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masses & MAINSTREAM

In this Issue: **APPEAL TO WRITERS, by Ilya Ehrenburg**
ON THE EVE OF PRISON, *by Albert Maltz* · PORTRAIT
OF CARTER G. WOODSON, *by W. E. B. Du Bois* · COLD
WAR COURT, *by Herbert Aptheker* · EVE MERRIAM · PHILLIP BONOSKY

Free Eugene Dennis!

BACK IN 1837, a Congressional investigating committee, dominated by slaveholders, was annoyed at the response of a witness. The long-since buried and forgotten Rankin of the moment, one Bailie Peyton of Tennessee, thereupon threatened him fiercely and when the witness rose to claim the committee's protection, the honorable one shouted, "You shan't say one word while you are in this room; if you do I will put you to death." The committee chairman, Henry A. Wise of Virginia (later the Governor who hanged John Brown), added: "Yes, this insolence is insufferable." John Quincy Adams, who tells us of this choice bit of Americana, commented: "As both of these gentlemen were armed with deadly weapons, the witness could hardly be blamed for not wanting to testify again."

Today the malevolent representatives of American imperialism threaten witnesses, for the moment, with loss of liberty, not of life. But the logic of the threat leads, in our time, to crematoria. Because Eugene Dennis, General Secretary of the Communist Party, U.S.A., challenged the legality of the Un-American Committee; because he wanted to show that several of its members were elected to Congress in direct violation of the explicit provisions of the Constitution; because he wanted to demonstrate that this Committee was possessed illegally of unrestrained power to investigate anything and everything with the avowed purpose of slandering the progressive; because he wished to prove that when its former chairman, Martin Dies, said: "About half the things the Committee got and used were seized illegally" (N. Y. *Times*, February 25, 1947), Dies told the truth—it is because Eugene Dennis wanted to perform this signal service for all Americans that he is now in prison.

He is in prison because he is a Communist, because that in which he believes—peace, democracy, socialism—is despised and feared by the ruling class. He is an American political prisoner and until our protests free him, no one is free. Every additional day Eugene Dennis remains in prison brings all of us closer to concentration camps.

The people of the world know that where a Rankin jails a Dennis there lurks fascism. The honor and safety of all Americans demand freedom for Eugene Dennis!

—THE EDITORS

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AMONG THE CONTRIBUTORS

PHILLIP BONOSKY, whose short stories have appeared frequently in *M & M,* is now at work on a novel.

W. E. B. DU BOIS has just completed a book comparing his impressions of the United States and the Soviet Union over the past thirty years.

ILYA EHRENBURG'S "Open Letter to Writers of the West" appeared originally in *The Literary Gazette* of Moscow.

VIRGINIA GARDNER is on the Los Angeles bureau of the *Daily People's World.*

NANCE MACMILLAN was an Australian delegate to the Paris Peace Congress last year as well as a delegate to the Melbourne Peace Congress which he reports in this issue.

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COVER: Women partisans of South China (Sovfoto).

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OUR TIME by Samuel Sillen

Joliot-Curie

THE war-hawking press of this country was not slow to claim credit for the firing of Frederic Joliot-Curie as French High Commissioner for Atomic Energy. After all, hadn't the papers here been warning Premier Bidault he would get a sound American switching if he didn't obey orders? Was it a coincidence that the Nobel Prize physicist was dismissed within two weeks of an arrogant editorial ultimatum in *Life* magazine?

No doubt the people of France will understand better now what General Bradley means when he says that a "little bit of sovereignty" must be sacrificed in the cold war. Joliot-Curie's associates in the Atomic Energy Commission have protested that his dismissal will be "heavy with consequences for the future of atomic energy in France," and even the New York *Herald Tribune,* which hailed Bidault's action, smugly notes that "the nation's progress in the field of atomic energy is likely to suffer."

For France, as for the United States, the *peaceful* use of atomic energy which Joliot-Curie symbolizes is to be verboten. The only valid function of science in the imperialists' view is for war against the Soviet Union.

It is this monstrous deformation of science that Professor Joliot-Curie opposes. He said at the Gennevilliers Congress of the French Communist Party: "A true progressive scientist will never give a scrap of his scientific knowledge for the purposes of war against the Soviet Union." What Joliot-Curie wants is unconditional prohibition of the

atomic weapon. He was the first to sign the Stockholm appeal of the World Peace Congress calling for such prohibition.

And here we can see why his firing is as much an attack on the American people as on the people of France. It is obvious that the atomic war which Joliot-Curie opposes would mean catastrophe for all people, as Ilya Ehrenburg points out in his "Open Letter to Writers of the West." Partisanship for peace is the highest patriotism today in whatever country.

Compare Joliot-Curie's position with that of Dr. Frederick Seitz, research professor of physics at the University of Illinois. Writing in a recent number of *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists,* Dr. Seitz calls on scientists to switch to military research: "The time is ripe for physicists and scientists in general to devote a much larger fraction of their time to research of military interest. . . ." The Illinois professor wants a leave-of-absence system whereby scientists can have "freedom" for uninterrupted time in military laboratories. He is not worried about political dictation, for "who among us will feel sinless if he has remained passively by while Western culture was being overwhelmed?"

So Western culture is now equated with atomic war and the militarization of science, with the assault on Joliot-Curie and the national independence of France. I think Western culture is more stoutly represented by Dr. Albert Einstein, who vigorously opposes Dr. Seitz's position. What we in America have to keep in mind is that it is only one step from the firing of Joliot-Curie to the attempted silencing of Einstein.

No Time For Silence

PROGRESSIVE American writers have a good deal of precedent for their feelings of indignation at those who keep their mouths discreetly shut these days. In 1844, after Emerson made his first public speech for Negro emancipation, John Greenleaf Whittier wrote:

"We had previously, we confess, felt half indignant that, while we were struggling against the popular current, mobbed, hunted, denounced from the legislative forum, cursed from the pulpit, sneered at by wealth and fashion and shallow aristocracy, such a man as Ralph Waldo Emerson should be brooding over his pleasant philosophies,

writing his quaint and beautiful essays, in his retirement on the banks of the Concord, unconcerned and 'calm as a summer's morning.'"

Emerson did take his stand, and he fought shoulder to shoulder with the Abolitionists. Soon it was he who called on writers, as Whittier had done earlier, to get into the fight. When the Boston press quoted Oliver Wendell Holmes as having denounced the New England Abolitionists as "traitors to the Union," Emerson was relieved to get a letter from Holmes correcting this report. "The wider you are from their notion of you," he wrote Holmes, "the better I shall be pleased." The rich, he said, "always vote after their fears," and he added:

"The cant of Union like the cant of extending the area of liberty by the annexing of Texas and Mexico is too transparent for its most impudent repeater to hope to deceive you. And for the Union with Slavery, no manly person will suffer a day to go by without discrediting, disintegrating, and finally exploding it. The 'union' they talk of is dead and rotten. . . ."

Of writers such as those addressed by Ilya Ehrenburg we may repeat: the wider you are from the newspapers' notion of you, the better we shall be pleased. The silence of a Hemingway or a Steinbeck on the threat of atomic war can be helpful only to the warmakers. This is a time when, as John Stuart Mill wrote in his essay *On Liberty,* "A person may cause evil to others not only by his actions but by his inaction. . . ."

We have sent Mr. Ehrenburg's appeal to a number of writers, including those he specifically names. We shall report their reactions in our next number. In the meantime we hope that the "Open Letter" will be taken up by every writers' group in the country. The people have a right to know where their authors stand on the transcendent issue of outlawing the atom bomb.

Selling Diplomacy

THE New York *Herald Tribune* recently featured an article by Arthur Miller, author of *Death of a Salesman,* with the following headline: "America Cannot Censor Its Plays For Europe. Despite Russian Barbs, Our Art Speaks For Our Freedom, Arthur Miller Says." And that, it turns out, is what Arthur Miller says in an article which at times seems to have

migrated from the spaces usually reserved for such champions of "Our Freedom" as Joseph Alsop, Mark Sullivan and Walter Lippmann.

Miller is answering a news item from Vienna which reports concern about the showing of *Death of a Salesman* there. The brasshats and their cultural echelons are afraid that this play and Irwin Shaw's *The Gentle People* might be "used" by the Communists. Miller writes:

"The question raised is simply whether it is wise for the United States to permit the export of literature which contains criticism of American life. I think it a valid question and I do not doubt for a moment that the Communists do seize upon any evidence in our literature of failures in our civilization."

The playwright shows very convincingly that if the United States prohibited art critical of American society we would have little of value to send out. He concedes that "If we are to logically follow Secretary Acheson's plea for total diplomacy it seems that this policy of censorship is called for."

But then, instead of attacking this "total diplomacy" and its objective, Miller reads the government a little lecture on how to make this diplomacy more persuasive. He wants in effect to lend a more cultured, a more human tone to the "Voice of America"; the fact that its function is to push a Wall Street war, and that it is therefore inherently anti-cultural and anti-human, apparently escapes his notice. "If we wish to prove that we are sensitive to beauty, we cannot censor beauty," he writes. That is very sweet and reasonable. I wish Miller would try this on an American press which is doing its damndest to silence Robeson, on an American Supreme Court which is sending his fellow dramatists to jail, on the American publishers who won't publish the new novels of Aragon and on the American President who fetes the persecutor of Neruda and hails the jailers of Nazim Hikmet as defenders of democracy.

Let us, says Miller, "dignify ourselves by pointing out that we send our art into the world as a demonstration first of our thought, and also of our freedom." What a fine demonstration that would be. Next month the State Department will feature a trans-Atlantic concert of all the Negro musicians denied employment in our symphony orchestras, and a showing of the new plays written in the penitentiary by Dalton Trumbo and John Howard Lawson, and an epic in praise of freedom by New York City's Board of Education.

"Our movie industry," says Miller with the piety of the times, "is more censor-ridden than any in the world outside Russia." What is "censored" in the Soviet film? To be sure, the Soviet Union would not permit a film calling for war even if there were an artist who demanded the "freedom" to make one; Hollywood will not allow a film calling for peace. To be sure, the Soviet people, who control their own film industry, would not permit a film attacking workers or national minorities, degrading women, preaching obscurantism; the bankers who own the American film industry will permit no others. The Soviet government honors the names of Pudovkin, Eisenstein, Gerasimov; the Truman Administration jails the finest minds in American film art. The Soviet film gives us great tributes to the scientific spirit, as in the recent *Pavlov,* and to anti-fascist resistance, as in *The Young Guard;* I don't have to elaborate on the recent Hollywood product.

All this talk of the "censor-ridden" Soviet film (as compared to the freer Hollywood film) is so much dust added to that which Howard Barnes throws into the reader's eyes on the same page of the *Herald Tribune.* And I have no doubt it makes good copy for the "Voice of America" in line with the shiny new program of free thought and free art which Miller proposes.

He has advice for the Russians, too. If *they* want to be effective propagandists, he says, they should show their "fallibility, their humanity, and we should feel drawn toward them as human beings, and that is the strongest bond of all." Note the assumption here that the Soviet artists do not show their humanity, an assumption that indicates Miller is better acquainted with the review sections of the capitalist press than with the works of Ehrenburg, Fadeyev, Polevoi, Panova and a score of other writers whose recent work is available in translation. Sheer ignorance of the actual material is the most generous explanation I can offer for Miller's references to Soviet culture. As to the plea for "fallibility," I think we may be permitted to take it with a grain of salt in the pages of the *Herald Tribune* which is on the prowl for Soviet "soft spots" with a look of murder in its eye. But even here, the allegation that all the people in Soviet books are presented as infallible and perfect is obviously false to anybody who has read Ehrenburg's Stalin Prize novel *The Storm,* for instance. True, the Russians don't have any salesmen who are torn to death in a jungle,

nor do they have manufacturers who send their own sons to death in order to make a buck. I doubt whether the Russians will agree to invent them to demonstrate their "fallibility."

In his article Miller makes the point that Communists "seize upon any evidence in our literature of failures in our civilization." He does not make the point that Communists are more eager than other people to find and encourage every evidence of health, of democratic aspiration, of realism and integrity and devotion to the interests of the working class in our literature. Our "civilization" is not monolithic. It is a conflict of war forces and peace forces, of exploiters and exploited. Communists do not stand "humanistically" above and outside this conflict. And because they take art seriously they do not merely "seize" upon evidences of rot and decay in our society, they also fight them. And if we don't fight we will all of us land in a concentration camp, including many who may seem peculiarly exempt and privileged.

"Border Street"

JUSTICE has again triumphed in Western Germany. From a Hamburg court comes the inspiring news that Veit Harlan, a well-known Nazi film producer, has been acquitted for the second time. He was charged with crimes against humanity arising from his film *Jew Suess,* an anti-Semitic version of Lion Feuchtwanger's novel of the same title (published here as *Power*). The film-maker pleaded that he had produced the picture under orders of Joseph Goebbels. Refusal, he told the court, would have endangered his life.

I hope I am not endangering my life if I spit out loud.

Herr Harlan and his Western Zone protectors came to mind when I saw *Border Street,* the Polish film about the Warsaw Ghetto. What a magnificent picture this is! It depicts with great strength the heroism of the Jews who took up arms against the fascist beasts. It is a moving tribute by the new Poland to a people who had for centuries suffered cruelly in that country. Americans who see this picture will know better how to deal with the Harlans, branded criminals by state law in Poland today as in the Soviet Union.

The film shows, as John Hersey's *The Wall* fails to show, the living link between the Jews of the Ghetto and the Polish underground outside which supplied arms. This unity of the Jewish and non-Jewish

anti-fascist is strongly pointed up in the children of the film, the children, let us remember, who are today the young citizens of the new people's democracy. For the film is more than a tribute to the epic past. It reflects and helps strengthen the socialist values of the living Poland.

What answer will anti-Communist Jews of the Dubinsky stripe make to this film? What answer will they give to the fact that while in Western Germany the Herr Harlans and Ilse Kochs are exonerated, it is in the East that a stirring indictment of anti-Semitism like *The Affair Blum* is produced? Films like *Border Street* and *The Affair Blum* crushingly refute the stupid slanders of the Social Democrats and of the American Jewish Committee. The more widely these pictures are seen the better for the Jews and for the country as a whole.

It might be argued that America has also produced a *Crossfire.* This is true. It is also true that the producer of *Crossfire,* Adrian Scott, and the director, Edward Dmytryk, both face a year in prison together with the others of the Hollywood Ten for whom Albert Maltz speaks so eloquently in this issue.

H. W. L. Dana

OUR magazine has lost a good friend, Dr. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, who died last month at the age of sixty-nine. Dana was a valiant supporter of peace and American-Soviet friendship. To this cause he made a special contribution with his books on the Soviet theatre. His comprehensive, first-hand knowledge of Soviet drama was unsurpassed in this country. His many essays and collections will long outlive the Brooks Atkinsons who, as he once told me, year after year rewrite their stale obituaries on the Soviet stage.

I last saw Harry Dana in the old Longfellow home on Brattle Street in Cambridge. He was a grandson of the poet and he was also a grandson of Richard Henry Dana, author of that classic protest against inhuman working conditions, *Two Years Before the Mast.* Dana was proud of this heritage. Though the most genial of men, he would flare up at anybody who dared repeat the conventional view that Longfellow was a harmless bore.

In his own life Dana was often a storm center. In 1917, for instance, he took a courageous stand against American participation

in the imperialist war. He was teaching at Columbia University at the time, and he was expelled, together with Professor James McKeen Catell, for "disseminating doctrines of disloyalty in the war." It was a celebrated academic freedom case. The late Charles Beard resigned from Columbia in protest.

Dana was again in the forefront of struggle in 1927, when he fought against the frame-up of Sacco and Vanzetti. He addressed a Communist meeting in Paris and urged a strike against the impending execution in his native Boston. "His action," recalls the New York *Times*, "promoted such unrest that special guards had to be placed around the American Embassy in the French capital."

In his postwar collection of *Seven Soviet Plays*—including work by Simonov, Afinogenov, Korneichuk, Leonov—Dana wrote: "During the war there was no blackout of the arts in the Soviet Union. Soviet drama was a force with which to mobolize the minds of men, and in wartime it proved to be a most powerful weapon in national defense. . . . The Russians will want to do all they can to advance the union of the United Nations until all nations are united, all races are equal, and all men are free."

This desire for peace and freedom, which Dana had seen over many years in the Soviet Union and its theatre art, was the consistent motive of his own life.

As WE go to press we learn with deep shock that our comrade Bob Reed has died. We lower our banners for Bob, whose sudden death at the age of forty-seven robs the working class of a devoted cultural leader. For all of us who knew Bob personally his loss is stunning and grievous.

THE EDITORS

OPEN LETTER

To Writers of the West

by ILYA EHRENBURG

THE Permanent Committee of the World Peace Congress has just held its third session. The participants issued an appeal "to all honest men and women who, whatever their views as to the causes of the present international tension, are concerned about the situation and earnestly desire the resumption of peaceful relations among the nations."

Let me remind you of the text of this declaration which was signed by the participants in the session and which they are calling on all honest people to sign:

> "We demand the unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon, as a weapon of aggression and mass extermination of human beings, and the institution of strict international control over the observance of this decision.
>
> "We shall regard that government which is first to use the atomic weapon against any country as a war criminal.
>
> "We call upon all men and women of good will throughout the world to affix their signatures to this manifesto."

Many writers in the West have already put their signatures to these words. I call upon those who hesitate, those whose ears are assailed by insidious whispers that the peace supporters' statement cloaks a political intrigue, those who are being assured that the dove of peace is like the famous Trojan horse.

Why do I call upon the writers? First and foremost because I am myself a writer. I know that a writer understands the significance of his signature; he understands that millions of readers listen to what he says and listen attentively; he not only sees, he foresees; he not only describes, he prescribes; and he bears on his shoulders a tremendous responsibility.

He who writes a book is responsible for all the books written before him, for the literary treasure-store of the whole world, for the great heritage of the past. The writer who describes human love is responsible for all the lovers of the world, for all the cradles, all the gardens. The writer who addresses people is responsible for all people. Can any writer now keep silent, stay under cover, betray a child, betray human happiness, ancient stones, the fate of culture?

I call upon the writers because each of their signatures will be followed by thousands of their readers' signatures. It may be said that no signatures can avert a war, can protect people from bombs or superbombs. But in my opinion such objections are unfounded and unworthy of writers. The days have long passed when wars were waged by isolated castes. I don't think it would be possible to wage a war today against the will of the people, against the will of the common folk.

The signatures under this call condemning the atomic weapon are not just sheets of paper with the names of Americans and Russians, Englishmen and Frenchmen, Italians and Poles, Chinese and Indians. These signatures stand for the resolution, determination and the pledge of millions upon millions of people. We know that the various conferences of diplomats proved fruitless. (I shall not stress here who is to blame for this.) We see that the menace of the atomic weapon being used against innocent people is mounting with every day. We see a danger without precedent threatening human culture.

It used to be said that when the guns speak the muses are silent. The muses must now raise their voices, they must speak in order to keep the guns silent.

I call upon those writers in the West who see life in a different light than we do, who often feel differently and think differently. I do not call upon like-minded writers only, but upon all honest writers in the West, socialists and individualists, realists and mystics, upholders of the past and champions of the new. I do not suggest that they should espouse my social, political or esthetic views. I do not suggest that they should come out for one political party against others or for one state against another.

I do not propose that they should condemn this or that government for its domestic or foreign policy. I offer them something different, something acceptable to them. I propose that they should come out

against the atomic weapon, against bombs and super-bombs which are a menace to all people. I propose that they support the demand of the partisans of peace for the unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon and for the institution of control to enforce this ban. I propose that they condemn the government which dares to be the first to drop an atom bomb on the inhabitants of any country.

There is neither camouflage, nor cunning, nor prejudice in the appeal adopted by the third session of the Permanent Peace Committee. The "secret" of making the atomic weapon has long ceased to be the monopoly of any one state. In demanding the prohibition of the atomic weapon, we demand its prohibition in every state where it is manufactured or can be manufactured. We do not call for the condemnation of the government of this or that country, but for the condemnation of the government that dares to be the first to use weapons of mass extermination of human beings. This is not a verdict or sentence, it is a warning. In issuing this manfesto we appealed to all people of good will. And I think that whoever opposes our demand to ban the atomic weapon will thereby reveal his own criminal intentions. I think that whoever will not want to name as criminals those who dare to use this weapon, will be revealing his own inhuman designs.

Writers of the West, I call upon you to subscribe to our unprejudiced appeal prompted by humanism and anxiety for civilization.

I am thinking of certain writers in the West who cannot possibly favor any plans for the mass extermination of human beings, but who, to the best of my knowledge, have not yet taken a stand against the atomic weapon. I shall take the liberty of addressing each one of them, in the belief that this personal appeal will make the nature of my message still clearer.

ERNEST HEMINGWAY, I call upon you. You know of my high esteem for your talent—I have written about that. Almost all your books have been translated into Russian and are well known to Soviet readers. But I am calling upon you now not only because you are a writer I like. We met in besieged Madrid, when the criminals were murdering Spanish children with bombs and doing it with impunity. You were rightly indignant then at the handful of men who had brought untold grief to the peaceful people of Spain. I remember something else: when the Italian fascists attacked Ethiopia, you spoke

out with an article full of wrath. You loved the Italian people, but you knew that the rulers of Italy who had attacked Ethiopia had committed a grave crime. You also knew that Addis-Ababa would be followed by Madrid, and Madrid by Paris and London.

There are many things that stand between us now, but I do not want to join issue with you. I call upon the writer Ernest Hemingway who witnessed the tragedy of Madrid: can you keep silent at a time when inhuman men are not even troubling to conceal their intention of dropping atom bombs or super-bombs on peaceful cities, on women, on children and old folks? How can your signature be lacking to the demand for the complete and unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon?

Roger Martin du Gard, I call upon you. For a long time I treasured your wonderful letter condemning enmity, the letter in which you wrote kind words about my peace-loving people. I finally had to burn this letter—in Paris when the Nazi invaders entered. You probably know that your *The Thibaults* is familiar to our readers. All your work is imbued with humanism, with love for the common people, and this it is that permits me to address you. I take the liberty of reminding you that our mutual friend, Jean-Richard Bloch, often spoke of the "responsibilities of talent." He said that when great disasters threaten the world the writer cannot hide himself and say "it does not concern me." You have not yet said what you think about the danger now threatening mankind. It seems to me that you must subscribe to the demand that the atomic weapon be banned: this is not the demand of some one party; it is the demand of human conscience.

J. B. Priestley, I call upon you. We are not acquainted personally but you were so kind as to preface an English translation of my war-time articles. In that preface you said that you valued a writer who declared himself against war criminals. But don't you think that writers should speak out against war criminals before they commit their crimes and should thereby try to prevent those crimes? You were in Moscow a few years ago and you certainly must have seen that you are well known to our readers and theatre audiences.

When I returned from Paris after the Peace Congress, people here asked me whether you had taken part in our work. I did not know how to explain your absence to them. In Paris I had been told that you had declined the invitation to attend the Congress because you were tire

and also because you did not believe that such conferences are effective. I am tired too, J. B. Priestley; I am tired of many things: of the war which I described in the book honored with your preface, and of the war which is now being prepared by men who care for nothing but their selfish interests. I quite agree with you: it is much more pleasant to write novels or plays than to speak at congresses or conferences. But I cannot shirk my responsibility to my readers, and although I am tired too, I appeal to you. Of course, I cannot vouch that our appeal will stop the evil-doers, but I can vouch that if you do not come out against the atomic weapon and do not put your signature to our address, your readers—whether in Moscow, London or New York—will never forgive you.

Erskine Caldwell, I call upon you. You were in the Soviet Union when the Nazis attacked us. Probably you remember how by chance we found ourselves in the same bomb shelter; the criminals were bombing Moscow then. You told us interesting stories, you joked and that summer night passed very quickly. But you were not only joking then, you were indignant too. And with this in my memory, I address myself to you: you must sign our appeal. You have written a lot, and very well, about the misfortunes of the plain people of America. Surely you must lift your voice to save them from the most terrible of calamities.

I am far from demanding that you should share my views on world events. I am not in my teens, and I realize that neither open nor closed letter can change a writer's convictions; life alone is able to do that. What I want is something else—to condemn the men who are planning to destroy peaceful cities. If you still have good memories of Moscow beating off the fascists, you may think of Moscow. But this is not imperative. What is imperative for you is to think of the fate of American cities and American children. And in my opinion, you will sign our call.

André Chamson, I call upon you. We are bound by old ties of friendship. You were in besieged, bleeding Madrid. You are a profoundly peaceful man and hate war, but when criminals seized your country you joined the Resistance and fought. Our appeal has been signed by French authors of diverse views; side by side with Aragon stands the signature of Martin Chauffier. Can you refuse to sign? Our readers

know your novels about peasant life in your beloved mountain region of Cevennes, they know your *Well of Miracles* showing how France suffered from the Nazis. I am certain that the fate of your heroes means more to you than to certain diplomats and politicians. You love art and have done much to save the remarkable monuments of the past.

Recently some newspapers on the other side of the globe published articles called, "What Will Remain of Paris after a Super-Bomb Hits It?" These articles made it clear that nothing would remain of Paris, that everything would perish—the Louvre and the cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris, the National Library and the Petit-Palace Museum, which you yourself direct. I shall not now go into the question of how much of truth and how much of boasting there is in such articles. Let us say that the criminals can destroy Paris. But you know just as well as I do that they certainly cannot build it: this will require centuries of toil and the creative genius of the people. I am convinced that you will take a stand against the men who are glorifying bombs and super-bombs. You will want to uphold peace, to save the ancient stones of Paris and the children of Cevennes; you will sign.

JOHN STEINBECK, I call upon you. You once told me that it was necessary to disperse the pre-war fog. You recently visited our country, and you have written a book about your visit. In it you mention a Soviet play about Americans engaged in spreading a pre-war fog and you say that you did not like this play. That is entirely your own business. I might say, in my turn, that I did not like your book about your visit to the Soviet Union: it impressed me as being somewhat superficial and light-minded. I expected more from the author of *Of Mice and Men* and *Grapes of Wrath,* which I consider deep books with a strong impact. But right now I do not propose to indulge in criticism of books or plays. You saw and you recorded in your book that the Soviet people do not want war. I believe that the American people do not want war, either. That is why I call upon you to come out against the handful of men who are building their own prosperity on a dangerous and criminal gamble with atom bombs. I hope that you will not shirk your duty.

Alberto Moravia, I call upon you. You have written a good book called *The Indifferent Ones* in which, as in your other books, you showed that you are far from indifferent toward the fate of the com-

mon people of Italy. You and I disagreed about many things in Rome, but there was one point on which we never disagreed—on the fact that war must be prevented. If I have correctly understood your books, if I have correctly understood you, you will surely put your signature to a declaration aimed against the atomic weapon.

I have named only a few, but I call upon many: upon all of you honest writers in the West, whatever your views. In the hour of supreme danger for all people, for all nations, for the whole of culture, you cannot remain silent any longer. Our appeal is being signed by bricklayers and steel-smelters, weavers and wine-growers, farmers and teachers, engineers and agronomists. Do not miss the hour! The writer must be in the vanguard. The voice of those who are called "the conscience of humanity" must ring out loudly and distinctly. I may not like many things you write. You may criticize or reject books by Soviet authors. But both you and we need peace; it is needed by all people; it is necessary to art. I want to preserve my faith in the humanity of the best writers in the West. This faith is shared by many readers, and you cannot fail them. You must speak out with simple, calm and stern words: prohibition of the atomic weapon; a warning to those who are planning to murder millions of innocent people; peace to all the continents, to all cities, to all children!

A Portrait of
CARTER G. WOODSON

by W. E. B. Du Bois

Carter Godwin Woodson, who died in Washington on April 3 at the age of seventy-one, illustrates what race prejudice can do to a human soul and also what it is powerless to prevent. Of course, race prejudice is only one particular form of the oppression which human beings have used toward each other throughout the ages. Oppression cramps thought and development, individuality and freedom. Woodson was naturally a big strong man with a good mind; not brilliant, not a genius, but steady, sound and logical in his thinking processes, and capable of great application and concentration in his work. He was a man of normal appetites, who despite extraordinary circumstances carved out a good valuable career. As it happened, he did not have the chance for normal development; he spent his childhood working in a mine and did not get education enough to enter high school until he was twenty; he never married, and one could say almost that he never played; he could laugh and joke on occasion but those occasions did not often arise.

I knew him for forty years and more, and have often wondered what he did for recreation, if anything. He had very little outdoor life, he had few close friends. He cared nothing for baseball or football and did not play cards, smoke or drink. In later years his only indulgence was over-eating so that after fifty he was considerably overweight.

All this arose, in the first place, because like most people on earth he was born poor. But his poverty was the special case of being one of nine children of poor American Negroes who had been born slaves. This meant that from the beginning he was handicapped; it was difficult for him to go regularly to the very poor country school in his neighborhood, and for six years during his youth, when he ought to have been in school, he was working in a coal mine; so that he was

grown before he entered high school in Huntington, West Virginia. Once started, however, he went to college at Berea, Kentucky, then to the University of Chicago. He alternated with public school teaching, travel and study in Europe and finally taught ten years, from 1908 to 1918, in the public schools of Washington, D. C.

In 1912, Woodson took his doctorate of philosophy at Harvard in history. It is quite possible that had he been a white man he might have entered a university career, as instructor and eventually as a professor with small but adequate salary; enough for marriage, home and children. But of course, at the time he got his doctorate, there was not the slightest thought that a black man could ever be on the faculty of Harvard or of any other great school. In Washington, he got his main experience of regular teaching work. It was hard and not inspiring. The "Jim-crow" school system of the District of Columbia is perhaps the best of its kind in the United States; but it had the shortcomings of all segregated schools, with special arrangements and peculiar difficulties; they are not the kind of schools which would inspire most men to further study or to an academic career.

After that experience Woodson turned to college work. He served as dean for a year at Howard University and for four years at West Virginia College. He might have ended his career in this way as president of a small Southern colored college. His duties would have been collecting funds and superintending discipline among teachers and students; or if it had been in a state school, he would have cajoled and played up to a set of half-educated Southern whites as trustees, so as to get for Negroes a third or a half of the funds they were legally entitled to. It would have been the kind of executive job which has killed many a man, white and black, either physically or mentally or both; and it was the sort of thing that Woodson was determined not to do.

He had by this time made up his mind that he was going to devote himself to the history of the Negro people as a permanent career. In doing that he knew the difficulties which he would have to face. Study and publication, if at all successful, call for money, and money for any scientific effort for or by a Negro means abject begging; and at begging Woodson was not adept.

It was a time, moreover, when all Negro education was largely

charity, not only college education, but elementary and high school training. Groups of Negro and white teachers in Southern schools made regular pilgrimages to the North to collect money from churches and philanthropists in order to support their schools. But the job which Woodson had carved out for himself was not a school; it was a matter of a periodical, with research and publication, and it was to be done in a field not only unpopular but practically unrecognized. Most people, even historians, would have doubted if there was enough of distinctly Negro history in America to call for publication. For thirteen years at Atlanta University we had tried to raise money for research and publication of studies in Negro sociology; five thousand a year, outside my salary. We had to give up the attempt in 1910. But one thing that Woodson's career had done for him was to make him stubborn and single-minded. He had no ties, family or social; he had chosen this life work and he never wavered from it after 1922.

His efforts at raising money for the work had some initial success; for ten years or more Julius Rosenwald, the Jewish philanthropist of Chicago, gave him $400 a year. Woodson organized the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History and already as early as January, 1916, while still teaching, he began publication of *The Journal of Negro History,* a quarterly which is now in its thirty-fourth year of continuous publication.

The Journal was an excellent piece of work and received commendation from high sources. The Carnegie Foundation and afterwards the Spelman Memorial Fund of the Rockefellers gave him $50,000 in installments of $5,000 a year beginning in 1921. But Woodson did not prove the ideal recipient of philanthropy.

He was not a follower of the school of Booker T. Washington and had neither the humility nor the finesse of social uplifters. His independence of thought and action was exaggerated; he went out to meet opposition before it arose, and he was fiercely determined to be master of his own enterprises and final judge of what he wanted to do and say. He pretty soon got the reputation of not being the kind of "trustworthy" Negro to whom help should be given. It was not for a moment intimated that the philanthropists wanted to curb his work or guide it, but if Woodson had anticipated their wishes and conformed to their attitudes, money would have poured in. Only those persons who followed the Washington philosophy and whose attitude

toward the South was in accord with the new orientation of the North, could be sure to have encouragement and continued help. After a while it became the settled policy of philanthropic foundations and of academic circles to intimate that Carter Woodson was altogether too self-centered and self-assertive to receive any great encouragement. His work was individual with no guarantee of permanence.

There was just enough truth in this accusation to make the criticism stick. Even his colored friends and admirers encountered refusal to co-operate or take counsel. Twice, alarmed because of his meager income, and his overwork, I ventured to propose alliance and help; I offered to incorporate *The Journal* into the Department of Publications and Research of the N.A.A.C.P., with promise of as much autonomy as was allowed me. He considered, but refused, unless an entirely separate department was set up for him. This the Board refused to consider as I knew it would. Then I suggested incorporation of his work into that of Howard University; but after trial, this also fell through, and his friends concluded that he must be left to carry on his great work without interference in any way from others. Several times he took in assistants and helpers, but never gave them authority or permanent tenure. He was always the lone pioneer and remained this until his death.

It was this very attitude, however, that brought out the iron in Woodson's soul. He was forty-four in 1922 when he began this independent career. He therefore gradually buckled up his belt, gave up most of the things which a man of his age would be looking forward to and put the whole of his energy into his work. As I have said, he never married, he never had a home; he lived in lodgings as a boarder, or ate in restaurants; he schooled himself to small and uncertain income; it is probable that he lived many years on not more than $1000 and probably never as much as $5000.

Deliberately he cut down his wants and that was not difficult in Washington. Washington had no theatre for Negroes; its music was limited; there were art galleries, but they were not particularly attractive until recent years and never catered to black folk. In many cases they refused to exhibit the work of Negro artists. Parks and public recreation had many restrictions; there was little chance at club life or opportunity to meet men of standing, either American or passing foreigners. Woodson did not have enough money to spend much time

in New York or abroad. He therefore concentrated his time, his energy, and his little money in building up his enterprise, and especially in organizing a constituency among American Negroes to support his work. That was the most astonishing result of his career.

FROM subscriptions to his quarterly, from donations made by small groups and organizations, from sale of books, he not only continued to publish his magazine, but he also went into the publishing business and issued a score of books written by himself and by others; and then as the crowning achievement, he established Negro History Week. He literally made this country, which has only the slightest respect for people of color, recognize and celebrate each year, a week in which it studied the effect which the American Negro has upon life, thought and action in the United States. I know of no one man who in a lifetime has, unaided, built up such a national celebration.

Every year in practically every state of the United States, Negro History Week is celebrated; and its celebration was almost forced upon school authorities, on churches and other organizations by the influence of the groups of people who had banded themselves together to help Carter Woodson's Association of Negro Life and History. His chief work, *The Negro in Our History,* went through eight editions, with its nearly eight hundred pages and wealth of illustration, and was used in the Negro public schools of the nation. More lately his monthly *Bulletin* of news had wide circulation and use.

It is a unique and marvelous monument which Carter Woodson has thus left to the people of the United States. But in this and in all his life, he was, and had to be, a cramped soul. There was in him no geniality and very little humor. To him life was hard and cynically logical; his writing was mechanical and unemotional. He never had the opportunity to develop warm sympathy with other human beings; and he did develop a deep-seated dislike, if not hatred, for the white people of the United States and of the world. He never believed in their generosity or good faith. He did not attack them; he did not complain about them, he simply ignored them so far as possible and went on with his work without expecting help or sympathetic cooperation from them.

He did not usually attend meetings of scientists in history; he was not often asked to read papers on such occasions; for the most part so

far as the professors in history of this country were concerned he was forgotten and passed over; and yet few men have made so deep an imprint as Carter Woodson on thousands of scholars in historical study and research.

In his death he does not leave many very warm friends; there were few tears shed at his grave. But on the other hand, among American Negroes, and among those whites who knew about his work, and among those who in after years must learn about it, there will be vast respect and thankfulness for the life of this man. He was one who under the hardest conditions of environment kept himself to one great goal, worked at it stubbornly and with unwavering application and died knowing that he had accomplished much if not all that he had planned.

He left unfinished an *Encyclopedia Africana;* it was an idea which I had toyed with in 1909, securing as collaborators Sir Harry Johnston, Flinders-Petrie, Guiseppi Sergi, Albert Hart and Franz Boas. But my project never got beyond the name stage and was forgotten. Later Woodson took up the idea as a by-product of his *Journal;* but few knew of his project at the time. Finally in 1931, the Phelps-Stokes Fund projected an *Encyclopedia of the Negro,* but invited neither Woodson nor me to participate.

However, the group called together, including Moton of Tuskegee and Hope of Atlanta, protested and finally we were both invited. I attended the subsequent meetings but Woodson refused. I and many others talked to him and begged him to come in; but no; there were two reasons: this was, he considered, a white enterprise forced on Negroes; and secondly, he had himself already collected enough data eventually to make an encyclopedia. We demurred, not because we were unwilling to have him work on the encyclopedia; indeed we were eager; but because we knew that one man and especially one man with a rather narrow outlook which had been forced upon him, could not write a scientific encyclopedia of sufficient breadth to satisfy the world. Eventually this Phelps-Stokes project was unable to collect sufficient funds chiefly, I am sure, because I had been named Editor-in-Chief. So this project closed its effort with the publication of only one thin preliminary volume. But Woodson left the kernel of a great work. It would be a magnificent monument to his memory, if this were

to be made the basis of broad rewriting and extension and published as a memorial to his life work.

As a historian, Woodson left something to be desired. He was indefatigable in research: for instance, his collection of photographs of Negroes and abolitionists is invaluable; his *Negro in American History* deserved the wide use which it has had. Some of his works like his *Education of the Negro prior to 1861, A Century of Negro Migration, Negro Orators and their Orations, Free Negro Owners of Slaves in the United States in 1830, Free Negro Heads of Families in the United States, The Mind of the Negro as Reflected in Letters Written During the Crisis, 1800-60,* are solid works of historical research. Others of his books were not of so great value.

Indeed his service to history was not so much his books as his editorship of the *Journal,* which brought into print some of the best scholars in this branch of history. On the other hand, Woodson himself lacked background for broad historical writing; he was almost contemptuous of emotion; he had limited human contacts and sympathies; he had no conception of the place of woman in creation. His book reviews were often pedantic and opinionated. Much of his otherwise excellent research will have to be reinterpreted by scholars of wider reading and better understanding of the social sciences, especially in economics and psychology; for Woodson never read Karl Marx.

The passing of Carter Woodson leaves a vacuum hard to fill. His memory leaves a lesson of determination and sacrifice which all men, young and old, black and white, may emulate to the glory of man and the uplift of his world.

Three Poems

by EVE MERRIAM

HOLLYWOOD BLACKOUT

Oh, we're scouring the flickers span and spick,
Removing each trace of politic;
Forecasting which gem for an Oscar is slated
(The one with its content the most dehydrated);
Just ibbetty-bibbetty-boo and a sunshine cake,
With a teentsy touch of mayhem, or art for Bogart's sake;
Sweetness and light and Technicolor eclairs,
Then Widmark plugs his granny while she's saying her prayers!

For we've kicked out all the Communists, progressives, and New Dealers,
Liberals, democrats, Bill of Rights appealers;
At your local movie house in every town and city
"Boy Meets Girl Meets Un-American Committee";
For no' picture dare show a trace of cerebellum,
And our only problem is: who'll be able to sell 'em?

On guard! Advance! Hopalong! Hooray!
On your mark, Trigger! Forward to yesterday!
Three cheers for Joe Breen
And the silent, *silent* screen!

LATE EDITION

The time is neon.
Blimps, mixing Rheingold beer with moonlight,
Confuse the heavens.

On earth as it is on high.

Coca-Cola proclaims our daily weather: fear and whimper.
The loyalty files mount level with planet Mars.
Man caught thinking in the subway
Is properly nabbed by the police.

To the syndicated wire service, an accolade:
Clever stunt to poll the common man—
"Which ten Americans should survive
The coming annihilation?"

Local news item,
Elephant strangles a child and the beast is killed.
Wrong, wrong!
Poor tusky martyr, fulfilling the logic of his anxiety.

So on to the cocktail party,
Past the sandwiches swooning in mayonnaise,
Past all the stale etceteras,
To the olive stone in the empty glass,
The stone through the window, the tinkling pane,
And the splintered man on the ledge
Teetering over the newsboy's cry:
Extraextra

Truman gives go-ahead to H-bomb.

Hell accepts.

CELEBRATION

The golden airplane flies North,
Dips to salute Jim Crow over the lily-white capitol dome;
Descends in a cloud of confetti, ticker-tape, whiskey and gardenias.
The cardboard keys to the city are handed over.

On the suede gloves: minute cancerous spots.
On the gleaming shirt front: the tumor swelling.
In the diplomatic briefcase: coal dust, drops of oil, sputum.
In the envoy's pouch, resting in the chauffered limousine:
The heads of children.
The motorcycle siren shrieks.
The cheering crowd has been recorded in advance.
Gonzalez-Videla, President of betrayers, honorary citizen of New York,
Hunches his hind legs, raises his forepaws and barks a clever bow.

The celebration of a man is elsewhere.
In Harlem, in a burnt-out tenement,
On the waterfront, a rank-and-file meeting,
Mothers refusing H-bomb murder;
Waking and working men and women everywhere,
And millions who call him by a name more beautiful than brother:
All celebrate the exile,
Set a place at our family table
For the poet whose songs are needful to us as bread,
For the name that sweetens our bitter America,
For Neruda, Pablo Neruda,
The fist and heart of Chile, Spain, the universal struggle,
For the voice throttled and gagged that calls again, again, over and ever,
For Neruda torn from his body, his native land,
For Neruda, citizen universal,
Whose residence we shall make
The unbound earth.

COLD-WAR COURT

by HERBERT APTHEKER

THE prophecy of the young Jeffersonian warning against the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 has come to pass. "The country," said Edward Livingston in Congress, "will swarm with informers, spies, delators, and all the odious reptile tribe that breed in the sunshine of despotic power." They will convey one's hopes and fears, one's beliefs and words, "distorted by calumny, to the secret tribunal where jealousy presides—where fear officiates as accuser and suspicion is the only evidence that is heard." All will be rationalized, all will be excused, but believe them not: "Do not let us be told that we are to excite fervor against a foreign aggression to establish a tyranny at home . . . and that we are absurd enough to call ourselves free and enlightened while we advocate principles that would have disgraced the age of Gothic barbarity."

The Truman Doctrine was announced March 12, 1947; the Truman Loyalty Order was issued March 22, 1947. The proximity is causal, not coincidental. Inevitably the standards of the Dies-Thomas-Rankin Un-American Committee have become the standards of the war-bent government.

Nowhere is this better demonstrated than in that very sensitive political barometer, the judiciary. An outstanding authority on constitutional law, Professor Robert E. Cushman of Cornell, puts the watershed in 1945. Up to then, the Supreme Court's "left" consisted of Justices Black, Douglas, Rutledge and Murphy, occasionally joined by either Chief Justice Stone or Justice Frankfurter. But in June, 1945, the deceased Chief Justice was replaced by Truman's Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Vinson, and simultaneously Douglas started to drift to the right, definitely joining that wing by 1946. The deaths of Justices Murphy and Rutledge led to their seats being taken by the

Truman politicos, Minton and Tom Clark, the latter being appointed shortly after having told the fascist un-American Committee: "We have the same purposes in view."

The decisions reflect the changed policy and the changed personnel. Arthur M. Schlesinger the Little chose *Fortune* magazine in which to insist that the Supreme Court's shift was not along left-right lines but rather "a battle of judicial activists against apostles of self-restraint." This loquacious pawn deceives, of course; a more competent student, Professor C. Herman Pritchett, observes in the *American Political Science Review* of last March that "the basic pattern of division on the present Court . . . is still between conflicting systems of preferences on matters of social and economic policy."

HOW great the shift has been is apparent when one examines the most significant decisions of the two periods. Such an examination shatters any remaining illusions about the Truman "Fair Deal." It brings home the fact that our time is the zero hour in defense of American freedom.

In 1941 a case involving Harry Bridges reached the Supreme Court. Here the labor leader had been fined for contempt by a California court because he had wired the Secretary of Labor concerning a case still before that court. The Supreme Court, in a decision written by Justice Black, reversed the lower court and in doing so put considerable precision in Holmes' famous "clear and present danger" ruling on free speech, thus making impairment of freedom more difficult. "What finally emerges," stated Justice Black, "from the 'clear and present danger' cases is a working principle that the substantive evil must be extremely serious and the degree of imminence extremely high before utterances can be punished . . . [and] neither 'inherent tendency' nor 'reasonable tendency' is enough to justify a restriction of free expression."

In the second Bridges case an attempt to deport him on the alleged grounds that he was a Communist and that the Communist Party advocates the overthrow of the government of the United States by force and violence was defeated by the Supreme Court. Here the Court found the government's case faulty because it depended upon the treacherous "guilt by association" doctrine. Moreover, said the Court in 1945, the government had failed to show either that Bridges was a

member of the Communist Party or that he advocated force and violence. And, wrote Justice Murphy, after strongly condemning the persecution of the trade union leader:

> "Proof that the Communist Party advocates the theoretical or ultimate overthrow of the government by force was demonstrated by resort to some rather ancient Party documents, certain other general Communist literature, and oral corroborating testimony of government witnesses. Not the slightest evidence was introduced to show that either Bridges or the Communist Party seriously and imminently threatens to uproot the government by force and violence."

A similar verdict had been rendered in 1943 when the Government's effort to deport the Communist leader William Schneiderman reached the Court. The case had been in litigation for four years and the government was attempting to cancel citizenship papers granted in 1927 because, it claimed, Schneiderman as a Communist was opposed to the principles of the United States Constitution and advocated the government's overthrow by violence. The Court rejected the plea on the grounds that naturalization laws could not circumscribe liberty of political thought and because the government did not demonstrate that either the defendant or the Communist Party advocated forcible overthrow. It held that Schneiderman's understanding of the dictatorship of the proletariat as "a state of things" in which "the majority of the people shall really direct their own destinies and use the instrument of the state for these truly democratic ends" was not in conflict with the "general philosophy" of the Constitution. True, the Court did not say that a contrary interpretation was impossible or that it was necessarily incorrect to believe that the Party in 1927 did advocate forcible overthrow of the Government. But the Court did say that this was subject to reasonable doubt and that therefore it could not revoke citizenship on an interpretation reprehensible to a member of the organization *without proof of overt acts indicating such was his interpretation.* It is in this connection that the Court declared:

> "A tenable conclusion . . . is that the Party in 1927 desired to achieve its purpose by peaceful and democratic means, and as a

theoretical matter justified the use of force and violence only as a method of preventing an attempted forcible counter-overthrow once the Party had obtained control in a peaceful manner, or as a method of last resort to enforce the majority will if at some indefinite future time because of peculiar circumstances constitutional or peaceful channels were no longer open."

The same year another highly significant decision was announced. A citizen named Barnette challenged the constitutionality of a West Virginia law requiring school children to salute the flag and pledge allegiance to it on the grounds that his religion forbade such behavior. The Court ruled in favor of Mr. Barnette and there are two paragraphs in this decision written—then—by Justice Jackson that we choose to italicize:

"Those who begin the coercive elimination of dissent soon find themselves exterminating dissenters. Compulsory unification of opinion achieves only the unanimity of the graveyard. . . . But freedom to differ is not limited to things that do not matter much. . . . The test of its substance is the right to differ as to things that touch the heart of the existing order.

"If there is any fixed star in our constitutional constellation, it is that no official, high or petty, can prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion, or force citizens to confess by word or act their faith therein."

Justices Black and Rutledge, in a special concurring opinion, added two sentences which likewise should be read and re-read by every American: "Such a statutory exaction is a form of test oath, *and the test oath has always been abhorrent in the United States. Words uttered under coercion are proof of loyalty to nothing but self-interest.*"

Note must be taken of two other decisions of direct relevance to the question of the rights protected by the First Amendment. In one, the Court through Justice Rutledge further strengthened Justice Black's bulwarking of the "clear and present danger" doctrine. It ruled that freedom of speech, press, religion and assembly was so uniquely important that any legislative restriction upon such freedom would be presumed to be unconstitutional unless clearly demonstrated as necessary because of the extreme imminence of a substantive evil (*Thomas v. Collins*, 1944).

In the other case, the court declared unconstitutional a law passed in 1943 by Congress on the urging of the Un-American Committee withholding the salaries of the "subversive" officials, Goodwin B. Watson, William E. Dodd, Jr., and Robert Morss Lovett. Here, in a decision written by Justice Black, it was held that the legislative denial of "any opportunity to serve the government is punishment, and of a most severe type." And, *"legislative acts, no matter what their form, that apply either to named individuals or to easily ascertainable members of a group in such a way as to inflict punishment on them without judicial trial are bills of attainder prohibited to Congress."*

In the area of the positive application of the concepts of freedom the New Deal majority Court likewise compiled a noteworthy record. This was particularly true, as is to be expected, in cases involving the Negro people, whose history has ever formed a most illuminating sector of the general struggle for freedom.

Notable in this respect were three decisions (*U.S. v. Classic,* 1941; *U.S. v. Saylor,* 1944; *Smith v. Allwright,* 1944) involving voting—in Louisiana, Kentucky and South Carolina—where it was held that tampering with ballot boxes constituted interference with the right of suffrage and where federal protection of this right was specifically applied to primary elections and to the participation therein of Negroes. In two other cases, decided in 1944, the labor contract laws of Georgia and Florida were declared to be unconstitutional because they in fact supported peonage.

IN CONTRAST, the bi-partisan cold-war Court has compiled a record of reaction whose fitting culmination has come with the decisions of May 8, 1950, the infamy of which can be compared only with the 1857 Dred Scott decision by slavocratic Justices.

The sins of this Supreme Court are of commission and omission; it has fostered reaction both by its opinions on issues before it and by its failure to rule on other issues.

In the latter regard, its most glaring omission has been its consistent failure to rule directly on the constitutionality of the President's loyalty oath program, in which the executive enters the area of legislation and adjudication; and of the literally unlimited powers of investigation and punishment conferred on the standing House Committee on Un-American Affairs. The illegality of the committee's proceedings flow

from the fact that it boasts of seeking to punish through publicity, that it is empowered to investigate what it refuses to define—un-Americanism, and that it deliberately and openly sets as its goal the restraint of unorthodox opinion. Moreover, the Court has refused to rule on the fundamental question, raised by Eugene Dennis, of the notorious violation by Congress of the Fourteenth Amendment.

Where the Court has ruled, its opinions may be divided into those which vitiate basic freedoms—of speech, of political activity, of impartial jury, of protection against unreasonable search—and those which specifically restrict the rights of labor and the Negro people.

What are the leading cases in these fields and precisely what has the Truman Court ruled?

In 1947, the Court upheld that portion of the Hatch Act which forbids political activity on the part of federal and some state employees and their immediate families, on pain of dismissal by the Civil Service Commission. The prohibition is so complete as to cover practically all political activity, except that of voting; and this, in fact, denies freedom of speech and of writing—so far as political questions are concerned—to about five million citizens. The Court, then, approved a law which in the words of the dissenting Justices Black and Rutledge, "makes honest participation in essential political activities an offense punishable by proscription from public employment. It endows a governmental board with the awesome power to censor the thoughts, expressions and activities of law-abiding citizens. . . ."

When the Carl Marzani case finally reached the Supreme Court, in December, 1948, only two of the original eleven counts in the indictment of that former outstanding government employee had been held sufficiently valid by lower courts to sustain his conviction. Involved was the assertedly false statement by the defendant concerning alleged Communist affiliations going back a decade prior to his indictment; no question as to the efficiency of his service was raised. The two remaining counts rested upon *oral unsworn statements said to have been made in an informal talk between the defendant and a State Department official. The record of no hearing was involved, there was no transcript, there were no witnesses.* Nevertheless, in a 4-4 decision the conviction was upheld and one of those voting for the conviction, Justice Jackson, was not present when the case was argued, but insisted on voting as he did!

More recently, in January, 1950, the Supreme Court approved a ruling by the Attorney-General prohibiting the wife of an American soldier from entering this country on the grounds that she is a security risk. In this case, the Court approved the forced separation of a husband and wife though there was *no* testimony at all, though the woman had had *no* hearing, though she did not know of what she was charged, had seen no witnesses and *though the Court itself knew no more than the husband and wife pleading at its bar!* The woman, Mrs. Knauff, an anti-Nazi refugee, had served with the British Air Force for three years; at the time of her marriage to the American soldier she was employed by the American Military Government in Germany; her efficiency ratings were excellent and yet, simply on the demand of the Attorney-General, she has been forbidden to join her husband!

Justice Minton, speaking for the Court, approved this inhumanity purely on the grounds of the superior interest of the asserted needs of security as contrasted with the mute appeal of liberty. So naked was this brutality that all of three Justices—Black, Frankfurter, Jackson—dissented: "In the name of security the police state justifies its arbitrary oppressions on evidence that is secret. . . . The plea that evidence of guilt must be secret is abhorrent to free men, because it provides a cloak for the malevolent, the misinformed, the meddlesome and the corrupt to play the role of informer undetected and uncorrected."

VERY serious inroads have been made by this Supreme Court upon the constitutional protection against unreasonable search. The case of *Harris v. U.S.* (1947) involved that of a man whose residence was searched, without warrant, and who on the basis of evidence so obtained was convicted of a crime. The Court upheld the conviction though, as the dissenting opinion pointed out, "the search and seizure in this case comprise exactly the kind of official abuse against which the Fourth Amendment has been supposed to give protection." Another case, of a very similar nature, reached the Court in 1949 (*Wolf v. Colorado*) and again the majority ruled in favor of the police rather than the Constitution.

It did this on the basis of reasoning akin to that of Luce's American century, for it found that due process did not require the suppression of evidence seized in an unreasonable search since "most of the English speaking world does not regard the suppression of such evidence as

vital." Because one decides not to suppress evidence, one must not care how the evidence is obtained! So much for the Fourth Amendment! As Justice Murphy pointed out, in one of the last of his noble dissents, "the alternative to the suppression of such evidence is no sanction at all against unreasonable searches and seizures."

Similarly has the Court undermined the right to trial by an unbiased jury. This it did in upholding, in April, 1950, the conviction of Eugene Dennis for contempt of the Un-American Committee. The jury rendering this verdict contained seven employees of the federal government, and the case was tried in the District of Columbia. The Court, through Justice Minton, felt it to be "vague conjecture" that such a jury meeting where it did and when it did and under the circumstances it did and having before it the General Secretary of the Communist Party would be anything but impartial!

When the same Court had before it a man convicted of peddling narcotics, it found grave doubts as to the impartiality of a jury containing some government employees. By a verdict of 5-4 the conviction was upheld, the minority holding that the probability of bias on the part of the jury should decide in favor of the defendant, but even the majority then said that if "the matters involved in the prosecution" were such as to possibly provoke bias they would have decided otherwise. Is any subject in the world less apt to develop bias in our land at this moment than communism? As Justice Jackson said, in voting for Dennis' conviction, if Republicans and Democrats must put up with such a jury, why shouldn't a Communist? To such lengths are men driven who defend the indefensible.

The special oppression of the Negro people, basic to the nature of American imperialism, has been approved by Truman's Court in the fundamental areas of enfranchisement, employment and police terror.

Georgia is the only state having a county unit system of voting. Under it, all state office holders and her two United States Senators are elected by geography rather than by people. That is, each of the 159 counties in Georgia is given a certain number of unit votes, none more than six and none less than two. A candidate receiving the most votes in a given county gets *all* that county's unit votes. This means that the 500,000 people of Fulton County (Atlanta) carry no more weight than such a plantation area as Troup County with 45,000 residents. Today, one vote cast in Chattahoochee County is as powerful

Irving Amen

as 122 votes in Fulton County. The Negro and working-class registered voters are predominantly urban and so this county unit system in fact disfranchises working people and especially the Negro people.

The *Chattanooga Times* commenting on this system recently, when it was challenged unsuccessfully in the lower courts, pointed out that it "is the last loophole whereby the U.S. Supreme Court decision that there must be no discrimination because of race in Southern primaries is defeated . . . if this loophole remains, the same technique may be copied in other states. . . ." By a vote of 7-2 the Truman Court upheld this loophole in April, 1950, and slammed the door on the New Deal Court's verdicts by raising the transparently specious claim that "federal courts consistently refuse to exercise their equity powers in cases posing political issues. . . ."

Two of the Court's infamous actions on May 8, 1950, directly applied to the Negro people, but, of course, had ramifications most damaging to the freedom of all Americans.

Their Honors sent two innocent young Negro men to their deaths by refusing to hear their appeal from murder convictions in North Carolina. A jury, consisting of eleven white people and one Negro person, had decreed death for Bennie and Lloyd Ray Daniels. The affidavits of these Negroes is replete with detailed and circumstantial

evidence of the frame-up character of the charge and of the typical police brutality which induced confessions. Previous reversals on such grounds are numerous; Truman's Court refused a hearing to Lloyd Ray Daniels, who was convicted by a confession obtained under threats of murder. The police told the Negro as he testifies, "If I wanted to see my mama again I had better own up that Bennie and I did it. I had only three minutes to make up my mind. I asked what they were going to do. They said, 'Kill you.'" The other Negro, having been to school one year, cannot read. The police gave him a "confession" to sign. He objected, but was warned, "If you don't sign your name we will blow your brains out." Their Honors grant no hearing!

And this court upheld a California statute banning picketing against discrimination in employment. This undercuts free speech as drastically as it does the struggle for fair employment practices. It permits, in effect, a state to say what subjects may or may not be demanded by picketing and it specifically agrees with the state's judgment that picketing for equal employment practices is illegal. And this on the argument that otherwise "the whole gamut of racial and religious concentrations in various cities" might picket one another! So, to make sure that all America does not go picket-mad and begin flaunting signs demanding, as Justice Frankfurter feared, that "Hungarians in Cleveland" and "Germans in Milwaukee" be hired, no American may picket Woolworth's to demand that they do indeed hire Negroes!

THE climax of the court's assault upon liberty comes with its frontal attack on liberty's main bastion, the working class, and liberty's frontline defenders, the Communists. Here a significant forerunner was the decision in January, 1949, upholding laws banning the closed shop in North Carolina, Nebraska and Oregon.

But the attempted *coup de grace* came in the decisions of May 8, 1950. One of the decisions tremendously encouraged "runaway" open shops by ruling that employers under union pressure cannot "force" workers to join the union. Here a union was ordered to pay a boss $500 because its members were picketing an open shop after a court had banned such picketing. The ban was granted because the state of Washington had passed a law declaring that workers must be free from "interference, restraint or coercion" by bosses in union matters! This reminds one of the fact that the most common use of the Sherman

Anti-Trust Law of 1890 was to justify the granting of an injunction against strikes or other concerted activities by workers.

The most sweeping judgment came from the Chief Justice himself in a 10,000 word opinion seconded by more words from Justices Jackson and Frankfurter, upholding the constitutionality of the non-Communist oath in the Taft-Hartley law, denying the contention that the act unduly infringed on the right of free speech, assembly and belief.

Mr. Chief Justice Vinson graciously concedes that the Bill of Rights "requires that one be permitted to believe what he will. It requires that one be permitted to advocate what he will unless there is a clear and present danger that a substantial public evil will result therefrom. It does not require that he be permitted to be the keeper of the arsenal."

We're not worried about keeping the arsenal; the question is keeping one's conscience, keeping one's beliefs, keeping intact the First Amendment. Disabilities based on beliefs may not be imposed by Congress—that's the clear and unequivocal language of the First Amendment—"Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech or of the press. . . ." Moreover, observe what the learned jurist forgot in his concern about the arsenal and where he pleads that the impact of the oath is "a small one" since the "sole effect of the statute" is that the person affected "may be forced to relinquish his position as a union leader." Yes, an individual's own loss of position is in itself not a big thing, but depriving working people of the right to choose their own "union leader" is! Freedoms never exist in a vacuum and they never exist in a single, restricted aspect. The freedom to speak is the freedom to hear, the freedom to write is the freedom to read, the freedom to vote is the freedom to be elected. The Taft-Hartley oath is not directed at individual personalities; it is directed at the trade-union movement. It says for whom—a person with what beliefs—workers may not vote and therefore vitiates their free choice. That the Chief Justice and his concurring colleagues choose to ignore this reflects not only their hypocrisy, but also their contempt for the masses of people.

The majority decision contradicts itself. We have observed that Chief Justice Vinson admits that the Constitution "requires that one be permitted to believe what he will." But one section of the Taft-Hartley oath which he upholds clearly violates this, for it requires that one swear he does "not believe in . . . the overthrow of the

United States government by any illegal or unconstitutional methods." It is this that troubled what is left of the consciences of Justices Jackson and Frankfurter so that the latter agreed with the contention of the appealing unions that it was "vague" and that Congress here had "cast its net too indiscriminately."

"Vague" and "indiscriminate"—how moderate is your language, Mr. Justice Frankfurter! Under this ruling how would one evaluate the proposals in the doctoral dissertation of one Woodrow Wilson that the English cabinet system replace the American frame of government, or the proposal of a score of scholars that British legislative supremacy replace American judicial review. How is one to evaluate Article Ten of the Constitution of New Hampshire? This specifically declares that the people may, when they find it necessary, "reform the old, or establish a new government. The doctrine of non-resistance against arbitrary power, and oppression, is absurd, slavish and destructive of the good and happiness of mankind." Could the Governor of New Hampshire honestly swear fidelity to the Constitution of his state and simultaneously pass the test of the Taft-Hartley oath?

And in one place, as we have seen, the Chief Justice says the Constitution "requires that one be permitted to advocate what he will unless there is a clear and present danger that a substantial public evil will result therefrom." But elsewhere he finds that "When the effect of a statute or ordinance upon the exercise of the First Amendment is relatively small [!] and the public interest to be protected is substantial, it is obvious that a rigid test requiring a showing of imminent danger to the security of the Nation is absurd." It is "obvious" that this "amends" the First Amendment to death and that the far from "rigid" test of "clear and present danger" has been completely ignored in this "absurd" effort to maintain freedom by cutting its throat.

Having eliminated what inhibitions the "clear and present danger" doctrine provided, it is not surprising to find the decision making "political" strikes illegal, since they may interfere with interstate commerce. It was on exactly the same plea that a court granted an injunction forbidding the conduct of the Debs' railroad strike in 1894 and it was because the strike continued despite the injunction that Debs first tasted prison. Clearly the intent and the effect of this decision is to make possible the crushing of strikes by a legislative finding,

sustained by the courts, that its content is "political" (talk about "vague" phrases!) and its result is interference with interstate commerce. This decision seeks to destroy the advances of the labor movement earned by workers' blood and agony during the past fifty years.

AND the whole offensive against labor and the Bill of Rights is based upon anti-Communism. The Vinson and Jackson decisions accept the Budenz-Rankin picture of the Communist Party as a criminal conspiracy directed by Moscow and seeking, by murder and terror, the imposition of an oligarchic tyranny.

Said Professor Zechariah Chafee, Jr. in his standard work, *Freedom of Speech in the United States,* "No one can soberly contend that the Communist Party is a conspiracy." But the American ruling class is not characterized by its sobriety. *The fact is that what was a lie when Hitler said it does not become true when Vinson and Jackson say it.*

The fact is that in uttering this monstrous falsehood the jurists were citing the testimony before the Un-American Committee. They are accepting the "findings" of a committee which as Professor Robert Cushman said is "embarked upon a systematic campaign to suppress freedom of political and economic opinion"; they are accepting the "findings" of a committee which, said the editors of the *Columbia Law Review,* "may itself be labelled 'un-American' and too dangerous to be continued."

There is only one element in Hitler's characterization of communism that is missing from that of Vinson and Jackson—identifying the Jew with communism. But since the Justices rest their case on the Congressional committee's findings, what are they to say about the following speech by the founder, continual member and most potent influence in the Un-American Committee, the Honorable John Rankin of Mississippi? In the *Congressional Record* of February 13, 1950 will be found imperishably preserved the stateman's words, as follows:

> *"Remember Communism is Yiddish. I understand that every member of the Politburo around Stalin is either Yiddish or married to one, and that includes Stalin himself. They have murdered more white Christians in the Ukraine in the last thirty years than have been killed in all the rest of the world since the crucifixion."*

Of course the free American press was too busy inventing anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union to report the remark of this potent Congressman, whose standards have now become guides for the United States Supreme Court!

TEN years ago Rankin's comrade, Elizabeth Dilling—of *Red Network* fame—denounced Professor Cushman for having addressed students "on that hackneyed Communist subject, the Bill of Rights and civil liberty."

The remark brought laughter then. But now it measures the aim of the American ruling class, and it finds support in the Supreme Court.

The monstrosity of the aim protects its proponents, for to question it requires the profoundest convictions and involves apparent immediate hazards. But—unfortunately for the ruling class—people cannot live on lies, and the ruling class is incapable of meeting the needs of life. Its problems are insoluble, and therefore its defeat is certain.

Now is the time to stand for freedom. The Supreme Court would make of judicial robes a shroud for the Bill of Rights. But those rights are the life-blood of the American people; the destruction of one brings catastrophe to the other.

When, in 1920, the federal government went on a witch-hunting, repressive spree, twelve distinguished attorneys, including then the young Felix Frankfurter, warned that "Free men cannot be driven . . . [they] respect justice and follow truth, but arbitrary power they will oppose until the end of time."

Mr. Justice Frankfurter has forgotten his noble words; but the people have not, since they cannot. With the people these are not mere words, they constitute bread and dignity. Renegades and cowards, thieves and deceivers, will not much longer rule the American people. Whitman in his time saw the American ruling class as "saturated in corruption, bribery, falsehood." What words will do to characterize this class now—eighty years later?

The verdicts of the courts are not unalterable. They have been reversed before; they will be again if enough of us stand together, gain allies and then render the final judgment.

Culture and Peace

by MAURICE THOREZ

The Twelfth Congress of the French Communist Party was held at Gennevilliers early in April. We print below excerpts dealing with cultural questions from the report by the General Secretary of the Party, Maurice Thorez.

THE imperialist camp is conducting a furious campaign of ideological preparation for war. It is striving to develop a real war hysteria. Like Hitler, the imperialists wave the tattered banner of "anti-communism." But the people know what the anti-communism of Hitler, the Munich-men and other Vichyites has cost them. United under the flag of anti-communism are all the warmongers and their contemptible agents, in the front rank of which are the right-wing socialist leaders.

By dint of lies and slanders, repeated a thousand and one times by the press and radio, the warmongers attempt to inflame the people against the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies. At the same time they bedeck in the most attractive colors the "American Paradise" with its millions of unemployed, its Ku-Klux-Klan and its assorted gangsters. Nevertheless, books and films, where social and political reality is more or less reflected, give a scarcely inspiring image of that country. They are nothing but the stories of bandits, spies, police agents, interlaced with pornographic episodes. It is a literature, a cinema which can only brutalize, corrupt, debase. One sees all too clearly what harm they inflict on a section of our youth. We have had to protest indignantly this monstrous effort to poison the minds of our children.

Thus, like the fascist aggressors of yesterday, the Anglo-American imperialists are now preparing war in every direction and by every means. The danger is extremely grave. Peace hangs by a thread. But the people, millions and millions of plain people, are determined and able to prevent war and save the peace, if they all unite and act together. . . .

There is another domain in which the intervention of American imperialism, under cover of the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Pact, is increasing the all too obvious tendencies to an incurable decadence. This is in the domain of the mind. Growing pressure is being brought to bear against French thought, against French science.

General Revers, "that great good man," made it known, on his return from the United States, that the American masters consider undesirable the presence of Communists in the branches of scientific research. M. Delbos, who was the Minister of "non-intervention," [in Spain] then hastened to dismiss Georges Teissier. For good measure, he retired another figure of French science, Henry Wallon, a pioneer in educational science who was suspended under Vichy and who was a minister during the Liberation period.

The press of the "American Party" is multiplying its attacks and slanders against the greatest French scientist of our epoch, our comrade Frederic Joliot-Curie, builder of the first atomic pile in France, whose removal is being vociferously demanded.*

A policy of intellectual regression, of obscurantism, of encouragement to all that enslaves and degrades man, marks the depths of bourgeois degeneration today. As in the time of "moral order," as in the time of Vichy, wholesale firings are taking place, repression bears down on the schoolmaster who dares criticize the government, who opposes war against Viet-Nam, or who reads a page of Anatole France to his pupils. The French curriculum must fall in line with American war policy. They want to impose on us a university of the American type, in which the word peace is considered a crime, as an "attempt to demoralize the Army and the nation and an insult to the minister."

Teaching budgets are slashed, the laboratories left without resources. Thousands of children can find no place in the schools. The public schools are in peril. What laboratories, what schools could we not build with a portion of the 600 billion francs swallowed up in the budgets of war and death!

Translations of American works—though their number, which exceeded 800 in 1948, dropped to less than 400 in 1949; the mass-circulation-American magazines, which have the function of teaching their readers to "think American" and to prepare them for the "inevitable" war; the scandal sheets and the anti-Communist, anti-Soviet

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* On Joliot-Curie's subsequent dismissal see page 3 of this issue.

THE NEW CHINA, *by Antonio Frasconi*

feuilletons; the stupefying films forced on us by Hollywood; the slanderous campaign against the Soviet Union, synchronized in the whole press, as at the time of the traitor Kravchenko's trial; the investment of American capital in French newspapers—illustrate the considerable pressure of the American imperialists on the ideological level.

But all this illustrates equally the abdication of a class. It is the abdication of the French bourgeoisie, which has at the same time lost its sense of national interest, the memory of our intellectual traditions, our qualities of taste, balance, elegance and integrity—all that has made our country great.

We alone appear as the guardians of the moral and intellectual heritage of France. We alone are the continuers of France.

While the ideological pressure of the enemy is intensified, our resistance, by a dialectical process emphasized by Marx, is considerably reinforced.

To our existing magazines, of which the principal on the intellectual front was *La Pensée,* we have added *La Nouvelle Critique,* a review of militant Marxism. Its reception by the student youth shows how much young people wish to learn and to struggle for a better world.

We have asked our writers, our philosophers, our painters, all our artists to fight on the ideological and political positions of the working class. To the decadent works of bourgeois esthetes, champions of art for art's sake, to the pessimism and retrograde formalism of the existentialist "philosophers," to the formalism of the painters for whom art begins where the picture has no content, we have opposed an art inspired by socialist realism and understood by the working class, an art which aids the working class in its struggle for liberation.

Such an art enriches not only the people. Offering great themes to the writer and the artist it lifts them, restores them to the great French tradition, broadens their horizon and opens the way to a new classicism.

We are happy and proud to be understood and supported by distinguished writers and artists who are placing all their talent in the service of the people. They are too numerous to be named here; I trust they will understand. At the same time, allow me to greet specifically Aragon and his book *The Communists;* also Fougeron and his last canvas "The Murder of the Communist André Houllier," which our comrades of the Seine District have presented to Stalin.

Our enemies are amazed and indignant to find us taking a position on problems of literature and art. They pretend to see here an intol-

erable interference in a domain reserved to the spirit, of which they claim to be the faithful and disinterested servants.

For a long time the masters of Marxist thought have shown what is hidden behind the big words about "freedom of art." In capitalist society there is no free art. The writer and the artist depend on the money powers that control the market of thought and quote talents like prices on the stock exchange. It is we who wish to free the artist from the servitude that degrades him and stifles his inspiration.

It is the capitalists who regiment the writers, giving them their orders and imposing their tasks. It is they who confine the artists in an art without content, and without theme. As for us, we ask only that the men of thought and art again link themselves with the great traditions that have triumphed in periods when literature and art flowered. The great masters are great by virtue of the content of their works. For this content they have always found the suitable form.

The social content of our epoch, which demands expression in the books of our writers, on the canvases of our painters, in the symphonies of our musicians, is the great upsurge of the people's forces, the struggle of the new and the old, of the old which everywhere in the world is retreating before the thrusts of the new forms of life.

To ask that art be the mirror of this reality, to ask that the artist free himself from the shackles that condemn him to intellectual prostitution and sterility, that is to give life to art and to dignify the artists. The fact that in our epoch the most profound writers and artists, the most principled, see the need to adhere to the ideological and political positions of the working class, is proof that all cultural values have today passed to the side of the proletariat.

So, when we call on writers and artists to take the place which belongs to them in the great battle for human emancipation, we are conscious that we are simultaneously defending the future of culture and the freedom of the artist. We are conscious that we are defending on this level, as on all others, the cause of France. For we wish to rescue France from economic, political and intellectual decadence so that she may shine with a new brilliance throughout the world.

HUNGER

in the San Joaquin Valley

by VIRGINIA GARDNER AND MARK MILLER

CORCORAN, CAL.—*The sun is hot now in the level fields of California's fabulous San Joaquin Valley. The first crops of the new season are being harvested. No longer does the rain seep through canvas tents, or the cold penetrate flimsy cabins in the labor camps of the vast mechanized farms of the country's richest valley.*

As we crossed the "Hump," the Tehachapi Pass, we glimpsed a lush tremendous garden only a mountain range away from the barren Mojave desert. A billboard informed: "Kern County: 500 Million Dollars in Minerals and Agriculture." From that distance the valley was a picture of peace and plenty.

Yet the further we penetrated, the more we were oppressed by an ominous quiet. The storm was not yet here, but the clouds were gathering.

In Bakersfield the welfare department director disclosed that in March 25,000 persons in the county, after a "superficial investigation," were given the coveted federal surplus foods. Throughout the Valley thousands of families lived on a starvation diet of potatoes, powdered milk and powdered eggs and a little honey.

NAIVELY thinking it would be as easy to get a day's work in potatoes as it was last year in cotton, we arrived at six A.M. to "grab spuds" in a field near Edison. But the crews were already at work, bending and grabbing, or stationed at posts in the field, some twenty yards apart, waiting for the big machine to come along and rip potatoes from the earth. Some 150 to 200 workers, men and women, several with little children playing about, were stooping or waiting. Some sat on sacks of potatoes already full. On the edge of the fields waited other

workers. Their only chance of being put on that day depended on some worker's becoming ill with exhaustion, or sun, or hunger. Job-hungry workers in plain sight of the men stooping in the field is the principle of all California farm employment.

A young girl wearing a big straw hat, her wide canvas belt with its horizontal bar drawn tight over long sleeved blouse and jeans, eyed us pityingly. "The crew we're on was filled two weeks before we started," she said. She was new to picking. "It like to got me yesterday—I was sick, but I was afraid I'd lose my place, so I worked." She and her lean, alert young husband, a picker for six years, had made $12 between them one day—before the growers cut working time to seven hours by agreement to keep from flooding the market with early potatoes. Since then they made together from $8 to $10.

We stood about for an hour with other rejected workers, all wearing their wide belts, some home-made of folded gunny sacks, some store bought. From the bar in front hooks were suspended, to which the sack was hitched when picking. When bending, the workers dragged the sack along between their legs, throwing in the spuds swiftly. Empty sacks hung from hooks in the back of the belts.

In the two vast fields we saw at Edison there was not one Negro, and only two Mexican-Americans. These were early potatoes and since jobs were scarce Anglo-Americans were "preferred" by contractors. In the packing sheds along the highway it was the same story. "No Negroes are hired here." In two former government camps now the property of the growers in Arvin and Lamont we saw only white workers. As we went from Bakersfield to Hanford a pattern emerged. The big employers might hire one minority or another, but not both. At the DiGiorgio grape ranch only Mexican-Americans were employed when we were there. Only at the height of cotton picking are big growers willing to "mix" workers, and then one group works one section, the other a second, in a seeming effort to pit one against the other.

The Farm Labor Bureau at Bakersfield had only one job open the day we were there—irrigator, at 75 cents an hour. It was "for white only," and to get the job you needed besides to have a trailer, work 12 hours a day and pay $2.50 a week to the owner for "utilities."

Albert Wilbur, Kern county welfare director, said that from fifty to sixty per cent of the 1,925 cases cut off relief on April 1 were Negroes. Negroes formed the "biggest load" for the county, in his social

work parlance. About 8,000 Negroes lived in the county the year around. "The history of the Negro people is that they, like the Mexicans, stay put once they get a few roots," he said. Other officials said twenty-five per cent of the year-around agricultural workers of Kern county, largest producing cotton county in the country, were Mexican-American, and twenty per cent were Negroes.

"You must establish legal residence in the county . . . we have no provision for able-bodied men . . . there are jobs now if anyone really wants a job . . . go back where you came from," applicants for relief are told in the Valley. Yet we saw how Negroes lived in the Cottonwood section of Bakersfield, their "legal residences." Here are our notes on the Mustim family:

"Eight children, one and a-half to seventeen-years old; only one, the five year-old girl, had shoes; outhouse; pieced button-board and plain cardboard for walls; ten people and three beds; no closets; no water in house; oil lamps in two rooms, light in one; half-full basket of peas and box of oatmeal only food; windows didn't open; flies!"

As Mrs. Mustin answered our questions we noticed the baby sleeping on a bed. Large flies were crawling around his mouth. The child was sweating from the heat. Finally he woke up—a beautiful boy who looked surprisingly more healthy than the rest of the children, particularly the fragile five-year-old who was sent home from school with an unexplained fever. We discovered the reason for the baby's sturdiness: he got his strength at the mother's expense. She had nursed him until two months before.

These were Negro agricultural workers who were trying to sink roots. They had lived in this wooden shack four years now, attempting to buy the property. Nine of them had moved into it as a tiny one-room shack and gradually by improvization the father with the help of one boy had managed to slap together a kitchen without windows and an additional room, but each served as bedroom, even the kitchen.

"How did you live after the cotton harvest was in?" "My husband was on work relief until April 1. He got $53 every two weeks." Since relief was discontinued Obie Mustim, who came from Oklahoma originally, had been trying to get work. He got a few days' work in the pea harvest but got at most $1.50 a day—and peas. In the height of the cotton harvest he made six to eight dollars a day.

The baby fretted, twisted about as if disturbed. "He's a little sick.

Too much peas, I guess, he's still not used to it," the mother said. For days the baby had had no milk, only peas mashed in water.

ALWAYS a short harvest, this year peas were picked in less than two weeks' time. The first day peapicking began some 500 men and women were turned away from one field. Others got to pick only one row. In every home was a basket of peas. Empty pea pods were in every dust bin.

In a little room containing a bed, a dresser, one chair, two coathangers and a big bottle of rubbing alcohol for sore muscles, the indispensable article for all pickers, we found a 36 year-old woman, Patsy Phillips. Tall, lithe, she spoke in a deep, dramatic voice. Her best day in peas she'd made three dollars, for picking nine bushels. "Pay was one and one-half cents a pound, but they short-changed you, cheated on weights and counted too many as culls [bad peas]."

How did she make out before peas, in the lean months after cotton picking ended in January? She said broodingly, "I really don't know how I made it this winter." She described the room she had paid $7.50 a week for during picking season. It was so small she had barely room to stand alongside the bed. The rains came before picking ended. She was so weary she wouldn't feel the rain dripping through the roof until her face was wet, her quilt soaked. Then, when picking was over and in a bitter cold rain, she came home to find a double lock on her door. She asked her landlord to unlock it. "No, I mean to keep you out. You're behind in your rent," he told her. She had no witnesses or documents to prove her residence in Kern county, so she got no relief. "When they gave out the powdered milk and eggs I couldn't get none either. Seems like a woman alone finds it hard. People around here who knew I hadn't got on relief helped me. But some times I be so hungry I just curl up inside." She had been to a union meeting (A. F. of L. Farm Labor Union) a few nights earlier. "Seems like if we all stuck together maybe they couldn't do us this way," she said.

Seated in the shade of a big tent were a Negro grandmother, Lizie Jones, her son, Arlee, a young vet, and his pretty twenty-one-year-old wife. The grandmother held their delicate baby, born in January. The young couple lived in the tent. In the cold weather they moved into the tiny house behind the tent although Mrs. Jones and her husband and another son and daughter-in-law and two children already filled it.

"Things are near starvation here now," said the grandmother. "What

are we going to do?" Her son had had one day in potatoes. He picked sixty-seven sacks full for $4.12. "I had to wait around darn near all day," said Jones, who had been employed at a San Bernardino air base after the war—with no social security.

But the grandmother answered her own question. "Lots of babies in the Valley died of starvation this winter. That's a sin—when there's such riches around us," she said. "Now I'll tell you—I don't aim to starve. And I don't aim to let this baby starve. I don't aim to steal, neither." She was in Texas during the last depression when the unemployed began marching. "Maybe that's what we need again."

Outside the welfare offices in Bakersfield we talked to Aurora Vivas, thirty-four, there with her husband, Antonio, forty-six, a wizened, tough-muscled little man, twenty-four years a resident of the county. Beside them played the youngest four of their eight sons, all under ten, barefooted, in tattered but spotlessly clean clothes. The youngest toddled about sucking listlessly on a nipple-capped pop bottle containing a chalky mixture. This was the powdered milk which with powdered eggs was all they had left to eat. The mother had gone in the welfare offices to plead for lard and soap, to no avail.

"We own our own home at Delano, we pay taxes," she said. "Whenever war comes, they take our sons. But not a penny for them when they are hungry. Not a penny for a little cornmeal or flour. The older ones will not eat the powdered stuff without bread." Her husband's work relief had been stopped after twelve days of hard work building new roads into the mountains to oil wells, for which he got $48. Mexican-Americans were given the hardest work relief jobs, she thought. "What are the poor people going to do? Next year will be worse. Machines in cotton, potatoes, in thinning beets. Are you going to have war? I don't want war, with my eight sons. But if the U.S. government would give us some help now to feed them—look they have no clothes, but I ask for none; all I ask is a little solid food, not powder."

In Bakersfield where people who "qualified" for relief got the "diet" described by Mrs. Vivas the county authorities were debating whether to accept surplus butter and cheese from the federal government. Carloads were available not far away, but it meant, according to the authorities, "a refrigeration problem and a distribution problem"—in other words, a little money from the grower-dominated board of supervisors.

The Kern County Chamber of Commerce proudly describes in a

handsome booklet this same Bakersfield: "throbbing heart of Kern County, . . . a beautiful city with a reputation for casual living expressed by modern, comfortable homes lining wide streets, shaded with tall palms and eucalyptus trees."

But in the crowded Cottonwood road area of the town the Mustims fought flies, the Patsy Phillips got locked out of their rain-drenched cubicle, and the Joneses shared a tent and a tiny one-room house. In the Cottonwood area there are no facilities for "casual living." There are no parks, or playgrounds, no public amusement facilities. The only decent eating house is operated by Tom Reese, vice president of N.A.A.C.P., a leader among his people and widely known among liberals. During the lean months which followed the four-month cotton picking, the soup line he inaugurated at his Delwood cafe numbered more men daily than his paying customers, sixty-five a day getting stew handouts at the peak of suffering. Reese said people were becoming angry. He felt part of the anger would be translated in political action. His wife helped register 1,700 new voters in the immediate area, swelling registered voters to around 3,000.

CORCORAN, in Kings county, on the surface is a model of the "typical" American small town. Everything is prosperous and pleasant, and its well-clad, well-fed people live in well-kept little houses on shaded streets. Is it possible that such a clean, bright, little town was the scene of some of the bloodiest battles of the cotton strikes of the thirties?

The actual scene of the battles was the vast cotton holdings of Elmer Von Glahn, who has since sold his acreage and a cotton mill to "Sandy" Crocket of Fresno and Albert Gamboggi of the big white house with the famous rose garden in the center of Corcoran.

There is a new hospital, modern and bright, in Corcoran. Miss Kirchofer, superintendent, said that it was a tax-supported, city institution, but admitted that it had no charity beds. All cases that cannot pay are sent to Hanford, twenty-one miles away. Was it true that a picker's wife who walked in with her baby in arms would be turned away even if the baby appeared near death? She hesitated, her green eyes coolly surveying her interviewers. "A doctor would be called, and it would be up to the doctor." Then, "we give emergency aid only on a free basis."

Discriminate? Oh, no. "I'm very fond of the Mexican people," she said, her smile precise and chilly. "They're like children."

The prettiness of Corcoran ends abruptly at the edge of town. At one end is Avenue 5½, where Negro pickers live the year round in rented or owned cubicles, houses, shacks and tents. Here there is no water anywhere, except, when irrigation is in progress, one pump from which washing water may be fetched. Inhabitants must haul water from Hanford at twenty-five cents a bucket.

"Quite a few people around here almost starved to death this year," said the Rev. E. W. Woolridge of the Church of God in Christ, Negro minister who doubles as cotton picker. "People can't help each other much because they don't have it to give, and no one else cares. Crocket and Gamboggi wouldn't go up to $3 a hundred until the union struck at Bakersfield, though they were paying it at Fresno. Only at the harvest end when they were scraping the bottom of the barrel would Crocket and Gamboggi go up to $3.25, though at Fresno they were paying $3.50 by then. Those are the men who rule this county."

On the edge of Corcoran in the opposite direction again the pleasantness disappears. Here is a Crocket and Gamboggi work camp, one of the "better" camps of their Rancho Grande. It is filled with rows of bleak little sheds ironically called cabins, with stinking out-houses between each two rows, dirty little pools of water all around because there is no drainage.

This is almost the end of the line. It is like some dismal netherworld. Everything is slow-moving, the children are solemn, with old faces. Here within ten days last November, according to the ghastly account in the official record, three babies died of malnutrition.

We went into the "home" of William Alarcon, Jr., a Mexican-American navy veteran and former plumber's assistant and member of an A. F. of L. plumber's local in Los Angeles. Unpainted boards warped in the rain and letting the bright sunlight through the cracks served as walls and ceiling. Bill had a wife and three children but there were only two broken-down beds in the cabin. The only furniture was a crude table and several chairs. There was no water, no toilet and no adequate light. The "home" was free to Alarcon provided he worked in the Crocket and Gamboggi cotton fields during the harvest.

"This is supposed to be one of the better camps, isn't it?" we asked Alarcon. "You can quote me," he said, "as saying that this is a lousy, dirty pest-hole."

Alarcon, a member of the A. F. of L. Farm Labor union, brought in relatives and other workers and their wives and translated the re-

porter's questions and their answers when they had language difficulties. They explained they were free to roam the valleys of the state searching for work up until cotton harvest time, which they did, leaving their families here. Kings county was a big cotton producer but except for cotton chopping which began in two weeks it provided little employment until September. Alarcon had worked some in former years in a sugar mill but industry was almost unknown in Kings county.

"How do you get along in between harvests? Relief?"

They shrugged their shoulders and gave bitter laughs. (A total of only $60,700 was allotted for relief for the entire county for 1949-50.)

"We try to get along as best we can," said one of the beautiful young wives.

"What about medical care?"

Fred Gonzalez told how his son was run over by a car on the road and the hospital refused even to examine the boy.

Alarcon's cousin, George Garcia, spoke heatedly. "It is a municipal hospital, yes, but my wife was refused admission when she was already staining, she was that near confinement. I was desperate. I had to drive her over a bumpy road to the county hospital, twenty-one miles, and there again she was refused admission. They said I couldn't prove residence in the county for the required period. I went to the Veterans Administration, and V.A. did get her admitted. When she was discharged, I was presented with a $50 hospital bill."

At the end of our talk several workers volunteered they were glad to know a magazine was going to speak up for them. Their manner, their words, said clearly that the Mexican-American agricultural workers were refusing to accept the role of the silent, docile farm worker the growers would like to have.

We drove away to search for the worst of the Crocket and Gamboggi labor camps, which even these workers had not known about.

Nine miles away, in what was formerly a swampland, we found the camp. We reached it by means of private roads. This was indeed the end of the line. Planted in the middle of cotton fields deep in the vast Crocket and Gamboggi empire, this camp had the look and feel of hopelessness and despair. The flimsy buildings were weatherbeaten and old. Only one thing gleamed new and shiny—the big car belonging to the overseer or labor contractor.

It was a Sunday morning, and in the unnatural stillness even the

children were quiet. We watched a tiny, dainty little girl of one year sitting on the ground in dirt and chicken feathers, playing listlessly in the burning sun. She was motionless except for one hand which moved a toy phone up and down.

To the reporter who had been in the Army, it recalled a barracks in the Jewish quarter of Buchenwald in the first days our troops liberated it.

Here the workers, in contrast to the eagerness of those in the previous camp, were little inclined to talk. They were hemmed in by the watchful eyes of the contractors who lived on the premises, by their separation from the town and stores nine miles away, by the high wall of no work, no money and almost no hope. Here was exploitation with its brutal iron fist, unconcealed by glove or illusion.

INDUSTRIAL workers laid off in Los Angeles and San Francisco are pouring into the San Joaquin for stoop labor jobs. Unemployment in California, as officials admitted, is ten per cent, highest in the nation; yet Governor Warren and the state legislature turned a deaf ear when the Independent Progressive Party with petitions bearing 100,000 names urged jobs, public works and relief.

In addition to hunger, disease, discrimination, the growers playing white against black, Negro against Mexican-American, the workers in the field face a mechanical frankenstein. Last year the automatic cotton picker replaced fifteen per cent of the pickers. The cotton blocker, now also used to prune beets and plums, has further cut jobs.

The Farm Labor Bureau man in Bakersfield who had shown us his record of arrivals seeking work—from Georgia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Louisiana—also showed us something else. It was a field of potatoes being dug and picked up and put on a truck—without a worker on the ground. The automatic potato picker was making its debut in California. It allows six men to replace forty-three.

In an adjacent field we watched a potato picker slowly straighten his back, rub his lean, sunburned chin and follow the machine with resentful eyes.

The growers' dream of reaping a harvest without any workers was one step nearer.

The starvation will be far more acute next year. This became more and more apparent as we gathered information. The workers know it. And they are frightened—and angry.

right face

REPORTAGE

"After several days in the San Joaquin Valley, I am convinced that all the recent horror stories about 'Grapes of Wrath' Oakies and Arkies, rattling around in loaded jalopies and starving to death, are just so much hooey. True, some people are starving."—Leonard Slater in *Newsweek.*

PRODUCTION MAN

"It seems to me that whenever you can give incentive, whenever you decrease the sense of security, you are tending to bring about a btter efficiency." *The Hon. Forrest C. Donnell (R., Mo.) in the U.S. Senate.*

CULTURE

"Jan Valtin's Wintertime *(Rinehart) deals with postwar Germany and the troubles that attend a German ship captain who befriends a Lett refugee. There is, perhaps, too much of rape and other horrors (the Russians are pictured even more luridly than the Germans), and a slight tendency to bring in Poe-like characters (such as the beauty with one leg who kept offering her person to our hero). In other words, it's a good yarn if you don't belong to the school of carping realists."*—The *Retail Bookseller* primes the market.

ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL . . .

"Recently a thoroughly un-American, undemocratic philosophy has been propagated in the name of 'American Democracy.' This is the cult of equalitarianism. . . . Equality is the objective of communism. Only a communistic government can guarantee and protect equality." —*Donald R. Richberg in* The Sigma Chi Bulletin.

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

On the Eve of *PRISON*

by ALBERT MALTZ

The following article was delivered as an address at a meeting in Los Angeles on April 23 under the auspices of the National Council of Arts, Sciences and Professions.

I DO NOT like the idea of spending a year of my life in a Federal prison. I do not like the problem of trying to explain to my twelve-year-old son and to my seven-year-old daughter why their father, and other fathers of their acquaintance, need to be political prisoners. I find it hard to convey to them why *they* must be law-abiding—why they should never take a bar of candy from a drugstore counter—when their father apparently is a law-breaker of another sort. For obviously the father *is* some sort of law-breaker; or else he would not be going to prison.

One explains. And one hopes that the explanations are at least partially understood, and that love and loyalty will be a bridge to understanding, and that the year, the neighborhood, the school, will not bear down too hard upon the child. And you wonder with your wife whether a visit to prison will be good for the children or bad. You are not altogether sure of the answer, you never can be, because a child's heart is not your own. And you like none of it.

I do not like an unfinished book in my file. I wanted it finished and read. I think now, for reasons personal to myself, that this particular book will never be finished and never read. I am not happy about it.

Nevertheless, circumstances being what they are, I am satisfied with this year in prison and with all of its consequences. If the opportunity were offered ten times over, I would not withdraw a word, alter a sentence, change a tone of what I said before the unspeakable committee on un-American activities—except where I could make the

words sharper, the sentences more biting. And if we go to prison, I for one will go with a deeper anger than I ever have felt in my life.

What is the substance of that anger? For myself and my colleagues —our families, our work, our lives? Yes, of course. But even more I abominate the manner in which our land is now being befouled by the men in charge of the machinery of government. You will notice here that I do not limit my charge. When this case began, in the fall of 1947, I did that, as did others. I pointed to the evil actions of certain committees, like the un-American activities committee, to certain individuals like J. Parnell Thomas, Rankin, Attorney General Clark. But many things have happened in our land in two and a half years—bad things. And today it would be blindness to view such events as the work of a few individuals alone or a few reactionary committees of Congress. On the contrary, the time has come when it must be admitted that what is at work here is the total machinery of our men of government, on a policy level and on an executive level.

When I say this, I am referring to the loyalty oaths and the loyalty administration boards; to the low courts and to the high courts; to magistrate judges and to Supreme Court justices; to public prosecutors and their sinister squads of perjured informers, who now roam the land testifying for expenses, and who know in advance that the government machinery will protect them in any lie they choose to utter. I am referring to the Harry Bridges case and to the Owen Lattimore case as merely the most recent examples of the manner in which the reputation, career and liberty of a citizen are now dependent upon the testimony of the professional stoolpigeon.

We have had case after case in which government witnesses are admitted perjurers. Furthermore these same perjurers have been caught on the witness stand in still further perjuries. Yet it is not these men who are prosecuted; on the contrary they are protected from prosecution by the Department of Justice, they are given generous fees and expense accounts and they cross the country on public tax money to appear and perjure themselves in still other cases. All this by the arrangement, connivance and manipulation of what is solemnly called a Department of Justice.

I refer also to the malicious, premeditated and dishonorable conduct of judges who penalize with prison sentences lawyers who have dared to defend vigorously clients whom the government is out to get. I

refer further to the thickening nightmare atmosphere hovering over our land in which increasing numbers of citizens are forced to swear "I am not this and I am not that." In Pittsburgh a violinist is removed from the symphony orchestra because his politics, as charged before the un-American activities committee, are unbecoming to a fiddler.

Not least in this record of charges I refer to our bi-partisan foreign policy, to the manufactured urgencies of an unnecessary cold war and to the pretense that national emergency makes it imperative to intimidate and persecute opposition political opinion.

I am, ladies and gentlemen, making what some will call a very radical speech. Perhaps so. But it may be that in calling for justice in the courts, for an end to indecency in public life, for a land in which ideas may be spoken without fear and in which all men and women—all—may live and act politically without intimidation, job blacklist and persecution—that in this I am being very conservative after all. In any instance I know of no other speech I can make in the month of April, 1950. Ten citizens are going to prison. It is not just that they suffer this. It threatens thousands of others that the courts send these ten to prison. It is a time for anger and a time to speak out.

For myself, I was born in this country, molded by it and I will not repudiate what it has taught me. I went to its schools, learned to salute its flag, learned its proud history, read and re-read the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution and the Bill of Rights and therefore I have not learned how to hold my tongue. This land has created a sense of loyalty in me; its way of life has given me a conscience.

But it is a loyalty to the land and its people, and to their free life and independence; it is not loyalty to a particular office holder, to the board of directors of any corporation, to a particular Secretary of State or a particular policy. Furthermore I was not born to a land in which informers and professional perjurers wrote the Constitution, dictated the substance of debates in Congress or decided who might lead a trade union, teach in a school or write a book.

Not since 1798, under a law infamous in our history, have men of letters been imprisoned in this land—have political parties been so persecuted, not for their deeds but for their ideas, as is the Communist Party today—have educators, ministers, trade unionists, scientists, entire organizations of the people, been declared subversive by governmental edict and court opinion.

It was not true loyalty in 1798 to bow before the Sedition law, and Thomas Jefferson did not. It was not true loyalty in 1848 to accept as necessary, just or good the war launched against Mexico by the slave owners dominating our government, and Abraham Lincoln did not. It was not loyalty in 1857 to accept the Dred Scott decision as wise, proper and constitutional, even though Chief Justice Taney argued out of his great legal knowledge that no slave or descendant of slaves could have any standing in Federal courts—and Emerson was too loyal to this nation to nod agreeably to such a decision, Thoreau was not heard applauding, Walt Whitman wrote no poems in honor of Taney. It was not loyal in 1921 to approve the Palmer raids against radicals, even though they were carried out under the Attorney General by the present head of the F.B.I.—and Charles Evans Hughes was not silent or approving.

The weapons of tyranny are many, and foremost amongst them is the current lie that those who oppose the policies of men now in office are disloyal to America. If we cloud our reasoning by mumbling that the "tyranny" of other governments requires the same of our own, then we will damn our own future. We have no command over the varying histories of other lands, over their internal development, the character and culture of their people. And we will be fools if we abandon any of our own liberties for any reason. We fought a successful war against Hitler without the necessity of loyalty oaths, purges, witch-hunts or the other institutions that have come to be visited upon us. Now, in peace time, the Appellate Court of Washington presumes to inform us that an emergency requires the abridgement of our civil liberties.

This is precisely what the Appellate Court ruled in the Hollywood case! The Appellate Court re-wrote the Bill of Rights without the consent of the people, and our all-wise, all-just, above reproach Supreme Court has in its turn ruled that there are no issues in the Hollywood case on which it cares to adjudicate. The powers-that-be have spoken!

I do not think so. I do not think that the powers that be have finally spoken. J. Parnell Thomas and his Committee have spoken. Senator McCarthy, Louis Budenz, Whittaker Chambers, Judge Medina, have spoken. The Appellate Court has spoken and the Supreme Court has spoken with the cowardly eloquence of its silence. But in 1859,

the sixteenth President of the United States said, "The people are the rightful masters of Congresses and Courts." And the central issue of our time, no less than Lincoln's, is precisely whether the people will remain the masters. And I think the American people have not yet been fully heard on this.

I don't think I suffer from a wholly naive faith in our people. I know that it is possible, in certain historical circumstances, that a people can be tricked, deluded and made drunk, so that it seeks its destiny on a path that leads to an abyss. We have seen Germany and we know this. I think whole sections of the American people are now partially tricked and deluded, confused and groping, but the hysteria has been manufactured on high and does not burn in the grass roots. And I believe the American people do not want Mundt Bills or hydrogen wars or the jack boot. It remains to be seen whether they can be deluded into accepting them.

The issue then lies in the days ahead. As you know, there has been a measure of real protest over the Supreme Court's action in the cases of the Hollywood Ten. For this I express the thanks of my colleagues. Certainly our personal fate will be affected if these protests, for which citizens like you are responsible, make the Court pause and cause the Justices to accept our petition for re-hearing. But of even greater importance is what happens next in our land and in our community. The fight to keep the Hollywood Ten out of jail is part of a larger fight to keep Hollywood free of a second investigation, to keep book publishing, the theatre, and all other media by which ideas are expressed, free from inquisition.

For two and a half years, despite its promises, the committee on un-American activities has not returned to Hollywood. It did not because the Hollywood Ten had challenged its power in the courts. But if the Hollywood Ten enter prison, then a long struggle has been lost. And then the members of the motion picture industry will need to decide how they will live—and whether the blacklist will be extended—and whether there will be oaths required—and whether the enthroned producer in Hollywood will be John Rankin of Mississippi.

I am not talking lightly. It would be wrong to pass over casually the consequences of a defeat. The ten of us did not go to Washington with the illusion that only we were involved. And if there are any who have thought so in the years since, they are due for bitter instruction.

We will live in the world we make. If we bow before new onslaughts by the committee on un-American activities, then we will live in *that* world. And although *that* world may bear down most heavily at first upon certain individuals, ten, a hundred or a thousand —nevertheless if there are any decent people who think they can live well within *that* world, they are mistaken.

We will live also in the universal community we make. If we go along with those who hunger to punish the Russians for their socialist ways, which some citizens abhor, by dropping hydrogen bombs on Moscow and other Russian cities, then we will learn on our own flesh the hideous consequences of allowing others to decide our fate. If we are too frightened of our public servants to demand of them that they meet the world's problems without resort to war, then we will suffer the consequences of our fears when we cower in bomb shelters.

These are not easy times. But there have been times no less difficult or threatening in the history of our nation and of the world. This is a time when men and women of principle and courage and a true instinct for self-preservation must come forward. I think they will come forward. They are represented here tonight. That's what this evening is all about.

I have said before, and I want very much to repeat again, that I am always impressed at a gathering like this by the indestructible bond that exists among people. We are so varied, each one private unto himself, with his secret heart, longings, problems, anxieties. Yet not alone, because we always come together. And we come together to see justice done, to advance thought, to combat rheumatic heart disease in children, to achieve brotherhood. It is an ever-recurring act of hope and love, and it moves the world. We have reason to be serious these days, but we also have reason to remember our history and to feel confident that the American people have a way of retaining mastery over Congresses and courts.

Friends—be of good cheer.

ON SAFARI WITH HARA

Experience, the great teacher, indeed points to no greater hypocrisy than the perorations of those who thus align themselves with this form of international political perfidy, social deception, and territorial fraud and seek an alliance of expediency with the fundamental human rights, givgiving lip service to their preservation solely to provide a screen of respectable plausibility to mask a sinister subversive design to destroy liberty as the obstacle to personal power. *

* *from text of statement by General MacArthur appearing in*

THE NEW YORK TIMES, WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 19

DICKIE
and the Fat Lady

A Story by PHILLIP BONOSKY

WE WERE all eager to find out who would move into Schlemmer's house after the Kolchiks were thrown out. It was a four-room, white-painted box; a little porch covered with withered morning glories faced the alley, and on each side of the porch was a huge cottonwood poplar that grew higher than the roof and showered it with leaves in the autumn. The two trees served as a kind of portal to the porch, wide enough for two people to pass between comfortably.

The reason we wanted so much to find out who would move into Schlemmer's house was that Mrs. Schlemmer had advertised to the world (our alley), as she kicked the Kolchiks out, that she'd never rent again to "hunkies" or "foreigners" who were susceptible to T.B. and unemployment. So we were very surprised when they began cutting down one of the trees even before the Nobles arrived. Nobody would tell us why. We watched the two men saw and saw, and finally the tree crashed into the alley over the fence, crushing it, and everybody ran to where they could look at the big monster lying across our alley.

Then the truck drove up. From it came strange furniture, which we gaped at: a chair upholstered in furs with a tiny head of something—a fox?—at the ends of the arms staring; and trunks and trunks plastered with labels, half-torn, half-faded, but still showing exotic names: Albuquerque, Toronto, Sioux City, Birmingham . . . and also Mr. Noble appeared for the first time, and his dog, Dickie.

Mr. Noble was not one of us. It was easy to see that he was what Mrs. Schlemmer meant: "Johnny Bull." Certainly he had never worked in *our* mill, and he spoke good English, of course. He was small, white-haired, with fallen-in cheeks, a silver dust all over him; he wore spats and a derby, and a bow-tie. He also had gold cuff links and a tie-pin,

which astonished all of us. His dog was just a little white rat terri as nervous and fast as mercury. The only thing we noticed abo Dickie at first was the way he stood still and shivered when the m whistle suddenly began to scream; he put his paws over his ears a his eyes turned piteously up to Mr. Noble who caressed his head a looked sternly down the alley to where the mill was blowing aw We certainly thought that was funny, the dog hating the whistle much. Our Mrs. Grabulis, whose husband had disappeared in the mi and she now left with four children, said you'd think the dog h to go to work, too.

Anyhow, while they were cutting up the tree, and some of us we hauling hunks of it home to put into the fire, the second truck dro up. Sitting in back, with her hair piled tiara-high on her hea wrapped in an old red velvet dress and her neck loaded with Mexic beads, sat the Fat Lady. She was 350 pounds and always rippled: a she sat there as though on a throne, and when the truck came to stop she didn't make the slightest effort to move. The only thing w that when Dickie jumped up into the truck she took him into h tremendous bosom and kissed him on the mouth. Everybody gaspe Even sighs rose spontaneously from the women, like souls slipping fro their mouths to heaven; but whether it was at the kiss or the sig of the woman, it was hard to say. Meanwhile she was talking to Dick in a beautiful, little-girl, sing-song voice, and we couldn't believe o ears: "Oh, litta darling," she moaned sweetly. "Did oo miss ums, lit darlin'?" And here she pressed the languid little thing against her b cheek, and we watched the dog close its eyes with bliss.

"Johnny Bulls," everyone said.

THE moving men took down the back gate of the truck and beg to construct a ramp that led from the truck to the porch. It sudden became clear to all of us why one of the big poplars had been cut dow —poplars that were there before some of us were born. Mrs. Nob could never in a thousand years have gone in between them. Everyboo crowded nearer to the truck to see how this was going to be don Mrs. Noble sat holding Dickie and looked serenely on as the work we ahead, looking neither at the workers nor at us; and finally when it w finished, she graciously let herself be lifted underneath the arms by tw of the truckmen, who staggered a moment on the flimsy truck as the

felt her weight; and then, inch by inch, they propelled her forward and down the ramp, while her columnar legs moved slowly and her serene smile floated over the whole proceedings as if they had nothing to do with her.

When they got her on the porch, a cry went up as all of us realized at the same time that she could never fit through the door. By now the three o'clock shift from the mill had let out and workers coming up the alley stopped curiously before the truck to watch this feat of engineering. Mrs. Noble stood on the porch, which looked like a pedestal; and while we kept guessing about how she was going to get in, the two men who had helped her onto the porch began to take out the window that looked into the front room. It happened to be a big window, wider than the door. Mrs. Noble still held Dickie, his one eye squashed in her bosom, while Mr. Noble was lost inside the house putting things in order.

Well, the window came out, a pulley was nailed on, and Mrs. Noble was quickly hoisted by two broad leather belts, over the bannister and up into and through the window, Dickie along with her. The onlookers were stunned. They made no sound, not a word, not even among themselves. Their eyes followed the whole drama through again from the beginning: from the truck, down the ramp to the porch; then from the porch up through the window, which was now being replaced. It occurred to everyone also that now she was in the chances that she would come out soon were very slight. Mrs. Noble had disappeared into the house perhaps forever.

Such an exotic pair had never come to our neighborhood before. It was not only that they were middle-class (rare in our parts), it was their weirdness that piqued us—*us,* not our parents, who shook their shoulders accepting in advance anything crazy from "Johnny Bulls." "What," my father asked, "will Mrs. Schlemmer do now when the rent is overdue? How will she get them out?"

But where had they come from, we wanted to know; who were they, what were they going to do? It wasn't too easy to find the answers because Mr. Noble, up to this point, had made no overtures toward any neighbors, and there weren't any children to pump. What seemed weirdest of all was the fact that Dickie never appeared. He kept in the house or strictly at Mr. Noble's heels when they went out for a walk; he didn't mix with anybody, and when the kids whistled

at him or called him "Dickie," he paid no attention at all. Could *he* be "English," too? we wondered. A dog?

A dog which was solely the pet of adults was something new in our kids' lives. We knew that the rich took good care of dogs and even put coats on them in the winter. But we didn't understand it, for dogs had no other purpose, as far as we could see, except to play with kids—unless they were hunting dogs. In our working-class town no self-respecting adult would make a pet out of a dog: there were children enough to worry about, let alone a dog.

THE first Saturday solved half the mystery. With the end of the second chapter of the "Green Arrow" at the Merlin, the lights went up and to the dumbfounded astonishment of all the kids, it was announced that the Merlin had decided to established a new policy for the entertainment of the regular patrons; at great cost the management had secured the services of Mr. Baylord Noble, famous for his circus performances with Barnum and Bailey and widely-known on the vaudeville stage in New York as well as in Europe: so, therefore, girls and boys, we present Mr. Baylord Noble and his dog, Dickie!

And out of the wings came Mr. Noble with Dickie at his heels. He was dressed wonderfully in a satin circus trainer's costume, with silk lapels, long tails, and a smokestack hat. His voice rang out: "Boys and girls and ladies and gentlemen, I want to introduce to you my friend and co-worker, my pal, my constant companion, Dickie! Dickie, take a bow!"

And the marvelous little Dickie, who looked like a bit of squirming sausage with a stub of a tail, gravely got down on his first two knees and bowed his head. What pandemonium! The cheers were so terrific the manager came crowding out of the wings with a face ready for anything. Then Mr. Noble began: "Boys and girls, you might think, looking at Dickie, that he's just an ordinary dog. But I assure you he isn't. Dickie and I have lived together now for over twelve years, and, as you know, that is a long, long time for a dog to live. And yet, look at him! Just as spry, just as youthful as he ever was, as young as the day I first brought him before the public some eleven years ago, when he was barely a year old, and he performed his first tricks.

"I'm going to show you exactly what Dickie and I did that first momentous day when Dickie appeared before 20,000 people at Catawba

County Fair Grounds in 1921." He clapped his hands and Dickie sat up attentively. "Now, Dickie," he said distinctly. "Do you know where you're at?" Dickie nodded his head. "In Wisconsin?" Dickie shook his head. "In Pennsylvania?" Dickie shook his head. "In Catawba?" Dickie barked joyfully and nodded his head. A smile broke over Mr. Noble's face and he made a flourish. "Now, Dickie," he said. "Are you happy to be here?" Dickie rolled over on the floor. "Are you ready to perform?" Again Dickie rolled. "Good," said Mr. Noble. "Let us prove to the public that a dog can be as smart as a human being, which means, smarter than most of us! Come on, Dickie!"

So they ran to the side of the stage and Mr. Noble came forward holding his arms in the shape of a hoop and Dickie pattered after him and leaped cleanly through the looped arms. Mr. Noble ran back again and again Dickie leaped through. Then suddenly Mr. Noble bent over and Dickie ran up his back, leaped high in the air and fell into Mr. Noble's outstretched arms!

Then he scampered into the wings and disappeared and Mr. Noble crossed the stage and began to talk to us. In talking he moved near to the wing, and suddenly we saw little Dickie craftily coming out behind Mr. Noble walking on his hind legs! Mr. Noble pretended that he didn't know Dickie was following him and imitating him. When we howled, he stopped in astonishment and asked: "What's the matter?" And we howled: "Dickie! Dickie!" And he pretended not to hear. He walked round and round with Dickie after him, while the theatre honked and shrieked. Finally, by accident, he caught sight of Dickie, registered surprise, and Dickie leaped cleanly into his arms to the roar of the audience.

Then he swung Dickie up into his arms and began to balance him on the palm of his hand while Dickie stood on one quivering leg. Suddenly, while Mr. Noble was lifting Dickie, Dickie lost his balance and fell. He crashed to the stage, yelped a moment, and Mr. Noble quickly swooped him up, laughed, pretending it was just part of the routine, and did the trick over again.

The Merlin's new policy was a howling success. Mr. Noble would tour the other little steel and mining towns in our area but would hit the Merlin about once a month. His act hardly ever changed, but we didn't care. Those of us who lived in the same alley with Mr. Noble felt the warm glow of reflected glory and told our mothers and fathers what we had seen and who Mr. Noble was.

We tried, then, to make friends with him and his dog. The two would go for walks in the evening, down to the Cliff, at the end of the alley that ran at right angles to *our* alley, and stand there looking over the gully below, through which a creek ran in which rats swam. In the summer time, it bloomed with sunflowers that were thick on the sides of the hill and made the place shine like butter. We would follow Mr. Noble and Dickie down there and while they stood and looked over the Cliff, we clambered up and down it, as bold as we dared. We didn't have the courage to go up to Mr. Noble and talk to him directly. Somehow, he looked mythically unapproachable, dressed as he was in his black derby, spats, bow-tie and sparkling stick pin. Dickie acted like no other dog we ever saw. He stood at his master's heel and waited. Mr. Noble spoke to him from time to time, low short words, that got a wag out of Dickie's stump tail, but he didn't go off to sniff like other dogs did. But then other dogs couldn't walk on their hind legs!

It was true that we never saw Mrs. Noble outside the house again. All we ever saw of her was when she sat at the window and stared at the alley. However, things began to happen in the house we had never seen before. One of the first things Mrs. Noble did was to get a telephone. None of our families, of course, had a telephone. Whom would we telephone? Then, one day, men brought a stunning cabinet radio to the Nobles' house, and from morning till night we heard its deep, polished tones.

"Johnny Bull," my father said.

But we didn't care. This is how we wanted to live, we thought: grownups who liked to play! Grownups who *liked* new things—telephones, radios, they soon got a player piano with tunes that we'd never heard before: tunes that reeked of circus sawdust and vaudeville dressing rooms. And that marvelous dog!

"The dog," my father said. "Ah, the dog!" And he shook his head with a clear smile. "The dog supports the people, but who supports the dog?"

The grocery boy made deliveries to the house, and so did the butcher boy. (*We* were our families' grocery and butcher boy!) Mrs. Noble, for all her weight, didn't eat much: only exquisitely: strawberries and cream, oysters, asparagus, pineapple; sherbets and cream cakes.

And so it went. When we got to wanting something extra at home, our people would shout that we had become corrupted Johnny Bull, middle-class, like the Nobles, but wait, wait!

And we did; and finally we learned something about Mr. Noble that we never knew or even suspected before. He came stumbling home late one night, getting caught in the mass of workers on their way out of the mill; and he sailed among their darkness like a pleasure ship dressed in a white-and-cream suit with gray lapels that should have been worn only by a mad man in our town where the air was thirty-three percent smoke. The workers steered him to the gate and left him there; and when he opened the door they could hear Mrs. Noble's sing-song little girl's voice.

So that was it. Mr. Noble, it seems, also drank. Got *drunk,* that is, gutter drunk. For the first time, perhaps, the wives around found a point of sympathy with Mrs. Noble, and tongues began to cluck for the poor fat lady whose husband kept coming home dead drunk and she too helpless to help him.

That night Mr. Noble came home, real silly drunk, and staggered through the door; and a moment later we heard a piercing yell come out of the house. It was followed by other yells, and we ran out into the alley to find Mrs. Noble trying to hoist up the window. She gestured wildly toward us, her massive face bruised with tears, and her tiny eyes sunk in grief. Mrs. Grabulis rushed through the yard and pushed through the door.

"Help! Help!" Mrs. Noble cried, waving a handkerchief at her face. Her husband was collapsed on the couch, with his head almost in his lap, held between his hands, moaning. Mrs. Grabulis was thinking of a sure-fire D.T. remedy, for Mr. Noble was shaking pathetically. But then so was Mrs. Noble.

Finally, Mrs. Noble caught herself, her big pale face soaked, and she whispered: "Dickie is gone, Dickie is lost!"

Mrs. Grabulis, who had begun to shake a little herself, couldn't understand.

"What?" she asked, deafly.

"Dickie is lost," Mrs. Noble repeated in a hoarse whisper, yet her voice tinkled. "Dickie's lost, lost!"

"He'll find his way home," Mrs. Grabulis said practically.

"But you don't understand," Mrs. Noble said. "You don't understand." She stopped to sip her tears, and then said: "Dickie is lost because he's *blind.* He *can't* find his way home!"

Mr. Noble lifted his head and with a face like the flesh of a peeled mushroom, whispered: "I lost him. I lost him somewhere in some saloon. . . ." And his head fell down again.

"The police will find him," said Mrs. Grabulis.

"No, no!" cried the Fat Lady. "He must be found now! Poor little Dickie, he's never spent a night away from us in all his life! He'll die of fear, of grief, oh, Dickie!" she wept. "Oh, Dickie!"

Mrs. Grabulis, overcome with embarrassment, backed out of the house and told the crowd that had gathered outside what had happened. Then, more as a joke, a searching party was formed and with the men, of course, leading, all the saloons in the city were scoured. Finally, Dickie was found shivering in an alley outside a tavern; he was cowering behind a garbage can, while blood flowed from his paws. He had been attacked by rats and had fought them off. It had rained meanwhile and, soaked, he was trembling from head to foot. They gathered him up in their arms, and he turned his sightless eyes this way and that, and moaned a little.

When they got him home again, Mrs. Noble was almost in a state of collapse. She was lying prone on the huge bed which was hers alone in the front room. Mr. Noble, meanwhile, had become sober, and took Dickie into his arms. He was trembling as much as Dickie was. With tears in his pale face, he thanked the rescuers, who stood, terribly embarrassed, in the little room, unable to understand the grief and prostration that the loss of the little dog had caused. Mrs. Noble moaned from her bed, lifted her enormous head, and without a word stretched out her huge arms and Mr. Noble brought Dickie into them. The workers who had brought the dog in turned, very confused, and hurriedly left the room.

Outside, they said: "It's a crime. She treats him like he was a baby."

"Why," said another. "I work as hard as that dog any day, but who treats me like that?"

There was now a general feeling of resentment felt by everyone. This was *too much* "Johnny Bull." It was not right that human feelings should be spent on what was just an animal, after all; it cheapened human feelings, people thought; it made mothers feel when they

caressed, or didn't caress their children because work called them away, that Mrs. Noble was making a mockery of their affection, or lack of it, with the kisses she gave the dog.

WHEN Mrs. Noble appeared at the window next day with Dickie done up in a vest and a flannel bandage around his throat, it was enough to start a riot. One could understand taking care of the worker who supported the family, but this dog! She sat rocking him and from time to time poured something down his throat. Women scowled now: men gave her looks; and the kids, who felt closer in sympathy to all this, only laughed a little. They began to call Mr. Noble Lon Chaney, and Mrs. Noble, the Fat Lady. Mr. Noble *did* look a little like Lon Chaney, with his white face, deep dark tragic lines, eyes that fell back into their sockets; in addition to which his face was bony, looking just a bit like a skull.

Still, he and Dickie appeared on the stage that Saturday afternoon at the Merlin.

The "Green Arrow" had shot his last arrow, and the lights went up to the cheers of 350 boys and girls. There was a moment's delay in the wings, however, before Mr. Noble appeared on stage. From the very beginning he looked confused. He began his speech, just as he did before, only stating that it was at the Tuscarawas County Fair that Dickie had made his first appearance. He asked the wrong question first: "Are you in Wisconsin?' and Dickie nodded his head, and everybody laughed—not that we were particularly aware that this was a mistake: we considered it a joke. Then, smiling palely, Mr. Noble asked: "Do you know where you're at?" And the poor little Dickie shook his head; but everybody roared anyhow. Mr. Noble was shocked and turned for a moment to stare out at the roaring kids; he lifted his hand for silence, faltered and let it drop. "Dickie," he cried. *"Do you know where you're at?"* And Dickie barked joyfully and nodded his head. "Catawba?" Mr. Noble cried, and Dickie rolled over on the floor. Howls came from the audience. "No, no!" some of us could hear Mr. Noble's stricken voice. "No, no!"

There was a moment of silence on the stage, as Mr. Noble stood with his hand pressed to his temples. Then he staggered to the wings and Dickie ran after him. And when Mr. Noble returned, he opened his hands in a loop, stumbled; and began to look for Dickie. But

Dickie had followed him, tottering on his hind legs, back on to the stage and was now behind him. Mr. Noble called: "Dickie! Come out of there! Here, Dickie, boy, Dickie, boy!" And he began to walk back to the wings with Dickie toddling after him.

The audience could not be controlled; their shrieks lifted the ceiling. On stage, Mr. Noble stumbled about, turned suddenly and stepped on poor Dickie who was following blindly in his footsteps. Dickie let out a hideous scream, followed almost simultaneously by as terrified a one from Mr. Noble; Mr. Noble fell to the stage and Dickie began to run limping blindly about holding up his bruised paw, until he fell into the hot footlights. The manager scampered out, picked Mr. Noble and Dickie up and hauled them off stage. The lights went out; the curtain went down; and the "Green Arrow" returned.

On Tuesday a doctor drove up to Mr. Noble's house and everyone wondered whether Mrs. Noble was sick. The blinds were drawn and Mrs. Noble had not appeared at the window all day. Then we learned that it was Dickie who was sick. A doctor for a dog! We all shrugged our shoulders and gave up. Why, *we* seldom got to see a doctor except in a neck-to-neck race with the priest. The Nobles were not only aristocrats: they were crazy aristocrats.

Then on Friday, we heard weeping in the house. The blinds went down all over the house. On the door appeared a wreath. Soon enough we learned it was for Dickie. There was a great deal of grim satisfaction among our neighbors. Not that they felt any malice toward Dickie, as a dog, but when he began to become people! It was even worse than that: somehow Dickie lived better than we in a way; somehow, I suppose he mocked us. . . .

WE THOUGHT we had heard the last of the Nobles and could soon settle back to our routines of alley cats and alley dogs that didn't know how to walk on their hind legs or get pay checks.

We were sitting in our kitchen that night when we heard a small knock on the door. When we opened it, it was Mr. Noble. His face was whiter than ever; he looked more shrunken; the deep lines along his face were graven, if possible, deeper; shadows filled the hollows of his cheeks. He seemed drunk, but in a moment we realized that it was grief that made him look dull.

It was something of a moment: Johnny Bull in our little kitchen

with the coal stove going and only a calendar on the walls! We looked at him a little bit the way you look at a jungle tiger in your cage. For Mr. Noble and all his ways, his airs and his talk, his aristocratic habits had been the embodiment of *them* to us—the upper, the higher, the stronger "Johnny Bulls," anglo-saxon middle-class boss-and-bank. And here he was standing humbly in our kitchen.

"May I speak to you for a moment?" he asked my father in a remote voice.

"Come in," said my father.

Mr. Noble entered but refused to take a seat.

"My dog has died," he announced. My father nodded. Mr. Noble's lips lost their color and then he said: "I am trying to raise money for his funeral. I have been asking the neighbors to let me have a little—just a loan, you understand—a little to bury Dickie decently. He has no coffin."

There was a dead silence in the house. I writhed with shame for Mr. Noble.

Finally, my father said: "Let the city take him away."

Mr. Noble's eyes closed and he shivered. "No," he said. "We couldn't do that to Dickie."

My father could not help saying what he said next, but I regretted it. "Sell," said he, "the fine player piano, the fine radio, the fine telephone. . . ."

Mr. Noble said nothing; only grew whiter.

Finally my father burst out: "A funeral for a dog! How crazy! We can't even afford a decent funeral for ourselves!" he cried. "Please go away! Tell the city!"

Mr. Noble left and went to our next door neighbor with the same result. He went up and down the street and got a few cents, but certainly not enough for a funeral. We watched him return to the house with drawn blinds, and then we saw him no more.

And yet it was only a few hours later that we heard another knock on our door, and again my father opened it. There now stood Mrs. Grabulis: ponderous, shrewd, hard, gay, earthy. She exchanged greetings cautiously with my father and mother, and then said: "It's a sad thing about the Nobles—the death of the magical dog, Deekee, and Mrs. Noble sitting all day long weeping, weeping. . . ."

"For a dog?" my father cried harshly.

"After all," Mrs. Grabulis cried back. "Would it be for Mr. Noble so much? Who will support them now? It's the real worker of the family that has died!'

My father's face grew red. "A worker!" he yelled, forgetting himself and taking a step toward Mrs. Grabulis, while my mother's face turned to pale. "I guess you've come to beg money to give this worker a grand funeral? Watch you that you're not dragged off to a furnace like a dog, while the dog goes in a coffin!"

Mrs. Grabulis' face now grew scarlet, while my mother's eyes turned from her to my father, and she wavered as though hanging in a wind.

"No!" cried Mrs. Grabulis. "Not for the dog—for the people. I've come for them. They owe now three months' rent and Mrs. Schlemmer is going to throw them out with the dog tomorrow!"

"Good!" cried my father.

"Oh!' Mrs. Grabulis cried, letting her mouth hang open. She gazed at my mother who shook her head reassuringly.

"You'll not help?" she demanded. "Not a penny to save these old ones, this unfortunate fat one, this old man who is half in the other world by now?"

"The 'Johnny Bull' was here begging for his dog," my father observed caustically.

"This is for the rent!" Mrs. Grabulis returned.

My father took out his rusty pocketbook and brought out five dollars. With an ironic shrug he handed it over to Mrs. Grabulis and said: "For the rent, then. But we'll see, however. It seems to me that I know what a Johnny Bull thinks about most!"

Mrs. Grabulis thanked him and went away. Of course, since my father contributed, it was easy to get the other neighbors to do the same.

Next morning, we noticed a truck drive up to the Nobles' place. Two men carried a small box into the house; and then there was nothing for several hours. Finally, later in the afternoon, the door opened and the same two men, who had returned with their truck, carried out a small white coffin. They lifted it on the truck; then came back to the window which was taken out, and hoisted Mrs. Noble through it. She, too, climbed into the truck. In a moment, it drove away.

Looking at me, my father said: "When I die, pay the rent instead."

letter from abroad

Melbourne

MELBOURNE touched loveliness this third week of April, the joyous, confident loveliness of Paris last April, all blue and white and golden. Australia's Peace Congress has been a superb success. Feverish pre-Congress organization gave those of us concerned many doubts and heart-pangs. We were organizing the Congress to the accompaniment of shrill cries from London and Canberra for Australian soldiers and military equipment to be poured into Malaya, to the tom-tom war beats of a government stomping erratically between the United States and the United Kingdom, determined to outlaw the Communist Party and all "Communist-front" organizations and to remove Communist Trade Union officials from office. The press and the radio kept up a discordant jangling in the background, vilifying the Dean of Canterbury and calling the courageous clerics who had helped to build the Peace Council a prey to the malicious maneuvering of Moscow.

In every state we had held meetings, large and small, in towns and villages, on the beaches, on the ships, at the factory gate. Our Peace Ballot was hawked patiently from door to door, the bar-rooms were bombarded with leaflets. Sometimes meetings fell flat. Sometimes we met hostile and organized opposition. Always we had the Red smear to combat. But many, many times we found people who said the word "peace" after us, slowly, longingly. Housewives signed the Ballot, and factory workers, wharfies and seamen, soldiers and clerks. Local and job auxiliaries to the Peace Council sprang up, and delegates to the Congress were elected.

We had news that the Dean was coming, but that the greatly loved Paul Robeson could not come. America was sending us instead the

co-chairman with Robeson of the Progressive Party, Fred Stover, and Professor Fletcher of the Episcopalian Theological College, Cambridge.

On Sunday night, April 16, 12,000 people crammed the huge Exhibition Buildings hung gaily with blue peace pennants, with great masses of fresh flowers and over all the world symbol of peace, Picasso's serene white dove. This was the opening rally, the welcome of the people of Melbourne to our overseas and hundreds of interstate guests. It was one of the largest and most spectacular rallies this city of a million people has ever seen. The collection of £2,000, the most generous ever given on such an occasion, serves as an indication of the people's realization that the fight for peace is a vital cause.

The next three days were devoted to the business sessions of Congress. Six hundred and sixty-four delegates from 366 organizations, representing at a conservative estimate 548,828 people, were in attendance. Delegates had come some 2,000 miles from the farthest northern points east and west, from Cairns and Townsville, Darwin and Port Hedland and from Perth to Hobart. There were artists and artisans present, all age groups, many races, most unions, united for peace. The amazing unity of purpose was the outstanding feature of the Congress, the sharp realization of the threat of war and the determination to have no part of it . . . to impose the peace!

We examined the Atlantic Pact in relation to the United Nations Charter, and found it to be a weapon for war and oppression. The proposed Pacific Pact was examined in detail, and likewise condemned. Rather than the philanthropic plan to develop backward areas as is claimed, it stood revealed as a blatant attempt to further exploit the 1,000 million hungry, humiliated people in our near north, our Pacific neighbors.

The attempt to force conscription for overseas service on the Australian people has three times been rejected by national referendum and was again coldly rejected by returned servicemen, by the youth and by the women of this country.

The dirty war in Malaya was identified with the wars in Indonesia and Viet-Nam. A Youth Deputation to the Melbourne *Herald* (the only evening paper, link in the Murdoch chain, the equivalent of your Hearst press), demanded a correction of distortions in the columns of the *Herald*. The deputation pointed out that the "terrorists" in Malaya are in fact the Malayan people; that ninety-seven percent live on a

starvation wage, seventy-six percent are illiterate, seventeen percent die every year of tuberculosis, forty percent are children of school age without even the minimum facilities for education, that in one year 7,000 have been imprisoned, over 2,000 deported, and more than 600 killed. It was pointed out that already 100,000 British, Gurkahs, Sikhs, Dyak headhunters and local police had been mobilized and flung into battle against the Malayan workers and peasants. The Youth Deputation from the Congress stated that the war was being fought to protect huge British rubber and tin interests and that in the name of Australian youth they refused to be conscripted for such a war. Behind them they had the solemn assurance of trade unionists that not a ship would sail for Malaya with armaments.

This last statement carries much weight here, as for three years Australian waterfront workers of fourteen unions have blacklisted all ships which could be of any assistance to the Dutch re-occupation of Indonesia. This action was directly responsible for calling off the Dutch invasion of Indonesia. An Australian recently visiting Indonesia, and this happened to a missionary, was greeted by the Dutch as an enemy and by the Indonesians as a comrade in struggle.

One full session of the Congress was devoted to the urgent necessity for disarmament and the outlawing of the atomic bomb. A petition was drawn up and signed by the Dean, by Mr. Stover, Professor Fletcher, and all delegates to the Congress. All Australians are called upon to sign the petition. It is to be taken by Deputation to Canberra this week, and presented to the Prime Minister and all the members of the government for signature.

During the evening special commissions met on various questions—trade unions; readers and writers; women; youth; Jewish community; church. Many more hundreds were brought into discussion this way, and they too confirmed the resolution of Congress.

On Wednesday night again nearly 12,000 people filled the vast Exhibition Building. Another £2,000 was collected. One woman had sent in two one-pound War Savings Certificates, an investment in peace for her two children. The slogans "A Pound per Child" or "A Quid a Kid" caught on like wildfire. The Dean was cheered tumultuously. Never has Melbourne expressed such wild enthusiasm, such fervent sincerity. Men with hard, lined weather-beaten faces, men who've fought in two wars, and been on picket lines in many industrial storms,

women too, who have struggled bitterly through war and depressions, told me they had never been so moved in all their lives.

Two American Negro seamen were on the platform, honored guests. One of them, Jimmie Searles, spoke of Harry Bridges as a great peace fighter; and when he went on to say that as an ordinary Negro working man he was right behind Paul Robeson all the way we cheered and clapped till we could cheer and clap no more.

It was a fine Congress and it augurs well for the peace forces in this country. The day after the Congress, many delegates were reporting back to their organizations, and plans for future action were being worked out. The Australian people: workers, artists, farmers, scientists, are resolved to think, work, organize and fight for peace.

NANCE MACMILLAN

EPITAPH FOR GORKY

by BERTOLT BRECHT

Here lies
The ambassador from the boroughs of want
The chronicler of the people's tormentors
And the people's assaulters
He who was reared in the universities of the highways
The lowly born
Who helped to abolish the system of high and low
The teacher of the people
By the people taught

(*Translated from the German by V. J. Jerome*)

Maxim Gorky died June 18, 1936.

books in review

Not So Simple

SIMPLE SPEAKS HIS MIND, by Langston Hughes. *Simon & Schuster.* Cloth, $3.00; paper, $1.00.

LANGSTON HUGHES' new book comes as something of a jolt to those of us who have insisted that the Man-on-the-Street is a myth. Since meeting his Jesse B. Semple—the nickname "Simple" was inevitable—I for one am ready to concede that the composite man really exists, at least in Harlem. Of course there are some 400,000 Negroes living in this world center of Negro life and among us there are all kinds of people; but when Simple speaks his mind he is truly speaking the mind of the common people of this community.

So I urge you: Don't miss reading this book. It is revealing, it is stimulating; you are sure to enjoy it. It is especially recommended for all who have been chilled by the cold war; here is a chance for them to warm their bones before the glow of Simple's humor, the humor of a people who have come through 300 *years* of cold war.

There are a number of unusual features to this work which consists of monologues in the Mr. Dooley tradition, with the author playing it straight, asking a few questions and occasionally trying, without much success, to get a word in edgewise.

Especially notable is the fact that Simple is talking to Negroes, the book being largely a compilation of columns which have appeared in the Negro press. Offered now to the general public, the special quality that results from this approach, the intimacy of uninhibited expression, is of unique value.

Of special interest too is that here Langston Hughes has tapped the bubbling wellsprings of authentic Negro humor, the wonderful quality of which is the direct opposite of that noxious sewer-flow with which Amos 'n' Andy and Octavus Roy Cohen have drenched the nation for too many years.

The humor of the Negro people, one of the most significant features of their national psychology, is not of the "gag" variety; it is subtle, compounded of double-meanings, indirection, allusions, colloquialisms. It has a bitter-sweet tone, this laughter in the shadows, that is difficult to

describe and more difficult to render without distortion; that he succeeds so well in getting much of its elusive quality into print is further evidence that Langston Hughes retains his close touch with his people and his top place among Negro creative writers.

Simple speaks of many things, of almost everything: rents, prices, wages, baseball, the F.B.I., $2,000 fur coats for dogs, the Un-Americans, his landlady, why lingerie is pink, the police and courts ("I definitely do not like the Law"), the South, Congress, atom bombs, Negroes, white people, the Army, the last war, the cold war, his love life, literature—everything in Harlem and the rest of the world too; in fact, Simple looks forward to the coming Rocket Age and figures out what he will do in all the far-away places to which he'll zoom.

And through it all he wrestles with his implacable enemy, Jim Crow. For Simple is a militant Negro—though he would use the expression "race-man"—and if Judge Medina overheard his forceful talk he'd probably double his daily dose of dry Martinis. If Simple were to pray what was really on his mind, "the Lord would shut his ears and not listen to me at all."

Simple would have the Lord wipe out all the white people and let *him* rule a while. But as Simple goes on to outline the beneficent program he would install as world ruler, it seems there would still be white people around.

"First place, with white folks wiped out, I would stop charging such high rents—so my landlady would charge *me* less. Second place, I would stop hoarding up all the good jobs for white folks—so I could get ahead myself. Third place, I would make the South behave. . . ."

And lest somebody wrongly accuse him of being a reactionary nationalist for even thinking of this prayer which he didn't pray, I should hasten to add that Simple is a staunch union man and that he would not deny a white man his just reward—only he'd like to see, for once, a *black* general pinning a medal on a *white* soldier, instead of the other way around all the time.

I have heard it said that there are some people who are a little leary about the Simple language of this book; that eyebrows have been lifted because the idiom is other (I wouldn't say "less") than pure Churchillian. I've heard tell that some were even so mad about this that they forgot to be angry about the things that anger Simple—lynchings, police brutality, Red-baiting and the rest. At one place in the book his girl friend, Joyce, also accuses him of something like that, saying reproachfully, "You are acting just like a Negro." Well, he also *talks* like a Negro, or rather, like a great many Negroes talk; and as for me, I'd rather listen to his

salty speech than to all the mush-mouthed sons of Marlborough in the King's own England.

Lambasting the ways of white folks, Simple does not fail to swing a few left-hooks at some of the Negro upper-crust. Joyce takes him to a banquet sponsored by Mrs. Sadie Maxwell-Reeves, who "lives so high up on Sugar Hill that people in her neighborhood don't even have roomers." He is filled with delight when the guest of honor, a venerable artist-writer whom they are feteing because the New York *Times* called him a genius, turns upon the assemblage and says:

"Now, to tell you the truth, I don't want no damned banquet. I don't want no honoring where *you* eat as much as me, and enjoy yourselves more, besides making some money for your treasury. If you want to honor me, give some young boy or girl who's coming along trying to create arts and write and compose and sing and act and paint and dance and make something out of the beauties of the Negro race—give that child some help . . . but don't come giving me, who's old enough to die and too near blind to create anything any more anyhow, a great big banquet that *you* eat up in honor of your *own* stomachs as much as in honor of me—who's toothless and can't eat. You hear me, I ain't honored!"

There are some weak spots in the book, and I have in mind particularly the treatment of Negroes in relation to foreigners. Simple inveighs against the situation where a new immigrant has rights that his people, "old Americans," are denied. The situation is real and that's how Simple sees it, but I was hoping that Author Hughes would butt in to indicate the danger of pitting Negroes against foreign-born and I was disappointed when he didn't. With all his wisdom, the Man-on-the-Street can be wrong too; folk-wisdom is not without its fallacies.

But in spite of such weaknesses and the limitations of this literary form, Jesse B. Semple is a splendid character, full of the zest for living and the spirit for fighting; he has nothing in common with the warped, frustrated and above all *doomed* Negro that Richard Wright, Chester Himes and others of that school have given us. That is because his creator, truly knowing his people, *loves* them. Loves them as they are, for what they are, and to hell with the white chauvinists.

No, there is nothing doomed about Simple, with all his troubles which he is quick to recite:

"I have been underfed, underpaid, undernourished, and everything but *undertaken.* I been bit by dogs, cats, mice, rats, poll parrots, fleas, chiggers, bedbugs, granddaddies, mosquitoes, and a gold-toothed woman. . . . In this life I been abused, confused, misused accused, false-arrested, tried, sentenced, paroled, blackjacked, beat, third-degreed, and near about lynched. . . ."

But listen to this—and here I come back to those people who

have been gloomed by the way things are or seem to be: after going through the list of his grievances (which I have quoted only in part), Simple concludes by saying:

"*—but I am still here. Daddy-o, I'm still here!*"

That's right, Simple is still here just the same; and he and his people are going to *be here* come A-bombs or H-bombs, McCarthys, Mundts and Trumans. So all of us who aim to be here too had better get acquainted with him now if we aren't already.

LLOYD L. BROWN

Drifting Liberal

AN ESSAY FOR OUR TIMES, by H. Stuart Hughes, *Knopf*, $2.75.

IF THIS book holds more than passing interest, that interest lies in its attempt to withstand some of the intellectual pestilence that now afflicts the American liberal. It also offers us insight into the mind of the younger middle-class intellectual for in many ways the author is a victim of the very spiritual malaise he is trying to dispel. He cannot relinquish his attachment to abstractions, and he frequently moves toward the heart of an issue only to flee from it because another step would bring him into collision with a dearly held premise. There is, it appears, nothing more frightening than to have to charge the disintegration of the capitalist world to capitalism itself.

Hughes, who teaches at Harvard and was formerly a member of the State Department, is concerned largely with the deterioration of our society as it expresses itself in culture and in politics. In this respect, he speaks for a good many of his contemporaries who fought in the war and who are now troubled by the moral chaos that seemingly surrounds them. Their hopes for a stable postwar world are gone. They find themselves having to work their way out of dilemmas without the fixed points of departure, the values which presumably guided an older generation. The muddle has been made worse by the cold war which produces judgments not rooted in fact or history but in the perverse approach that if the Communists are for it we are against it. "We are in doubt both as to what our heritage is and as to whether it is still valid for us." Thus the genesis of this essay.

In the course of his analysis, Hughes says some things of value, but these observations are made feeble by the poverty of hypotheses borrowed from Spengler and Toynbee. To be sure, he alters them to eliminate their more obvious defects and he even discards the religious *mystique* of Toynbee's quackery. There is also an apologetic note in his offering

Spengler's doomsday nonsense as a guide. But Hughes is an eclectic and he takes what he considers to be the best of Spengler and Toynbee as tools for historical analysis. The outcome is no less confounding than the postulates on which it rests. Symptom and disease have no clear line of demarcation and the elaborate statement on the crisis of the west carries little more than the assertion of its existence. It turns out to be a crisis spiritual and cultural in nature, a crisis of understanding because the irrationalist temper has become dominating.

Hughes believes that more of the fundamental assumptions of his book derive from Marx than from any other source. "The simple fact of the matter," he says, "is that the Marxist interpretation fits the realities of our time more frequently than any alternative doctrine." How true indeed! And while today it is a mark of courage for a young teacher to proclaim publicly his indebtedness to Marx, in this case the admission is more formal than real. Marx here is fitted to Hughes who has completely missed the dialectic of Marxism, not to speak of the Marxist critique of capitalism as the source of the retrogression and crisis of bourgeois society—exactly the problem Hughes is trying to probe.

What we are faced with is not primarily a spiritual crisis or the dwindling of rationalism. This

is merely the façade of the tottering structure of capitalism. Hughes' preoccupation with the Spenglerian categories, with the signs of a deteriorating civilization and his unwillingness to trace them to their real origins lead him into a web of contradiction and to attribute the appearance of things to the appearance of other things. His brief section on the western statesman glued to the telephone, serving only as a technician, bewildered and without ideas—all these are not to be charged to the airplane, the absence of serenity, or the speed with which the world moves. With hardly an exception, contemporary western statesmen are mediocrities for the reason that they must defend the mediocre, the outworn and the useless. They fail to communicate anything of lasting substance for all they have to offer are yesterday's bad dreams when it is today and tomorrow that cry out for new fulfillment. The crisis of understanding is a crisis engendered by an imperialist ruling class which cannot understand the aspirations of its opponent class, and for its own protection invents, as one device, a vocabulary of irrationalism to limit understanding and human intercourse.

The chapter on America is befogged by airy generalizations. The national cohesion which Hughes sees is illusory. It is one of the myths that surround all definitions of the American mind as unified and as having a community of interest. To be sure certain fictions persist but the striking Pennsylvania coal miner is no more an image of his boss than his boss is of him. Despite his insistence on historical perspective, Hughes discards it when he gets into the swirl of current American affairs. "Most Americans," he says, "don't want this country changed." Perhaps at the moment they do not desire fundamental changes, but the quest for change is inherent in the American tradition, for it was by a very conscious demand for change that Americans rid themselves of a foreign monarchy, of slavery, and of several administrations that told them not to change.

And what is most ominous in Hughes' book is his tacit welcome of the drift towards corporatism —a corporatism which he says "need not involve a diminution of political liberty and electoral democracy. To date, the fascist outcroppings that have accompanied the development of corporatism in Europe have been absent in the United States." This is apparently not intended as low comedy but when it is read side by side with a daily newspaper it becomes tragically funny. Furthermore, this corporatism, as Hughes conceives it, should not be led by the old hacks of the G.O.P. and the Democratic Party but by "sophisticated conservatives." Under their guidance "a new har-

mony may appear in the relations of government, business, and the labor unions" reinforced by the international crisis. This concept is put forth tentatively but no matter how it is presented it is exactly the kind of "harmony" American fascism needs to guarantee its rule over the country and the execution of its adventures abroad.

Hughes' remarks on the Soviet Union are not clearly thought through, but in contrast to the idiocies that now pass as authoritative opinion, they are worth repeating. "The Soviet peoples' defense of their homeland against the Nazi invasion represented not only a response of traditional patriotism but an expression of confidence in the basic principles of their new society." Hughes, of course, rejects the principles of that new society as offering the alternative to the disintegration of the old; nor does he seem to understand how those principles evolved out of a declining capitalism. At least he refuses to equate fascism with communism, and he is quick to admit that the values of Soviet society have meaning and validity. In other words, the U.S.S.R. is here to stay and in the face of this gigantic fact the only thing to do, in appreciation of ultimate humanistic goals, is to elaborate "some *modus vivendi* with the Soviet Union—no matter how tentative and fragmentary. . . . Toward such a policy the Paris Con-

ference of last spring made a modest start. Since then the end of the American monopoly of the atomic bomb has offered a compelling argument. Implicit in any such idea is the concept of the co-existence of the rival societies headed by the Soviet Union and the United States."

This is the note on which Hughes closes his book. And because it is a note which rings clear and true it will be remembered long after the sour ones are forgotten.

JOHN STUART

Pioneer of Science

FRANCIS BACON: PHILOSOPHER OF INDUSTRIAL SCIENCE, by Benjamin Farrington. *Henry Schuman.* $3.50.

ANY new work from the hands of Benjamin Farrington is expected to be original, profound and provocative, in virtue of such works as *Greek Science, and Science and Politics in the Ancient World.* This, his latest, is no exception, even though the subject is far removed from that of all his other boks in place and time. We move here from Greece and Rome to England, from the period of slave-owning antiquity to that of the bourgeois challenge to the forces of feudalism. Whatever Farrington touches acquires new depths, new facets, new meanings under his incisive scalpel.

He accomplishes here a *tour de force.* In a slight book, a sort of extended essay, he combs all the writings of Bacon and voluminous materials on him. His aim is to evaluate the man's achievements separated both from false claims and jaundiced detractions. In the process he lays to rest a number of slanders, ranging from Harvey's "he wrote philosophy like a Lord Chancellor," to the flea-cracking moralizers who, finding him vain and pretentious, can conveniently disregard his great contribution to progressive thought. Farrington helps arm the reader against the views of both the late Morris R. Cohen who belittled Bacon for his democratic approach to scientific inquiry and the Deweyan pragmatists whose extravagant praise is a form of self-glorification and a shield for their own obscurantism.

The central thesis is that Francis Bacon, living through what Farrington calls "the first English industrial revolution," sought to inspire his contemporaries with the vast possibilities for human life of the systematic, socially organized pursuit of science in closest conjunction with industry, agriculture and household arts. For this, Bacon believed, an intellectual revolution was required. The objective possibilities were then present. All that was needed was the change of attitude, a radically new perspective, if men were to move boldly forward toward do-

minion over nature. But this meant a sharp rupture with past modes of thought, and especially with that tradition which had come down from Plato and Aristotle.

Thus, contrary to the traditional treatment, Farrington finds not the *New Organon* but the *Great Instauration* the key to Bacon's life-long idea and his historical significance. And he takes literally, and seriously, Bacon's statement in the Preface: "in behalf of the business which is in hand I entreat men to believe that it is not an opinion to be held, but a work to be done; and to be well assured that I am laboring to lay the foundation, not of any sect or doctrine, but of human utility and power."

Certain weaknesses appear in Farrington's analysis. There is a persistent tendency to ignore or obscure class factors and the class struggle. Not until page 151 in the present work, for example, is material on Bacon's class alignment presented, and then only in a quote from him and without any development or analysis. True, something of what was going on in England at the time inevitably comes through, but more as background material for understanding what Bacon meant than as fundamental in shaping his thought. Farrington tends to write as if science and a scientific world-outlook were always ready to burst forth and blossom the moment restraining social forces were re-

moved. These retarding forces came, of course, from the classes which had a stake in the established relations of production, but in his analysis they always remain shadowy.

Similarly, the new rising class was just *there,* with its new progressive outlook, only awaiting the cue to step upon the stage of world history. Sometimes there is an antagonist but no protagonist. At other times it is the other way around, but seldom if ever do both appear in Farrington's historical studies in full stature. So it seems, at least, to this reviewer, who does not hesitate to express his great debt to Farrington for his brilliant contributions to scientific and intellectual history.

Another weakness is the playing down, slightly apologetically, of Bacon's contribution to scientific method. Certainly he said many silly things, but Farrington does not let that interfere, elsewhere, with penetrating to the truth beneath. He passes over completely the significance of Bacon's method of exclusion, of negative instances. He plays down the method correctly as secondary to Bacon's outlook on science and human life. In doing so he surrenders it to its host of detractors (Cohen, Cajori, Liebig, *et. al.*) on one hand, and its narrow empiricist supporters who view it through the wrong end of the telescope as a stepping stone toward J. S. Mill or John Dewey.

Marxists, I believe, cannot give up Bacon's method that easily. It could never have served as the method for Marx's *Capital,* but Bacon's attack on simple enumeration, his emphasis on seeking negative instances in any subject under investigation, his insistence on looking for the opposite in every phenomenon being examined, has been systematically ignored by those who, like Bertrand Russell, want to reduce all knowledge to probability and scientific law to such statements as "All crows are black." There seems to be some sense for dialectics in Bacon's development of what has become known as the "method of control," fundamental to all scientific method.

The difficulty with Baconian evaluation has been that recent English bourgeois scholars have been too nationalistic to see his faults and too class conscious to see his virtues. German scholars have been too metaphysical to see any good in him, while Americans have confused the question with their partisanship for or against pragmatism. It is Professor Farrington's Marxist equipment that enables him to see how Bacon broke through the fetters of Feudalism and narrow British nationalism to envision science in the service of all mankind.

HOWARD SELSAM

theatre

"Longitude 49" and *"John Brown"*

by ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

"LONGITUDE 49" by Herb Tank introduces a new playwright of salt and substance.

The play takes its title from the location of the dingy American port where an American freighter is loading cargo. The ship is in poor condition. After the steward has taken his cut from stores already chiseled into by the company the food is scanty and moldy. These conditions, together with the postwar dashing of hopes and breaking of promises and the tedium of a long voyage, have made the crew edgy.

Secret orders from the company, based on some devious maneuver in the cold war, compel the captain to prolong the voyage. The cargo now being taken on is not consigned to a home port. The ship is to freight goods between Near Eastern ports.

To carry out such orders with an already embittered crew is difficult. The men have shown their defiant temper by electing as their delegate, a Negro seaman, Brooks, who is suspected of being a Communist. For the ship's officers the top problem is to "get rid" of Brooks.

The mate, trading on the fact that he himself was once an ordinary seaman, comes down to feel out the men. He pretends sympathy; he warns that the captain may take the election of the Negro as a provocation; he tries to work on the presumed prejudice of a young seaman from the South to split the crew. But, as we see later, he gets nowhere.

At a subsequent conference with the captain the mate is ordered to use some port regulation to frame Brooks and put him out of the way in a town jail. Instead the mate, taking advantage of some drunken roughhouse among the crew, gets rid of Brooks in a way more congenial to him. He shoots him.

At first this appears to accomplish its object. It seems to stun the men into hopeless apathy. But emotions are working underneath. And unexpected support comes from the "natives" in the port. Their feeling against the race arrogant English and Amer-

icans is so explosive that the British authorities are afraid to arrest or even transport the wounded Negro to the town hospital. And every hour that the wounded man remains on the ship increases the tension all around.

Brooks dies. Their fears and differences dissolved by common anger and common need, the men go on a sitdown strike. The loading stops. The captain is compelled to arrest the mate for murder. Furious over being deserted by the captain, the mate sputters out the whole slimy story of the plot against Brooks and much else besides—the mutual double dealing as the captain maneuvered the mate into doing the dirty work and the mate's readiness for it as a means of supplanting the captain.

Aside from Brooks, who figures importantly but comparatively briefly in the action, the chief characters are McGuire, an old Irish seaman who typifies the tired old union militant who needs a shock to reanimate him; Alabama, the young Southerner, whose prejudices are being cleansed away by the double action of the crew's solidarity and the officers' guile; Blackie, punch-drunk from picketline beatings, who has been reduced to a conditioned reflex reaction of violence to every situation; Cookie, a Negro seaman at odds with Brooks, in the old militant-versus-Uncle Tom debate on how best to live in the white-dominated world, but who has enough manhood to recognize when the limit is reached; Swede, a seaman without citizenship papers, who has to overcome his fear of deportation; and other seamen, each with some analogous fear to overcome, and each projecting a recognizable type; the mate who symbolizes the ruthlessness of capitalist drive on the way up; and the captain who typifies the arrived man, insecure at the top and ravaged by bad conscience and fear.

I have used the words typifies and symbolizes deliberately. Tank's characters are all clearly marked types and the turns of the plot serve symbolic purposes. Typing the characters, in this case, was wise; and the manner in which it was done is an achievement. By presenting his characters in such sharp, type delineation, Tank made them embody, in a very direct and effective way, the social content he aims at.

Each character, at the same time that he is so clearly typed, is also distinctly individualized. A strong sense of personality gives each one life. This is an unusual achievement and a demonstration that subtleties and ambiguities are not essential in order to draw convincing characters.

Unquestionably the lifelikeness of Tank's characters derive, in large part, from his first hand knowledge of seamen. But there is also natural talent to account

for it. Only a very real gift could produce the personal accent he has succeeded in giving each character. One of the hardest of the writer's tasks, getting the dialogue to stay in character, is achieved here with ease.

The dialogue is good to listen to, all by itself. It is fresh; it is racy; it is charged with the life breath of the seaman's calling.

The structural elements of the play, however, are somewhat weak. Some of the key action, such as the formation of the grievance committee from the apathetic crew occurs off stage. Between the conference in the captain's cabin and the shooting it leads to, occur scenes so different in content and mood that the shooting, when it comes, lacks the sense of inevitability that it might have had. And Brooks, the key character, is pulled out of the play, by the shooting, before his relationship with the men and the nature of his influence can be sufficiently developed.

The sub-plot of conflict between the master and the mate is even less successful. Tank did not seem to have their actual relationship and significance clear in his mind. At times the captain seems to be more victim than instrument of the company; while the mate is presented wholly in the despicable straw-boss role, though he too might appear to be a victim considering that he is made to take the captain's rap. At any rate the relationship here is confused. Tank's hand, so sure with the seamen, falters in the complexities attempted in the characterization of the officers.

Despite this the play has impressive power. Seldom has working-class life and struggle been portrayed with such authority and conviction.

And Tank was fortunate in his acting company. I have had occasion, before, to speak of the special effectiveness of some off-Broadway performances. At their best the enterprising and devoted actors of the little off-Broadway theatres achieve an identification with their role that Broadway performances seldom catch. The Freedom Theatre company does it, with the result that *Longitude 49* is one of the best acted plays of the year.

Every performer is good but if one may be singled out it should be the Negro actor, Frank Silvera, who plays McGuire, the tired old Irish unionist. He gives the lines a mature wisdom and an ingratiating eloquence that warm the mind for days afterward.

Tank, as director, gave further evidence of his fine stage sense. The sets, by Idell Carruth and Ed Walsh astonishingly suggest the metallic rust and litter of an old freighter's interior.

As if in defiant demonstration of the vitality of the cultural Left *Longitude 49* was followed, some

ten days later, by the opening of Theodore Ward's new play, *John Brown.*

Since a deadline has to be met there is no time for a detailed analysis. At this point I will set down some first impressions and await opportunity, in a later issue, for a fuller discussion.

The play, directed by Gene Frankel, is a stately and eloquent dramatization of the John Brown epic. Deeply charged with emotion it is a vivid reflection of the passion for human freedom that supplied so much of the motor power of American progress. It is good to be reminded of this passion these days.

As regards time Ward centers his action on three focal points of John Brown's fight to abolish slavery in America: the night after his avenging descent on the slavers at Pottawatomie that contributed so much to making Kansas a free state; the interlude in the Adirondacks, where he and his sons and his daughters and their husbands, settled after the victory in Kansas, and which he used to prepare the expedition against Harper's Ferry; and the night when he led his band against that arsenal.

Psychologically Ward centers his drama on the conflict of ordinary contradictory human emotions in Brown's sons and his other followers. The conflict is both within themselves and against the almost superhuman integration with his purpose that marked John Brown. This produces dramatic tension, but at a cost. John Brown's followers appear to have no firmness or conviction in themselves; they appear to be acting under a spell, equally when they obey and when they resist. This reaches a climax in the last act when, despite a majority dissent, they follow him in conscious anticipation of death, with little of the hope that must move even martyrs. It seemed to me that John Brown himself had greater expectations than the play allows for.

The People's Drama, Inc., that put the play on, is the indomitable group that staged John Wexley's *They Shall Not Die* and kept it going through a long run despite hoodlum attacks. A further demonstration of their enterprise is the form of their theatre, a version of "the theatre in the round." The stage is a platform in the center with the audience seated in tiers around the four sides and with diagonal entrances through the auditorium for entrances and exits. Among other things theis eliminates poor seats since there are no "back rows" in the usual sense. The rows furthest back are where the center row would be in the ordinary theatre. Though this was their first production in such an auditorium the company managed it expeditiously; and there is an undeniable gain in the sense of audience participation

that this arrangement makes possible.

The acting itself suffered from the miscasting of the title role. Irving Pakewitz, though he put fervor and intelligence into the part, is simply too young to give the impression of a dominating patriarch that the role requires. It is a tribute to the play and to the adventurous production that it stands up so well despite the handicap of a not fully realized major role.

JOSHUA LOGAN'S *The Wisteria Trees* is called "A new American play . . . based on *The Cherry Orchard* by Anton Chekhov." It seeks to Americanize the Russian classic by transforming the effete Ranevskys who gave way to mujik-capitalists into decayed Southern aristocrats giving way to the "Cracker red-neck" capitalists of "the new South."

Whatever one may call the result, adaptation or transplantation, there is much deformity in the new growth. Cottoning to the box office, a little more sex is grafted on; Madam Ranevsky's counterpart, Mrs. Ransdall, is turned into a *femme fatale* with whom every man is smitten, old, young and in between. The deformity is still more repulsive in the transformation of the Ranevsky household servants into cliches of old plantation domestics.

"THE SCAPEGOAT," John Matthews' very free adaptation of Kafka's book, *The Trial,* is a truly dramatic warning of the fascist potentialities in the current Red-hunt. Kafka's book was a novelization of a neurotic's anxiety dream.

The Scapegoat gives its warning on two levels. On one we see the fear psychosis that is being fostered in the ordinary American citizen as little by little, he begins to feel himself being identified with the investigated "subversive" he reads about in his paper and hears about in the news broadcasts. On the other level we see the delusion becoming the actuality as the persecution begins to involve everybody.

The process is presented with impressive imaginative insight and dramatic resourcefulness. Erwin Piscator's direction was a splendid evocation of all its powers. *The Scapegoat* is one of the most distinguished productions of his Dramatic workshop and I was glad to hear that it is to be given a Summer run and put into the theatre's repertory.

letters

HERSEY'S WALL

To M&M:

IN SUPPLEMENT to Louis Harap's excellent review of *The Wall,* may I call attention to one rather disturbing episode in Hersey's book? It is one in which the leaders of the Jewish fighter organization are considering charges of betrayal levelled against Dr. Zadkin, an official of the Judenrat. The narrator Levinson protests that since no direct evidence has been presented, the inquiry is "a trial by prosecutors, not by judges." Whereupon the Communist, Kurtz, presents a typewritten record of Zadkin's treachery, extracted from the latter's personal file. But when Levinson observes that this is poor proof because there is nothing in Zadkin's handwriting on the document, and asks him why, in any case, he withheld his proof until so late in the investigation, Kurtz answers,

> "I thought proof would be unnecessary. I thought that intelligent men like yourselves would understand that the purpose of such a trial as this is not the weighing of any one man but simply the provision of an example before the world. Justice, you see, should be used as a prophylactic. It is preventive, not curative."

Levinson remarks,

> ". . . The question, in this light, was not the actual guilt or innocence of Zadkin at all; it was whether his death would provide a good enough, or fearful enough, example for all other Jews. Therefore I suppose my praise of Zadkin's versatility was in fact an argument in support of his execution; the bigger the man, the more spectacular the example."

Here we have repeated the common slander that Communists consider the guilt or innocence, as well as the fate, of an individual as secondary to considerations of political expediency, and that human beings are merely pawns and victims of party policy. The fact that Hersey later shows Levinson as virtually convinced of Zadkin's guilt does not at all dissipate the reader's impression of Kurtz' callous dismissal of the value of the individual human life. It simply renders the incident more "subtle," and apparently absolves Hersey of having falsified the position of the one Communist whom he allows even a minor role in his novel. But the falsification remains, and with it an unpleasant suspicion of Hersey's motive in manufacturing it.

One should also note the word, "yourselves," in Kurtz' speech, intended to convey the idea that not only are Communists alien elements in a united front, but that even they unconsciously consider themselves so. This is both generally untrue, and specifically so, as Hersey might easily verify by studying such material as the Communist Dorka Goldkorn's memoirs of the Ghetto resistance movement in the April issue of *Jewish Life.*

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

New York