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HOLLYWOOD: Illusion and Reality

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

WHITTAKER CHAMBERS' HOLY WAR ON REASON

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The Novels of Jorge Amado

GEORGE LOHR

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THE HOLY WAR ON REASON

What Whittaker Chambers Means to America

By MILTON HOWARD

IT IS written that the Roman rulers felt that a great crisis had come to their ordered, stable, free world. The crisis was expressed in the teachings of a carpenter, Jesus, who taught that the slaves and the masters were brothers, that "the first shall be the last and the last shall be the first." It is also written that the rulers needed "witnesses" to help them crucify the teacher of this idea. For if the slave believes that happiness is possible, what becomes of a society based on slavery? The slaves are then a danger to the society which imposes misery upon them.

The chronicle then relates that "the chief priests and all the council sought witnesses against Him; but their witnesses agreed not together. At last came two, saying we heard this fellow say I am able to destroy God. . . ."

That did it. It was this classic testimony of such "witnesses" that clinched the first of the vast frame-ups with which entrenched, privileged power has always sought to stay the rising class and the advance of society.

Whittaker Chambers* is but the latest of this class of "witnesses"—better known in the language of the modern labor movement as stool-pigeons or informers—who are arising in such numbers to "confess," to point the finger, to peddle their various brands of disillusion which have at least one thing in common, that they instantly result in a great increase in the bank account, in social acceptability, in a sense of safety, of solidarity with the wielders of the police club, the proprietors of the jails, and the general masters of privilege.

What is it at which they point their fingers? At the 100-year-old social movement of the working class and its parties basing themselves on Marxian Socialism.

Of Judas, the forerunner of all these "witnesses," it was written that "when he saw that Jesus was condemned, he repented, and brought the thirty pieces of silver to the priests saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed innocent blood. Then

* *Witness*, by Whittaker Chambers. Random House.

Judas cast down the pieces of silver in the temple and went and hanged himself."

This naive act of self-destruction was part of the innocence of the time. The "witnesses" who serve the possessors of today's great concentrations of the nation's productive machinery live in a climate more degenerate. They produce their profitable confessions. A new one appears as the infection of the old wears off. The pressing realities of contemporary social life—jobs, insecurity, war, lynching, white supremacy, fear of the morrow—break through the myths of the "witnesses." A Krivitsky is followed by a Valtin, who is followed by a Budenz, and a Philbrick, and now a Chambers. There will be more. The fabrication is not difficult, and the need will increase.

It is only necessary to be able to mention some names of real people, real places, known many years ago or even quite recently. From the starting point of this fraudulent verisimilitude, it is not difficult then to launch into the limitless cesspools of the standard revelations, the semi-literate fantasies taken from the most ancient models of the anti-democratic, anti-labor frame-up.

From the dawn of Marxism in the 1840's and '50s up to the present moment the pattern hardly varies. In the Cologne Trial of the 1850's, it was a Marxist "conspiracy" to betray G many and France; in the Drey Case, it was forged documents unmask the conspiracy of the Mas and the Jews against France. In d ens of classic labor cases, the hi "witness" always stepped forth w the horrendous details of the cons acy.

The latest headlines from Fra bring us the ominous and hackne repetition of the Reichstag Fire mula, the well-tried version of "plan to seize power" and to "b up the naval station." Did not saintly Attorney General A. Mitc Palmer providentially find real bo under his porch at the moment w the American working people v getting restive under the harsh of the open shop? Was not L himself "a German spy" in all bellowing uproar that followed overthrow of Czarism? Is there even a leering literary production sale in the "free" portion of known as *I Was the Secretary Mao Tse-tung,* being the lowd on how this "agent of Mosc tricked the Chinese peasantry deprivation of their landlords?

THERE are a number of cu things about these new manu turers, these industrialists of working class confessions. The is the enforced uniformity as re their political ideas; no matter w or how they have lived, no m what they are confessing, they orably finish by acceptance of specific political-military-econ

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program of the Pentagon, the White House, the F.B.I., and the proponents of that depravity known as "the inevitable war with Russia."

There is not a solitary refugee from the alleged immorality of the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact whose voice can be heard today summoning humanity to challenge the military alliance between the Washington leadership and the Nazi general staff swiftly arising at Bonn. And the Washington-Bonn alliance is not what the German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact was, an agreement between two hostile, antipodal powers not to attack each other, but an intimate military collaboration based on avowedly common aims, common ideals, common historic perspectives.

But the second peculiarity of these "witnesses" is that though they claim to be describing the same movement, their accounts are often in direct contradiction with each other. Thus, while it was left to the ineffable Budenz to discover that the explicit language of the Communist movement is "Aesopian" (different from what it says, with a hidden meaning known only to "the initiates"), his competitor in confession, Whittaker Chambers, in his entire 800 pages does not mention even once this allegedly cardinal characteristic of the Marxist working-class movement. What was omnipresent to Budenz was invisible to Chambers.

Similarly, while it is the stock-in-trade of the Koestler school of confession merchants that the Marxists are fully as porcine in their egotistical greediness as any respectable dealer in commodities or any Congressional leader, it is Chambers' formula that the Marxists are matchless idealists seeking no gain but ready to immolate themselves in suicidal raptures for their detestable vision. Where one stoolie feels it necessary to startle his greedy public with the spectre of a rival greed, the other considers it more strategic to frighten it with the looming peril of an army of devilish saints.

But in all this, whatever the form demanded by the moment, whether it be the revelations of the Marxist "nationalization of women" in the 1920's, or the contrary "Victorianization of women" in the time of the new anti-abortion laws, the central tactic is that made notorious by Hitler, Goebbels, Rosenberg and Julius Streicher as the Big Lie.

We saw the Big Lie embodied in the Protocols of Zion forgeries. We see it in the scabrous literature so dear to the professional Catholic-baiters wherein the prurient bigot, seeking sexual titillation in the guise of revelations about the Pope, reads avidly of the "nuns and priests burying their babies in the church-yards," thinking—in fact, hoping—that he is here getting a truthful history of Catholicism and its meaning.

I remember the literature of the Nazis which we found when our forces crossed the Rhine. A Nazi intellectual showed these books to me with great pride, and with complete confidence that they would convince me as they had tricked the majority of

the German middle-class intellectuals into accepting the gas chambers.

The Nazi books on the "Jewish-Communist conspiracy" were appalling in their "scholarship," in their apparently overwhelming factualness. This craftily concocted system of "fact" was a hideous, enormous fraud from the first word to the last. But it was repeated with such relentless insistence, and backed with such power to punish disbelief or challenge, that it drugged a nation into catastrophe and the horrors of Dachau and Buchenwald even as the worshippers of the atom-bomb seek to drug us into massacres of unimaginable savagery.

WHITTAKER CHAMBERS' book, like all the other books of its type from Koestler onward, has the same social function as this Big Lie literature, and it has in general the same technique. Chambers' asset in this market is his brief and weird connection with the working-class movement in the United States; he can manipulate his account of this connection, using names and incidents of the late '20s and early '30s as stage properties, as his literary strategy for peddling the standard anti-working class, anti-socialist frauds along with the more contemporary deceptions of the "inevitable war" conspirators.

"The instruments of darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles,
To betray us in deepest consequence."

That was how Banquo put it to Mac beth when he spoke of the witche That is how the "witnesses" wh seek to prepare national disaster fo America operate. That is how Cham bers operates to disorganize and b tray America's intelligence and blin it to its real danger.

An alert reviewer, Dr. Charles Ala Wright, professor of law at the Un versity of Minnesota, has notee "After reading the book, I am co vinced that Mr. Chambers is the a thor of one of the longest works fiction of the year. . . . On close e amination it becomes obvious that t author is not a detached teller of tru but rather a pitchman seeking to p across a bill of goods." (*Saturd Review,* May 24.)

This is a sign that the intelligen of the country is far from buri under the clubs of the thought-co trol terrorism. But not even Prof sor Wright can know what a frenzi falsification it is.

LET US see how Chambers op ates.

He first deceives the public abo the general nature of Marxian Soc ism, its real origins, its real ai its real practices, and its real re tionship to democracy, religion a freedom. This he shares in comm with all the classic "witnesses," fr the police spies of Bismarck and Czar down to the latest F.B.I. w ness at Foley Square. We may t it as a political axiom that these formers and confessors never tell truth about what they learned,

and experienced in the working-class movement.

Their trick is to announce membership in, or transient contact with this indestructible social movement. This is to establish the air of authenticity for whatever fantasy Bismarck, Thiers, the Czar, Hitler, or the F.B.I. might desire them to state, depending on the specific need of reaction at any given historic stage.

Thus, Chambers is extremely careful never to tell his public the real content of the literature of Marxism which he claims to have read. By common agreement, these "witnesses" never elaborate the elementary bases of Marxian Socialism—that capitalism developed out of feudalism; that private ownership of the factories (not homes or personal property) has inevitably produced monopoly control of the national economic machinery; that the majority are compelled, as economic dependents, to sell their labor-power, whose use by the owners of industry produces profit (surplus value); that this system creates the social lunacy of "over-production," cyclical crises, wars (two world wars in a generation), chronic insecurity for the majority, poverty amid enormous capacity for abundance, etc.

Nor will one find in Chambers any hint that Marxism perceives that production has become socialized, that is, completely interdependent, while possession of the socially-created product remains private, leading to the historic necessity for the social ownership of the factories, with the working class leading the nation.

There is not the slightest hint that Chambers ever knew that which Marxism teaches as its most elemental idea—that Marxism is not an "ideal" invented by "thinkers" or "revolutionaries" to be foisted upon the world for its own salvation, but that Marxism is the outcome of real conditions, real development, of historically objective transformations going on under our own eyes. Like all the "witnesses" seeking to disfigure the real content of this ever-expanding social force, he tries futilely to sunder the ideas of Marxism from the basis which gave it birth, from the rise of modern capitalism, the factory system and the industrial revolution, from the rise of the working class and owning capitalist class and the social consequences of commodity production.

If these "witnesses" can separate Marxian Socialism from its historic-social basis, they can then hope to depict it as an evil philosophic construction, as a "conspiracy." They can then try to hide the fact that the conspiracy is in the social system itself, with its fatal inner antagonisms and contradictions growing out of the conflict between social production and private appropriation.

Finally, it is the over-riding rule for all these "witnesses" that they must try to blind the intelligence from perceiving that the social existence of modern capitalist nations is determined by the rise of tremendous monopolies, by the final concentration of power in the hands of an imperialist oligarchy dominating fi-

nance, production, the political life and form of the state, and driving hard to establish colonial hinterlands of semi-slave labor and looted raw materials.

In ignoring all this, Chambers does not vary in any way from the monotonous pattern of all anti-working class, anti-socialist informers—past, present and future. His allegedly unique experience has led him, as was to be expected, to the commonplaces of the police-thinker as a class.

But it was not to dish up a repetition of the standard anti-socialist works that Chambers wrote his frenzied book.

Chambers' book is a political weapon especially prepared at this juncture in the evolution of extreme political reaction, in the push for some form of fascist degradation in the United States. As such, it has programmatic features which strive to go beyond the formulas of the stereotyped anti-Communist pornography up to now.

WE CAN now close in on the central ideas of this new attack on the security, sanity and soul of America.

Chambers is selling us the following ideas:

That there is a new treason abroad in the world. This he calls "the treason of ideas." He writes: "In the 20th century, treason became a vocation whose modern form was specifically the treason of ideas."

That this "treason of ideas" is embodied most concentratedly in Marxian Socialism, or Communism. Th Communism spread itself throu the activity of "spies," operating us ally for the Soviet government.

The great sin of this Communis is that it teaches mankind that re son, science, human planning c control nature, direct history, a create happiness, but "without Goo

That the Rooseveltian New De of the 1930's was part of the advan of the evils of Communism; that was in fact a socialist revolution itself.

That the "socialist revolution" the New Deal was organized "spies" within the government.

That the United States should nev have acted to undermine the regi of Hitler Germany; that it did so alliance with the Soviet Union cause of "spies" in the State Depa ment.

That there is freedom only wh "business" wields power without intervention of "government."

That most of the human race infected with the heresy of Comm nism, that is, the Marxian notion t man must change the world. New Deal was supported by American people because of their fection with the Communist her that man can improve the world.

That God appeared to Chamb as a Voice and told him to fi Communism.

That another world war is nec sary and inevitable in order to s God and prevent Man from thi ing that he can change the wo without God.

That the New Deal and the Communists wanted to see him dead, and that Chambers therefore had to carry a knife and hide from the Communists "who have people more or less everywhere."

That Alger Hiss caused the United States "the loss of China."

That the F.B.I. and the Un-American Committee are fighting with their backs to the wall to save America from the Communism which pervades the government, the press, the colleges, most intellectuals.

That in spreading their heresy that Man can change the world all Communists are self-sacrificing and idealistic except Stalin.

That anyone who does not believe that Whittaker Chambers is getting orders from God to fight the Communist idea that Man can change the world is a "dupe" or a "rationalist."

That God appointed Thomas Murphy to prosecute Hiss (p. 792).

That anybody who wants evidence for what Chambers says is defying God—"Those who insist plaintively on evidence against a force whose first concern is that there shall be no evidence against it must draw what inferences they please."

THE climax of these confessions, melodramas, fantasies, is the clamor for war. Chambers stands before this nation, arrogant, contemptuous of agreement or hesitation, and summons the people and the intellectuals to get ready for holy war. He calls this the century fated to experience the choice of what he calls "social wars or the wars of faith."

By the "social war" he means the tremendous peoples' anti-imperialist movements in the Asian, Middle East and African empires. He also means by it a warning against socialist transformations in the countries of Western Europe. By "wars of faith" he means a Pentagon-directed crusade of atomic violence hurled against these "social wars" by the financial-military power of the Morgan-duPont-Rockefeller billionaires.

In this swift summary of his ideas, I have not given the extraordinary intensity of his self-delusion that in his personally frenzied echo of the calmly worked out policy of the banker-generals he is a divinely appointed Leader. He refers to "my fight" to save the nation and the world during his ten years on *Time* magazine. "But this fight happens to be a necessity of the 20th century," he writes. "And I by an accident of individuality and history, and hence by my special experience, happen to be the one man who could make it."

It is worth quoting at this point the Credo which this adorer of the F.B.I. political police, this admirer of the Negro-hating anti-Semitic Rankin, is determined to impose upon American intelligence as the dividing line between friends and enemies, between patriots and "Kremlin dupes," between citizens and "spies." Here are some of his major pronouncements which the Book-of-The-Month Club owners, the top American Legion McCarthyites, and other such, are cooperating with him in

injecting into the national conscience.

"The revolutionary heart of Communism is not the theatrical appeal, 'Workers of the world, unite. You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world to gain.' It is a simple statement of Karl Marx, simplified for handy use: 'Philosophers have explained the world; it is necessary to change the world. . . .'

"It is not new. It is in fact man's second oldest faith. Its promise was whispered in the first days of the Creation under the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil: 'Ye shall be as gods.' It is the great alternative faith of mankind. It derives its force from a simple vision. . . . The Communist vision is the vision of Man without God.

"It is the vision of man's mind displacing God as the creative intelligence of the world."

He then presses near to the very heart of the "treason" of the 20th century which it is his fate, as well as the historic destiny of the Pentagon A-bomb possessors, to confront in a "war of faith." Here is the "concentrated evil of our time":

"It is the vision of man's liberated mind, by the sole force of its rational intelligence, redirecting man's destiny and reorganizing man's life and the world. . . .

"This challenges man to prove by his acts that he is the masterwork of Creation—by making thought and act one. It challenges him to prove it by using the force of his rational mind to end the bloody meaninglessness of man's history by giving it purpose and plan. It challenges him to prove it by reducing the meaningless chaos of nature, by imposing on it his rational will to order, abundance, security, peace. It is the vision of materialism."

This deadly, treasonous "visi
he trumpets in his mission as
appointed of God, "is shared by
lions who are not Communists (
are part of Communism's se
strength)."

This is the social vision crimi
carried forward by "those miscell
ous Socialists, liberals, fellow tra
ers, unclassified progressives and
of good will," whose only differe
from the Communists themselve
that they "will not take upon th
selves the penalties of the faith,"
is, they are not members of the C
munist movement as such, but me
do its work.

But in order to work for the
fillment of this "materialist visi
he tells us, you must be ready to "
upon yourself the crimes of histo
Since it is a criminal vision, it
only be achieved by criminal me
(p. 11.) The criminal means app
under various guises—as the w
ing-class movement, Marxism, rea
science, the Communist Party or
social formation engaged in any
in changing the world with the ob
of "securing abundance, secu
peace."

This provides the explanation
his estimate of the coalition s
movement known as the New D

"The simple fact is that when I
up my little sling and aimed at Com
nism, I also hit something else. W
I hit was the forces of that great soc
revolution which in the name of lib
ism, spasmodically, incompletely, s
what formlessly, but always in the
direction, has been inching its ice

over the nation for two decades. . . . This is a statement of fact that need startle no one who has voted for that revolution in whole or in part. And consciously or unconsciously, a majority of the nation has so voted for years. It was the forces of that revolution that I struck. . . ."

IT IS all so clear now. It began in the Garden of Eden with the Serpent, the first Communist. It continued down through the centuries with the rise of rationalism, science, technology, modern production. It flamed up in working-class Marxism, in the *Communist Manifesto;* then erupted against the Russian Czars in the crimes of the Bolshevik Revolution, finally to seize and corrupt the majority of the American nation who staked the socialist revolution of the New Deal. Fortunately for mankind —at least that part of it that owns factories and lives on unpaid labor or private profit—God spoke to Whittaker Chambers and if we will submit to the inevitable "war of faith" we

TEA FOR ONE: *by Forrest Wilson*

may still be saved from the curses of "abundance, security, peace."

When this hearer of Voices tries to persuade the country that he was hiding from the Communists, with a knife under his pillow, we know now what he is trying to say, because we know now his definition of a Communist. He was cowering in his darkened bedroom in fear of the human race and human normality. He was busy in his solitude hating the American people and the American nation.

> "I saw that the New Deal was only superficially a reform movement . . . the New Deal was a genuine revolution whose deepest purpose was not simply to reform within existing traditions, but a basic change in the social and above all the power relationships within the nation . . . insofar as it was successful, the power of politics had replaced the power of business. This was the basic power shift of all the revolutions of our time. This shift was the revolution."

And that is why when an F.B.I. agent came to see him, he thought that perhaps the Roosevelt New Deal had decided to rub him out since he alone knew what a socialist revolution it really was. He wasn't sure which of the two revolutionists, Stalin or Roosevelt, would "have him killed."

Then too, he might have been killed by any one of the millions of Communist Americans—the majority—who voted for the New Deal. For him, indeed, "the Communists have people more or less everywhere." By which he means, of course, that there are just people more or less everywhere.

That is his problem. He echoe the literary creed of Sartre for whor "Hell is other people." His lou salesmanship of his alleged love c God is only his way of phrasing h hatred of humanity. But a pretende love of God which is in essence hatred of humanity prepares its e ponent for limitless cruelties, com mitted with a calm sense of sanctit It is the mentality depicted with ho ror by Pascal—"Who would act th angel acts the brute."

The unruffled soul of the holy to turer is glimpsed with alarm even b one of the most ardent of the pro-w writers, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., wh writes: "Chambers hears voices; so d Joan of Arc; so did Hitler. . . . T argue in the face of experience th belief infallibly creates humility, an pragmatism creates totalitarianism to revive the logic of Torquemada (*Saturday Review,* May 24.) Th symbols are accurate; there is To quemada in Chambers' demand for new medievalism, as there is Hitl in the hatred of democracy, socalis and the vision of human happine flourishing in peace.

CHAMBERS resorts to the trick making belief in God the s preme issue dividing the world in two camps today. But here his i tellectual dishonesty becomes gro indeed. For it is a fact that the of cially enforced religious dogma fascist Spain, Portugal, and su countries does not prevent these r gimes from exercising the cruele terror against the population despi

he people's Catholic faith. On the ther hand, there are literally millions f devout Catholics, including priests nd bishops, as well as millions of hurch-goers in the Soviet Union and he Peoples' Democracies, who stand staunchly in the camp of peaceful coexistence, who bitterly oppose the militarist philosophy of the Washngton-Bonn axis.

Chambers' theology is cynicism; he mocks religious belief when he makes himself the personal errand-boy of God and makes God a member of the Un-American Committee. He merely manipulates religion as a political club when he assigns God to the Pentagon and denies Him to all opponents of A-bomb diplomacy.

One of his crudest deceptions about Marxism and the working-class parties is to pretend that these are movements which make religious belief their main target and that it is God-or-not-God which differentiates Communism from other movements. The history of Marxism, past and present, is replete with evidence to the contrary.

For Marxism, religion is "the heart of heartless conditions." Marxism does not seek the abolition of religion with which it does not agree philosophically; it abolishes the heartless conditions which compel a search for the spirituality of man outside of man. In practice, Marxism in the socialist state and peoples' democracies actually provides more genuine freedom for religious belief, as well as for non-religious belief, than prevails anywhere else.

WE ARE in a position now to appraise the full measure of this man's political fabrications, the mockery of his pretense to religious piety, the shabby sophistries of his mind, and the Tartuffian slyness of his career. For if few Americans are in a position to detect the fraud of his description of Marxism and the Communist movement, there are millions whose own experience teaches them the fraud of his description of the New Deal.

He faked the social realities of the 1930's so that he could fake the social realities of the 1950's. He does not dare in his book to explore either the depths of the social-economic crisis of the 1929-1932 years, its origin, or what it revealed about the ineradicable anarchy of an economic system controlled by a handful of gigantic industrial-financial trusts. In a book of 800 pages he gives five lines to the greatest economic reality of his entire stay in the working-class movement. To do more would have made it impossible for him to launch, along with the rest of the raging propaganda of the hour, the demonology that America's history of the past generation can be explained by "Communist spies." This is the exact replica, adapted to American conditions, of the Nazi doctrine of all modern history, that all phenomena can be explained simply with the mind-killing incantation, "the Jews are behind it all."

It is a fact that the "spy theory of history" was trotted out even in

the days of the big bank crashes, when it was bruited about that "spies" had started runs on the banks. We see public opinion being enormously deceived by the "spy" theory of atomic power. But it is not spies that determine history, although all modern states from the days of the first American republic employ intelligence services.

The Chambers fraud, as it is the fraud of all the anti-Communist hysteria, is to pretend that it is "espionage" for an American to advocate social reform, or Marxian socialism, or that belief in the necessity of the people's ownership of the factories is synonymous with, or inclines the believer to, espionage. Are all members of the Democratic and Republican parties "spies" against the Soviet Union?—to cite the crazy logic of the spy-mongers in reverse.

In his desire to convince the nation that the policies of the government are influenced by "spies," not by class interests, class relations, and class aims, he cites the nefarious work of "Kremlin agents" in getting the government to offer the Morgenthau Plan for the de-industrialization of post-war Germany. But it was the Soviet Union which was the foremost opponent of this plan. The "spy" theory for government policy is shattered by a fact.

In the 1930's, when the American working class demanded social insurance as protection from the storms of the crisis, the reactionaries easily proved that this demand was the result of "foreign agents," and it was not hard to find a docume written by Lenin in 1912 urgi workers everywhere under capitali to struggle for pensions, unempl ment insurance, free medical care, Did this make Roosevelt a spy Lenin? Or was it the social for in the nation which compelled Roo velt as a knowing representative his class to see the necessity for gra ing social concessions to a restl population to save the system a whole?

Thus, the Chambers theory American life is a profound ficti in the same sense his account of Communism is a profound fiction literary construction not written w candor or genuine change of vi but rather in the commercial "ge of the sincere" (True Confessio where the surface "fact" conceals abyss of falsehood.

THE progressives, or rather the progressives, have been jol by the vision which Chambers dra for them of the path they must ta For in "denouncing Communis what is expected of them is that t shall denounce not only Marxi which most of them never adhere or understood; but that they shall nounce their heritage of New D reform, their heritage of democra humanism, their belief in the effic of reason to master nature and crease human happiness thereby.

He has suddenly revealed to th that the "free world" preparation war demands an ideological adj ment in which they must surren

o the worship of irrationalism, "blood nd earth" mythologies, and contempt or progress and history. Chambers lemands of the working class that it lrop the "materialism" of its struggle or social advance, since it is mate-ialism to seek either a lowering of he rate of profit of "business" or a hange of ownership of the factories rom their present absentee owners. He also demands as a corollary that American intelligence shall drop its ecularism and submit to the advent of a new mysticism.

Thus, Chambers' attack on Marx-ism turns out to be an attack not only on working-class ideas but on the revolutionary rationalism of the 18th century which accompanied the overthrow of the feudal monarchical system. He is not only attacking Moscow and Stalin; he is going after George Washington, Jefferson, and the French Revolution, too. He echoes the ravening cry of Goebbels in Paris of 1944: "We must wipe out 1789!"

In fact, there is a remarkable resemblance between the thought content of Chambers' book and Rosenberg's *The Myth of the Twentieth Century,* bible of the Nazi intellectuals. Where Rosenberg described the striving for human happiness and brotherhood through the application of science as "the myth" of the 20th century, Chambers does the same but calls it the "treason" of the 20th century.

In importing this deeply irrational creed into the United States, Chambers is deliberately responding to the immediate political needs of the most extreme, fascist-minded monopolist groups in the country. For these financial oligarchs the time has come when that side of the American heritage which is marked by democratic humanism in literature and political ideas must be replaced with a new thought current—contempt for history, for progress, for reason, and for the notion of the goodness of people.

To destroy human beings by the millions, as is the plan of the atomic warriors, it is necessary to breed a contempt for humanity as a value in itself. Chambers is providing a platform for intellectual war on Paine, Thoreau, Douglass, Whitman, Mark Twain, Dreiser.

WE CAN understand then why Chambers reserves some of his bitterest venom for what he calls "the Popular Front mind" in the United States. For what is this Popular Front but a broad coalition united in defense not of Marxian socialism but of the common heritage of rational thought, science, democratic liberty, scientific enlightenment, religious freedom, and human culture?

In his tirade, Chambers reveals with special sharpness the formidable role of Marxism as the ally and co-defender of all traditional values based on science, humanism and freedom. He is showing, in his hatred, that our national fate is today inextricably involved in the development of a people's coalition seeking the

maintenance of all these values in the peaceful co-existence of the Socialist and capitalist states.

The crisis of which Chambers speaks with such elaborate mystifications is real enough; it is the crisis of a society which can save its moral heritage only if it rejects atomic war, only if it insists on applying reason to the contradictions of enormous productive capacity side by side with the poverty of the producers, the non-owning classes.

By revealing the last nightmare station on the line which the United States is now tragically traveling under the whiplash of the Washington-Bonn munichism, Chambers has done an unwitting service. He shows those who have allowed themselves to be dragged down this path that there is no half-way house in it. An American-sponsored Axis will not preserve rationalism, democratic liberty, or the ideals of humanism anymore than has any other fascism.

The totalitarianism of the mind and soul is not in the Popular Front's anti-fascism or in working-class Socialism; it is in the "free world" war scheme, where the social level of Franco, Adenauer, Syngman Rhee, Chiang Kai-shek, is imposed as the norm by the billionaires choking in the super-abundance of their dollars, their factories, and their unsold an unsalable "over-production."

IN HIMSELF, Chambers is insign ficant. He is a minor Tartuf a junior Goebbels, a Van der Lub who knows five languages, an ador at the altar of McCarthyism. B the tremendous pressure to turn l *Witness* into the major current American thought indicates that t highest circles in Washington a convinced that their plan to cru the colonial revolutions and to "li erate" the countries of socialism a people's democracy can no longer o erate solely with the slogans of t past.

An oligarchy which has open adopted the Hitler general staff as main support cannot rely on huma ist, democratic pretensions, thou these are still the main banners.

The Chambers book shows the i tellectuals who have submitted to t degradations of the war-with-Russ line of the past five years where th must end up if they do not swift re-examine their entire course. Ge man intellectuals who failed to res Goebbels did not all think that th would end by approving the g ovens and madness as a philosoph But that is what happened. For Ame ican intellectuals, Chambers is t warning.

Spring in the Bronx

By MICHAEL GOLD

1. THE KILLERS

A mother wheels her baby down the street
he wears the stylish two guns and western holster
made so fashionable by toy merchants this year
the baby shoots and shoots at his proud mother
nobody is surprised to see a baby shoot his mother
he shoots at dogs at passing strangers autos and the sky
all the kids are shooting now in their games of kidnap and murder
they read comic books and study shooting sadism and shooting
the sun of truth is rarely seen by child or adult
millions of locust lies darken our sky
television and the newspapers movies radio and comic books
the cocaine peddlers lurk around every Bronx school
wagging their mouths like advertising men
anxious to infect for a dollar
it is free enterprise
the murder of truth and innocence
it is big business
my heart is troubled when I see
this baby shoot a mother in Korea

2. THE BUDS ARE OPEN

Spring came to our street this morning
dressed in five lovely shades of new green
bearing lilac buds and a pink magnolia
our janitor's wife sang like a thrush

so the neighbors heard her up the airshaft
"Glory to God and the bursting buds
my son is coming back from the war!"
Lee was born in our basement
he worked in a garage and was popular
he played second base on a local team
played sax and folk guitar and collected opera records
the neighbors mourned when Lee was taken
his parents are tall stately and silent folk
who sweep the halls and stoke the furnace
and shift the daily garbage
thinking their own secret thoughts
but the neighbors hear the secret
"Mister Faraway President
a man can be forced into war
a man and his wife can shift dirty garbage
but not all the garbage in the Bronx
is as dirty as your war
your napalm massacre war
your son-destroying war!"
break out O buds of half-thought
pushing in silence amid the garbage
announce the people's glory and power
the whole world waits for an American spring
and our people at last in flower!

3. BOOM INDUSTRY

The churches call with a sweet clang of bells
the Bronx worships Christ in its best Sunday clothes
long ago this man was betrayed by an informer
today the people worship Christ and not that "ex-Christian"
America's number one informer has been given another award
just made Professor of Christian Ethics in a Bronx university
can Christ hope to build brotherhood on such rotten foundations
the project is dubious I do not see how it can succeed

This informing has become a new American boom industry
boom fortunes are being made by many a rotten sneak and Judas

at such silver always vanishes and the informers' children will
curse their fathers
ill want to change their names and hide from the rotten heritage

ings will be different in the future there will be brotherly love
iformers have no love and without love you cannot create the world
ie future belongs only to workers and creators rich in brotherly love
iese Sunday bells promise an end to sterile informers and the coming
of a world of love

4. THE HAPPY CORPSE

Doggedly all day he climbs
p and down the steep apartment houses
gray little Chaplin refugee
scaped from the Hitler furnaces
o become a Fuller Brush salesman here
ow he is 100 per cent American
/ith stern faith in our toilets frigidaires and autos
e worships in the chromium temple of success
Hitler's victim now believes in the Chase National Bank
: was not the bad people who won for Hitler
hey were always a minority
t was the good people the meek and law abiding
he smug and petty bourgeois brush salesmen the blind
he egotists dwelling in family caves warm secure and rotten

5. BRONX EXPRESS

Though chewing gum ads shed much bright hope
nd big healthy blondes show triumphant teeth from the cigarette posters
umanity suffers in these subways
he fathers and mothers of New York
re pushed and cursed here like stockyard cattle
e they sick or well strong humble or foolish
ll all are kneaded into a dough of exploited flesh
f legs arms buttocks and souls
uttons rubber rayon and the subway spit and slime

roar and scream of tortured subway metals
and unhappy subway faces that submit
God wants us to suffer in subways
under the optimistic loud ads
peddling ten brands of adulterated whiskey
life is crushed and sorrowful
for a bunch of working people from the Bronx
travelling to the daily job
truckmen in eisenhower jackets
Jewish Italian Puerto Rican needle trade workers
reading newspapers that preach atombomb war
low-wage clerks in neat blue suits doing crosswords
and crisp young stenos with silken legs
dodging reality in a brave Hemingway novel
a longshoreman dozes darkly in his dungarees
electricians teachers domestics and bookkeepers
nobody is a tall elegant Hemingway hero
caught in a tunnel by their bread necessities
they read lunatic newspapers preaching war
in the sick green subway light
the flickering light of a diseased social system
but do not stop halfway with the subway gloom
this is the womb
these are the producers
necessity is the mother of history
only out of necessity
will the new heaven and earth get born
not made by tourists parasites or informers
but by producers in dark subways
travelling to the necessary job ahead

6. ODE TO A LANDLORD

New York is mine
New York is my village
every street has known my grief and joy
my loved ones sleep in these cemeteries
my children talk with a Bronx accent
landlord of the white eyelashes and fat nervous mouth
you really can't evict me from my home

I was born over a Bowery saloon
and peddled papers along that street of the damned
I worked in offices factories and on trucks
I raised corn peas and roses by Raritan Bay
and dug clams for the nightly chowder there
lived too by the Coney Island beach
where Walt Whitman once chanted Homer
to the startled seagulls of Brooklyn
landlord of the many capitalist fears and manias
you own the skyscrapers factories and tenements
but you can't own Walt Whitman or his people
you own banks but you don't own me
I have marched in many picketlines against you
made speeches in all the five boroughs
written plays poems and cries of my heart
if I am poor I know why I chose it
poverty is my military medal of valor
it says I was loyal to my people
my mother my father my brothers and the poor
I know the soul of New York
my people rallied to Lincoln's call
though all the rich and the politicians were copperheads
my people rallied to Roosevelt
though the slaveowners cursed and abused him
I was with my people in the famine of 1930
they showed their great mettle then
they rose like the trampled grass
never imagine you have safely duped or suppressed them
we are always getting reinforcements
now the Puerto Ricans are arriving to our help
starved and persecuted and exploited
like earlier immigrant Jews or Italians
they bring us new valor and song
hurrah for the brave Puerto Ricans
with their bright colors and lovely girls
they renew our song and solidarity
my family is a big brave family
with new births and weddings for every sad death
how can a man be disloyal to his mother
maybe you will evict me into one of your jails
where you are throwing my family nowadays
as a magic cure for your fatal disease

but I will still be happier than you
more secure and with healthier roots in life
owning more of New York than you
landlord with the white fearful eyes and fat face
though I cannot pay my rent
yes we suffer and sweat and are too noisy
you may fool or evict us
yet we survive like the trampled grass
that lives between two lifeless stones
along an old pier where the gulls are flying
landlord my people are bigger than skyscrapers

HOLLYWOOD
Illusion and Reality

By JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

1. Film and Foreign Policy

EARLY in 1950, the *Saturday Review of Literature* published a discussion of the role of motion pictures in supporting the foreign policy of the United States, which ran through four issues of the magazine. The series of editorials and articles revealed the growing difficulties facing propagandists for Washington's war program and the special role assigned to Hollywood in the service of U.S. imperialism.

"The American movie," wrote Norman Cousins, "is the main source of information about America to most of the people of the world." Cousins regretted that American films portray our country predominantly as a "nation of murderers, gangsters, idlers, deadbeats, dipsomaniacs, touts, tarts and swindlers."

Cousins wanted motion pictures to inspire "respect for the workings of justice and representative government." Eric Johnston, head of the Motion Picture Producers Association, answered Cousins, arguing that Hollywood is doing a good job making films of "entertainment devoid of ideological lecturing or sermonizing." He described the Hollywood product as "Light and frothy musicals. Comedies. Yes, and some 'bang-bang' pictures, too, in which rustlers bite the dust when the brave cowboys take after them. Fun stuff. Escape stuff."

Johnston concluded in his inimitable Chamber of Commerce prose: "It is our everlasting hope that our motion pictures blend together to transplant before the eyes of others the shimmering, spectral pattern that is America." The reference to a "spectral pattern" tempts us to assume that Johnston sees the reflection of American life on the screen as a parade of ghosts. At all events, he is satisfied that motion pictures cross the seas as "messengers of a free country."

In a final article replying to Johnston, Norman Cousins attacked the "remarkable claim that no distinction need be made between the impact of a film on an American and

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This article is from a larger work, *Film in the Battle of Ideas,* to be published as a booklet by Masses & Mainstream. A second excerpt from Mr. Lawson's essay will appear in our next issue.

on a foreign audience." Cousins apparently felt that pictures which show us as a nation of murderers and gangsters are good enough for the American people, but there is a special "export problem."

The discussion, taking place in the months preceding the outbreak of war in Korea, illustrates the basic dilemma of official propaganda in all fields of communication. Cousins and Johnston agree that the film must be judged as an instrument of propaganda, subservient to the demands of state policy. Indeed, they both make such a sweeping obeisance to state power that they seem in danger of bumping their heads together.

Support of imperialism is treated by them as a task so pressing that they can dispense with the usual niceties of "cultural" controversy. Their articles are notably lacking in respect for esthetic standards or human values. They are concerned only with selling "American democracy" to world audiences.

But this is the heart of the dilemma: the U.S. government is clearly committed to a program of world domination by force of arms, but the propaganda specialists must somehow clothe this program in the garments of "democracy" and "peace." Norman Cousins deals with this aspect of the problem. He makes a distinction between the domestic audience and the appeal to people of other countries, because he is acutely aware of the failure of State Department propaganda in other lands.

Johnston, speaking for the film industry and its Wall Street owners, does not share Cousins' concern for the sensibilities and opinions of foreigners. Let them respect the superior wealth and power of the United States: "The simple fact is that our standard of living is the world's highest. What is dishonest about pictures that reflect it?"

There can be no doubt that Johnston expresses the basic line of American policy and the "culture" which defends it. Since the policy is martial and aggressive, its cultural manifestations are martial and aggressive. However, the difficulties and failures which plague the development of the program of American imperialism necessitate changes in propaganda techniques. While the rulers of the United States continue the drive to war and fascism, they search desperately, and with little success, for new methods of ideological struggle, new ways of softening or overcoming the growing resistance of the world's peoples.

This was the function of the cycle of "Negro interest" films which appeared in the year before the outbreak of the Korean war. The armed intervention in Korea deepened the propaganda-dilemma; while flaming death enveloped Korean villages, the United States endeavored to present its atom bomb diplomacy as a boon to suffering humanity.

In July, 1950, the Washington *Evening Star* noted the difficulty and suggested the government build "propaganda machine that would en

loy only those who possess (1) the echnique of the writer of modern dvertising copy; (2) the wisdom of he philosopher; (3) the skill of a Machiavellian political scientist and 4) the intuition of the mystic."

THE ideology of Hollywood films is in the main determined by the undamental aims of American imerialism. The development of moion pictures in the past two years as paralleled the destructive brutalty of the Korean war. A deal was ecently concluded to show a new ound version of *The Birth of a Naion* in Japan, Indonesia, Formosa, the Philippines, Malaya and Hongkong. (*Variety,* November 21, 1951). Since our policy in Asia is based on "Anglo-Saxon supremacy," it is logical to each a distorted lesson from Amerian history to the people of the Orient, warning them that the bloody destruction of Negro rights in the Reconstruction period represents the consistent aim and purpose of the uling class of the United States.

While we exhibit *The Birth of a Nation* in colonial areas, we also export "New Look" films which purport to deal "sympathetically" with the rights and aspirations of the Negro people. We can expect Hollywood to develop its own "Point Four" program of colonial expansion, offering increasingly "dignified" treatment of the people of Asia and Africa.

The contradiction between such films and the revival of *The Birth of a Nation* is not as irreconcilable as it may at first appear. The "friendly" pictures make a class-appeal to selected groups in the colonial countries, suggesting that those who bow to American imperialism may receive some compensation for their services. At the same time, *The Birth of a Nation* gives a brutally direct warning to those who refuse to bow.

Floyde E. Brooker, film expert of the Mutual Security Agency, recently returned from an eleven-week tour of Southeast Asia and the Philippines, which included his appearance with Frank Capra on behalf of Hollywood and the U.S. State Department at the International Film Festival in India. Brooker reported that "increasingly, motion pictures, and especially the Film Festival, will be in the forefront of the ideological war." (*Daily Variety,* May 15, 1952).

Both Brooker and Capra commented on the difficulties they encountered in India, and urged more effective American motion picture propaganda to combat the films coming from the Soviet Union and the People's Democracies.

The problems that face the filmmakers are economic as well as ideological. Box office receipts are falling off in the United States, and foreign audiences show an increasing distaste for the gaudy sex, gangster and war pictures which are forced upon them by the American monopolies. Since Hollywood's profits depend to a considerable extent on the extra income derived from export, foreign opposition to American propaganda contributes to the deepening crisis in Hollywood. The diminishing returns

reported by the picture companies have resulted in the cutting of dividends and a sharp drop in motion picture stocks. (*Hollywood Reporter,* May 29, 1952: "Movie Stocks Take a Beating.")

Hollywood will try to meet the crisis by changes in its propaganda line, designed both to reach wider audiences and to break down "sales resistance" to the aggressive policies of America's rulers. But tactical changes will be made within the general strategy of the program of war and imperialism.

The strategy is not new. The rise of the American film coincides with the epoch of imperialism. Propaganda for war and conquest, for "white supremacy" and the oppression of colonial peoples, is not a recent or incidental aspect of Hollywood production. It has characterized the whole history of motion pictures in the United States, from *Tearing Down the Spanish Flag* in 1898 to the latest Korean war film.

Many progressive and well-intentioned people display an alarming insensitivity to the class control of films; while they may agree with the general proposition, they ignore its application to specific films, welcoming some as "pure entertainment" and others as "fairly progressive" or "unobjectionable." One is astonished, for example, to find such war propaganda as *The Red Badge of Courage* listed as a "recommended film" in progressive trade union journals. It is even more surprising to find *The Well,* which outdoes other "Negro interest" films in its arrogant wh chauvinism and contempt for t masses of the people, described "acceptable."*

The error stems from a seric weakness in cultural theory—the fa ure to understand the class for that shape culture and determine function as an essential part of t social superstructure.

2. Hollywood and the Un-American Committee

MANY questions relating to t class control of motion pictu have been high-lighted in the lo "investigation" of Hollywood co ducted by the Congressional U Americans. The House Committe attack on film artists seems to ha as one of its chief purposes the esta lishment of censorship over the co tent of pictures. In his opening sta ment at the 1947 hearings, Chairm J. Parnell Thomas spoke of "the t mendous effect which motion pictu have on their mass audiences," a observed that "what the citizen s and hears in his neighborhood mo house carries a powerful impact his thoughts and behavior."

Witnesses repeatedly asserted t Communist ideas were smuggled i pictures. Jack L. Warner testified garding the work of suspected writ that "some of these lines have in endos and double meanings, a things like that, and you have to ta

* These films are discussed at so length at a later point in Mr. Lawso forthcoming booklet.—Eds.

8 or 10 Harvard law courses to find out what they mean."

One can sympathize with the helplessness of the vice president of Warner Brothers in understanding the lines spoken in his films. The Committee helped him by defining "Communist ideology" (at least eight different times during the 1947 hearings) as the portrayal of a rich man as a villain. It also asserted that it is "Communism" to criticize members of Congress, or to show a discharged soldier as dissatisfied with his prospects.

The Committee continued to manifest a good deal of interest in the subject matter of pictures in the hearings conducted in 1951. When a film director expressed doubt about Communist influence on content, the Committee's counsel, Frank L. Tavenner, Jr., insisted that "red influence went back prior to 1925, when the Communist International directed the Communist Party of the United States to infiltrate that medium." These absurdities were endorsed by stoolpigeon witnesses such as Dmytryk and Kazan, who eagerly testified about left-wing interference with their "artistic integrity."

This line of testimony provides the key to the Committee's approach to the content of films. Like the Smith Act trials, the Congressional inquisition seeks to "prove" a portentous "conspiracy" in the realm of ideas, making it a "crime" to write or speak in defense of peace, progress and democracy. In this way, as the Council of the Authors' League of America pointed out in 1947, the Committee engages in an "immoderate, uncontrolled and radically harmful form of censorship" which is "fiercely unfair, basically undemocratic and deeply un-American." (Statement of Authors' League Council, December 4, 1947.)

We are today seeing the effects of this system of thought-control as it spreads its devastation from motion pictures to other areas of culture. As the Authors' League warned five years ago, the Committee seeks to destroy "the whole corpus of a man's work, past and future."

WE CAN understand the Committee's tactics if we consider the specific function assigned to it in the drive toward war and fascism. Its main task is to prepare the way for the direct suppression of free speech, press and association. It "softens up" the public by sensational scares and phony disclosures; it creates a political climate in which people become accustomed to fear and violence, suspicion of ideas, cultural censorship, destruction of the reputations and careers of men and women suspected of "dangerous thoughts."

Since these things violate the fundamental laws of the United States and attack all that is best in our history and tradition, the Committee's task is by no means an easy one: it has proceeded systematically to undermine and destroy the Bill of Rights, and to establish the principle that culture must be totally subservient to government policy. The hearings

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have been essential preparation for placing books on trial in Federal Courts and for wholesale prosecutions under the Smith and McCarran Acts.

The fascist aims of the Committee include propaganda for public acceptance of films of an openly anti-democratic, pro-fascist, pro-war character. The extensive discussion of the content of pictures at the hearings has been largely dedicated to this purpose. But it is a serious mistake to suppose that there is any real conflict between the Committee and the film industry regarding the kind of pictures that are made. Since the drive to fascism is organized and guided by finance capital, it would be strange indeed if the picture companies owned by Wall Street were basically opposed to Congressmen who so patently follow the dictates of their Wall Street masters.

Wall Street does not need the fanfare of public hearings and hysterical investigations in order to "persuade" its West Coast executives to put a little more Red-baiting, chauvinism and war propaganda in current productions. Anyone who is familiar with the administration of the studios knows that the same result could be accomplished by a telephone call.

YET there have been persistent illusions, even among the victims of the heresy hunt, that the "freedom" of the great corporations is somehow threatened by the danger of political censorship, and that the rulers of Hollywood can be rallied to defend their "rights" against Congressional interference. The theory involves dangerous misconceptions, not only concerning the control of motion pictures, but concerning the class character of art and its use by the ruling class.

Many artists have shown splendid patriotism and courage in opposing the illegal proceedings of the Un-American Committee. Unlike the informers who sacrificed their birthright to crawl in the mud before their tormentors, scores of motion picture people—writers, actors, directors and others—have preferred to abandon their professional careers in order to retain their professional integrity.

The fight against the inquisition has been conducted on a high level of principle, and has played a part in disrupting the plans of the warmakers and alerting the nation to the fascist danger. However, the generally effective campaign against the Committee has been weakened by the tendency to associate the rights of individual artists with the "rights" of the film monopolies.

How can artists who have been deprived of a livelihood by the monopolies continue to use such unrealistic slogans as "Freedom of the Screen?" Yet this slogan appeared repeatedly in the material issued in support of the Hollywood Ten. We find a similar concept in a leaflet issued in Hollywood in September, 1951, in defense of writers, actors and others subpoenaed in the third round of hearings.

The leaflet speaks of "the committee's conspiracy to destroy the last vestige of free cultural expression in the film industry," and tells the film audience that "A free screen is up to you." It is true, of course, that audience pressure can affect the content of films, but audiences cannot be organized on the naive assumption that there is any trace of "free cultural expression" in a monopoly-controlled industry.

It is insulting to representatives of the working class and the Negro people, and to members of national minorities, to tell them that "a free screen is up to you," when they know that Hollywood has always served the class interests of exploiters and oppressors, systematically propagating the ideology of "racism" and "white supremacy."

It is not surprising that Hollywood serves its masters. But it *is* surprising that progressive artists, despite their experience of the commercialism and corruption which have always characterized Hollywood, are still affected by the mythology of "free enterprise." While Wall Street beats the drums for war and mobilizes for world conquest, we are asked to believe that the giant film corporations cling to "vestiges" of a social conscience, exhibited in "democratic" and "humanistic" tendencies, reflecting audience demand or the integrity of individual writers, directors or producers.

"Freedom of the Screen" is a meaningful demand only when it proclaims the right of genuinely independent creators (free from W[all] Street, free from banks and corpor[a]tions) to make and exhibit picture[s]. To demand "freedom of the scree[n]" for finance capital mocks the whol[e] spirit and meaning of creative fre[e]dom. Furthermore, it tends to ignor[e] the reality of finance capital's sta[te] power, and to assume that politician[s] are "forcing" fascism on reluctan[t] capitalists.

There are no essential differenc[es] between the Un-American Commi[t]tee and the Hollywood producer[s]. changes in the content of films a[re] not dictated by politicians, but by th[e] class which utilizes politics and cu[l]ture for its class interests.

3. Weapon of Imperialism

IN ORDER to use culture effe[c]tively as a weapon, the creator [or] the critic must base his work on cle[ar] understanding that culture in class s[o]ciety is a weapon of classes—not [an] emanation of isolated individuals, n[or] of abstract "ideals," not of "the pe[o]ple" as an undifferentiated mass. Un[-] fortunately, some intellectuals of th[e] Left are still influenced by an abstra[ct] vague and "classless" approach to cu[l]ture which assumes that the writ[er] or the artist is innately "progressiv[e]" because the nature of his work co[m]mands devotion to truth and beau[ty] a sensitive feeling for life and natu[re].

This concept has a profound a[p]peal to many intellectuals. It enab[les] them to deny in their own minds th[e] pressures which shape their thoug[ht] and work, to avoid their full soci[al]

esponsibility and to blur the class character of their art. Illusions concerning the degree of freedom enjoyed by motion picture artists, in the "good old days" before the appearance of "political censorship," are related to similar illusions in other cultural fields.

In an historic sense, these illusions have their origin in the bourgeois-democratic heritage. The libertarian traditions which come down to us from the American past identify culture with the life-stream of the people, with popular movements and struggles. The ideas that have shaped our national development proclaim the right of all men to "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." But we cannot understand their significance in the past or their power and use today unless we explore their roots in terms of specific class forces and relationships.

The Declaration of Independence, the mighty words of Douglass and Whitman and Lincoln, were born in struggle against the reactionary classes of their time; they constitute a priceless inheritance to be fought for and extended by the progressive classes of our time.

Today in the United States, the interest of the nation and the people is betrayed by a ruling class which cannot maintain its power without destroying all the rights which have been won by the people in their proud history. These rights—the liberties of the whole nation—can only be defended by the working class and the Negro people, in alliance with the growing body of professionals and progressive representatives of the middle class.

This is the great, liberating truth of our time. In 1952, when peace or war hangs in the balance, we cannot use culture effectively as a weapon of progress unless we understand how it is used as a weapon by imperialism.

A guide to understanding the function of culture is provided by the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the economic base of society and the superstructure of institutions and ideas erected upon it. Marx states the principle in his preface to *The Critique of Political Economy*:

> "In the social production of their means of existence men enter into definite, necessary relations which are independent of their will, productive relationships which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The aggregate of these productive relationships constitutes the economic structure of society, the real basis on which a juridical and political superstructure arises, and to which definite forms of social consciousness correspond. The mode of production of the material means of existence conditions the whole process of social, political and intellectual life."

Stalin has recently pointed out that language is not a part of the superstructure: "Language is not a product of one or another base, old or new. . . . It was created not by any class, but by all society, by all the classes of society, by the effort of hundreds of generations." In the course of his discussion of linguistics, Stalin elucidates the relationship be-

tween the base and the superstructure:

"Every base has its own superstructure, corresponding to it. . . . If the base changes or is eliminated, then following this its superstructure changes or is eliminated; if a new base arises, then following this a superstructure arises corresponding to it. . . .

"The base creates the superstructure precisely in order that it may serve it, that it may actively help it to take shape and consolidate itself. . . . The superstructure has only to renounce its role of auxiliary, it has only to pass from a position of active defense of its base to one of indifference toward it, to adopt the same attitude to all classes, and it loses its virtue and ceases to be a superstructure." (*Marxism and Linguistics,* New York, 1951.)

THE ruling class of the United States, desperately seeking to consolidate its position and increase its wealth by a war for the conquest of the world, will of course not permit the superstructure "to renounce its role of auxiliary . . . to adopt the same attitude toward all classes."

Recent events have caused many Americans to re-evaluate the role of the state; the ruthless use of the police power and the juridical apparatus to suppress rights which are clearly guaranteed to all citizens by the fundamental law exposes the function of the state as an instrument of class domination. The role of the Supreme Court in the past few years, and the cynical misuse of legal authority in the enforcement of the Smith and McCarran Acts, have torn the veil of "abstract justice" from the political and legal superstructure.

The Un-American Committee hearings, loyalty tests and oaths, investigations and trials and witch-hunts are designed to rivet tighter class control of the whole superstructure, with considerable attention to its cultural aspects. Every form of communication, every phase of art, science and thought, is being co-ordinated in "active defense" of the interests of the bourgeoisie. Nevertheless, many intellectuals regard this process of regimentation as an attempt to *subvert* the existent cultural pattern, which they still see through a haze of abstract concepts of esthetic "freedom," bourgeois-democratic illusions concerning culture as an untrammelled search for truth and beauty.

It is the function of the cultural superstructure to create just such illusions: it helps to protect and consolidate the base by the *idealization* of the system of power; art, science, philosophy and thought are largely dedicated to the task of rationalizing the *status quo,* to veil the stark ugliness of a disintegrating social order.

It is not surprising that many intellectuals shrink from full recognition of the nature and purpose of the cultural superstructure. "Subjective hesitations reflect the real intensity of the struggle and the enormous pressures exerted by the ruling class at a time when it can no longer maintain its power under the old cloak of "classless" legality.

The pressure, expressed most directly through the loss of livelihood and the threat of prison, impels many cultural workers to seek some fiction which will at least *lessen* their responsibility, placing them on the fringe

of the battle and not in the center of the fray.

Consoling theories of the "special role" and "democratic function" of culture tend to cluster around the motion picture—precisely because the film is one of the most essential parts of the cultural superstructure; it is utlized with special care and attention by the ruling class, because its world influence is probably greater than that of any other form of communication.

THE only American study of Hollywood motion pictures which makes full and competent use of the Marxist-Leninist theory of the function of culture is V. J. Jerome's pamphlet, *The Negro in Hollywood Films,* first published in 1950. Here is a brilliant analysis of the first cycle of "Negro Interest" films, represented by *Home of the Brave, Lost Boundaries, Pinky* and *Intruder in the Dust.* In studying the content of these films and demolishing mistaken views concerning their "progressive" character, Jerome attacks fundamental errors which came to light in the controversy around the "New Look" films.

Jerome bases his analysis on the essential function of the film, which "serves monopoly, not only as a source of colossal profits, but as one of its most potent ideological weapons to master the minds of millions." The notion that the profit-motive is the sole determinant of the content of pictures stems from the one-sided view that film is simply a commodity which is governed by the laws of commodity production. The film is ideology.

Wall Street is unquestionably concerned about profits. The monopoly structure of the industry has tended to guarantee continuing profits, because it prevents competition; it enables the producers to squeeze the small exhibitor for the benefit of the big theatre chains; it limits the audience's freedom to choose what it will see on the screen.

Box office pressure can be effective if it is based upon a well-organized popular movement, led by trade unions and people's organizations and consciously aware that there can be no real "freedom of the screen" as long as it is under monopoly control. A campaign along these lines could expose the utilization of motion pictures as propaganda for war and fascism and compel certain changes in film content.

Jerome's pamphlet provides the theoretical groundwork for a realistic campaign to force the industry to abandon its Jim Crow practices and its abominable "racist" stereotypes. Jerome does not underestimate the significance of the "New Look" films, which he describes as "a new tactical concession" forced by the growing strength of the Negro people and their white labor and progressive allies.

But, he continues, "it would be unrealistic not to see in the very concession a new mode—more dangerous because more subtle—through

which the racist ruling class of our country is today reasserting its strategic ideology of 'white supremacy' on the Hollywood screen."

Jerome's pamphlet has been extensively read and widely praised here and abroad. But its deeper theoretical implications have been inadequately recognized. These implications are contained in the section of the work entitled "A Class Approach," in which Jerome annihilates the notion that the film is "inherently a progressive art," or that its democratization is possible under capitalism. He shows that the mass appeal of film, far from making it a "people's art," makes it supremely important as an ideological weapon to influence the minds of millions.

IN STRESSING the importance of Jerome's contribution, I must point out that the errors he attacks may be found in my own critical writing in the period from 1945 to 1949, and especially in the revised edition of my book, *Theory and Technique of Playwriting and Screenwriting,* published in 1949.

The book is a useful analysis of the social forces that have shaped the development of drama and film, and the social concepts underlying dramatic form and story structure. But my study of the history of the American film and the issues arising out of the Un-American Committee's attack, fails to recognize the class forces that have controlled American production from its small beginnings to its present world influence. The scope of the error is exposed in the over-optimistic statement that "there can be no permanent interference with the development of the American motion picture as a people's art."

The lack of foresight in this prediction was apparent in 1949. It is even more painfully evident in 1952.

Although Jerome does not mention my book by name, he refers to it when he speaks of "the error of viewing the motion picture medium as inherently a people's art, or as an art form that must develop by its own inner laws into a progressive cultural weapon."

In order to illustrate the "classless" approach to the motion picture, Jerome cites an article by a film reviewer in the *Daily People's World* of San Francisco. The reviewer speaks of the "scornfully immature attitude toward the cinema" of those who see "Hollywood only as a corrupt institution, the source of nightmares of decadence and ideas of reaction." As an example he quotes Maxim Gorky's prophecy in 1896 concerning the future of the film under capitalism:

> "Rather than serve science and aid in the perfection of man, it will serve the Nizhni Novgorod Fair and help to popularize debauchery. . . . There is nothing in the world so great and beautiful but that man can vulgarize and dishonor it. And, even in the clouds, where formerly ideals and dreams dwelt, they now want to print advertisements—for improved toilets, I suppose."

Jerome notes that the reviewer dismisses these wonderfully prophetic words: "Gorky, in 1896," according

the reviewer, "could not yet see e possibility of the film's develop- ent as a creative weapon in the nds of the artist." Jerome asks a rtinent question:

"Where amid the constant rubbish ound out by the bourgeois film-mills of ollywood is there evidence today of 'a eative weapon in the hands of the ar- t?' Weapon?—yes! But it is neither eative nor in the hands of the artist. It is structive and in the hands of monopo- s."

Jerome might have added that the riter in the *People's World* used my ook as his authority: "There is a rofound difference," says the re- ewer, "between Gorky's pessimistic ophecy and John Howard Lawson's 'the motion picture is an art and industry. It is also a unique social rce bringing cultural experience to illions of people, offering them an terpretation of life that affects their eliefs, habits and emotional atti- des. . . .'"

It may seem ungenerous to reject is compliment belatedly, two years ter it was offered. But it is necessary clear the record, and to define my sponsibility for ideas which I en- orsed and helped to disseminate. I n not one of those who hold that e "integrity of the artist" is best rved by ignoring mistakes, nor can accept the view that the artist's spe- al role or special sensitivity makes him immune to sharp criticism.

It is symptomatic of the general level of Marxist criticism in the United States, that, aside from Jerome's comment, my work on play- writing and screenwriting has been favorably reviewed, and uncritically accepted without discussion of its erroneous formulations. It is left to the author to acknowledge his short- comings three years after publication.

Although I accept full responsibil- ity for the error, it is not solely my own. As the *People's World* review suggests, my book reflected moods and opinions which were, and to some extent still are, prevalent among writers and artists of the Left.

There is indeed "a profound dif- ference" between Gorky's vision of the future course of film history and my description of motion pictures as "a unique social force." It is the dif- ference between cogent insight into the class control of culture and a bourgeois-liberal formulation that ob- scures class forces in a veil of general- izations about "interpretation of life" and "emotional attitudes."

We cannot afford the luxury of such generalizations in this crucial period of ideological struggle. We must examine the film and all forms of art and communication as class weapons, serving a specific purpose in the cultural superstructure of capi- talism.

FROM
"Thine Alabaster Cities"

By MARTHA MILLET

"O beautiful for patriot dream
That sees beyond the years
Thine alabaster cities gleam
Undimmed by human tears . . ."
—from "America, The Beautif

CROWN THY GOOD

I have known the names of Concord and Boston Common,
Of Gettysburg . . . of Liberty, New York,
(A town men live in over restive stones,
A town where men perform their common tasks
Two strata over bones sometime revered.)
These names and others as a child I learned—
But not of Martinsville; of Laurel, Mississippi
Where the past cries in vain and relic stone
Relives the ancient pain. The crude, swift blows
Of graves a-digging . . . and the beauty of men's living
Flung underground—imperious—no recall.
How the ripped hearts from violated bosoms
Still thrust and pound and spurt their threnody . . . !

The old names, good names, weep away.
And the black mallet smears horizon-wide
The dread name: *Martinsville;* the dire name: *Laurel.*

In a booth of death in a courthouse
They burned a man.
And fifty spectators flushed and fair
Attended court to squirm and stare
And share the devil's show.

The federal government *could not* intervene.
No grounds.
The high court could not, would not reexamine
Close-plotted lie on lie.
The State Court: NO.
The Governor: *Damn you, NO!*—
Yet conjured up the curd of an emotion
To damn a delegation and a vigil—
(Vigil of death, breeding tomorrow;
Out of the dead limbs, the yesterdays, the morrows.)

"CROWN THY GOOD WITH BROTHERHOOD. . . ."

The law, enthroned, wags its annulling head:
"There to die until dead . . . dead . . . dead. . . ."

God knows the scales rust thick with privilege,
Imperial indolence weights the queer device,
Whip handles freight the flowing justice bowl. . . .

Therefore they must, in day or dark of night
Swagger and swill and do the hideous rite;
Not once, but ever . . . till the veined marble splits
And the hot, choked-up earth force breaks aloft,
With winds that sow wild beauty as they fly.

Stalk and burn,
Stare and shiver and slaver.
The gods are drunk.
They call for a cadaver.
All's right in heaven.
(*Here* the toll was seven.)

In the black booth
They burn a man. . . .
Full tide of manhood, full with wife-smile,
child-smile.
They buckle hands that ached for fruits of earth.
They strap a breast that reared their edifice.
They stop a breath that told of wonder well.

The law-givers, fighters, losers, the dead winners
Of every name, of no name, greatly dreamed,
Gave blood for dreams . . . (*did think their struggle done . . . ?*)
But how they groan under the courthouse stone.
How the proud legends chiselled perfectly
And hourly smirched, cry down the old loved bones . . .
And the old names fade, weeping, under the blood
Of Martinsville, of Laurel.

In the black booth
They strap, they slay with fire
Both man and truth,
Banish man and life.
Vanish life and light. . . .
But in the giddy hour of celebration

When brag and swagger crowd the barroom air,
What door is this that opens dark and stern?
What face is there, advancing dark and stern?

The black man's eyes
They *Burn . . . BURN . . . BURN.*
I see the face, noble and unafraid,

The lean, dark face turned full upon the world.
The eyes fall full upon the eyes of men—
And who will shrink, who will cower
Under those eyes that flame and tower?

Receive my word
Receive my beating blood.
Through bars, through blindfolds,
Through the night of cries,
Receive and claim
Those death-denying eyes.

THE PIT

Night of winds rocking and shaking, shocking
the marble cities awake,
Making the lordly turrets quiver, the iron towers quake;
Winds clutching, straining, tearing with claws of night—

A shrunken moon draws rags of cloud about a sunken face.
The tumbling stars blow out.

In the barred cellars feet wear thin on stone.
Ever the sidewise grin, the question's twist,
The hammering hand, the slamming fist, the gavel-hate:
Declare! Declare!
Haveyou/or/areyou/or/willyoube?
And do you know such name? (You would walk free?
Free under the shrinking star and shuddering sky?)
Reply! Reply!
And did you sometime say?
Sign here! and swear!

The new commandment-makers stump the land,
Trumpet the new commandments:
Men give heed!
Thou shalt kill—all those whom we appoint;
Anoint, bow down to evil images;
Thou shalt dishonor thy father and thy mother,
Bear false witness against thy friend, thy brother;
Thou shalt despoil the birthright of thy young;
The name of Freedom shalt thou take in vain;
Wear trophies of the slain—
Descend the devil's ladder, rung by rung.

The winds hurtle on cell gates, stream through the corridor,
Flapping the judgment papers to the floor . . . and silence drips
Through the full, silent lips; cool, cool, deep
Over the steep mad hours, the pacing feet.

And sky and sun are sweet, and nostrils keen
For bloom plucked from a window box or speckled field. . . .
Yet a man stretches shoulders, feeling clean.
Yet a man rears his head, in dungeon sealed.

In grated hell those rot who bear decay—
Can kill, who first have killed within themselves,
Can cause a door to swing aside and walk
Forever solitary, scorn to bride.

O great wide wind whirling in marble world,
Come gentle, soft to the dumb labyrinths
Where lie the captives of the courthouse square.
Bring a swift breath of home to those who sit
In the bar's shadow, potent in the pit. . . .

Come pale, come soft to the forsaken beds.
Lay hands of comfort on the restless child
And stir the bosoms of the sleeping wives
With image of new, fragrant, laughing lives,
Budding secretly, bursting out of the cell.
Still, secret cell, give voice to thirst of heart.

"How fair thou art." The distant lovers speak,
Marble between.
Still, secret flowering . . .
Listen. . . . The spring of time comes all unseen,
One morning showering encircling green.

Blow, wind, your goodly gusts to men who moan
And curse—they know not why—the dead, dead days.
Chant them of manhood proud, of years that dawn
In welcomes; days that open, ripe with gifts.

Crash on the stamping mills of avarice,
The close-clutched powers in the hands that crush.
Rush from the cliffs of night, all-cleansing, gush
Through the long night of cries; make of one spark
A streaming column of unfolding light.

MARTHA MILLET'S poems have appeared in various magazines and anthologies. The two selections above are parts of a long poem, "Thine Alabaster Cities," just published by the author.

THE DELEGATE'S DAUGHTER

***A Story by* ANNA SEGHERS**

FELKA glowed with pride when she learned that she had been nosen as a delegate to the trade-union ongress in Moscow.

The news was not altogether unxpected. Yet there are pleasant moents which surprise you even when ou expect them. For they suddenly eveal things within yourself which, p to then, you had only vaguely elt.

The Party had been banned in Marshal Pilsudski's Poland, and party neetings were held in secret. The extile workers in L——, however, were not surprised that Felka had been chosen. Old Bronski was very ick. A——, arrested in the course of last year's strike, was still in jail. t was during that strike, when the police cracked down hard to nip it in he bud, that Felka had shown her nettle. From then on she was conidered solid and reliable.

She was a shy and reticent woman. t was hard to tell from her expresion whether she really understood what she read and heard. Hence none of the workers had dreamed hat, at the crucial moment, she would be the one boldly to come forward and assume strike leadership, replacing the veteran Comrade A—— almost overnight. Certainly the police did not suspect her. So, despite the wave of arrests, the strike went on; and Felka remained untouched, one among ten thousand women weavers.

After she was informed of her nomination, Felka stayed behind for a few minutes with N——. The latter said to her: "Tomorrow morning you'll travel to the border. Magdusia will give you the necessary exit-permit. Anyone who crosses, either for a job or a visit, has to have one. With it, you're to cross the German border on foot, then get into a train and ride to Berlin. You'll be met at the station. The following day, with new papers, you'll ride across Poland to Moscow. I assume you'll stay there five days. Then you'll return by the same route. That means you'll be back with us next week."

Felka said nothing. All at once she had qualms about the seriousness of her mission. Still, N——had often made the trip. If he could take it in

his stride, why should she be upset? Since the direct route from Pilsudski-Poland to the Soviet Union was barred and under close police surveillance, they had chosen this safer detour.

N—— continued: "To avoid any suspicion, tell your neighbors you're going to the country to see some relatives. You have a child, haven't you? The Zawadskis will take her in while you're away."

They discussed a few more last-minute details. The dismay which at first had gripped Felka disappeared. She saw that her trip had been carefully prepared. It was just like a year ago. Suddenly, when the strike committee was arrested, the entire responsibility had been thrust upon her. She had to take charge of the whole strike—even writing the leaflets and getting them secretly printed and distributed. A week before, she herself had never dreamed she would be capable of such a task. Yet, with the help of good comrades, everything had gone off successfully. Why shouldn't this trip go off successfully too? Wasn't it being prepared by the best and most responsible people she knew?

On her way home she was in a hurry to step in at the Zawadskis. They were the family of dye-workers who were to take care of her child while she was away.

ANNA SEGHERS, the distinguished German novelist, was recently awarded a Stalin Peace Prize. She is the author of *The Seventh Cross, The Dead Stay Young,* and other works. "The Delegate's Daughter" was translated by Joseph M. Bernstein.

Jozia, Felka's daughter, was elev years old. She was a retiring, tacitu child. She had a pale, angular lit face with dark eyes and long e lashes—just like her mother, t neighbors used to say. But Fel knew that her daughter took af her father Stannek too—the way h eyes lighted up when she was happ and the way they blazed when anyo acted meanly.

Stannek had died several wint before, victim of a severe epidem of the flu. They had been deeply love: through her husband, Felka h come to know the Party. She ch ished and preserved everything h husband had left behind—his conv tions and his child.

Felka always thought of Stann when she had important decisic to make. During the past yea strike he had been constantly in h memory. But if there was one thi she could criticize herself for, it w her habit of telling her daugh everything. Her comrades, if th knew, would be shocked. Yet h could she make them realize th everything Jozia learned was as sa as if locked within herself?

She had told her daughter abo the trip she was planning. The gi eyes shone even before it was de nite that Felka was going as the de gate. Felka hastened to add: "It's n yet sure. There are other, better pe ple. . . ."

FELKA got off the trolley-car, h ried across a courtyard, a mounted the stairs to the Zawadsk

But she never got around to asking them to take her child in. At the foot of the stairs someone told her: "The Zawadski kids are sick. They've broken out all over. Looks like scarlet fever."

She took the next trolley to a remote part of town. Lipski worked there in a clothing factory. His wife did homework. The Lipskis were old comrades and friends and loved children. They were like grandparents to Jozia.

Old Mrs. Lipski was always home —patiently sewing garments. But today of all days the apartment was locked. "Oh, Felka, Felka! Don't you know what happened? The police came to their house. You should have seen what they did to the poor woman's apartment! They even upset all her boxes of buttons —they took both of them away! The poor old folks! They dragged them down the stairs, pushed them in a police truck, and drove away!"

Felka was so upset that only when she was nearing her own house did she realize what this news meant to her personally. Her daughter lay wide awake in bed; she knew that today was the day for the decision about her mother's trip.

"I'm a delegate," said Felka. Jozia, smiling broadly, repressed a shout of joy: it might have aroused the neighbors' curiosity. But there was something she couldn't understand—something in her mother's face, in the sound of her voice. She waited until her mother lay down beside her.

In this bed, in this corner partitioned off from the rest of their one-room flat, Felka had told the child everything she knew—from the Russian Revolution up to the present. She had confided in her everything that tugged at her own heart. Here no one could overhear them. And here Felka always felt at peace. Whatever disturbed her seemed to grow clearer as she unburdened herself. And she felt as if the child, pressed close to her, understood many things she had failed to grasp during the daytime at the table.

"What shall we do?" Felka asked. "You can't go to the Zawadskis, you can't go to the Lipskis. Nor can you stay with the Nowaks down the street. And certainly not in Jannek's house. No one must know about this trip. Not even Jannek. I've already told the neighbors we have to go to the country to see some relatives. There's no time left. My train leaves tomorrow morning. Where can I leave you, at such short notice?"

Hugging each other tightly, they thought and thought. Jozia broke the silence: "The easiest thing would be for me to stay right here."

"But how can we do that?" Felka inquired. "The apartment must be empty, locked up."

"Yes, locked up—and it'll look like it's empty. Nobody in the house here knows whether I've left or not. Early tomorrow morning, you can buy some food for me. You'll say it's for going to the country. Nobody'll notice how much soup you cook."

At first Felka shook her head. It was too startling a proposal. But was

it entirely out of the question? Besides, what other possibility was there? Call off the trip—unthinkable! The finest human beings had pinned their hopes and faith on her. And now that the decision was made, comrades in three countries were at work, co-operating to carry it out.

As her mother said nothing, Jozia went on: "It doesn't matter if the bread gets stale. That'll be a sign you're coming back soon. Maybe you'll bring me back something. Just put enough apples and onions in the box. . . ."

BEFORE dawn broke, they settled everything. It was as if their apartment were made to order for just such trips. The box stood between the cupboard and the window. Jozia could easily crawl out of bed and sit on the box, where she could read and play and warm up some soup. The curtains remained drawn. Across the courtyard, from the windows opposite, all that could be seen were the stove and about half of the table. The windows on the other side of the room opened on a high windowless wall: the warehouse of the shoe factory. Chimneys jutted above the side walls of the courtyard. Behind them were many other chimneys, rising above the maze of adjoining courtyards. And beyond them was the railway embankment: it was at an elevation, and the tracks extended in a straight line as far as the eye could reach.

Over that embankment, her mother explained, she would ride past Jozia. Just when the noonday whistles blew. Hurriedly she baked some cakes for the child, as if for a Sunday meal.

Jozia heard the door lock from the outside. Felka gave the key one backward turn so that occasionally at night, when everyone was asleep, the child could slip out. At first Jozia felt more excited than afraid. It was as if she herself were going on the trip. Her mother exchanged a few words of greeting with neighbors on the landing. Then the world grew silent. Only the chatter on the stairs went on, like raindrops punctuating the solitude of a dreary day.

"Now she's on her way to the station," thought Jozia. "I won't take my first bite of a cake until the train goes over the embankment." Then she meant to take her books and magazines and scissors with which to cut out pictures.

All at once someone began to shout in the courtyard. It was Mrs. Golomb—a horrible lady! The whole house was afraid of her, because she always snooped around, looking for the worst in everyone and everything. On the other hand, the faintest ray of hope filled her with rage. Whenever anyone had the slightest prospect of a job or when a sick person showed the first signs of recovery, she got annoyed. And she was always around when two youngsters were in love. And if someone stayed out late at night or had visitors, her fury knew no bounds. Jozia mused: "If she only knew I was sitting here!"

Then the noonday sirens screamed

tween the curtain and window ia could see a stretch of the em- nkment—about the width of her nd. Felka was peering out of the in window at the yellow curtain. hen she waved, Jozia felt her hand e a soft breeze in her hair. The in whistle blew . . . and then it s gone!

OZIA felt very sad, as if only now had she said goodbye. To be sure, e had been the one who last night d suggested that she remain alone the apartment. While she lay xt to her mother, she knew that is trip had to be made. What her other would bring back would nange their lives—her own too. low she sobbed quietly and thought: life has to be changed, why must be us two—Mama and me—who ave to change it?

Down in the courtyard there was bustle of activity. The children ere home from school. They were laying their favorite new game: hasing one another in a chalk-drawn attern of circles and squares. Sud- lenly a boy shouted up to the win- low: "Jozia!" It was her friend Jan- ek, and he was surprised that she ad left so abruptly without telling im anything about it.

The secret had to be kept even rom Jannek, although he was her est, most trusted friend. His father was in jail. His mother was Felka's est friend. He himself was short nd lithe. Once in a strike he had slipped through the cellar grating of a factory with a bundle of leaflets, because the factory gates were heavily guarded. He was the kind of boy who would never have dreamed of asking: "Why should I be the one to crawl through the cellar window?"

Lucky Jannek can't hear what just went through my mind, thought Jozia. She heard his voice down below. At play or in serious things, he was always reliable. How quick and untamed, like a high-spirited pony!

Sometimes a ball flew so high she could hear it bounce. And her mother wasn't at the border yet. She felt so much like playing with the other children—how would she be able to hold out for the whole trip? But other people here in the city were shut in, many of them for years. Mr. and Mrs. Lipski were probably in prison. How could Jozia compare her situation to theirs? It couldn't be mentioned in the same breath. She was sitting here of her own free will. Her mother had made cakes for her; and when Felka's trip was over, her own imprisonment would be ended too.

How empty the bed was that night! Felka was sleeping on the border with comrades. Jozia crept out into the hall so quietly that the door didn't even creak; and she came back just as noiselessly. Not a soul noticed her. The whole house was asleep. Wieczorek had come home from the corner tavern and was no longer brawling in his apartment.

Early next morning she crawled again into her corner between the cupboard and the window. She wanted to be there at the exact mo-

ment her mother was due to cross the border. When Jannek raced down the stairs, he knocked at the door, although he knew Jozia wasn't there and wouldn't be going to school with him. She had such an urge to call out his name!

Soon her mother was in Berlin. The Party headquarters there was called the Karl Liebknecht House. Two people—Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg—had a special place in Jozia's heart. Both had spoken boldly to the people on the open squares of Berlin; then both had been arrested and murdered. Rosa Luxemburg had also gone to Berlin from Poland. She had lived in the same kind of a house as Jozia, with the same kind of courtyard. Now she lay buried in Berlin. Even though it meant waiting longer, it was good that her mother could pass through Berlin. She was sure that Felka was now thinking the same thoughts as herself.

She even ventured to heat up some soup for herself. The whole house smelled of cabbage.

In Berlin her mother boarded the train for Moscow. She traveled again through Poland, past Jozia. She had a false passport—otherwise she would have been seized on the train and thrown into jail. Jozia gave a start, as if some chance sound or gesture might betray her mother to the police spies.

MEANWHILE, the windows had darkened. Only three or four remained lighted. Why? Maybe someone inside was sick; maybe child was coming into the wor maybe somebody wanted to read there any printed matter that keep a person as awake as Jozia n was, thinking of her mother who journeying across Poland in night? Down below, a street li divided the courtyard into two hal both of them utterly deserted. So where a night-watchman's lant bobbed up and down. It was ti yet its shadow seemed enormous. stars were thinly sprinkled in narrow patch of night sky. But t quieted her restless heart; they w more powerful than the street lig

Jozia awoke suddenly when J nek knocked at the door. Old M Golomb rasped: "They've gone aw you stupid boy! Didn't you kno

"I knew," faltered the boy, " I'm so used to knocking."

Mrs. Golomb laughed harsh "Then you'd better get unused to quick as you can. You'll see: s got herself another Jannek. She's gotten all about you. Besides, she head taller than you are now. W do you think? When she grows a li more, she'll pick out a tall fell She won't even look at a midget yourself."

Jozia thought: I could let know I'm still here. Then ma once in a while he could slip n to me under the door, or ever piece of candy. And she grew frig ened. Although he knew Mrs. lomb was a horrible old witch, m be he would begin to have dou about her?

t was a sunny morning. The ches of sky between the roofs were azure meadows. The chimneys med to hang down from the sky. t autumn she had gone to the ntry on a picnic. There she had n the real sky—unobstructed by fs or smoke. Clouds raced across at one moment they looked like cks of birds, then like huge dem-strations, and then like towering untains. In the future all children uld be able to enjoy the skies and rests to their heart's content. How od it smelled in the woods, how arp and clear every sound was. ery tree was a song. The flowers zed at her with their blue and lden faces. "We'll both go on an-her picnic soon," Felka had prom-ed. And now she was really far vay. She was nearing the border etween Poland and the Soviet Union. nce, a worker in this very room ad described the trip: you have to hange trains. Then, beyond the bor-er, you enter Soviet territory be-eath a huge banner. On it are writ-en the words: "Workers of the orld, unite!" Only then did the real rip begin; only then did Jozia really egin to count the days until her nother's return.

THE locomotive engineer who had brought her mother to the bor-ler now had to drive the train back cross Poland. Now every whistle rom the embankment meant: I am here, I am there!

Now too she had to be more care-ful in rationing her food supply. It wasn't so bad to eat only a little every day; but suddenly to face starva-tion—that was hard!

Just as the textile workers of L—— had sent Felka, so workers from every country had sent their delegates to the congress in the land in which there were no bosses any more. The red flag with hammer and sickle—the same flag that had to be kept hidden here—flew there. They sat beneath it as under a sheltering tree. Last year, when the workers in L—— demonstrated, that flag was suddenly unfurled. Then the police fired: those in front, who bore it aloft, fell. The next row snatched the flag from them—the same flag now rustling above Felka's head like a tree—and when that row fell, the third row of marchers, despite the barrage of shots, held it high.

Since that demonstration Jannek's father was in prison. But Jannek was proud: "He did carry the flag a little while!"

Whenever the workers talked about the country Felka was now in, their faces lighted up in a way that fas-cinated Jozia. But the faces of those she didn't like, like Mrs. Golomb's, scowled and hardened.

If only she could have gone along! But there were many other children like herself—Chinese children, Negro children—waiting as she was, in hovels, in caves, or on ships. Her aloneness was not really aloneness....

All these thoughts tired her out as much as if she had made the trip herself. At times she dozed off on the box; at times she lay wide awake

for hours on the bed. She had figured out when her mother should be back—in the best of cases and in the worst. She hoped—it was a hope beyond all hope—that it would be two days earlier than they had made up.

The next time she dared to slip out of the door at night, Mrs. Golomb's cat slunk across the hall floor and stared at her, filling her with fright.

Her brain got so dizzy that it filled with the silliest and most serious thoughts, all jumbled together—who can say that he always thinks great thoughts? The greatest human beings also think once in a while of apples and nuts, of sun and rain, of shoes for their children. Who can say that he never thinks great thoughts? A foolish person also thinks at least once of his life as a whole, and especially of death. . . .

Jozia thought of her mother and the congress to which she had been sent; she thought of mushrooms growing in a meadow in the middle of the woods; she thought of Jannek and his quick temper, and how unafraid he had been when he crawled through the cellar window with a bundle of leaflets. And she wondered whether Felka would bring her back something. . . .

Once she was very frightened. Old Mrs. Golomb, in order to tease Jannek, knocked at the door and croaked: "Oh, Jozia, let me in. I know you're in there. Let me in!" At first the child couldn't make out who it was, muttering in the hall. She quivered like an aspen leaf. Often too, on her box, Jozia felt as though she were moving—even flying—through space. She had snipped so many pictures from the magazines that the cut-outs piled up around her like snow.

Frequently at night the house seemed made of glass. She saw that Victor was beaten whenever his father got drunk; that Mania, who always looked so gay, often cried bitterly when she was alone. And Gutek tramped up and down the stairs, letting a girl in or out. The gurgles of feminine laughter sounded faintly like the patter of rain. Jozia reflected: "I only hope Mrs. Golomb doesn't see them."

HER food supply was running out. There was still enough, however, for several days; and Jozia was frugal. Besides, she was so tired she didn't feel hungry any more. She told herself: "I won't be asleep when she comes back." At every whistle from the embankment she awoke with a start. Then she waited and waited . . . and, as the whistles followed in quick succession, she remained half-waking and half-asleep. Her heart pounded whenever she heard footsteps on the stairs at night, long after she knew that they were unfamiliar. And when the day finally came which she felt *had* to be the last day, her whole universe had shrunk to the tiny space between the window-frame and the curtain. She was dazed, torn between hope and disappointment.

On the evening of the day her mother was supposed to return, she

was weak and near collapse. She continued to wait, but much of the strength one needs in order to keep on hoping had left her. The moon appeared cold and perfidious to her. She crept from the box in the corner and sprawled out on the bed. The mute staircase made a mockery of her listening. Even Wieczorek didn't come home drunk; Bronia's baby didn't cry once.

Now every whistle from the embankment hurt her. Trains roared past in the moonlight and brought all other mothers to their children....

What would she do if Felka failed to return?

All at once a strange thought seized her: suppose something you firmly believe in does go wrong. There were so many bad people in the world—in her own apartment they had often talked about them—but you forgot about them while you played and did your homework. But on a night like this she recalled them all. She had heard their names mentioned; she even recognized their faces. In the factory, at the corner store, in the house . . . Mrs. Golomb, for instance. She must have told the police who used to visit Jannek's father at home. Or the foreman in the factory, who drove the workers as the boss ordered him to. Or Mrs. Jakubczak, who during strikes sold only for cash: "Tell your folks at home that I don't get things for nothin' either; tell them they should have thought twice before they went out on strike."

There were policemen and soldiers. Above them, powerful masters who were even stronger and more evil. They were the ones you just barely got a glimpse of—behind a window or in a passing automobile. Her mother had journeyed to a country where such people had no more power. There she was learning what had to be done in order to get rid of such people here in Poland as well. That was it! All those people were against the trip and had prevented Felka from returning. . . .

HER mother had sworn to her that the comrades had taken care of every detail. But Jozia suddenly thought of comrades whom her mother had mistakenly trusted. She remembered such phrases as: "I never would have thought that of him. . . ." and "I never dreamed he would let us down." Maybe Felka had encountered someone like that—someone who had left her in the lurch.

Now Jozia really felt alone. With a few crumbs left to eat. Should she open the door and cry for help? But if she betrayed the trip, she would betray everyone and everything. What would Jannek say to that? "I never would have believed that of Jozia. . . ." And then suppose her mother came back? How terribly disappointed she would be!

But maybe something had gone wrong with her mother's plans? Felka herself had said a few weeks before: "What can I do? I did the best I could; it just went wrong." Such words seemed like vermin, infesting the cracks in the walls, and crawling

forth at night.

All of a sudden there was another whistle from the embankment. Then she thought anew of all the things that inspire confidence. Often it happens that a train is derailed. But that doesn't upset the whole schedule of the railway line. All the while she had been sitting in this spot the engineer had driven the train over the embankment at precisely the same moment on every run. That was why Felka had gone: they all had confidence in her. In Moscow people from every country had gathered—people in whom the workers had confidence. That was the reason for her mother's trip; and Jozia was a part of it, too, because there was confidence in her.

The embankment whistle tooted: "I'm on the way! I'm on the way!" . . . Jozia was too tired to feel hungry. She wrapped what was left of her bread in a piece of cloth, now much too big for that amount of bread.

During the daytime it was dark and dreary enough in the kitchen. But at night! When she shut her eyes, she saw spots and colors in the darkness. They were also too bright and whirling. Gradually, however, her mood quieted down: she saw only tiny, pleasant points of light....

MAYBE it was that night or the night after—footsteps sounded on the stairs. It was a light step, a very light step, yet the whole house seemed to rock with joy. Then, when the key turned in the lock, oh so softly and so cautiously, she felt like leaping from her bed. But she was too weak. Her mother was at her side, smothering her in an embrace.

They did not turn on the light, as if they still didn't realize that the waiting was at an end; and they suppressed any sounds of joy.

"I've brought you so much," Felka whispered, "so very, very much. Tomorrow morning we'll look at everything; tomorrow I'll tell you everything."

The child replied: "Everything!"

They were both too worn out for questions. The mother stirred about a little and then pressed something to Jozia's mouth. Some juice poured out, with a sweet strong scent. And Jozia opened her piece of cloth; she wanted to explain that a tiny bit of bread was left and that, if the worst had come to the worst, it would have lasted two days more. When her mother stretched out in bed, the child snuggled next to her and quickly fell asleep.

But Felka lay awake a long time....

The trip had been far more than she had imagined. How compare a dream based on pictures and descriptions with even a small portion of reality? Her own life would never again succumb to despair, because with her own eyes she had seen that man can build a different life on this earth. She thought of the congress. Passing her fingers gently through her daughter's hair, she tried to repeat the phrases that had excited and inspired her.

Now, in the night, these phrases

merged with the individuals who had uttered them from the speakers' platform . . . with men and women . . . young and old . . . weavers, machinists, and miners . . . white- and yellow- and black- and brown-skinned workers. Everyone brought to the platform his active, militant worker's life — like a bright, bullet-pierced banner—from his Polish or Indian or Canadian or German or Malayan or Chinese setting. Then, after he related his experiences to the congress and left the platform to make way for the next speaker, he disappeared again into his life of militant struggle—just as she herself, Felka, had disappeared and now lay beside her little girl. Her whole life had finally lighted up and become clear; and the flag which symbolized it had fluttered in applause.

That was why all the comrades had sacrificed their last pennies, so that they could send a delegate to the congress; so that she could bring back home the meaning of that congress, like a priceless treasure.

At bottom, she had thought of Jozia every second of the time. Her heart had grown heavy. Then, in the upsurge of the great gathering, that part of her life which seemed heavy and painful had fallen away from her; and it seemed to her they were not separated. Then she knew for certain that everything *had* to come out all right. And by coming out all right it would thwart all those who made their separation so bitter. Yes, it would serve them right! . . . She *had* to return to her comrades who had sent her and were waiting for her as longingly as her own child. And Jozia would hold out! One thing was bound up with the other. . . .

How Jozia would have liked to tell Jannek everything her mother told her! But she also had to keep mum after her mother's return.

SO JANNEK never found out until recently that Jozia had to spend so many days under the same roof with him, without his realizing it. When he heard the whole story, he shook his head and was proud of Jozia.

During that year of the trade-union congress, the two children were separated for a long time. Jannek's mother took him with her to Warsaw to visit his imprisoned father, and she found work in that city. When they came together again, many years later, they realized that they both had remained true to their first childhood love. Today Jannek and Jozia are man and wife.

All three—Felka, Jozia, and Jannek—made many a dangerous journey, went to prison, participated in war and revolution, until their Polish land became what it is today.

There were periods in their life when they were constantly on the move; other periods in which they rose up in open struggle. And often too they had to wait and wait in one place—silent and unafraid.

The Novels of JORGE AMADO

By GEORGE LOHR

Prague.

THE people of Czechoslovakia took special pride in the award of a Stalin Peace Prize to Jorge Amado this year. Was not the great novelist of Brazil almost like one of their own? He and his family had spent most of the last few years in Prague, and his latest book was written in nearby Castle Dobshish, the former residence of an Austrian prince that now serves as home and study for many writers. Through Amado the Czechoslovak people learned much about the misery and struggles of their comrades in faraway Brazil.

Indeed there isn't a bookshop in any city of the socialist world that doesn't carry a wide selection of Amado's works. In Asia, which he recently visited, and in western Europe too his books are widely known. In his native Brazil the people have found ways and means of circulating his popular works despite bannings by the police.

Only in our own country is Amado's work virtually unknown. The chauvinist empire builders have seen to it that most of us remain ignorant of the flourishing people's literatur of Latin America, which they loo upon as a vast colonial holding. Onl one of Amado's books—*Violent Lan* —has been published in the Unite States. Yet his books are part of th cultural treasure that belongs to a of democratic America. His voic must be heard in our country, alon with the voices of Pablo Neruda, N colas Guillen, Enrique Gil Gilbe the late Enrique Gonzalez Martin and all the other great progressiv writers of Latin America.

I spent an afternoon with Amad at Castle Dobshish a few weeks b fore his departure for Brazil. rather shy-looking man of avera build, he talked of his homeland, t starvation of his people and the militant fight against Wall Stre domination. He told about rece huge strike developments and of t sharecroppers in Porecatau who, wi arms in their hands, defended the soil against seizure by the landlor He spoke of the four million s natures already collected for the P Five Peace Pact Appeal and the m resistance against sending Brazili

youth to die in Korea.

And then the novelist spoke about the role of his party in the center of the nation's turbulent political life. The Brazilian Communist Party had just celebrated its thirtieth birthday and Amado, on that occasion, had written a comprehensive Marxist view of Brazil which demonstrated again that Amado, the great artist, is at the same time a profound analyst and political leader.

The exploited masses of Brazil know the qualities of this man who for twenty years has been in the Communist movement. In December, 1945, during the brief period when the Brazilian government was forced to grant legal status to the party, 600,000 people voted for the Communists. Among the seventeen Communist leaders who took their seats in Congress was Jorge Amado, elected by the people of Sao Paulo with the third largest vote cast for any candidate.

During our discussion, we talked about Brazil's literary past, and Amado made its creative workers come to life as ardent defenders of the people's rights. "In every phase of struggle that my country went through during its existence," he said, "there were also writers reflecting its militancy and revolutionary traditions."

Amado's own writings are weapons in the fight against feudalism and imperialism. His oneness with the people is spread over every page of his many books. The characters he describes are not vague shadows, drawn from the memory of a hasty acquaintance, but live men and women with whom he has shared misery and joy, defeat and victory. It was on their behalf that he accepted the Stalin Peace Prize.

DESPITE his comparative youth —he will be forty in August— Amado has already published fifteen books, ten of them novels. The other five include a play about the great Brazilian writer of the last century, Castro Alves; the story of Carlos Prestes, *The Knight of Hope;* a collection of poems, a work dealing with the Soviet Union, *The World of Peace.* The manuscript of his new novel is now ready for publication. It is called *The Underground of Freedom* and is dedicated to our own Mike Gold, who has exerted a great and positive influence on the writers of Brazil.

Amado's writing career stems from the early Thirties, which saw a rebirth of revolutionary literature in his country. The preceding decade had been a period of great riches for the bourgeoisie and of savage attacks against the people. In literary circles surrealism, modernism, and futurism were the fad. But the battles of the exploited for land and bread, and especially the march of the column led by Luis Carlos Prestes into the interior of Brazil, gave rise to many novels about the landless peasants by authors such as Amado who had

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themselves come from the countryside.

His novel *Cocoa,* published in 1933, dealing with the exploitation of workers on a cocoa plantation, breaks resolutely with the concept of idyllic life in rural areas prevailing up to then in Brazilian novels. A storm broke loose among the critics, expressing the fury of the landowners; but despite their howling, the working people in the cities learned about the lot of their comrades on the plantations.

Another novel, *Jubiaba,* deals with the life of a Negro worker, Antonio Balduino, who seeks freedom in many ways and finally finds his way to the working-class movement. White chauvinism, while not as vile and terroristic as in the United States, exists in Brazil, and the ugly imprint of chattel slavery remains upon the country. The very hill on the outskirts of Bahia, on which Balduino spent his childhood, living in a mud hut, bears as its name a grim reminder of the days of chattel slavery.

It is called "Morro do Capa Negro" (Hill of the Castrated Negroes) because the white rancher to whom it once belonged, castrated his slaves as punishment when they refused to beget children that would again be slaves. Jubiaba, an old Negro man who still remembers the days of slavery and who is considered as a sage among the other residents of the hill, one day tells this story to a group of his poor neighbors, Negro, Mulatto, and white. He adds the legend that the slave owner, transformed into an evil spirit, now haunts the hill.

"But the Negroes aren't slaves any longer," some one in the crowd remarks. "The Negroes are still slaves, and so are the whites," a skinny man who works on the docks interrupts. "All poor people are slaves. Slavery hasn't ended yet. . . ."

Antonio Balduino has a long way to go before he reaches the goal of collective struggle. As a teen-ager, he joins a street gang that roams through Bahia, loafing and begging. This is for a time his adventure of freedom, his way of matching strength with the oppressor. Then he becomes a boxer, miserably exploited but proud of his physical power and eager for the momentary adulation that goes with the trade. His nights are spent drinking in waterfront bars singing sambas he himself composed and making love to many girls on the poor man's bed—the beach of Bahia.

Next he works on a tobacco plantation and then joins a travelling circus, appearing as the strong man who fights all comers and getting a few pennies as his reward. Finally he becomes a longshoreman. When there is a strike of city transport workers that spreads to other trades, Balduino goes to his first strike meeting. He makes a speech and quickly finds himself one of the leaders of the strike.

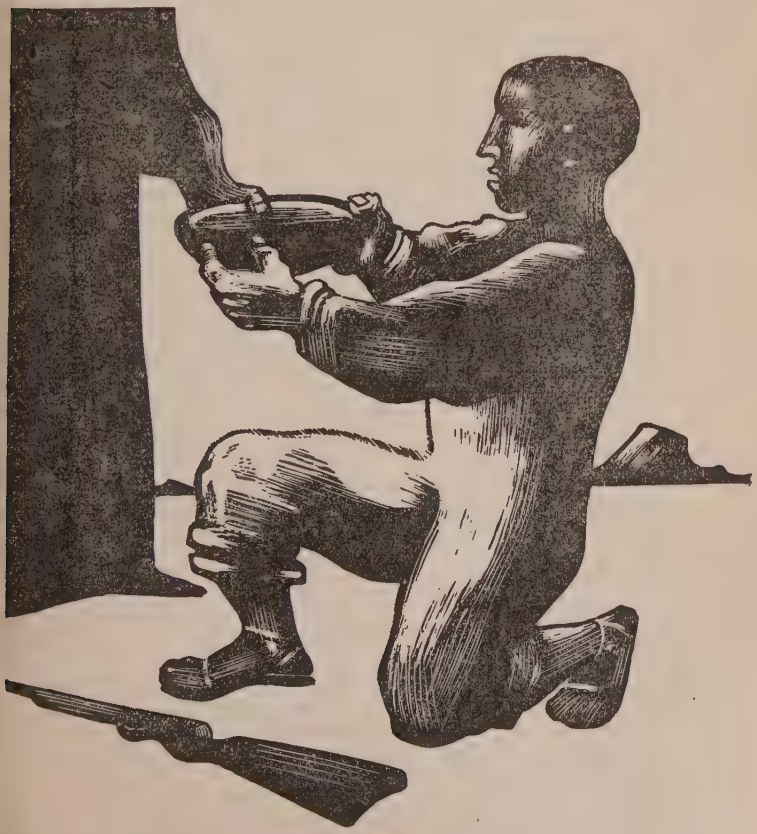
During the struggle he learns that his strength and hatred of oppression can have real meaning for the cause of the Negro people and all others who are enslaved only if they are joined to the strength and class consciousness of all the workers. "The

strike has saved him because now he knows how to struggle."

AMADO'S novel, *The Roads of Hunger*, written in 1946, is aptly prefaced with these lines of Castro Alves:

"Cover, dew of the blood of slaves,
Cover, dew, the hangman's head
Grow, grow, red harvest,
Grow, grow, fierce vengeance."

The novel deals with the share-croppers of the Sertao, that vast stretch of semi-desert land in the northeast of Brazil. Every day these men, women and children, equipped with only the crudest implements, seek a meager sustenance from the almost unyielding soil while the plantation owner lives in luxury either in the Casa Grande or in one of the big cities. Frequently they are driven off their little plots of



By the Chilean artist, José Venturelli

land by either the feudal owner or the drought.

Like the Joads of our country, they then take to the roads, with the coffee plantations of Sao Paulo as their Eldorado. But strictly speaking roads do not exist for them. They have to cut their way through a curtain of thorny cacti, the only vegetation in the arid desert or *caatinga.* Here nothing lives but huge lizards, reminders of a prehistoric age, rattlesnakes and vultures.

But the trek is not only southward. There is also a steady stream of those who have been to Sao Paulo, to the coffee plantations, and found nothing there but misery. Now they are heading north, braving once again the hated *caatinga* to seek another landlord.

"It is difficult to tell whose misery is greater," Amado writes, "those who are leaving or those who are coming back." He notes: "It means hunger and sickness, the abandoned dead along the road nourishing the soil that the ever stronger mandacarus (a cactus plant) may grow, so that the thorns which will tear the flesh of other fugitive peasants will become still more sharp."

Amado takes the reader through the *caatinga* in the company of two families, that of Joao Pedro and of his brother Jeronimo, three of whose sons have already left the plantation some years before. Amado describes not only the daily combat with hunger, illness and death, but also the organized struggle against the chaos of feudalism, the message of the party that will bring a new social order to the Sertao, and with it human dignity. He tells of Nenen, one of the sons of Jeronimo who, after leaving the plantation, became a soldier and as a member of the Communist Party led an unsuccessful uprising in his garrison.

In prison Nenen remembers the Sertao, the peasants, the bandit leader Lucas Arvoredo whom his brother Joe had followed, seeking to avenge the injustices done to the people. The same impulse to revolt had driven the brothers from the fields, but only one had found the party which could give direction to his rebellion. After his release from prison, Nenen returns to the plantation he had left years before, bringing to the peasants the message of his party that called for an end to landlordism and oppression.

"And at dawn, with the fields moist from dew still wrapped in shadows, and the air full of the powerful smell of earth, Nenen left toward the *caatinga,* following the same roads that Jeronimo and his family had once taken. The seeds of suffering and revolt had matured in this ground reddened with blood, in this land of famine. The time for the harvest was at hand."

HIS best known work, *The Knight of Good Hope,* is about Luis Carlos Prestes, the general secretary of the Communist Party of Brazil and hero of his people. This book is one of the truly great contributions to proletarian literature. Written in 1941 to aid the campaign for the liberation of Prestes, who had then

een in jail for six years, it also made istory as a publishing venture. It ppeared first in a Spanish edition nd quickly became the most widely ead book in all of Latin America.

Sale of the book was forbidden in Brazil, but it circulated in mimeographed copies, sold under the counter, wrapped in covers of books about Churchill and other safe topics. Sailors, locomotive engineers, bus drivers and travelling salesmen helped spread the book throughout the country. An edition in Portuguese, the language of Brazil, could appear only in 1945, shortly before the sweep of the protest movement in Brazil and all over the world forced the liberation of Prestes.

Years later, Amado could rightly say that in writing this book, so eloquent in its wrath against the betrayers of his country, he had fulfilled his primary duty as a citizen and as a writer. It is the history of the struggle for freedom as it unfolds during the first four decades of this century in Brazil. It is the story of a man who searched for the answer to the problems of his land and people, and found the answer in scientific socialism. Castro Alves must have dreamed of a man like Prestes when he wrote the following lines, used by Amado as a dedication to his book:

". . . For the people, a star,
For the tyrants, a threatening comet."

One of the most inspiring sections of Amado's book is his description of the famous march of the Prestes column. Like his father, young Prestes chose a military career in a country where the army, enlisted men as well as officers, has a militant tradition of revolt. He soon became a leader of cadets who, like him, dreamed of freedom. As a young officer he helped direct the uprisings of 1922 and 1924, which were unsuccessful despite the heroism of its participants because its leaders lacked the understanding of rallying the people, and above all the working class. The leaders of these insurrections had no program to offer because they did not yet know the problems of Brazil.

The Prestes column, made up of soldiers who had been part of the two insurrections, learned about these problems as it marched across the country. Beginning in October, 1924, they marched over 16,000 miles, fighting every day with government detachments sent out to destroy the column. With food and few arms, they won every engagement, thanks to the genius of Prestes, their general, who was not yet thirty years old. For 28 months they marched, across the Sertao, the pampas, the deserts, mountains and rivers, bringing to the people the message of revolt and learning from the people the ills that afflicted their country.

"They saw how great, how deep and how painful was the suffering, the endless suffering of the people. . . . The Marxist of today, Luis Carlos Prestes, grew in a direct line out of the column's expedition. He divided the Sertaos and annulled illegal acts of seizure by which the big landlords had appropriated the land of the small peasants; he freed

innocent prisoners of their chains; he met the bandits, fought alongside them and learned to know their true faces. He drew a lesson from each battle: the people learned from the column, the column learned from the people."

Many years after the column had passed, blind musicians at country fairs in the northeast of Brazil were still singing of Prestes:

"He has crossed the entire Sertao,
Opening the road with an axe,
Wherever he passed,
Things changed,
The good people stayed,
Bad things came to an end."

PRESTES studied the science of Marxism-Leninism. After some years in exile, he returned to Brazil in 1934. The Communist Party, under his leadership, organized the National Liberation Alliance. This movement, which overnight won the support of millions, put forward a program against feudalism, imperialism and fascism. But the great uprising, led by the alliance in November, 1935, was defeated and Prestes was arrested some months later.

Amado has vividly described the terror that followed and the various trials of Prestes before fascist courts. After he had already been behind bars for four years, a new frame-up trial of Prestes was staged on November 7, 1940. But the fascists had picked the wrong date and the wrong victim. Like Dimitrov before him at Leipzig, Prestes used the courtroom as a tribune.

In a foreword to the French edition of this book, which appeared in 1948, Amado deals briefly with Prestes' life between his liberation in 1945 and that date. Elected to the Senate by the working class of Rio de Janeiro, he immediately mobilized the party and the masses for the struggle against the war plans of U.S. imperialism. His militant position earned him and his party the fury of the warmakers in Washington and their docile agents in Brazil. By March, 1947, his party was again underground, and the F.B.I. started to hunt Prestes. The sale of Amado's book about the Communist leader was forbidden.

Amado says: "The original edition of this book has thus again become forbidden and clandestine reading matter. This book is once again a weapon of the people in the fight for democracy and for the progress of our country, a fight which Luis Carlos Prestes, expelled from the Senate, persecuted and sought by the police, now directs from somewhere in Brazil with his indomitable courage and his exemplary patriotism."

Some day soon, new and still more glorious chapters will be added to the story of the Knight of Hope and his party, chapters that will tell how peace and freedom came to Brazil and to our whole beloved continent. And many of these chapters will be written by one of the greatest sons of the party and his people—Jorge Amado, Marxist fighter and poet who sings of struggle, of heroism, and of victory.

RiGhT FaCe

Primed

"NATION WILL HEAR CONVENTIONS AT CHICAGO OVER CBS RADIO, WITH NEXT PRESIDENT NAMED AND HEARD FROM SITE OF MANY HISTORIC BEEF-JUDGING MEETINGS"

"Right on the same dais where a good many millions of pounds of the world's finest beefsteak have been judged and auctioned off in Chicago, the next President of the United States will be nominated, and whether he be Democrat or Republican, will climb to that same stage to make his acceptance speech."—*From CBS news release.*

Preparedness: 1

"CENTRALIA, ILL.—*Victory Mothers of World War II, in a recent Illinois convention, voted to change their name to: Victory Mothers of World War II and Future Wars of the United States.*"—From the Associated Press.

Preparedness: 2

"Nebraska's funeral directors Wednesday were urged to take an active part in civilian defense planning by Lieut. Col. A. L. Tuttle, Omaha chief of operations civilian defense. He spoke at a session of the Nebraska Funeral Directors and Embalmers Association at the Castle Hotel."—*From the Omaha* World-Herald.

No Discrimination

"'Political rights are far too dear to the Afrikaner for him ever to think of denying them to other whites,' said J. H. Viljoen, Minister of Mines in the Malan government. As he said this he was close to tears in what seemed absolute earnestness."—William S. White to the New York *Times.*

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

books in review

Man on the Road

A MAN WITHOUT SHOES, by John Sanford. *The Plantin Press.* $10.00.

JOHN SANFORD is a novelist with previous books to his credit, one of which, *The People From Heaven,* was re-issued by Liberty Book Club. *A Man Without Shoes,* on the other hand, was rejected by twenty-three commercial publishers, asserting their freedom of suppression, no doubt. Its author was forced at last to print it at his own expense. It might well be argued that it would have been wiser to print more cheaply for wider distribution; and one hopes that this can still be done.

A Man Without Shoes is not a faultless work, but its failures, which unfortunately cannot here be given the detailed consideration they merit, must be seen relative to its very large achievement. Sanford's aim was to create a protagonist whom he would show in every stage of emotional and intellectual development, through childhood and young manhood, during the years 1909-1938.

As a kid Dan Johnson began by taking nothing for granted, and the depiction of his becoming an antifascist, undecided whether or not to go to Spain where one of his friends is fighting and another has been killed, takes little for granted either. The considerable part devoted to Dan's downtown New York and lower Harlem boyhood is full of humorous and passionate recall, out of which emerge a few key figures such as his parents, his uncle Web Varner, the schoolteacher Juno Forrest, his Negro friends Tootsie Powell and Julie Pollard, and Mig deLuca who introduces him to the nature of class justice by telling him of Sacco and Vanzetti.

In opposition to these are certain themes which persist until their implications are broadened later in Dan's life: travel as source of knowledge or escape, Washington and Lincoln as representatives of contrasting social outlooks, John Brown as symbol of unceasing struggle, the fight for Sacco and Vanzetti which teaches Dan, who participates in it, so much about historical continuity and human complexity, but which, when lost, becomes the first contributing factor to his subsequent loss of nerve.

It is impossible without extended quotation to convey the charm as well as intensity of this first section and the brilliance of its style which puts it in the main line of the best comic tradition. Sanford makes use of short scenes, some of an episodic character and others consisting of brisk con-

ersational exchanges, some describ-
ıg an act of growth, others recording
ne which has already taken place in
is character.

Though I would not press the anal-
gy too far, his method reminds me
f Sterne's in *Tristram Shandy*. Here
t has brought results which point to
ich possibilities for left-wing litera-
ure. The comic tradition calls for
he portrayal of individuals with
quick, positive responses to new ideas
ınd situations. The emphasis is on a
ıealthy grasp of external fact rather
han on subjective determination.
The fact need not be huge nor the
occasion solemn and the mind which
is sparked may be lit by a series of
small explosions rather than a giant
blast. But the gaiety celebrates, in its
own way, just as sure a victory of the
revolutionary consciousness.

The writer's play contains an ele-
ment of tension, of anticipation: it
is fun to see the old fetishes sent fly-
ing in a bright wind, but what will
take their place? When the answer
is given the grand circle of comedy
is complete and the reader may be
startled by an emotion whose source
lurked in the heart of laughter but
whose strength he could not foresee.

Picked at random, Sanford's intro-
duction of the Washington theme il-
lustrates his use of sudden bursts
of insight and feeling in the midst
of humor. Dan has written an histori-
cal essay for one of his public school
teachers, Andrew Burch, who "lived
as if life were a condemned building."
Dan's paper is entitled "Washington
the Man with the Determine Face."
It projects an imaginary interview
with the man who was "alected to
the president of the Untied States."
There is a delightful contrast between
the reporter's ingenuous questions
and the hero's careful formality. Then
Dan takes his leave and we are hit
by "When the butler opened the
door I saw with amazement that he
was slave." What has happened is
not only the passing on of an his-
torical perception, but also the open-
ing of a direction in life.

A similar outbreak occurs when
Dan, now in high school, listens to
Doc Knox, an old *American Mer-
cury*-muckraker type, abuse his stu-
dents as boobs uninterested in the
truth, who will never turn out to be
anything but waiters, clerks, hack-
drivers (Dan's father is one) and
barbers. Dan challenges him and
finally says, "The truth, the truth—
that's all you ever talk about, but you
don't really teach us the truth. We
found out about the Consatution is
built up on property, not democracy,
and the Spanish-American War was
on account of the sugar-plantations,
not the starved Cubans, but that isn't
what anybody means by the truth.
It don't do any good to know about
the sugar-plantations if you don't
like the starved Cubans. . . ."

The point is made, not didactically,
but as part of Dan's personal evolve-
ment, and it has to be made again
later to Dan himself when, disheart-
ened by the fact that Sacco and Van-
zetti are still in jail after five years
of agitation for their release, he be-
gins to lose faith in people's stead-

fastness and to hanker after violence. Then the secretary of the defense committee for which he works tells him, "This isn't heaven, kid, and in case you don't know it, those're people out there in the street, not Christs walking on water."

In the second section of the book, devoted to Dan's *wanderjahre,* two years of hoboing through the states, the development of the earlier motifs is accomplished both through direct experience and through the use of passages of poetry and prose poetry. The latter, while they re-create the country's past (in the manner of William Carlos Williams' *In the American Grain* and of Sanford's own poetic interpolations in *The People from Heaven*) are also meant to represent Dan's assimilation of knowledge and increase in understanding.

Many of these passages are superb in themselves: "Marse Linkum," "Had I So Interfered in Behalf of the Rich" (John Brown), the wonderful symbolic encounter of Paul Bunyan and John Henry, "Paul Bunyan and Friend," which takes folklore out of kneepants; the magnificent imaginary letter of Washington privately advising the ruling class of today how to retain power, and the bitter "Vicksburg '63" exposing the Bourbon mentality and the hard facts behind its lying and boasting.

If the future must have anthologies, these are certain candidates. At the same time the way in which these sections are set into the narrative signals a weakening of dramatic grasp. The reader assumes that they stand for Dan's apprehension, but their has more of convention to it th genuine presentation. The charac does not learn before one's eyes, he did before, but rather because reader accepts, perforce, the auth device for denoting learning.

In this part Dan has the two ex riences which are to overshad everything that he will subsequer do—or hesitate to do. He is fi trated in his affection for a girl Colorado Springs, Julia Davis, wh he wants to love but who, reveng herself upon her father for being failure, is driven to degrade hers and every relationship she enters in In Florida he speaks his mind to fascist who has given him a lift a is badly beaten up and thrown in jail by a local sheriff.

Each of these incidents leaves traumatic trace on Dan. The f makes him deceive his wife in or to carry on a pointless, neurotic aff with a woman who reminds him Julia. The second starts a fear so pa lyzing that most of his waking h will be occupied with finding ex dients, mainly in talk, for evad the shame which it arouses in him.

This fear has its leitmotif: the l Train, which he first hears rush by as he lies in his cell, the Fo Eighter from Decatur, the Uni States Express. "The tracks were so gold, the ties were bones, and ballast was cannon-balls, chew gum and tin cans. A hundred mill passengers were aboard, ninety-n million on the rods and the roofs a the rest on plush with dollar ciga

From here on the book undergoes erious qualitative change. On the face it is concerned with Dan's rriage; his job in an employment ency during the depression; ironic nter with his boss, Peterson, whose nical emptiness repels and fascin-s Dan as though he were sparring th a male Julia; the aforemen-ned affair; ideologically important t inconclusive conversations with s old friends, two of whom, Mig d Tootsie, have become Commu-sts; much self-reproach; and finally precarious decision, inspired by his ife, Mary, not to go to Spain but to ake his stand at home instead. Pre-rious, because Dan's fear has so ermeated his being that whatever e does or says seems either fear's by-oduct or its fatefully related, super-cial opposite.

The leitmotif has drowned out the amatic counterpoint. The finest naracters, like Dan's parents, dwin-le; the others are barely sketched , while the dialogue, which before as a form of action, now becomes substitute for it. At best one has sense of coasting or of a motor lling. At worst the talk becomes ute or fatuous, as in Dan's sup-osedly playful, foolish exposition of ialectical materialism to Mary. (He egisters for an evening course, and fter attending three sessions, spends ne time with his mistress.)

At a time when the struggles of the nemployed are taking place, he is educed to such tripe as this: "I like o find jobs for people: it's the only onsolation I have working as a capi-

talist pimp. When I'm able to help somebody, and he tells me, 'Gee, Johnson, thanks a million!' I feel great, really great."

Now, too, the chauvinist terms which Dan and his Italian and Negro friends had used, with affection toward each other and in ironic mockery of their racist enemies, have become repetitively tasteless and unpalatable; they stick out because the young force which once fought their meaning is not there.

The writer may, when pressed to depict characters whose relation to the social movements around them is much more active than Dan's has become, answer, "You are asking for a different person an a different story. These are mine." But then he must be prepared to suffer the penalty of the reader's diminishing concern. And the plain truth is that Dan, for all his suffering and thrashing about, has grown much less interesting. At times he seems even to know less than he did once. At one point when Mary tells him to stop pitying himself, he says, "Put up or shut up. Is that it?" Yes, that is it. But he does neither. How long must the reader stand someone who cannot stand himself?

It is painful to write so harshly of this portion and aspect of Sanford's work. Only lack of space for more adequate discussion makes it seem as though I felt they could be dismissed lightly. As for the rest and major part, one cannot overpraise the sentient imagination, eloquence and militant thinking that has gone into it.

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

A Worker's Life

SWING SHIFT, by Margaret Graha
Citadel Press. $3.00.

"SWING SHIFT" traces the l
and activities of Mac, a ra
road dispatcher from his childhc
in a midwestern mining town, in t
heyday of populism, up to a
through the Thirties when he was
active Communist trade unionist.
the preface the author tells us th
Mac is a real person and the noveliz
form in which his story is told ru
close to the actual course of his l
and some of the events that inf
enced it.

The book is an effort to trace
worker's development to class co
sciousness and maturity in the le
wing movement through the fo
decades that were probably most
fluential in molding the Americ
labor movement. The book, therefo
should be informative to readers w
have not gone through much of t
scenes like the railroad strike of 19

he strike wave after World War I, he unemployed days. The author also gives some of the atmosphere in and around the working-class movement as she takes us through the stages of Mac's life and activities.

Mac doesn't stay put very long. Forced most of his life as a dispatcher to depend on swing jobs (substituting for men on vacation or sick) he takes us to many parts of the country. But the bulk of the book is not taken up with his life as a railroadman. The first of five parts ends with Mac taken past the big strike wave after World War I, a Socialist who went with the left wing, enthusiastic over the Russian Revolution and on his way to the Soviet Union with a colony of Americans to help build up the Kuznetsky coal Basin (Kuzbas) in Siberia.

He is in Kuzbas through Part 2. Through Part 3 he is active with cigar makers in Tampa, Fla. In the next part he is in a Southern prison. In the final part he is up North active in the rank and file of the railroad movement.

The parts on Mac's life with the cigar makers and in prison are undoubtedly the most interesting. The story pictures the brutal exploitation of Cuban and other Latin American cigar makers and their militant struggle and success in building a union despite depression conditions and extreme police brutality. Mac gets a dispatcher's job in the area and as a Communist helps give leadership to the cigar workers and the unemployed of Tampa.

We get a dramatization of the relation between Communists and other progressives, struggling workers and unemployed, and the relationship between the movement of this Southern city and the general offices of the parent union organization in New York. The climax of this story is a demonstration, police violence and a frame-up of Mac along with the leaders of the cigar workers.

We are then taken through all the stages of a frame-up, and a workers' defense movement that reaches success only after more than a year, on an appeal to a higher court. In the meantime, Mac and his friends go through a year of imprisonment at hard work in a Florida road camp. Miss Graham pictures the road camp in all its horror. This is probably the part of the book that leaves its deepest mark on the reader.

The section on Kuzbas leaves you cold. The author apparently sought to picture a closer relation between the American workers and the Russian Revolution than mere sympathy from far away. A sizable number of workers did, indeed, go to Kuzbas under the leadership of Big Bill Haywood and others. But, as we know, many who went hardly had the will or ability to stand the hardships or were moved more by romantic fancy than a self-sacrificing spirit. Mac is pictured as a constructive contributo and as introducer of the America dispatching system along one of th Russian rail lines.

As you read this section you ge a feeling that the author was unfa miliar with the scene in the Russi of that period at close range. Th characters, especially the Russians seem artificial. The conversations ap pear to be mechanically fitted to th political history of the period. An this section suffers from an effort t cram too much into it.

The sections of the book dealing with Mac as a railroader are no eventful or exciting. I can see the author's difficulty there. The railroad workers were pretty well hamstrung for the period by the Railroad Labor Act and provided little drama for America's class struggle. Mac is shown shifting from job to job, going through a monotonous routine, or he is shown discussing railroad problems addressing meetings, making contacts touring and writing for the rank-and-f file paper. All that is important in life, but it makes monotonous reading when spread over many pages.

Despite the mentioned weaknesses the book should prove interesting to many readers, especially as a flash-back to some of the events of 20 or 30 years ago.

GEORGE MORRIS