MASSES & MAINSTREAM

The Fictional American Woman

ARGRIT REINER

CIVIL RIGHTS and the Liberals

ERBERT APTHEKER

The Relation of ART to REALITY

. NEDOSHIVIN

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UNE 1952

35 cents

Vol. 5, No. 6

MASSES & Mainstream

MASSES & MAINSTREAM *is published monthly by Masses & Mainstream, Inc., 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y. Subscription rate $4 a year; foreign and Canada, $4.50 a year. Single copies 35c; outside the U.S.A., 50c. Re-entered as second class matter February 25, 1948, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright 1952.*

June, 1952

PRINTED IN U.S.A. 209

THE FICTIONAL AMERICAN WOMAN

A Look At Some Recent Novels

By MARGRIT REINER

THE treatment of women in American fiction today confronts progressive critics with a challenge they can no longer ignore. Writers, readers and reviewers alike have become so accustomed to male supremacist ideas that they take them for granted and regard them as normal. The bourgeois writer reflects in his writing the male supremacist attitudes he observes in the world around him, but the distortion does not end there. His treatment of women in fiction is designed to justify and perpetuate these attitudes.

This purpose governs the writer's selection, his viewpoint and his omissions. Female writers as well as male, many progressive as well as all reactionary writers follow the ruling class ideology, the taboos and stereotype concepts, in their treatment of women.

Such concepts are far from being "universal": Gorky's "Mother" has long since been joined by a host of heroines in Soviet fiction—heroines of labor, equal with men and their partners in the socialist society. The upsurge of understanding of the role and position of women is similarly reflected in the literature of the New Democracies and especially of People's China, where women are stepping from feudalism to socialist freedom in one generation.

The U.S. fictional heroine is cut from a different cloth. To observe her, novels from last year's best sellers and book club selections were chosen. An examination of these books reveals a clear pattern.

The problems, real or distorted, of the bourgeois woman occupy a predominant place in U.S. literature. With a few notable exceptions the working-class women appear mainly as domestic workers or "comic relief" —queer, uncouth, peculiar people. This is especially glaring in the depiction of Negro women.

It is assumed of most fictional heroines that they—or their husbands —have sufficient money at their dis-

posal to solve their household and child care problems by way of "the maid." Since this situation is taken for granted, the bourgeois novelist hardly ever concerns himself with it. The only subject fit for his consideration is the bourgeois personality and its problems.

By this very choice, reality has slipped through the writer's fingers. For at the base of all reality concerning the bourgeois woman stands the forgotten heroine—the working-class and Negro woman. It is the presence of women workers in factories which provides the economic ground upon which the loves and emotions of the "woman in the suburb" thrive. It is the domestic worker in the kitchen, unsung and unmentioned, who frees the lady for her "interesting" loves, adulteries and career.

Were the writer to deal with the forgotten heroine as a subject he would immediately have to face up to the issues of economic dependence, limited job opportunities, lower wages, absence of child care and health facilities, and educational restrictions. He would have to reckon with mothers robbed of their normal family life, oppressed with the double burden of work outside the home and work for their own families, children deprived and stunted, marriages shadowed by insecurity and drudgery. Reason enough for the bourgeois writer to shun such "unpleasant" subjects.

This, then, is the first part of the pattern: omission — the forgotten heroine. But to bury her safely is no easy matter. Every major gain in this country was made possible only with her active participation, often her leadership. Her workworn figure intrudes upon the agitated bedroom scene. The culture based on denying her existence remains a hollow edifice peopled with vague creatures.

THEN there is the stereotype. The "good woman" in fiction is the woman happily confined in the glass cage of "her proper place." *Love, not labor is woman's concern* and *woman's place is in the home*—these ideas reflect and bolster the economic exploitation of women under capitalism. Unequal pay for equal work is one side of the coin—the little woman in her dream home is the other.

Novel after novel expounds the theme that woman's happiness is to be found only in the home and the family. Josephine Johnson's *The Way Things Are* is typical. Here, the modern woman is the "bad woman." She goes to work, leaves her children in the indifferent care of domestic workers and progressive schools, drinks, plays cards and runs to meetings. The husbands are not much better, but it is understood that they are "henpecked," so that it's really the women who are to blame for the inevitable result: divorce, juvenile delinquency, feelings of insecurity.

The old-fashioned girl in the story

MARGRIT REINER is the author of "Morning," a short story which appeared in our March, 1951, issue.

sweet and kind but clearly unfit
live alone in the unsheltered world.
rtunately, the strong guiding hand
a kind and capable young man is
ilable. Wedding bells take care of
problems. The old-fashioned girl
l be happy, because she knows her
ce.

Such themes are legion. One of
nerica's most popular women writ-
, Taylor Caldwell, illustrates the
rkings of the double standard as
plied to men and women in fiction.
The Balance Wheel her hero
arles, a Pennsylvania manufacturer,
uggles actively with his conscience,
man in conflict with his brothers
d his time. His struggles to keep his
n out of war, his failure and resig-
tion lend some depth and credibil-
to an otherwise banal plot.

But the heroine, Phyllis, the proto-
pe of the "good woman," is sharply
contrast to the man she loves. Pure,
tient and slightly inhuman, Phyllis
ves through the plot gracefully,
aving family feud, love for her hus-
nd's brother, scandal and war with-
t disturbing a hair on her head. Her
nction is to love and to suffer, to
al and smooth over. Her role is
ssivity, her main asset beauty, her
rld is confined to home, love and
nily.

There is also a "bad woman," Isabel,
no is no lady, being a butcher's
ughter. She drives her husband,
ases wealth and success, gossips,
ins lives. But when she and her
sband are finally faced with the
lure of all their schemes, Isabel
tes succinctly the role of the wife
in bourgeois fiction. ". . . we have only one important problem. Your happiness, your success, what you want." Here the active "bad" woman subordinates herself to "superior" man and becomes passive — a "good" woman.

The gilded cage in which women were confined as willing prisoners to their "superior" husbands was shaken when—at the turn of the century—Ibsen's Nora slammed the door on her "doll's house" and walked out into freedom. But that was a long time ago, in an era of bourgeois realism and liberal thought. Current U.S. literature, true to the class interest of imperialism, has retreated even behind the limited advancement of Ibsen's thought, and is now attacking even the hard-won bourgeois rights of American women.

Nora left the doll's house because she refused to suffer any longer a marriage based on the oppression of woman. The modern bourgeois heroine is quite content with the empty "freedom" of sexual license. This new "love," while somewhat different in form from the old, is just as securely based on inequality. Hemingway's heroines, from Catherine in *A Farewell to Arms* down to the insipid Contessa of *Across the River and Into the Trees,* are typical of this literary pattern.

To speak of Contessa Renata as a person is difficult. She is a foil, designed to decorate, titillate and enrich the peculiar masculine world of Hemingway. Here masculinity means love of war and violence, a childish mysti-

cism about killing and—by way of the cultural side of life—a ludicrous preoccupation with the refinements of food and drink. This inner core of the Colonel's life Renata will never be a part of, she knows better than even to suggest that she accompany him while duck-hunting. Her own feelings, if they exist, are barely revealed, nor are they explainable.

An interesting bit of dialogue indicates the depth of thinking regarding woman's place in the world. This concerns the Colonel's first wife. Renata: "Was she awful?" The Colonel: "Yes, terrible. She was a newspaper woman and ambitious. . . ." "Not that —my God, not terrible like that."

WHERE the heroine is not co pletely submissive, love becor a battle for power. Men are eitl strong or weak—the weak being dc inated by the women, the strong ki ing the women around. There is pretense of love being an emot among equals. It is a weapon in jungle of the marriage market wh women are both commodity a struggling victims.

Susan Yorke's *The Widow* tr with the Woman Over Forty, a str woman, active and therefore e Told in the first person by the wic it dissects her romance with a youn man and describes how she c sciously drives her lover to suic

WOMAN OF SPAIN: *by Alberto Beltran*

e story is narrowed down to the allest orbit possible—the self. In neurotic preoccupation with the st trivial nuances of emotion, love totally lost.

The widow moves in a world in ich there is not humanity enough deep feeling about one other hun being. This book takes every urgeois myth and stereotype about men and draws the final consence: love no one, for love—being social emotion—is danger to the f.

Tennessee Williams' novel, *The man Spring of Mrs. Stone,* brings ve very quickly to the level of sex-purchase. An American woman aring fifty, having lost her husband, auty and stage career, finds herself Rome trying to decide what to do ith her life. Her Italian gigolo serts her when richer and more pealing ladies arrive on the scene. Faced with this tragedy, Mrs. one decides to have her face rebuilt Paris. Meanwhile she takes a ung sex pervert off the street and to her bed. The book puts it untly: A woman in her forties ust buy a man, hook a man, get a an any way she can or be conemned to empty old age.

From this shopkeeper's approach love it is only a small step to the lorification of force and violence in ve—the cult of rape. "Sex, sadism nd sensation . . ." predicts the New ork *Times Book Review* under the eading "Trends for 1952." No oubt. Book stalls all over the coun-y blare forth this cultural message in their millions of gory pocket book editions. Not only detective and thriller fiction depends on depravity for its sales. From the war novels of Irwin Shaw and James Jones to the literary creations of such decadents as Truman Capote and Paul Bowles—and including especially the frenzied outpourings of anti-Soviet and anti-Communist authors — sex, sadism and sensation is the substitute for thought and genuine creative effort.

It is not only that sex sells books —there is an inner necessity for the innumerable scenes of violence, rape and brutality toward women. Just as the increasing militancy and power of the colonial peoples abroad and the Negro people at home is met with increasing chauvinism and lynch terror, so is the increasing militancy and peace sentiment of women met by the glorification of sadistic sex and violence.

At the core of cultural corruption stands the degradation of the human being. The new hero, fascist-minded, racist and military, demands the utter subjection before him of "inferior" people. Traditionally, this is symbolized in the degradation of the women of foreign countries and especially of colored women. And just as traditionally, the white woman at home—wife, sweetheart and girl-left-behind—reaps the fruits of such conquest. Inevitably, the master-race theory of "Anglo-Saxon supremacy" breeds in its exponents a "Lord-of-the-Manor" attitude toward women.

THE pattern of male supremacist ideology develops an added feature—a sense of isolation. We find heroines in fiction filled with the idea that they have no common cause with either men or women, that their problems are their own and bear no relation to the rest of society. The treatment of the problems of aging women in *The Widow, The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* and Mary Jane Ward's *A Little Night Music* illustrates this.

These books have in common their approach that whatever happens to the woman over forty is her problem and hers alone. There is no hint of criticism of a society that consigns middle-aged women to the scrap heap, fails to provide jobs or training for lifelong usefulness. It becomes merely a question of the unhappy women learning to "adjust" to the sad fate of life without love.

Only in *A Little Night Music* is there even a suggestion of another solution. The heroine, after all kinds of soul-searching and childhood-evaluating, decides to accept the directorship of the conservatory of music where she has been teaching. (This promotion is accomplished as a result of anti-Semitic discrimination against another teacher, a fact which seems to disturb neither the author nor the heroine very much.) But even in this case of adjustment to work, the fate of the "spinster" in question is depicted as quite tragic, simply because she is an unmarried woman and no suggestion is permitted that there might be something wrong with a society setting up such a standard for its women.

This, then, is the pattern: omission, stereotype, distortion, violence and a sense of isolation. Fiction women have no positive will, they are passive, emotional, erratic and childlike. All references to past struggles of women and the heroism of history are obliterated. No will, no militancy, no history—wherever rotten ideology props up the wholesale exploitation of a people, a nation, a minority, these slanders recur with unfailing certainty. They are meant to add up to a total—no organization, no struggle, no future free from oppression. The ideology of male supremacy is a tool of class rule, designed to blur the consciousness of both men and women, divert criticism of social conditions into the safe channels of a "battle of the sexes."

HOW then is it possible for progressive and socially conscious writers to accept these male supremacist standards and attitudes? How too many writers who uphold in their work and their thinking the dignity of all men regardless of nationality, color and creed fail to apply such knowledge and convictions to the women they write of.

Stefan Heym's *The Eyes of Reason* is an example of this double standard. The male characters, while far from being as well realized as the importance of the subject matter would warrant, are at least understandable human beings, conditioned by society

SIGNING FOR PEACE: *by the German artist, Kurt Zimmerman*

struggle. The women, one and all, are in line with every male supremacist prejudice and, as a result, unrealized and unsatisfactory as literary characters.

There are no working-class women in this story of the people's revolution in Czechoslovakia—this in itself flies in the face of history. Due to a similar weakness there is also insufficient emphasis on the role of the working class as a whole, but at least there are some working-class male characters of importance involved in the story. All the "good" women in the novel are afflicted with a deep-seated paralysis of will, while the "evil" women are active and aggressive.

Vlasta, one of the "new people," is dealt with solely as a fine woman unable to love; all that seems to interest the author about her is her emotional life. Similarly, Petra, whose adolescence and revolt against parental authority are painstakingly detailed, lives through the crucial day of revolution with hardly a recognition of the world around her.

Above all, Kitty Benda, the heroine, is treated as a stereotype bourgeois wife. Moving through social change as though confined in a glass cage, Kitty is forever undecided and unwilling to make a decision. There is a strong resemblance between her and Phyllis of *The Balance Wheel.*

Millard Lampell's *The Hero* suffers from a similar contradiction between the hero and his unequal mate. There actually is no heroine—Melissa is like no woman who ever lived. Related to countless fictional creatures she winds her way through innumerable emotional scenes, a sweet pain to the reader as well as to the hero. Swayed only by passion, never by reason, she cannot choose between two men, but neurotically waits for the right one to salvage her. Her final conversion and projected marriage to poor Steve is as incredible as is the similar union of Kitty and Karel in *The Eyes of Reason.*

PERHAPS the most destructive influence on the literary portrayal of women has been wielded by Freudianism. Today the old standby of religious doctrine and unscientific superstition to justify the continued inequality of women's status are wearing thin. Few believe any longer that women are "inferior" because their brains are smaller than men's. It is here that Freudianism has stepped into the breach, providing a pseudo-scientific explanation of women's "inferiority" and an elaborate rationale for her continued oppression. Its emphasis on the "sexual drive" as the basic motivating force of human behavior has lent new lustre to the fading glory of the fictional bourgeois heroine.

Abraham Polonsky's novel, *The World Above,* is an example of this trend. Here a young psychiatrist's quest for truth leads him into opposition to orthodox Freudian psychiatry as well as to thought-control ling congressional committees. But despite the hero's intellectual con

sions the author takes a strictly eudian view of character, stressing e primacy of sexual drives in life, rticularly in his women.

There are several women in the ro's life, of different background d viewpoints, but they all have common their lack of positive will d their preoccupation with emo-n. The hero's relationship to them entirely on that level.

The final scene is illuminating: e hero has just taken the decisive p of refusing to disavow his entific beliefs before an investigat-g committee and with it—pre-mably—he has reached a higher vel of political understanding. ley, the working-class woman who s lived through many union strug-es, awaits him. She offers him food, armth and love.

But she does not help him—as ell she might—to see his role more early in relation to the many union en and women who have made nilar decisions before him. She es not share his political and in-llectual experience, discuss it with m or partake of it as an equal. She simply the mother, the lover, the eltering haven—a woman in her roper" place.

For the most part progressive ovelists have avoided and ignored e crucial themes of woman's life. here has not been a story of a wom-n industrial worker battling her ay through restrictions, discrimina-on and prejudices to an equal place n the assembly line, finding herself the labor movement, solving her problems with home, family and husband in this situation. The dramatic and heroic struggle of working-class mothers against landlords, school boards, poverty, and strike-breaking bosses remains to be told. The story of the Negro heroines—the many Amy Mallards, Bessie Mitchells, Rosalee McGees — are truly the stuff that great fiction is made of.

The rich and beautiful relationships between men and women, mothers and children, comrades in the working-class movement of our country, have yet to find their way into fiction, to highlight and illuminate life for our men and women as did Gorky and Nexö and O'Casey with their writing.

IT IS good to be able to report at least some steps in the right direction. Louis Falstein's novel, *The Face of A Hero,* is by its nature mainly concerned with and written from the viewpoint of men—the crew of a B-24 sweating out their fifty missions in World War II. The author shows great insight and respect in his treatment of the wives and sweethearts the men have left behind.

There are several episodes dealing with the relations of GI's with Italian girls, typical of the U.S. soldier's thoughtless chauvinism against native populations. But these episodes are not exploited for cheap sex, they are written with a profound understanding and love of people. The brave, hungry washerwomen of Me-

dia who befriend a lonely Negro sergeant are beautifully drawn.

In Myra Page's *With Sun In Our Blood* we meet the rare heroine—a working-class woman—Dolly Hawkins, daughter, wife and mother of miners telling the story of her life in the rich speech of the Cumberland mountains. Despite an overly sentimental approach, the lives and struggles of Dolly Hawkins and her family are real enough and there is a dignity in the treatment of this woman rarely found in current fiction. Certainly the Dolly Hawkinses in our country deserve the attention of many other creative talents, for in their lives they embody the power and richness of the working class.

Outstanding is Lloyd Brown's novel, *Iron City*. Like Falstein he faced the problem of treating with women characters solely from the viewpoint of the male heroes. By the very nature of the story the women, while playing an important role in the lives of the men, are not in the main focus. Yet they emerge as strong and militant characters, heroic as their husbands and certainly equal.

Lucy Jackson, the woman who collected more signatures for Scottsboro than anyone else; Charlene, the resourceful and able wife of the Communist organizer; and Anne Mae Zachary—here are Negro women truthfully depicted with love and respect. Their husbands and friends are in jail, but these women are n resigned to sit back and wait. Th organize ably and well to free the men and the frameup victim, Lonn James.

IT IS high time for progressi writers to free themselves male supremacist thinking and co duct a conscious struggle for a wor ing-class approach to the treatme of women. Marxist criticism mu fulfill its great responsibility in th field. There is need for a serio evaluation of the treatment of wom in the works of progressive write like Howard Fast, Alexander Saxto David Alman, Len Zinberg a others. A working class approach character and to the relationship b tween men and women will deep the artistic impact of any write work.

Education, discussion and se criticism are urgently needed. T male supremacist pattern of om sion, stereotype, distortion, violen and a sense of isolation can broken. There is a proud and mi tant tradition of struggle for t rights of women in our country a there are hundreds of heroines history awaiting to be rediscover And there is around us a growi mass movement of women for pea and Negro liberation. There are n heroines to be written and su about.

CIVIL RIGHTS and the LIBERALS

By HERBERT APTHEKER

THE American people are becoming increasingly impatient at war scares, price hikes, Jim Crow and witchhunts. The monopolized communications do well at smothering and distorting, but when flyers won't fly and workers won't work and 250,000 Negro men and women become registered voters in Florida despite hell, high-water and Groveland, the news will out.

Here are some of the signs of stirring on the anti-witch hunt front culled only from a recent week. A priest stated in a sermon that "Every Catholic — especially the Catholic writer—should be distinguished by a love of justice and freedom and by a spirit of charity in his writings." And the priest, Father McCullen, permitted *The Nation* (April 26, 1952) to publish the sermon in its entirety, with a preceding editorial paragraph naming the particular Catholic writer he had in mind in his criticism—the hierarchy-sponsored Louis Budenz.

In Atlanta, Georgia, fifty delegates from six Southern state organizations of the N.A.A.C.P. denounced all avowed Presidential candidates from the Republican and Democratic parties because none had "demonstrated any genuine concern for civil rights."

In Cincinnati when the 950 delegates to the biennial convention of the League of Women Voters observed that their national board had omitted reference to civil rights in its recommended program, they altered the program from the floor. A delegate from Shaker Heights, Ohio, pointed to this omission and declared "that threats to individual freedom were growing, individual rights were being restricted and character annihilation was prevalent." She called on the assembled women to "help stem the tide of our disappearing freedom" and was—said the New York *Times*, April 29—"roundly applauded."

And in Cleveland, the 2,500 delegates to the convention of the Right-led Textile Workers Union-C.I.O., adopted a resolution condemning the Smith and McCarran Acts, the convictions of the eleven national leaders of the Communist Party, calling the Supreme Court's decision upholding those convictions "a grave blow to our heritage of free speech and free thought," and labeling anti-Communism as "a cloak for reaction-

ary forces to drive the people into patterns of conformity."

Some recent books reflect this growing popular awareness of and concern about the corrosion of our civil liberties. This article will briefly examine and assess three influential examples of this literature. These are:

A collection of essays, edited by Clair Wilcox, Professor of Political Science at Swarthmore College, entitled *Civil Liberties under Attack.** The contributors to this volume include Henry Steele Commager, Professor of History at Columbia, Zechariah Chafee, of Harvard Law School, Walter Gellhorn of Columbia Law School and James B. Baxter III, President of Williams College.

Second, *The Loyalty of Free Men,* by Alan Barth, editorial writer for the Washington *Post,* with a long foreword by Professor Chafee, issued in mass quantities by Pocket Books at thirty-five cents.

Third, a report by the American Civil Liberties Union, *The Judges and the Judged,*** by Merle Miller.

THE first two volumes deal generally with the assault upon civil rights; the Miller volume examines the effect of this assault—in the form of a private racket conducted by ex-F.B.I. agents—upon the radio and television industry.

The central positive fact about all these volumes is that they do reflect —in however limited a fashion (and the limits will be analyzed)—the general, growing concern with the steady eating away of our Bill of Rights. This concern is expressed with sufficient impact to arouse furious attacks from the reactionary press —Hearst, Scripps-Howard, the *New Leader* and the others.

The authors and contributors to these volumes are appalled at the grossness of the Un-American Committee which questions a scholar like Professor Harlow Shapley behind barred doors, forcibly ejects his lawyer, denies him the right to call witnesses and has the professor's written statement torn from his hands.

They believe people should be punished for deeds, not thoughts; they find intolerable the advice of a Congressman that one join only those organizations approved by the American Legion and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce; they think coercing "loyalty" is self-defeating; they believe that heterodoxy of thought is stimulating rather than subversive.

One of these writers, Professor Robert Carr—contributing to the Wilcox volume—wants a strong, national F.E.P.C., recognizes that the Negro people really desire equality and freedom, and finds a cause of war to lie in "the prejudiced, contemptuous policies followed by American states or communities toward their Negro citizens, their Oriental citizens, or their Indian citizens."

To have such views expressed in these times, by men such as these, is invaluable and tremendously heart

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* University of Pennsylvania Press, $3.50.

** Doubleday, $2.50.

ening to all who believe that freedom need not be and will not be wholly lost in the United States.

YET all the contributions suffer from serious limitations in analysis and errors in fact which greatly undermine their effectiveness. A critical evaluation of these works is necessary to advance the common effort of all democratic and peace-minded people.

The books appeared because of the writers' concern with finding, as the title of one reads, civil liberties under attack. Immediate questions that arise are: Under attack from whom? For what reasons? What is to be done about it? On each of these crucial questions the volumes fail the reader.

The first question—*who* is attacking civil liberties?—is hardly posed, let alone answered. Capitalism, imperialism are words which never appear in these volumes. The word "fascism" appears once in the three books. This is in Professor Chafee's foreword to Barth's book, where the reader is told "there is no need to worry much about fascism."

They *say,* too, that Communism is not much of a "danger." Or, at least, "internal" Communism—at the present moment. But, at the same time, their thesis is, as the cover to Mr. Barth's volume maintains, that it is "the Communist threat to freedom" which really evokes the attack upon civil liberties! That is, while none states *who* is attacking civil liberties, all assume that the responsibility for the attack rests with the Communists who have, so far, been particularly attacked!

Mr. Commager, for example, lamenting Congressional inquisitions, finds these denying the basic principle that "even the worst criminal has a right to his day in court" and concludes, "If this principle goes by the board, under pressure from Communism, then Communism has won a notable victory."

Similarly, Mr. Barth, horrified at recent glaring examples of the violation of elementary democratic rights, exclaims: "Nothing that the agents of Communism have done or can do in this country is so dangerous to the United States as what they have induced us to do to ourselves."

And Mr. Miller concludes his study of the Red-baiting victimization of radio and television performers by remarking that "*Red Channels* has surely done exactly what the Communists would wish it to do . . . [It has] created in one of this country's most crucial industries the kind of terrified dissension on which the Communist Party always has and always will grow."

All of these writers falsely picture the Soviet Union as an aggressive, reactionary power and repeat the slander that the leaders of the Communist Party of the United States—if not each of its members—are agents of this power.

It is because these authors have accepted the basic argument of those whose gross anti-democratic and indecent behavior alarms them, that they are unable to discover who is

attacking civil liberties.

What, then, *is* their explanation for that which alarms them? "We are afraid," replies Professor Wilcox. Who are "we"? All of us. Of what are we afraid? A phantom—"our fear has no conceivable foundation in fact."

Professor Chafee feels the Second World War is to blame; it "taught us to hate each other." "We" have thus become afflicted with a "mental pestilence of hatred and fear." Elsewhere he finds, in all seriousness: "The biggest danger to the United States is from stuffed shirts—stuffed shirts in positions of authority who seek to fill every government office and every teaching position with stuffed shirts." Professor Gellhorn dismisses this particular question more briefly but with no less—and no more—illumination: We are in the midst of "the periodic hubbubs."

WELL, then, civil liberties are under attack, we know not by whom, because all of "us" have the "hubbubs" induced by Communists who really are terrible, but really aren't dangerous.

What to do? Given such a diagnosis, the therapy may be imagined. It consists in prison for the Communist leaders—the "incorrigible" ones. For the rank-and-file, who must be certified as such not by a careless old Congressional committee but by the superbly efficient F.B.I., we can provide psychiatric treatment. Thus urges Professor Chafee. Communists, he says, are "American problem children" and "it is the task of a wise psychiatrist to reach isolated and perplexed minds and bring them into renewed communication with fellowmen"—including, no doubt, Mr. Chafee's "stuffed shirts."

This is for peace-time. But, in an emergency or in war-time, the "isolated and perplexed minds" will have to forego psychoanalysis and partake of the blunter care provided by concentration camps. Mr. Chafee adds the precaution — really superfluous, for Mr. McCarran had already thought of it—that when such measures are instituted "we ought to limit them to the emergency and be absolutely sure that they come to an end when the emergency is over." Who, among the "we," Mr. Chafee, will decide the moment of liberation—you, or Senator McCarran?

It is a measure of the corrosive power of anti-Communism that, once embraced, it leads a Professor Chafee, historian of the struggle for freedom of speech in the United States, to go along with the essential program of an arch enemy of free speech like McCarran.

And what of Mr. Miller and his investigation of the blacklist in radio and television? Has he found such repression? Yes, indeed. His book is a valuable collection of data proving the victimization of hundreds of talented artists and writers and documenting the manner whereby witch-hunters have "panicked" these industries and driven from the air consideration of such "Communist questions" as academic freedom, peace and

vil rights.

But what are the proposals? Basicy, surrender, for Mr. Miller pasvely concludes that where it comes commentators, newscasters and ograms of substantive social connt, "no important sponsor" would ıy for views he disapproves. And at settles it! In the exalted language Richard Rovere, in *Partisan Reew*: "It is plain that among the ghts of lard merchants are the right make themselves absurd and the ght to hire and fire radio performs as they please."

Having surrendered the outerorks, what about the rest of the bason? For pure and simple entertains, Mr. Miller thinks it would be ell if the American Federation of adio Artists policed themselves. All ıccused" personnel would write a confidential" letter of "explanation." his would be filed by A.F.R.A. and hen the sponsor, through the Amerın Association of Advertising gencies, raised any question about a erformer, his letter of "explanation" ould be forwarded and then he ight—or might not—be hired. All ith a minimum of fuss.

The standards of A.A.A.A. were inicated in a recent article by one of its ig wheels, Maurice B. Mitchell, "It's till A Business," in *The Saturday Review of Literature*. Mr. Mitchell ismissed as "crackpots" those who orried about "educational talks and iscussions." "Sometimes," he went n, "the broadcaster wonders whether here shouldn't be another 'freedom' dded to the list of new ones we've discovered lately: freedom from culture."

IT IS worth noting, in passing, that our authors, having accepted the basic anti-Communist lie of the witch-hunters, take over in some instances even their techniques.

For example, Mr. Ernest Angell, chairman of the Board of Directors of the American Civil Liberties Union, and Mr. Patrick Malin, its Executive Director, state in an introduction to Miller's volume that the A.C.L.U. was determined that Miller's "investigation should include the utmost possible checking on every suggestion of black-listing by Communists or other 'leftists,' and he devoted weeks of time to this effort."

In the text itself Mr. Miller says "several weeks" were given to a search for this but "not a single instance of such proof was uncovered." Which proves what? It proves, says Miller, that if there is such a list "it, like the Party itself, operates in secret," while Messrs. Angell and Malin point to the *absence* of evidence of such a list as showing "once again [!] that one of the main dangers of Communist tyranny is the secrecy in which its adherents regularly operate." Or, as Budenz put it, the absence of the advocacy of violence on the part of Communists proves how diabolically sinister is their *conspiracy* to advocate it!

Or, again, President Baxter, of Williams College, focuses his contribution to *Civil Liberties Under Attack* upon the evil nature of Communism

especially as demonstrated in its alleged violation of all tenets of scientific inquiry. To bolster his case, Mr. Baxter, a professional historian, bases a false summary of Lenin's *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* (whose appearance he misdates), on a summary of the book appearing in a work by James B. Conant published forty-three years after Lenin's!

He tears out of context and completely distorts words written by Zhdanov as partially quoted in the *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science,* when Zhdanov's own work—*Essays on Literature, Philosophy and Music*—is readily available in English. President Baxter quotes at length from the "memoirs" of the renegade Ignazio Silone as to the "unprincipled" nature of Communists—published in the impartial *New Leader*—but never mentions and probably is unaware of the detailed exposure of Silone written in specific reply to these "memoirs," by Togliatti and available in the London *Labour Monthly* (May, 1950).

President Baxter quotes from the discussions held in the Soviet Union on Lysenko's theories, but he quotes not from the published proceedings, but rather from excerpts offered in a hostile article by Professor Sonneborn in *Science.* And Baxter's quotation, excerpting from Sonneborn, distorts Sonneborn, whose own excerpting, needless to say, completely distorted the whole essence of the 600 page volume* carrying the text of the discussions!

It is difficult to believe that President Baxter would be guilty of such gross violations of elementary standards of scholarly inquiry were he writing about any subject other than Communism, in which, apparently, no holds are barred.

THESE volumes maintain a deliberate blindness as to the source of the present assault upon civil liberties because their authors have fallen victims to the key weapon of the assaulters.

The civil liberties of the mass of American people are being attacked today by the class which hitherto has robbed the Negro people of their civil liberties. The economic masters of this country are basically responsible for the oppression of the Negro people—the greatest single example of the rape of civil liberties in this country, though the books under review do not indicate it—because much of their power and profit has been derived from this oppression.

Similarly, these economic masters control the political and ideological life of this country. It is they who are responsible for the assault upon basic democratic rights. It is they who—seeking war—find such rights increasingly irksome and would bind the home population with the chains of fascism while launching war upon the world.

Merle Miller seems surprised to discover that it is the Columbia Broadcasting System and Columbia

* *The Situation in Biological Science*, International, 1949, New York.

Pictures Inc., and the multi-millionaire Chiang-supporter Kohlberg, who pay the ex-cops who make a racket out of *Red Channels,* but he need not be surprised.

Anti-Communism is the supreme racket, of the supreme racketeers—the monopoly-capitalists. It is international—Japanese, German, Italian, Spanish—and American. It is the policy embarked on by those who seek war and fascism. Its aim is to destroy all decent thought and culture—and all decent living standards.

This is why Red-baiting inevitably moves out to get all—Mrs. Bethune, president of the National Council of Negro Women and Dr. Harold Lenz, dean of students at Queens College and leader of the Americans for Democratic Action. This is no aberration; rather it is the intent of red-baiting. From Benjamin J. Davis to Mary McLeod Bethune; from the Smith Act to "regulate" thought to the Smith Bill to "regulate" trade-unions, the line is straight and clear.

Nothing except unity will break the line. The unity cannot be based on anti-Communism, main weapon of reaction. The unity must be built on anti-fascism, on a program for peace, security and equality.

Freedom-fighters are not called upon to make more "reasonable" the "excesses" of the McCarrans. Freedom-fighters must throw the McCarrans out of office. We must not "improve" the Smith Act, we must repeal it; not hope for restraint in the enforcement of loyalty oaths, but eliminate them.

"Though," said Theodore Parker, "all the governors in the world bid us commit treason against man, and set the example, let us never submit."

Win Amnesty!

One year has passed since the Supreme Court upheld the conviction of the 11 leaders of the Communist Party who were indicted under the thought-control provisions of the Smith Act. It has been a year of cruel punishment for these men and the wives and families from whom they were torn. Amnesty is the only practical way to redress this great wrong.

We urge our readers to support the **National Conference to Win Amnesty for Smith Act Victims,** ***which will be held on June 14 at the St. Nicholas Arena in New York City. For full information write to Conference Headquarters: Room 643, 799 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.***

—The Editors

The Living LEONARDO

By J. D. BERNAL

"May I be deprived of movement if I ever weary of being useful."
—LEONARDO DA VINCI

THERE are men whose achievements we need no centenaries to celebrate. Their works speak for themselves. This is especially true for the great artist who writes in a universal language which neither time nor distance diminishes.* Centenaries do, nevertheless, serve a useful purpose in reminding us of the total achievement of a man, asking us to assess what his work meant in his own time and how its message needs be read for the work of our own days. The turn of centuries sometimes brings back a close and fresh echo of what has been, in the intervening time, blurred and distorted.

Leonardo da Vinci was a great man of a great age. His native gifts and abilities were enormous, but they were multiplied by the circumstances of the age he was born into. He appears at a crucial point in history where art was at its peak and science was just beginning its triumphant career. He contributed more than any other single man to the advancement of both and he showed, in his own person, how harmoniously and effectively they needed to be combined. That union has since been almost lost, but with the new movement of society, it is on the way to being reformed.

Gorky, with the experience of the revolution behind him, has shown the way in which the great individual is himself the special product of a period of social stress such as that which marked the end of the Middle Ages.

"The rapid development of the powers of the individual has no other explanation than that, in periods of social storms the personality becomes the focal point of thousands of wills which have selected it for their instrument and we see the individual divinely strong and beautiful, illuminated by the bright flame of the desires of his people, his class or his party.

"Who the individual is does not matter

* Leonardo da Vinci, himself, knew well enough the power of the medium he used. "That science is more useful whose fruit is most communicable to all generations of the universe." (*Paragone.*)

. . . what matters is that all these heroes ppear before us as carriers of collective nergy, as mouthpieces of mass desires. . . . lways in the course of history it was the eople who created the man. A specially triking example of this is provided by he Italian city republics of the 14th and 5th centuries where the creative activities f the Italian people embraced all spheres f the spirit, the entire field of human re- ations, and created truly great art, bring- ng forth an amazing number of great nasters of the word, the brush and the hisel." (From an article on "The De- truction of Personality," in *Literature and ife,* p. 117.)

The many-sidedness of the indi- vidual was itself a feature of libera- ion from the limits imposed by the state order of the Middle Ages. The Renaissance was, in Engels' words, writing before the changes he had foreseen and worked for:

"It was the greatest progressive revolu- ion that mankind has so far experienced, time which called for giants and pro- duced giants—giants in power of thought, passion and character, in universality and earning. The men who founded the modern rule of the bourgeoisie had any- hing but bourgeois limitations. On the contrary, the adventurous character of the ime inspired them to a greater or less degree. . . .

"Leonardo da Vinci was not only a great painter but also a great mathema- ician, mechanician and engineer, to whom he most diverse branches of physics are indebted for important discoveries. . . .

"The heroes of that time had not yet come under the servitude of the division of labor, the restricting effects of which, with its production of one-sidedness, we so often notice in their successors. But what is especially characteristic of them is that they almost all pursue their lives and activities in the midst of the con- temporary movements, in the practical struggle; they take sides and join in the fight, one by speaking and writing, another with the sword, many with both. Hence the fullness and force of character that makes them complete men." (Preface to *Dialectics of Nature,* quoted in *Literature and Art,* Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Selections from their writings, New York, 1947, pp. 73f.)

LEONARDO DA VINCI more than any other single figure of his time expresses that completeness in his life and work. The reason he does so is that by his birth and train- ing—he was the illegitimate son of a successful local solicitor, apprenticed at fourteen to the leading goldsmith of Florence—he carried with him the training of the craftsman rather than the scholar. He had no formal educa- tion and despised those that had. What he valued was the direct ex- perience of his eye and hand:

"If indeed I have no power to quote from authors as they have, it is a far big- ger and more worthy thing to read by the light of experience, which is the instruc- tress of their masters. They strut about puffed up and pompous, decked out and adorned not with their own labors but by those of others, and they will not even allow me my own. And if they despise me who am an inventor, how much more should blame be given to themselves who are not inventors but trumpeters and re- citers of the work of others. . . .

"Those who are inventors and inter- preters between Nature and man as com- pared with the reciters and trumpeters of

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J. D. BERNAL, distinguished British scientist, is a Fellow of the Royal Society and a vice-president of the World Peace Council. His article was written for the world-wide celebration, sponsored by the Peace Council, of the 500th anniversary of Leonardo Da Vinci's birth.

the works of others, are to be considered simply as is an object in front of a mirror in comparison with its image when seen in the mirror, the one being something in itself, the other nothing; people whose debt to nature is small, for it seems only by chance that they wear human form, but for this one might class them with the herds of beasts." (*The Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci,* ed. Edward MacCurdy, London, 1938, Vol. 1, p. 61.)

He rejected equally the age-old religious philosophical idea, born of upper class contempt for hand work, that experience was delusive and that we should rather depend on tradition or pure reasoning. "Experience is never at fault; it is only your judgment that is in error in promising itself such results from experience as are not caused by our experiments."

Leonardo was, however, far from having the idea that crude experience was enough—he understood the need to refine it by science, particularly mathematics, which he thought of as itself derived from material experience.

"No human investigation can be called true science without passing through mathematical tests, and if you say that the sciences which begin and end in the mind contain truth, this cannot be conceded, and must be denied for many reasons. First and foremost because in such mental discourses experience does not come in, without which nothing reveals itself with certainty." (*Paragone,* a Comparison of the Arts by Leonardo da Vinci, ed. Irma A. Richter, London, 1949, p. 23.)

Leonardo at Florence, or indeed elsewhere, produced little finished work, but what he did was of such excellence that even in an age of superb art no one questioned his personal supremacy in painting. But this did not satisfy him. His idea of painting as a science involved such a range of investigations and practical trials that only the purse of a great prince could provide.

He found it in Ludovico il Moro, Duke of Milan, at that time the greatest and wealthiest state of Italy. Its revenues were equal to those of France and England combined. They were derived from an intensive agriculture based on irrigation and a flourishing metal industry, particularly of arms manufacture. But the government was a dictatorship based on crime and violence covered by magnificent and wasteful expenditure and had long forfeited the support of the people.

Leonardo was appointed on the strength of an application where he stressed his ability to construct all kinds of new military machines, mentioning almost as an afterthought: "Also, I can execute sculpture in marble, bronze or clay and also painting, in which my work will stand comparison with anyone else whoever he may be."

It was in Milan that Leonardo was able to develop to the full his mechanical bent in the devising and constructing of machine tools and civil engineering plant. His drawings bear witness to his close attention to workshop practice of the day, which he himself could contribute

unexampled capacities for drawing and invention.*

BUT the scientist and artist were always blended with the engineer. Indeed we can see that he had conceived all his work as a great unity, comprised in what he called the Science of Painting set out in his one book, the *Paragone.* To him this science was necessarily all inclusive for:

"If you despise painting, which is the sole imitator of all visible works of nature, you certainly will be despising a subtle invention which brings philosophy and subtle speculation to bear on the nature of all forms—sea and land, plants and animals, grasses and flowers—which are enveloped in shade and light. Truly painting is a science, the true-born child of nature. For painting is born of nature; to be more correct we should call it the grandchild of nature, since all visible things were brought forth by nature and these, her children, have given birth to painting. Therefore we may justly speak of it as the grandchild of nature and as related to God." (*Paragone.*)

His view of painting was absolutely straightforward; it was to represent nature, solid, living and moving, on a flat, colored, changeless surface. To him this was primarily a scientific problem and he bent all his energies to solve it. His two greatest contributions to its solution were his use of light and shade as well as atmospheric color, to render solidity and depth, and the creation of the illusion of movement. Both required a deep knowledge of natural science. But Leonardo could not turn to the natural scientists—they hardly existed—he had to make his science directly from observation and experiment.

The enormous range of his achievement here in optics, in mechanics, in geology, natural history, anatomy and physiology is a proof of his altogether exceptional ability to see and set down in his drawings and notebooks the most significant aspects of nature. It also bears evidence to a tireless industry and firm purpose that belies the reports of his contemporaries of his inability to achieve what he undertook. No one but himself understood what he was trying to do.

But his scientific success is at least as much a measure of the fact that he started clear of the encumbrance of traditional beliefs; that his education was the materialist practice of the workshop, not the idealist disputation of the schools.

"They say knowledge born of experience is mechanical, but that knowledge born and consummated in the mind is scientific. . . . But to me it seems that all sciences are vain and full of errors that are not born of experience, mother of all certainty and are not tested by experience." (*Paragone,* p. 25.)

LEONARDO'S materialism was anything but static, indeed he was the first to express clearly the new concept of movement, of dynamics, that characterizes modern science in contrast to that of the Greeks.

* His interest in these was more than academic. He hoped to make his fortune out of a semi-automatic needle-polishing machine while at the other extreme his gigantic double boom mechanical excavator anticipated modern Soviet methods of mechanical excavation.

Movement he loved and studied endlessly—in water, with his practical preoccupation with canals and irrigation; in air, with the flight of birds and his own attempts at mechanical flight; in animals and human beings "laughing, weeping, fighting and working."

He understood movement, not as an abstraction, but in terms of force acting on heavy matter. He partly grasped the concept of inertia, the basis of the new physics of Galileo and Newton, and related it to the endless studies he made of guns, mortars and missiles of all kinds. He lived just at the time when the whole art of war was being revolutionized by the first large-scale use of field artillery, itself made possible by improved techniques and the beginnings of concentrations of capital.

If war and its needs were to inspire much of his work, it was also to destroy it. The wealth of the Italian cities and their control by a parasitic class that had forfeited the support of the people who had created it, invited foreign invasion. Milan was occupied by the French. Leonardo's model for a great bronze horse was used as a butt for archers. His only other positive achievement, his fresco of the Last Supper, was left fading, unfinished, on a damp monastery wall to be finally obliterated as the result of American bombing.

From that time on he led an unsettled and happy life. He could still produce masterpieces—the enigmatic Mona Lisa belongs to this period. For three years he was chief engineer to Cesare Borgia, the "Prince" of Machiavelli, in his criminal and futile campaign in the Romagna. His hatred of the brutalities of war deepened with his experience of its reality.

He left the service of Cesare before his final collapse and returned to Florence, where his chief achievement was the preparation of a picture, never finished and now lost, "The Battle of Anghiari," in which he compressed all his science of representing movement and emotion and all his hatred of the violence and horror of war.

But by now Leonardo was an ageing man—he was beginning to be overshadowed by younger and more productive rivals such as Raphael and Michelangelo. He retired from his native land and spent his last days as an honored pensioner of Francis I—a living symbol of the Renaissance he was bringing to France.

LEONARDO's life has impressed succeeding generations by its contrast of great projects and unfinished performance. Some have said that he had allowed his science to interfere with his art, not realizing how, to him, art was a science. But although no human being in a short life could have ever achieved what he set out to do, his later failure is as much due to the times in which he lived as was his early success.

The formative period of the Renaissance had indeed come to an end in his lifetime. The modern world was not to come straight out of a civilization devoted to knowledge and

eauty, but had to pass through the res of war and the destructive politi- il and religious crises of the Re- ormation and Counter-Reformation. he Italian Renaissance, built in the rst burst of liberation of the bour- eoisie, was on too narrow an eco- omic base in a world still largely eudal. Its own inner contradictions ere too much for it—it could inject leaven into the rest of Europe, it ould not save itself.

Much of Leonardo's work perished n his lifetime—far more was lost fter his death. As a painter his school arried on his manner but without is inspiration or the science which as at the root of it. Nevertheless, ll painting since his time bears his ark. He had solved the basic prob- m of representation of space in ictures. It was for others to find out ow to use the solution.

In science there was no such means f transmission. Leonardo buried all is conclusions in no kind of order n his voluminous notebooks and very ew were ever able to see them or ake use of them. But less was lost an might appear. The work which eonardo set out to do in science ould in any case have had to be done gain by many men with patience and easurement and calculation. He had rrived at, or near, many important eneralizations by observation and ntuition—the solutions needed to be hecked and proved before they could e used.

What really mattered was that he ad blazed the way. He had shown hat could be done. Even if others could not follow exactly in his tracks, they knew that there was a way to knowledge through experience and so had the hope they needed in order to find it for themselves.

Despite wars, despite the Counter-Reformation, a school of Italian science grew throughout all the 16th century. Before it was damped by the burning of Bruno and the condemnation of Galileo, it had sown the seed in the active commercial world of Northern Europe. Bacon and Descartes, Harvey, Huyghens and Newton, with their new instruments and their new organization—the scientific societies—were to complete a scientific revolution which Leonardo had foreshadowed.

BUT this is not all. Though Leonardo's work, blended with that of the other men of his time great and small, has passed into the general tradition of Art and Science—it still remains as fresh as when it was first made. The quality of greatness in human achievement is that of perennial life. A drawing of Leonardo can transmit to us directly, new delights, new understanding, new purposes. Through it we can know that the men who made these things are not dead, but live in our own work. And especially does that message ring in our time, also one of struggle and achievement.

We need Leonardo to show us what a man can do and how he can draw his strength from the living and working tradition of the people.

CARMENCITA

By JESUS COLON

MY WIFE and I still remember the day when Carmencita, my mother-in-law, came from Puerto Rico to live with us.

She examined our apartment minutely but unobtrusively. The kitchen and two bedrooms. The parlor with rows of books more or less neatly tucked in homemade bookcases. And the books. She read every title, her myopic eyes very close to the bindings.

After she finished her thorough examination, she went to one of the front windows facing the street and looked pensively down at the people passing on the sidewalk a few stories below. Carmencita stayed in that position for a long time. Then she called my wife to the room we had prepared for her and closed the door.

When my wife came out of their long conference, I was already in bed. She seemed preoccupied and nervous.

"What is the matter?" I asked as she dropped the comb with which she was fixing her hair.

"Carmencita," she said, "will not spend a second night under the same roof with you."

"Why?"

"Because . . . you are a pagan, . . . materialist . . . and atheist . . . a—"

"How does she know all this," I interrupted, "when we have hardly spoken to each other?"

"She said she knows what you are because of your books, because there is not an image of a saint in our whole apartment. My mother says that a man with books like this should be named *diablo* instead of Jesus like they named you."

As my wife went on with what her mother had said, I realized I had a problem on my hands seriously affecting the future of our family. What should I do?

Carmencita, or Tita, as we all knew her since our early days in Puerto Rico, was the living austere portrait of a medieval Catholic woman. Faith was her only guide. I remember how I used to tremble from head to foot when she caught me staring at her daughter, my childhood sweetheart

who would look out at me from the small window of their home in Puerto Rico.

Carmencita was erect then, over fifty and of a firm and stubborn character. Her profile had the lines of Dante's familiar marble bust, and she looked as if she wanted to send all infidels and such to the remotest depths of his Inferno.

Carmencita's eyes were commanding. Very seldom did she let her long, pale face reveal the slightest emotion. Her slim figure moved with the sure steps of those who firmly believe they are going straight to heaven when they die. But under that rigid composure and fierce, almost defiant saintliness, there was a world of sentiment and love for the downtrodden that took me years to discover and really appreciate before she died.

The immediate problem was to convince Carmencita that people owning and reading such "horrible" books as the ones she saw in the parlor were not such bad people after all—in fact that she could live under the same roof with her daughter and myself for years and years.

Early next morning I went to a Catholic religious store. I asked to see an image of Jesus. I picked one that seemed to be very human. From there I went to the nearest Five-and-Ten store and bought a framed picture of some fruits painted in very flashy colors. I threw the fruits away and placed the image of Jesus in the frame. Now it looked as if I had bought both image and frame in the same store.

I CAME home. My wife and mother-in-law were in the kitchen. I went in looking for the one-eared hammer that we had. I took a piece of thin wire, two small nails and a big one and went to Carmencita's room. At first Carmencita and her daughter heard my puttering and hammering without moving from the kitchen, but after a little while curiosity grew stronger than reserve. They came to the door just as I was hanging the picture on the wall at the head of her bed.

"How do you like it?" I asked blandly.

A faint glow of satisfaction appeared on Carmencita's face. Almost imperceptibly, her head nodded in approbation.

After supper we three took a walk around the neighborhood. I took pains in pointing out to her places and persons of interest, the customs and nationalities of the people in New York.

Came Sunday. I took Carmencita to St. Patrick's Cathedral. We entered through the right. I started asking her questions. "Who is that saint?" And she started explaining the causes and circumstances of his or her sainthood. I noticed that her brief biographical sketches coincided

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JESUS COLON is a Puerto Rican writer and organizer who has been active among his people in New York City for over 30 years. He is a teacher at the Jefferson School of Social Science.

closely with the printed notes framed in front of every saint. We went from right to left of the church with her lecturing a few minutes at every pedestal. I was patient and respectfully attentive to every word. As we went out, we were greeted by the myriad peaceful doves on the wide steps of the cathedral and the hustle and bustle of the Fifth Avenue traffic a few feet ahead.

The great Prometheus in the water fountain was looking calmly at the semicircle of umbrella tables at the Radio City Cafe.

"If a couple of Negroes dared to sit at one of those tables, they would not be served," I remarked, pointing at the cafe in the round circle below.

"Why?" questioned Carmencita.

"Because Negroes are looked upon as inferiors in this country and are not given the same rights as the whites. And that goes for us Puerto Ricans, too."

"Strange," she said, "I thought this was a very democratic country."

I did not press the point. I rather let it rest and watched for any effect my words might have on Carmencita. After I pointed out casually that the Puerto Rican flag was not among the many adorning the Radio City Plaza, we went into the main building to see the frescoes.

I explained to Carmencita that originally a Mexican painter named Diego Rivera was contracted to do the frescoes. He started by painting a Negro and a white worker clasping hands and the figure of Lenin in the middle, with Lenin's hands touching the hands of both men. When the Rockefellers, the owners of Radio City, took notice of what Diego Rivera was painting, they paid him up in full and discharged him, removing what he had already done.

"And who was this man Lenin that the painter selected to be in the center?"

I explained as simply as I could. We kept on walking through the main building until we reached the Sixth Avenue entrance.

IN THOSE unemployment days of the Thirties only an alley separated the Home Relief office on Adams Street in Brooklyn and our apartment.

The Workers Alliance used to organize demonstrations and sit-down strikes inside the relief offices. Sometimes their members would stay inside the relief offices all night, refusing to be ousted from the premises.

Joe Hecht, one of the leaders of the Workers Alliance in Brooklyn, used to come to our apartment to prepare coffee and sandwiches for the sit-down strikers and talk of their rights to relief and better conditions generally. Joe knew a little Spanish and he and my mother-in-law grew to know each other pretty well.

Carmencita could not conceive how a "judio" could spend so much time and risk jail and perhaps a beating trying to get help for the Puerto Rican people. Joe and I sat down with Carmencita to explain that there was something greater than

ationality and so-called "race"—nd that is the conscious feeling and nderstanding of belonging to a class hat unites us regardless of color and ationality, without belittling the ontributions and positive qualities f our particular nationality. Joe Hecht, the Jewish-American, and the Puerto Rican looking for help at he relief offices, belonged to the ame class: the working class.

Another thing that my mother-in-ow could not understand was how t was that a very intelligent and apable fellow like Joe could be vorking for eight dollars a week—nd not always that—for the Work-rs Alliance, when he could very asily be earning five times as much vorking in his own trade. Joe ex-plained this to her in his modest vay. I helped him with his Spanish vhenever he could not find the right vords.

After Joe finished one of his ex-planations, Carmencita used to sit by the window and reflect for a long ime while the voices from the picket ine in front of the relief offices con-inued chanting the demands of the lay.

For two or three weeks, Joe did iot come to chat with us. We learned hat he had received a terrible beat-ng on a picket line. That upset Car-nencita and all of us very much. Then one day Joe came with his head ll bandaged. When Carmencita saw iis condition she let go with her scant rsenal of nasty words in Spanish gainst the police who had beaten oe so badly. Joe explained to my mother-in-law that the police were only the instruments through which the capitalists operated to crush the rising consciousness and demands of the workers.

Carmencita had a great admiration for Joe. She admired him more when he joined the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and left for Spain to fight against fascism.

I will say that Joe's leaving for Spain had something to do with inducing Carmencita to take part in the pilgrimage to Washington in which over a thousand women from New York alone went to protest the arms embargo against Republican Spain. She joined in picketing the White House together with hundreds of other women. When she came back, she gave us a comprehensive report in Spanish of everything she saw and heard. She added a very sound criticism of a few errors made on this historical trip to Washington.

It was a happy day in our apartment when Joe Hecht returned from Spain, bald and thin, but with a fluent mastery of Spanish and, of course, a greater clarity and understanding of the whole fight against war and fascism. Carmencita received him as she would her own son.

It was a day of great sorrow in our home, years later, when we got the news that Joe Hecht was killed attacking a Nazi machine-gun nest during the Second World War.

WE HAVE a custom in regard to the dead. For nine consecutive

days after the funeral, prayers or "rosarios" are conducted in the home of the deceased's family. The rosario is a long and repetitious prayer full of Latin passages and needing a conductor who has, through long experience, mastered the consecutive order of the rosary and the Latin interpolations. Most of the rosario conductors do not know what they are saying in Latin.

In Puerto Rico it would be highly insulting to one of these prayer leaders if a person even insinuated that she or he should accept payment for the services. These last rites are supposed to be a strictly pious act, free from any taint of money or presents.

Carmencita was an expert on rosario conducting. And she always paid her own carfare and other expenses to the place where the rosario was going to be held.

Thus, when she was invited to conduct some rosario and she was informed that this whole tradition had been commercialized here (the prayer leader being brought back and forth in a taxi or automobile and dined and wined before or after each night of praying, besides receiving payment or a small "gratification"), she dropped it all and refused to conduct any more rosarios as long as she remained in the United States. She also objected very strenuously to the fiesta character that has developed in New York around this religious ceremony. We pointed out to her the influence of the money-concept of life and culture that those who control everything have forced on even the most revered customs and traditions of the people.

Carmencita received further proof that our criticism of present-day society was correct when she went with her honor diplomas, fraternal degrees and credentials to a world-wide fraternal organization to which she had dedicated many years of her life in Puerto Rico. First she was informed that this organization, preaching equality and brotherhood all over the world, was divided between whites and Negroes here in the land of democracy. Therefore she, being a Puerto Rican, would have to belong to some special lodge.

With all her written letters and honors attesting to her many years of sacrifice and hard work for the chapters of this fraternal order in Puerto Rico, the powers that be had divided her concept of the brotherhood of man into white and black. She was treated more or less like a naive old woman who had insane notions of equality and who might eventually become another burden to the organization because of her age.

Around this time she really started doubting the sanctity and disinterestedness of the organized church. She went to one of the best known Spanish Catholic churches and found out that you have to practically pay as you go in, just like in a movie house. This to be followed by money collections for various purposes, sometimes two or three times during the religious services.

She also found out that it was

customary to hold bingo games in the church basements, and that in some of the "capillas" (chapels) without ample basement facilities, the priest just covered the saints and held dances at which "refreshments" were sold. They even had the additional convenience that these dances were never bothered by the police on superficial excuses, as were the socials held to raise the rent in the small halls of the Workers Alliance. Dancing in the church was unbelievable to her until she saw it with her own eyes.

HER thinking on this subject and the subtle changes that were taking place in her could be seen in her treatment of Father Pedro, a tall young priest who used to come to visit her when she was sick or when she took one of her long "vacations" from going to church on Sundays.

During the first year with us, Carmencita got up as soon as the Father came in and she would not sit until he did, a mark of high deference and respect among the Puerto Ricans. But after she had observed the bingo games and dances in the church, she remained seated when the priest came to visit her. She told the young priest in the most forceful and direct manner what she thought of these goings-on.

When she first came from Puerto Rico she would look cross at me when Sunday came and I chose to remain at home reading the papers. Later she did not wonder any more how a fellow like me "who did not drink, smoke or swear" could stay away from church. She even began to stay home herself, giving the excuse of her rheumatism.

Finally she developed the theory that since "Dios esta en todas partes" (God is everywhere), she might as well remain at home or go and visit a sick friend or do some other humanitarian act.

Though she remained deeply religious, or more exactly, religiously dedicated to do good and to "ayudar al caido" (help the downtrodden), she rarely went to church in her later years. We could say that for the last years of her life she translated her Catholic tenets into terms of practice and tangible love and help for her fellow human beings.

THE book *The Soviet Power,* by the Dean of Canterbury, was published in English. We thought it would be a great idea to issue several thousand copies in Spanish. I was given the honor of publishing it in our language. This required long hours of work, far into the night.

Many a night Carmencita double-checked the galleys for me, while I read the English original, before turning it over to the final proofreader.

To Carmencita the reading of *The Soviet Power* in galley form was a revelation. I remember how she used to read and reread the galleys of the chapter on Soviet women. At first she used to tell me she was rereading that chapter because she did not want any misspelled words to appear in

the final copy. But in one of her unguarded moments, after once again reading the chapter on women, she placed the galleys face down on the table and exlaimed, almost inaudibly, "Unbelievable!"

It was a great emotional experience for all of us when the first half-dozen copies were delivered from the binders. Carmencita pressed a book to her breast and smiled. A long, significant smile.

Then I knew that at last we were beginning to understand each other.

We never failed to tell her of the new editions of "our" book that were being issued all over Latin America. *The Soviet Power* was being serialized in dailies, weeklies, and printed by the thousands in inexpensive editions throughout the Spanish-speaking world. We told Carmencita of these and all other editions in almost every known language. She rejoiced in her nice quiet way. When we talked of more thousands of copies being printed in far off corners of the earth, she used to say as if she were meditating aloud, "It seems the world is moving."

AS THE Hitler hordes marched deeper and deeper inside the Soviet Union, Carmencita got very impatient about the news of the day. I noticed that she kept on praying late into the night when the Nazis reached the outskirts of Moscow. Sometimes when I came home from meetings and assignments in the early hours of the morning, I would find her still praying. I noticed that every once in a while she would push a pin into a small cushion while she continued praying.

"What do you do that for?" I once inquired mildly.

"I do not want to lose count," she replied. "This prayer, in order to be effective, has got to be said eleven thousand times. It is called 'La Oracion de las Once Mil Virgenes' (The Prayer of the Eleven Thousand Virgins).

"I started it a few months ago," she went on, "and I hope to finish it during the next few days."

"And what are you asking now with this long prayer?" I said.

"I am asking the Lord that nothing will ever happen to Stalin," she answered simply and modestly.

Carmencita, I reflected, has travelled quite a bit since that day she came into our home from Puerto Rico.

RiGhT FaCe

Heads I Win, Tails You Lose

"In a casual description of the Board of Estimate, City Council President Rudolph Halley said: 'We sit there like a bunch of boobs trying to pass on bills because the proper facts are not presented.' Mr. Halley said that when a decision on a cloudy issue had to be made a coin was sometimes tossed. Often, he added, he had leaned over to the Mayor at a Board session, handed him a coin and said, 'Here, toss mine.' "—*Report of a speech at Freedom House in New York.*

Un-American Word Dept.

"Communists have so perverted such fine words as 'democracy,' 'peace,' 'freedom,' 'youth,' and 'mother' that any organization using these words in a slogan today should be suspect until you know who is behind it."—From a booklet issued by the Western Electric Corporation.

Happy Holiday

"Leopoldville, seat of this Belgian colony, is alive and happy.... Here, in what is frankly a colonial world, there is no trace of the sharpest of all frictions between black and white—the friction of political rights—because here nobody votes, and that goes for whites, and everyone simply looks to Brussels for political guidance. A permanent holiday from the highest responsibilities. . . ."—*William S. White reporting from the Belgian Congo to the New York* Times.

The Meanies!

"PARIS—*Eric Johnston, spokesman for the Hollywood movie industry, said today that 'France is the most restricted film market outside of the Iron Curtain countries.' In addition to limiting American movies to* 121 *a year, Mr. Johnston said, France requires every movie house to show French films five weeks out of every thirteen."* —An Associated Press dispatch.

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

The Relation of ART to REALITY

By G. NEDOSHIVIN

IF THE basic problem which divides philosophers into two camps is the problem of the relation of thought to being, the basic problem of esthetics as a science may be defined as the relation of art to reality. The solution of all other problems of esthetics depends in the last analysis upon the manner in which this problem is resolved.

Art is a form of social consciousness. J. V. Stalin has said, ". . . the material life of society is an objective reality existing independently of the will of men, while the spiritual life of society is a reflection of this objective reality, a reflection of being." (*History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.*) Thus art is one of the forms through which the human mind reflects social being.

At all stages of the development of mankind, from the beginnings of the primitive communal system to our own time, art has always been one of the forms in which man has apprehended reality, or, to use Marx's expression, the artistic-practical mode of apprehending the world. Even the primitive cliff drawings of animals represent early man's attempts to express his idea of the world, to reproduce objects observed in real life.

The entire history of the multiform world of art, from century to century, gives us a picture of how objective reality has been reflected in the mind of man and then recorded and fixed in artistic images. True, this reflection did not always, by any means, approximate reality as closely as it might. Medieval art created symbolical pictures far removed from the concrete, real appearance of things and phenomena. And yet even they represent a certain idea of the world, although in a fantastic form.

El Greco's mystical visionary art shows us phantom-like beings existing somewhere in a kind of detached, imaginary void. But concrete analysis discovers to us the earthly foundations of even this art, which stands so far from realism. This distorted ". . . consciousness must be explained . . . from the contradictions of material life. . . ."[1]

Basic to art as one of the forms of human consciousness is its ability to reflect reality objectively. "For the materialist," says Lenin, "sensations

[1] Marx—*A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,* Selected Works, Vol. I.

are images of the ultimate and sole objective reality."[2] Marxism-Leninism teaches us that objective reality is knowable, that the mind of man reflects, or, to be more exact, can reflect with greater or lesser profundity matter existing outside and independently of us.

"Human thought, then, by its nature is capable of giving, and does give, absolute truth, which is compounded of a sum total of relative truths," is how Lenin stressed this basic principle of dialectical-materialistic epistemology. This general principle is also applicable to art, which, like science, is a reflection of reality, since reality fundamentally contains nothing that does not allow of its being reflected.

Man's consciousness is empty and devoid of content until with the help of experience it comes into contact with the real world. Art loses all meaning as soon as it divorces itself from reality. Modern formalism clearly bears this out. Abstract cubistic combinations of forms do not contain a grain of the real content of objective reality; this makes them absolutely empty, meaningless, devoid of the least objective value.

In other words, reality existing outside of us is primary and its artistic reflection is secondary. "The existence of matter does not depend on sensation. Matter is primary. Sensation, thought, consciousness are the supreme product of matter organized in a particular way," wrote Lenin. Thus, artistic consciousness is a reflection of reality, and a reflection which more or less objectively reproduces the essence, content, qualities and characteristics of reality.

These general premises must be taken as our point of departure in analyzing the form of human consciousness with which we are here concerned, that is, the artistic form.

IN OUR efforts to define the essence of art, we may proceed from Belinsky's formula, first welcomed to Marxist literature by Plekhanov, that "art is . . . thinking in *images*." Accordingly, while art and science are equally forms of apprehending reality, art apprehends reality in images, whereas science apprehends it in conceptions.

Let us examine this question in greater detail.

Science, starting from observations of individual facts of life, generalizes these individual observations, arrives at general conceptions, discovers the laws governing one or another group of phenomena. Concrete descriptive material is of primary importance to all the sciences, forming the necessary basis for generalization, the basis without which a scientific conception is an empty abstraction.

Description of concrete facts alone is not the final goal of science, however. That goal is to elucidate the laws governing given phenomena.

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[2] Lenin—*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism.*

G. NEDOSHIVIN is a distinguished Soviet critic.

Knowledge of these laws then serves man as the basis of his practical activity. For example, knowledge of the laws of heredity and variability discovered and investigated by Michurin and Lysenko arms agricultural workers for their practical work of refashioning nature.

Not so in the case of art. In art, the results of cognition always express themselves not in the abstract form of conceptions, but in the concrete, perceptual form of an *image*. Whatever generalization a work of art may contain, this is always embodied in it as a single, concrete fact, phenomenon or person. In literature, concrete people act and definite events take place.

Eugene Onegin is a typical character for landlord Russia; he is the fruit of Pushkin's profound generalization of the real facts of life. But he is also a particular person with his own personal fate, who lives through events that, while—again—being typical, represent the facts of the life of Eugene Onegin alone.

Repin's *Volga Boatmen* is also the fruit of a profound knowledge of life, and entails serious generalizations. But in the painting we are shown concrete people: Kanin, Larka and the retired soldier moving along a definite part of the Volga shore at a definite time of a hot summer day.

Therefore, the generalization of reality takes different forms in science and in art. The artist does not formulate laws, although he must be able to discern typical events and characters of the real world. For the scientist, on the other hand, typical phenomena are the material on the basis of which he discovers the laws governing phenomena. The artist, thus, does not seek to *discover the laws of phenomena;* nevertheless, he depicts the phenomena which are essential from his point of view, and which do illustrate general laws.

Of course, the dividing line between scientific and artistic thinking is not absolute. In *War and Peace,* Leo Tolstoy devotes many pages to the presentation of his philosophico-historical views, which, strictly speaking, belong to the domain of science and philosophy, for all that they have been woven into the fabric of a brilliant work of art. The famous beginning of *The Communist Manifesto* presents a powerful and vivid artistic image. The scientist often resorts to artistic imagery as his method of expression; no less often does the artist indulge in purely scientific generalizations.

Art, like science, apprehends the world, generalizes particular observations, seeks the typical, the law governed. But general conceptions, ideas, are embodied in art in a concretely sensory and directly individual form. Whereas in science the particular is presented in the form of the general, in art the general appears in the form of the particular, of that which can be perceived by the sense organs, as a definite and inimitable phenomenon.

THE point of departure for all cognition of reality is sensation

"Matter," writes Lenin, "is a philosophical category designating the objective reality which is given to man by his sensations, and which is copied, photographed and reflected by our sensations, while existing independently of them." (*Materialism and Empirio-Criticism.*) Thus sensation is the source of all of man's knowledge of the world. It is also the source of our artistic cognition of the world.

It would be a mistake, however, to limit the essence of art to merely perceptual—to visual or auditory—sensation, to the primary, sensory perception of the world. The claim that the difference between art and science is that the content of the former is sensation or the world of feeling, and of the latter—ideas or the world of reason, is an utterly erroneous one.

Reactionary formalistic criticism has repeatedly revived the thesis that thought is not essential to art, that art does not need idea content. But the purpose of this teaching of the purely sensuous nature of art is quite obvious: it is meant to deprive artistic creation of cognitive value and confine it to the elementary sensory perceptions.

Formalistic art has in practice taken that very road. Even impressionism tried to negate the significance of profound ideas in art and reduce it to the mere fixation or registration of sensations.

Unquestionably, sensation is highly important, both in the creative process and in the work of art itself. Every great work of art gives us a vivid perception of the sensuous beauty of the world. The power of Velasquez and Repin derives in great measure from the fact that these brilliant masters were able to convey the remarkable impact of their sensory perception of reality.

Nevertheless, the sensuous aspect of art is only a necessary condition for the existence of the work of art; it is not the essence of that work of art. When the impressionists, for example Degas, made their sensuous perception of the world a goal in itself, they gave sensation as such a crude, animal character. Race horses and ballerinas served as equal sources of esthetic emotion. For sensuousness to play the significant role it should in art, it must rise above such primitive sensuousness. Sensuousness must become, as Marx said, human sensuousness.

Although cognition begins with contemplation of the world, it does not stop there, for, in itself, this is not as yet the objective reflection of reality. Nor should the transition from sensation to "abstract thought" be understood as a departure from the rich world of living phenomena to the sphere of dry and empty abstractions. It is a transition from the single to the particular and from the particular to the general.

THIS brings us to the elucidation of one of the central conceptions of the theory of the essence of art—the conception of the image.

To restate in other words the definition given above, it may be said

that art embodies the results of our cognition of reality, not in the form of concepts, as does science, but in the form of images, of the concrete, sensuous, inimitably individual reproduction of reality.

The image is not simply the fixation of the sensuous perception of a given phenomenon or object. When the artist observes a certain phenomenon, say, a knife lying on a table, a "picture" of the knife is fixed on the retina of his eye. This does not mean that even the most elementary artistic task can be reduced to a reproduction of that which is perceived as a result of external stimulation of the retina.

In preparing to paint a still-life, the artist places a number of objects before himself, and it may seem that his purpose is to reproduce on canvas only that which his retina fixates. But such, of course, is not the case. The Dutch painters of still-lifes, who endeavored to portray the appearance of objects with the maximum precision, at the same time presented in their paintings complete "philosophical" speculations concerning those objects. For that end to be attained, the artist must *apprehend* what he sees.

The salient feature of cognition in the form of images lies in that the results of intricate generalizations are embodied in what appear as particular objects or phenomena. But in the artistic image, provided it is the result of profound objective knowledge, in other words, provided it corresponds to the true content of the object being apprehended, everything fortuitous and untypical is swept aside, while everything characteristic and typical is accentuated.

In Yoganson's painting *Interrogation of the Communists* every detail is consistently individual, and yet each character in the canvas is more than a particular person; he is the personification of the characteristic traits of a great many people. In fact, powerful and profound generalization in a work of art is far from being antagonistic to individualization; on the contrary, it reaches its greatest height only when the individual is made as vivid and convincing as possible.

In art, the *general* becomes truly convincing when it is invested with the properties of the characteristic. A definite, typical mood is conveyed through portrayal of the emotional state of the given person.

Thus, the artistic image is to a certain extent an abstraction, divested of some of the untypical and fortuitous details which the artist finds in reality. The artist's idea as such is identical with the idea of the scientist, but receives different final expression, as it is now my purpose to show.

The idea—the result of generalization—forms the basic content of art. Truly objective knowledge of reality makes for clarity and depth of the idea. Absence of a clear goal is always the result of superficial artistic cognition of the world. The idea of the work is the artist's understanding of the essence and meaning of things. The demand for idea content that we

make of our artists is therefore, in this light, a demand for the fullest and profoundest comprehension of the essence of the real world.

In art the idea is expressed in the *form* of images. The idea of the courage and staunchness of the revolutionary is given perceptual embodiment by Repin in his picture of the dialogue between the condemned fighter against autocracy and the priest who has come to receive his last confession (Repin's *Rejection of the Confessional*). The ideas of the alliance of workers and peasants in the U.S.S.R. and the Soviet people's progress to a new future have been embodied by sculptor Mukhina in the image of *The Worker and the Collective-Farm Woman,* striding forward in powerful and surging rhythm.

A WORD about the problem of so-called "tendentiousness" is in place here. As you know, Engels repeatedly criticized "tendentiousness" in art, particularly as it manifested itself in the socialist novel of the end of the century. He wrote Margaret Harkness:

"I am far from finding fault with your not having written a purely socialist story, a Tendenzroman, as we Germans call it, to glorify the social and political views of the author. That is not at all what I mean. The more the author's views are concealed, the better for the work of art."[3]

However, it does not follow from this that the founders of Marxism were opposed to tendentiousness in art in general. Such a view would be most untrue. Marx, and especially Engels, on many occasions emphasized the militant tendentiousness of one artist or another. As if he had a premonition that he might be misinterpreted, Engels wrote:

"I am not at all an opponent of tendentious poetry as such. The father of tragedy, Aeschylus, and the father of comedy, Aristophanes, were both decidedly tendentious poets, just as were Dante and Cervantes; and the main merit of Schiller's *Craft and Love* is that it is the first German political propaganda drama. The modern Russians and Norwegians, who are writing splendid novels, are all tendentious."

Marx admired the indomitable militant spirit of Dante's poetry. It goes without saying that the founders of Marxism could not have regarded an artist's avowed struggle for his ideals as a fault. To think otherwise is to understand nothing of the *revolutionary* import of their teaching. Propaganda of definite ideas and their courageous defense were always considered by Marx and Engels, as later by Lenin and Stalin to be the highest merit of a work of art.

In their famous dispute with Lassalle, Marx and Engels, contrasting Shakespeare to Schiller, pronounced themselves in favor of the former. Marx wrote Lassalle that he considered the latter's *"Schillerism,* making individuals the mere mouthpieces of the spirit of the times" his main fault. Engels voiced the demand that ". . . the realistic should not be overlooked

[3] See Marx and Engels, *Literature and Art* (Selections from their Writings), International Publishers, N. Y.

because of the intellectual elements, Shakespeare should not be forgotten for Schiller. . . ." In other words, Marx and Engels held that the idea does not always receive an adequate image form of expression in the works of Schiller.

While criticizing "tendentiousness," Marx and Engels by no means identified it with partisanship, and it need hardly be emphasized that they were not advocating non-partisan objectivism in art. When Marx objected to the abstractness of Lassalle's characters, he wrote that ". . . I do not find any characteristic traits in your characters"; Engels reproached Minna Kautsky because ". . . in Arnold (one of the characters of her novel—*G. N.*) personality is entirely dissolved in principle."

Marx and Engels thus maintained that in art the general and essential must take the form of the particular. They were opposed to the idea, the "tendency," existing divorced from the image, that is, as an addendum to it.

One can put this even more definitely—they were therefore defending the *tendentiousness of the artistic image* itself, demanding that it contain a clear-cut and lucidly expressed idea.

It follows from this that it is wrong to look upon the artistic image simply as a mirror of reality, or, to be more exact, *simply* as its passive reflection. To reduce the artistic image to mere reproduction of that which is, is to forget the most important feature of the image form of cognition of the world—generalization, which presupposes discovery of the laws of development and consequently includes the element of judgment concerning the object depicted . . . is to forget that the idea is the kernel of every true work of art.

Engels protested specifically against those instances in which the image is not the organic expression of the idea, that is, when it is not in itself "tendentious" and the idea is mechanically "added on" in the form of an outer tendency.

CONTINUING our analysis of the structure of the artistic image as one of the forms through which reality is reflected, we come now to another important aspect of the question.

Creating his artistic image on the basis of his observations and study of the material, which he has pondered and re-lived, the artist forms in his mind what Lenin called the "reflection" or "copy" of reality. The image form of cognition of the world demonstrates to us with great clarity, and what might be called elementary sensibility, the approximate correspondence which exists between the particular thing as the object of cognition and its subjective reflection in the human mind.

But so long as the image exists only in the artist's mind, it is not complete as yet and art has not been created. Art begins when the work of art is created. The artistic image must be given substantial embodiment. It must be objectivized. Varied as the forms of such embodiment ma

be, they have this in common, that in each case the image which has subjectively matured in the artist's mind is objectivized in the material form of an actual work of art.

Of course, the work of art does not in any degree cease thereby to be a phenomenon of the mind, of ideology; but it is easy to see that in order to make his image comprehensible to other people, the artist must *create* a work of art.

The creation of the work of art—the process of giving "embodiment" to the subjective image—is not unconcerned with the content of that image. The latter takes its final form only in the course of the creative process. One can hardly imagine a painter first conceiving and completely experiencing his work in his mind alone, and only then proceeding to paint his picture. The idea, the image most often receives its final shape in the actual process of work. Individual images may change, acquiring a more vivid character; the entire composition of the work may be altered. The objectivization of the image, its transformation into a work of art, is a tremendous creative process during which the subjective idea receives its final realization. The painter thinks with his brush in hand, the sculptor as he molds the clay or wax, the poet as he creates his rhythmic lines.

WE ARE now approaching the very core of our problem.

Every artist seeks to reproduce the results of his cognition of reality in a specific, concretely sensuous—in other words—image form. He must create the illusion of life, of reality, and present it as our sense organs perceive it.

In this regard there are definite bounds between the different forms of art. It is not absolutely necessary for the novelist dealing with a definite event to know how the people who participated in it were dressed, yet this is absolutely necessary to the painter; in most cases it is not important for the sculptor to know the color of his subject's necktie, or his manner of speaking.

These bounds are not absolute, and in most cases they can be crossed, but in art it is always necessary to take into consideration, to recreate, to reproduce a host of circumstances which the scientist can easily ignore. Inasmuch as the image realized in a work of art reproduces not the original sensation (which registers everything that presents itself to the senses more or less equally without distinguishing between the essential and the fortuitous), the artist has to *create* for his generalization the likeness of the individual in all its palpable and living truth.

In the novel, an entire system of events is built up from the fates of many people, each of whom has a definite character, recreated by the intelligence, imagination and feelings of the artist, since in most cases these characters never had actual existence. Even in his time Aristotle saw the difference between science and art in the fact that the former speaks of

AUGUST BONDI, JEWISH ABOLITIONIST, WELCOMES FUGITIVE SLAVES: *by Stanley Levine*

that which *is*, while the latter deals with *what might have been* in all probability and likelihood.

Actually, the historian who does not know what Kutuzov was thinking about on the day of the battle of Borodino either remains silent on that score or puts forward what he considers a likely hypothesis. Ignorance of some individual fact is not an obstacle to his process of generalization. The artist cannot follow his example. He is obliged to *create* what is lacking in his factual knowledge, but in such a way, naturally, that it corresponds to "the probability and likelihood." That is exactly what Leo Tolstoy did in his *War and Peace*.

When the scientist reaches the results of his cognition, he deals with general premises, deductions, conceptions which are not given him through the senses in real life. The investigator may support a definite psychological law with a number of examples (taken directly from reality), but this law itself will be expressed in general terms. The artist depicts this same psychological law in the concrete image of a man acting in accordance with it.

The scientist registers what exists in reality and draws his conclusions from that; the artist must impart life to his characters. Paraphrasing Heine, one might say that the scientist extracts its spirit from the body of a phenomenon, whereas the artist has to endow this spirit with a body. He has, however illusorily, to "create" his hero; he is the maker. The scientist does not create his world, even in an imaginary way; he presents a reflection of the real world in conceptions. The world created by the artist will, of course, also be a reflection of reality, but it must take the form of a concretely existing world of people, phenomena and events.

As it is one of the forms by which we come to know reality, the work of art acts directly on reality through the minds of the people who partake of art.

THUS we have come to the second important aspect of the essence of art, which we may call the problem of the idea-content of art.

This problem is the basic, cardinal problem of Soviet esthetics. Socialist idea-content is the life-giving foundation of our art. The forcefulness and significance of every major work of Soviet artistic culture is measured by the degree to which it is permeated with the ideas of Communism, the ideas of the Bolshevik Party. The more deeply and richly it gives expression to its idea content, the more significant it is.

The great Lenin was the author of the principle that art must be partisan; this was one of the elements of his theory of the partisanship of ideology generally in antagonistic class societies. Mercilessly exposing reactionaries of all hues and shades, Lenin showed that their assertions that art is independent of life screened their defense of the interests of the exploiting classes. Lenin developed this brilliant principle of the partisanship of art in struggle against the theory

of "art for art's sake," against all spokesmen of reaction.

At the height of the revolution of 1905, Lenin wrote his famous article *Party Organization and Party Literature,* in which he comprehensively set forth the principle of the Party spirit of art. Counterposing the false "freedom" of bourgeois art to the tasks of the art which links its destinies with the emancipation movement of the working class, he said in this article:

> "In contrast to bourgeois customs, in contrast to the bourgeois privately-owned and commercialized press, in contrast to bourgeois literary careerism and individualism, 'aristocratic anarchism' and rapacity —the Socialist proletariat must advance the principle of *Party literature,* must develop this principle and put it into effect as fully and completely as possible."

This principle of the Party spirit of art constitutes the foundation of the theory of the development of art under the conditions of the socialist revolutionary movement. It brings to light the fact that under the conditions of class struggle ideology takes the form of partisanship.

Lenin defined the essence of the principle that art must have a significant idea content and be inseparably linked with the practical tasks of the revolutionary transformation of life as follows: "literary activity must become *part* of the general proletarian cause. . . ." Lenin demanded that art be openly linked with the people and their vital practical interests.

Like all ideology, art is a weapon of social struggle, of the class struggle. Therefore, it is always a direct or indirect, conscious or unconscious expression of the practical interests of definite social groups. In other words, art always expresses in its images the ideas, aspirations, thoughts and feelings of one class or another, of one social group or another.

Does this premise contradict the thesis presented above that art is the reflection of reality, that it is a form of cognition of the world?

Of course not.

"The superstructure," Stalin teaches us, "is a product of the foundation, but this does not mean that it merely reflects the foundation, that it is passive, neutral, indifferent to the fate of its foundation, to the fate of classes, to the character of the system. On the contrary, having come into being, it becomes an immense active force, actively assisting its foundation to take shape and consolidate itself, and doing everything it can to help the new system finish off and eliminate the old foundation and the old classes." (*Concerning Marxism in Linguistics.*)

EXAMINATION of the thesis that art must have idea content leads us to the underlying principles of Lenin's theory of reflection. Lenin pointed out that mind not only reflects the world, but also creates it. In order to influence reality in practice, man must know what the results of one or another action of his will be. Reflecting reality, the mind also creates for itself the possibility of

intervening in reality practically. On becoming cognizant of the properties of fire, primitive man also apprehends the possibility of its practical application; on ascertaining the properties of stone, he realizes that it is possible to change its forms in order to adapt it to his own needs.

The activity of man is purposeful activity: before beginning some practical action, man builds up in his mind a plan by which he is guided. Marx writes in *Capital*:

> "A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality. At the end of every labor-process, we get a result that already existed in the imagination of the laborer at its commencement. He not only effects a change of form in the material on which he works, but he also realizes a purpose of his own that gives the law to his modus operandi, and to which he must subordinate his will."

This is the sense in which the human mind is capable of creating reality. It goes without saying that it must not be understood idealistically. "Ideals in general *cannot do anything,*" wrote Marx and Engels in *The Holy Family*. "To carry out ideas, there must be people who have to exert practical force." But man's labor and practical activities to change the world presuppose an "ideal" goal which is the result of knowledge of reality previously gained in practice, in experience.

In labor, man comes to know the objective qualities of things and phenomena and learns to utilize them for his own purposes. The stone that the hand of man has reworked does not disappear but acquires new qualities, or more precisely, discloses its objective properties. The wider, richer, more intricate is his activity, the more profoundly does the mind of man penetrate the essence of things, the more fully does man apprehend the world; and the fuller this cognition is, the greater are the opportunities that open up for man's creative activity.

Transformation of the world by man depends upon the knowledge of the laws of reality which he has gained in the course of his practical activities. From this standpoint, we may say that man's creative activities do not imply the destruction of objectively existing things, but rather the contrary process, the process of bringing them to life.

The precious stone which is dull and formless in its natural state, springs to beauty after being worked upon by the skilful hand of the cutter. Metallic ores, friable, crumbling, useless when discovered, are turned into a durable, pliable, valuable substance in the furnace, of which even the primitive blacksmith (whom folklore for reasons we can well understand called a "magician") could fashion many wonderful things.

Knowledge of the properties of objects, of the laws governing nature, and the ability to utilize these laws, to call to life the "dormant" forces of reality and "tame" them—in short,

the ability to control the object of his activity and dominate over it—such is the foundation on which man's creative activity in all spheres operates.

In brief, man's mind is a powerful weapon in his struggle with his environment, a means of creating reality, for it plans, directs, corrects and perfects his practical activities.

WE HAVE been borrowing examples from the early history of mankind. But in all epochs, the mind exercises an active force, influencing and transforming reality through practical activities. This is being brought out with the greatest clarity in our own times, in the socialist society, where development is governed not by the spontaneous laws of social evolution, as under capitalism, but by a plan, by intelligent direction based on the most advanced scientific theory, on Marxism-Leninism. Direction of this social development is effected by the Bolshevik Party, whose theory and practice embody the highest wisdom of the epoch, combining profound study of the laws of history with their daring and revolutionary application.

The claim that the mind can change the world does not in the least imply, as we have already noted, any degree of compromise with idealistic conceptions; it in no way assumes that mind is primary and being secondary; it merely notes the dialectical interaction between the two. Indeed, the consistent development of materialistic principles demands the acceptance of this most important thesis, in which is revealed the distinction between dialectical materialism and all the pre-Marxian forms of materialism.

In his *Theses on Feuerbach,* Marx wrote: "The chief defect of all hitherto existing materialism—that of Feuerbach included—is that the thing (Gegenstand), reality, sensuousness, is conceived only in the form of the object (Objekt) or of contemplation (Anschauung) but not as human sensuous activity, practice, not subjectively."

Philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, while the point is to change it, stressed Marx. Mind does not of itself create reality by virtue of the immanent laws of thinking; it is part of that reality, destroying some things and creating others. This is effected with the help of material practice, of the real transformation of the world through labor, through creation.

Struggle with the environment in order to adapt it to our own needs and remove whatever obstructs our progress, the evocation of the new and fruitful—such is the revolutionary spirit of human practice guided by human consciousness.

This eternal struggle, this incessant and insatiable creation, this tireless forward movement in the creative activity going on about us spells the highest meaning and the highest poetry of human life. To transform this subjective striving into a real objectively existing fact, to win the struggle in order to draw new

strength from victory for new plans and new accomplishments which make man *Man*—such is the highest beauty of human life.

Social consciousness has always served human society as a weapon of struggle with nature, as a weapon of social struggle, forming the basis of practice and acting as its conscious expression. And art has been just such a weapon from the very first days of its existence, remaining such to the present.

In the hands of the progressive classes it has been a powerful means of revolutionizing consciousness; reactionary classes have exploited and are still exploiting it as a brake on the development of society. In the latter case, art loses its true content and significance, and generally ceases to be art, as we see with modern reactionary imperialistic "artistic creation." Art has reached its true heights only when it has performed its function as a force revolutionizing society.

Today, in the epoch when the world is split into two camps, the burden of the struggle lies in the clash between these camps. Art inevitably expresses primarily the interests of this struggle. In Soviet art it does so openly and directly, for it serves the interests of progress, of the people, of the highest and finest ideals; in reactionary-bourgeois "art," it does so in a cowardly fashion, hiding its real physiognomy behind the mask of "pure art," because it serves the forces of obscurantism and social evil.

ART plays an active transforming role in society.

Stalin's brilliant definition of the artist as an engineer of the human soul reveals the innermost kernel of this aspect of the problem. The artist apprehends reality and embodies the result of his cognition in the work of art. This work, acting on the mind, the feelings and will of people, shapes their consciousness and, what is more, does so in a definite direction. The very selection of certain facts of life and their interpretation is important as implanting in man's mind a definite view of the world, and this "view of the world" in the final analysis determines his activity.

Art educates the people, spreading and popularizing definite ideas, definite views on life, adopting the position of a definite social group and in this way serving as a weapon in the struggle of the classes, that is, becoming (consciously or unconsciously) idea art, its aim being in one way or another either to change reality in a definite direction, or, on the contrary, to prevent such change.

What does it mean when we say art educates the people? This means that it arms them ideologically for activity of a definite content and character. But, as appears from the above, for his practical activity man must be armed with a true knowledge of reality, otherwise his activity is doomed in the last analysis to failure.

For this reason realistic art possesses the most revolutionary power. This fact was emphasized in his day by Engels when he stressed the re-

volutionizing significance of truthful portrayal of life in realistic literature. ". . . a socialist-biased novel," he wrote to Minna Kautsky, "fully achieves its purpose, in my view, if by conscientiously describing the mutual relations, breaking down conventional illusions about them, it shatters the optimism of the bourgeois world, instills doubt as to the eternal character of the existing order. . . ."

This explains the power of such works, for example, as Tolstoy's *Resurrection,* Balzac's *Gobseck,* Repin's *The Volga Boatmen* or Daumier's *The Laundresses.* That is why realistic art possesses the most progressive, advanced content. The converse also holds . . . the higher and more noble the educational aims of art, the nearer it is, in the last analysis, to an objective, realistic method of apprehending reality.

If art lacks the power of realistic generalization, the work of art will be powerless to implant anything in the soul of man, to stimulate his thoughts and feelings, to direct his activity. Herein lies the fundamental difference between naturalism and realism, that naturalism is incapable of generalizations that stimulate and advance man, that it lacks the revolutionary power of realism; this explains why naturalism is such an integral product of the bourgeois consciousness.

Genuine realistic art, on the other hand, always possesses this potent educational force which revolutionizes consciousness.

This factor, which may be called the factor of artistic idealization, is of considerable importance in explaining the transforming role of art. We are not speaking of esthetic norms and canons, such as the norms and canons of classicism, which contradict reality. We are speaking of the reciprocal relation between the real and the ideal, both of these elements being inherent in man's endlessly rich perceptual powers.

All great art contains that which endows the image with particular importance, as the model to be achieved. Such superb images are found in the art of the Renaissance, of Velásquez and Rembrandt, of Kiprensky and Alexander Ivanov, Repin and Surikov.

COGNITION invariably includes the element of "idealization," the essence, so to say, of the subjective idea which goes further than existant practice and anticipates it, so as then to be embodied in it. Consciousness as an active force which revolutionizes reality must include this factor of the vision, the dream. "We should dream!" exclaims Lenin. This is not the passive dream which carries us away from life and reality; it is the revolutionary dream which strives to be embodied in real life and can be so embodied. Lenin passionately insisted on this factor, against the Mensheviks' servility to "facts."

Much the same is to be observed in art. By making the image significant, stressing the vital elements

life in it, the artist, as it were, transforms reality, directly or indirectly presenting definite images to be emulated. Often in the works of the great realist, people live more intensively, act with more concentrated energy, show a strength of character such as is not to be met with at all times in life. This by no means entails heroic gestures, striking poses and so on. Outwardly everything may be very modest and restrained, very "ordinary," as in Repin's *Unexpected.* But innerly the higher meaning of what is taking place is sure to be revealed, and it is from that that art derives its educational significance.

Generalizing and accenting what is most essential, what is most progressive, the realistic artist formulates his understanding of the beautiful. When the masters of the Renaissance, in their struggle against the medieval idea of sin, extolled earthly man, his earthly aspirations and earthly pleasures, they presented this in their works as the beautiful content of life. The most important task of Soviet artists is to present the best, progressive features of our people as the beautiful.

In art, the factor of artistic idealization represents the dream, which sometimes and somewhat anticipates the usual phenomena of life and, discerning what is basic and most important in it, calls to progress, stimulating people to transform life, to struggle, to make a reality out of the perspicacious insight of the great realist artist.

In the final analysis, art as creation lies precisely in showing life as it should be according to our ideas (to paraphrase Chernyshevsky) or, conversely, in condemning with the utmost passion what contradicts these ideas.

The life-giving power of the idea is the basis of the flowering of the art of socialist realism, which is advancing on the foundation of growing ties between art and the struggle the Soviet people are waging under the guidance of the Bolshevik Party, led in its historical creative work by the genius of Lenin and the genius of Stalin, to build Communism.

Two Poems

O GREAT GREEN WALL A-GROWING

We bow to your beauty
honor to you, new men of China
placing trees where the field guns were
planting peace at all borders

With letters of love
blossoms we throw on strong sea currents
to make slow landings on your long shore
and, borne of the air, flowers
to garland your rising sons

Steel we know you would meet with steel
but love will you greet
with quiet growing
O great green wall of China!

Kao Kang has said it
Mao has led it
Si-lan, with your body you sang it:
lay hands on New China
then will the sword dance—
but speak love and the fists
will unfold in greeting

Listen: a lone sentry lifts his long rifle
startled by a sound—
it is green breaking ground
and he smiles at ease knowing
only the stars one night will surround
our planet of peace

Take root, tap water, drink sun and air
and turn away the wrath of the winds
to gentle breathing with your soft answer

Break old gods of flood, of the dry season
and in the easy climb of years
make timber for the bell-toned blade
the small ones in pacific slumber now
will wake to wield and to withhold
remembering heroes who made you
your parti-colored shade
your delicate and natural screen

O great green wall
uprising for Man's holy mansion
we will our offspring and their sweet ascension.

—Lee Jenson

GOOD MORNING

(*Written by the exiled Greek poet to his little daughter whom he has not seen for over four years.*)

Good morning . . .
Good morning lovely rose, somewhere richly fragrant.
Good morning water somewhere flowing.
Good morning woods somewhere singing.
Good morning . . . good morning.
Locusts, butterflies, birds, good morning.
One who prays at dawn sends you his tears
from a deserted isle—a cradle of the sea.
A tiny mouth is hungering to find you,
two tiny hands hanging limp,
a small embrace without her doll.
O lovely rose and woods and water,
let your fairy-tale unfold.
Unfold it yonder, let it murmur around her cage.
She will understand and laugh,
she will clap her tiny hands and laugh,
for she is not yet five.

—Menelaos Loudemis

European Portraits of American Life

LITERATURE of the NEW RESISTANCE

By JOSEPH STAROBIN

Paris

ONE of the most significant European realities today is the growth of a literature about American life, written by men who are forming the New Resistance. In this new literature, it is not just a matter of characters who encounter America in a casual way, as in Pierre Gamarra's *The Lilacs of St. Lazare,* whose heroes (all living in one apartment house) discover a solidarity with each other in the peace demonstrations against General Eisenhower on the Champs Elysees.

More interesting, at least for us, are those writers and books which try to deal with Americans as such. There is a clear need in Europe to understand what makes these Americans tick. The deep rage against the U.S. threat to social advance and peace is finding its literary expression.

In one sense, Konstantin Simonov pioneered this effort to portray the American in his own milieu with his famous play, *The Russian Question.* Last year, all Poland turned out for the first play by Adam Tarn, a secretary of the Union of Polish Writers, and only recently an exile in our own land.

Tarn's play describes an American jury, wrestling with the verdict in the case of a young man accused of murdering a woman in Central Park. One group of jurors, led by a school teacher and a taxi driver, are convinced of the man's innocence. But an ambitious district attorney is counting on a guilty decision to advance his career. In the heated jury debates it is hinted that the murdered woman may have been a "Communist spy"; even the accused, some say, had Communist connections. As the terror of McCarthyism grips the jury, profound issues of American life today are vividly revealed.

And now Ilya Ehrenburg, in his new novel which is again set in France—*The Edge of the Razor*—makes one of his heroes an American savant who has to flee his native land in order to work, and yet does not escape the ravages on his happiness and his career even in Paris.

In France, two works appeared last autumn—a novel called *Jimmy* by Pierre Courtade, and a play entitled

Colonel Foster Will Plead Guilty by Roger Vailland. And in discussing these two I'd like to include the widely discussed "Letter to Mr. Smith" by Charles Favrel in last November's Catholic review, *Esprit.*

Courtade, the foreign editor of *L'Humanité,* is the author of two previous literary works: *Elsineur,* which novelized Hamlet and sought to show the rise of fascism in a Shakespearian framework, and *Les Circonstances,* short stories of the Resistance. Vailland is an essayist and novelist of recognized talent, who has more and more been approaching Marxism. Favrel is a leading journalist of the conservative *Le Monde,* well-known for his coverage of Korea and Indo-China.

Thus we have a spectrum of observers, all of whom have been impelled in this past year to examine America.

FAVREL'S is a political essay, addressed to the "average American" Mr. Smith of Kansas, whose farm is bisected by the 38th parallel. Favrel's impassioned indictment of American crimes in Korea is important for the evidence which it gives on the origins of the war and the barbarity with which it is being fought. It is also important for the way it debunks the myth that "Soviet aggression" is menacing western Europe.

But the essay in the Catholic magazine goes further than that, when Favrel cries out: "I wanted you to understand, Mr. Smith, why we consider you the Number One danger. Danger Number Two, coming from the East, seems very remote, much easier to prevent. Europe entertains no fears from that side. . . ." He writes:

> "You will never know, I hope, what it means to be invaded, deported, sent to death-camps, to have your cities wiped out and your fields burned out by enemy raids. However, if you had seen your people's flesh and mind aching with such pains, you might feel closer to people's suffering; you might understand our feelings better and our reluctance. You might become a little more human. That, indeed, you Americans are not human is the sad truth which I, an average Frenchman, feel bound to confess.
>
> "You are not human, and you proved it to a stunned and infuriated world by the ruthless, vicious, deliberately aloof way you are waging the Korean war in which you are entangled."

And earlier, he cries out: "You frighten us, Mr. Smith. Just like a spendthrift and wayward son who is stupid enough to waste the best things that Nature gave him. . . ."

Here we have an estimate of the American from the upper-class European. Favrel expresses the interesting fact that the European upper-classes are really more cynical about America, and see it in a less differentiated way than the European Left.

IN VAILLAND'S play, these same themes are given dramatic expression, but with a subtle depth and an excruciating sharpness. The setting is Korea. Colonel Harry Foster commands the headquarters in the town of Kaidon; the problem in this day's operations is to give protection to a

group of 3,000 American soldiers retreating across a river. The quarters are lodged in the home of a wealthy Korean grain speculator, whose daughter Lya (educated in American universities) has just asked for, and gotten, the job as Foster's secretary.

"We are not war criminals," Colonel Foster sternly tells the Korean speculator. No, Foster is a man of the old school, of democratic instincts, mind you. "When I entered West Point," he says, "I never thought this would oblige me some day to shoot peasants." He likes to believe that the American Army is not here to save the speculator's grain, but to give Korea freedom from "Communist aggression." He rebukes his soldiers, Jimmy and Joe, for their excessive drinking and rousting-about; the Korean women must be left alone, says Foster.

And he is enchanted by the opportunity to discuss Communism with the worker-prisoner, Masan. For has not the Colonel himself read Karl Marx? "It's the first time in my life that I see a Communist," he muses. When Masan refuses to speak unless unchained, the Colonel orders the chains removed. But the conversation comes to nothing when Masan proudly refuses to talk until all invaders have left his country's soil.

Colonel Foster discourses with the beautiful Lya. He is not, he makes clear, one of these young pigs like the soldier, Jimmy, who has tried to "make" Lya. Foster has a Van Gogh in his parlor, he loves Picasso, and he wants so much to get away from it all, to live perhaps like the Mandarins in ancient Peking, with a mistress to serve, to love. . . .

These garrulous proposals are interrupted by the news that the guerrillas have intercepted the plans for the rescue mission. Not only have 3,000 Americans been cut off but the outpost in Kaidon is endangered. "After all," says Lya as the news crashes down on Foster, "I prefer Jimmy. He finds words more simple to say to a girl at a stop-over place that he wants so much to spend the night with her."

There is a crisis in the headquarters. There must be a spy in the place. The soldiers begin suspecting and accusing each other; the Korean speculator who has managed to escape with the help of his top-brass American friends comes to get his daughter, but she refuses to join him. In the critical situation, Colonel Foster issues orders to his subordinates to shoot up the water-works, to destroy the ancient Confucian temple, and, of course, to murder the prisoner Masan.

There is a scene of great power in which Lya reveals that she has been the "spy." This daughter of the upper classes muses with the son of the working class on what a wonderful country Korea will be after it has been freed, how it will be rebuilt with the help of all the world's workers, how the girls will dance in the streets amid the flowers.

In the final scene, the partisans arrive, not in time to save Masan, in time, however, to capture Colo

Foster. As he comes into the spotlight, his crimes are recited from the wings, and when he is asked how he will plead in face of his dossier, he replies with only these words: "Colonel Foster will plead guilty."

Unlike Favrel's Mr. Smith, for whom the correspondent of *Le Monde* really has no feeling at all, Vailland has tried to understand the American officer and the American GI; he has drawn on his own experience with them in crossing the Rhine, in the capture of the Remagen bridge six years ago. Yet his indictment is all the more majestic for its severity. The American can only plead guilty.

There is a double meaning, however, if I understand this author. To make no defense after having ravaged another people's land is the abyss of cynicism; at the same time, it is an approach to expiation. There is a depth of barbarism in Foster's last hollow words. Here was a man who said he knew better. And what did he do with his knowledge? Nothing. Yet the beginning of regeneration also lies in admitting this guilt, the guilt of that ultimate betrayal, not only of the rest of humanity but of the best in America itself.

AND this brings us to Courtade's *Jimmy*. For Courtade, the Communist, has gone deeper than Favrel or even Vailland. Indeed his book is one of the most ambitious essays on the contemporary American that have yet been published in Europe. What Courtade has seen most clearly is the contradiction, the conflict of forces, *within* American life.

Jimmy Reeds is a Southerner who has married Lucy Goldman of New York. He is a junior executive in a life insurance company, the father of two kids, the owner (when the mortgage has been paid) of a home in Queens. And he is the candidate for the manager of the Albany branch of the firm, which his chief, Mr. White —the Legionnaire who hates Jews, Negroes and Communists—has just offered him.

But Jimmy is uncertain that he wants to live just for the obituaries in the Albany *Times* thirty years hence. In fact, Jimmy is not sure of anything. He is not sure of his love for Lucy, not sure of his way of life. His indecision is indicated partly by a ludicrous promenade with his secretary to a Harlem night-club, where he leaves her in a drunken daze when he finds her racism intolerable.

Then comes Peekskill: Lucy has been persuaded by friends to attend a concert the following Sunday. It has been a long time since they've seen Paul Robeson (not since *Emperor Jones*) and a trip into the late summer countryside is such an excellent idea.

Courtade, the journalist, is in constant struggle throughout the book with Courtade, the novelist—but his perception of what happened at Peekskill, how it happened and what it meant is certainly a masterpiece for a man who visited our country so briefly.

The portrait of our own great Robeson is majestic. The pigmy dis-

trict attorney, the intrigues with Governor Dewey, the way the fascists mobilized (incidentally with Mr. White, the insurance executive, playing a big role) and the fleeting figures of the Communist organizer whom Courtade surmises better than he knows, as well as the solid trade-union leader, Ward—all this is done in such a way as to give the French audience a much better view of our life than they have had until now.

Jimmy and his wife are caught up in the melee, but as bystanders. They are shocked, but they are fearful for their own security. This titanic event and its challenge coincides with Jimmy's reluctance to become a junior executive in Albany. And so this war veteran who never got beyond Illinois gets up and leaves for Paris. To find himself, he flees his family and his land.

THIS flight from himself is an opportunity for Courtade to weave the tapestry of present-day France, and it is done with the sure strokes of a Frenchman who knows and loves his own land and wants to confront the American with the torment that the new occupation signifies.

There are remarkable satires here: the American geo-politician (Burnham) tries to sell the rather dim-witted U.S. ambassador on the virtues of buying up French intellectuals for a subtle, "leftist" propaganda campaign. At another point, an anti-Nazi demonstration is proceeding outside the leading paper, *Le Figaro,* which has been publishing the memoirs of the Hitler thug, Skorzeny, while indoors this same geo-politician is selling *Le Figaro's* chief editorialist on the necessity of rearming Germany.

There are portraits of the French workingman on his bicycle on a Sunday morning, the same tow-headed youngster who later will bother Jimmy in the cafe for his signature on the Stockholm Appeal. What is most skillfully dissected is the racism in America—this is one thing which all Europe feels and will not tolerate. And it is present, this anger, in Favrel and Vailland, too.

At Peekskill, Jimmy was shocked by the anti-Semitism of the fascists and yet at moments he feels the same perverse medievalism rising in him toward the Communist organizer, toward his own wife; it takes an entire book and many trying experiences before this cancer has been removed.

The crisis comes about when Jimmy has gone, out of curiosity, to the anti-Eisenhower demonstration. Observing the brutality of the police he sees the same youngster whom he refused the signature on the Stockholm Appeal being tackled by a cop and arrested, as are thousands of others. The lad has to find a witness who will testify that it was the cop who attacked; otherwise, jail.

And Jimmy, who feared to sign the appeal, who wanted to get away from Peekskill, and now finds himself one of Europe's innumerable Peekskills, decides that he must so testify. Even if, as it turns out, somebody in the F.B.I. offices of the Marsha

Plan soon interrogates him and threatens him with the loss of the GI Bill of Rights subsidy unless he turns informer on other Americans in Paris.

Thus, whereas he could not face the challenge to his integrity at home, he faces it in Paris. In this, Courtade is expressing a certain paternalism which some people of Europe's Left feel toward American progressives. And now Jimmy knows he must return home. He knows, as the author says, that "one cannot be a man of no country, a man of thirty-six loves."

He must go because he has come to understand that France is not the St. Germain des Pres, where tired businessmen from Kansas sit in existentialist cafes listening to bad versions of songs from Kansas. He must go because he feels the roots of his own homeland pulling.

The friends who were at Peekskill are now in difficulties. One of them has been framed-up in an "atomic spy scare." The commission to investigate the Peekskill affair is of course investigating the progressives. Jimmy really has little to tell his wife about Paris, for the problems do not lie there at all. "Sooner or later, the world has to concern itself with us," he says one night. "There is no choice . . . even if misfortune hits us, I don't want it to be said that I did nothing to prevent it. Obviously, I can't do very much by myself . . . alone. . . ."

And so it is to others that Jimmy turns, the men and women who invited him to listen to songs one Sunday afternoon. Courtade cannot resist bringing his hero before the investigating commission, and of course, the district attorney has been informed of his stay in Paris. And when, in the fantastic farce of it all, they ask him whether it was not he who brought secret messages from Duclos and Togliatti, he tells them to go to hell.

It is clear that in Courtade's Jimmy, we have a hero different from Vailland's Colonel Foster. Nor can one address the same letter to Jimmy Reeds as to Mr. Smith of Kansas. It would not be true to say that Courtade is overly kind to Jimmy and it is the measure of how much Courtade has in common with Vailland and Favrel that his hero only finds himself by experiencing the anguish of France.

But Colonel Foster was damned and doomed by his own hypocrisy; there is only the glimmering of redemption for him, or rather for his kind. In Jimmy there is hope—a hope that is properly placed like all other aspects of the novel in the social reality of American contradictions and the American struggle.

There is hope if the America of Jimmy Reeds will find itself in time, will find itself in its own native roots, will give battle for its own sake as well as for that of all humanity; there is hope if Americans will "go home" before it is too late.

THIS literary trend in France has received fresh impetus with the appearance of two volumes of a trilogy by Andre Stil, *Le Premier Choc*

and *Le Coup de Canon.* Stil has just won the Stalin Prize for his novel about the dock workers who refused to unload American munitions. It was the first time a writer of a capitalist country had won such a high honor, and an impressive mass meeting at the Vel d'Hiver was held last month in tribute to the author.

Andre Stil at 31 is the author of four books, executive editor of *L'Humanite,* member of the Communist Central Committee. Born in the minefields of northern France, he got his diploma in philosophy, became professor at Quesnoy after several years as a teacher of miners' children. Stil is not an intellectual who has to "go out to the workers." He is one of them.

The first book of his new trilogy appears at first as series of vignettes. The seaport in Charentes had felt the last war heavily: the Americans had bombed indiscriminately — workers' homes, civilian factories, Nazi submarine bases. A docker like Guitton, who had adopted a war orphan, finds no place to live other than an abandoned block-house; at least this keeps out the rain. Unemployment has quieted the docks, but the workers feel the eyes of France are on them; they must keep munitions from landing; the U.S. Army is taking over airfields, evicting people from their hovels, even menacing the farmers' crops.

The characters emerge in a series of incidents of daily life. Old Leon, whose wife is an invalid, justifies his existence by helping kids across the highway where the military trucks roll. Paulette, busy with the baby, awaits her husband, Henri, on his bicycle . . . he's the Communist section organizer, out all hours of the night.

In one stormy scene, the members of the Party branch debate the meaning of the Political Committee's latest statement; Robert, the trade union leader, is bluntly criticized for failing to see that resisting the American occupation is the way to fight against the rearmament of western Germany; he can't take it, and stalks out without saying as much as goodby.

And there is Mme. Duquesne, 60 years now, her husband a de Gaullist and former officer of the merchant marine. For her the war days center on the Nazi officer who occupied a room in the house; she remembers to this day the horrible photos she found in his room of atrocities on the Soviet front. Imagine her emotion then when an American captain arrives one day and asks the same room for his chauffeur . . . who turns out to be the Nazi, now working on the U.S. submarine base. Mme. Duquesne insists on testifying before a court to the point of defying her husband, facing the divorce.

The first volume concludes as the committee for the defense of people's homes has been formed; the townspeople threatened with eviction take over an unused building which the Germans left intact and which the Americans have not yet occupied. Here they defend their Christmas together from the cops.

IN *Le Coup de Canon,* the action becomes swifter. The problem is to move the whole town in such a way as to prevent unloading those munitions when the next ship arrives. The conflict mounts. The committee has united people who rarely talked to each other before. The railway workers debate how to help, which is not easy since these men do not see their immediate interests affected. The local doctor, who has his reservations about Communist tactics in the peace movement, joins in the action nonetheless.

Meanwhile, the police commissioner is not inactive. He is out to frame Henri, with the help of a certain renegade, one of those who has been putting up provocative slogans that suggest Americans ought to be picked off one by one, by terror; the plot is exposed, for the walls have ears in these small French villages.

And there is Gisele, the daughter of the local butcher who has grown rich serving the Germans and was now catering to the Americans; Gisele was a girlhood friend of Henri's wife, Paulette, but she didn't marry a docker. She lets herself be taken up in a plane by the American pilots, and then a wild ride in a launch out on the bay. Stricken with shame before the night is over, she bars her door to her irate father as the clock strikes five. What can Paulette say when Gisele spills the whole story out? It is so typical, thinks Paulette to herself, that Gisele is mortified that she has been violated by a man . . . she doesn't see him as an American, thinks Paulette.

In the final scenes, it turns out that a cannon has been hidden way down in the hold of a ship of grain. When it comes up on the crane, somehow the grip slips and the cannon hurtles into the harbor, striking the bodies of old Andreani and his wife, who had disappeared mysteriously two days before. They could not face the battle, these two gentle old folk, with only their wedding rings left to their name. . . .

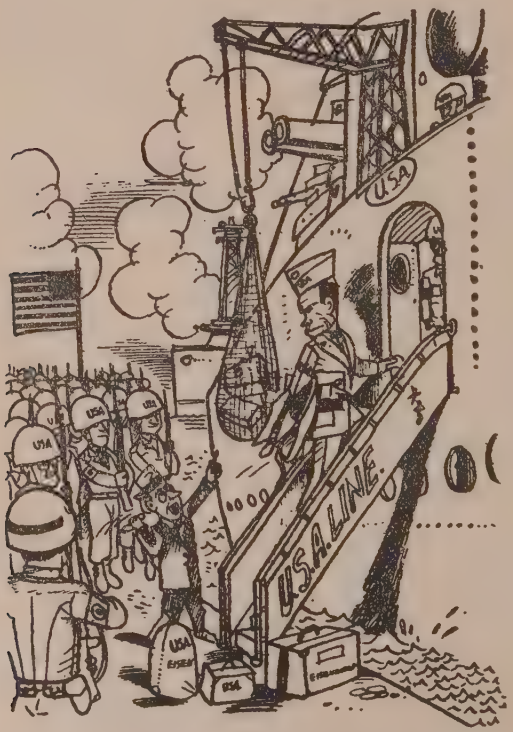
Two features distinguish Stil's approach. Undoubtedly, they indicate the main direction of the literature of the French Left. These are books about current, urgent realities, contemporary issues which agitate the nation, indeed life and death issues. Secondly, Stil has peopled his books with a new type of hero, the workingman and workingwoman out of the details of whose daily lives emerges a struggle of political meaning, of decisive national destiny. These are not marginal observers, studying their own torments as others do the battling. Neither is this a delicate tapestry of an entire society, with the old order in full decay and the new merely suggested.

There is nothing mechanical in Stil's method. His characters are not in the least self-consciously assembled, for the author knows them intimately —the dock-workers, the doctor on their side, the retired pensioners, the neighboring farmers, and their antagonists—the police, the butcher, the new collaborators. His heroes, as Aragon points out in *Les Lettres Fran-*

caises, are men of whom one does not ask what is the color of their eyes. Stil himself has said that he has deliberately tried to portray his Party, the Communist Party, in its life and work; he has shown how the general line of the Party looks when it is translated into the concrete activity of the ordinary folk who compose it.

Stil hardly portrays the American soldier or officer against whose activity this whole town in Charentes has been mobilized; he does not have the same concern as Pierre Courtade in *Jimmy* for what makes the American tick.

But his very significant books unquestionably are part of the growing literature of France which deals in one way or another with the problem of the United States. It further highlights a phenomenon of the times—the fact that in France one writer after another is dealing with themes which reflect the struggle against U.S. imperialism, the great and central preoccupation of the French people today.



EUROPEAN: "Hey, Ike, how about taking these guys with you?" (From *Vie Nuove,* Rome.)

books in review

A-Bomb, Inc.

ATOMIC IMPERIALISM, by James S. Allen. *International Publishers.* $2.90.

ON THE day following the Nevada army maneuvers, Marquis Childs wrote in his syndicated column that these field trials with atomic weapons meant "the almost inevitable abandonment of any hope of international control to prevent atomic warfare."

One is not required to share Childs' hopelessness in order to recognize the extreme danger which confronts our world. In *Atomic Imperialism* James S. Allen has produced one of the most important books of our times because he has gotten down to the fundamentals of that danger and has given his readers an understanding which will aid them immeasurably in fighting it.

For many it will no doubt come as a surprise that the largest industry in the United States is the atomic industry and that it is engaged almost exclusively in the manufacture of weapons.

That industry has been trustified and monopolized even more than the steel and chemical industries, and by the same peak groups of finance capital. The Morgan-du Pont interests dominate the atomic industry from the mining of uranium (especially in Canada and Africa) through the production of plutonium, the supplying of electronics and other essential equipment, the development of atomic power for airplanes and submarines, the building of new projects, and down to the actual manufacture of the weapons.

But the "struggle of the titans," as Allen calls it, between the Morgan-du Pont group and the Mellon-Rockefeller group has continued in the atomic industry as on other battle grounds of the American economy. Union Carbide and Carbon Corporation, which "holds the most important secondary position in the atomic enterprise" and which operates Oak Ridge, is not visibly under Mellon-Rockefeller control, Allen says, but its history and associations suggest that it is mainly through this chemical trust that the group is making a stand for a share in the rich prizes of the atomic industry.

Allen has traced the interweaving interests of the top monopoly groups through the maze of the highly complicated corporate structure of American finance and industry.

He shows how these financial groups have dominated every commission or committee set up by the

government for the purpose of directing the U.S. atomic enterprise. Their officers have figured largely in every agency dealing with international control. In the very first committee named by the then Secretary of State James Byrnes to draw up proposals for international control, there were Vannevar Bush and James Conant of M.I.T. and Harvard respectively, both institutions traditionally dominated by Morgan; Maj. Gen. Leslie Grove who has consistently protected du Pont interests; John J. McCloy, an attorney for Chase National Bank (Rockefeller), and Dean Acheson, who between Cabinet jobs has served as attorney for the du Ponts. And Byrnes himself turned up, after leaving the government, as a director of the Newmont Mining Co., the Morgan-controlled corporation with interests in uranium and other metals in Africa.

The technical advisory committee which drew up what we now know as the "Baruch plan" for international control of atomic energy includes a vice president of General Electric (Morgan), president of New York Bell (Morgan) and a vice president of Monsanto Chemicals (Morgan).

The Atomic Energy Commission which theoretically owns all fissionable material and facilities for production has included at one time or other such men as Sumner T. Pike who participated with Morgan interests in the development of Rhodesian copper mines; the retired admiral, Lewis L. Strauss, formerly of Kuhn, Loeb and now an officer of Rockefeller Brothers; T. Keith Glennan of Western Electric and General Aniline; and Thomas E. Murray of Union Carbide.

The A.E.C. works with 17 permanent advisory committees and four boards, not to mention additional temporary advisory groups. Their composition is similar, with Morgan-du Pont men in a majority and with Mellon-Rockefeller substantially represented.

For the corporations which these men represent, the atomic industry has been highly profitable, although so much secrecy surrounds its operation that any accurate estimate is im-

possible. Without spending a penny for research or construction, these corporations possess the exclusive right to exploit an industry in which the U.S. government had sunk more than five billion dollars up to the end of 1950 and on which vast new billions are in the process of being spent.

Allen has devoted considerable attention to this so-called partnership of government and industry, a partnership in which one partner puts up all the money, while not only the right to present and future profits but the power to make policy resides in the other. It is "the most thoroughgoing fusion of the state into a corporate structure," Allen says, and has an especially evil connotation for American political life.

"The nuclear weapons state-monopoly cartel is the furthest organic advance of the fascist tendency, the closest approach in the United States to the corporate state of fascism," he warns.

Allen's study of the control exercised in Canada by the peak monopoly groups of the United States is a valuable contribution to anyone concerned with understanding American imperialism. Specifically, this chapter reveals the pattern of conquest by U.S. finance capital of the uranium resources of our northern neighbor.

Allen has also followed the "uranium rush" to the Belgian Congo and the African mining empire where the Morgan group, International Nickel, Imperial Chemicals, Ltd., and smaller Belgian interests are all involved in the ruthless exploitation of the natural and human resources of the continent.

The Canadian enterprise is "practically a branch of the American atomic industry," Allen points out, but the British might prove a serious contender if Vickers and Imperial Chemicals were to take full advantage of their share in the trusts controlling African and Canadian pitchblende. Accordingly, the U.S. atomic industry decided to take these potential rivals into the world cartel the better to control them.

The Atomic Energy Commission of the U.S., the A.E.C. of the United Nations, and the Anglo-Canadian-American "combined policy committee" have all proved useful agencies in establishing and operating the cartel. The Baruch plan proposed by the U.S. and subserviently defended by Britain, Canada and France is one which not only retains U.S. dominance in the field, but, if accepted by the U.S.S.R., would give to the cartel ownership of the Soviet atomic industry.

However, it is obvious that the U.S. government, acting for the U.S. atomic trust, has never sincerely sought a genuine agreement for international control and will not do so unless popular pressure for such an agreement becomes irresistible.

In this volume, which further enhances Allen's already high standing as a Marxist scholar, there is a wealth of meaningful information which will feed that pressure.

ROB F. HALL

The Deep Pit

INVISIBLE MAN, by Ralph Ellison. *Random House.* $3.50.

"WHENCE all this passion toward conformity?" asks Ralph Ellison at the end of his novel, *Invisible Man.* He should know, because his whole book conforms exactly to the formula for literary success in today's market. Despite the murkiness of his *avant-garde* symbolism, the pattern is clear and may be charted as precisely as a publisher's quarterly sales report.

Chapter 1: A 12-page scene of *sadism* (a command performance of 10 Negro youths savagely beating each other for the Bourbons' reward of scattered coins), *sex* (a dance by a naked whore with a "small American flag tattooed upon her belly"), and *shock* (literally applied to the performers by an electrically charged rug).

Chapter 2: Featuring a 14-page scene in which a poor Negro farmer tells a white millionaire in great detail how he committed incest with his daughter; and the millionaire, who burns to do the same to his own daughter, rewards the narrator with a hundred-dollar bill.

And so on, to the central design of American Century literature—anti-Communism.

Author Ellison will reap more than scattered change or a crumpled bill for *his* performance. *Invisible Man* is already visible on the best-seller lists. The quivering excitement of the commercial reviewers matches that of the panting millionaire.

Strangely, there is much truth in their shouts of acclaim: "It is a sensational and feverishly emotional book. It will shock and sicken some readers . . . the hero is a symbol of doubt, perplexity, betrayal and defeat . . . tough, brutal and [again] sensational," says Orville Prescott in the New York *Times* about "the most impressive work of fiction by an American Negro which I have ever read."

"Here," writes Daniel James in the war-mongering *New Leader,* "the author establishes, in new terms, the commonness of every human's fate: nothingness."

"Authentic air of unreality," exults the reviewer in the Sunday *Times,* about the part dealing with the "Brotherhood" (Ellison's euphemism for the Communist Party).

The Sunday New York *Herald Tribune* man knows what he likes too:

> "For a grand finale there's the hot, dry August night of the big riot when the hungry looted, when Ras the destroyer—of white appeasers—alone was out for blood; when Sybil, the chestnut-haired nymphomaniac, was raped by Santa Claus and when the Invisible Man, still clutching his briefcase, fell through an open grill into a coal cellar—and stayed there to write a book. . . ."

The *Saturday Review of Literature* is also impressed with this work that is as "'unreal' as a surrealist painting . . . It is unlikely that *Invisible Man* is intended to be a realistic novel

although the detail is as real as the peeling paint on an old house."

At this point a reviewer in *M&M* might very well say "Amen!" and leave the unpleasant subject. But the commercial claque does more than extol Ellison's "surrealist horror," "well-ordered dissonance," "Dostoyevskianism," and thrill to "Harlem's slough of despond." We see that the same *Saturday Review* critic who is happily certain that this is not a realistic novel insists that ". . . *here, for the first time, is the whole truth about the Negro in America.*"

The mind reels before a statement such as that, compounded as it is of an ignorance so stupendous that it can only be matched by its arrogance.

Ostensibly set in Negro life, the novel is profoundly anti-Negro and it is this quality which moved several of the chauvinist critics to say that its author has "transcended race" and "writes as well as a white man"—the highest accolade they can bestow!

Here, as in James Jones' whine *From Here to Eternity,* is the one-man-against-the-world theme, a theme which cannot tell the "whole truth" or any part of the truth about the Negro people in America or about any other people anywhere.

Ellison's narrator-hero is a shadowy concept, lacking even the identity of a name, who tells of his Odyssey through a Negro college in the South, then to Harlem where he is hired by the Communists as their mass leader ("How would you like to be the new Booker T. Washington?") for $300 cash advance and the munificent,

depression-period pay of $60 per week; he is quickly disillusioned and, battered in body and soul, finds refuge down a man-hole from whence to write a book about it all.

It would not be in order here to speak of responsibility, for the writer has anticipated and answered that objection in the prologue: "I can hear you say, 'What a horrible, irresponsible bastard!' And you're right. I leap to agree with you. I am one of the most irresponsible beings that ever lived."

Nor will I here attempt to refute the particular variations of the anti-Communist lie that Ellison tells. Some idea of his writing on this subject can be gained when we see even the *New Leader,* second to none in Red-baiting viciousness, complaining that "Ellison's Communists are hard to believe, they are so unrelievedly humorless, cynical and degenerate (including the black Communists)." And the *Nation's* reviewer—who says he is "ready to believe" the worst about "Harlem Stalinists"—grumbles: "The trouble with such caricature is that it undermines the intention behind it." (Nevertheless he finds the book "exalted.")

And just as the author makes his irresponsibility undebatable, so does he help establish the fact that his work is alien to the Negro people and has its source in upper-class corruption. According to an interview in the *Saturday Review* it was "T. S. Eliot's 'The Wasteland' which . . . changed the direction of his life: 'Eliot said something to my sensibilities that I couldn't find in Negro poets who wrote of experiences I myself had gone through.'"

Indeed, there is nothing in common between the wailing eunuchs of decay on the one hand, and the passionate strength and beauty of Negro poetry on the other. One can only speculate as to what it was in Ellison's "sensibilities" that drew him to Eliot and away from his people—and away from all people. But the result of the infection is a tragedy: the first born of a talented young Negro writer enters the world with no other life than its maggots.

Ellison is also a disciple of the Richard Wright-Chester Himes school and shares with these writers their bitter alienation from the Negro people, their hatred and contempt of the Negro working masses, the renegades' malice—and their servility to the masters. Cut off from the surging mainstream of Negro life and struggle and creativity, they stagnate in Paris, wander on lonely crusades or spit out at the world from a hole in the ground.

But against them and their inspirers is the growing renaissance of the Negro people's culture—writers, playwrights, poets, singers, musicians, dancers, artists and actors, who are linked with their people, who live with their people and who sing with the Negro poet of long ago:

"Lord, I don't want to be like Jud
In my heart. . . ."

LLOYD L. BROWN