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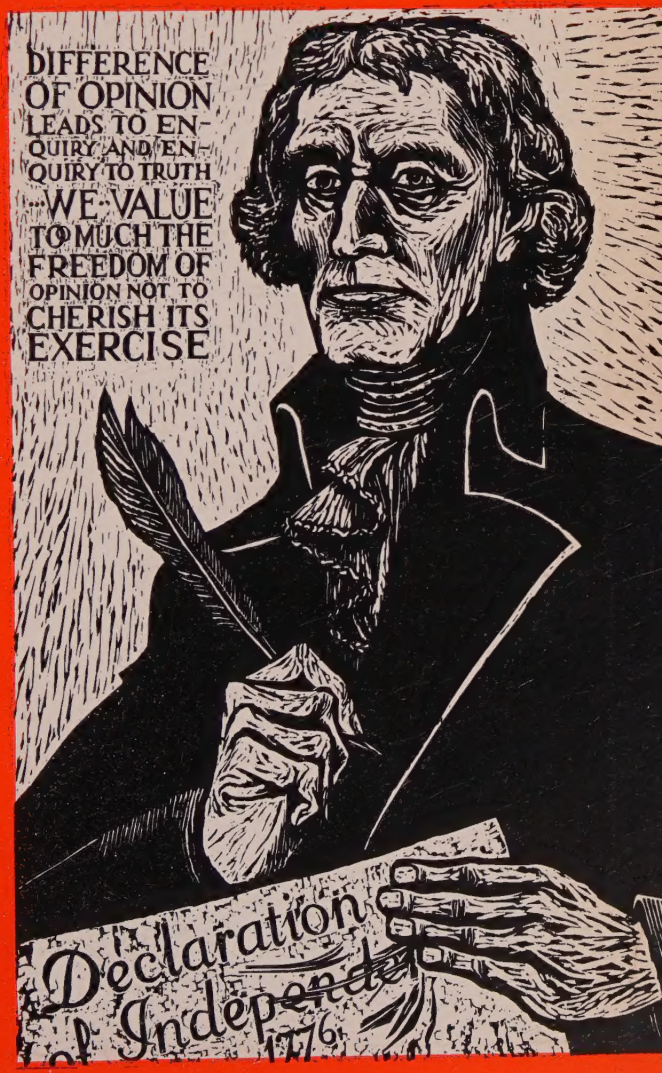

STAND UP FOR FREEDOM!—*The Editors*

HOG WILD

A Gestapo man-hunt has opened up only two weeks after the Supreme Court's decision. Having scuttled the Bill of Rights, the government is now going the whole hog.

As we go to press a whole new series of arrests are being made. The charges range from writing articles and publishing books to entering buildings and mailing envelopes. Advocacy of peace, opposition to legal lynchings, support of labor's demands—these are "treason" in the time of Truman.

Grand juries throughout the country are grinding out more indictments and government attorneys gleefully predict that thousands will be arrested.

The Gestapo knocks on many doors—today twenty, tomorrow we know not how many more.

These super-Palmer raids must be stopped by a people awakened to their peril. More and more people are moving into action to stop the catastrophe, to repeal the Smith-McCarran Laws, to save the Bill of Rights and prevent world war.

The defense of each citizen's freedom is the defense of all.

Rally to the defense of the political prisoners of the United States.

Protest against the thought-control police.

Demand an end to the Administration's strategy of terror.

Let the President, the Congress, the press know that the American people will not submit to this tyranny.

—THE EDITORS

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AMONG THE CONTRIBUTORS

ALVAH BESSIE, one of the Hollywood writers recently released from jail, is the author of *Men in Battle,* and *Bread and a Stone.*

LUIS ENRIQUE DELANO is an editor of *PAZ,* the peace magazine for Latin America. He has just finished a play, *The Strike,* dealing with the coal miners of his native Chile.

LORRAINE HANSBERRY, a young Negro writer, is on the staff of the newspaper, *Freedom.*

GEORGE MARION is the author of *Bases & Empire, The Communist Trial,* and *All Quiet in the Kremlin.* A new popular edition of the last named book, to sell at $1.50, will be ready soon.

JOSEPH NORTH is now at work on a book, a selection from which appears in this issue.

ANNA SEGHERS is the distinguished German novelist whose most recent published work in this country is *The Dead Stay Young.*

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COVER: The woodcut of Thomas Jefferson is by the American Graphic Workshop in New York.

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Stand Up for Freedom!

A BELL rang out from Philadelphia's Independence Hall in 1776 to celebrate the first Fourth of July. On the bell were inscribed these triumphant words: "Proclaim Liberty throughout all the land unto all the inhabitants thereof." But on this Fourth of July the Liberty Bell is silent, its iron tongue ripped out by Truman's Supreme Court majority.

From Washington comes a new proclamation. The Free Speech Amendment is decreed a dead letter. It is replaced by the Smith Act. Americans are now free to think acceptable thoughts. Americans are now free to speak approved words.

And who will certify our thoughts and words? Those who are pushing the country into a war that the people don't want. Those who murdered Willie McGee and the Martinsville Seven. Those who shackled labor with the Taft-Hartley Act.

In upholding the Foley Square frame-up conviction of the eleven Communist leaders, the Court has struck down the Constitution. Generations of Americans fought and bled for guarantees of personal liberty which Justice Vinson and his five associates now declare void. For 150 years the people have looked to the Bill of Rights as their banner and shield. Jefferson defended basic liberties against the Alien and Sedition Acts. Lincoln defended the Constitution against the Dred Scott decision. But today Justices of the Supreme Court openly rebuke the people for their excessive "preoccupation" with the constitutionality of police-state laws that smash the entire democratic tradition we have been taught from childhood to cherish and protect.

The "liberal" Justice Frankfurter writes in his concurring opinion:

"Civil liberties draw at best only limited strength from legal guarantees. Preoccupation by our people with the constitutionality

instead of with the wisdom of legislation or of executive action, is preoccupation with a false value. . . . When legislation touches freedom of thought and freedom of speech, such a tendency is a formidable enemy of the free spirit. Much that should be rejected as illiberal, because repressive and envenoming, may well be not unconstitutional. . . ."

The American people must deeply ponder these weasel words. For these words tell us scornfully that the Bill of Rights is no bulwark against laws that repress and poison. They tell us cynically that the First Amendment, which in unmistakably plain language forbids Congress to abridge freedom of speech and press, is an empty and hypocritical pledge. And in truth the Truman Court majority has ruled in this spirit. As Justice Black points out in his courageous dissenting opinion, the Court, pledged to uphold the Constitution, has sustained a law that flouts the First Amendment to the Constitution. The Court is outlawing opinion. Mr. Black has made it crystal clear that his colleagues have snatched the First Amendment liberties from "the high preferred place where they belong in a free society."

The Court majority argues that the Bill of Rights is out of date. It was "devised under other circumstances," says Justice Jackson. That is a convenient doctrine. It makes this great charter so much clay in the hands of whoever holds power at the moment. Circumstances have indeed changed. But the circumstances of today demand not a sacking of the First Amendment but its strictest interpretation and enforcement. Today more than ever, with the liberties of the working class, the Negro people, the intellectuals, being squeezed to the vanishing point, we can appreciate the wisdom and foresight of the plain people who insisted on a Bill of Rights.

WHAT is the real meaning of the "changed circumstances" doctrine? As the St. Louis *Post-Dispatch* pointed out in its vigorous editorial denouncing the Smith Act decision, "Six men have amended the United States Constitution without submitting their amendment to the states for ratification. That is the nub of this decision."

This unratified amendment is a blow not at the Communists alone but at the whole American people. As we have repeatedly said in these pages, the rulers of this country are using the technique of Hitler and Tojo to accomplish the same ends as Hitler and Tojo—fascism and a war for world domination. They are "saving the country

from the Reds" in order to smash democracy. They are "saving the world from the Reds" in order to smash the peace.

To confirm this, let us turn to the same Justice Jackson who concurred with the Vinson majority. On November 21, 1945, Mr. Jackson, as chief of counsel for the United States, made an opening address before the Nuremberg Tribunal. He said:

> "On February 27, 1933, less than a month after Hitler became Chancellor, the Reichstag building was set on fire. The burning of this symbol of free parliamentary government was so providential for the Nazis that it was believed they staged the fire themselves. Certainly when we contemplate their known crimes, we cannot believe they would shrink from mere arson. It is not necessary, however, to resolve the controversy as to who set the fire. The significant point is in the use made of the fire and of the state of public mind it produced.
>
> "The Nazis immediately accused the Communist Party of instigating and committing the crime, and turned every effort to portray this single act of arson as the beginning of a Communist revolution. Then, taking advantage of the hysteria, the Nazis met this phantom revolution with a real one. In the following December, the German Supreme Court with commendable courage and independence acquitted the accused Communists, but it was too late to influence the tragic course of events which the Nazi conspirators had set rushing forward."

Here in a nutshell is the classical technique of hoodwinking a people with anti-Communist lies and a "phantom revolution" in order to clamp fascism on a country. Mr. Jackson has accurately described this technique. And the parallel with what is going on in our land today is ominously apparent. One exception should be noted. In the Germany of 1933 the Supreme Court still had the "commendable courage and independence" to acquit the falsely accused Communists. In the United States of 1951 the Supreme Court, with Jackson's support, justifies the frame-up. The Court does not make even a gesture of blocking the tragic course of events being rushed forward by the conspirators of Wall Street and Washington.

The German fascists made a gesture of presenting "evidence" of Communist misdeeds—that is, the Reichstag fire—but their imitators here have not done even that. They are unable to produce a shred of evidence that the Communists have committed a single illegal act.

They are unable to produce a shred of evidence that the Communist teach and advocate the forcible overthrow of the government. The can only fabricate the claim, supported solely by $50-a-day stoolpigeo agents of the F.B.I.—that at some future date the Communists hav the "intent" to publish certain ideas which are in reality not Commu nist ideas at all.

WHAT bearing does this doctrine of remote and hypothetical crim have on the rights of the mass of Americans who are non-Com munists? Justice Douglas gives the answer in his dissenting opinion "That is to make freedom of speech turn not on what is said, but on th intent with which it is said. Once we start down that road we enter ter ritory dangerous to the liberties of every citizen."

For example, may there not be a potential crime in the public read ing of the Declaration of Independence on this Fourth of July? Th Declaration says that "whenever any Form of Government become destructive of these ends [Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness] it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institut new Government, laying its foundations on such principles and organ izing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely t effect their Safety and Happiness." A government officer may accus the speaker of some ulterior "intent"—and lock him up. The courts after what Justice Vinson calls "an investigation of a state of mind, may determine that the reading was a criminal act, notwithstanding al the protestations of the patriotic victim.

The government has arrogated to itself not only the right to pr into your mind, but to put things in it that you didn't know were there It not only can forbid thoughts, but it can attribute to you forbidde thoughts that you don't happen to have. This is thought control wit no holds barred. And the Court goes even further. It penalizes wit jail sentences the attorneys who conscientiously seek to uphold th legal interests of their clients. There is a frenzy in this effort to drav the noose of persecution tight, to stifle any vestige of independen thought.

Why? Because the ruling class must have a "legal" sanction, how ever crude, for what it has already been doing to suppress democrati dissent, and because it plans with the aid of such technical sanction t intensify its attacks on the people. Every reasonable person must hav asked why it is that *after over thirty years of the existence of the Com*

munist Party, the government only now discovers that socialist ideas are punishable. Every reasonable person must have asked himself why nearly ten years after the enactment of the Smith Act the government suddenly decided that the Communists should be prosecuted under it.

THE answer is given in the statement issued by Eugene Dennis, general secretary of the Communist Party, on the Supreme Court's decision:

> "The nation is confronted with a clear and present danger—the danger of Wall Street's advanced drive toward war and fascism. The prolongation of American intervention in Korea and the war-makers' efforts to spread it into a world atomic holocaust is a clear and present danger. The establishment of an American police-state in the image of the Smith and McCarran Acts is a clear and present danger. The mad armaments drive and its crushing economic burden upon the working people is a clear and present danger.
>
> "The sole 'guilt' of the Communist leaders is their advocacy of peace and social progress—their opposition to war and fascism. The Communist Party does not now advocate—and never has advocated—the forcible overthrow of the Government. It has worked—and will continue to work—for peace and democracy, for the unity of the people against the atomaniacs, against Labor's foes and against the lynchers of the Negro people.
>
> "It is solely because of this advocacy and activity that the Communist Party is today being persecuted."

Fear of the peace sentiment in the country is above all the motive for torpedoing the constitutional guarantee of the right to express that sentiment. The imperialists have a program that is irrational, and so they must silence the voices of reason. They are leading the country to destruction, and so they must bludgeon every citizen who wants to save the country. Their policies do not enjoy the confidence of the people, and so they must terrorize the people and poison them with the anti-Communist lies of Hitler.

Naturally, the Court's decision will be taken as a green light by every force of bigotry and greed in the country. In the cultural field, where reaction has been multiplying victims of thought control, there will be renewed attacks. There will be an attempted police inspection of the mind and conscience of all honest Americans. The Smith Act

is a book-burning statute. It calls for a lynching bee against the dan gerous thoughts of artists and scientists. Under this Act and the McCar ran Act the teacher is expected to work under a drill sergeant in a bar racks-like classroom.

The hour is late, but it is not too late to fight this program of terror There are undoubtedly some who will wish to run, to seek some per sonal refuge in this storm. But there is no refuge. There is only the "safety" of intellectual suicide, of desertion to fascist forces, of complic ity in the great crime against the people of America and of the world —the safety, in short, of the graveyard.

Before fascism came to Germany there were many who dismissed it threat. They said "Germany is not Italy." There are people in the United States today who say that "America is not Germany." There wa nothing inherently "German" or "Italian" about fascism. The police state that threatens us is alien to the sentiments and desires of the American people. Its victory is not inevitable. It can happen here bu it doesn't have to. It can be stopped and it will be if enough of us band together in defense of peace and democracy, if we try hard enough to reach the American people with the truth, if we do not allow our selves to be bludgeoned into silence.

The Alien and Sedition Acts were quickly reversed by a peopl aroused to their danger by the Acts themselves. The Dred Scott decision was quickly reversed by a people who stood up for human freedom when it was cynically violated. And neither the Smith Act nor the Court' decision upholding it is eternal, as Justice Black has stressed in hi dissent.

WE CALL on our readers to write and wire President Truman pro testing the injustice done to the Communist leaders and askin for their freedom.

To demand that Congress repeal the Smith and McCarran Acts.

To support all actions for peace.

To defend every victim of the intensified thought control compaig that threatens.

Only by standing our ground, only by working together with th broadest elements of the population for peace and civil liberties, ca we be faithful to the precious heritage bequeathed to us by those wh celebrated the first Fourth of July in 1776.

Justice Black's Dissent

Washington, June 4.—Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black, in dissenting from a majority of the court, which approved the Foley Square frame-up of the eleven Communist leaders, declared:

HERE again as in *Breard v. Alexandria,* decided this day, my basic disagreement with the court is not as to how we should explain or reconcile what was said in prior decisions but springs from a fundamental difference in constitutional approach. Consequently it would serve no useful purpose to state my position at length.

At the outset, I want to emphasize what the crime involved in this case is, and what it is not. These petitioners were not charged with an attempt to overthrow the government. They were not charged with non-verbal acts of any kind designed to overthrow the government. They were not even charged with saying anything or writing anything designed to overthrow the government.

The charge was that they agreed to assemble and to talk and publish certain ideas at a later date: the indictment is that they conspired to organize the Communist Party and to use speech or newspapers and other publications in the future to teach and advocate the forcible overthrow of the government.

No matter how it is worded, this is a virulent form of prior censorship of speech and press, which I believe the First Amendment forbids. I would hold Section 3 of the Smith Act authorizing this prior restraint unconstitutional on its face and as applied.

But let us assume, contrary to all constitutional ideas of fair criminal procedure, that petitioners, although not indicted for the crime of actual advocacy, may be punished for it. Even on this radical assumption, the only way to affirm these convictions, as the dissent of Mr. Justice Douglas shows, is to qualify drastically or wholly repudiate the established "clear and present danger" rule. This the court does in a way which greatly restricts the protections afforded by the First Amendment.

The opinions for affirmance show that the chief reason for jettisoning the rule is the expressed fear that advocacy of Communist doctrine endangers the safety of the republic. Undoubtedly, a governmental policy of unfettered communication of ideas does entail dangers.

To the founders of this nation, however, the benefits derived from free expression were worth the risk. They embodied this philosophy in the First Amendment's command that Congress "shall make no law abridging . . . the freedom of speech, or of the press. . . ." I have always believed that the First Amendment is the keystone of our government, that the freedom it guarantees provides the best insurance against destruction of all freedom. At least as to speech in the realm of public matters, I believe that the "clear and present danger" test does not "mark the furthermost constitutional boundaries of protected expression" but does "no more than recognize a minimum compulsion of the Bill of Rights." (*Bridges v. California* 314 U. S. 252, 253.)

So long as this court exercises the power of judicial review of legislation, I cannot agree that the First Amendment permits us to sustain laws suppressing freedom of speech and press on the basis of Congress' or our own notions of mere "reasonableness." Such a doctrine waters down the First Amendment, so that it amounts to little more than an admonition to Congress.

The Amendment as so construed is not likely to protect any but those "safe" or orthodox views which rarely need its protection.

I must also express my objection to the holding because, as Mr. Justice Douglas' dissent shows, it sanctions the determination of a crucial issue of fact by the judge rather than by the jury.

Nor can I let this opportunity pass without expressing my objection to the severely limited grant of certiorari in this case which precluded consideration here of at least two other reasons for reversing these convictions. (1) The record shows a discriminatory selection of the jury panel which prevented trial before a representative cross section of the community; (2) the record shows that one member of the trial jury was violently hostile to petitioners before and during the trial.

Public opinion being what it now is, few will protest the conviction of these Communist petitioners. There is hope, however, that in calmer times, when present pressures, passions and fears subside, this or some later court will restore the First Amendment liberties to the high preferred place where they belong in a free society.

AUTHOR meets CRITIC

by GEORGE MARION

MR. JOSEPH HENRY JACKSON was all business and no belles-lettres. And I was glad of that. For I had not dropped in on the book-editor of the San Francisco *Chronicle* to discuss art, literature or the state of the American novel. I had called on the off-chance that I might get Mr. Jackson to print a review of my book, *All Quiet in the Kremlin.* So I came right to the point.

"I could have sent you a copy of this book and let it go at that, Mr. Jackson. It is, I hope, an objective and unpretentious description of Soviet life as any non-expert American visitor might see it today. With Russia so much in the spotlight, the book might be expected to attract a reviewer's attention. But experience has taught me better, and so I wanted to talk to you. As newspaperman to newspaperman, I would like to ask you something about the practical problems of review. When my first book, *Bases & Empire,* appeared, I sent out a considerable number of review-copies and took other steps to get normal notice. It turned out to be a waste of time and money. So I have done very little about the present book. But I am here in San Francisco on a brief lecture tour and I thought it would be wrong to leave without making some effort to bring my book to the attention of the most influential book-reviewer on the West Coast.

"Now let me ask you a blunt question: In the present political climate of the United States, are you in a position to review a book of this unorthodox kind? Or are you under such pressures, whether from your publisher or from other sources, that you would find it inexpedient to review a book on Russia that doesn't conform to the currently popular pattern?"

Mr. Jackson was indignant at the suggestion. In his twenty-odd years in the business he had never once been subjected to any pressure and

the day that occurred would be the day he would walk out and so o

"But," and the real reply always begins at the first but, "but the is another consideration. I think the function of the newspaper's boo section is to give people more information about the books they *wa* to know more about. If it is a book they have already heard abou they will want to know whether to buy it or skip it. If it is a new boo by an author they know, they are always anxious to know what's i his new book."

I asked mildly if he would consider reading my book to see if weren't worth review, but Mr. Jackson rejected the suggestion u qualifiedly. His job was to review books published by establishe houses and duly brought to the attention of potential readers by ad quate outlay for advertising and other promotion. He couldn't possib "use" any other kind of book in his syndicated column. This point view wasn't new to me but I had never before heard it put so baldl nakedly.

"Aside from books I write or edit, and the work of running th department including its Sunday book-section, I have a daily colum to do. I have to schedule my time pretty carefully to get the necessa reading done. So I couldn't afford to read a book I couldn't use i my column."

Without prodding from me, he went on to spell out his meanin "I pick up a book like this, for instance, and I see it is published b Fairplay Publishers. Now I can't touch that. I don't know who Fairpla Publishers is. . . ."

"Fairplay Publishers is just me," I interjected.

"Yes. Now suppose I were to review this book or run a review. man in Sacramento, let's say, gets interested and goes into Levinson and asks for the book. They've never heard of Fairplay Publishers what do they do?"

"They can order it from any major wholesale book distributor in t United States—American News, Baker & Taylor, McClurg in Chicago I explained.

"Well, Levinson's is a pretty big shop and he might know how order your book," Jackson resumed. "But even in a big shop, the clerk aren't well trained and they probably wouldn't know. So they tell th man: 'Fairplay Publishers? Never heard of them!' And the man go out irritated and maybe writes a note to the *Chronicle*. Three or fou

such notes and the publisher will ask: 'What's this fellow Jackson up to, reviewing books nobody ever heard of?' "

Now I might have thought that this constituted a form of pressure exerted by the publisher on his book-editor, if Mr. Jackson hadn't assured me that he was under no pressure and would never, never submit to pressure. It is quite possible that Mr. Jackson doesn't feel the pressure because he is already voluntarily headed in the direction his publisher wants him to go. Where there is no resistance there is no rape. But however Mr. Jackson feels about it, it seems to me that the American people are subjected to some peculiar pressure somewhere in the process.

Let's see how the whole system operates. A few major book-publishing firms dominate the market. They own or control or are integrated with the big book-clubs and the bulk of the marketing machinery. The lesser publishers operate in their shadow, dine on their leavings. In the field of world affairs, this handful of publishers issues books that all sing more or less the same tune about Russia and, by an odd coincidence, it is much the same tune the daily newspapers and radio and State Department and Voice of America sing. The average citizen *has* to believe what all these books and papers say because, as far as he knows, not a single informed person in the world denies what they say.

But there are dissenters! I dissent. I have come back from the Soviet Union with a quite different story than the one the papers tell us fifty million times a day. The book publishers don't like my story, so they don't publish it. Very well, I get it published in spite of them. But then my book lacks the imprint of an "approved" house, so Mr. Jackson and his fellow-reviewers can't be bothered with reviewing it, and John Citizen still doesn't know there is another point of view than the uniform one of the daily papers and "respectable" book publishers. To whatever extent John Citizen participates in making decisions as to American foreign policy (with all its domestic consequences) he decides on the basis of carefully screened information, a deliberately one-sided presentation of the facts of life.

This is what is known in our country as "freedom of the press." For my money it is the cleverest and most complete censorship the world has ever known! I tried to present that idea to Mr. Jackson for his comment, but I was able to ask him less than half a question.

"Don't you think," I began, "that by ruling out all the books that lack the imprint of a big publisher, you raise the question of freedom of the press?"

I was not through, but Mr. Jackson interrupted to dismiss my objection. "There's no such issue," he stated categorically. "You have no idea how many self-published books come in here. We simply haven't time for them. One book may be an experimental play, another a book of verse. The author of each considers his work just as important as, no doubt, you think your book is. And for all I know all three of you are right. But I haven't time to read the play and I haven't time to read the book of verse and I haven't time to read your book. That's all there is to it. Where's the issue of freedom of the press in that?"

"I'll answer that with a question," I replied. "Did you ever hear of the New York *Times* refusing to take an ad for an experimental play or a book of verse? *I* never did. But the New York *Times* has always refused ads for my books! Doesn't that suggest there is something more to the matter than the question of a publisher's imprint? Isn't it the *content* of my books that draws the fire and ire of the *Times?*"

MR. JACKSON opened his eyes pretty wide for a moment. Evidently this particular form of censorship had not come to his attention before. He asked if the *Times* had given me any reason for refusing to take ads. I replied that though I had written to publisher Arthur Hayes Sulzberger and Managing Editor Edwin James and had received written rejection from business manager Harold Hall, I had never been given a reason.

"Why then," said Mr. Jackson, "perhaps they simply didn't think it was a book!"

"Good!" I returned. "I like cards on the table. And that's a point I think we must consider. Since I became a reluctant publisher I have been offered lots of manuscripts and I am perfectly aware that most of them don't add up to a book. What's more, let's be brutal about it: there are plenty of pure crackpots in this field. So I am quite ready to take this position with you: When an author presents a self-published book, or when an unknown publisher produces a book, the burden of proof (as the lawyers say) is on the author-publisher. It is up to him to prove that he really has a book. Until he does so, you

can't blame reviewers who pass the book by.

"But now let's consider the case of an author who faces all those barriers, with a book that surmounts them. When a book has come out under the handicap of self-publication, received no reviews in the papers or magazines, been denied access to important sections of the book-market even by way of paid advertising, and in spite of that achieves very respectable notice, what then? My book, *Bases & Empire,* for instance, was ultimately reviewed in the *Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science; the review said this is a book you can't laugh off, this is a book that contains 'cogent information not otherwise available to the American reader.' Now, doesn't the case change? I think it does. I think that now, to repeat that same lawyer's-phrase, the burden of proof shifts. It falls on the reviewer who didn't review and the man who refused to take an ad. Let them prove their good faith. Let them explain why they concealed the very existence of this book from the reading public. Let them tell us how policy decisions can be democratically arrived at while they deliberately prevent the people from hearing anything but the officially approved point of view. And let them explain why they ignore my present book just as they did the previous ones."

A soft answer turneth away wrath. "I can see that you are a good debater," said Mr. Jackson. But I had not come for personal compliments and still less to debate with Mr. Jackson. Debate could not be profitable I knew, because I had been over this ground before. I had learned that our distinguished intellectuals are usually whitewashers of our controlled-press; and I know their stock answers. There was my meeting with Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt a few years ago, for instance, on exactly this issue.

THE circumstances were these: I had written a pamphlet called "The 'Free Press': Portrait of a Monopoly," and someone quoted the pamphlet during one of the United Nations debates at Lake Success. Mrs. Roosevelt, a member of the United States delegation to the U.N., rose to reply. Why, the very fact that this pamphlet was published, she said, proves that there is real freedom of the press in the United States. I caught up with her a day or two later in one of the committee rooms and asked her a question. Did she think there was freedom of the press just because no law prevented me from writing such a

pamphlet? What if after I had written it, I found that all the presses and distribution-machinery were controlled by a handful of publishers who were controlled by a handful of bankers and that between them they would not let my pamphlet circulate or would not, in effect, let it be printed? Would that be freedom of the press?

"Hah," snorted Mrs. Roosevelt, "they don't have to print it."

They certainly don't have to print it! And they certainly don't print it! And they certainly take positive steps to restrict my freedom to circulate it after I print it myself. Is it "freedom of debate" when you say your piece over a national network while I talk to myself in a telephone booth? If you want to call that freedom of the press, freedom of information, freedom of thought, freedom of debate, that's your privilege. But it is bunk all the same.

I am not complaining that any wrong has been done me, mind you. I'm quite willing to go on fighting for a forum. But a wrong is done the American people who are not allowed to hear me. For I am not talking for myself alone. I am reporting what hundreds of millions of people outside the United States are saying. When I am silenced, a wrong is done the American people who are harried into accepting wage-freezes, high prices, high taxes, peace-time militarization, wholly unnecessary wars in distant lands—all on the strength of certain assumptions about the Soviet Union, assumptions that don't square with evidence visible to the naked eye of any American who chances to visit Russia, assumptions I am prepared to challenge.

This business of taking a *formal* freedom, a *legal* right, and presenting it as an actual freedom is a debater's trick. The shadow is offered for the substance it is a kind of *hoc est corpus* ceremony (which not for nothing has given rise to the expression *hocus pocus*). But it is no *mere* debater's trick; it is not just a play on words but the essence of the most dangerous political game ever played anywhere on earth. And it is in these United States today that it is being played.

I have just been reading some opinions delivered by the august Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States. They dealt with the cases of various organizations and individuals who had been put on the United States Attorney General's "subversive" blacklist. Now hardly a day goes by that you don't read of some serious damage done to one of these blacklisted persons or organizations as a result of the blacklisting. Physical violence has been done to individuals; property

has been destroyed, men have been driven not only from their jobs but from their trades and professions and not a few suicides have resulted. Yet several of the learned judges, including the Chief Justice, declared that this strange new power of blacklist in no way curbs the freedom of the blacklisted men.

"They are in the position of every proponent of unpopular views," said these judges. "Heresy induces strong expressions of opposition." (Ah, you see, it is their non-conformist views that causes them to be attacked by mobs; it is not the public blacklisting-process that whips up the mobs!) "So long as petitioners are permitted to voice their political ideas," they continued, "it is hard to understand how any advocate of freedom of expression can assert their right has been unconstitutionally abridged."

They may cut off our hands at the wrists, but glory be, we shall still have the legal right to pound a typewriter. They may undermine our trade-unions with informers, deliver them over to the leadership of "loyal" Americans chosen by the employers, frame and imprison union men who are so old-fashioned as to fight for higher wages and better conditions; but the right to organize will still be there on the books. They may arrest—they have arrested—distinguished Americans who dared to advocate peace, on a charge of failing to register as foreign agents; but so long as these Americans were not denied the right to speak their minds the Constitution is unimpaired. You can't call a little thing like being put in jail an "impairment of freedom," can you?

THE Nazis did things more crudely. But for all that, it seems to me that we have gone a long way, a long, long way down the same road Germany traveled under Hitler. And because I believe that, and because I see that we are being led down that road under the pretext of a war threat from Russia, I never permitted my little talk with Joseph Henry Jackson to become an aimless bull-session. So I turned the talk back to the question of a review.

"I can understand your position," I said. "I myself have to do a lot of jobs to carry on my work and I know they can't be done according to some ivory-tower blueprint but according to the actual circumstances at the time and place each job has to be done. So I am ready to agree that ninety-seven per cent of your book-section must be devoted to

well-advertised books, must deal with books as merchandise, as commodities going to market. But doesn't there remain a little corner of the book-page, say three per cent, in which you can review books not with regard to their attractions in the market-place but solely for their content? If there is a little place like that, wouldn't the *theme* of my book entitle it to consideration?"

We parted in a friendly manner. Mr. Jackson promised to consider the matter but pledged nothing. And I expect nothing. I do not, and we must not, look to the Big Business press or to Big Business itself for aid in a battle which is, essentially, against Big Business itself. No, we must rely upon our own resources.

Lynchsong

by LORRAINE HANSBERRY

Laurel:
Name sweet like the breath of peace

Blood and blood
Hatred there
White robes and
Black robes
And a burning
Burning cross
cross in Laurel
cross in Jackson
cross in Chicago

And a
Cross in front of the
City Hall
In:
New York City

Lord
Burning cross
Lord
Burning man
Lord
Murder cross

Laurel:
Name bitter like the rhyme of a lynchsong

I can hear Rosalee
See the eyes of Willie McGee
My mother told me about
Lynchings
My mother told me about
The dark nights
And dirt roads
And torch lights
And lynch robes

sorrow night
and a
sorrow night

The
Faces of men
Laughing white
Faces of men
Dead in the night

sorrow night
and a
sorrow night

SPARTACUS

From a Novel by HOWARD FAST

AUTHOR'S NOTE: In January of 1950, I began to lay out in my mind and assemble material for a book on Spartacus and the servile insurrection which he led. I had always been fascinated by the story of this slave who shook great Rome to her very foundations and who became a deathless symbol of class resistance and class struggle. Not only was there, in our own time, the brave struggle against such odds of Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht and their League of Spartacus; but through the centuries the name of Spartacus was always on the lips of the most oppressed, the most wretched, and yet the most militant elements of society. I read a great deal; I struggled with the material, as writers do; and then, in April of that year, I began to write.

Shortly afterwards, I was sent to prison, where I found that an American jail is not conducive to creative writing. But I continued my reading and my reconstruction of a background for the story. However, in that time, my concept of what I wanted to do changed. The storm of Korea began while I was in jail; a catalyst had come into the history of my own time and my own land, and living with the price one pays for trying to write truthfully, I decided that I would have to write what most needed to be written.

Thus, for two months after I came out of jail, I worked on a narrative account of the Peekskill incident. I finished that, but Spartacus still lived with me. He was no ghost that one could easily set aside—but rather did he more and more take on meaning and purpose for our own time.

However, the form of the story changed. It is difficult to explain the creative process only because so little of it takes place in front of

a typewriter. Like some old-fashioned dishes, a thoughtful book cooks for a long, long time, and the writer must live out at least some of the ingredients. Which is why the pursuit of literature has become an exceedingly nerve-wracking and dangerous profession in today's America.

I began to see a wonderful continuity between that first great class war—there were others before it, but none of such dimension—and all the times that followed. There was a ladder to the stars which man fought to climb from the beginning of civilization, and no rungs are missing. Only our knowledge has empty spots. And today, at long last, after so much pain and suffering and misery and oppression, the goal of that ladder is in sight. This concept, a concept of the interconnection of each and every blow against oppression, of each and every whiplash of oppression, became the theme of what I wanted to write. And as might be expected, its first impact was to stop me cold. It was too big and too much, and with the lack of writing facilities in the jails of Truman-democracy, I could hardly even schedule it properly.

Eventually, I decided to begin. It may take twenty years to write the whole thing, or it may never be all written. That doesn't matter. Perhaps I will write some of it and others will write the rest of it—and we are too near the top of the ladder to stop writing in deference to a little man from Missouri.

The section reprinted here is taken from the first volume of a very long book. I hope to finish this first volume soon, and I hope to publish it as a book by itself. What follows is a tale of a part of the life of Spartacus, as told by Batiatus, the *lanista* or owner of a school for gladiators, to Crassus, the Roman millionaire and general who finally put down the servile revolt. It is not history in a literal, mechanical sense. In those times, and more recently too, history was written by the ruling class for the purposes of the ruling class. We know almost nothing of who Spartacus was or where he came from. The men he loved and who loved him were all slain, and no one in his cause ever put down one word concerning him which survived.

The historians of patrician Rome reconstructed him according to their lights and their needs. I have tried to bring him alive in terms of that logic of history which belongs to the working class and its allies.

—H. F.

SO IT was that before there was a Christian hell in books and sermons —and perhaps afterwards too—there was a hell on earth that men saw and looked at and knew well indeed. For it is the nature of man that he can only write of the hells he has first created himself.

In the month of July, when it is dry and awful, go up the Nile from Thebes. Go up to the First Cataract. Already you are in the devil's own land. See how the ribbon of green along the riverside has shrunk and withered! See how the hills and mounds of the desert have changed to a finer and finer sand. Smoke and powder; the wind touches it and it bursts up here and it throws out tentacles there. Where the river flows slowly—and it does in the dry time—a crust of white powder lays over it. The powder is in the air too, and it is already very hot.

But at least there is a little wind in this place. Now you have passed the First Cataract, and you must strike out into the Nubian Desert, which lies southward and eastward. Go into the desert far enough to lose the little wind that survived over the river, but not far enough to catch even a breath of breeze from the Red Sea. And now go southward.

Suddenly, the air is still and the earth is dead. Only the air is alive, and the air is glazed with heat and shimmering with heat, and man's senses are no longer valid, for he sees nothing as it is, but everything bent and warped and curved by the heat. And the desert has changed too. It is a mistaken notion many people hold that desert is everywhere the same; but desert means only a lack of water, and this lack of water varies enormously in degree, and the desert varies too according to the nature of the soil or landscape where the desert is. There is rock desert and mountain desert and sand desert, and white salt desert and lava desert—and there is also the terrible desert of drifting white powder, where death is the absolute signature.

Here, there grows nothing at all. Not the dry, twisted, tough shrubbery of the rock desert; not the lonely tumbleweeds of the sand desert, but nothing at all.

Go into this desert then. Plod through the white powder and feel how wave after wave of the dreadful heat beats down upon your back. As hot as it can be and yet allow a man to live, so is it here. Make a track through this hot and terrible desert, and time and space become boundless and monstrous. But you go on and on and on and on. What is hell? Hell begins when the simple and necessary acts of life become

monstrous, and this knowledge has been shared through all the ages by those who taste the hell men make on earth. Now it is frightful to walk, to breathe, to see, to think.

But this does not go on forever. Suddenly, it is delineated, and the further aspect of hell appears. Black ridges show ahead of you, strange, nightmarish black ridges. This is the black stone escarpment. You go on toward the black stone, and then you see that it is streaked through and through with veins of shining white marble. Oh, how bright this marble is! Oh, how it gleams and shines and with what heavenly lustre! But it must have a heavenly lustre, for the streets of heaven are paved with gold, and the white marble is rich with gold. That is why men came to this place, and that is why you are coming here, because the marble is rich and heavy with gold.

GO CLOSER and see. It was long ago that the Egyptians' Pharaohs discovered this black rock escarpment, and in those days they had only tools of copper and bronze. So they could chip and scratch at the surface, but little more. But after generations of scratching at the surface, the gold gave out and it was necessary to go into the black rock and cut away the white marble. This was made possible because the age of copper was past and the age of iron had come, and now men could work the marble with picks and iron wedges and eighteen-pound sledges.

But a new kind of man was needed. The heat and the dust and the physical contortions necessary to follow the twisting gold-bearing veins into the rock made it impossible to employ peasants either from Ethiopia or from Egypt, and the ordinary slave cost too much and died too quickly. So to this place were brought war-hardened soldiers taken captive and children who were *koruu,* bred from slaves who were bred from slaves in a process where only the toughest and the hardest could survive. And children were needed, for when the veins narrowed, deep inside the black rock escarpment, only a child could work there.

The old splendor and power of the Pharaohs passed away and the purses of the Greek kings of Egypt dwindled; the hand of Rome lay over them and the slave dealers of Rome took over the operation of the mines. In any case, no one but Romans knew how to work slaves properly.

So you come to the mines as Spartacus did, one hundred and twenty-

two Thracians chained neck to neck, carrying their burning hot chains across the desert all the way from the First Cataract. The twelfth man from the front of the line is Spartacus. He is almost naked, as they all are almost naked, and soon he will be entirely naked. He wears a shred of a loin cloth, and his hair is long and he is bearded, just as every man in the line is long-haired and bearded. His sandals have worn through, but he wears the little that is left of them for what protection it may offer; for though the skin of his feet is a quarter of an inch thick and as tough as leather, it is not enough protection against the burning desert sands.

What is he like, this man Spartacus? He is twenty-three years old as he carries his chain across the desert, but it is not marked on him; for his kind, there is an agelessness of toil, no youth and no manhood and no growing old, but only the agelessness of toil. From head to foot and hair and beard and face, he is covered with the powdery white sand, but underneath the sand his skin is burned brown as his dark, intense eyes, which peer out of his cadaverous face like hateful coals.

Tall or short is hard to say, for men in chains do not walk erect, but the body is whipcord, sun-jerked meat, dry and waterless but not fleshless. For so many generations there was a process of gleaning out, winnowing out, and on the stony hill of Thrace the living was never easy, so that what survived is hard and with a tight clutch on life. The handful of wheat upon which he feeds each day, the flat, hard barley cakes are sucked dry of every shred of sustenance and the body is young enough to sustain itself. The neck is thick and muscular, but there are festering sores where the bronze collar rests. The shoulders are padded with muscle, and so equal are the proportions of the body that the man looks smaller than he is. The face is broad, and because the nose was broken once by the blow of an overseer's rod, it appears flatter than it actually is, and since the dark eyes are wide-set, it takes on a gentle, sheep-like expression. Under the beard and the dust, the mouth is large and full-lipped, sensuous and sensitive, and if the lips move back—in a grimace, not in a smile—you see that the teeth are white and even. The hands are large and square and as beautiful as some hands can be; indeed, the only thing about him that is beautiful are his hands.

This, then, is Spartacus, the Thracian slave, the son of a slave who was the son of a slave. No man knows his destiny, and the future is

not a book to be read, and even the past—when the past is toil and nothing else but toil—can dissolve into a murky bed of various pain. This, then, is Spartacus, who does not know the future and has no cause to remember the past, and it has never occurred to him that those who toil shall ever do other than toil, nor has it occurred to him that there will ever be a time when men do not toil with the lash across their backs.

What does he think of as he plods across the hot sand? Well, it should be known that when men carry a chain, they think of little, of very little, and most of the time it is better not to think of more than when you will eat again, drink again, sleep again. So there are not complex thoughts in the mind of Spartacus or in the minds of any of his Thracian comrades who carry the chain with him. You make men like beasts and they do not think of angels.

BUT now it is the end of a day and the scene is changing, and men like these clutch at little bits of excitement and change. Spartacus looks up, and there is the black ribbon of the escarpment. There is a geography of slaves, and though they do not know the shape of the seas, the height of the mountains or the course of the rivers, they know well enough of the silver mines of Spain, the gold mines of Arabia, the iron mines of North Africa, the copper mines of the Caucasus and the tin mines of Gaul. There is their own lexicon of horror, their own refuge in knowledge of another place worse than where they are; but worse than the black escarpment of Nubia is nothing in the whole wide world.

Spartacus looks at it; the others look at it, and the whole line halts its plodding, painful motion, and the camels with their burden of water and wheat also halt, even as do the overseers with their whips and their pikes. Everyone looks at the black ribbon of hell. And then the line goes on.

The sun is sinking behind the black rock when they reach it, and it has become blacker, more savage, more ominous. It is the end of the day's work and the slaves are emerging from the shafts.

"What are they, what are they?" thinks Spartacus.

And the man behind him whispers, "God help me!"

But God will not help him here. God is not here; what would God be doing here? And then Spartacus realizes that these things he sees

are not some strange species of the desert, but men like himself and children such as he was once. That is what they are. But the difference in them has been composed from within and from without; and to those forces which shaped them into something other than humankind, there has been an inner response, a fading away of the desire or need to be human. Just see them—see them. The heart of Spartacus, which has become in the process of years like a stone, begins to contract with fear and horror. The wells of pity in him, which he believes to be dried up, are wet again, and his dehydrated body is still capable of tears. He looks at them. The whip lays on his back for him to move on, but still he stands and looks at them.

They have been crawling in the shafts, and now when they come out, they still crawl like animals. They have not bathed since they are here, nor will they ever bathe again. Their skins are patchworks of black dust and brown dirt; their hair is long and tangled, and when they are not children, they are bearded. Some are black men and some are white men, but the difference now is so little that one hardly remarks upon it. They all have ugly callouses on knees and elbows, and they are naked, completely naked. Why not? Will clothes keep them alive longer? The mine has only one purpose, to bring profits to the Roman shareholders, and even shreds of dirty cloth cost something.

Yet they wear an article of clothing. Each has upon his neck a bronze or an iron collar, and as they come crawling down the black rock, the overseers snap each collar onto a long chain, and when there are twenty chained together, they plod to their quarters. It must be noted that no one ever escaped from the Nubian mines; no one could escape. A year in these mines, and how can one ever belong to the world of men again? The chain is a symbol more than a need.

Spartacus stares at them and seeks for his own kind, his own race, the humankind, which is race and kind when a man is a slave. "Talk," he says to himself, "talk to each other." But they do not talk. They are silent as death. "Smile," he pleads to himself. But no one smiles.

They carry their tools with them, the iron picks, crowbars and chisels. Many of them have crude lamps strapped onto their heads. The children, skinny as spiders, twitch as they walk and constantly blink at the light. These children never grow up; they are good for two years at the most, after they come to the mines, but there is no

other way to follow the gold-bearing stone when the veins narrow and twist. They carry their chains by the Thracians, but they never even turn their heads to look at the newcomers. They have no curiosity. They don't care.

And Spartacus knows. "In a little while, I will not care," he says to himself. And this is more frightening than anything else.

Now the slaves go to eat, and the Thracians are taken with them. The rock shelter, which is their barracks, is built against the base of the escarpment itself. It was built a long, long time ago. No one can remember when it was built. It is built of massive slabs of rough-hewn black stone, and there is no light inside, and ventilation only from the opening at each end. It has never been cleaned. The filth of decades has rotted on its floor and hardened on its floor. The overseers never enter the place. If there should be trouble inside, then food and water are withheld; when they have been long enough without food and water, the slaves become docile and crawl out like the animals they are. When someone dies inside, the slaves bring the body out. But sometimes a little child will die deep inside the long barracks, and it will not be noticed and he will not be missed until the corruption of his body reveals him. That is the kind of a place the barracks is.

The slaves go in without their chains. At the entrance, they are unchained and given a wooden bowl of food and a leathern jack of water. The jack contains a little less than a quart of water, and this is their ration twice a day. But two quarts of water a day is not enough to replace what the heat takes in so dry a place, and thus the slaves are subjected to a gradual process of progressive dehydration. If other things do not kill them, sooner or later this destroys their kidneys and when the pain is too bad for them to work, they are driven out to the desert to die.

All these things, Spartacus knows. The knowledge of slaves is his, and the community of slaves is his. He was born into it; he grew in it; he matured in it. No animal could survive this way; the pattern for survival is not simple; it is not an easy thing; it is far more complex and thoughtful and difficult than all of the problems faced by people who never confront this one. And there is a reason for it too. It is just that Spartacus does not know the reason.

Now he will survive. He is adapting, flexing, conditioning, ac-

climatizing, sensitizing; he is a mechanism of profound fluidity and flexibility. His body conserves strength from the freedom of release from the chain. How long he and his comrades carried that chain, across the sea, up the River Nile, across the desert! Weeks and weeks of the chain, and now he is free of it. He is light as a feather, but that found strength must not be wasted. He accepts his water—more water than he has seen in weeks. He will not gulp it and piss it out in waste. He will guard it and sip at it for hours, so that every possible drop of it may sink into the tissues of his body. He takes his food, wheat and barley gruel cooked with dry locusts. Well, there is strength and life in dry locusts, and wheat and barley are the fabric of his flesh. He has eaten worse, and all food must be honored; those who dishonor food, even in thought, become enemies of food, and soon they die.

He walks into the darkness of the barracks, and the fetid wave of rotten smell claws at his senses. But no man dies of a smell, and only fools or free men can afford the luxury of vomiting. He will not waste an ounce of the contents of stomach in such a fashion. He will not fight this smell; such things cannot be fought. Instead, he will embrace this smell; he will welcome it and let it seep into him and soon it will have no terrors for him.

He walks in the dark, and his feet guide him. His feet are like eyes. He must not trip or fall, for in one hand he carries food and in the other, water. Now he guides over to the stone wall and sits down with his back against it. It is not so bad here. The stone is cool and he has support for his back. He eats and drinks. And all around him are the movements and breathing and chewing of other men and children who do exactly as he does, and within him the expert organs of his body help him and expertly extract what they need from the little food and little water. He picks the last grain of food from his bowl, drinks down what is left, and licks the inside of the wood. He is not conditioned by appetite; food is survival; every small speck and stain of food is survival.

Now the food is eaten, and some of those who have eaten are more content and others give way to despair. Not all despair has vanished from this place; hope may go, but despair clings more stubbornly, and there are groans and tears and sighs, and somewhere there is a wavering scream. And there is even a little talk, and a broken

voice which calls, "Spartacus—where are you?"

"Here, I am here, Thracian," he answers.

"Here is the Thracian," another voice says. "Thracian, Thracian. They are his people, and they gather around him. He feels their hand as they press close to him. Perhaps the other slaves listen, and in an case, they are deeply silent. It is only the due of newcomers in hel Perhaps those who came here earlier are remembering now what most they fear to remember. Some understand the words of the Attic tongu and others don't. Perhaps somewhere, even, there is a memory of th snow-topped mountains of Thrace, the blessed, blessed coolness, th brooks running through the pine forests and the black goats leapin among the rocks. Who knows what memories persist among the damne people of the black escarpment?

"Thracian," they call him, and now he feels them on every side and when he stretches out a hand he feels the face of one of them, al covered with tears. Ah, tears are a waste.

"Where are we, Spartacus, where are we?" one of them whispers.

"We are not lost. We remember how we came."

"Who will remember us?"

"We are not lost," he repeats.

"But who will remember us?"

One cannot talk in such a fashion. He is like a father to them. Fo men twice his years, he is a father in the old tribal way. They are al Thracians, but he is the Thracian. So he chants to them softly, like a father telling a tale to his children:

> "As on the beach where churning water broke,
> In close array before the western wind,
> Churning finely up from the ocean deeps,
> And arching as it breaks upon the land,
> Its white foam spewing hard and far,
> Just so in such array the Danaans moved
> Unhesitating to the battle line—"

He captures them, and holds their misery, thinking to himself, "What a wonder, what a magic in the old chant!" He eases them out of this terrible darkness and they stand on the pearly beaches of Troy. There are the white towers of the city! There are the golden, bronze-girt warriors! The soft chant rises and falls and loosens the

knots of terror and anxiety, and in the darkness there is shuffling and motion. The slaves do not have to know Greek, and indeed the Thracian dialect of Spartacus is little enough like the tongue of Attica; they know of the chant, where the old wisdom of a people is preserved and kept for the time of trial. . . .

Finally, Spartacus lays himself down to sleep. He will sleep. Young as he is, he long ago met and conquered the terrible enemy of sleeplessness. Now he composes himself and explores the memories of childhood. He wants cool, clear blue sky and sunshine and soft breezes, and all of these are there. He lies among the pines, watching the goats graze, and an old, old man is beside him. The old man teaches him to read. With a stick, the old man traces letter after letter in the dirt. "Read and learn, my child," the old man tells him. "So do we who are slaves carry a weapon with us. Without it, we are like the beasts in the fields. The same god who gave fire to men gave them the power to write down his thoughts, so that they may recall the thoughts of the gods in the golden time of long ago. Then men were close to the gods and talked with them at will, and there were no slaves then. And that time will come again."

So Spartacus remembers, and presently his memory turns into a dream, and presently he sleeps. . . .

HE IS awakened in the morning by the beating of a drum. The drum is beaten at the entrance to the barracks, and its crash echoes and re-echoes through the stone cavern. He rises, and all about him he hears his fellow slaves rising. They move in the pitch darkness toward the entrance. Spartacus takes his cup and bowl with him; if he had forgotten it, there would have been no food or drink for him this day; but he is wise in the ways of slavery, and there is not such great variation in the manner of slaver that he should not anticipate. As he moves, he feels the press of bodies around him, and he lets himself move with them to the opening at the end of the stone barracks. And all the while, the drum continues its crashing beat.

It is the hour before the dawn, and now the desert is as cool as it will ever be. In this single hour of the day, the desert is a friend. A gentle breeze cools the face of the black escarpment. The sky is a wonderful fading blue-black, and the twinkling stars gently disappear, the only womanly things in this cheerless, hopeless world of men. Even

slaves in the gold mines of Nubia—from which none ever returns—must have a little surcease; and thus they are given the hour befo dawn, so that a poignant bitter-sweet may fill their hearts and revi their hopes.

The overseers stand to one side, grouped together, munching bre and sucking at water. Not for another four hours will the slaves b fed or watered, but it is one thing to be an overseer and another to b a slave. The overseers are wrapped in woolen cloaks, and each carri a whip, a weighted billy and a long knife. Who are these men, thes overseers? What brings them to this terrible womanless place in th desert?

They are men of Alexandria, bitter, hard men, and they are her because the pay is high, and because they get a percentage of all th gold the mines produce. They are here with their own dreams of wealt and leisure, and with the promise of Roman citizenship when the have served five years. They live for the future, when they will ren an apartment in one of the tenements in Rome, when they will eac of them buy three or four or five slave girls to sleep with and to serv them, and when they will spend each day at the games or at the bath and when they will be drunk each night. They believe that in comin to this hell, they heighten their future earthly heaven; but the truth o the matter is that they, like all prison guards, require the petty lord ship of the damned more than perfume and wine and women.

They are strange men, a unique product of the slums of Alexandri and the language they talk is a jargon of Aramaic and Greek. It is tw and a half centuries since the Greeks conquered Egypt, and thes overseers are not Egyptians and not Greeks, but Alexandrians. Whic means that they are versatile in their corruption, cynical in their ou look, and believing of no gods at all. Their lusts are warped but com monplace; they lie with men and they sleep a drugged sleep over th juice of the Khat leaves, which grow on the coast of the Red Sea.

These are the men whom Spartacus watches, there in the cool hou before the dawn, as the slaves plod from the great stone barrack shoulder their chains and go toward the escarpment. These will be h masters; and over him they will hold the power of life and the powe of death; and so he watches for small differences, habits, mannerism and indications. In the mines, there are no good masters, but it ma be that there will be some less cruel and less sadistic than others. H

watches them detach themselves, one by one, to take over where the slaves are shaping up. It is still so dark that he cannot distinguish subtleties of face and feature, but his is a practiced eye in such matters, and even in the walk and heft of a man there is definition.

It is cool now, and the slaves are naked. Not even a loincloth hides their pitiful, futile organs of sex, and they stand and shiver and wind their arms around their bodies. Anger comes slowly to Spartacus, for anger is not productive in the life of a slave, but he thinks, "All things but this we can bear, but when there is not even a scrap of cloth to cover our parts, we are like animals." And then revises it in his mind, "No—less than animals. For when the Romans took the land where we were owned and the plantation where we labored, the beasts were left in the field and only we were sorted out for the mines."

Now the drum stops its wracking sound and the overseers uncoil their whips and crack the stiffness out of the bull-hide, so that the air is full of a snapping and crackling music. They lay the whips in the air, for it is too early to lash the flesh, and the gangs move forward. It is lighter now, and Spartacus can clearly see the skinny, shivering children who will crawl down into the belly of the earth and claw at the white stone where the gold is found. The other Thracians also see, for they crowd close around Spartacus, and some of them whisper:

"Father, oh father, what kind of a hell is this!"

"It will be all right," Spartacus says; for when you are called father by those old enough to be your father, what else is there to say? So he says the words which he must say.

Now all the gangs have gone toward the escarpment, and only the huddled group of Thracians remain. A half dozen overseers are left, and led by one of their group, their whips dragging tracks through the sand, they move toward the newcomers. One of the overseers speaks and demands, in his thick jargon,

"Who is your leader, Thracians?"

No answer.

"It is too early for the whip, Thracians."

Now Spartacus says, "They call me father."

The overseer looks him up and down and takes his measure. "Yo are young to be called father."

"It is the custom in our land."

"We have other customs here, *father.* When the child sins, th father is whipped. Do you hear me?"

"I hear you."

"Then listen, all of you Thracians. This is a bad place, but it ca be worse. When you live, we ask work and obedience. When you di we ask little. In other places, it is better to live than to die. But he we can make it better to die than to live. Do you understand m Thracians?"

The sun is rising now. They are chained and they carry their cha to the escarpment. Then the chain is removed. The brief coolness the morning is already gone. They are given tools, iron picks, sledge and iron wedges. They are shown a streak of white in the black roc at the base of the escarpment. It may be the beginning of the vei it may be nothing at all. They are to cut away the black rock an expose the gold-bearing stone.

Now the sun is in the sky, and the terrible heat of the day begi again. Pick and sledge and wedge. Spartacus swings a hammer. Eac hour, there is a pound more of weight in the feel of the hamme Hard he is, but never before in his life of toil did he do such wo as this, and soon every muscle of his body strains and whimpers wi the tension. It is simple to say that a hammer weighs eighteen pound but there are no words to tell the tortures of a man who swings suc a hammer hour after hour. And here, where water is so precio Spartacus begins to sweat. It oozes from his skin; it runs from h forehead down into his eyes; he wills with all the strength of his w that the sweat should stop; he knows that in this climate, to sweat to perish. But the sweat will not stop, and thirst becomes a savag aching, terrible animal inside of him.

Four hours are forever; four hours are eternity. Who knows bett than a slave how to control the desires of a body, but four hours a forever, and when the water bags are passed through the gangs, Spa tacus feels that he is dying of thirst. As do all the Thracians, and th drain the leather jacks of the crawling green and blessed fluid. An then they know what they have done.

These are the gold mines of Nubia. By midday, their strength an

power to work is ebbing, and then the whips begin to urge them on. Oh, there is a great mastery of the whip in the hands of an overseer; it can touch any part of the body, delicately, lightly, threateningly, warningly. It can touch a man's groin or his mouth or his back or his brow. It is like an instrument, and it can play music on the body of a man. Now thirst is ten times worse than before, but the water is gone, and there will be no more water until the day's work is over. And such a day is eternity.

And yet it ends. Everything ends. There is a time of beginning and a time of ending. Once again, the drum beats, and the day's work is over.

Spartacus lets go of the hammer and looks at his bleeding hands. Some of the Thracians sit down. One, a lad of eighteen, rolls over and lies on his side, his legs drawn up in tight agony. Spartacus goes to him.

"Father—father, is that you?"

"Yes, yes," Spartacus says, and he kisses the lad on his brow.

"Then kiss me on my lips, for I am dying, my father, and what is left of my soul I want to give to you."

Then Spartacus kisses him, but he cannot weep, for he is dry and singed, like burnt leather.

July 4, 1950

by Alvah Bessie

Beloved...
through the bars, through the screening on the range,
the opposite wall, quite near, of white-washed brick
is slashed by clerestory windows, like a church.
The panes are fogged, but through the little
half-reclining panels you can see
twenty feet of street, a passing car . . . a girl?

This is important; but more important to me, grounded here,
the eight thousand horsepower roaring of the planes
that soar over the ugly building night and day . . .
...letting down; gaining altitude...
...rising to Pittsburgh; sinking from New York...
...dropping from Chicago; climbing to Los Angeles...
The iron bars rattle when they pass; the block
lies silent, listening....

Over in the District Zoo
the beasts revolve in their cages day and night
and I, who am a lover of animals, remember them with pity:
the Bengal tiger with his deadpan stare,
in geometric pattern, back and forth,
rubbing his right flank on the bars. The polar bear
in the heavy heat of Washington's summer
(stir-crazy) who reverses gears, walks backward
once his snout has touched the opposite wall...

The P.A. system speaks: *"Hear this, now hear this—"*
(through every speaker perched at each small cell)

"Attention all units: make your 7:45 count.
"Attention all units: make your 7:45 count."

This is our day of freedom; this day we said:
"We hold these truths to be self-evident...
'All men are created equal... they are endowed," we said.
"with life, liberty—"
(The guard counting..."12...14...16..."
as he paces down the range)
That day the bars rolled back
(automatic electric?), the gaol doors swung on rusty hinges
and ragged mechanics and stocky yeomen stood in the cobbled streets
and cheered. "...and the pursuit of happiness!"

The radio! A Congressman is speaking
near the Monument: "—and in these days,
"when the menace of Godless Communism threatens all,
'we must stand shoulder to shoulder, even as our glorious forebears
"who—" (Even such a Congressman
may be caught tomorrow, his pudgy fingers
in the public purse and find himself with me—created equal!)
Now he is strangled and the speakers cry again:

"Attention all units—the count is clear!
"Attention all units—the count is clear!"

That means: all present or accounted for—
each man in place, a place for every man:
the alcoholic (in for ten days, out for two; in for thirty days
and out for one; in for sixty days—), the thief—
four counts of armed robbery: "I said,
"Gimme back my gun and my false nose;
"they're the tools of my trade!"
The derelict who brained the flophouse owner with a baseball bat:
"It's a *good* thing I did," he said.
"That guy was no damned good at all.
"Took men in and robbed them of their dough
"and threw them out into the wilderness of 9th Street."

The signers of bad checks, the "lewd molest,"
the statutory rapists and the peddlers of dope,
the con-man from Santa Monica who said:
"I saw Betty Grable lots of times!"
The alien who made the sad mistake
of watching a car for a man and being nabbed
for stealing it; the Mexican
(called *Amigo* here) who kissed a girl fourteen
(she looked twenty): "rape," reduced
when she was found intact, to "indecent liberties"
and deportation (natch). The Negro lad
(called *Nigger* here): condemned to die this morning—
only yesterday I asked if he could play piano
and he said:
"If I could play piano, man,
"I'd be invulnerable to sorrow."

The animals in the District Zoo—do you suppose
they have to clean their cages, too?
They're doubled up now, two by two (both male),
an upper and a lower bunk, a basin and a toilet,
a shelf to sit on and a shelf to write—
and all night long the yellow bulbs
burn dim along the range.
It's getting dark now—you can hear the fireworks
over the Capitol, proclaiming freedom, independence—
"...life...liberty...happiness..." (This is the city
of frozen monuments to liberty where the valiant dead
are quoted daily by the craven quick.)

Do the beasts
revolve in their dark cages all night long
in the Zoo, or do they sleep, as I sleep—
sleep and wake...wake and sleep...
listening to the Albanian immigrant
in the overhead bunk snore and toss—groan
and speak out loud...?

Next cell, the bowl is flushed by an ex-G.I. who said:
"Contempt of Congress, huh? You ever listen
"to those bastards on the Hill?
"How could you *not* been in contempt of them?"
Far down the range a man is coughing; another screams in sleep—
the Negro youth is moaning softly
on his segregated tier:
"Sin, he says.
"It's a sin...
"everything is a sin..."

The count is clear...The land is bright
with Freedom's Holy Light, Pro—tect us
with Thy Might—Great God, Our King...

Wife, beloved woman—it is two a.m. in California;
are you asleep? Is my child asleep
or does she cry? Can you hear
the animals revolving in their cages in the District Zoo,
blunted claws clicking on the concrete floor?

Can you hear the muted thunder of artillery,
the drumming tanks, the dry rattle
of machine guns and the scream of planes
from across the seven thousand miles
of salty water?

The lines are drawn; each man in place,
a place for every man. The dark dissolves
into the dawning air—the world around
the count is clear.
Please do not be afraid.

RACIST LAWS in the United States

by HERBERT APTHEKER

"SHOCKING!" "Incredible!" Such were typical responses from leading American publications to the laws decreed by Hitler at Nuremberg in 1935. The Nazis acted, as their statutes said, "for the protection of German blood and German honor." They banned from citizenship all except those "of German or kindred blood" (*Artverwandten Blutes*) and those who, by their conduct, showed a willingness and a fitness to serve the Third Reich.

The registration by "race" of all inhabitants of the Reich was required; Jewish children were to attend separate schools; Jews and "Aryans" were forbidden to marry. In brief, declared the St. Louis *Times-Star,* the Nuremberg laws represented a state of "national distemper . . . out of keeping with the modern world, and perfectly in keeping with the Middle Ages."

Actually the Nazis confessed great indebtedness to the United States for having provided them with a model for their own racist legislation. Thus, one of their leading professors of jurisprudence, Dr. Heinrich Krieger, devoted a volume—*Das Rassenrecht in den Vereinigten Staaten* (Berlin, 1936)—to an admiring examination of the U.S. theory and practice of racism.

And what of today? Now the sublimity of the pretense grows as the hideousness of the reality increases. Solemnly, the United States as a participant in the First Inter-American Demographic Congress, held in Mexico City in 1943, promises the rejection of "all policy and all action of racial discrimination." Two years later the U.S. participated with the Latin-American countries in signing the Act of Chapultepec: "The world's peace cannot be consolidated until men are able to exercise their basic rights without distinction as to race or religion." The war then raging as terrible proof of the truth of Cha-

pultepec is terminated with the Potsdam Agreement in which the U.S. joins in demanding that "All Nazi laws which . . . established discrimination on grounds of race, creed or political opinion shall be abolished. No such discriminations, whether legal, administrative or otherwise, shall be tolerated." And in becoming a member of the United Nations, the United States pledged adherence to its Charter which gives as one basic purpose of the organization to "promote respect for, and the observance of, human rights and fundamental freedom for all without distinction as to race."

SUCH are the promises; what of the deeds? What are the facts concerning racist legislation in the United States today?

The structure of the American social order is exploitative, and integral to that structure has been and is the super-oppression of the Negro people within its borders and colored peoples outside. This material base explains the fact that the U.S. has been and remains an ideological fountain-head of racism. And its present laws—local, state and federal—reflect, though incompletely, this racism.

It is important to recognize the incompleteness with which statutes mirror the reality of national oppression. Thus, while no *valid* law now provides for ghettos* the United States is—with the Union of South Africa—the most completely ghettoized nation in the world today. For example, while Negroes constitute twenty per cent of Baltimore's population, they occupy two percent of its living space; in Chicago the population density of the Negro section (90,000 per square mile) is three times more than the maximum density for healthy living; while *The Architectural Forum* (January, 1946) in surveying a single block in Harlem remarked that, "At a comparable rate of concentration the entire United States could be housed in half of New York City."

Again, laws for jury selection are not racially discriminatory in words, but in fact jury selection is notoriously discriminatory, so that a typical finding reported by Professor Pauline Kibbe, reads: "In an estimated

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* Laws establishing and maintaining ghettos were important in their *origins* about fifty years ago—that is, with the appearance of imperialism. But once the laws had done this task, and other contractual and private means for bulwarking ghettos were perfected, then the state and federal courts because of mass struggle invalidated the *laws,* but not the ghettos.

fifty counties [in Texas], wherein the Latin American population ranges from fifteen to forty per cent, persons of Mexican descent have never been known to be called for jury service, even in the trial of civil suits" (*Latin Americans in Texas,* 1946).

The whole pattern of discriminatory enforcement of law does not appear when one focuses only on the actual statutes themselves. This, too, is beyond the scope of this article, but the fact is notorious and has been summed up well by Professor Thorstein Sellin in a paper entitled, "Race Prejudice in the Administration of Justice" (*The American Journal of Sociology,* September, 1935) in this sentence: "Equality before the law is a social fiction."

And sometimes the enforcement of the words of a non-discriminatory law serves to illuminate the racist nature of its administration. Thus, in a typical instance of police bestiality, which quite untypically reached the U.S. Supreme Court (*Brown* v. *Mississippi,* 1936) the Court, in reversing conviction of the Negroes involved, commented, "The rack and the torture chamber may not be substituted for the witness stand." Such was the word of law, but the actual status of the Negro people, and the habitual conduct of the law's minions appear in the undisputed record of that case which showed that the police had boasted, in open court, of having tortured the Negroes until they confessed to a crime which available evidence demonstrated they could not have committed. And, of course, no punitive action was begun or even contemplated against the sadistic gangsters of law and order.

And the words of law will not reflect the whole cumulative weight of a racist society. For example, there is no law forbidding the inhabitants of American Samoa, in the Pacific, from becoming doctors or dentists. How, then, explain this mild little sentence dealing with that possession of the benevolent U.S. in the *World Almanac*: "Since there are no practicing doctors or dentists, the entire population is under the medical care of the U.S. Navy"? The island has been held for over fifty years and contains thousands of residents, yet not a *single* doctor or dentist. There is no law against a Samoan *being* a physician but there is, under Navy regulation, a segregated educational system in Samoa which does not include the college level and which concentrates on teaching English and handicrafts.

Yet with all the inadequacies of a study of the letter of the law itself, such an examination does have considerable value. In the first

place, laws are important controllers of social conduct and must be studied if one is to shape an effective social program. Moreover, if the very words of the laws are racist this constitutes irrefutable evidence of the oppressing nature of the society having such laws. And, in view of the signed commitments and noble pretensions of U.S. imperialism, the effort to expose the true character of that system is aided by citing chapter and verse of its current racist legislation.

"WE HAVE been very diligent and astute," wrote Walter F. George, a former Justice of the Supreme Court of Georgia and now a U.S. Senator, "in violating the spirit of . . . such statutes as would lead the Negro to believe himself the equal of the white man." "No statutory law, no organic law, no military law," said the ex-Judge and current Senator, "supersedes the law of racial necessity" (*Liberty Magazine,* April 21, 1928).

"Racial necessity"—the courts have used similar language. Thus the Pennsylvania Court, which upheld a Jim Crow railroad law then in effect in that state, said in 1867 that there was "a natural law" which was "clearly divine" and which forbade "a corruption of races," while the U.S. Supreme Court in upholding, a generation later, a similar statute from Louisiana asserted that "legislation is powerless to eradicate racial instincts."

Though these laws are necessary and natural and divine and instinctive, just to be helpful to God and nature the ruling class decides to enact them anyway and to punish the extraordinary creatures of God and nature who, unaccountably, violate them.

Thousands of such laws have been passed by city, state and federal legislatures and hundreds remain in effect today. The most prolific governmental sources of such enactments are the cities. Every local community south of the Mason-Dixon line, and very many north of it, abound in racist ordinances. Many such bodies of law, usually in mimeographed form, are deposited only in local city halls and no collation of them has ever been undertaken, but some indication of their nature may be gotten from a few available examples.

Section 597 of the Ordinances of the City of Birmingham, Alabama, reads: "It shall be unlawful for a negro* and white person to

* Racist legislation almost always uses the lower-case form in writing the word Negro.

play together or in company with each other in any game of cards or dice, dominoes or checkers." Those convicted of such horrendous conduct are subject to six months' imprisonment or a $100 fine.

The Atlanta, Georgia, code provides that "No colored barber shall serve as a barber for white women or girls"; and that "The officer in charge [of a cemetery] shall not bury, or allow to be buried, any colored persons upon ground set apart or used for the burial of white persons." This last is exceeded in chauvinist lunacy by the private regulation in force in the U.S. capital, "where a dog cemetery has erected a color bar against the burial of dogs belonging to colored people." (*Segregation in Washington,* 1948.)

It may be added that hundreds of villages and cities, particularly in the South and West, bar Negroes (and/or Mexican-Americans, and others) from remaining within their limits over-night, or, in many cases, from ever entering those limits.

STATE legislation is, of course, readily available and much of its content is in direct violation of the Federal Constitution, and of international obligations, not to speak of such old-fashioned things as decency. In surveying the relevant state legislation we may well begin with a current Mississippi law that will outrage every human being, except—if this is an exception—the rulers of that state:

> "Any person, firm or corporation who shall be guilty of printing, publishing or circulating printed, typewritten or written matter urging or presenting for public acceptance or general information, arguments or suggestions in favor of social equality or of intermarriage between whites and Negroes, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine not exceeding $500 or imprisonment not exceeding six months or both fine and imprisonment in the discretion of the court."

Thirty states* prohibit marriage between white and Negro, while six—the Carolinas, Alabama, Tennessee, Florida and Mississippi—constitutionally forbid the legislature ever to permit such marriage.

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* Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North and South Dakota, North and South Carolina, Oklahoma, Oregon, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, West Virginia, Wyoming.

Typical of these laws is that of Texas (Penal Code Article 492): "If any white person and Negro shall knowingly intermarry with each other within this state, or having so intermarried, in or out of the state, shall continue to live together as man and wife within this state, they shall be punished by confinement in the penitentiary for a term of not less than two nor more than five years."

In most cases where such laws exist other new kinds of criminals make their appearance. This includes the reverend gentleman who had united in the holy bonds of matrimony those whom only death (and thirty of the United States) might part. Thus, the West Virginia law reads: "Any person who shall knowingly perform the ceremony of marriage between a white person and a negro shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and, upon conviction thereof, shall be fined not exceeding two hundred dollars." This is mild; South Carolina causes the guilty minister to be locked up for twelve months. Other distinctions aimed at Men of God recur, as the Georgia law forbidding Negro ministers to marry any but Negro couples.

Mothers also—as mothers—become criminals, and it is doubtful if such legislation has existed anywhere else in the world. Thus, a Maryland law reads: "Any white woman who shall suffer or permit herself to be got with child by a negro or mulatto" is to be put in prison for a minimum of eighteen months and a maximum of five years. Similar laws exist elsewhere, as in Georgia and Arkansas.

Fifteen states forbid marriage between white people and others referred to as "Mongolians" or "Oriental;" and lesser numbers of states prohibit various other kinds of intermarriage: white-Malay; white-Hindu; white-American Indian; white-Asian Indian; American Indian-Negro; Malay-Negro.

STATE legislation of a racist character has also been applied particularly to education. Twenty-one states provide for the separation of Negro and white children in their public school systems. Three states—Delaware, Mississippi and North Carolina—have triple segregation, the third being for American Indians. Two states—Florida and North Carolina—require the segregation of textbooks. Six states require the segregation of blind children and three—South Carolina, Texas and Virginia—require that children who are deaf, dumb and blind also be segregated.

Most of the southern states provide by law for segregated industrial, agricultural and college education. Two enactments peculiar to individual states merit particular notice: Maryland requires the supervisor of Negro schools to be white, and Tennessee prohibits anyone from teaching white pupils who is not a native-born white person who has spoken English since childhood and whose parents could speak English.

In dealing with education it is necessary to point out that while it is legally saturated with racism, this is only part of the story. Nationally, the whole educational system, particularly on a college level, is racist in administrative terms. Thus, in 1947, a federal Commission on Higher Education reported that numerous institutions were "extremely anxious to ascertain the racial origins, religion and color of the various applicants for a purpose other than judging their qualifications for admission . . . such information is likely to be used for discriminatory purposes." Since all these institutions were tax-exempt and several of them were state-endowed the quasi-legal status of this racism is plain. Moreover, it is clear that racist discrimination is practiced by state licensing boards in admission to the professions. Thus a 1948 survey conducted by the Anti-Defamation League disclosed "that close to 98 per cent of these [licensing boards] application blanks ask questions which have no relation to competence in the fields of medicine, dentistry, law, optometry, and accounting" (Ruth G. Weintraub, *How Secure These Rights?* 1949).

Additional areas of personal, public and institutional life are regulated by racist laws in many states. Several apply specifically to American Indians, with thirteen states (and the Federal government) currently barring the sale of liquor to Indians and four states making it unlawful to furnish them with firearms. New Mexico and Arizona forbade their 100,000 Indian citizens from voting until as late as 1948, and both states still legally disqualify—with the active connivance of the Federal government—Indians from the benefits of the social security program.

The Southern states generally require Jim Crow arrangements in transportation. Segregation is the law there, too, in public and private recreational facilities, parks, hospitals, welfare institutions, prisons, hotels, factories, restaurants. Some details are revealing. For example, Oklahoma requires separate telephone booths for Negro and white;

Texas forbids boxing matches between Negro and white; Arkansas requires separate voting places; North Carolina requires its Negro state military units to be officered by white men; North Carolina and Virginia forbid fraternal benefit associations of Negroes and whites; South Carolina forbids Negroes and whites to work together in the same room in a textile factory or to use the same pay windows, or the same toilet and drinking facilities, "or to use the same doors of entrance and exit at the same time . . . or to use the same stairway or windows at the same time. . . ."

STATES, with rare exceptions, have not passed openly racist laws dealing with the suffrage because the Fourteenth Amendment specifically prohibits this. But the fact of the disfranchisement of oppressed peoples — and especially millions of Negroes in the South — is well-known. While the basic methods of accomplishing this result are fraud, coercion and violence, certain laws also play a part and call for comment.

Important is the poll tax, instituted about fifty years ago and still on the books in Arkansas, Alabama, Mississippi, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia. Particularly inhibiting are the cumulative features of the poll-tax laws of Mississippi, Virginia and Alabama.

More significant than the poll tax, however, in disfranchising the Negro masses is the "understanding" clause in most Southern election laws. This requires that in order to qualify as a voter one must convince the Board of Registrars that he can read and/or write and/or understand the Constitution of the United States and/or of the State. When one knows that, in addition, Southern states give their Registration Boards extraordinary power he can understand how very potent a racist law this "understanding" clause is. Typical is Alabama, whose Code provides: "The Board of Registrars may make such rules and regulations as it deems proper for the receipt of applications for registration and the accomplishing in as expedient a manner as possible the regulation of those entitled to register, but no person shall be registered until the majority of the Board of Registrars has passed favorably upon the personal qualifications."

As though this were not enough, in much of the South—especially the rural South—registration is accomplished not in public places but in the homes of white people. And there are still other stumbling

blocks. Harnett T. Kane, reporting on Louisiana, in no way atypical, says: "The Negro goes to the registration place and he is not recognized. He is told to come back tomorrow, we are fresh out of application blanks, we will send you a notice when we are ready for you. He is kept away by all sorts of tricks." (*Voting Restrictions in the 13 Southern States,* 1945).

Other states add inimitable touches of enlightenment: South Carolina has open, not secret, balloting, and the Mississippi Democratic organization requires a participant in its primaries (the only election that has the slightest meaning there) to swear that he opposes Fair Employment Practice legislation, anti-lynching legislation, anti-poll tax legislation, and that he "cherishes the customs and the time-honored traditions of the Old South"!

No one, then, need be surprised that in most recent elections less than one per cent of the Negroes of voting age in Mississippi were qualified voters, less than two per cent in Alabama and less than three per cent in Louisiana. Those three states alone have over 1,500,000 Negroes of voting age, but only 21,000 are qualified voters!

The racist laws of the United States were based squarely on the mythology of "blood" taken over by the Nazis. And just as the Nazis were preoccupied in their "race" registration laws with "the protection of German blood," so are the American chauvinists. Thus, Virginia's analogous law (enacted five years before the Nuremberg law) is entitled the "Preservation of Racial Integrity" Act.*

BUT who is white and who is Negro? The law makers have had a terrible time with this since they base themselves on "race," which is to say on a lie. Thus, he who is a Negro, *by law,* in Indiana, isn't in Virginia, and he who is a Negro in Florida isn't in Georgia. Moreover, the legal definition of a Negro changes in the same state, so that one who is a Negro in Georgia now might not have been prior to 1927, and one who is a Negro now in Virginia might not have been in 1930, while *that* one might not have been in 1910. Sheer madness, of course, but it is all U.S. law, all based on "blood" percentages, *i.e.,* percentages of ethnically distinct bloods—which do not exist!

* See the recent book, *States' Laws on Race and Color,* compiled by the distinguished Negro attorney, Miss Pauli Murray, and obtainable from the Literature Headquarters of the Methodist Church in Cincinnati.

It is interesting to observe how the courts have adjusted themselves in solemnly adjudicating where the law involved is based on a myth. In 1922 the U.S. Supreme Court decided that a particular person was not "white" though less colored than many "whites" because he was not, it said, Caucasian. But the next year, a Hindu was pleading at the bar and the Court found Hindus were Caucasians, but this one was not "white" because he was darker than most "whites." Faced by rulings that said, between 1922 and 1923, that color did and did not determine whether one was white, Mr. Justice Sutherland declared for the Court, that while science could offer no definition, still the "average man knows perfectly well" who is what!

SO FAR we have examined city and state law. What about the Federal government? Perhaps, given the American tradition of political decentralization and the fact of states' rights, racist legislation exists on a local but not on a national level? Has the U.S. government really violated its international obligations?

Actually the national government consistently follows—by law and in fact—a blatant policy of racism and in so doing most certainly is violating international obligations repeatedly assumed. The United States social order has depended upon and today depends upon the super-exploitation of Indian, Latin-American, Pacific, Asian and Negro peoples and the legal framework of that order reflects that fact. That which the Federal government directly controls, from its capital city to its furthermost Pacific possession, is characterized by white chauvinist legislation and administration.

The public education system in the District of Columbia is Jim Crow by Federal law. The government insists that these segregated schools provide each group with equal advantages but this is demonstrably false in Washington as it is in Georgia or Alabama. A third of the schools in the nation's capital housing Negro children were built before the Spanish-American war, and over thirty per cent of them were old white schools (none has gone the other way—newly built for Negroes and then, when old, handed down to white children). While the schools for white children are operating at 75 per cent of full capacity, schools for Negro children are at 115 per cent of full capacity; the pupil load for Negro teachers is about 30 per cent higher

than for white; the Federal government expends over $160 per year per white pupil and under $130 per year per Negro student.

Public recreation also is segregated by law in Washington. But aside from positive legislation, the city is, in fact, completely segregated with practically all life rigidly controlled, from restaurants to theatres to hotels. Particularly disgraceful are the ghetto slums festering within a stone's throw of Congress. And directly responsible is the Federal government which, through three Presidentially-appointed Commissioners, administers the District. To clamp this segregated dictatorship on the million Washingtonians it was found necessary to disfranchise *all* inhabitants of the District, a deprivation which has persisted for over seventy years. Administratively, the departments and bureaus of the Federal government operate in the District on a completely racist basis from job status and tenure to eating and washing facilities. Meanwhile, the nation's capital actually "is run," as the National Committee on Segregation stated, "by the dominant real estate and financial interests, formally organized as the Board of Trade."

The sole level of government responsible for policies of naturalization and immigration has been and is the federal and here, too, racism has long marked the legislation. To this day U.S. naturalization laws bar, purely on racist grounds, Arabians and Afghans, Japanese and Koreans, peoples from Burma, Thailand, Malaya and Indonesia.

The basic racist pattern of immigration laws was set in the post-World War I days of deportation deliriums and Red-baiting. The act of 1924, still the fundamental immigration law (recently modified by the anti-Semitic, pro-fascist McCarran amendment to Displaced Persons legislation) provides that the number of immigrants to be allowed shall not exceed two per cent of the nationalities resident here as of 1890. This in fact assigns twenty per cent of the immigration quota to southern and eastern Europe and eighty per cent to northern and western Europe, thus discriminating against Jews, Italians, Greeks, etc. Peoples from Asia are pretty generally refused entrance altogether, though in 1946 the government generously allowed 100 immigrants per year from India and the Philippines.

The nation's armed forces have a long tradition of officially promulgated and enforced racism—that of the Army dating back to the War of 1812; that of the Navy, in especially open form, dating from about

the Spanish-American war. And its armed forces remain basically Jim Crow, in organization, in personnel policies, in advancement, in living arrangements. A sensitive indicator is the administration of military "justice." How viciously racist that is may be judged from the fact that Mr. Thurgood Marshall, Special Counsel to the pro-Truman National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, subtitled his *Report on Korea,* issued in April, 1951, "the shameful story of the courts martial of Negro GIs." He found the Negroes involved to have been tried "in an atmosphere making justice impossible" and that this was "rooted in the Jim Crow policies still persisting in the Army."

THE second white man to lead an expedition into what is now the south-west of the United States commented in 1582, that "The [Indian] people are very healthy." He was looking at the Hopi and Navaho people; today, after centuries of capitalism's benevolence, the annual death rate of the Hopi is twenty-five per 1,000, of the Navaho it is sixteen per 1,000 and of the whole United States it is ten per 1,000. Today, an official study finds forty-eight per cent of the Hopi children undernourished.* Such is a glimpse at the health of the 60,000 Navaho and Hopi peoples almost 400 years after the white man first appeared.

That which is true of these 60,000 is true of the additional 350,000 Indians in the United States and Alaska. And their health reflects directly their general standard of living and the specially-exploited and segregated life they are compelled to live, with part of the compulsion coming from Federal law and regulation.

Oliver La Farge finds "the outstanding federal discrimination against the Indians [to be] the disgraceful doctrine, maintained by the [Federal] Bureau of the Budget and supported year after year by Congress, that an inferior health service, staffed by such doctors and nurses as can be obtained to work under impossible conditions for substandard pay, is good enough for the tribes" (*New Republic,* Oct. 3, 1949). If to this be added the fact that official policy of the Indian Service medical officers is to make no concessions to native custom even where

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* There are two good recent studies of these Indian peoples: Clyde Kluckhohn and Dorothea Leighton, *The Navaho* (Harvard University Press, 1947); Laura Thompson, *Culture in Crisis, A Study of the Hopi Indians* (Harper, 1950).

such custom may be equally as good, from the standpoint of modern science, as the "white" procedure; that the physicians and dentists are white; that they are terribly overworked (55,000 Navaho people have one federally paid dentist!); and that per capita Indian income is almost three times less than that in Mississippi and seven times less than that in the U.S. as a whole—then the death rate and incidence of malnutrition are perfectly explicable.

Federal regulations call for compulsory attendance of Indian children at school, which sounds very well, except, as in the case of the Navaho, space is provided for only twenty-five per cent of the children. And the teachers get under $1,700 a year, and, write Kluckhohn and Leighton, "the school terms are set in accord with white tradition rather than to fit the special circumstances of Navaho life and seasonal weather conditions in Navaho country." No wonder during World War II, Selective Service reported eighty-eight per cent of Navaho males from eighteen to thirty-five years old were illiterate!

In a word, up to the New Deal's Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 the avowed Federal policy as applied to the Indian was General Sheridan's immortal quip—"The only good Indian is a dead one." The Federal government's policy of so-called "forced assimilation" was in fact a naked policy of thievery and murder. Under President Roosevelt the beginnings of some improvement appeared but with the onset of reaction under Truman, the Federal Indian policy is back to General Sheridan. In Professor Laura Thompson's words: "The forced-assimilation policy has been revived in Indian service."

Mr. La Farge, in addition to remarking on the racist policy of the Federal government in dealing with the Indians' health, sums up the facts of their existence in words directly applicable to the American Negro people—"unequal pay on jobs, promotions denied, inferior housing, social exclusion in many places and, very acutely, unequal treatment by police and courts in the towns just beyond the reservation."

An additional word is necessary for the Indians of annexed Alaska. All that has been said of the Indians of the U.S. is applicable to the 50,000 Indians of Alaska but in addition they suffer the exploitation of direct colonialism. Though the Alaska annexation treaty between Russia and the United States, in 1867, stipulated that the natives of Alaska were to get all the rights and privileges of U.S. citizens they

have, in fact, been segregated and robbed. To this day so elementary a right as documentary title to their lands has been denied them and the continual stealing of those lands has marked the past eighty years.

This process was climaxed, in legal terms, by an enactment unique in peace-time post-Civil War U.S. history. In August, 1947, President Truman signed the Tongass Bill which, in so many words, deprived the people of their land and timber in South-east Alaska *if two or more of their grand-parents were Indians.* Litigation has checked the full implementing of this law, so far, but its precedent is menacing and certainly no more openly predatory act has ever stained a code of laws.

A PRIME example of U.S. imperialism and its offspring, white chauvinism, in action is provided for the Latin American peoples by the Panama Canal Zone. Here, in a 550-square-mile stretch of territory owned for almost half a century and containing about 65,000 people, the U.S. ruling class has bared its soul.

This Zone has been and is under the administrative eye of the President with direct responsibility for the area falling upon the Secretary of War. A General is and habitually has been its appointed Governor and the Zone is run like one huge army camp, with representative government conspicuous by its absence. The Canal itself is the result of the labor of tens of thousands of imported workers, especially West Indians, and it is against them that the whole weight of legal discrimination and segregation falls.

Official Jim Crow applies throughout the Zone, and poverty is everywhere. Government wage rates provide the "local rate employees" (or "silver" workers) with half to one-fourth that paid "U.S. rate employees" (or "gold" workers); public housing is provided "gold" workers, but none for "silver" workers, which means officially sponsored ghettos; all professional and skilled work is kept from "silver" workers; all education, recreation and public facilities are Jim Crow; "silver" employees are paid once a month, "gold" once every two weeks; subsistence schedules for "gold" workers are twice that for the "silver" workers, and "silver" workers cannot get more than $25 a month as a retirement pension, no matter what their work nor how long they were employed!

The United States' show windows in the Pacific similarly serve to

convince the surrounding peoples of the authenticity of the Voice of America. Historically, there have been two main island centers where Federal power has been absolute and U.S. possession unchallenged for over half a century, namely, American Samoa and Guam. While the Canal Zone has been run like an army camp, these American Pacific islands have been conducted like battleships, under the direct supervision of the Secretary of the Navy and resident governors who have been Naval officers.

What was in store for the 50,000 peoples of these islands was heralded by the fact that when Guam, the largest of them, was picked up in 1898 as part of the booty of the Spanish-American War, the U.S. proceeded to take from its inhabitants what rights they had had under the previous ruler. Though the people were overwhelmingly Catholic, the first governor exiled all priests, except one who was a native, and even denied entry to the Apostolic Delegate. A completely segregated life was established at once, and in these segregated schools only English was permitted. The people's own language, Chamorro, was forbidden in the government service and *the Navy actually gathered up and burned dictionaries of the Chamorro language.** All vestiges of civil liberties and representative government were rooted out, and U.S. Marines replaced the entire native police force.

This is the system that prevailed in Guam until 1950 when its status was changed, demonstrating, editorialized the N. Y. *Times* (July 28, 1950) "our good faith just when that good faith is being challenged by Communist propaganda." What was done? As of August, 1950, Guam was taken from the Navy Department and given to the Department of the Interior (some Interior!). At about the same time an act was passed bestowing citizenship on Guamanians and giving them one House to legislate only on domestic affairs, subject to a veto by the governor appointed by the President.

But meanwhile the N. Y. *Times* (June 25, 1950) had reported that civilian rule "means higher taxes for Guamanians" and that their central grievance now was "over the acquisition of lands for military use . . . [and] the widespread arbitrary taking over of Guamanian properties" so that "some of the island's best agricultural lands are held by the military." The Act transferring the island specifically reserves to

* See, Laura Thompson, *Guam and Its People* (Princeton University Press, 1947).

the Navy absolute control over all its installations and all its operations in Guam, and, anyway—as the *Times* (July 16, 1950) noted—"martial law could be proclaimed on ten minutes' notice. . . ."

Just to make sure, President Truman, by executive order, October 30, 1950, reserved to the Navy Department jurisdiction over all military installations and supporting facilities in Guam. And on February 13, 1951, Truman's Governor of Guam—Carlton Skinner, a businessman from nearby Connecticut—turned over the island's militia force to the U.S. Marines. As the N. Y. *Times* said—that's showing our "good faith"!

The U.S. Navy administers—"in trust for the United Nations"—the lives of over 120,000 people who inhabit the Marshall, Marianas and Carolina islands. What is going on there may be judged from two official pronouncements. One, the order of Admiral Wright dated April 3, 1947, announces a *maximum* wage scale for the natives of the U.S. Pacific Trust Territory. It is: for apprentices, under 16 years of age, 3-5 cents and hour; for domestic workers, 4-6 cents an hour; for common laborers, 5-7½ cents per hour; for semi-skilled workers, 7½-9 cents per hour; for clerks, $15-$36 per month; for teachers, $20-75 per month. These are *maximum* figures.

The next item comes from the Navy's newspaper on Saipan—the *Saipanorama* of October 28, 1947:

NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE NOTICE

The Deputy High Commissioner for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is considering granting a lease of large parts of the Island of Tinian for commercial agriculture. He is ready to receive proposals for such leases from residents of the Trust Territory, Guam, the Continental United States or any other U.S. territory or possession.

All persons interested are invited to submit their proposals in writing. . . . Only proposals contemplating large-scale commercial agriculture are desired.

R. B. Randolph
Chief of Staff

Thus, the Democratic-Republican Real Estate Company, Inc., wins over the colored peoples of the Pacific to the American Way of Life.

THE record establishes without any quesion the fact that racism is entwined within and forms an organic part of official U.S. policy and practice—on every level, local, state and federal. This exists despite every protestation to the contrary and despite numerous constitutional and treaty obligations which it violates. It exists not as an aberration, not as an unfortunate slip or oversight; it exists as a coldly-calculated and economically vital part of the U.S. imperialistic social order.

To fight against it is to fight against imperialism, to fight against the drive towards fascism and war and therefore to fight for the life and well-being of the overwhelming mass of American people.

The legal battle against these racist statutes and administrative practices, on the basis of their arbitrary, invidious and anti-social nature is by no means predestined to fail. Victories have been won. To cite a few representative instances just within the past few years: the Jim Crow pattern of Southern higher education has begun to crack, the League of Latin-American citizens has led in breaking through some discriminatory regulations in Texas and California, the Alaska Native Sisterhood succeeded in forcing an anti-discrimination law on that territory's statute books, and the United Public Workers forced the removal of Jim Crow signs in the Canal. There are, too, positive anti-racist laws in existence—even in Louisiana and West Virginia, as well as in states like Connecticut, Illinois and New Jersey—but effective enforcement comes only with sufficient organized pressure.

With the impetus from the democratic struggles of Reconstruction, the Federal government passed a Civil Rights Act in 1875. Its preamble said: ". . . it is essential to just government . . . to mete out equal justice to all, of whatever nativity, race, color, or persuasion, religious or political."

Though the Supreme Court invalidated this Act in 1883, its truth was not invalidated. The words of that preamble *are* true and the laws of the government of the United States prove it to be unjust. To change those laws and to bring our nation's legislation and practice into accord with that preamble is a patriotic cause the success of which will assure equality and freedom for all Americans—and peace for the world.

Alberto Beltrán

School-boy's Lesson

by JOSEPH NORTH

BY THE time the war ended we were Americans. In those evenings under the flaring gas lamp in the whitewashed kitchen I had roused the New England countryside with Paul Revere and had shed my blood on the slopes of Gettysburg. I wept when I heard Booth's pistol crack in Ford's Theatre and Old Abe fell. The Lincoln legend bears powerfully on the young of the immigrant: the lanky woodchopper who learned his letters by candlelight is ancestor of the urchin reared in Blakelee's Alley.

History, which entranced me then as it does today, ingrained in me the concept, which I could scarcely express but which I ardently felt, that ours is a nation of immigrants. And I regarded myself as native as any scion born in the red-brick mansions of Boston's Beacon Street. The Founding Fathers were mine too, and had drawn their swords for our freedom. Ours. Though their names were Washington and Jefferson and Madison, could they not have been Kowalski or Sinkiewicz or Magidoff? And had there not been Kosciuszko, Pulaski, Lafayette? I counted myself, without reserve or hesitance, as native as Daniel Boone. A coonskin hat was the dearest treasure of the immigrant at twelve.

This is not to say that I ignored our poverty or that I was a Jew and my mother and father spoke the language with the tell-tale accent of the newcomer. Certainly there were those who preferred that I never forget that. I suffered the common slur and had my share of the epithet and I survived many a battle over that. It brought me my share of blackened eyes and sore bruises and at one time, for months, I fought my way down the streets to the schoolhouse every morning and my way back home every afternoon. I kept a careful record in a lined notebook of my combats and, as objectively as I could, graded my wars—"won," "draw" or "lost."

The bruise of the street could not, however, erase the overwhelming word of the book. I can distinctly recall my credo at sixteen, the

result, primarily, of ten public school years. This I had come to believe: the United States of America was indisputably the world's greatest, freest land. Injustices, indignities such as we suffered, would pass away as we climbed the grand, ascendant spiral of our American democracy. I could recite the words on the sacred parchment our forefathers had signed and nobody need persuade me that all men are created free, and under our hallowed code, our just law, are equal.

I believed, passionately, with all the faith of the young, everything I read and my Pennsylvania countryside was evidence, proof positive, of its truth. Not far off was Valley Forge, and I had sat, bareheaded, silent in Constitution Hall, a mere hour from my home.

Our country's traditions inspired the immigrant child, brightened the gray of our poverty. I was not unique at all for this was equally true of my classmates and cronies, the members of my old gang, all of whom were sons of immigrants—Polish, Irish, Ukrainians, Italians, Jews, Czechs. We were Americans all.

Before we were ten we re-lived the Revolution every February in bright pageants at our grade school, strutting in three-cornered hats, wigs, swords and great rusty muskets. "And you, Joseph," our teacher had said this time, "you are Thomas Jefferson."

"Mom," I said, bursting into our kitchen that afternoon, "guess what. I'm Thomas Jefferson."

She looked up from the big pot in which a vegetable soup bubbled. "Thomas Jefferson?" she puzzled. "Jefferson?"

"Oh, you know, Mom, he wrote the Declaration of Independence. On Fourth of July. You know he said all men are free and equal."

"M-m," she said, and continued stirring the soup.

"But Mom," I said, crestfallen, "*he* wrote the Declaration of Independence. I'm going to wear a hat like he wore, like George Washington wore. Oh, you know, like the picture on the calendar. And you got to make a coat for me like our forefathers wore."

"Forefathers?" she asked, eyeing me.

"You know, Mom, the Founding Fathers." I ran for my history book, thumbed through the pages and excitedly showed her a picture of the great men on the memorable day at Independence Hall.

She scanned the page and sighed. "Headache enough I've got," she said; but that evening she sat sewing, under the gas-lamp, and I watched her intently and with satisfaction. "Like Betsy Ross," I thought admiringly.

I practiced my lines in my bedroom, and, later, rehearsed them with Stanislaw Lopakov, our Washington—a tow-headed, chunky son of a Polish laborer, and Emilio Nacrelli, a sloe-eyed agile youngster who was our star third-baseman. Emilio wore a pair of octagonal spectacles for the occasion, his chief prop.

Washington, Jefferson and Franklin strutted ponderously in a weedy, empty lot adjoining a big deserted warehouse where large empty boxes lay piled in heaps, making an excellent stage. The rest of our gang sat dubiously on other boxes, their feet dangling, as they watched us.

"I'm sick and tired of being enslaved by that tyrant King George III," Emilio Franklin said, carefully adjusting his spectacles. "How about you, Mr. Washington?" he asked Stanislaw who leaped adroitly from the top of one careening heap of boxes to another. The Father of Our Country restored his balance, adjusted his three-cornered hat and said sonorously, "It is high time indeed for liberty."

Franklin raised a warning forefinger. "But," he said, "we must hang together or we'll hang separately."

Jefferson thereupon drew a quill, plucked that afternoon from the tail-feathers of a chicken, and began writing handsomely on an empty crate, mumbling to himself. "When in the course of human events..." he intoned.

Our cronies eyed us enviously as we continued the rehearsal of those stirring days. They pleaded a chance to try on the tri-cornered hats and Franklin's intriguing spectacles. Generously we gave them each a turn and before the pageant they knew our parts as well as we. We continued our rehearsal until well after darkness, until the harassed mothers—in half a dozen languages—called the plotting Colonials home to their beds.

THAT we lived in hovels and hunger often notched another nick in our belt, well, hadn't Poor Richard walked up Market Street with nothing to his name but three small loaves of bread? And when he died, the cannons boomed for him, for he had died patriot, scientist, statesman, sage—and rich. "Early to bed, early to rise," Poor Richard had said, "makes a man healthy, wealthy and wise." We studied the maxims of his Almanac. We need only nurture the American qualities of fortitude, perseverance and thrift to conquer the future. "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves that we are underlings,"

Miss Williams, our English teacher, underlined on the blackboard as she taught us the Bard's wisdom.

And Mr. Peale, our bald, gimlet-eyed high-school principal, rose to fervid peroration on the assembly platform: "So consider the unknown auto mechanic, in his greasy overalls, who rose to become the richest man in the world today." He taught us the adoration, the limitless promise, of the Model T.

America, indeed, promised much and I reveled in its glory, counted its attributes like a miser his gold. I knew our nation's facts and statistics, the population of every major city, the capital of every state: Augusta, Helena, Sacramento, Springfield, Dover, Annapolis, Montgomery, Olympia. . . . In my mind's eye I could see Cleveland on a swirling river called the Cuyahoga, the heights of San Francisco at the Golden Gate, the moss climbing the porticoes of St. Augustine. I loved the hills, riverside, woods of my own county which I explored like a brave of the Lenni Lenapes who had lived here.

I loved my school, entered it as though it were a temple, and none studied more ardently. My books were sacrosanct and if it rained when I carried them home, I tucked them reverently inside my shirt so no stray raindrop could fall on them. Though it was the fashion to decry the authority of the teachers and juvenile custom demanded defiance, in reality I trusted them, and many, most, as I look back, deserved that trust. It is impossible to hoodwink a child. The women who had chosen the teacher's calling had devotion to their task, a democratic regard for the polyglot assortment of children before them. This was especially true of the early school years. To this day I recall prim, tiny Miss Brown, our second grade teacher, hugging me, and though I made the necessary remonstration, I was pleased. I still wore the long blouse of the Old Country and my head was shaven like a Ukrainian peasant child's.

The teachers were, I later knew, daughters themselves of the poor or the folk of the lower middle-classes and they, too, believed the magnificent truths of our country's heritage. They taught what they knew, diligently and with full conscience. There was much they didn't know, but they were unaware of their own ignorance. They had no inkling of history's innermost truths, the compelling motivations of society, its division into contending classes, the determining weight of ownership and its mode of acquirement. They transmitted their share of wisdom and their ignorance, their partialities and prejudices,

to us. Unwittingly, in teaching us our national glory, they taught us to accept our class lot.

We, the immigrants, the poor, could not but know that we lived in an imperfect world. That was all too obvious and often painfully so. But the sacred digits 1776 earmarked the future for us. This credo our schools taught us, and this we accepted as our gospel.

I took to learning zealously and read everything that came my way, a disorderly, variegated choice. I floated down the Mississippi with Jim and sought hidden treasure with Tom Sawyer. The immigrant's son stalked deer with Cooper's Algonquins and I knew the shores of Gitchee Gumee as well as my own Delaware. I read at dusk and sneaked a few pages at dawn, like a studious young monk, in a monastery, at his Scriptures. Often my mother found me asleep with the book on my chest. The tall, thin, kindly spinster at the Public Library knew me as well as my mother and saved books for me which she felt were to my liking: Poe, Longfellow, Twain, Hawthorne, Melville, Stevenson. My mother, fearful that I would lose my eyesight altogether, forbade me to read after dark, and once, when she burst into my room to find I had disobeyed, she flung Hiawatha out the window and was horrified when I bolted through the window after him. Fortunately, my window opened on a shed a few feet below.

BUT the lore of books was not my entire education: I learned from another treasury of knowledge: work. At the age of nine I swept the floors in the clothing-store of an aged, taciturn Irishman who laconically grilled me on my knowledge. In the summer, as soon as I had the heft and height, I hid my age and found work running bobbins in the textile mill and later, tossing rivets in the big shipyard. But I returned to school, willingly, gaily, after every summer of work and each September, when the leaves began to turn and the evenings grew cool, excited me with the prospect of the new school year.

Not that shipyard labors wore me down, or that physical labor was abhorrent, for I was strong and wiry enough. But I had already determined, under my folks' prodding and my own desire, to continue my studies through the university—the dream of the immigrant. "Study," my elders prayerfully urged, for they regarded learning as the key to a richer future than theirs. If the New World had fallen short in so many ways, it had one solid virtue. It offered their sons and daughters opportunity to unlock the wonder of books.

Our high school stood on a hillside, a great gray-stone building topped by a handsome medieval tower from which you could see the river and its plodding craft, the hills and woods of the rolling back country, the criss-cross of city streets. I loved every particle of the building: it was a castle of fascination and reward. I studied the declensions of Latin and the ponderous German verb, happily set up my retorts in the chemistry laboratory, and I reveled in the literature classes. I have yet to encounter a more passionate exponent of Shakespeare than Mrs. Williams, a little, withered, red-haired woman. Her body danced, her eyes shone as she read aloud from Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Macbeth. She hissed, whispered, connived and stabbed, held us enthralled as alternately she was witch, Highland lord, scheming lady, Roman tribune. I could never accept Shaw's dictum that he who can't, teaches. No, not after Miss Williams. She taught and succeeded in her purpose, galvanized into ardent Shakespearians a classroom full of immigrant children whose parents could scarcely speak the language. We went about the corridors declaiming "When shall we three meet again?" or "I came here not to praise Caesar but to bury him."

Stooped, gray-haired Mr. Hartley taught geometry with passion; his dim, blue eyes shone behind his spectacles as he stood there in his shabby, wrinkled gray suit and spoke of "Euclid's magic." There were other teachers too, whose love for their calling inspired them, and I have often thought of the splendid, anonymous souls in a thousand towns and backwood villages who sought, diligently, ardently, to transmit their love for man's culture to the contemporary young.

There were exceptions, naturally, like the principal whose perpetual bright, toothy smile concealed a mean, devilish soul. He tip-toed through the halls, peering into the faces of the passers-by, turning on and off his controlled smile. He beamed on the sons and daughters of the town's upper crust, smiled at the general run, and managed a scarcely discernible twist of the lip for the poorest and for the Negro children. He was a pedagogue-politician, a numerous breed these days, with ears cocked for the noises outside the walls of the schoolhouse, seeking the direction of the political winds, the will of the school-board.

Occasionally when a mathematics teacher fell ill, he would suddenly appear, noiselessly, in the classroom, mount the little platform and the difference in his manner was painful to everyone in the room. If the son of a Wetherill or a Montgomery stumbled over Euclid's propositions he smiled, gently corrected him and passed on. If the son of a

Jones or Smith or Rosenberg faltered (and if their parents owned neither wealth nor status in the community) the half-smile became a sneer. If the children's parents lived on the waterfront or were Negro then his sarcasm burned. "A teacher isn't God," he told one frightened child, "We can't graft a brain in your head, a brain in your head." He had a habit, a kind of verbal tic, that obliged him to repeat the last words in a sentence.

THE four years passed quickly and the time of graduation approached. Being in the upper category of scholarship I received a formal letter that invited me to take the examination for a four-year scholarship at the University of Pennsylvania: the juiciest plum of all our school awards. The local Rotary Club had, in a fanfare of newspaper publicity, announced that it would give three such prizes to the highest in the tests.

And, great day, the immigrant's son was one of the three. My name and picture appeared in the local newspaper: I had won fame. Overnight I became a celebrity in our neighborhood. The folks on the street crowded into our kitchen to congratulate my mother whose eyes shone and she embraced me again and again. "We'll have a party," she said, and she called Mrs. Trippet across the fence. Other neighbors arrived with copies of the afternoon newspaper.

Fedyos came from the other end of the city where he lived now, his glossy lock over his forehead and he embraced me, tweaking my cheek in the Old Country fashion. "I saw it in the paper," he said happily, and he drew a bottle of whiskey from his coat. "Blakelee's Alley," he shouted jubilantly, "to the boys of Blakelee's Alley, as good as the best." We drank and the phonograph played its two worn records, "The Old Dominion Line" and Caruso's "Pearl Fisherman." Mrs. Trippet was persuaded to dance and Fedyos took a turn around the parlor with her, his black eyes shining. The room was jammed and the impromptu party went on into the morning. The immigrants, the Negro women, the neighborhood poor rejoiced, for the triumph belonged to all—one of their own had illustrated *their* mettle and each frolicked as though his son had won the great prize.

At school my classmates, too, clapped me on the back. "You deserved it," Guy, the Italian shopkeeper's son, said. My teachers smiled on me and Miss Williams commended me before the class. "He loved Shakespeare," she said beaming. "If you love the Bard you can make

your mark anywhere." She quoted a few appropriate lines from *Julius Caesar.*

That afternoon I received a note to appear in the principal's office immediately after school. When I arrived he rose from his desk, disarmed me with his maximum smile, shook hands, and closed the door carefully. He sat down again, smoothed the few gray hairs that hung over his bald forehead.

I sat, awaiting some homilies of tribute, some praise for my hard work. He cleared his throat. "That scholarship," he said, staring at the desk, "that scholarship." I smiled, waiting. "That scholarship, as you know, was given by the Rotary Club. The merchants congratulate you, and of course, so do I for your fine record. It is what we expect. We teach and we mold character, mold character."

I nodded, shifted in my chair and glanced out the window catching a glimpse of a big black freighter towed downstream. "Character," he said. "More important than success, Joseph. America needs spine. And you have it, you have it. Backbone. You can take the outrageous slings and arrows of fortune, as Miss Williams would say, along with your triumphs, along with your triumphs," he echoed, in his characteristic tic.

He rose from the chair and walked to the window, took off his glasses, wiped them. "What I have to say isn't pleasant," he mumbled. I stirred uneasily, looking intently at him, beginning to wonder.

"What I have to say is this, is this. You know the Rotary Club consists of merchants of a certain faith in this town which happens not to be yours. They met last evening and they came to a decision. They respect and admire your splendid showing, mark you, a grade of 92 for the three examinations is exemplary, but they regret they had to come to a decision"—he coughed—"a decision."

I sat on the edge of the chair, my heart pounding. "I may as well come to the point," he said, as though to himself. "They feel that there are enough merchants in this town of your own faith, Joseph, of your own kind, to tender you a scholarship. So they regret they must withdraw the scholarship in your case. But they trust," he added hastily, "that your own faith won't let you down." He beamed his all-out smile. "Your faith is justly famous for its devotion to its own kind."

"You mean," I asked slowly, "You mean I don't have a scholarship?" He averted his eyes. "Well, not that. I merely mean that the Rotary Club has come to a decision, you see, that your faith should provide

for its own. I am certain you have merely to suggest it to them," said, rising suddenly, beaming again, "and I, that is, we, are certa you will have your scholarship, which, of course, you richly deserv

I sat silent, staring at him a long moment. "I see," I said, final and rose.

I LEFT the school and walked slowly, bewildered, aimlessly, towa the river front which had so often brought us solace. I was afra to return home, to face my mother and the neighbors. I felt, someho as though I had become a culprit, had committed some crime, v suddenly outcast.

I passed the City Hall with its plaque commemorating Washingto visit, passed Welsh Street and the old square red-brick building on corner, reputed to be the house which harbored the runaway sla of the Underground Railway. I passed the great cranes and high pic fence of the shipyard and heard the hoarse blasts of the tugboats.

The Jewish merchants? I knew none of them and I told mys bitterly I would die before I would beg anybody. I had won fai hadn't I? Nobody said the contest was for Christians only, had th They asked everybody in the upper quarter of the class to take exam, didn't they?

I entered my home and flung my cap on the floor and sat down the kitchen. When I blurted the tale to my mother she sat before her hands folded in her lap, and her eyes narrowed. "You'll go college," she said, finally. "And you won't beg anybody. You won they cheated you. They can burn in the hottest fires of hell. I've sev and I've scrubbed and I can do it again. You'll go." She rose went to the stove.

"Don't think about it," she said suddenly, her back toward Then she turned abruptly, her eyes dim. "What will you have supper?" She named my favorite dishes. "Tonight you'll have whate you want. We'll feast. We'll have a banquet," she said.

"A banquet," she repeated, her voice rising. "May their souls b in hell."

I went outside and sat on the steps.

My education had begun.

For Germany's Youth

by ANNA SEGHERS

A WRITER is always glad to get letters from readers—whether they praise or criticize his work. But the letter I received last week was unusually welcome. It came unexpectedly, bearing the postmark of a little place in Western Germany. The man who wrote it is old. He was my schoolteacher in the Rhineland, when I was ten years old. He was a good teacher. I was very fond of him, and I am just as fond of him today.

If a teacher can inspire that kind of feeling in a pupil—and the feeling still remains intact when the pupil herself has gray hair—then he must have been an excellent teacher. Goethe used the term "original impression" to denote the first pure and unalloyed sentiment aroused in a child by an event or an idea. That was what my teacher aroused in me—more warmly than any other human being. Whether it was a line of German poetry I recited, a landscape in which I lived, or an incident from the history of our people, my teacher was himself always an integral part of the subject he taught. It was as if he realized the responsibility thrust on anyone who engenders "original impressions" in a child. Later, when I continued my studies, our paths separated. He went on teaching elementary school pupils—that is, he continued to impart "original impressions." I studied for my B.A. degree. I believe my teacher may have been active in the school-reform movement which developed in Germany toward the end of World War I or shortly thereafter. I only know that under Hitler he suffered greatly.

Of course, I must hasten to add that he was not the only teacher whose memory I still cherish with fondness and gratitude. I often think of many of my teachers: what they taught me—whether in history, geography, science, or foreign languages—did not fall on

barren soil. To their honor let it be said that in the "Third Reic the best of them were either dismissed, jailed, or died in exile. So of them suffered for political, others for religious reasons. My Rhi land teacher was not the only one who refused to teach young pe ple things that his mind and heart despised.

Now the German teachers again face a crucial decision. Wh shall they teach the young people? The problem is upon them alm before they realized it. For they were utterly exhausted by what ha pened in Germany, considering themselves lucky to get back to th family and profession after the horrors of World War II. Must th again take up a struggle which many of them consider futile, wh they compare the forces arrayed against them with their own mod selves? Perhaps many of them think it better to avoid controvers issues in the classroom and to concentrate solely on factual materi Then at least they will not have to *lie*. But that is not my idea of t teaching profession. After all, I do not retain warm memories of teacher because he taught me that the square of the hypotenuse of right-angle triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the oth two sides. But I do remember how my favorite teacher behaved wh our town was occupied by the military. He was holding forth in drawing class, and he shouted to the soldiers: "Don't disturb circles!" So I learned that knowledge—even circles and squares often demands sacrifices.

Eighteen years ago there were many in Germany who imagin they could retreat with their factual knowledge into a "neutral" zone into an "inner Reich," safe from attacks and clashes. The Nazis sh tered these inner and outer Reichs. They forced doctors to extermin "offspring of the congenitally diseased" and to carry out murderc experiments on prisoners. They compelled chemists to develop pois gases for the war industries. They made schoolteachers elimin Heinrich Heine from the textbooks and teach their classes that go was bad and bad good. And how did these inner and outer Rei end? In terrible inner and outer ruins!

A WISE and devoted teacher knows that many of the decisions pupils will have to make as grown-ups depend on his early guida in the classroom. He knows the part he plays in shaping "origi impressions." What is the German schoolteacher going to tell his c

today? When he takes up the topic of the Thirty Years' War, will he impress upon his pupils that it was a happy period, to which we all look back with a sense of longing? Germany a battlefield, the harvests laid waste, the cities destroyed, the rising middle class and artisans killed off, the youth fighting against one another as mercenary hirelings! No, he does not want that; and he knows that the worst lies are the lies told to children. Yet he cannot awaken in his pupils the sense of German unity, of Germany's history, language, and labor, of the deep yearning for peace which fills every single mother, teen-ager, and child—and at the same time condemn these things as lies. Will he delude first himself and then his pupils with the Hitler lie: We want peace but the others won't leave us in peace?

How is he to explain to the children why tanks are again rolling through the streets of German cities? Why arms budgets are being increased while the barest necessities of life are lacking? Why the Bonn government rejects all proposals of the German Democratic Republic to get together and discuss ways and means of keeping the peace? The German schoolteacher is now part of a new chapter of history, upon which coming generations of schoolchildren will have to pass judgment—if there are any classrooms or human beings left. That too is part of his assignment. It is up to him whether his pupils graduate from school as courageous fighters for freedom or as dull-witted louts, softened up and ripe for cannon fodder.

Shortly after World War II a group of orphans, rescued from a concentration camp, came to Frankfurt. They were warmly received and cared for. They were given food and drink and toys. A little girl, handed a doll as a present, began to sob. Growing almost hysterical, she cried out: "Why are you giving me a dead child to play with?" That was the result of fascism, war, and concentration camps. I cannot re-tell the story without feeling deep anxiety for my own children, for all children.

Here in Eastern Germany our teachers and writers are helping to educate the young. We who have lost so many dear ones as a result of Hitlerism and war must decide whether to educate the youth for war or for peace. We know what is allowed and what is forbidden in Eastern Germany. Hence, whoever is against our peace laws outlawing all war-mongering propaganda is against us; he is against our sacrificed dead.

Here in Eastern Germany we see a new youth growing up, faci the future with joy. We see tractors instead of tanks. Our teache developing and fostering all the aptitudes of our young people, do r call day night or night day. They teach current affairs too. They expla the words "Atlantic Pact" and "American Imperialism." But th also point out the difference between Wall Street and the Ma Streets of America, people with decent, hard-working men and wom

The big youth rally during Whitsuntide Week of 1950 was a ma nificent example of peace and joy. The young men and women fr East and West Germany realized that their solidarity—their simp youthful, but unbreakable ties of friendship—meant the unity of G many and world peace. Their linked arms signified German uni Their Whitsuntide gathering was but the prelude to the world you meeting which is to take place this summer, when black, white, brow and yellow hands will be linked to forge a circle of global unity. The young people have learned the lesson of Soviet youth: *We need r travel the road to death. There is a way out, a road to life.*

THE teachers must go forward on this road. It is a hard road bu rewarding one. Carefully studied homework and memorizing few bare facts are not enough provisions for this road to life. Amo the great peoples of Europe the teachers have always been in t vanguard of the movement for freedom and unity. When Russi youth fought against Tsarism, they found support among their tea ers. Teachers pointed to the great examples in the history of the R sian people, in their language, art, and science. Whole schools a universities, teachers and students together, were fired by the id of the Russian Revolution. In Western Europe too, when France under the Nazi yoke, many teachers considered it their duty to wa their students of the lies of Hitler and their own Vichy Government braving persecution and risking their own personal safety!

In our unhappy German past many teachers enthusiastically preach militarism in our schools. They ignored or falsified the great examp in our German history of fighters for justice and freedom. Then ca a generation of Nazi teachers—deceivers themselves duped—who p ceded their pupils on the field of battle.

When the Allies negotiated at Potsdam after World War II, it w perhaps the first time in history that education of the young and t

teaching profession itself became points of discussion in a political document. Their agreement provided for a re-vamping of Germany's structure, not for its extinction. The German schools were called upon to eliminate all militaristic elements from teaching staffs as well as from the classroom. Here in East Germany, liberated from Nazism by the Soviet armies, we have followed that course. In West Germany, where war criminals again sit in places of honor, young girls and boys are once more being taught the "virtues" of militarist subservience. They learn from the past and present only enough to make their future seem dark and ominous indeed. To their unanswered questions they are given only one answer; for the countless talents lying unused within them, they can find only one outlet: the battlefield. They can absorb only one concept of equality: equality in the face of death.

The eyes of peace-loving people throughout the world turn anxiously yet hopefully toward Germany. Why? Because if the split in Germany is perpetuated it means war for everyone; if Germany insists on her unity, it means peace for everyone. What do the teachers say about this burning issue, every morning in their classrooms? What do they tell their pale, anemic-looking city children? Their sunburned peasant children?

I know what my old schoolteacher is saying if he is still in the school system. But what about his colleagues? Remember the words of a shop steward in the Victoria Works in Nuremberg: "If we working people in Germany are not capable of fighting for democracy as we conceive of it, then we don't deserve to have the sun shine on us." Do you know of any job more important than the schoolteacher's? He turns out human beings.

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

NEW CLOTHES FOR *Chiang*

by FREDERICK V. FIELD

IN AUGUST, 1949, the State Department went to considerable effort to publish a volume of 1,095 pages the central theme of which was the hopeless corruption, inefficiency, defeatism, ineptness and unpopularity of Chiang Kai-shek and his Kuomintang regime. As Mr. Acheson informed the President in transmitting the record, the Kuomintang's "leaders had proved incapable of meeting the crisis confronting them, its troops had lost the will to fight, and its government had lost popular support." The inescapable conclusion reached by the press and the public in this country as well as elsewhere in the world was that at long last the American government was abandoning the criminal alliance with Chiang. This was a logical conclusion, for it is not customary, even in the strange arena of capitalist diplomacy, to retain cordial relations with a man and his clique whom you have excoriated in an official public document of over a thousand pages.

Less than two years later Chiang Kai-shek, surrounded by the same kind of sycophants, has again become the main prop and ally of the U.S. government's Far Eastern policy and the recipient of large-scale military, political and economic aid. The participants on both sides of the alleged dispute between the President and MacArthur are fully agreed not only on the importance of maintaining the present rump Chinese government on the island of Taiwan but on returning it to the mainland by force. It has become difficult to figure out who is the more enthusiastic in promoting Chiang Kai-shek as the symbol of Americanism in East Asia. The MacArthur-Taft group extols the crucial importance of Taiwan and its rulers to the continuation of the American way of life. The Administration generals and politicians echo these sentiments and the State Department quickly calls for liquidation of everything that the people of China have won in their long struggle for freedom.

There is a widespread impression that the U.S. government, having obviously changed its mind on Chiang Kai-shek, has also made a drastic reversal of the policy implicit in its 1949 White Paper. It is generally felt, moreover, that the Truman-Acheson-Marshall group, in order to save their political skins, have made basic policy changes toward the MacArthur-Taft-McCarthy position. To support these interpretations there is the evidence of Korea, which was within MacArthur's strategic scheme and outside Acheson's; there is the evidence of Taiwan, which the whole MacArthur crowd included and the whole Truman crowd excluded; there is the evidence of the Chinese People's Republic itself toward which the State Department around December and January of 1949-50 seemed prepared to make some concessions, while MacArthur was openly flirting with Chiang Kai-shek whose madame's hand he delicately kissed before a staged battery of cameras some months later. There is also the substantial evidence that one school of war-makers of which Truman is the titular leader are Europe-firsters and the other school of war-makers of which MacArthur is the most voluble and melodramatic are Asia-firsters.

Obviously there is plenty of evidence that some kind of dispute has been under way and a great deal of confusion as to just how important this dispute may be, what the issues are dividing the two camps, and how basic are the divisions. Decent Americans, who are most Americans, and who are opposed to all war-mongers regardless of the camp to which they belong, find themselves confused, as the government wants them to be.

Possibly a great deal of the confusion can be dissipated by examining how and why the figure of Chiang Kai-shek has been in, out, and then in again as a central theme of the government's Far Eastern policy.

CHIANG is both an individual and a symbol of a particular way of life and of certain institutions. As an individual he has always been theoretically replaceable by others who stood for the same institutions. There have been times, as during the latter stages of Kuomintang tenure on the mainland or the early period of the rump government on Taiwan, when the U.S. government was desperately searching for another "strong man" to lead the Chinese away from the liberation they were seeking. But events have turned out in such a way that the mode of life which the American rulers chose for the Chinese

people remained identified in the long run with the individual Chiang Kai-shek. Over a considerable period of years Chiang has remained the personification of the policies and traditions which the Chinese people did not want and eventually repudiated but which Washington insisted upon trying to force upon them.

Chiang Kai-shek represents the corruption and betrayal of a particular stage of the Chinese revolution by its internal and external enemies. Mao Tse-tung has often pointed out that the Chinese revolution, as other revolutions, followed a zig-zag course. During its long history it has on several occasions been diverted from its main course by a combination of the strength of its enemies and its own errors and weaknesses. Such a period occurred during 1927 when substantial elements of the Chinese bourgeoisie sided with the feudal gentry and with the help of the foreign imperialists turned against the revolutionary movement which had reached a high point of organization and political understanding. Chiang Kai-shek emerged as the front or "strong man" of this betrayal.

Ever since, and including the period of the Anti-Japanese War, this man and what he represents have been (excluding the White Paper period) the main prop of the U.S. government's Far Eastern position. For a number of years this was a reasonably effective prop for the foreign imperialists. From 1927 to the outbreak of China's war of defense against Japan in 1937, Chiang was the spokesman for the bulk of the Chinese bourgeoisie and for the entire semi-feudal landlord class. Here we may remind ourselves of Mao Tse-tung's well-known definition of the Chinese bourgeoisie (from *China's New Democracy*, written toward the end of 1940):

> "Revolutionary character on the one hand, compromising character on the other—such is the dual character of the Chinese bourgeoisie. This dual character was also seen in the European and American bourgeoisie according to history. To unite with the workers and the peasants to oppose the enemy when the enemy is endangering them and to unite with the enemy to oppose the workers and the peasants when the latter are awakening is a general rule for the bourgeoisie of various countries, only, the Chinese bourgeoisie shows this characteristic more vividly."

It had been the very strength of the genuinely revolutionary classes

the workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie, during the 1924-26 period, which had frightened the middle and big bourgeoisie back into the arms of the feudalists and imperialists for the 1927-37 period.

The Anti-Japanese War, representing a common and over-riding danger of national extermination, divided the Chinese bourgeoisie, a section of the great landlords and upper bourgeoisie following Wang Ching-wei into the arms of the Japanese invaders, and the remainder forming to a certain extent a front of national defense with the workers, peasants and artisans. Chiang Kai-shek, during the early part of this period, was the figurehead for the national coalition; in the latter years of the war he became distrusted at home as well as abroad. Acheson, for instance, notes in the White Paper that "it was considered too dangerous for the United States to consult with the National Government regarding the Yalta Agreement. . . . It was felt that there was grave risk that secret information transmitted to the Nationalist capital at this time would become available to the Japanese almost immediately. . . ."

CHIANG KAI-SHEK'S class basis in Chinese society became seriously narrowed after the Anti-Japanese War. From 1945 on the Chinese bourgeoisie was threatened by U.S. interventionists allied with Chinese feudal-bureaucrats. The existence of the nation as well as the existence of an independent bourgeoisie was again jeopardized as it had been by the Japanese. As in that earlier period a new national unity was hammered out among all the patriotic classes, including large sections of the bourgeoisie, while only certain of the upper bourgeois groups along with the big landlords betrayed the nation by becoming collaborationists of the American imperialists. But this time Chiang Kai-shek and his clique openly became collaborationist and allied themselves with the Americans. This puppet group was, after years of civil war, ousted, along with their American masters, from the Chinese mainland and found refuge under U.S. military protection on the island of Taiwan. The success of the revolution, moreover, on the one hand, began the rapid elimination of the landlords as a class and, on the other, integrated the national bourgeoisie into its own national struggles.

Chiang Kai-shek has thus become, for the present period, somewhat analagous to what Wang Ching-wei was during the Anti-Japanese

War, a tool of the foreign aggressor possessing no roots in the Chinese nation except among the most corrupted, treacherous circles. In a certain sense Chiang today represents even less that did Wang in the earlier period, for whereas the latter, under the aegis of the Japanese, had a foothold on the mainland and in many of the most important cities, Chiang and his wretched cohorts have been relegated to an island in the Pacific.

This is the man whom the politicians from Taft to Acheson and the generals from MacArthur to Marshall choose as their present-day symbol of American Far Eastern policy. The re-emergence of this symbol is the logical outcome of the aggressive policies upon which the American bi-partisans have been engaged. The White Paper of the summer of 1949 with its repudiation of Chiang was a temporary and short-lived aberration by certain elements in the government who thought they could wade through the manure pile without soiling their feet.

The major Far Eastern aim of the bi-partisans after the war against Japan had been to gain control over China by forcing upon the Chinese people a puppet government dedicated to keeping Chinese society in a semi-feudal, semi-colonial status. Chiang Kai-shek had, under different international and internal conditions, carried out such a task ever since 1927; with heavy military and financial aid the Washington pundits figured he could do it again under the conditions which prevailed after the Japanese surrender. They were completely mistaken. Chiang became thoroughly discredited throughout the length and breadth of the land and his armed forces were either won over to the popular cause or decimated by the People's Army. U.S. intervention on his behalf served not to enslave the Chinese people to its imperialist designs but to alienate the American rulers and their policies from the mainland of China and to cause a severe crisis within their circles.

Chiang Kai-shek, momentarily, became a scapegoat for the decisive defeat of the American plans. This is the period reflected in the State Department's White Paper. Its thousand-odd pages are replete with denunciations of Chiang, his clique and the institutions for which he stood. It is worth looking back at a few of these comments.

ACHESON, for instance, referring to the Kuomintang in 1949 said that, "In the opinion of many observers they had sunk into corruption, into a scramble for place and power, and into a reliance on the


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NEVER DIE

United States to win the war for them and to preserve their own domestic supremacy." "The mass of the Chinese people," he added, "were coming more and more to lose confidence in the Government."

Major General David Barr, head of the United States Advisory Group to the Chiang Government, tried to explain the failure of the American policies by reporting: "the Nationalist Army was burdened with an unsound strategy which was conceived by a politically influenced and militarily inept high command." He went on to say that a principal reason for the inefficiency and corruption of Nationalist officers "was the support and loyalty of the Generalissimo for his old army comrades which kept them in positions of high responsibility regardless of their qualifications. A direct result of this practice is the unsound strategy and faulty tactics so obviously displayed in the fight against the Communists."

One of the American Foreign Service Officers, John Stewart Service, had reported as early as 1944 that "The government and military structure is being permeated and demoralized from top to bottom by corruption, unprecedented in scale and openness." He refers to Chiang Kai-shek's "loss of realistic flexibility and a hardening of narrowly conservative views," to his "growing megalomania and his unfortunate attempts to be 'sage' as well as leader." At about the same time General Stilwell was reporting to the Chief of Staff in Washington that Chiang Kai-shek "will only continue his policy and delay, while grabbing for loans and postwar aid, for the purpose of maintining his present position, based on one-party government, a reactionary policy, or suppression of democratic ideas with the active aid of his gestapo."

Lt. General Albert C. Wedemeyer, himself a reactionary, in a report to the President in the fall of 1947 spoke of the Kuomintang "whose reactionary leadership, repression and corruption have caused a loss of popular faith in the Government."

Ambassador John Leighton Stuart told the State Department in 1948 in a dispatch on "the Generalissimo himself" that "long experience with him suggests that he is no longer capable of changing and reforming or of discarding inefficient associates. . . ."

And so it went wherever one looks. Generals, consular officials, returned American pilots, missionaries, the academic "experts," newspaper men—all had the same report on Chiang Kai-shek and his en-

tourage. At one point, in the fall of 1949, Senator Tom Connally, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, angrily blurted out to Senator Knowland, a steadfast stooge of the China lobby, "Chiang Kai-shek deserted his people to go to Formosa. I suppose the Senator wants them [Chiefs of Staff then on a tour of Alaska] to see Chiang Kai-shek with his $138,000,000 in gold in his pocket that belongs to the government of China." In the same burst the Texas Senator said he was glad that the Nationalists, "so eaten by graft and corruption," had been overthrown by the Chinese populace.

Professor John King Fairbank of Harvard wrote for the Foreign Policy Association in the fall of 1948 that "the demoralization of Kuomintang China—isolation of cities from the countryside . . . paralysis of production, 'desertion' of the intellectuals, corruption of officials, surrender of armies—is likely to become accelerated. Material aid from the United States cannot stop this process. Foreign arms and food for the police will not maintain a Chinese regime once it has so clearly lost the tacit acquiescence of the population. . . . The fact is that Chiang Kai-shek has had twenty years in which to compete with communism for the support of the Chinese peasantry, and he has lost."

An American missionary wrote *The Witness,* a Protestant journal, "I used to believe fervently in the 'Christianity' of the Generalissimo and Madame. I do so no longer. They and their colleagues have murdered, imprisoned, impoverished, uncounted numbers of the finest moral, intellectual, political and social leaders of China. Their minds are back in the middle ages."

The social-democratic *New York Post* wrote in the fall of 1948 that "Inflation, poverty, corruption, insecurity, hunger, disease, ignorance and panic, the basic enemies of mankind everywhere, have risen to such proportions in the portion of China with which our government has social relations that chaos is on the verge of taking over from the remnants of what we call its government."

THE above paragraphs, a few months ago, would have given the impression of beating a dead horse. Not so today. Chiang Kai-shek and his clique who form the rump government located on the island of Taiwan are back in the full favor of the American generals, politicians and correspondents. A huge U.S. military group is taking over direction of its armed forces, great quantities of weapons and muni-

tions are pouring into Taiwan, American airplanes scour the nearby coasts and seas, an American fleet protects the renegades' sanctuary from the Chinese people while permitting Chiang's ships to raid the mainland and harass coastwise shipping. Project X spies, murders and organizes sabotage upon the People's Republic.

Meanwhile as a necessary part of the build-up Chiang Kai-shek's face graces the covers of the debased weekly and daily American press. His troops which only a few months before were reported to be sympathetic with the Chinese revolution are now heralded as the shock troops of the American Way of Life in its projected invasion of the Asiatic mainland. Corruption? Degeneracy? Nepotism? Inflation? Poverty? Ignorance and disease? Where are they? No longer around Chiang Kai-shek, according to the press, the generals and the politicians. Miraculously these evils—all of them—have disappeared. Chiang Kai-shek has once again become the outer perimeter of the American line of defense. Chiang Kai-shek is now personlly protecting the shores of Oregon, Washington and California. But more—he is shielding the minds of America's youth from the corrupting influences of those evil forces which have liberated 475 million Chinese from centuries of feudalism and ten decades of imperialism. Heil Chiang Kai-shek!

In August, 1949, Acheson said that what had happened in China "was the product of internal Chinese forces, forces which this country tried to influence but could not." In May, 1951, his chief assistant, Dean Rusk, the man also charged with the State Department's Far Eastern work, said: "The Peiping regime may be a colonial Russian government—a Slavic Manchukuo on a larger scale. It is not the Government of China. It does not pass the first test. It is not Chinese." What is this? Moronic? Imbecilic? Let's skip that self-imposed question. Let us instead say that in this seeming contradiction, and in the contradiction regarding Chiang Kai-shek elaborated in all the foregoing, there is a recognizable pattern—a pattern of imperialism.

Basically the objectives of U.S. imperialism toward China have not changed since V-J Day (to go back no further). What were these objectives? To control the Chinese nation by keeping its internal social organization semi-feudal and semi-colonial; to make it a military and political vassal of the U.S. government useful in itself for exploitation, useful beyond itself for the larger strategic purposes of America's

rulers; to accomplish all this by foisting upon the Chinese and maintaining in power a subservient puppet "strong man" and his clique. The objectives remain the same today; their accomplishment becomes infinitely more difficult.

How many remember that even during the anti-Chiang period in 1948-49 the officially stated American policy was to reconquer the Chinese nation? Acheson, in his introduction to the White Paper of August, 1949, said: "We continue to believe that, however tragic may be the immediate future of China and however ruthlessly a major portion of this great people may be exploited by a party in the interest of a foreign imperialism, ultimately the profound civilization and the democratic individualism of China will reassert themselves and she will throw off the foreign yoke. *I consider that we should encourage all developments in China which now and in the future work toward this end.*" (Emphasis mine—F.V.F.) Note that this passage follows immediately upon the one in which Acheson says that the Chinese revolution "was the product of internal Chinese forces."

Compare this with the following words uttered by Dean Rusk, the Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, in May of this year:

> "There is a job to be done for China which only the Chinese can do—a job which will require sustained energy, continued sacrifice and an abundance of the high courage with which so many Chinese have fought for so long during the struggles of the past decades. . . . One thing we can say—as the Chinese people move to assert their freedom and to work out their destiny in accordance with their own historical purposes, they can count upon tremendous support from the free peoples in other parts of the world. . . . That Government [Chiang Kai-shek's] will continue to receive important aid and assistance from the United States."

That is the nub of U.S. Far Eastern policy today as it was two years ago. There have been concessions—there has been give and take on certain tactical questions, including the one involving the role of Chiang, but the central strategic theme of controlling China underlies all these. It has been because of this common strategic denominator among all the imperialists—whether MacArthur or Acheson, Taft or Marshall—

that they have been able to reconcile many of their tactical differences and that the only point really separating them is the question of when and where to start the Big War. China is central to Eastern Asia—geographically, in terms of size and economic importance, strategically and politically. There is a long periphery, stretching from Korea down through Japan, Okinawa, Taiwan, the Philippines and so on; but there is no peripheral policy except the one which uses those off-shore positions for the purpose of regaining a mainland foothold.

Now Chaing Kai-shek has returned to the tactical center of the picture from which for reasons of internal American politics he had been temporarily ousted in 1949. Where else could the U.S. government turn? Where could the Japanese turn during their invasion of China except to the traitor Wang Ching-wei? Currently there is no element of Chinese life so discredited, so debased, so reviled as Chiang Kai-shek. *Therefore,* he must by the logic of politics, to say nothing of by all that is morally fitting, again become the chief symbol of the American government's hateful aggression in Asia.

An Autumn Night

A Story by LUIS ENRIQUE DELANO

HIS foot pushed the right pedal to the floor. The brakes screeched and the gravel crackled under the tires; the car stopped. The driver stuck his head out of the window and called to the soldier who stood in the middle of the road, his hand still raised to stop the car.

"Something wrong?"

The soldier, small and dark, stood his rifle on the ground, nervous, almost frightened at having caused this sudden, abrupt halt.

"No, sir, nothing's wrong. I only . . ." and here his voice took on a pleading tone. "I only wanted a lift. I'm going to Concepción, and since you're going the same way, I wanted to ask you to take me."

Involuntarily, a choking anxiety crept into the soldier's words. The driver looked at him and saw a young face of about twenty years, dark, almost hairless. He noticed the army boots covered with mud, enclosing the trouser ends with a band of badly cut leather. And the gun, whose butt rested on the little stones of the unpaved highway.

"All right, get in."

The soldier didn't need coaxing and started to open the back door.

"Better come up front with me," said the driver. "You'll rattle around less on this damned road."

"Very good, sir, thanks." Sitting, he placed his rifle at rest between his legs, the barrel pointed toward his chest.

The early cold autumn of the region slipped into the car as it gathered speed. Yellow leaves danced slowly in the air and then fell to carpet the highway. The color of old gold buried and dug up after many years. It was cold and the twilight began to unfurl its dark plumage over the road. Great pastures, bordered by dreary rows of yellow-trunked poplars, stretched out toward unreal distances. Through the open window beside the driver came a distant odor of iodine, filling the car with a promise, a memory of the faraway coast.

The driver steered carefully because the road was full of great holes. He seemed to pay little attention to his passenger, who sat silently, perhaps talking to himself without opening his lips.

"Out for a good time?" he asked indifferently.

"What?" The soldier started suddenly. Then he recovered himself, removed his cap, whose inner band was dark with accumulated sweat, and answered, "Yes, I'm going to Concepción to see my family. I've got a few days leave from the regiment."

"Uh huh. . . ."

For a long time the driver didn't speak again. Suddenly he had to slow down and stop altogether. Some cows crossed the road with melancholy steps, halting from time to time with slow indifference. The driver took out a pack of cigarettes.

"Smoke?"

"No, thanks."

He lit his cigarette and blew his horn until the last cow cleared the road.

It was now completely dark. The lights of the car revealed a ribbon of wrinkled ochre which was the deserted road. The driver smoked silently while his companion remained sunk in his own thoughts.

"It's getting cold."

The soldier didn't answer. What could he say to a remark like that? He put his cap on, staring ahead stubbornly as if looking for something he had lost, something that should be on the road.

The first wretched houses of a village began to appear. A long, long street. Ghostly men in ponchos went by, followed by hungry dogs. The road stretched out in darkness through this town without electricity.

"Las Vegas," said the driver, like a tourist guide. "Three miles ahead there's a place where we can eat."

The soldier looked at him without speaking. They were leaving behind the street with its adobe-walled houses. They passed a country store with a rail in front where farmers might tie their horses while they bought tobacco, wine or dungarees. But no one was there. An Argand lamp hanging on the outside cast light on the inevitable sign: FREE GIFT STORE.

The car went faster. The owner seemed to be in a hurry to get where he could eat, his appetite stirred perhaps by the night cold. Suddenly

the car stopped before a house that stood like an island in the middle of the oceanic autumnal night, and the driver honked his horn two or three times. A woman, carrying an oil lamp, appeared in the door.

"Good evening, doña Trini."

"Oh, it's you, don Jorge. Good evening. But come in. Aren't you going to eat?"

"We were thinking about it. What do you have tonight?"

"Roast meat with potatoes and some meat pies left over from yesterday."

"Fine. I like warmed over meat pies. Could you fix us some hot soup?"

"Of course, don Jorge. Come in."

THE men got out of the car. The driver rolled up his window and slammed the door.

"What's the matter, friend? Why don't you close your door?"

The hesitant soldier obeyed.

"Well, sir, it's just . . . I don't have any money."

"Don't worry, I'm treating you."

The soldier lifted his gun and followed his companion through the door until they came to a huge room lit by two or three lamps. A white dog came out to meet them. The driver patted his head.

"What's doing, Copito?"

There was a table large enough for a whole classroom of students to eat at, an old toothless piano, some photographs, several chromos on the walls and the inevitable oleo of President Balmaceda, between two banners, stiff chested, with big mustaches and the Chilean tricolor across his breast.

"Sit down," said the woman. Then she called out, "Maria, bring a brazier, the dining room's very cold." She turned to her guests again. "What will you have to drink, don Jorge, red wine or a little bottle of *chacolo?*"

"I think the red wine, doña Trina. It goes better with the meat pies."

"Good. Excuse me, I'll go to the kitchen."

The men sat down. A strong young peasant girl came in carrying a large bronze brazier filled with burning coals which she left beside the table.

"Well, friend," said the driver, rubbing his hands, "with this ap-

pliance at least we won't freeze." He lit a cigarette and looked at his passenger who remained silent. He had left his rifle leaning against the back of a chair and laid his cap carefully on the seat.

Soon the dinner came: steaming soup, baked meat pies, roast meat and potatoes.

"Help yourself, friend," said the owner of the car, pouring out a second drink for his guest.

"Thanks, sir."

The man carefully wiped his mouth with the napkin, drank half his wine and, looking into the soldier's eyes, asked, "Why did you desert?"

The other made a defensive movement and bent his knees as if to jump, but then his body slackened as if fixed to the chair, face to face with this unknown who had suddenly become his judge.

"And what makes you think I deserted?"

"It's very simple," the man said. "No man on leave carries a gun."

The young man didn't answer immediately, as if weighing something, studying what to say. Finally he seemed to make a decision; he began to speak stumblingly, disconnectedly.

"I don't like military service," he said. "They force you to do things against your will. How is that possible? I—even wanted to be chosen, to do guard duty. My father told me the army would do me a lot of good, that it would discipline me and teach me a lot of things. Now you see what's happened. I can't. I don't like it, sir. If it was just a matter of marching, learning to shoot, to ride horseback and handle a machine gun—but—I was in Lota, sir, during the coal miners' strike."

He paused, as if this simple sentence explained everything. And actually, even to the remote, indifferent mind of the car owner that phrase was capable of producing an impact, of evoking suggestions, memories of things read or heard, strange, dark, wretched things.

"Maybe you won't understand me, sir, but I say that to be a soldier you shouldn't have to be a wild animal. . . . I had to go there against the miners. They told us that they were criminals, enemies of the country, that they didn't respect the flag, sir. I can remember it as if it was now, the speech the colonel gave us before we went out to take over the mines. You are Chileans, he told us, and you are going to have the privilege of fighting against a bunch of anti-patriotic

rebels, people with no reverence whatsoever, who make fun of the most sacred things, who respect neither honor, family nor religion. And we believed that, sir, and were ready for anything, even to kill to free the fatherland of such enemies."

THE soldier paused and looked at the bottle and then at his companion's face. The man seemed to understand because he lifted the bottle and refilled their glasses. The soldier drank and his dark face seemed aflame with heat.

"And—?" asked the car owner.

"None of that was true, sir. They were men like ourselves, poor like us, people just like us. . . . We had to break into their houses, wretched huts worse than my father's, and drag them out with threats, beat them with rifle butts. . . . They were poor, the women were thin with sick kids, and we, late at night, pounding at their doors, forced those poor half dressed people to grab some pots and pans and set out for the train where we piled them into box cars, just like animals. They said they were sending them north, but the fact is, sir, they kept them several days at the station, without food, so that their kids half died from hunger. It's true that some of them resisted but none of them had guns and we were armed to the teeth, as if we were fighting a war. I ask you, sir, is that what the army is for? Do they force you into military service to abuse people this way, to push women around and make children cry with fright, to throw people out of their homes for the crime of going on strike?"

"You a communist?" asked the driver.

"Who, me? No, sir, I was never in any party. My father neither. But what I saw is that these people are just like us, I mean, just as poor, and if they were on strike, going hungry, with no wages at all, it was for something serious, sir, not just for fun. These were the beasts that my colonel had talked about! Poor skinny men, whose wives looked consumptive and whose kids cried from hunger."

The soldier took out a handkerchief and blew his nose loudly, like movie fans in the most touching part of the picture.

"After that, sir, I said the same thing I'm telling you to some of my pals in the barracks and one of them told my captain. That's the way it is, that kind of pal is never lacking. . . . They brought charges against me put me in jail for a month, and afterwards they kept a

watch on me. I was a communist, a bad soldier and a bad Chilean and I don't know what else. . . . To make it short, sir, they made my life impossible. Finally, yesterday, I couldn't take it any more, I decided to desert. That's the truth, sir, the pure and holy truth."

"And the rifle, why did you go off with the rifle?"

"In case they caught me, sir. To defend myself . . . or to shoot myself once and for all." His voice had broken into a kind of savage sob. He raised his hands to his face and did not move.

"Come, come, friend, take it easy. What do you get out of acting that way? Let's have your glass," said the driver. And although the other did not seem to hear him, he filled the glass to the brim and did the same with his own.

"Salud."

"Salud, sir," the soldier answered, taking his hands from his face which was now calm, though his eyes were still glazed.

They drank. The man paid the bill and they went out into the thick darkness which opened like an immense mouth.

"Well, well, it seems to have gotten colder in spite of our warm bodies," said the driver. "I've got some overalls here in the trunk, friend, for you to put on." He opened the luggage compartment and brought out a pair of greasy overalls and handed them to the surprised soldier.

"And if the gun bothers you, leave it here in the trunk, along with your cap. In Concepción young men your age go bareheaded."

He closed the top with a bang and both got into the car again. The car started, its headlights tracing two bright parallel furrows through the terrifying darkness of the autumn night.

(*Translated from the Spanish.*)

right face

CHAPLAIN

"We must make sure that the heart and soul of Europe is right. That is one of the obligations, gentlemen, that is imposed on me and my staff.—General Dwight Eisenhower to Congress.

PRO-ANTI

"Definition of a 'non-Communist liberal': Although by no means a 'pro'-Communist, he wants even less to be counted as an anti-Communist. Complicated as these terms are, some anti-Communists who are 'anti-anti-Communists' belong also in this category." — *The social-democratic* New Leader *clarifies the question.*

FAIR DEAL

". . . There won't even be a token effort {by the Truman administration} to push civil rights, compulsory health insurance, the Brannan plan, or Taft-Hartley repeal. However, Democratic strategists still believe these issues will make good campaign material again in 1952." —Newsweek *magazine.*

WARPED WOOF

"Dogs, like people, sometimes have mental problems which require expert care. Often these can be averted by keeping the body in tiptop shape. Sergeant's Dog Care Products help keep the psychiatrist away from the kennel door."—*Advt.*

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

One hundred and twenty-seven murders, 101 "justifiable killings," 357 attempted murders, 93 kidnappings, 11 jailbreaks, three brandings of men with hot irons—these figures represent crimes committed in one week on television programs in Los Angeles. *Seventy-two per cent of the crimes occurred on programs designed especially for children.*—TV Magazine

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

books in review

John Henry's People

IRON CITY, by Lloyd L. Brown. *Masses & Mainstream.* Popular edition, $1.50; cloth, $3.00.

IN A BRILLIANT essay published recently in *Masses & Mainstream,* Lloyd Brown wrote that "the patterns and themes of Negro writing have been set mainly by forces outside the Negro people." His novel is a powerful answer to this tendency in Negro writing. Here, at long last, is a novel of Negro life that matches the greatness of its theme.

It seems simple enough to welcome *Iron City* with routine words of praise. One can say of it, and say truly, that it is "important," "powerful," "poetic," "truthful." The customary adjectives have been worn smooth and round by commercial use. But the appearance of this book is not a routine matter. It requires sober recognition, as an event of major cultural significance, marking the emergence of new values and forces in our literature.

Lloyd Brown writes of Negro prisoners in a dismal county jail. But the story has extraordinary scope, intensity and extension. It carries us beyond the walls of the prison. And it also carries us beyond the walled enclosures of contemporary fiction. It brings us *back* to the true function of the novelist as a creative historian. This was the classic conception of the novel, formulated by the great masters of the nineteenth century, Tolstoy, Balzac, Zola and others. These writers saw people struggling in the flow and movement of history; they explored the individual's fate in terms of the social relationships which determine the value and meaning of each life.

Since the novel performs an historical function, any serious work of fiction must be considered in terms of its historical setting, its place in the social and cultural conflicts of its time. *Iron City* appears at a moment when the most successful American novelists seem to have abandoned traditional values — or, indeed, any values at all! Norman Mailer wallows in the swamp of sadism and perversion which is Trotskyite "art." James Jones, the latest seven-days' wonder of American fiction, has written a book which is chiefly remarkable for its hatred of humanity, its nihilism and unrelieved brutality. It must be admitted that Mailer and Jones seek to fulfill an historical function;

but they are historians of chaos.

In a recent volume of criticism, James W. Aldridge holds that young writers "have inherited a world without values. . . . The state of criticism, like the failure of values and the absence of a community of art, is only a symptom of the general debility of the times as a whole. Since the end of the war, there has been, in all parts of the world, a gradual dwindling of creative vitality and impulse."

The last sentence reveals the limitations of the critic's viewpoint and the source of his pessimism. Like the writers of whom he speaks, Aldridge has "inherited a world without values. . . ." But it is not the green earth with its vast concourse of peoples and cultures. There is no dwindling of creative vitality "in all parts of the world." On the contrary, it is a phenomenon that exists only in the lands under Wall Street's influence or control. In these areas, the cult of "valuelessness"—the denial of the whole heritage of human progress—is systematically encouraged as a justification for war. Populations and cultures marked for atomic destruction are obviously without "value." There is no denial of values in the lands of socialism, where everything that is valid in the art and thought of the past is cherished as the inalienable possession of the people, to be used in the building of a free society.

This background is germane, and indeed essential, to a critical evaluation of Lloyd Brown's novel. For it is a ringing affirmation of *values*—the traditional values of human morality and decency and comradeship, revitalized and given new meaning in terms of today's struggles. The affirmation has special significance in the present cultural crisis, when the whole tradition of humanism is denied, when Congressional Committees place artists and writers on trial for "dangerous thoughts," when the Supreme Court of the United States outlaws the advocacy of certain ideas and the use of certain prohibited books, when the custodians of the bourgeoisie's "culture" fall on their knees before the bankers and the generals, praying for atomic salvation while they weep over the decline of "values."

Progressive writers have been slow to make a creative answer to these threats and lamentations. There has been discussion of a people's art, of working-class partisanship and proletarian themes. But there has been a lag in creative realization. In the field of fiction, it seems especially difficult for the author to discard the trappings of bourgeois "psychology." During the decade of the Thirties, there was a tendency to treat social themes in a mechanical and stereotyped manner. A writer is sure to be "mechanical" if he is not at home with his material.

But today there is a mistaken

notion among many writers of the Left that their work becomes real and convincing when they disregard social passions and concentrate on sex relationships. If one cannot deal adequately with the life of a labor organizer, one cannot solve the problem by giving him one, two or a dozen love affairs. Nothing could be more wooden than these cliché situations, decorated with Freudian comments and stream-of-consciousness musings, hallowed by endless repetition.

IRON CITY marks a clean break with these sterile preoccupations. The characters are not treated externally. Their inwardness, their life of the spirit, is richly developed. One knows the mind's uncertainty. One feels the heart beat against the ribs. These prisoners in Iron City's "Cathedral of Justice" are engaged in a battle for existence; their thoughts and feelings, like those of all oppressed and defiant people, are shaped in daily struggle with a brutal environment.

The depth of Lloyd Brown's understanding may be attributed to his own experience. His career as a labor organizer and militant fighter for Negro rights goes back to the nineteen-thirties. The book has the courage of a man's life behind it and in it. Yet the author who has been less fortunate in his experience can learn a lesson in literary courage from this book. None of us can fight oppression effectively in our creative work unless we look upon the face of oppression and name it for what it is. None of us can affirm the greatness and beauty of man's spirit unless we seek the sources of affirmation in the reality of our time.

Three principal characters in *Iron City* are Communists. Paul Harper, Henry Faulcon and Isaac Zachary are not men who indulge in a great deal of political talk. Their Communism is the texture and meaning of their lives. They are modest, loving, determined men, who adjust themselves wisely to prison conditions, bringing warmth, hope and comradeship to their fellow prisoners. They have come forward through slow learning, as men and women do, reaching toward the values that make life worth living—love of people, faith in human beings, moral responsibility, devotion to the community and the nation.

It would seem easy enough to tell the truth about Communists. There is no mystery about it. Expensive witch-hunts and inquisitions only serve to illuminate the role of Communists as defenders of the working class, the Negro people, and the real interest of the nation. Anyone with eyes to see or ears to hear must know that the present drive toward fascism has as its first objective the destruction of the most conscious and militant enemies of fascism.

No writer can neglect this truth —for neglect of it is a deadly peril to his professional and personal existence.

Yet the fascist poison of Red-baiting has so corrupted our American culture that the obvious realities of the contemporary scene are virtually outlawed. Decent writers—who know the truth—avoid it in their work; they may protest in *political* terms against the vile absurdities of anti-Communist propaganda. But they are silent in their creative work.

The action of *Iron City* takes place early in 1941, when a number of Communists and trade union leaders were arrested under the barbarous criminal syndicalism laws on the statute books of certain states. Harper, Faulcon and Zachary are among those caught in the police dragnet. In the County Jail, they become interested in the case of Lonnie James, a young Negro awaiting execution on a framed-up murder charge. They form a committee in their cells; they smuggle out information which enables their friends to start a campaign exposing the frame-up. At the close of the story, the campaign has resulted in the finding of a missing witness and a decision by the Supreme Court to reconsider Lonnie's appeal in the Fall. The three Communists are still in jail, and Lonnie's ultimate fate is uncertain.

This is the bare framework of the narrative. But the work achieves a poetic extension and social passion which go far beyond the time and place of its comparatively restricted action. There is, of course, a direct connection between the events of a decade ago and the present day: the attack on labor and the Left in 1940 and early in 1941 was a prelude to today's witch-hunts. The case of Lonnie James is an example of the systematic destruction of Negro lives which has become so general that it must be denounced as genocide.

However, the scope of *Iron City* is not attained through generalizations and comparisons. It lies in the author's mastery of the form in which he has cast his novel. The jail is the center of the action, but the earlier and later lives of the characters are traced in passages which are remarkable for their explosive compression: a few pages give us the dreams and activities of a lifetime.

For each of these imprisoned men, the jail is the culmination of a drama that goes back over the years. And for each, the earlier drama is crystallized in beautiful and bitter moments of decision. Paul Harper remembers the part played by an antique chamber-pot in the shaping of his life; but there was also "a stove in the story—the stove was an important part; and people. The people were important, too." Old Henry Faulcon reviews the wonderful memories of his long years, and the

part that a great woman, Lucy Jackson, played in his life's progress. Isaac Zachary's abiding ambition to be a railroad engineer becomes a poem of humanity's hope.

But the emotional extension of the story is not achieved solely through recollection of the past and foresight into the future. It is also accomplished through the depth of meaning which is given to jail incidents. For example, the scene in which the broadcasting of the Louis-Conn fight rouses the anti-Negro prejudice of some of the white prisoners and the proud shouts of the Negroes, until the voices in the cell blocks merge in the American and world struggle for liberation.

In its maximum extension of interest and meaning, the book never loses the poignant and oppressive sense of the prison. The bars and walls are never absent.

The book is successful not only in giving us the physical feeling of the prison but in getting at the inner core of prison experience. It is hard to capture the inwardness of human suffering, to go into the heart and find the secret of strength that steels men against pain and indignity.

Having known what it means to undergo imprisonment, I have wondered how it could be described. In its arrangement and administration the Federal "correctional institution" at Ashland in which I served ten months, bears no resemblance to the Monongahela County Jail. But there is a deep similarity in the emotional life of the prisoners. I read *Iron City* with an almost unbearable sense of recognition, of re-living painful moments.

Although it is painful, it is wonderfully rewarding, for it gives one—like the actual experience of prison—a great sense of the goodness of people. Lloyd Brown's sense of values is both humanistic and socialistic. His pity for people in their suffering is transfigured by his sure knowledge that the suffering will end and the spirit of man will triumph.

A WORK of such significance raises a host of artistic and technical problems, which undoubtedly will be the subject of extended critical discussion. Of central importance is the problem of

structure: since the actual scene of the story is the prison, and the time covers only a few months, the plan does not lend itself to the exploration of situations and relationships, or to fullness and complexity of characterizations.

The excursions into the past and future lives of the characters are among the most exciting passages in the book; yet the effect is achieved through poetic insight rather than through many-sided study of people and their problems. Thus, the very richness of the suggestion makes us eager for more.

For example, we know so little about the character called "Army" that our feeling for him cannot carry the projection into the future which carries him through the war to his marriage in Georgia and his death on a lonely road by men with shotguns. The passage illustrates both the strength and limitations of the author's method. It has an intensity that almost touches greatness; but the wonderful potentialities which it suggests are only indicated and not fulfilled; we are not close enough to the man to link his fate with the fate of his people—for the link is in the soul, and not in a generalized statement.

A somewhat similar problem is posed by the climax of the book. Since there is no solution to the conflict, the action is resolved in Henry Faulcon's dream of socialism: it is beautiful, warm,

comic, a magnificent poetic realization of the theme. Yet it remains a dream—and we return, in the final paragraph, to an old guard walking through the sleeping cell-block, an "old old man with death in his face."

Perhaps this is the only way a story of our time can end. But one can wish that the poetic values in the dream were more closely integrated in the actual situation in the prison at the conclusion of the story. For example, the projection of Army's future career to his death on a Georgia road might have been in some way related to the dream of socialism, which men like Army sensed only dimly in their search for dignity and liberation.

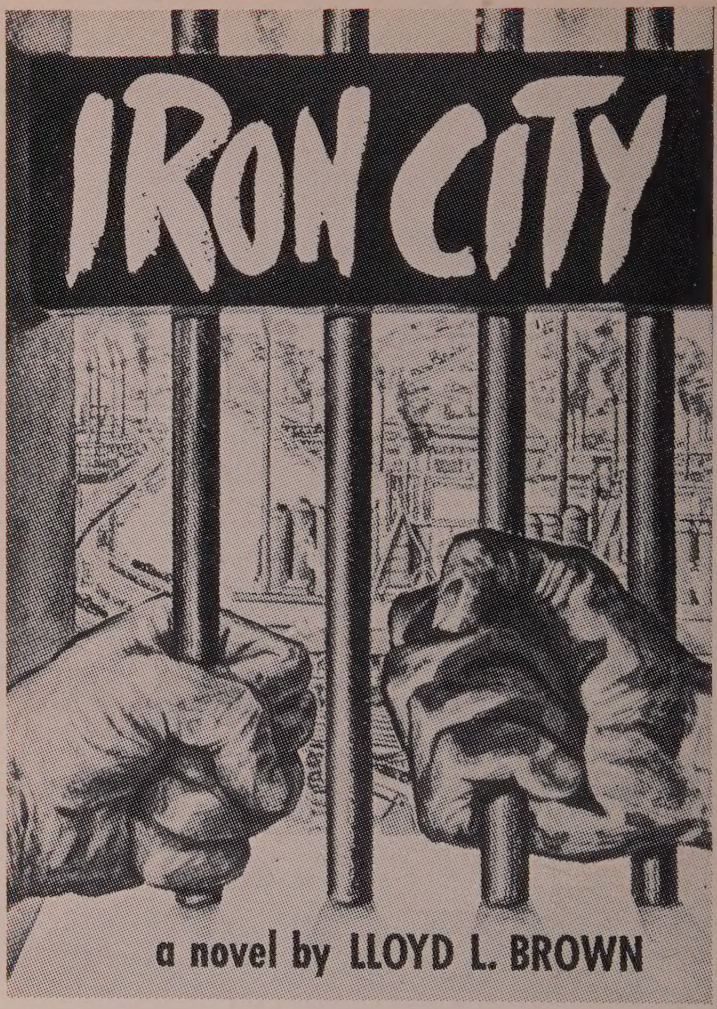
Further study of these questions of theme, emphasis and form may serve, not only to deepen our understanding of *Iron City,* but to illuminate aspects of the novel's development and possibilities in the present period. Brown has shown the way in which the contemporary novelist can perform his function as an historian, and thus make the novel again a weapon in social conflict, an instrument of social change.

Above all, he has performed this function in relation to the contemporary life and culture of the Negro people. While many novelists have written of the Negro as a "victim," an object of pity — which is essentially the viewpoint of the white ruling class —Brown has approached the Negro struggle for liberation as essentially *national* in character; he has caught the quality and feeling of the specific national characteristics of the Negro people, born in their long fight for freedom. He has shown the inter-connection between this fight and the movement of the working class toward socialism.

Let us recall Brown's words in the essay quoted at the beginning of this review: "There are some Negro writers who confuse the essential and all-important struggle to break out of the *ghetto* with the false idea of breaking away from the *people* who are confined in the ghetto." There are parts of *Iron City* which are like a direct and vigorous answer to the morbid and despairing viewpoint of authors like Richard Wright.

Here are people who know their strength — John Henry's people, who draw their humor and their wisdom and their anger from the well-springs of their own national life, the hidden greatness of their history. Here are women like the great women who have emerged from the fields of the South and the ghettoes of the cities to assert the rights of their people and all peoples. As Paul Robeson has said, "This book gives one strength, hope, exaltation. It is grounded deep in the life of the Negro folk —with unforgettable, moving, heart-stirring people. . . ."

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON



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