MASSES & MAINSTREAM

PSYCHOANALYSIS vs. THE NEGRO PEOPLE

LLOYD L. BROWN

EUROPE JUDGES THE SMITH ACT

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War Correspondents — JOSEPH NORTH

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THE McCARTHY INTELLECTUALS • THE ROBESON CASE
DREISER AND HOLLYWOOD • NAZIM HIKMET INTERVIEW

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MASSES & *Mainstream*

October, 1951

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EUROPE JUDGES THE SMITH ACT

By JOSEPH STAROBIN

"THE American who visited Europe in the summer of 1951 could not get away from it all." Everywhere the great crisis of American life was felt abroad. Scores of thousands of students, teachers, hardware merchants, writers and artists flowed into the Old Continent, what with the Grand Bi"— the bimillenary celebrations in Paris—and the Festival in London, the July concerts in Perpignan and the Swiss festivities in August; after all, Americans don't need visas for the Marshall Plan countries (if they can get passports from the State Department!) just as the French don't need visas for Morocco. And yet, the time of innocent tourism is over.

Let's face it. Our country has today become the password for everything which Europe suspects, fears and hates. The American in Europe is the object of derision, if not contempt. This cannot be explained in the old terms. There was a time when decadent aristocrats and philistines, themselves responsible for Europe's stagnation, scorned American manners and culture, though it was really democracy they feared. But today it's not the "upper classes," but the working people, the educator, the scientist, the mother and the child, who want the "Ami" to "go home," and who demand "les americains en Amerique!"

Most intolerable to the European is American hypocrisy. It was Georges Bidault, a former foreign minister, who said in 1948 that democracy is a state of affairs where you may hear a knock on the door at six in the morning and know it is the milkman. But Europe now knows that scores of American working-class leaders are being arrested at seven in the morning. Unlike the F.B.I., the Gestapo never claimed to be defending democracy.

The universal revulsion against the murder of Willie McGee flowed from a feeling of outrage which is compounded when U.S. senators periodically arrive to extol the sanctity of the individual and bid Europe

defend freedom against the alleged transgressors.

Europe, which is supposedly in the shadow of an imminent Soviet invasion, has no air-raid drills: but the spectacle of little children crouching in American schoolrooms is the symbol of an insane totemism about the atomic bomb. The "supreme weapon" has recoiled upon its worshippers in the horrible form of terrorizing children. Nor do the reports of narcotic rings among adolescents commend the way of life which Europe is supposed to emulate.

Louis Aragon has aroused all France with three articles in *Les Lettres Francaises* on Victor Hugo, occasioned by a sidelight on the bimillenary celebrations. It seems that in 1941 the Nazis dismantled the bronze statue of Hugo; what remained in the square which bears his name was merely the base. And now an enterprising publicity agent has placed a model of the Ford motor car, the Vedette, on the site where the poet once brooded!

YET all this does not touch the essentials. Europe would be prepared to ignore a great deal—bubblegum culture, comic-book belles lettres, Forever Amber womanhood; they would not murmur at Winchell and Kinsey and Harry Truman's sportshirts and the Dmytryk-inosis that is poisoning American ethics—if ony American capitalism kept to itself and left the rest of the world alone to build in peace. The export of war preparations to a continent

From "Tvorba," Pra

that hungers for a long peri peace—this is the chief Eur complaint.

In this respect, something n now taking place. From 1947 th 1950 one could still say that w Europe was divided about the ted States: a section of the in the major countries wel what they considered to be the erosity of loans, gifts of food, ises of trade and plenty; U. S. despite the warning of the Com ists, appeared to be making a po contribution to Europe's reviv

Today, as the recent Italia French elections have shown, a the growing Labor Party cri Britain indicates, the resen against the U. S. is crossing lines and is gripping new seg of each nation. For the re-arm program of the Atlantic Pact no visible benefit—not even th

bry benefit of hand-outs. It brings a apid decline in living standards hich are already wretched. It does ot even present the capitalist class n most countries with the profit-onanza on which American finance apital is gorging itself.

The consequence must be not only cute economic and social struggles, apidly becoming first-class political rises, but something else, too: *a new evel of united battle for national independence in which the overwhelming majority, whatever its previous differences on the Marshall Plan, will be ranged in bitter opposition to the Atlantic alliance.*

I FELT it essential to describe this atmosphere in the summer of 1951 before answering the question that the editors of M&M posed: How have the peoples of western Europe, and especially their intellectual circles, reacted to the new crisis at home—the Supreme Court decision against the First Amendment, the jailing of Communist and working-class leaders?

It was not immediately clear, at least in those countries which I have known best, that something qualitatively new had happened in the United States on June 4, 1951. It seemed for the moment merely that the "other shoe had fallen." That an era of lawless raids, of political terrorization, of rapid destruction of such elementary American institutions as the right to reasonable bail, should now have set in was not quickly grasped. Nor was the conclusion of an inevitable aggravation of the reactionary assault on the liberties of Europe quickly drawn.

At first glance, the Supreme Court decision appeared to be no more than a confirmation of what had long been said about American democracy; the most dramatic protests against the persecution of American Communists had come in 1948 and 1949 when the Foley Square trial began. The intervening two years were something of a puzzle, since Europe has found it hard to understand the prolonged legal procedures.

Moreover, popular attention was focussed on the more dramatic, the urgent, a case such as that of Willie McGee where a man's life was at stake, a case more reminiscent of Europe's own experience. For there is a plain unevenness of development which conditions European attitudes.

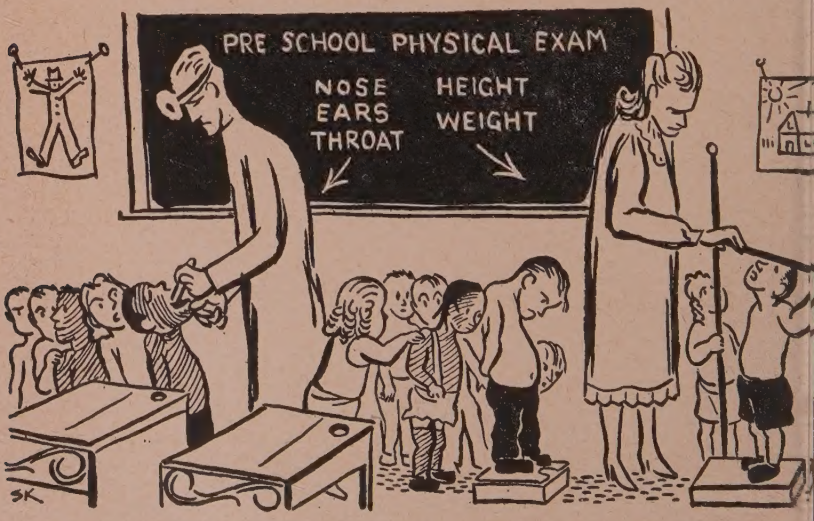
In France the memory of 75,000 Communists and Resistance heroes who lost their lives under Hitler and Petain is still a fresh and living thing. In Italy, as Palmiro Togliatti pointed out in his first address of the electoral campaign at Florence, literally tens of thousands of Italian working people have been arrested and thousands jailed for varying periods and scores have given their lives in the three years since April, 1948. In addition, the attention of Europe is focussed on the colonial and semi-colonial worlds, where the brutality of the ruling classes is every day taking a toll of Communist leaders arrested and assassinated, militants rounded up by the hundreds.

Finally, the growing united national resistance to U.S. imperialism tends to blur in people's minds the distinction between "good Americans" and "bad Americans." Most of Europe went through this problem once before with respect to the German people.

I would not want to convey a wrong impression: the distinction between the two Americas has been scrupulously maintained in writings, speeches, declarations. But in practice, especially as the counter-movement of the American people to their own ruling class is not too easily grasped and not at all fully known, the tendency to blur this distinction is evident.

By the middle of the summer, however, very important changes were setting in. Today the crisis of American life is widely understood in Europe. It is being discussed everywhere, and an important solida movement is developing which is tain to take on more and more matic forms.

In the constant campaign of European Left to bring the t about America to public attent the persecutions of our coun working-class leaders and the r demolition of all constitutional fo are all being highlighted. The that resistance is growing am the American people themselve making a very important impact to the extent that this resistanc known abroad. And the emerge of a new, more deeply based determined peace movement, a the Chicago Congress of the A ican Peace Crusade, is causing European Left to revise its ra oversimplified attitude to the po tialities of the American wor people.



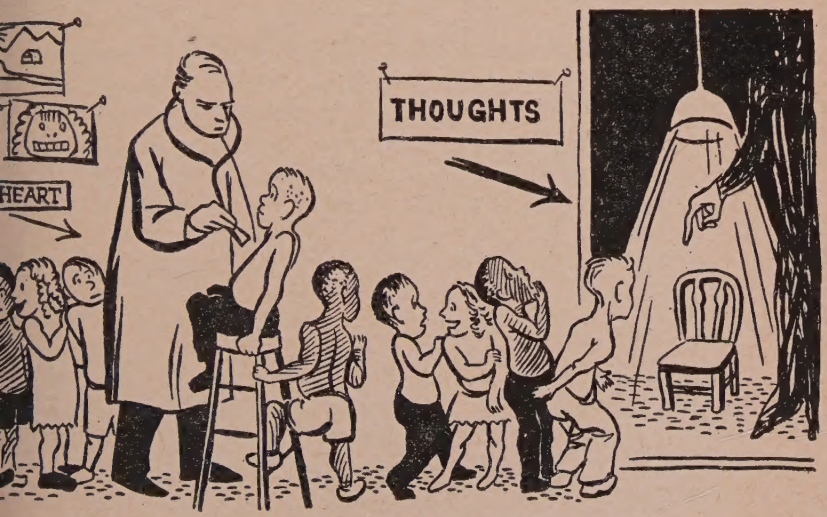
N FRANCE there were two im- portant actions by that group of tellectuals which had done such a eat deal during the Foley Square ial. Out of these actions is arising permanent organization, the Lafay- te Committee for French-American riendship, which intends to carry orward a varied educational and olidarity program.

The first action was a small but mbolic commemoration of the July ourth anniversary at the Pont de renelle, in front of the model of at Statue of Liberty which was rance's gift to America in another me. M. Emile Labeyrie, honorary overnor of the Bank of France, de- vered the address, published the llowing week in *Les Lettres Fran- ises.* After citing the traditional es which have bound American and rench democracy, Labeyrie says:

"We cannot forget, we French democrats—on the eve of our own independence day—that 11 of the purest, most proven and most noble American citizens have just been imprisoned for the crime of maintaining that American democracy can still be perfected, for being Communists, for being associated in the campaign of Peace that includes more than half the human race—and all that despite the fact that the Constitution expressly forbids Congress itself to limit the freedoms of thought, of speech, of expression."

Standing in front of the statue, while this address was delivered, were some of France's outstanding intellectuals, men and women who speak almost daily to millions and influence millions more.

For example, M. and Mme. Lyon-Caen, president of the Cour de Cassation, which corresponds roughly to our Court of Appeals; the eminent scholar, Prof. Jacques Hadamard; the



outstanding artist, Boris Taslitzsky; the French world federalist leader, Dr. René Tsanck; the Left critic, Jean Marcenac; and such writers and novests as Jean Fréville, Vladimir Pozner, Pierre Courtade; as well as Jean-Maurice Hermann, chairman of the International Union of Journalists . . . and finally, the Catholic progressive deputy, Gilbert de Chambrun, himself a descendant of Lafayette.

The influence of this group was dramatized at the great Bastille Day celebration ten days later. For the first time in France the vivid portrayal of French democratic solidarity with the "other America" was manifested in the streets. In the line of march, with half a million French men and women taking part and applauding warmly, this "Committee for the Defense of Imprisoned American Democrats" carried banners of protest and four enormous portraits, the relation of which told their own story. One was of Lincoln, another of Roosevelt, a third of Paul Robeson and a fourth of Eugene Dennis.

This consciousness is spreading into all phases of French life. For example, *Action,* the semi-official newspaper of the powerful Mouvement pour la Paix, published by the former minister, Yves Farge, carried a debate in its July 26 issue between the peace leader, Pierre Debray and the Catholic philosopher and editorialist of *L'Aube,* Etienne Borne.

It was one of the first of the more recent efforts of the peace movement to enlist—even if only in discussion — important figures who represe non-Communist millions. The deb rapidly reached a sharp give-and-ta on what democracy really is, whet it is not being violated in the E etc.

It is typical of the new situati in France that Debray answered: would be necessary for us to und stand each other on what democr really is. Do you think, for exam that the United States can call its democratic when men are being jai for the sole crime of being Co munist Party members?"

M. Borne evaded this question as most of the non-Left press tried to maintain its uncomforta silence on what is happening ac the Atlantic. But it was a sign of new awareness in Europe that bray invoked the current assault American liberties and specifically crime against the Communist lead

THIS same thing is happening Italy, where the protests h come from such powerful organ tions as the Association of the tims of Fascism, headed by Sen Umberto Terracini, former presi of the Constituent Assembly (him a victim of 17 years of Mussoli jails).

One of the most sympathetic imaginative movements of solida with the American progressives be found in the German Democr Republic and its capital, Berlin. the past two years large meet have been held with the participa of outstanding public figures suc

e author, Anna Seghers; the head the Union of German Writers, odo Uhse; and Prof. Gerhart Eisler, no heads the Office of Information. But the most unusual and systemic form of enlightenment of the erman people and solidarity with merican democratic figures is the ublication, *USA in Wort und Bild,* n institution quite unique in urope. This is a 48-page illustrated eriodical, ably edited by G. F. Alexn, who lived in our country during ne Hitler days. Twelve numbers have een published over the past two ears with a growing circulation of undreds of thousands through Gerany and in other parts of Europe.

The articles and photos expose the ealities and pretensions of Amerian life. The current issue features ne Supreme Court decision, the imrisonment of Eugene Dennis and is comrades, and the first of McGrath's terror arrests. Photos show he American working-class leaders eing herded off to jail, the brave tand of the attorneys, the courageous demeanor of Frederick V. ield, Dashiell Hammett and Dr. Alhaeus Hunton before the inquisiioners.

Everywhere in other parts of urope one finds a most intense inerest and deep sympathy for what is appening across the Atlantic. Joris vens, the noted film maker, asks bout all his old friends on both oasts. For Ivens, who has known omething of the vitality of our progressive movement, there is no quesion that "the real Americans will come out on top." Jan Drda, the genial head of the Czechoslovak Writers Union, inquires in detail about progressive American writers.

Pablo Neruda—himself forced into exile from Chile—sees in the persecution of the American Left a promise fulfilled by the U.S. ruling class to the satellite reactionaries of the hemisphere: throughout Latin America today progressives are being mercilessly hounded; this could not long continue, says Neruda, unless the men of Wall Street and Washington undertook at home what they are responsible for abroad.

Another exile, Jorge Amado, the famous Brazilian novelist who is now finishing the first book of a trilogy on the long years of the Vargas dictatorship, asks how the writers of Brazil can be helpful. What courage and compassion in these men who have themselves suffered for years what progressives in the U.S. are only beginning to experience! *

EUROPE is not at all sure that the American people will rise to their great responsibility. It looks to those who recognize that responsibility and who will battle perseveringly to save not only the honor, but the liberties and the peace, the dream of which Whitman sang.

While hoping that the "Railsplitter awakes," the peoples of Europe are forging their own ranks for the defense of their very future.

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* See the interview with Nazim Hikmet in our "The World Over" department, page 62.—Ed.

Free Paul Robeson!

By ELIZABETH MO

They don't let us sing our songs . . .
They are scared, Negro brother,
Our songs scare them, Robeson.

SO WROTE the Turkish poet Nazim Hikmet in prison. Now Nazim Hikmet is free and his songs are heard. But Paul Robeson is not free, not really free to come and go as he chooses.

Hikmet was freed by the indomitable will of the people of the earth. Paul Robeson can be freed from the bounds decreed by the U.S. Government if the people make their determination felt. It is time—

The National Executive Board of the Scottish section of the powerful British miners federation has invited Paul Robeson to give a series of recitals in the coal fields. At the same time, the Board has requested the U.S. Ambassador in London to obtain permission for Mr. Robeson to leave his country, where he is virtually under house arrest since the State Department confiscated his passport.

The invitation from Scoland is one of many. Impresarios the world over know what Paul Robeson means in box-office receipts. They may not all be concerned about the basic reasons for his universal "drawing power" but they are eager to sign contracts.

The famous Lynford Joel Con
tato concern of London offers a
tract—on the singer's own term
for an eight-week tour of the Br
Isles beginning this November.
foremost agency in Tel-Aviv
asked Mr. Robeson to give ten rec
in Israel this winter—the tour,
indicate, would take on the na
of a national holiday because of
eagerness of the people.

Unless the decision of the S
Department is reversed and Mr.
beson receives his passport, he
not fill these engagements. Not
are our anti-cultural officials de
ing men and women abroad of
longed-for pleasure of hearing
great artist, they are attemptin
destroy his livelihood as well.

More than any other Amer
artist, Paul Robeson is a world fi
He has mastered many languages
devoted years to studying the ar
other lands. He has sung to
Chinese and to the Slavic peopl
their own tongues; his name is w
known in Africa.

In Paris, in Prague, in Warsaw
people asked me, as an Ameri
"How is he? When will we
him? What are you doing abou
way they treat him?" They k
about Peekskill—and are trou

In the Skoda plant at Pilsen, workers said: "Give Paul Robeson our greetings—tell him we will welcome him here." Young pupils in a pedagogic institute in Krakow sent their love to him. "Tell him to come to Poland."

The most treasured gift one can bring is a record of his songs. Every child knows his name; his picture hangs on the walls of homes throughout Europe—and no doubt in Asia and Africa too. When people speak of the "other America" the name of Paul Robeson is on their lips.

In the days before the government was so "scared" by his songs, when he could travel, I heard thousands acclaim his art at the Salle Pleyel in Paris, and again in 1950 at a huge outdoor gathering in London where thousands stood to hear him sing and showed their love and admiration in wild applause.

To the great regret of the delegates, Mr. Robeson could not attend the Second World Congress in Warsaw because he was denied a passport. But, one morning at about four A.M., Paul's voice in all its rich depth rolled out in the great hall. Tired delegates woke up; people hurried in from the halls and the restaurants. Word spread: "It's Robeson!"

Next day, when all delegates were assembled, the recording was played again. Those who had missed it could not be denied. There was no one on the rostrum—no introduction. The Chinese, Belgians, Indonesians, Africans, French and Norwegians recognized the beloved voice. There was a sign of pleasure; then no one moved. When the record ended the entire audience stood in tribute.

THERE has been much smooth talk lately from high government officials about their desire to see the freest cultural exchange among countries, about their devotion world culture. The Robeson case i test of their sincerity.

Those who value our culture, th who are concerned for our place the world, must not rest until t battle is won. This intolerable int ference with the rights of an ar and an American challenges us Especially does it challenge mu cians, actors and cultural leade Whether they abhor or uphold Robeson's ideas on world affairs, they stand by while he is denied rights as an artist?

Where are their protests? Have officials heard from those who, the past, have so strongly expres their admiration for Mr. Robese From those who have acted with Robeson, who have sung with H and benefitted in no small deg from this association?

Mr. Robeson is a modest m Spending himself in the cause humanity, he has not taken the t to battle in his own case with same vigor and strength that he used for others.

It is more than a world renow artist that we must defend. It noble human being, a great-hea man, passionately devoted to the c of peace and freedom—freedom his own people, the Negro pe and for the oppressed everywher

Let men and women, the y of America now—today—take up fight to free Paul Robeson so his voice may ring out over all earth.

)REISER:

'he Hollywood Twist Again

y SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

'T IS ironic that Hollywood, trying to prove it can produce movies orthy of respect after the debacle rought about by its own Red-baiting and witch-hunting, should have o turn to a novel written by a man ho proudly announced in 1945 that e was a Communist. This, he said, as "the logic of his life."

The movie is *A Place in the Sun,* ased on Theodore Dreiser's *An merican Tragedy.* It is obviously a prestige" picture designed to give he critics cause to argue that "movies re better than ever." This is seen n the tricky camera work, the symolic shots which are as subtle as he models in bathing suits shown requently in the picture, the restrained, understated direction and cting, the "unhappy" ending.

But what is proved is only that Hollywood is utterly incapable of andling Dreiser's book honestly. When Dreiser originally sold the tory to Paramount, he had a clause ut in the contract which he thought would protect him against any distortions of his meaning. In 1931 Dreiser angrily sued the company, with no success, to keep the picture from being shown.

He claimed that it portrayed his hero as a "sex-starved drugstore cowboy" and made the plot into "a cheap, tawdry confession story." And this is precisely what has happened again in the present version. It could not be otherwise, for Hollywood is part of the American tragedy of which Dreiser was writing.

The novel was stimulated by an actual murder case that took place in 1906, in upstate New York. An impoverished young man, Clyde Griffiths in the novel, works in a factory belonging to a rich uncle. He has a love affair with Roberta Alden, a worker in the factory. Then, suddenly, the doors of "high society" seem to open before him, and he has high hopes of marrying a millionaire's daughter.

But Roberta has meanwhile become pregnant, and demands that he marry her. They go rowing on a lonely

lake. The boat overturns and she is drowned. Clyde is arrested, convicted of murder, and electrocuted.

Out of this case Dreiser extracted some tremendous themes, none of which the movie is interested in handling. One is the exposure of the horrible inhumanity of the basic education given by middle-class America to its children, woven into the warp and woof of its press, its entertainment, its whole life; namely, that to be poor is the greatest evil, and to be rich the greatest good.

Dreiser goes on to show how wolfish a life must inevitably result. Even the slightest step up the ladder means that many others have to be trampled.

How can Hollywood take up this theme, when it has become a factory for manufacturing exactly the same illusion? Hollywood is never more at home than when it is portraying its version of the rich, with their sumptuous homes, restaurants, fashions and sporting life. And the audience agrees how sad it is that Clyde should have been so hampered, when so wonderful a dream life was opening before him.

Dreiser goes on to show how love itself, the normal urge of youth towards sex relations, affection and friendship, becomes mangled and destroyed in this brutal and competitive life. Relationships of mutual respect cannot exist, for everything must become a weapon of combat.

One of Dreiser's great strokes of genius, added to the plot he took from the original case, is his depiction of Clyde's early life. His first infatuation is with a more exp enced woman, already exploited other men, who sees in him an mark for little expensive prese dinners, some of the "good thin

There follows the tremendous sc of the splurge for which Clyde his fellow bell-hops periodically their money. They "borrow" a lim sine entrusted to the father of on them, take their girls to the r house, dine and dance. Then co the fear that they will be late work, the speeding back in the e hours of the morning, the runn over of a little girl, the frenzied fl and crack-up.

All this is so perfectly built up Dreiser in visual and emotional tail that the camera would have n ing to do but follow him. But entire scene is ignored in the m

WHEN Clyde is working in uncle's factory, these les have burned deep in him. H lonesome and has the affair Roberta. But now he has the u hand, for to her he is a step up ladder, and he makes sex a we on his side.

He dangles promises, demands cessions, frightens her with a p ble loss of interest. Thus love its humanity, takes on a knife turns into viciousness.

Similarly loveless is the affair the wealthy girl, Sondra. Ne sees a person in the other. sees riches and "society." Sondra a daring gesture of indepen

ainst her family and friends. The romise is obviously that of unhapness on a different level.

But how can Hollywood touch this eme, when it is a blast against the ry illusions it holds sacred? What e see in the movie are two love afirs, both exactly the same, proceedg through the same familiar clichés; ie soulful glance, the later accidenl meeting, the wise-crack, the lanuorous dancing to soft music, the romise of eternal bliss.

Both women are equally beautiful. ut alas, the same man is involved n both. A collision! The result is ragedy, but it is Hollywood's, not reiser's. The movie crawls out of he situation by suddenly turning the oor girl, Roberta, from a sweet hero-ne to a shrew, and depicting the ove for the rich girl, Sondra, as he "true" eternal passion.

Clyde has found the "right" woman, but alas, too late. Dreiser is "improved" on with a soulful scene n the death cell between Sondra and Clyde, and at the end, when Clyde s shuffling to the electric chair, his ace dissolves into a dream embrace.

In his handling of the murder, Dreiser shows a keen psychological insight. He slowly unravels the conflicts in Clyde's mind which spring from the real dilemmas in the cutthroat world around him. The conflicts, insoluble by any of the standards of the life to which he must conform, reach a pitch where he becomes incapable of any rational thought or control.

He hysterically plans to murder Roberta, but when they are in the boat, he finds he cannot do it. Somehow the real act is different from a hysterical scheme. But then comes the accident, and he swims away without making an effort to save her.

Thus rises a third theme, that of justice. Of what was Clyde guilty? The question has since been debated many times in law schools, without a definite answer. For what they can handle is only the legalistic question of just what his act was.

Dreiser cuts deeper. What he shows is that none of the lawyers, judges, state officials, politicians, whether interested in their careers or even interested in "justice," is capable of asking the fundamental question: Is Clyde not a tortured human being who can be saved? Is he really a killer? Is he a menace? If he is a menace, is it not murder to kill him?

It is impossible, Dreiser shows, for a law based on protection of property to care for human life. Bourgeois society must blot out any true understanding of an action that exposes so openly its own teachings and real ways of life.

And the movie illustrates the point. It shows a priest piously assuring Clyde that he had "murder in his heart." He deserves to die. Morality is saved. And the only lesson that emerges is that Clyde should have been a little more shrewd.

A great movie can be made out of *An American Tragedy,* for its artistic lessons, faithful to the typical in real life, are as applicable to the camera as they are to the pen. Thus the Kan-

sas City Dreiser portrays in the book is the city as it was about 1900, not that of 1920. The factory owners he portrays are those that could be typical of the turn of the century, not the rich of the 1920's or 1940's. Every word and scene rings true.

But Hollywood, in its sound-proof and reality-proof studios, can turn the camera only on its own sets and illusions. It has "modernized" the story by introducing late model automobiles, but the rich, the poor, the factories it portrays are such as never existed any time, any place.

IN THE early '30's the great Soviet director, Sergei Eisenstein, invited to Hollywood to make a movie, chose *An American Tragedy.* His script was rejected. It is easy to see why he should have chosen this book, and why he made no Hollywood movies.

Some of the critics have hinted that the "social crusade" of the book may be "minimized," but rush to add that its "essential message" has been kept. They do not show much knowledge of the book.

The fact is that Dreiser, at the time of writing *An American Tragedy,* in 1923, was neither a social reformer nor a fighter for the working class. To him, the world was still made up, not of exploiters and exploited, but of "rich" and "poor," the successful in the jungle world and the defeated.

In his factory scenes he showed little inkling that there was a different kind of life, a collective life growing among the working class, which rejected bourgeois competitiveness, which sought for a way for hu beings to rise and develop toge and so made possible genuine mutual respect, and human gro

Dreiser's early life had been r like Clyde's. He too had been s thing of a dandy, sought mon success, suffered unhappy emot crises. His first great step was decision to go against the tide examine the bourgeois world cally, to measure its illusions ag its realities.

This period, of *Sister C* through *An American Tragedy,* f him still a critical realist, "brea down conventional illusions"; b cast him into a terrible pessim and in the 1920's, with a new v being born, this was an impos position in which to halt.

He was deeply moved by a vis the Soviet Union in 1927. In 1930's he took up the fight fo miners in the "captive mines Harlan County, Kentucky. He fo against the legal lynching of Scottsboro Nine. He took up struggle for the republican go ment of Spain against the F fascists. He exposed the line-u tween American and British i trialists and bankers, and Hitle studied Marxism.

Then the greatest of Ame novelists became a Communist would hardly expect Hollywo follow him this far. But it is im ble even of the elementary ho with which he viewed life wh was still searching for the de forces which were moving it.


STATE'S WITNESS
CASHIER

"The Mark of Oppression" fashions a new look for racism

PSYCHOANALYSIS VS. THE NEGRO PEOPLE

By LLOYD L. BROWN

PSYCHOANALYSIS has provided a pseudo-scientific rationale for every phase of capitalist activity—from selling TV sets to promoting imperialist war. It was inevitable that this reactionary ideology would be used against the Negro people. The latest and most shocking evidence is *The Mark of Oppression* (Norton. $5.) by Doctors Abram Kardiner and Lionel Ovesey, two leading Freudians who are professors at Columbia University.

Subtitled "A Psychosocial Study of the American Negro," the book is presented as a definitive, scientific study of the "personality" of the Negro people.

The Mark of Oppression has been reviewed approvingly by the commercial media, and there is no doubt that it will become a standard reference in psychology and sociology classes throughout the nation.

But it is a monumental perversion of scholarship, being both a product of and rationale for the oppressing system of white supremacy; it "proves" again that the Negro is ferior.

Whole libraries of such "pro have been assembled over 300 y by bourgeois historians, theologi anthropologists, biologists, soci gists, penologists, and Senators f Mississippi—here come the choanalysts!

Kardiner and Ovesey are men "good will": they say they do want their work to be used aga the Negro (though facts are f and must be faced). In a prefa statement they disavow all conc of inherent racial inferiority and a double-barreled liberating role their work. After noting that "sensibilities of those investiga might be hurt, the writers "rest claim that this work will do n good than harm on the belief the truth about what happens to individual who is subject to discr nation can help free those who petrate it and those who suffer f it alike."

What is to be investigated?

rsonality of the 14 million Amer-
n Negroes: "our objective is not
establish a basic Negro personality
cause the institutional background
the Negroes we are studying is
nerican. We confine ourselves to
e task of establishing the effects
caste and class on this personal-
." This is said on page 12, but as
turns out, what was *not* the ob-
ctive becomes just that—by page
17 the "basic personality" of the
egro is established and defined.
ut first the study.

How shall such an inquiry be
ade? As it happens, Columbia Uni-
ersity sits atop Morningside Heights
verlooking Harlem—the greatest
cal concentration of Negroes in
merica: perhaps the investigators
ent the four years needed to gather
eir material living and working in
arlem?

No (and they did not even learn
w to spell Lenox Ave.). Such a
rect approach would not advance
psychosocial study; and besides
ere are other scholarly authorities
om whom insights on all angles
n be gained: "Rose [Arnold M.
ose, University of Minnesota] be-
eves that Negroes have a deeply
grained sense of impoverishment."
Perhaps Negro history and litera-
re might be scanned for clues to
egro personality? Kardiner and
vesey considered the matter:

> "Can we look to the vast protest literature that has grown up for one hundred and fifty years? This would have some value; but in it, we would only expect to find an appeal to the white man's sense of justice and fair play. . . . This literature represents the conscious and articulate protest which needs no psychological explanation. It contains no hidden trends."

Which brings us to the obvious point: *only through the unconscious can we learn what Negroes are like!* The method must be the psychoanalyst's couch.

Only one more thing must be settled first: by what standard shall Negro personality be judged? "Our constant control is the American white man because both he and the Negro live under similar [!] cultural conditions. . . . This means that we can plot the personality differences of the Negro in terms of these variables against the known personality of the white." And which whites? "We select as our standard of comparison the personality integration of the white middle class."

The combination of stupidity, class snobbery, and white chauvinist arrogance in the above is typical of the whole book and, indeed, underlies the basic premise of its authors who see Negro personality as a deviant from the norm, the white man, and hence, as we shall see, an aberration.

Further: to attempt to assess any group by such a "control" as the white middle class is colossal folly, since the middle section of our society is by its very makeup and position the most unstable, contradictory, vacillating—the least "integrated"—of any.

TWENTY-FIVE Negroes were psychoanalyzed by Kardiner and Ovesey to learn what all Negroes are like. Put down this baldly the notion sounds like such madness as to be almost incredible. But the doctors mean it literally and so assert on page xv of their preface and reiterate on page 301.

For any mere statistical purposes, they point out, such a number would be meaningless, "but it is a very large number from the standpoint of psychodynamic analysis" since "Freudian psychodynamics were set forth on the basis of five published case histories."

Noting that their subjects were all Northern urban Negroes, Kardiner and Ovesey are confident that their findings apply to Southern Negroes as well: "We feel it safe to predict that the differences are not in quality, but in quantity."

Twelve of the 25 subjects, who were "analyzed" in sessions ranging from 20 to 100 visits each, were patients in psychotherapy ("they related their life stories in return for aid in the solution of a personal problem"). Eleven were paid subjects: $1.50 per interview and the promise of a $20 bonus for attending 20 sessions. (It would appear that analytic fees are not on a reciprocal basis.) The remaining two subjects were volunteers.

The 25 are grouped into three categories: "The Lower Class," "The Middle and Upper Classes," and "The Adolescent." They also are classified into some nine varieties of color: dark, dark brown, med brown, light tan, very light tan, l golden, light olive, and white.

The color of the subjects, give the beginning of each case his summary, seems to have a prin importance to the analysts; it is quite revealing of their ingra racism. Compare this:

> "S. C. . . . a dark brown N There is a perpetual sullen expre on his face. He speaks with a very Southern accent in a low, at time most inaudible, mumble."

with the following subject at other end of the color spectrum

> "L. H. . . . has handsome Cauc features, white skin and straight . . . and is extremely graceful soci

Before turning to the finc drawn from these case histori typical example might be show the dream-interpretation metho

The subject is B.Y., a 16-yea girl (light olive), a patient in chotherapy. Her difficulty: s walking. B.Y. tells the analys dreamt the cops came to my h and took my brother to jail and holding him on a rape char thought it was a terrible thin do. . . . Maybe I dreamt it be I read so much of that in the pa

Oh no, B.Y.—and reader to that makes sense to you. You se dream really *"illustrates her fe sexual attack by her brother,"* if that isn't monstrous enough analyst goes on: *"The unde wish for a sexual overture is imp*

Actually what is implicit here is ne foul stench of racist ideology and ne image of a Nazi doctor practicng a "cure" on a Jewish prisoner.

THE authors have made it easy, though nonetheless repulsive, to ummarize the "Negro personality" hat emerges from the 25 case hisories. A separate chapter is devoted o the last of the subjects because, ay the writers, "her case can almost e categorized a composite of all hose that have gone before."

The subject is I.B., dark brown, a 21-year-old art student who is seeking a cure for three major problems: sexual frigidity, inability to get along with anyone, and an inability to express her art talent in work.

What are the main features of this "composite"?

I.B. hates Negroes; living in Harlem she suffers keenly "the physical repugnance of being with other Negroes." From this follows a bitter self-hatred.

> "Her conviction that she is worthless, inferior, unlovable—and that these states because of her blackness are unalterable—give rise to a wild resentment, characterized by explosive tantrums and hysterical outbursts."

That is not all by far. I.B. is described as being

> "... uninhibited, crying and raging with facility . . . venomous hostility . . . coercive . . . masochistic . . . suffers from a 'success phobia'. . . destroys all her relationships with people . . . capacity for warmer emotions markedly constricted . . . chronically late . . . elusive and wary . . . creates endless distrust and suspicion . . . self destructive . . . buys affection by giving herself sexually to the white man . . . all people are her enemies, white and black . . . has little rapport with other women . . . fares no better with men . . . promiscuous with Negro and white men alike and often chooses partners who are of diminished potency, ranging from homosexuality to complete impotence . . . a violence-concept of sex"—and, not surprisingly, "generally quite depressed."

All of which, and more, leads the authors to conclude that

> "A more unhappy, anxious and aggression-ridden human being is hard to conceive. . . . This girl is crippled in every aspect of her social life and . . . lacks the capacity to become a useful citizen through work."

The authors deduce that on the part of I.B. there is an "obvious identification of herself and other Negroes with feces. This excites the most violent compensatory activities to wash herself clean (white)."

Kardiner and Ovesey are sure that their "finding"—that the Negro people equate themselves with feces—is a basic quality of Negro personality; and they develop this concept in a later chapter. It is difficult here for this reviewer to control his "hostility": any adequate comment on my part would be unprintable.

Following this "composite" study is a chapter presenting "A Psychodynamic Inventory of Negro Personality," which concludes with a summary statement. Before giving

this summary, the statement quoted earlier in this article should be recalled: that the aim was "not to establish a basic Negro personality."

Speaking in terms of form rather than content, what is one to say about a "scientific inquiry" which drives ahead to a purpose which is not its objective? Some science! But this is really the least important point about the conclusion: summarized here is the inevitable result of the reactionary ideology and methods of the investigators.

> "Is there such a thing as a basic personality for the Negro? This work proves decidedly that there is. . . . Taking as our base line the white middle class, the conditions of life for the Negro are so distinctive that there is an actual alteration of the pressures to which he must adapt. Hence, he develops a distinctive personality. *This basic Negro personality is, however, a caricature of the corresponding white personality,* because the Negro must adapt to the same culture, must achieve the same social goals, but without the ability to achieve them." [My emphasis, L.L.B.].

So what do we have? The most modern, jet-propelled bourgeois science—Psychodynamics—discovers a conclusion that was a commonplace of the slave masters and their scribes more than 300 years ago: that the Negro is a caricature of the white man; that the Negro is inferior!

IT WOULD take a very large work—far beyond the scope of this article—even to list the innumerable vicious, absurd, self-contradictory pressions and deliberate falsificatio which abound in this volume. He I will limit myself to a few whi expose the abysmal level of the sch arship of Kardiner and Ovesey.

Page 63: *"Violence against Negro and other forms of overt timidation are confined largely to South."* Literally, from the campus Columbia, the policemen's shots t killed John Derrick in Harlem co be heard! . . . Peekskill . . . Cic . . . Freeport . . . Brooklyn . . . Tr ton. . . .

Page 316: *"Every Negro who higher than lower class has a se of guilt to other Negroes because considers success a betrayal of group and a piece of aggress against them."* This is quoted to lustrate three qualities of the autho (1) their overweening arrogance talking about "every" Negro on basis of their fantastic inquiry; the utter absurdity of their findi since it is common knowledge more than any group in the U.S rank-and-file Negroes hail each cess of one of their people; and it offers an opportunity to show, the following quotation, how th authorities contradict themselves

Page 365: Repeating the same of this "sense of guilt," the aut say here: *"It is not universal to sure"!*

Now for an observation that pears to be merely a demonstra of ignorance, but is actually a scious falsehood.

Page 310: *"Until very recentl*

Negro has had no real culture heroes like Joe Louis and Jackie Robinson) with whom he could identify." Shades of Phillis Wheatley and Crispus Attucks! This stupidity is used to prove the truth of the authors' contention that self-hatred, alleged to be a dominant factor in Negro personality, is an inevitable result of the absence of Negro heroes. *But the authors know that the above statement is false*: on pages 362-3 they mention W. E. B. Du Bois (though they give no evidence of ever having read his works), Booker T. Washington, Frederick Douglass and Marcus Garvey.

Here, to return the compliment, I would say that scholarship like this has a marked, feces-like quality.

The next sample illustrates a typical combination of ignorance, arrogance and chauvinism. Page 340: The authors *"pause for a moment to make a few observations about these forms of expression [spirituals and folklore]. The Spirituals represent an accommodative trend toward slavery. They do not ring with protest . . . devoid of rage and of guilt."*

Kardiner and Ovesey happily accept the bourgeois historians' myth about the "submissive slaves," and use this as further proof that Negroes

"A Black Woman Speaks . . ."

'Tis true
my pearls were beads of sweat
wrung from weary body's pain,
instead of rings upon my hands
I wore swollen, bursting veins.
My ornaments were the whip-lash's scar
my diamond, perhaps, a tear.
Instead of paint and powder on my face
I wore a solid mask of fear to see my blood so spilled.
And you, women seeing
spoke no protest
but cuddled down in your pink slavery
and thought somehow my wasted blood
confirmed your superiority . . .

BEULAH RICHARDSON

This stanza is from Miss Richardson's poem, "A Black Woman Speaks of White Womanhood, of White Supremacy, of Peace," which was acclaimed at the recent Chicago Peace Congress. The full text has been published by American Women for Peace, 1186 Broadway, New York City.

must hate themselves. Page 351: *"The slaveholder was not only his persecutor; he was also his benefactor and protector."* The slaves tended to "identify themselves with their persecutor" and hence the Negro "hates himself as the white man hates him (or as he thinks the white man hates him)." Here is even the hint that the Negro's anti-Negroism is *overdone* as compared with that of the whites!

Even the most universal human activities are "revealed" as neurotic expressions in Negro life. Pages 333-4: *"We must conclude . . . that dancing, for which the Negro has such remarkable talent, is not a positive and abandoned joyful expression, but a socially permissible vehicle through which his aggression can be expressed . . . in the case of the Negro, the predominant emotion which finds expression through dancing is rage."*

(Could it be that Kardiner and Ovesey condescended from Morningside Heights on a field trip to the Savoy ballroom and thought that the lindy-hoppers were trying to kill one another—and didn't have sense enough to ask the nearest onlooker?)

Page 341: *"Why . . . do most novels by Negroes about Negroes have predominantly females as their chief characters?"* The authors do not answer this question which they believe to be fraught with significance; but in asking it they suggest a better query: Why don't these scholars read Negro novels before discussing them? Here one may note a unique quality of Psychodynamic "science": its practitioners do not know what they a talking about.

2

THE brief rebuttals given here not and cannot fully cope wi the complexity of error to be fou in most of the quotations; and summary here I must limit myself a few central observations.

One obvious fact must have already been noted by the reader: t discovery of a "basic personality" the Negro people is a self-evide absurdity. Common sense—and t nearest dictionary—say that the co cept "personality" pertains to the *dividual.*

A glance around any family d ner table, not to speak of classroo club meeting, etc., is an adequ laboratory test verifying the mu plicity of personalities in any gro Indeed, a cinch bet would be t Kardiner and Oversey themselves not share a common personality.

These scholars blithely speak "every Negro," "all Negroes," despite the fact that the only t thing that can be said of every in vidual Negro in our country is t he or she is oppressed. In fact, i from this historic truth that the co mon features of the Negro peopl a group emerge. These comm features are *national characteristic* not common personality.

As a nation-within-a-nation, an pressed nation, the Negro people h important characteristics in comm history, territory, language, econo life, culture, and—of special i

here—a common psychological keup.

As individuals Negroes vary widely all respects; in this, of course, they like all other peoples. But in dissing the notion that all Negroes alike and the idiotic idea of drawg up a "composite" personality, it important to stress the common tional characteristics of the Negro ople. For only here will we find e answer to the main question at nd, which is not the "composite" rm but the vicious, slanderous *connt* of the Negro "personality" prented by Kardiner and Ovesey.

What Negroes are like is not an cademic question. It is a vital, life-nd-death question for the American eople as a whole. To the extent that ne masses of white people do not now the Negro people, to that exnt are they poisoned by the domiant ideology of white chauvinism nd made impotent before their deadest enemy—fascism.

Every avenue of capitalist control, very medium of propaganda—inuding books like *The Mark of Oppression,* every aspect of Jim Crow w and custom, are used to keep hite Americans from knowing the Negro people.

Yet the Negro people are readily nowable. Indeed, for hundreds of ears Negro spokesmen, together with heir white allies, have been using very possible means to tell their felw countrymen what the Negro peole are really like, seeking by the uth to knock down the monstrous yth of white supremacy.

Nearly half a century has passed since Dr. Du Bois revealed the very souls of black folks. Self-hatred, guilt, debasement? Read these words of lasting truth and beauty, of ringing pride!

> "Your country? How came it yours? Before the Pilgrims landed we were here. Here we have brought our three gifts and mingled them with yours: a gift of story and song—soft, stirring melody in an ill-harmonized and unmelodious land; the gift of sweat and brawn to beat back the wilderness, conquer the soil, lay the foundations of the vast economic empire two hundred years before your weak hands could have done it; the third a gift of the Spirit. . . . Our song, our toil, our cheer. . . . Would America have been America without her Negro people?"

Negro history, past and present, gives the lie to Kardiner's and Ovesey's "findings" about the Negroes. Not self-hatred, but hatred of oppression and resistance to it—*liberation struggle,* that is the dominant theme of Negro history, culture and psychology.

In Negro life, that which determines the national psychology of the Negro people is not primarily the fact of oppression and its "marks": rather it is the people's reaction to oppression—an unceasing and invincible drive toward freedom.

Yes, there are marks of oppression —deep marks. But it is not for his scarred back that we remember Frederick Douglass: it was what he did, how he fought, how he led the struggle against the whip-hand of slavery,

that made him his people's hero. Nor does history record that the cruel indentation on Harriet Tubman's forehead was her outstanding personality trait: "Go down, Moses," sang those she led to freedom; and the slave masters, knowing nothing of Psychodynamic analysis but much about the Underground Railroad, outlawed the singing of this song of "resignation."

THE growing Negro liberation movement calls forth new tactics on the part of the oppressors; increased demagogy goes hand in hand with increased terror. *The Mark of Oppression* is an example of the New Look in racism.

Kardiner and Ovesey cannot hope to sell this "group portrait" to those whom it purports to depict. The Negro people will recognize here not themselves but the handiwork of their enemy.

But the danger exists that many others, who are repelled by a Di congressman's calling William L. P terson a "black s—o—b—," will taken in by the same concept voi in psychoanalytical terminology. T many who reject the racist belief t the Negro is by nature a brute prone to accept the "liberal" vers that the Negro has been dehumani by oppression.

In practice the two variants h the same purpose. Who will figh admit Negroes into "white" ap ments, schools, to decent jobs, to equality, while believing that Negr are so much human garbage?

Books like *The Mark of Oppress* should be exposed everywhere, es cially by students, instructors, those in social work and other a where this type of infection flouris

Let all Americans get to know Negro people in the best poss way—by uniting with them in c mon struggle for peace, civil liber and Negro liberation.

On Consciousness and Oppression

"Men and women can be forced to earn their b under intolerable conditions; they can be chained whipped and killed; but while they breathe, they th Since consciousness is the possession of all human bein often their only inalienable possession—it is the wea which they employ in their resistance to oppression."

—John Howard Lawson *(The Hidden Herit*

Our Time

By SAMUEL SILLEN

- *The McCarthy Intellectuals*
- *Victory Over Blacklist*
- *Soviet Literary Talks*
- *Bouquets and Brickbats*

McCARTHYISM is riding high in the ranks of the war-at-any-price intellectuals. Led by Sidney Hook and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., they have now formed a Committee on Cultural Freedom to "expose fellow-traveller fronts." And just as the McCarran Committee picked the Institute of Pacific Relations as its target of the moment, so the McCarthy intellectuals are concentrating on *The Nation.*

The liberal weekly has committed the unpardonable crime of arguing that peace is desirable. That makes *The Nation* a "Kremlin tool" in the eyes of the Social-Democratic *New Leader* and the Trotskyite *Partisan Review,* which spearheaded a Red-baiting campaign against *The Nation's* anti-Franco foreign editor, Alvarez del Vayo. They have been joined by the *Saturday Review of Literature,* which recently featured an article by Peter Viereck that hits a new low in the scurvy anti-Communist journalism of our day.

Viereck, Pulitzer Prize poet and history teacher at Mount Holyoke College, calls *The Nation* one of the "West-baiting and East-appeasing journals" which "entice the wavering intellectual." In the elevated language of the Senator from Wisconsin, Viereck terms *The Nation* editors "Stalinoid highbrows," "Lumpen-intellectuals," "Catholic-baiters," etc. More dangerous than the Communists, they may "help us lose World War III," which Viereck takes the liberty of declaring in the absence of Congressional initiative.

Rather self-consciously Viereck disclaims any allegiance to McCarthy. But his article scrupulously follows the line described by the master himself. In the September 7 issue of *U.S. News and World Report,* McCarthy said: "If also the well-meaning, deluded intellectual radicals, who consider themselves as great liberals, did not contribute to the cause, this propaganda would not be poisoning our channels of information."

As an exponent of Cultural Freedom, Viereck threatens *The Nation* with rack and ruination if it does not change its editorial position. It must "resist hysteria about hysteria, the present witch-hunt against the witch-hunts." And it must proclaim that we live in "the most un-reactionary era in American history." Otherwise the magazine will be skinned alive, warns Viereck in his article entitled "Sermons of Self-Destruction."

The *Saturday Review* article brilliantly illustrates the truth of a recent article in *The Nation* on "The Pall of Orthodoxy." The author, Alfred McClung Lee, a professor of sociology at Brooklyn College and author of several books on the American press, asked pertinently: "Is it really so accidental that thought-control—miscalled 'loyalty'—investigations chiefly oppress non-Communist liberals? How much freedom of speech is left in the United States?"

It is of course not accidental that the Smith Act, the Un-American and McCarran Committees, and the Truman "loyalty" edicts should oppress not only Communists but non-Communist liberals and indeed most Americans. They are aimed to do just that. And experience has confirmed that they will do just that unless they are fought unitedly by Communists and non-Communist liberals like *The Nation* editors, regardless of their many differences.

The stormtroop intellectuals, like their political masters, are making it quite clear how far the country has been pushed down the road to fascism. The "Sermons of Self-Preservation" need to be preached as loudly and boldly as the scurrilous "Sermons of Self-Destruction."

Victory Over Blacklist

THE fight against McCarthyism in culture was given a big lift by Lena Horne's superb victory over the "Red Channels" blacklisters who tried to keep her off the WCBS-T "Toast of the Town" program la month. Hitting back hard, the inte nationally famous singer threaten to sue to the limit if her sponso knuckled down to the Hearst pre and cancelled her contract.

This was also a triumph ov Jim Crow, for it is well known th Miss Horne's main "offense" is h consistent battle against the oppr sion of her people, especially in t arts. That battle is vividly describ in Lena Horne's autobiography, viewed in our last issue.

The victory shows that the rac blacklist can be broken, but it a underscores the need for a full-sc fight in which the audience and radio performers together make th voices heard. In radio, films, bo publishing, theatre, etc., the bla list has become the main threat only to the livelihood of artists to even a bare minimum of progr quality.

The progressives in the audie must speak up.

We may be sure that the re tionaries will not accept their de by Lena Horne gracefully. They try to keep her off the air for go Currently they are shooting in direction of CBS, which has de oped an apologetic self-defense consists of pointing to the fact NBC also employed this or artist. This kind of argument only speed the day when the bl list will be total on all the compe networks.

Soviet Literary Talks

THE article by Konstantin Fedin in this issue, like that of Ilya renburg in our August number, part of a lively discussion on ques-ons of literary craftsmanship fea-red in the Soviet press during re-nt months.

This discussion is by no means nfined to writers. Literature in the id of socialism is a deeply cher-ned possession of the people. So-et readers, exacting in their de-ands, take an active part in the iblic exchange of views aimed at eeping up high standards of art and iminating shoddy work wherever may exist.

Soviet poetry, novels, plays offer sharp contrast to the decay of lues in bourgeois letters today. ut there is no smugness. The Soviet riter is made keenly aware that to ow as an artist he must keep pace ith his country's swift develop-ents in its advance to Communism. This concern for artistic standards expressed in vigorous, principled, ank criticism and self-criticism, hich the Big Money press here tries interpret as if it were analogous the head-chopping of the Un-merican Committee.

Of course, the Soviet discussions craftsmanship have nothing in ommon with the snobbish, for-alist, time-serving jargon of liter-y coteries. Form is not valued ostractly as a glorified mumbo-mbo. A writer's ideas, sensitivity, nowledge of life cannot be divorced from his techniques. "Raise Ideological Level and Artistic Skill" is the title of a recent editorial in *Pravda*.

Criticism of the poem "Love the Ukraine" for its nationalistic ideas in opposition to the fraternal multinationalism of the U.S.S.R., or criticism of the libretto of the opera *Bogdan Khmelnitsky* for glossing over the reactionary role of the Polish gentry, goes hand in hand with a detailed criticism of the artistic craft.

A great impetus to more serious artistic analysis was given by Joseph Stalin's contribution to the debate over Soviet linguistics last year. Stalin's enrichment of linguistic science clearly has a special importance for artists of the word. It brought a new understanding of the development of language, a heightened respect for its creative usage.

In exposing the fallacies in the language theories of N. Y. Marr, Stalin pointedly described this noted philologist as a simplifier and vulgarizer of Marxism, "like the followers of the 'Proletcult' or 'RAPP.'" This reference is to a long-discredited literary movement which had a narrow creative platform, a mechanical, schematic approach that under "Left" slogans scorned questions of artistic form and showed contempt for the classical heritage.

"If you recall Comrade Stalin's works on linguistics," says the novelist Alexander Fadeyev, general secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers, "you will be able to appreciate the significance and value of

this aspect of a writer's work. In order to have a mighty command of Russian, Tolstoy above all made a close study of the language's historical development. . . .

"The Revolution has naturally enriched the language enormously. For writers to reject these great riches, to give them no place in literature, would be very wrong. But at the same time one must take care not to clutter up the language w superfluous coinages, technicalit dialectal expressions and no words [words formed and used one occasion]. While enriching vocabulary, we must carefully serve the basis of Russian langu must not sin against its grammat structure."

Obviously this approach is at posite poles from that of bourg

The Case of Professor Struik

I DON'T believe that anyone anywhere really thinks that Professo Dirk J. Struik, internationally known mathematician and schola has plotted the overthrow of Massachusetts. His indictment on suc a fantastic charge dramatizes the fascist threat to the intellectual lif of the nation. Let us never forget that the course in Nazi Germany which began with the imprisonment of Communists, advanced unt any writer, any professor, any scientist like Dr. Struik was threatene with the concentration camp if he possessed a basic human decenc that would not crumble into obeisance before the fascists.

Dr. Struik, author of *Yankee Science in the Making* and other work is a victim of the Smith Act as certainly as if he were indicted unde its terms. He is a victim of the Supreme Court's abrogation of th First Amendment on June 4. In suspending him from his teachin post, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has fallen in with th prevailing pattern of judging men guilty until they are proved innocen

The fear which has gripped the American universities is intensifie by this brutal act of thought control. Professor Struik's offense was h integrity, his respect for his own belief in the Marxist theory of histor His crime was advocacy of peace and concern for the Bill of Righ

His indictment, purely for his ideas, marks an ominous extensio and speeding up of the fascist attack. The way to defend free speec is to exercise it. Speak up and condemn this outrage.

—RICHARD O. BOYER

heorists who praise Gertrude Stein, ames Joyce and Ezra Pound because ney destroy the syntax of our lan- uage and "invent" words. These vriters, far from "refreshing" the nguage and making it more pliable," as their supporters claim, ave merely abused it, sought to hatter its communicative power as social instrument.

Language, as Stalin has shown, not nly registers but reinforces the re- ults of thought, "the successes of nan's cognition." The literary "mo- lernists" strive to divorce language rom thought, and in doing so they ave advanced not art but obscurant- ism, which is the deadly enemy of rt.

Soviet writers indicate in their raft discussions that they have no use for such "innovators." Yes, in- ventions of new forms and tech- niques are necessary, and without them, as Fadeyev writes, art cannot progress. "But to us," he adds, "being an innovator means, above all, per- ceiving *new features in real life,* and portraying them, in their dynamic growth and development, through the medium of art."

Bouquets and Brickbats

IN AN essay on "Newspaper Criticisms and American Fiction," Frank Norris registered astonish- ment at the amount of "commen- datory palaver" shoveled out by the professional reviewers of his day. The benevolent cliché was even at that time—fifty years ago—the first refuge of the newspaper critic, and Norris found it hard to calculate the number of third-rate authors who were regularly informed that they had just written "a thrilling story palpitating with life . . . one of the very best novels that have appeared in a long time . . . not a dull page in the book."

Norris traced the fragrant-bouquet tradition to the fact that "it is easier to write favorable than unfavorable reviews." There is of course another factor which no first-year student would ignore today: that books are commodities which are intended, like asparagus and vanishing cream, to be sold over the counter. The pub- lisher pays his advertising bills, as you need not be told if you read the reviews in the Sunday book section of the New York *Times.*

But the brickbat tradition is by no means dead, even though the busi- ness office restrains it. In a sprightly treatise on *The Charlatanry of the Learned* (1715) a German Diogenes named Johann Burkhard Mencken (no relation) noted the practice of "a certain class of bad writers who, as soon as they see that an author of great name has published something remarkable, hurl themselves upon it, and although the encounter might be too much even for Achilles, beat it and tear it to pieces." That used to happen regularly with the books of Theodore Dreiser. Today philis- tine abuse takes a different form. A book like Lloyd Brown's *Iron City* is ostentatiously ignored.

We would be the last to boast that

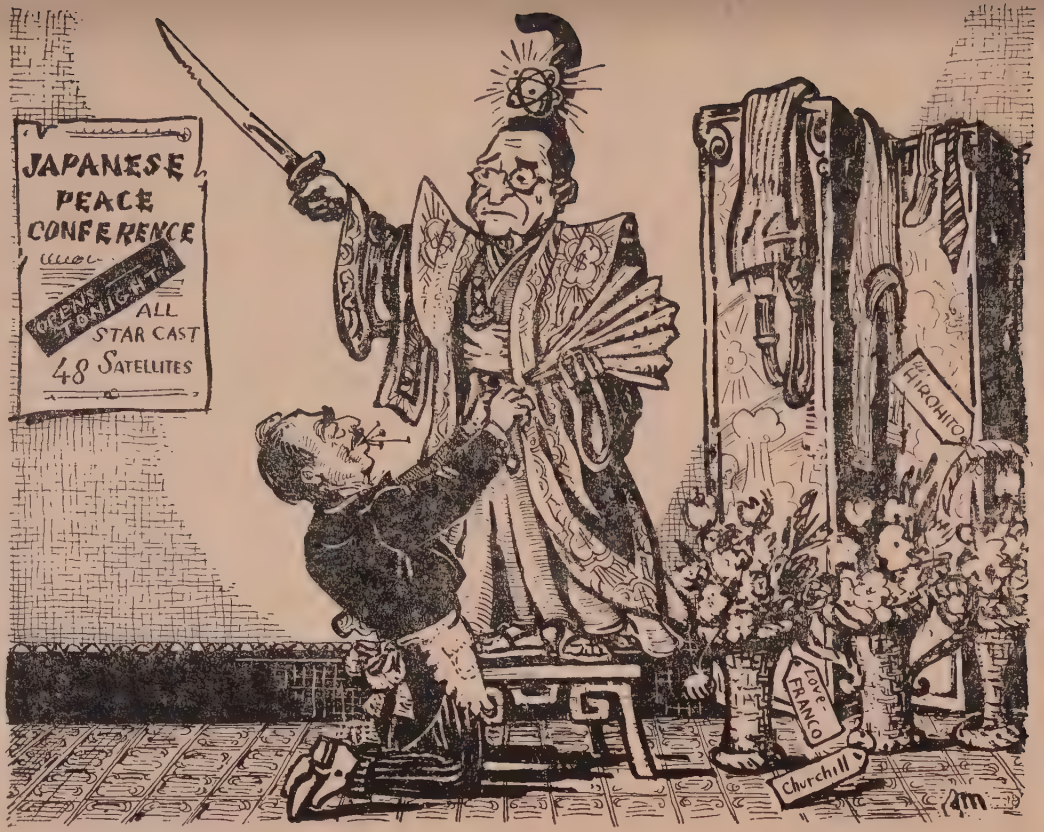
our own reviewing performance unfailingly mirrors our intention. But we do have a definite feeling about both commendatory palaver and remorseless griping. Frankly and without apology our reviews emphasize the positive qualities of left-wing books. This is not merely a matter of countering the hostility and ignorance of the bourgeois reviewers. It is also that we have, thank our stars, different criteria of judgment from those of the *Saturday Review of Literature*.

Left-wing criticism, however, can develop its own brand of "commendatory palaver," and it is undeniable that there has been some sinning in this respect. Essentially this reflects the influence of the commodity-approach to culture that dominates our society: the commercial reviewer is not out to "criticize" the product he must sell. In the reader's mind a pattern is formed: he is not used having shortcomings pointed out the salesman.

Too often this attitude is carr over into left-wing criticism by b reader and critic. If a genera positive review includes a seri criticism of shortcomings, this seen by some readers as a signal a thumbs-down conclusion. To extent that the critic is influen by the pattern he will not fully ap his critical faculties. This failure, turn, can only increase the read skepticism.

Ours is a totally different outl from that of the commercial pr What we require always is b principled and completely hon criticism. We can best demonstr our respect for both the readers the progressive author under rev by the depth and frankness of analysis.

WE LEARN with deep sorrow of the death of Helen Black on September 11. For many years Miss Black made a major contribution to American cultural life as the representative of several Soviet publishing houses. She helped bring here the novels of Ilya Ehrenburg, Leonid Leonov and many other authors, as well as the compositions of Gliere, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Khatchaturyan. At the time of her death Miss Black was head of Sovfoto. A good friend of our magazine, Helen Black was for a number of years on the staff of *New Masses*. The death of this warm, generous woman is a loss to the cause, so crucial for peace, of American-Soviet cultural interchange.


JAPANESE
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OPENS TONIGHT!
ALL
STAR CAST
48 SATELLITES
HIROHITO
LONG LIVE FRANCO
Churchill

How can the young writer master technique?

A Soviet novelist's view:

The Writer's Craft

By KONSTANTIN FEDI

IN SPEAKING of the writer's craft, one must begin with language. Language will always remain the writer's building material. The art of literature is the art of words.

Even so important an element of literary form as construction is secondary in importance to language. We know good works of literature whose construction is imperfect. But no work can be good if its language is poor. You cannot build a good house out of poor timber, though you can have a good house with a layout that is not entirely satisfactory. But what is the use of a pleasing design if the walls are rotten and do not keep out the cold?

The pupil goes to the master-craftsman to learn his craft. The master teaches him to avoid the mistakes which he himself used to make and afterwards learned not to make. He too had his teachers, and to what he learned from them he added his own experience.

The pupil must not only imbi the master's knowledge; he must al acquire experience of his own. The craftsmanship will advance, atta greater heights of perfection.

Science would come to a standst if scientists were content to rest wi what they inherited from their pr decessors. Discoveries are born whe the master's knowledge ends and t pupil's new knowledge begins. R call Lenin's words: "To preserve heritage by no means signifies lim ing oneself to that heritage . . ."

It is the same in art. Taking ov the skill of a master does not ma you a master yourself. The purpo of assimilating the past is to advan more boldly into the future. But o needs to know the past pretty th oughly, so as not to waste effort discoveries that have already be made.

It is when he contributes his ov achievements in craftsmanship th the young writer will advance t

art of literature. And no literary achievement is possible unless the writer works ceaselessly, all his life, I would say, on his language.

I AM convinced that a young author benefits greatly from newspaper work. This is a schooling in literature which nothing else can supply.

What does a newspaper schooling give? It trains the qualities most precious in literature: brevity, precision, clarity of thought.

Many of our recent novels suffer from diffuseness, verbosity, from what Leo Tolstoy called "fat" as opposed to "muscle." Newspaper work develops the writer's muscle. It does not allow his writing to spread. If a paper prints unmuscular writing, that is the paper's fault. By its very nature, the newspaper requires the literary man to be trim, so to speak.

Verbosity is the enemy of the newspaper, because extra words take up extra space and because they blur the idea, while in the newspaper every idea must be clear-cut.

Precision of language is a requirement not only of style, of taste; it is above all, a requirement of meaning. Where there are too many words, where they are feeble, the thinking lacks vigor. Muddled ideas do not lend themselves to clear, concise langage. It is when the writer has nothing to say that his writing drags.

The first great teacher of Russian writers, Mihail Lomonosov, said: "Writing is confused when the writer's ideas are confused." This was true in the 18th century, it remains true in the 20th and will remain so always.

Our own contemporary, the distinguished Soviet writer Alexei Tolstoy, declared: "Language is an instrument of thought. To handle language carelessly means to think carelessly."

Newspaper work is a training in the observation of life. A writer who works for the newspaper needs solid but mobile contacts with reality. A newspaper will not print a story about just anything, or rather about nothing. Its columns are a mirror of the day. But that is not to say it expects the writer to cover the events of the day. That the reporter will provide. The writer's function is to disclose—briefly, with insight, through the medium of expressive action—what his contemporaries think and feel.

Gorky went through the newspaper mill and tasted to the full of its difficulties and hardships; but his first fiction stories were also written for newspapers, and he noted that working for them had taught him a great deal. Chekhov, that unrivalled master of the short story, for many years published his work in newspapers.

The young writer should, in my view, begin with the shorter form. It is not well for a writer taking his first steps to attempt a big novel, a series of novels, an epic cycle of many volumes.

I know that young writers have it in them to produce novels, and even cycles of novels: they are full of

energy, are eager to tell at once as much as they can, if not everything they know. They are full of temperament and have plenty of time ahead of them. But the freedom and scope offered by the large epic form, its profusion of characters and profusion of words, its multiplicity of overlapping traditions, which creates the impression that the writer can do just what he pleases—all this is not sufficiently conducive to developing a striving for perfection of form.

All too often, one may say of so-called "big canvases" by young writers: the canvas is big enough, but what do we see on that canvas? It lacks the unity of composition that would help bring out the treatment of the theme. The links between the characters are too tenuous. Instead of a single source of light, each character has a klieg light of his own, as though he were a film actor. The theme of the story is not in accord with its characters, and the plot unfolds without much regard to the circumstances. The big canvas has failed to become a big picture.

Craftsmanship is best learned in the short story. Here you can see at a glance whether the different parts are properly proportioned, whether you have achieved organic unity of characters and theme, whether each episode contributes as it should to bringing out the main ideas and each detail is relevant to the whole. And here you learn to use words with really critical discrimination: there's no room for long-windedness in the

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short story, the words for it have be picked, and picked sparingly.

Of course, not every young wr trained in the short story school r go on to become a novelist. Bu am sure that every novelist will the better for having trained in art of the shorter form. If he launc into novel writing straight away, will not develop that striving high standards which short story w would teach him.

Adopting Leo Tolstoy's express I would say that the art of eli nating "fat" and acquiring "mus is much more easily learned in short story than in the novel.

WHY did the Chekhov and Go stories which first appeared newspapers become part of the sical heritage of Russian literat why were they not submerged in mass of stories-for-a-day?

These stories mirrored the life of Russian society; epitomized in them was one or another aspect of class relations at the turn of the century.

But it is equally true that these stories were written with the full force of immense talent. Chekhov and Gorky did not lower their artistic standards when writing for newspapers. They did not vulgarize their language, did not alter their style, were not content with untypical characters or hackneyed plot patterns. They remained true to reality and true to art.

The true artist is an artist at all times. You cannot write well for the monthly and less well for the weekly —cannot put all your talent into a novel, a modicum of talent into an essay, and no talent at all into a newspaper article.

One must strive for craftsmanship not in some one chosen medium, but in everything one writes. As soon as you take up your pen, you assume artistic responsibility. If you write like a hack in a newspaper sketch, an article, a review, a letter to a friend, you will never be an artist in the story or the novel.

Once and for life the writer must forbid himself to write carelessly.

There is no such thing as an "ignoble medium," but there is such a thing as an ignoble attitude toward some media. This attitude is the fault of people who think it beneath their dignity to work always with the same intensity, the same exertion of effort.

The standard of our demands on the writer's language must be very high indeed.

CRITICS have been remarking with increasing frequency of late on the undue occurrence of provincialisms in literature. The demands for purity of the Russian language are justified. The only thing is to avoid pedantry.

We all know Lenin's article "On Purifying the Russian Language," in which he assails the needless employment of foreign words. But some of the provincialisms sound as uncouth in the Russian reader's ear as any foreignism, and are equally unintelligible. Gorky in his articles about language made quite clear his views on the subject of unintelligible localisms, and these views are shared by the whole of Soviet literature.

Of course, while criticizing excessive indulgence in localisms, one should not go to extremes, should not demand of the artist a sort of sterilized literary language.

Actually, every word originated in some specific part of our land; and even when the literary language was already well developed, say in the 19th century, after Pushkin's day, the vocabulary of the Russian national language was freely augmented with local material. An apt word formed somewhere in the depths of Russia would spread, gain general recognition, become common usage.

A word current in a limited part of the country will have an adequate claim to become universal and cease

to be local if there is not an apter and more definitive word in the language for the thing it represents, and if it is readily understood and does not jar the ear.

Combatting "provincialism" in literature means requiring that the language should not be cluttered with needless bizarre words, whatever the writer's purpose in doing so. But this does not preclude using a dialectal word when it is difficult or impossible to replace it by a generally known and accepted one, when it is apt and serves to enrich the language. Accordingly, a writer may be quite justified in adding localisms to his vocabulary, provided the words he brings into the national Russian literature out of the local store are both necessary and apt.

Now, after the appearance of J. V. Stalin's works on linguistics, science and literature have a solid foundation on which comprehensively to develop Marxist linguistic theory and elaborate the esthetic principles which must guide the writer in his practical work in the matter of language. Marked by the clarity of genius, Stalin's scientific formulations about the basic word stock of a language and its relation to dialects, about a language perfecting itself according to its inherent laws of development, about language as a means of intercourse which always remains one for the whole of a society, brightly illumine the path of the writer's advance to mastery of language.

And J. V. Stalin's works will help the artist to solve correctly, among others, the exceedingly important problem of the attitude of the national literature to provincialisms.

WHY must we strive for a high standard of literary technique? Is it in order the better to disguise intellectual impotence, poverty of content, as is the case in the hack bourgeois literature of the West? Of course not. It is because wealth of knowledge and ideas requires perfection of form, that is, craftsmanship, for adequate expression.

Art is the ability to convey big vital truths. Let no one imagine that if a writer has a competent technique, he can make a truth out of falsehood. Falsehood remains falsehood, with master and novice alike.

Art that is not the vehicle of significant ideas is an imposture. That is what is called formalism: a husk with no grain inside it, technique for technique's sake.

Fine craftsmanship allows one to portray people's feelings and experiences more fully and with greater insight. Truth and beauty of language, harmony of all the elements of form speak deeply and powerfully to the imagination and emotions of the reader. But mere dexterity in language, mere outward virtuosity, fails to touch the emotions.

Speaking at the U.S.S.R. Writers' Congress about the decadents in literature, Alexei Tolstoy described the ailment from which they had suffered as "language shamanism." And this is very true. In their early years some of the older generation

Soviet writers, myself among them, experienced to a greater or lesser extent the influence of the decadent school, which lived out its last days after the October Revolution.

The specific characteristics of the decadents can most readily be understood if we take the example of Andrei Bely. Every sentence Bely wrote was meant to astound the reader, to overwhelm him. He gave himself up to language just as a shaman gives himself up to his self-induced esctasies. Language was for him a thing supreme, with an all but physiological existence of its own. It was a glossal welter, and Bely himself referred to his writings as glossolalia.* The tide of his sentence dragged his ideas after it, and the more fanciful and wayward the language, the more nebulous the ideas became.

When language is an object in itself, it becomes meaningless, as every instrument is meaningless if it does not produce any useful result. It is the purpose for which a piece of work is done that governs the employment of the instrument. It is the idea that brings the word in its train, that the word may express and communicate it.

True cratfsmanship does not obscure the idea, but brings it out, as the developer brings out the image in photography.

This gives the craftsman a practical way of testing the value of a work. If you see flaws in form, look for flaws in content. If your artistic taste refuses to accept a scene where someone dies, it means that the person did not die, that is, that the author did not feel that he died, did not experience this death as an artist. If you don't believe in the sunset in a picture, it means that there is no sunset.

What I mean by this is that true comprehension of reality impels the artist to strive for true portrayal of it, and makes for harmony between the reality and the image. By the criterion of this harmony the artist can test with a high degree of precision the value of the work. It is not only talent that participates in this testing process—culture, knowledge, experience, participate even more. And these are acquired by ceaseless effort.

We must not forget the essential fact that "artist," "master," is not some title or rank. Upon attaining mastery of his craft, a writer does not cease to perfect it. Craftsmanship has no bounds.

In his article "Shakespeare and No End," Goethe says: "Not everything done by a superb master is superbly done." Undoubtedly, even great masters commit mistakes. But they attained greatness because all their lives they fought against those mistakes.

ACQUIRING craftsmanship is not easy, of course. Chekhov said in one of his letters: "The better a thing is, the more sharply its faults strike

* Glossolalia—ecstatic utterance unintelligible to hearer or speaker.

you, and the harder they are to correct." The experience of big writers shows that the artist does not find his work easier, but ever harder as time goes on.

But it is not only toil and torment, that work; it is a joy, true happiness. It is important to make one's work a habit, an inner need. The satisfaction of the need is in itself a reward for the "travail" about which so much is said and which the writer does indeed know only too well.

For several years I led a prose seminar at the Gorky Literary Institute. Over considerable periods I watched the work of many students, future men of letters, most of them young people of ability. I noticed that as a rule the best results were achieved by those to whom writing came hard, not those who wrote with facility.

My explanation of this is simple: those who grapple with the difficulties of the writer's profession naturally find things harder than those who try to evade them. In the long run, the man who writes with effort develops an infinitely more exacting approach to his work than the man who writes without it. And little by little two types of writers take shape: the profound and the superficial.

That is why it is essential, beginning with a young writer's very first steps, to require quality in his work much more than quantity. Better less, but better—it is not everyone that is willing to take this advice. But those who do take it soon see by their own experience that it is correct.

I note with great pleasure that students who worked earnestly and perseveringly in the seminar but a short time ago are already functioning actively and successfully among our new, young Soviet writers. They gained their first experience of life in the heroic years of the Patriotic War, and since then they have been able to complete their education, to start publishing their work in magazines, to win the recognition of the reader. Our country opens bright, hopeful, far-reaching prospects before them. That is a great deal.

And precisely at this moment of their gratifying successes, we writers must tell our new colleagues that even the highest popular appraisal of their work does not mark the summit of their possible achievement.

Our wish for our young writers must be that they bring to their lofty calling both earnestness and understanding.

"A GOOD BOOK is a book that does not leave the reader intact; it is a challenge hurled at us to change something in ourselves and in the world."
—Roger Garaudy *(Literature of the Graveyard)*

RiGhT FaCe

Non-preventive Medicine

"At New England's Deaconess hospital, rats exposed to lethal radiation were joined artificially by Siamese twin surgery to unexposed rats, resulting in saving the life of the exposed rat. That's how science tries to find cures for the evils of atomic bombs."—*Columnist Peter Edson in the Los Angeles* Daily News.

Tickled to Death

"Most Americans like inflation. They like the feeling of prosperity it engenders."—Business expert Donald I. Rogers in the *Daily Oklahoman.*

Land of Opportunity

Cobb Tells 1A's How to End Job Problem: Enlist in Service of Choice by Saturday

New York's Director of Selective Service doubles as an employment counsellor in the New York *Times.*

Alumnus

"During the two years, 1936 to 1938, that I was in Germany as a student at the German War College, the Nazis contributed considerably—not intentionally—to my education concerning Soviet objectives."—*Lieut. Gen. Albert C. Wedemeyer in* U.S. News & World Report.

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

WAR CORRESPONDENTS

By JOSEPH NORTH

THE probate does not reveal William Randolph Hearst's generous legacy to the State Department. His dictum—"You supply the pictures, I'll supply the war"—is Washington property nowadays and the foreign correspondents abide by it. They stalk the foreign capitals like Pinkerton detectives, hunting the appropriate picture.

This could surprise nobody who ever encountered our newsmen abroad. I observed them in the nervous rooms of the Censura, the press-offices during the war in Spain. The only change since then is quantitative: there are more of them these days of American Empire, rummaging the world for the big auction.

They were in Spain what they are today, glorified police reporters. After a bombing they would rush pell-mell to the city morgue. I watched them count the dead on the slabs with a cool, accurate forefinger. They did that best. Wilfully, they ignored the massive ebb and flow of people, the social and political forces beneath the opaque shell of events. They could count the dead but had little arithmetic for the living.

An AP man, a lean, blonde stick of a fellow with a wisp of mustache would come to me, his brow wrinkled and ask petulantly, "Now how does that damn Popular Front go again?" He would tick off the various parties on his fingers. "Let's see, now, there are the Left Republicans, right? They're the business people, the middle-classes, the professionals, right? Then there are the Communists, well yes, I know about *them,* and the Socialists, well, but what about those anarchists, you know, the CNT? And the UGT, and the FAI, what about them? Are they in or out?" A pause, then "Damn it all, now what was it you said their program is?"

I was "a Communist reporter." A Communist is supposed to know about these things, grubbing around in the drab tedium of the trade unions, the clusters of expendable little people, not the Great Ones who make the big headlines. From time to time the war correspondents would desert their encampment near the chancelleries doors to sally briefly to the front, snag a momentary thrill of danger which received journalistic amplitude by the time it hit the headlines.

A bulky, red-faced Englishman by the name of Sefton Delmar toured the fronts for the Beaverbrook papers (and, it was said, Whitehall) like a sahib in a swift, red racing car he had shipped down from London. Ponderously gadding about in a yellow, turtle-necked sweater which he affected as the costume of a war correspondent, he was sustained in his spartan watches by huge weekly parcels stuffed with great hams and gleaming bottles of Scotch. Beaverbrook headlined his dispatches in fat, black type: "Sefton Delmar at Guadalajara," "Sefton Delmar at Brunete" —clearly two forces of equal proportions.

Delmar sweated out brief, lurid word pictures of the scene before him, the shot and shell that landed perilously near *him,* Sefton Delmar, ambassador plenipotentiary for His Lordship. And after his heroic day's labors, his 300 cablese words, he retired, sweating with achievement, to the cool, plush bar of the biggest, most ornate, most crystal-glassed hotels of Madrid, Valencia, Barcelona, wherever he happened to be.

Louis Fischer arrived from Paris, on infrequent occasions, in the manner of a visiting potentate, a self-appointed Metternich of journalism. He affected the manner of the man-in-the-know, darkly mysterious, an equal intimate of the higher-ups, adviser to kings. He would arrive clamorously at the hotel, the servants would haul his weighty luggage into the foyer, and Metternich would promptly seek out the correspondents of the big newspapers.

He would approach them, with a big, frozen smile, bearing armloads of gifts, and, observing all the protocol of an embassy, he scrupulously graded those he called to his banquet table. The New York *Times* man, or one from the London *Express* rated a carton of Lucky Strikes (cigarettes then were worth their weight in gold): to newsmen of lesser journals, a single pack. And when, on the rare occasions he visited the front, and I saw him there seeking out the International Brigades for a story, he strode among them like a Lord Bountiful handing each soldier one cigarette.

Shortly afterward this advocate of men found guilty as Hitler agents in the Moscow Trials, wailed: "I had lost Russia: would I now lose Spain?" Oh yes, Fischer and Russia, Fischer and Spain. Imperial Delmar had only equated himself to a single battle: Fischer was the equal of nations.

Machiavelli advised long ago that regency demands a cautious, calculating eye. That Fischer had. I encountered him one day at the Ebro front: we were traveling in the same Ford when a trio of Messerschmitts swooped down to machine-gun us and then to bomb us. As we ran across the stubbled fields, Fischer, panting, found breath enough to observe, audibly, earnestly, to himself: "Damn it, there's no spot in Spain that's mathematically safe." He has loyally continued his services to the enemies of democracy in his quest for a spot that's mathematically safe.

Yet there were some, a few, who were touched—all too briefly—by the grandeur of the Spanish Republic and who wrote better than they knew, attained a stature they could never achieve again. Like Herbert Matthews of the New York *Times.*

Grave as a coroner, his shoulders hunched a bit with the weight of his supreme responsibility, the *Times* man abroad, he moved with icy decorum through the crowded press offices, in his tweeds, carrying a big pipe in one hand, his portable in the other, enroute to file a news dispatch to the center of the world—Times Square.

It seemed to me then, that he tried at times to grasp the magnificence of the scene before him. "For me," he wrote in 1937 from Madrid, "these are the great days of my life." He says in his book *Two Wars And More to Come*: ". . . I take my hat off to these people. They are fighting and suffering and struggling for something better than life has hitherto given them, and I hope they win."

But his allegiance to the Spanish folk and the Internationals was brief. Recently I tried to find an echoing note in his current writings, but I have not caught one word, a single monosyllabic "No" of dissent from him these years when Republican Spain lay bleeding, her sons and daughters driven into the Spanish Buchenwalds.

I recall his encomiums to the soldiers, Communists and non-Communists alike, of the Lincoln Brigade during Spain:

"They are not fighting for Moscow, but for their ideals and because they would rather die than see a fascist regime under any shape or auspices installed in the United States."

I waited to hear one word from him in their defense as they are hounded here; John Gates, the incorruptible, driving warrior, in jail; Alvah Bessie, the fighting poet who lay down his pen to take the Republican gun—in jail; Steve Nelson, the lion-hearted whom all loved in Spain—in jail; others. And Matthews? Silent.

Today he obediently hammers out his daily jeremiad against the Communists; he has achieved the be-all and end-all of his career, attained the purple—editorial writer for the New York *Times.*

I BELIEVE I understand: sometimes an unexpected moment, a word, an accidental glance gives key to a man's character. May Day, 1937 we were returning to Barcelona from a visit to the Aragon front. Matthews and Ernest Hemingway had borrowed Delmar's red racer. They encountered me at the front and invited me to return with them.

We were winding through the steep mountains when we caught up with a score of shouting young men and women in a flower-bedecked truck that was speeding down the road, gay with the banners of the Republic, red, yellow, purple. They were singing, at the top of their lungs, cracking the mountain silence with song, roaring their national air

ıem, defiantly, and then they would ırst into the Internationale; and as e drew up behind their truck, they aved to us happily, their young, live, shining faces a picture of life nd hope.

Suddenly, at a sharp turn, the road ell away steeply, the speeding driver ost control and the crowded truck omersaulted, flinging the singing oungsters in a dozen directions onto he granite road. We slammed on the rakes and leaped out. Some were lead by the time we reached them, heir gay young faces of a moment go now smears of blood. Others ay moaning, clearly near death.

Hemingway and I joined several easants who had come running with itchers of water and armfuls of andage. We succored those who were still breathing and we were soon covered with their life-blood. After helping bandage the forehead of a youth of seventeen, I glanced up and saw the great correspondent of the New York *Times,* immaculate in his tweeds, stepping high among the prostrate bodies, bending over them carefully (tucking in his neck-tie so it would not brush the blood) and interviewing the dying, asking their names and addresses which he jotted precisely in a notebook. His face was impassive, grave, his manner austere, professional, *scientific,* and I felt a spurt of contempt for the man.

Hemingway, deftly bandaging the heads and arms of the injured, was on his knees among the dying. When he saw Matthews diligently plying his questions among them he roared: "You son of a bitch, get out of here before I kill you."

I had thought, for a long time afterward, of this episode and it seemed to me that I had caught a sidelong, yet deep, glimpse into the characters of both men. Humanity, for Matthews, was raw material for a news-story. Hemingway's naked impulse was for Man.

Yet how explain his retreat, the diminution of his talent and character, his treacherously false portrait of Andre Marty, of La Pasionaria, of the Spanish people in *For Whom The Bell Tolls?*—the inanity, and worse of *Across the River and Into the Trees?*

WE WERE, one day, in the Hotel Florida in Madrid, hotly discussing the Abraham Lincoln brigade. Hemingway praised their courage about which he had frequently written, then he hammered his big fist on the table, making the whiskey bottle jump. "Well," he shouted over his tumbler of Bourbon, "I like the Communist as soldier, I hate him as priest."

"Priest?"

"The commissars who spout Marxism like a bishop the Scriptures, and hand down the papal bulls."

I lit into him and he admitted, with a laugh, that he had never read Karl Marx: his antipathy to ideas, to a system of thought, was notorious. Then, when he said all authority was anathema to him, it struck me that I could place him: he belonged

in spirit, to the anarchists, so many of whom had been paralyzed by their Bakuninist ideas. "Anarchy is the highest form of order," one of their posters said in Barcelona and I am certain that Hemingway would agree with that.

I argued that the authority, the leadership of the Communists was an electoral matter, they were chosen by their rank-and-file comrades for their experience, wisdom, selflessness, drive. And, I insisted, his categories "soldier" and "priest" made absolutely no sense. The Communist as "soldier" was good because he had exactly those qualities that Hemingway attributed to him as "priest." The more he knew, the deeper he believed, the better he fought. He fought well because he had convictions, derived from fact, science, truth. He was prepared, hence, to live or die for his conviction.

Hemingway, pacing the room brushed my argument aside. "Con viction," he snorted, "convictio with a capital C. Fatherland, with capital F, Love with a capital L. Go damn the big words. Since Pharac they've used them to bamboozle th poor, dumb, believing jerks."

"No," I countered, "the questio is who uses these words, for wha for whom. When Franco shou 'Espagne' he means Juan March, th tobacco monopoly, the Duke Alba's plantations, Count de Rom none's royal castle, Catalan textile Asturian ore. To the Republican Fatherland is people: the farmer, th miner, Juan March's workers, n Juan March. Fatherland, for the pe ple, is the humanism in Cervante Goya, Lorca, their Christian faith ar not their prelates, the schools th

re beginning to build under the epublic, their trade unions, the quare meal, decent-paid work."

"Hell," Hemingway roared, stopping before me and eyeing me intently, "I believe you're a priest yourself, a budding commissar. Have a drink," he laughed, "and put your mitts up." He poured half a tumbler of whiskey for me, then he squared off, hunching his shoulders, striking the pose of a prize-fighter, pranced lightly around the room, dancing into the fact he trusted, the primeval argument of the fist. Guts, man, guts, sock and take it, man, *Take it.*

He remained primordially ignorant of the cardinal facts of life, of man's history, the struggle of classes and the shaping of people in that struggle. You had it or you didn't, and alone you carry your destiny to the night of death. There was a time, in the earlier Thirties when America hungered and starvation was as palpable as the skyscraper, that Hemingway groped for the truth in *To Have And Have Not,* which concluded with the hero's death (inevitably violent) and his final gasp, "One man alone . . . cannot. . . ."

But the money flowed back into the tills of the big counting houses, industry's wheels began to turn again, and Hemingway's search died stillborn. His wilful rejection of social reality reduced him, as artist and as man.

I RAN into some correspondents for the monied press whose minds opened their hearts. They grew to see the cause of the Republic as the cause of all men, regardless of politics, all who love a child's laugh, the glimpse of children sleeping sound, the doll on the pillow—unbombed.

One rainy day, during a trip to Paris, I received a telephone call and the young voice at the other end said, in a low tone, hesitantly, that he was on the Paris edition of the *Herald Tribune.* "James Lardner . . . is the name," he said between long pauses. "We . . . I . . . never met you . . . but I know you from mutual friends. When I heard you were in town, I thought, I would like, if you've got . . . a spare hour . . . to have a chat with you . . . about Spain."

When I heard the name *Herald Tribune* my hackles rose, for I knew that Mrs. Ogden Reid's little commercial enterprise in Paris was no friend of the Republic's. But I also knew that here and there, sitting behind some obscure desk in a corner, a man would be brooding, a man whose mind hadn't congealed into the contemporary paralysis of thought. And who would, could, write something honest about Spain that would help Spain.

I agreed to see him and the next day, at a corner cafe near the Opera, I met a handsome, dark-eyed young man of 22, slim, with good shoulders, somewhat over medium height, who spoke slowly, shyly, yet carefully, and carried himself with such an air of modesty and simplicity that my prior animosity vanished. He stood there, his black hair parted

neatly in the precise center, his big, sober eyes appraising me through horn-rimmed glasses.

"Lardner?" I asked, when we sat down at a table, "Lardner, that's a familiar name. Any relation to Ring?"

He toyed with the napkin, looked away and said, after a long pause, "Yes, there's some relation. My father."

I extended my hand again and shook his warmly for I had always been a fan of Ring Lardner and had regarded him as an authentic voice of modern American literature. I said I was glad to meet a son of the man who wrote "Hair Cut."

Young Lardner seemed embarrassed by all this, and like so many sons of the famous he resented, despite natural filial pride, the designation as *son,* expected his own due as *man.* I sensed this and didn't allude to his father again.

He began to tell me why he had phoned. He spoke of himself and his ideas, revealed that he had less than meager regard for the editorial policies of his paper, in fact, for the whole official attitude toward Republican Spain. "The newspapers are a cesspool," he said. "You get so much . . . so much crap up here in Paris. I want to . . . go down there . . . and see for myself."

He asked many questions about the Lincoln Brigade, honest questions, and I felt he had more than a professional journalist's curiosity. "Do you think it's possible for me to go down there and . . . see them . . . in the lines, I mean, really g to know them?"

I said I knew no reason why shouldn't go down to Spain and s the brigades for himself, the oth correspondents in Spain visited the often on their journalistic roun He looked away, his young, sob face working, and I saw he want more than that. Then he sa abashed, that he would "possibl write a book about the Brigade.

He asked many questions abo the Popular Front governme searching questions that revealed probing, orderly mind keened to t universal issues of the time. Franco wins," he groped, "Hitler wins. That would be bad for Am ica, it would probably . . . me World War II."

I nodded.

"And this Non-Intervention st . . . It's suicide."

He was silent awhile. "I can't why F.D.R. refuses to sell arms to the Republic." He had, on own, looked up international and discovered indisputable pr that a recognized government the right to purchase arms anywh to put down an insurrection.

He said, with slow resolution, t he would get down to Spain, so how, by hook or crook; perhaps d ing his forthcoming vacation could persuade his editor to acc some special articles on the war.

A FEW weeks later I ran into in Barcelona after the n hellish bombing known to mank

up to that time. For three days and nights the Capronis and Condors had come and gone, bombing around the clock, bombing school children, bombing marketplaces, the teeming homes, the smoking factories—bombing sleep—and after twenty-four, thirty-six, forty-two hours of it, haggard fathers led their children by the hand, mothers carried their babies, out of the homes, up the broad avenues, in a silent migration, into the hills, burrowing holes into the ground for a safe spot to lay their children to sleep for a while.

Young Lardner had seen some of this and his wide, blue eyes had a harder look than I had seen in Paris. It was a bad moment in the war: France, Britain, the U.S. continued their embargo on Republican Spain while Mussolini shipped endless lines of whippet tanks into the Aragon, behind the compliant backs of the Non-Intervention "blockade" of the British and French. The enemy troops kept sweeping around the flanks of the Republican line, turning them with steel, smashing down the valleys and heights from Belchite to the sea, and it looked dark indeed.

I wondered then about this young man not so long out of Harvard and the easy fraternity life, just down from the fleshpots of the *Tribune's* Paris. Would he—could he—see beneath the grim surface and sense the resistance the people were mustering up at this very moment, even as their sons were being thrust back at breakneck pace?

But here he was at the Hotel Majestic on the Gran Via, twisting his fingers, looking solemnly through his horn-rimmed spectacles, but asking quietly when we thought he could get up to the front. He did get there, after the Lincolns had crossed the Ebro that first time, when many of the boys had swum the wide river, panting on the Republican side, some stark naked, clutching the rifles which death alone could pry from their fingers. They clustered in the chilly fields to reorganize the defense.

Young Lardner lay on the floor of a hut talking with the men, talking all night under the brilliant stars, talking with American lads whom he understood easily enough, America's youth, the kind you could find in the sunny bleachers any Saturday afternoon in the summertime. He lay there on the ground, on a blanket one of the men got for him and he took notes all night long.

The next time I met Jim, a few weeks later, he was asking anybody he thought was in the know how he could join up.

I argued with him, as did others, tried to persuade him that he could help the cause of Spain best by speaking across America, telling what he had seen, explaining, urging that the embargo be lifted. He shook his head, and the next time I went up to the lines he stood, leaning against a stone wall, in the khaki of a Spanish Republican infantryman, peering through the sight of a rifle.

He smiled boyishly, looking up

from the gun, and asked: "Would you do me a favor? Send a cable home for me?"

He wrote it out with the stub of a pencil. The wire to his mother in Milford, Conn., said, "Okay healthy dont worry love."

The next time I met Jim Lardner he marched at the head of a gang of captured Franco prisoners. Young Lardner, in ragged pants, carried his rifle gingerly, stepping up the torrid, dusty road from the Ebro toward Toro de Espagnole.

Next I heard from him he lay in a hospital with wounds from a bomb. "Am healing quick," he wrote, "and I hope to be back soon at the front. Come up, will you, and bring a lot of paper and pencil. And some copies of the New York *Times* if you can—I'd like to read what Matthews says about our crossing the river."

I came up with pencil and paper and found him lying on his stomach on the cot working on a mathematical puzzle, the picture of concentration. "I like to do this," he said, looking up grinning. "Always loved math." A pile of books lay at his side: a Spanish grammar, a copy of *Red Star Over China,* a Proust novel.

Again I suggested that he return to America and speak for Spain. Again he shook his head. "No," he said. "When I get all healed up I'm going up to the Brigade." There was no profit in further argument, I saw. "I joined up to go to the front," he added. "They still need men there. Let somebody else talk in America."

Then his young face changed, the former shy, boyish look returned and he asked, "Do me another favor will you? Wire my mother again for me saying I'm okay. Will you please? It'd mean a lot to me."

THE next time I heard of him he was dead. He was killed in the Sierra Pandols leading a volunteer scouting party into No Man's Land. He would never write his book about the Internationals; he had lived it.

Matthews and the others wrote long obituaries of the young hero—Ring Lardner's son.

If he had survived he would, like his brother, have been dragged be-fore the Un-American Committee by now. And those who praised him *then,* as another young Byron, Lafayette, a Lincoln Brigader—what would they have written if he were standing beside the microphone fac-ing the contemporary inquisitors in business suits?

(*This is a selection from a book which Mr. North is now writing*)

look at the best short stories"

PRIZES FOR DEFEAT

By JEFF LAWSON

IN THE September *Atlantic Monthly,* Herschel Brickell, editor of the *O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories,* says we have reached "A high plateau—please, not a peak—in the development of the American short story," and in this year "have accomplished something of real moment, in a form peculiarly American—of this I am very certain."

I am not so sure. There are many talented writers around, but how high is the "plateau"?

The two annual collections of "best short stories" have just been published. The *O. Henry Award* features the better known, commercial work and the lush, often decadent Southern group. This year's issue contains fifteen stories from the bigger monthly magazines such as *Atlantic, Mademoiselle,* and so on; two from the *New Yorker;* seven from the literary quarterlies.

By comparison, *The Best American Short Stories,* edited by Martha Foley, seems a more honest selection, giving a fairer insight into developing trends. This year ten were picked from the "little" magazines; six from the *New Yorker;* the other twelve from the larger monthlies.

In her foreword Miss Foley discusses a tendency she has noticed for writers to turn to the so-called universal truths and a kind of old-fashioned morality. "At first I was going to call it a turn toward Victorianism."

There does seem this difference between the new collection and last year's: in some stories a warmth and compassion is felt for the characters, unlike the general pattern of postwar writing which vomits obscenities and distaste for human beings.

However, these authors do not deal directly with life, but rather with their inner reaction to it. They act as a kind of emotional mirror at the bottom of the sea. Stimuli come to them, filtered down from the surface: they congeal the stimuli into crystal drops, and then hand them up, clean kernels of feeling. Except sometimes by a kind of innuendo, few of the stories deal with contemporary problems.

The O. Henry stories make even less attempt to handle serious subjects. Thus, Truman Capote's "The House of Flowers," is along his usual line of florid, exotic primitivism combined with touches of vulgarity and chauvinism, which Nancy Hale, one of the editors, excuses by saying, "The innocent amorality of the story is part of its charm—it paints a real

West Indian Garden of Eden, with its naive prostitute, Eve."

In reading the "best stories" of 1951, the outstanding impression is not simply that they are abstracted from real issues, but that practically every one is a story of *acceptance.* That is their essential feature. In search of solution, the characters do not fight the conflict, do not escape it, do not go around it, do not overcome it. They get used to it, swallow it, accept it.

Here are some examples. First, two stories from the Foley collection. "Flight Through the Dark," by Roger Angell touches directly upon a current theme. "Everybody's scared now," the main character says. The man's anxieties have real enough causes: the talk and plans for war, his brother-in-law being taken back into the navy.

But his solution is to lose himself once again in the everyday interests of life, dogs, friends, family, household problems. He does not ask why he and his countrymen must be impregnated with fear. He does not ask why our government knocks itself out blowing air-raid sirens when no one is threatening us. He accepts the fact that the fear is there; pushes it into the recesses of his mind for a few more hours; continues life in a kind of fool's paradise.

John Cheever's "The Season of Divorce," is typical in that it could have taken place 10, 20, 40 years ago and be much the same but it does deal with an important subject: that of a woman of potential talent who is forced to lead a deadening life as the cooking, scrubbing member the family. The woman is caught i trap, but hasn't the will to do a thing about it. She stays on with husband, apparently learns to acc the trap.

IN THE O. Henry volume "Peg ty's Parcel of Shortcomings" John Hersey is in the stereoty tradition of the "funny maid." woman must carry a smelly salr all around New York. When gives up trying to get rid of the and adjusts to it, she finds all is —people don't crowd her in the ways, and so on. She decides that solution to all problems and sh comings is to give up worrying ab them, to accept them freely.

In view of Mr. Hersey's prev writings of a serious nature I ter to search for some deeper poin this snobbishly told story. One p tical possibility these days migh that if you find yourself with a herring, don't let it get you dow

"The Jersey Heifer" by P Harding Love is also in a light Another editor, Joseph Henry J son, calls it a "joyful—and thoughtful—affirmation of the p ciple of acceptance. The autho fully aware that although the 'ser is in the garden' all the time, garden is still the garden—is all garden there is, and must be acce whole. . . ." It is interesting to such an overt expression of the

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JEFF LAWSON is a young Calif writer now living in New York.

"The Hunters" by Harris Downey won first prize in the O. Henry Award and was also reprinted in the Foley book. A soldier, Private Meadows, is lost and utterly dazed by war. He wanders aimlessly until he is picked up by a fascist type who leads him through a series of meaningless killings. They shoot goats, a few Germans, and some flyers who are probably their own men. The dazed private completely accepts the leadership of the brutal soldier. In the end, he clutches some money he got from the dead German and sobs in realization of what he has done.

Mr. Jackson says of it:

> "Private Meadows has . . . lost himself. . . . He is so far lost, moreover, that he accepts with the automatism of the lost the leadership of the first soldier he meets. That this leadership carries him along to become the hunter-slayer, to perform acts of meaningless horror and uncaring violence which in turn take him to wanton killing under the leadership that is interested in nothing else—this, inevitably is the story of all the lost anywhere. . . . He [Downey] is saying something meaningful about men and war, he has also said something that has significance for everyone living in a world which is now discovering that when you walk the terrain of war you leave yourself somewhere, you get progressively lost. . . ."

It is true that the author is saying something about people today. The story does portray something of the horror and stupidity of war. But must everyone accept "uncaring violence" so easily? How can we ourselves avoid becoming a Private Meadows? The story gives no clues.

Though "The Hunters" suggests that what Meadows did was not good and he was sorry afterwards, the real thing it says is that he could not help himself. He's really the good guy. But the point is that he did the shootings, not how he felt about it.

To the ones killed, there was no difference between Private Meadows and the brutal leader. The bullets were the same. The deaths were the same. A jelly-bombed Korean baby isn't interested in hearing that his killers are really well meaning Americans who can't help themselves. "The Hunters" amounts to an apology for the nice men who kill because they have no will.

IN LIGHT of the terrific propaganda spilled over the land to get us used to brutality, lies, taxes, repression, lynchings, wars, the acceptance story is significant. The purpose of all the smear campaigns, the jailings, the siren blowing, is to frighten and daze us into acceptance. Such stories help serve this purpose.

The young writer today knows that if he expresses himself freely, he will be frowned upon. In college, he finds his professors fired for speaking their minds, and he is pressured to steer clear of ideas or action that might risk his literary "future."

The young writer sees that publishers, editors, and many writers too are out to set reactionary standards. If the "little" magazines were once a receptacle for a more vital literature, they hardly are that any more. They

may be a bit more subtle and "arty" than their bigger brothers, but there is little real difference.

If Mr. Brickell's plateau does exist, it seems to me that most of the "prize" writers are hiding somewhere under it, in some cave; certainly they aren't standing on top out in the air. If the new writers want to write work that is really important to the world, the will have to realize that our genera tion has a responsibility to figh against fascism and war. If we don take that responsibility, we, like Pr vate Meadows, will one day find ou selves sobbing on the ground wit nothing to clutch in our fingers b the pay-off of brutality and horror.

CLASSIFIED

When I was free (a word I now suspect)
I used to drive my Hudson (mortgaged to the hubs)
to the filling station twice a week.
Blacklisted and proscribed, I had no job.
I used to kid with Zev (who ran the place)
and I wasn't kidding.
Twice a week
I asked: "You need a man to run the pump?"
He always laughed. I was a customer—
screenwriter, novelist, a great success,
a man whose face appeared in public places
and in the public prints, a man who wrote
a movie he had seen (with Errol Flynn).

P.S. I did not get the job.

God works, they say, in devious ways
His wonders to perform. A convict now,
committed for a year, I now appear
before the prison warden and his board.
"We have a job for you," he smiles,
"pumping gas in the garage.
Think you can do it?"
Eagerly, I say, "I'm sure I can."

P.S. I got the job. You see—crime pays.

ALVAH BESSIE

books in review

The Negro People Tell Their Story

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY OF THE NEGRO PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES, edited by Herbert Aptheker. *Citadel.* 962 pp. $7.50.

IN THE treatment of the history of the Negro people in the United States, two giants stand on a pinnacle far above the morass of distortion, lies, and omission in which the exponents of "white supremacy" take their miserable refuge.

Carter G. Woodson and W. E. B. Du Bois, through their pioneering work, have given the lie to the historical mythology that Negroes were happy slaves, that they were shiftless, irresponsible and unfit for government during Reconstruction, that they are an imitative and dependent people who throughout the 300-odd years of their oppression have made no distinctive contribution to progress in this land.

While white supremacist historians have depended for their estimates of the Negro on the ex-slave master and the riding boss—those who claimed to know him best—Dr. Aptheker's *Documentary History* turns to the Negro himself for the Negro's story. This work, the result of 15 years of devoted labor, is undoubtedly the most important contribution to the historiography of the Negro people since the publication, in 1935, of Dr. Du Bois' *Black Reconstruction.*

It would be difficult to find a more glorious epic—a story more pregnant with hope in spite of indescribable exploitation, a finer tribute to a people's will to live, to grow and to share equally with others in the civilization to which a common humanity entitles them.

Beginning with a petition for freedom addressed to the Colony of New Netherlands in 1661 by a Negro slave and ending with the editorial of the first issue of *The Crisis* in 1910, the *Documentary* consists of 430 documents and a half-million words. As Aptheker states in the introduction:

> "Here the Negro speaks for himself. These are the words of participants, of eye-witnesses. These are the words of the very great and the very obscure; these are the words of the mass. This is how they felt; this is what they saw; this is what they wanted."

They wanted first of all to be free. And the early documents of the work show how by petition, self-organization, secret plot and open revolt, they fought against every subterfuge and resort to force which aimed at their enslavement.

Here is Prince Hall, born in Barbadoes in 1748 and a tower of strength among Negroes in colonial Cambridge, inveighing against kidnapping and the slave trade. Prince Hall was the founder of Negro Masonry and his appearance in the *Documentary* is but one of many reminders of the roots which contemporary mass organizations of the Negro people have in the freedom struggles of earlier generations.

The genesis of the Negro church is also found in this early period, most notably the African Methodist Episcopal Church whose first Bishop, Richard Allen, was born a slave and became a stalwart leader of the nation's largest community of free Negroes in Philadelphia in the 18th and early 19th centuries.

Prince Hall, Richard Allen, and Benjamin Banneker, the mathematician, astronomer and surveyor whose letter to Thomas Jefferson is carried in full, are figures one might expect to encounter in any true account of the Negro's past. But Aptheker knows that history is the story of the *whole people*. And so we have the words of "a great number of blackes" in a petition addressed to the General Counsel and the House of Representatives of the Massachusetts Bay Colony on January 13, 1777: "A life of slavery like that of your petitioners deprived of every social privilege of everything requisite to render life tolerable is far worse than nonexistence."

That the agitation for freedom was not confined to the North during this period of the nation's revolutionar birth is demonstrated by a documer in which Thomas Cole, bricklaye P. B. Mathews and Mathew Webl butchers; on behalf of themselves an other free men of color, petition th Senate of the State of South Carolin for the right to institute suit and t testify under oath in court.

While the free Negroes contende for equal civil rights and pleaded th cause of their enslaved brothers, th slaves themselves were anything bu passive. Thus in 1793 the Secr Keeper, Richmond, wrote to the S cret Keeper, Norfolk:

". . . we have got about five hundr Guns aplenty of lead but not mu powder, I hope you have made a go collection of powder and ball and w hold yourself in readiness to strike whe ever called for and never be out of th way it will not be long before it will ta place, and I am fully satisfied we shall in full possession of the whole country a few weeks, since I wrote you I got letter from our friend in Charleston tells me he has listed near six thousa men . . . don't be feared have a go heart fight brave and we will get free. . .

It is well known that a handf among the slaves have won a nam less notoriety because they were n good "secret keepers." But the mass of Negroes were prepared to ma short shrift of those who toady b fore their mortal enemies. Thus informer writing to the Governor South Carolina explains: "I wou tell to you personally what I do this way was I not certain that only being seen talking to your E cellency would be attended w my destruction."

The *Documentary* takes us from e Revolutionary and post-Revolu-nary periods into the fire and thun-r of the Abolitionist Era. We read e first published piece from Freder-k Douglass' pen—a letter to Garri-n on the case of George Latimer, a gitive slave. Other Douglass clas-cs are carried in full or major part: e letter to his former master; the escription of his encounter with ovey, the slave-beater; the Fourth of ly Oration with its burning chal-nge and stinging rebuke—"This ourth of July is *yours,* not *mine!*"

A number of less widely-known Douglass items are included; but, in ddition, we read the words of a core of other Negro Abolitionists. ach one of them towered above the igmy Bourbon and Copperhead poli-icians who clutter up the history ooks.

Is there someone who seeks his-orical precedent for the proposition hat Negroes have a common *national* destiny in this country? The concept of nationhood recurs, frequently in a rudimentary form, in a number of documents of this period. In a book on the Negro question in 1852, Martin R. Delany declared:

> "We are a nation within a nation;—as the Poles in Russia, the Hungarians in Austria; the Welsh, Irish and Scotch in the British dominions. . . . We must make an issue, create an event, and establish a national position for ourselves. . . ."

Are there those who question whether the militancy of Robeson, Patterson, Du Bois and Davis are well grounded in the authentic traditions of the Negro people? Listen to Robert Purvis speaking in Philadelphia in 1860 of the "cowardly and malignant spirit that pervades the entire policy of the country. . . ."

Or listen to Dr. John S. Rock as he makes a statement which might be found, almost verbatim, in a score of Robeson's contemporary speeches: "Through two hundred and forty years of indescribable tortures, slavery has wrung out of the blood, bones and muscles of the Negro hundreds of millions of dollars, and helped much to make this nation rich."

Dr. Rock, a Boston physician and lawyer, is one of the many new and fascinating personalities to be encountered in the *Documentary,* one whose utterances invite a closer familiarity with the man, his life and his labors. An 1861 speech reflects the consciousness of class cleavages which many Negro leaders began to express prior to the Civil War:

> "The educated and wealthy class despise the Negro, because they have robbed him of his hard earnings, or, at least, have got rich off the fruits of his labor; and they believe if he gets his freedom, their fountain will be dried up, and they will be obliged to seek business in a new channel. Their 'occupation will be gone'. . . . The poor ignorant white man . . . does not understand that the interest of the laboring classes is mutual. . . ."

Another man of imposing stature was Charles H. Langston, secretary of the Ohio Anti-Slavery Society. In 1858-59 Langston was one of several Negro and white men tried and convicted of conspiracy to violate the Fugitive Slave Law. They had forc-

ibly rescued a Negro from the hands of slave catchers who had descended upon Oberlin, Ohio, to "return" him to slavery. The *Documentary* carries Langston's address to the judge and jury as he stood to be sentenced, and it is one of the most magnificent documents of the democratic tradition of this country.

One could devote equal space to other Abolitionist leaders. But again, Aptheker, in his selection of documents, depends not merely upon the individuals, but particularly upon the mass expression, for the clue to the issues, movements, and direction of the period.

In 1842, when talk of war between the United States and Britain was heightened because of the controversy over the successful *Amistad* slave mutiny, a New York Negro newspaper wrote:

> "If war be declared, shall we fight with the chains upon our limbs? Will we fight in defense of a government which denies us the most precious right of citizenship? . . . Shall we make our bodies a rampart in defense of American slavery?"

This was the period of the militant state and national conventions of the Negro people. The first national convention was held in Philadelphia in 1830, and its proceedings are made available. An Ohio Convention in 1849 resolved: "To acknowledge no enactment honored with the name of law, as binding upon us, the object of which is in any way to curtail the natural rights of man."

From Abolition, the *Documentary* carries us into War, Reconstruction, Betrayal, Populism, Imperialism a the Twentieth Century. Negro bacco stemmers in Richmond scribe their working conditions 1865; South Carolina ex-slaves mand the land they work on. We re the editorials in the first daily Neg newspaper, published in English a French in New Orleans in 1867; fraud and violence spread like a p tilence, we have the victims' descr tions of the orgies of the Klan. Isa Myers portrays the National Neg Labor Union in 1869 and we Negroes playing a major part in Knights of Labor; Henry Adams, ganizer of farm workers, describes planned exodus of 50,000 Negr from southern areas to Kansas with a few months in 1879. The formati of many mass organizations is t at first hand, while Booker T. Wa ington emerges as the leader of Tuskegee machine which counsels comodation.

Seemingly far removed from this, a sensitive young man, at threshold of his career, sits in room in Germany in 1893 and c fides to his diary: ". . . be the Tr what it may I shall seek it on pure assumption that it is wo seeking—and Heaven nor Hell, G nor Devil shall turn me from purpose till I die."

That was the young Du Bois, c brating his 25th birthday. As *Documentary* proceeds, Du Bois his ideas and programs drive straighter to the heart of the strug for Negro rights. He shares the la pages of the work with men

omen like John Bruce, T. Thomas ortune, Ida B. Wells-Barnett, Mary hurch Terrell, the aging Douglass nd his remarkable son Lewis, and a core of others.

It is fitting that near the end of he volume we come upon the proeedings of various meetings of the Niagara Movement, immediate predeessor of the N.A.A.C.P., and find he following words of Du Bois in his address to the third meeting of he Movement in 1907: ". . . vote with the white laboring classes, remembering that the cause of labor s the cause of black men, and the black man's cause is labor's own."

A subsequent volume of the *Documentary* now in preparation, will bring the story through World War II. The central theme of this period is to be found in Du Bois' words.

The first half of the *Documentary* covers the two centuries closing with the Civil War. The second part is devoted to the 45 years from 1866 to 1910 and provides us with the first major treatment of what has been the most neglected period in Negro history.

Throughout the work one is reminded that the united struggle of Negro and white militants has deep historical roots in U.S. life: that the Negro people have been in the forefront of each crusade for important social change, and that the clearest thinking white Americans, especially the working class and its leaders, have been increasingly mindful of the extent of their stake in Negro liberation.

In selecting the documents and preparing the brief introductory notes, Dr. Aptheker has exercised the finest editorial judgment. Sparing in his comment and allowing the documents to speak for themselves, he illuminates with a Marxist viewpoint the necessary historical background.

One might wish that there was more material included on the Negro's participation in and reaction to the Populist movement; for example, material dealing with Tom Watson and his relations with Negroes. Harriet Tubman speaks in only one document, and this seems hardly enough for a woman whom the editor rightfully describes as one of the greatest heroines of the nation.

Such observations, however, should not inhibit the most enthusiastic reception of this work. Here is the living stuff out of which must come a hundred novels, a score of plays. Here is clay for the sculptor's hand, the painter's raw material, the inspiration of modern poets.

More than this: here are lessons for today's struggle; examples of strategic plan and tactical maneuver in the Negro people's centuries-old struggle for freedom.

This *Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States* should be a handbook for every peace and freedom fighter, Negro and white. Read it, and you will understand why Dr. Du Bois says in his inspiring preface: "I hasten to greet the day of the appearance of this volume, as a milestone on the road to TRUTH."

LOUIS E. BURNHAM

Eluard's Poetry

THE SELECTED WRITINGS OF PAUL ELUARD, translated by Lloyd Alexander. *New Directions.* $3.50.

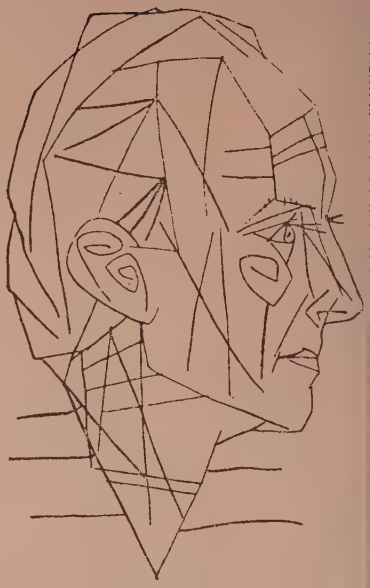
FOR more than three decades Paul Eluard has been one of the very important poets of France and the world. The publishers of the volume at hand praise Mr. Eluard's fine, national lyric voice but carefully protest his "extreme" (Communist) politics.

It is not unusual, in this era of the Red palsy, to witness quaking among the high literati. However, to read Eluard's poetry is to see that his whole life is bound up in work which has as its first aim the delineation of the face of reality in the special way of the poet:

> . . . If I sing my whole road without turning
> And my whole country like an endless street
> You believe me no longer you go to wilderness
> For you wander aimlessly without knowing that men
> Need unity need hope and struggle
> To explain the world and change it . . .

The New Directions people might be a little less rude. Eluard does not need to be suffered for his politics.

On the contrary, it seems to this reader that Eluard reaches his great height during the Resistance which coincides roughly with his adherence to the French Communist Party. This was not an unnatural conclusion for a man who loves his country and his people so deeply and unselfishly.



ELUARD: drawing by Picasso

In his works accomplished prio to the Resistance Eluard's voice sing mainly of the world in a person way. The Resistance marks the poi where the singer, still wonderful personal, sings the world in a dee social way.

Both aspects of Eluard give m great pleasure, but when I recall th earlier works I remember lines n poems; in the later works I remem ber not lines alone but the sweep an impact of long passages and enti poems.

Mr. Alexander's selections seem bear out this point. Three quarters the book bring us the poetry writt between the years 1939 throu

18. (One has to regret, however, t even later work of Eluard is not luded; especially some of the ems about Greece, where he read poetry on the front lines and ged the monarcho-fascist troops to n the democratic cause.)

There is too much fine poetry to ect examples, but look at these:

I record reality
I watch my words closely
I want to make no mistake
I want to know from where I leave
To conserve so much hope

My origins are tears
Fatigue and sorrow
And the least of beauty
And the least of goodness. . . .

Here is a complete poem:

TRAINED BY FAMINE

Trained by famine
The child always answers I am eating
Are you coming I am eating
Are you sleeping I am eating

And another:

NOTICE

The night before his death
Was the shortest of his life
The idea that he still existed
Burned the blood in his wrists
The weight of his body sickened him
His strength made him groan
It was at the very bottom of this horror
That he began to smile
He had not one comrade
But millions and millions
To avenge him and he knew it
And the sun rose for him.

Eluard is, in my opinion, a very difficult man to bring from his masterful French into masterful English. While it is possible to argue with Mr. Alexander, the translator, about one or two passages, his work on the whole is quite excellent.

MILTON BLAU

Dollar Empire

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM, by Victor Perlo. *International.* $2.25.

GERMAN imperialism set itself the task, in Hitler's words, of ruling "for a thousand years." It missed by 990. American imperialism sets itself the task, in the words of Leo Welch, treasurer of the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, of ruling forever—it "is a permanent obligation." Despite the somewhat overpowering quality of Mr. Standard Oil's arrogance one must assure him that his permanence will be history's fleeting, albeit intensely unpleasant, moment.

Perlo's *American Imperialism* is a succinct analysis of the nature of this latest, and last, stronghold of imperialism—its techniques, aims, strength and weaknesses. The book's eleven chapters encompass the historic roots of U.S. imperialism, its present military, political and financial ramifications, the sources and quantities of its super-exploitation, and the impact of war preparation and war-making upon American capitalism.

Of outstanding value is Perlo's tracing of the exact nature of U.S.

imperialism's super-exploitation of Latin-America, Asia, Africa, Europe and the Negro people within its own home borders. Nowhere else, so far as this reviewer knows, will one find the actual dollar and cents significance of contemporary U.S. imperialism so clearly and fully spelled out as in Perlo's volume.

American Imperialism's basic theme, explicitly founded on Lenin's classical study, is that chauvinism, super-exploitation, poverty and aggression are organic to U.S. imperialism. It proves the imperialistic nature of the United States ruling class and its government. It establishes the world-devouring appetite and program of that class and government. And it does all this persuasively and polemically, taking particular pains with the demagogy of Truman's "Fair Deal" and its "labor" lackeys.

The Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine are subjected to devastating exposés with apt quotations and precise figures culled from carefully cited official or semi-official sources. When Perlo speaks of the super-profits from overseas investments he shows the reader exactly what he means by citing corporation reports showing, for example, that the rate of profit from domestic investment for Mr. Welch's Standard Oil w eleven per cent and the rate fr foreign investments was thirty-th per cent.

When the author speaks of M shall Plan forced dumping he mak the subject live by demonstrating th "enough peanuts went to Austria supply every Viennese with a nic bag daily." When he speaks of special booty taken from Africa, describes the mining company wh showed an annual profit of over 1 million dollars on a total capital under 60 millions and did it by p ing its workers an average of f dollars a week.

The increasingly intimate relati ship between the U.S. governme big business and the military is do mented and Perlo proves that "all schemes for capitalist 'planning' up as devices whereby the most po erful monopolies utilize the gove ment to destroy their already we ened competitors, to legalize creased exploitation of labor greater profits for themselves."

In a volume of great compress and enormous detail this revie found remarkably few factual err One or two appear—misdating acquisitions of American Samoa Hawaii, for example—but, gener the work's detailed accuracy test to extraordinary care. Formulati too, showed the same fine virtue, rare, indeed, was the careless which held that while "a third w war might ruin the American pe it would mean an extra ten or tw billion dollars per year in interest

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e bankers." Surely, while some of e American people probably would rvive a third world war, no private nkers—let alone private bankers th enhanced accounts—would sur- ve.

Indeed, elsewhere, Perlo, quoting 'illiam Z. Foster, makes the point at another world war "would surely und the death knell for the capital- : system." He adds that "the very rces [headed by the Soviet Union] hich guarantee this result strive by l means to avert that war." It would ve been well if Perlo paused to nsider this seeming paradox and to ow *why* the forces of socialism and emocracy are, and must be, the rces of peace.

The impact of present U.S. impe- alism on the liberties and freedoms f its inhabitants was not central to erlo's focus and is omitted.

Lacking too is a consideration of ne deteriorating standard of living f the mass of the American people nder the impact of the aggressive var program. Happily, both these ubjects are dealt with at length in he recently published *Labor Fact Book 10*, prepared by the Labor Re- earch Association (International Publishers, $2.00), and thus, the two olumes complement each other very vell.

Perlo's book is an exceedingly use- ul, indeed, an indispensable volume. No other single book presents so cur- ent, accurate and incisive an expo- ure of American imperialism—the world's greatest menace.

HERBERT APTHEKER

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THE WORLD OVER

A Talk With Nazim Hikmet

Berlin

THIS Youth Festival in Berlin was one of Nazim Hikmet's first encounters with people from other lands since his 13-year ordeal in Turkish dungeons. Every moment of it seemed precious to him.

When I presented myself one morning at the German Press Club—where he was surrounded by half a dozen journalists all seeking an appointment—he brushed aside his solicitous German secretary to insist on finding time for an American.

"This is very important for me," he said, "I want to send greetings to the American friends who are now being imprisoned."

There is a magnetic nobility about Nazim Hikmet, a strength and simplicity hard to capture in words. Hikmet is a tall, broad-shouldered man with a full face, deep blue eyes under reddish-brown lashes, a mustache of the same hue and a trace of gray at the temples which merges with a full shock of sandy brown hair. Nothing in his demeanor suggests the tort of his long imprisonment.

The amazing story he told me gan immediately after the first W War, when Hikmet was an office the Turkish Navy. Several sai who had taken part in the 1918 volt of the German sailors at had returned home with Mar ideas. Hikmet was among those mutinied against the old Empire was forced to flee, and made his to young revolutionary Russia.

Despite a sentence over him returned and took part in the b geois national revolution led by mal Ataturk against the invasio Greece, then the pawn of the Br effort to dismember and domi Turkey. But he was on the Le the national movement.

While in the thick of politica tivity, he was above all the poe young Turkish student who was us during the interview said h membered his family reading met's poems from the very ea years.

At the trial, following his a in 1937, it was alleged that Hi had carried on revolutionary e tion among the students; his vo of poems, though published le was placed in evidence as "su sive" and designed to "corrup youth."

That brought a first sentence years by the Military Tribunal. second case, conducted by the time Tribunal, the sentence w years. The judge admitted the reason: a war was in the offing,

y would have to side with Hitler d gain the oil of Baku.

Hikmet was held three months in four-by-six cell through whose open of the snow poured in. Later it was en worse: a cell on board a ship, tually the ship's latrine where he as forced to live for weeks, taken it each evening to pace the deck. e never knew whether his jailers ere tempting him with the visions f liberty if he would "confess" or reparing to dispose of him by alleg-ng an accidental fall overboard.

And then a ship's cell (at this oint, he drew a picture of a vessel nd showed the porthole of the cell n the hold). There it was, in the teaming summer, a virtual coffin.

When he was transferred to Ana-olia, it was a different kind of prison —full of peasants, sometimes entire amilies, who had transgressed a minor law, or fought against the rich and-owners. They lived in common —these families. And through the coming and going of the simple peas-ants, he was able to keep contact with his people, to send his poems out.

Toward the end, when the old Kemalist Party was on the verge of being forced out of power, the poli-ticians were prepared to release him . . . it was the American minister, Hikmet said, who intervened and was responsible for more months of imprisonment.

What enabled him to survive all this? He replied directly to the ques-tion. "I never lost faith. I believe in Man, in my own people, in the peo-ples of the world."

I asked him about the Americans in Turkey. For it was with regard to Turkey (was it not?) that the Truman Doctrine began. Apart from militarizing the country, planting air-bases everywhere and vassalizing the economy (so that the native textile industry, for example, cannot com-pete) the Americans are behaving very badly in Turkey, said Hikmet.

"But," he added quickly, "we al-ways make a distinction between the American people and the American ruling circles." Your soldiers, he said, "seem to be kept drunk most of the time; there are incidents every week in which Turkish girls are kidnapped in plain daylight to serve them. . . . We detest this America of the atomic madness; we honor the America of Walt Whitman, of Paul Robeson, of Howard Fast. . . ."

When I mentioned the protest movement in our own country during his hunger strike, the poet said quite simply, "Yes, I heard of it. I saw clippings of the *Daily Worker* while in prison. . . ."

Masses & Mainstream? Yes, he had seen the magazine which introduced his poems from prison to America.

Hikmet wanted to know each de-tail about the trial of the Communist leaders, about the current arrests. He took out a sheet of paper and wrote out a message. It must be sent imme-diately, he insisted, a message of ad-miration and affection for William Z. Foster and Eugene Dennis, from far-away Turkey, from a man who had faced prison too.

And his immediate plans? "I have

one plan—the independence of my people. I have fought for this in every way I could, sometimes by attending peace congresses, sometimes by illegal work, sometimes from prison, sometimes by writing poems. And sometimes (he smiled) by an interview such as this to an American such as you."

JOSEPH STAROBIN

Recording Music In New China

Peking

WHEN New China's music lovers finish the day's work and play their phonographs, what do they listen to? The people's records fall into five main groups: 1) modern *yangko* operas; 2) modern songs such as *The East Shines Red,* telling of Mao Tse-tung; 3) classical Peking operas; 4) folk songs and provincial operas; and 5) modern orchestral music, in roughly that order of popularity.

This reflects a new public taste. Record-manufacturing was not a flourishing business in the days before liberation. There were three companies, all in Shanghai, two controlled by foreign and one by bureaucratic capital, the Great China Recording Co.

Since no progressive recordings could be made under the Japanese puppets or the Kuomintang regi the people ignored their produ Galloping KMT inflation finally them out of business.

Realizing the importance of r ords in the people's cultural life, Shanghai Military Control Comm sion took over and revived the named company the day after libe tion. The Literary and Artis Working Group of the Third Fi Army made the first records of P ple's China, a song cycle of the her Huai-hai battle.

Among the most popular of modern ballads of this type *Wang Ta-Ma Wants Peace* sung Kuo Lan-yin, and *Song of Emanci tion* sung by Li Pu, both prize-w ning sopranos at the Budapest Yo Festival of 1949. Another mod ballad, *Song of the Chinese Peop Volunteers in Korea,* was sung last May Day by 200 million d onstrators throughout China.

Only when the record factory moved to Peking was it possible cut the records of the mod *yangko* operas, showing w achievements New China has m in musical art.

The first of these was *Brother Sister Tilling Virgin Soil,* produ originally in 1944 by the Lu H Art Academy of Yenan. Writte the style of the North Shanshi f songs, the music is lyrical and w

The most successful of t operas so far is *The White-Ha Girl.* An album of five records o cerpts from this opera is hi popular. —P.

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