen is such an incident, setting off ripples into the past and future of the other lives in the book, so that we see their love affairs, terrors and even carnivals in a different way. But the increase of feeling and understanding is not imparted to the reader alone; placed in the middle of the book, Maciste's agony acts like a magnet drawing into or back to his party his estranged comrade Ugo and the orphan Gesuina, as well as the printer's apprentice, Mario, and Milena, the wife of a shopkeeper. And the love of these couples grows, as it were, out of his body.

The meaning of Maciste's life-giving death contrasted with the lingering of the mad Signora, doomed to spend the rest of her life blowing bubbles to applauding children, is unmistakable. It is almost like an epigram in conclusiveness. (Pratolini is fond of swift summings-up, as when the girl Aurora says, after sleeping with her repulsive seducer, the coal merchant Nesi, "I am like Pinocchio on the last page of the book.") It is a true symbol because it has not been imposed upon the action. It springs from characters with a life of their own and from actual circumstances as they follow the course of history.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

Subs for Libraries

A reader recently donated $100 to be used by *M & M* in filling subscription requests from libraries. The fund was exhausted in two weeks. If you would like to assist in getting *M & M* into libraries throughout the country, please contribute what you can to the library fund of this magazine.

High Society

A RAGE TO LIVE, by John O'Hara. *Random House.* $3.75.

THE very weight of O'Hara's new book announces the seriousness of his intent—an extended study of the capital of Pennsylvania with its leading female social figure in the foreground. The result is reportage; the scandal teasingly described, complete with fashionable addresses and even more fashionable names, brash yet based on snobbery, documentation without significance carried on for almost 600 pages, chronicling half a century's social notes.

Grace Tate Caldwell, only daughter of the city's leading family, is a healthy girl, full of normal impulses, who takes to her social role with alacrity. In the course of her adolescent goings-out she meets a proper New Yorker of old family, marries him with due eclat, and from the first encounter gets along famously in bed with him. After fifteen years and three children, she yields to her lust for an Irish contractor of the town and the resultant scandal ruins her marriage. Fatefully her husband and youngest child die of polio.

She lives the scandal down almost effortlessly but a few years later, still unmarried, she falls in love again. This time she barely yields to the man but through a misunderstanding of the man's wife she reaps another scandal which forces her to leave Pennsylvania. In a brief scene at the book's end one sees her in New York, the winter of 1947, an old woman presiding over a family of well-to-do decadents, worrying about her current lover's health, the head of a family of those corrupt and diffident human beings whom O'Hara has described in other works. Presumably she personifies, in modern dress, the Lady of Pope's Epistle—"You purchase Pain with all that Joy can give, and die of nothing but a Rage to live."

In creating the proper setting for his heroine, O'Hara has written the best sections of his book. These are the passages in which he deals with the political life of the city: the relations of the public officials to the political machine, the courtesies and personal connections that create class rule. All throughout the book, too, there are knowing details about the mores of the heroine's set and, down the social scale, of the small businessman. Only the workers remain undiscovered in this large rambling book.

It is interesting to see how, though apparently aiming so high, O'Hara narrows the range of his novel on every level. In the simple matter of the naturalistic slices of life with which he has chosen to present a full scale picture of a city he has no socially

conscious workers enter the story, though there is an ideological representative, with many variations, for every social class of the city. Yet it is the remembered statement of the father of one of the heroine's lovers, a working-class radical, now dead, which halfway through the book ties up into coherence for a second the raw material that O'Hara has been piling. (Though it is the simple knowledge of every worker that the benevolent capitalist rules as harshly as the most notorious J. P. Morgan.) This passing recollection of a libertine is the only reflection of working-class consciousness in the book.

There is no intellectual center for the book either, so that one can't help wondering why O'Hara has written it. There is apparently no intelligence at work anywhere in the novel. Once toward the story's end, one of the characters prattles about psychoanalysis, then a new technique, but that so timidly that it exhibits what one suspects is O'Hara's fright of being intellectual. All throughout the decades the story covers the trappings are catalogued — the makes of cars, the gowns, the guns, the saddles, the menus—but not a single idea crosses the threshold. It is true that the major characters are not apt to mouth them, but there is little evidence that the author has entertained an intellectual concept that would give the scene of his book any-

thing more than visual authenticity.

O'Hara's faults, more easily disguised in the short story form, derive certainly from a lack of social insight but also from a fear of being serious. In his introduction to the Scott Fitzgerald Portable he writes of one of America's most morally perceptive novelists in a juvenile, pugnacious fashion. It is interesting that he slights Fitzgerald's ability to reveal his people, as O'Hara himself is unable to do, and concludes that Fitzgerald's importance lies in the fact that O'Hara can on any visit to the Plaza recognize one of Fitzgerald's characters. Well, one can recognize O'Hara's characters if one is out for a walk on New York's fashionable East Side, but the recognition will be limited to dress, the cars they ride, the apartments they inhabit.

It is on this human level on which a novel must succeed if it is to move us that O'Hara most constricts his novel. His inability to show the reader how his people move in a situation displays a breakdown of the novelist's art. Early in the book one begins to encounter passages that begin: "It is impossible to say where the hand of Fate began to intervene in any getting together of man and woman. . . ." And the elisions: the climaxes and incidents passed over in a sentence, all those moments in fiction in which a novelist's real work is done, so that one waits with no release for the scene for which the stage has been set.

If this method keeps the reader at a distance from the characters, if in a purely formal sense there is no conflict followed by catharsis—the kind of dialectical development that makes a novel of the length of *War and Peace* or *Anna Karenina* continually suspenseful—this method also allows O'Hara to make no significant comment about the social scene he has detailed. The political corruption and the individual decadence lie side by side; never seen in conflict—with the world of choices that action opens up—their relevance is never established. And unable to test his characters at crucial moments, O'Hara begins to lose his hold on them. They meander, become vacuous, and the surface reporting of the heroine's activity can scarcely be called "a rage to live."

The progression of incidents takes on a dogged quality; the little jokes, the stylistic changes appear to be his own exasperation with the ennui that overcomes the novel. At best, or at worst, the conclusions to be derived from O'Hara's novel depend almost entirely upon the social intelligence each reader brings to it. And the work of the novelist has to be done by the reader.

JOSE YGLESIAS

theatre

MORE OFF-BROADWAY

by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

NO SUMMER doldrums this past season. Live, interesting theatre came from the five off-Broadway groups, The People's Drama whose *They Shall Not Die* was a hit, The Interplayers, We Present, Studio Seven and Off Broadway. Three productions not yet covered here and well worth seeing are O'Casey's *The Silver Tassie,* done by The Interplayers at their Carnegie Hall auditorium; Strindberg's *The Father,* done by Studio Seven at the Provincetown Playhouse; and W. H. Auden's and Christopher Isherwood's *The Ascent of F6.*

O'Casey tells us in his autobiography, *Inishfallen, Fare Thee Well,* that Yeats refused *The Silver Tassie* for the Abbey Theatre. Yeats said the narrative was discontinuous and that the style was too mixed, veering, with too little concern for transition, from rollicking poetry to stark symbolism and then to crushing realism.

I have also heard rueful doubts expressed about the play for two other reasons—that the symbols to which it resorts in its anti-war expression too closely approach the mystical; and that, by going no further than exposing the wastage of war and showing no other reaction to it than impotent rage on the part of the victim, the play has a defeatist tinge.

Those to whom tightness and tidiness of construction are everything will probably share Yeats' feeling and will probably be too inhibited to enjoy its sprawling dramatic movement. But the many more who judge by the power rather than the shape of a play will find that a negligible matter. Any play that can hold so much dramatic energy and deliver it with so much force fully justifies its structure.

In *The Silver Tassie* O'Casey makes a very moving attack on the insanity of war. He gives us an athlete reveling in the strength and suppleness of his magnificent body; he is the pride of his family and the joy of the whole neighborhood. This demigod is paraded off to war with drums and hurrahs—and comes back in a wheel chair. According to the official

rhetoric he is a hero, a living medal to his family and the neighborhood. The fact is that he is a torture to himself and a festering wound to the neighborhood. If a terser and more moving dramatic symbol of the wastage of war has been given I have yet to see it.

It is this which makes the second set of objections to the play seem pointless to me. Of course there is more to be said about war than O'Casey has said here; but where is the play—or book—that has said everything on its chosen theme? For myself, I second George Bernard Shaw's description: "A deliberately phantasmopoetic first act intensifying into a climax of war imagery in the second act; and then two acts of almost unbearable realism bringing down all the voodoo war poetry with an ironic crash to the earth in ruins, the hitting getting harder and harder to the end."

Al Saxe's direction was, as always, sensitive and resourceful though he had to overcome a style of acting unsuitable to the play. That style aimed at character presentation foreshortened to almost vaudeville conventions. It had proved effective in last season's production of E. E. Cumming's *Him* and this season's preceding production of Louis Macneice's poetic satire *Out Of the Picture* (which, despite flashes of wit and wry eloquence, failed to come off as a play). It is to the company's credit that they managed to turn so smoothly to the realism required by the O'Casey play.

STRINDBERG'S centenary occurs this year. Studio Seven, at the Provincetown Playhouse, was the first group to honor it, and so successfully that Broadway is to follow with another production of the same play, *The Father.*

Strindberg's long career, apart from personal conflicts, was a series of clashes with government, church, the academies, the café coteries and the salons, culminating in court trials on charges of blasphemy and indecency. Because of these rubs with authority Sweden's working-class organizations claimed him as their own and conducted defense campaigns on his behalf.

The struggle exhausted Strindberg and cost him many miseries. But it was a creative struggle. Strindberg's contributions included new resources for Sweden's novelists, playwrights and historians, a supple new literary language based on the vernacular, the introduction of ordinary people as characters in drama and fiction and of their problems as literary themes, and new techniques that replaced old and devitalized literary forms.

His rebellions against authority, however, were personal and individualistic, a self assertion against traditions that he found repressive. He adopted Nietzsche as his philosopher and even as his model; he tried to live like Nietzsche's

socially alienated "superman." And, like Nietzsche, he suffered from emotional imbalances which kept him, as both the events of his life and the matter of his work reveal, at a neurotic if not a psychopathic pitch.

Like most of Strindberg's writings, *The Father* is a projection of a personal conflict, the struggle with his first wife for the control of their children, a struggle that, with variations, was repeated in his two subsequent and equally unsuccessful marriages. Strindberg's possessive attitude toward his wives was intensified by the Nietzschean rationalization for it —the concept of the man-woman relationship as a master-slave relationship.

In *The Father* the conflict turns upon a quarrel over the education of the daughter whose own tortures are ignored by the two contestants in their revolting lust of battle. That battle is presented as a contest between masculine integrity and feminine deceit. The wife discovers the husband's vulnerable point—the question of his paternity. If no man can be certain that he is the father, what sure claim has he on the child? The play develops the phases through which paralyzing suspicion, subtly injected, inflames into an obsession and then madness.

The Father has few rivals as a dramatization of torturing neurotic conflict. That conflict is always held to dramatic terms; and in the course of it we have perceptions of human behavior uncanny in their insight. The dialogue is natural without ever falling into the banality that too often smudges naturalistic drama; and it is cuttingly ironic without ever becoming merely sophisticated.

Yet the neurotic pressures attributed to the characters explode into the play itself and keep it at an unwholesome tension. What might have broadened the play is missing here, a sense of the relations of its suffering people with the world around them, a sense of the social conditioning which fosters neuroses. The lack of an outer air, of a social horizon in Strindberg's vision, keeps the play from providing still larger satisfactions than it does.

Studio Seven's production is intelligent and tight. The roles of husband and wife, large and exhausting parts, are performed with distinction by Ward Costello and Anne Shropshire, though, in both cases, the characterization tended to freeze into rather rigid and single-mooded portraiture.

THE AUDEN and Isherwood play *The Ascent of F6* (produced by We Present at the Hudson Guild Theatre) is, like their previous *The Dog Beneath the Skin,* a product of an earlier and social-conscious period in which they established their reputations but from which they departed, for-

mally into increasing subtleties of technique and, in ideas, into a sophisticated fatalism and mystical retirement from life.

The *F6* of the title is an unscaled peak in a mountain range that serves as the (disputed) frontier of two colonies, one held by the English, the other by a rival imperialist power, "Osnia." The native population of the English colony is reported to be discontented, which the Foreign Office and its stooge press explain away as the effects of Osnian propaganda. According to a native tradition whoever masters F6 will be master of all the land to be seen from its summit. Thus the mountaineer who reaches it will help to validate his country's claim to the disputed territory.

After an opening scene in which the tedium and frustration of the life of Mr. and Mrs. A (for average) is described in racy, rhymed dialogue, the play proper begins with a Foreign Office conference. The conferees symbolize the British ruling groups—a government minister, a retired general, a newspaper chain proprietor and a society lady. The conference is climaxed by the report that an Osnian expedition is already on its way toward the peak of F6.

A group of England's best mountaineers is urged to meet the Osnian challenge. The events of their ascent are counterpointed against the reactions of Mr. and Mrs. A who are given this vicarious adventure to appease their demands for some substance in their lives. The British expedition is the first to top F6 but at the cost of all the climbers' lives. The Osnians attain the crest only to find it straddled by the body of their rival. The play ends with a state funeral which leaves Mr. and Mrs. A, for whom, according to the speeches, the mountaineers gave their lives, sadder and emptier for that futile gift. *The Ascent of F6* is thus a striking symbol of the criminality of imperialist war.

Unfortunately the effectiveness of the symbol was spoiled by an intricate psychological sub-plot (sibling jealousy, mother image, etc.) which distracted rather than relieved the action; or, rather, overloaded it, since the sub-plot with Mr. and Mrs. A was about all that the play could carry. And as if this were not enough there were further digressions into mystical by-paths in a monastery situated halfway up the mountain. All this excess matter slowed and confused the play.

Nevertheless the play provides satisfying entertainment. The production is ingenious and spirited. From a quite uniformly good performance one might single out the acting of Robert Fuller and Erica Feydn as Mr. and Mrs. A; De Witt Drury, Robert Brown and E. W. Swackhamer, as the climbers; and the Negro actor, Marcus St. John, as the abbot.