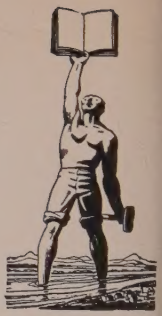
MASSES & MAINSTREAM

NEGRO HISTORY WEEK 1953

For Peace and Freedom

EBRUARY, 1953 *35 cents*

Vol. 6, No. 2



MASSES & Mainstream

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

February, 1953

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

The Real Conspiracy

AN EDITORIAL

THE outrageous "guilty" verdict in the second Foley Square trial was built into the indictment and into the rigged system by which the jurors were osen nearly ten months earlier. The perjured and purchased testimony of e Budenzes and Lautners and the government's fantastic mutilation of the arxist classics outweighed thirteen lifetimes of struggle for peace and the ople's welfare—outweighed the glowing truth upheld by Elizabeth Gurley ynn, Pettis Perry and their comrades. And this whole nauseating procedure which the Bill of Rights is strangled is supposed to be proof of the flourishg state of democracy in the epoch of McCarthy and McCarran, of Truman id Eisenhower.

In this issue we are proud to publish a notable poem by one of the dendants, V. J. Jerome, author of *A Lantern for Jeremy*. This poem was writn in the Foley Square courtroom. Do we not have here a vivid symbol of ie issues involved? Amid the legal mummery of the atomic barbarians sat civilized man affirming, together with all the defendants, the great values f human culture and freedom.

Conspiracy? Yes! To overthrow the Bill of Rights. To teach and advocate id organize the mass murder of millions in a new world war. The guilty—ie Wall Street and Washington plunderbund whose dupes and hirelings erformed at Foley Square—judged the innocent and condemned them. But ie innocent—who are not just thirteen, but tens of millions—will yet judge ie guilty and render their verdict.

If we Americans are to halt the attacks that threaten all decent people, ve must raise our voices and insist that the thirteen latest victims be released n reasonable bail pending appeal to the higher courts. We must build a far vider movement of support for the defendants in all the Smith Act cases, vith the immediate focus on Steve Nelson and his colleagues whose trial is cheduled to open this month in Pittsburgh.

And what happened at Foley Square should be a warning against any elaxation in the fight to save the victims of the most brutal of these warnciting frameups: Ethel and Julius Rosenberg.

With a Voice Full of Fury

By YVONNE GREGORY

SUNBEAMS the color of dusty lemons sift through a stained glass window marked "given by the Deaconesses." Lemon color dusts across lilies, across gladioli, over chrysanthemums, asters and roses that stand huddled together in bunches and baskets, wreaths and wired floral designs in a semi-circle directly beneath the church pulpit. Sifted through the bright stains of glass and petals, the dusty sunbeams touch lemon light soft and gentle along the slender still form of a young black man. He lies natty and correct in Navy blues against crushed white funeral satin. And white stars on a navy blue ground wink from the American flag folded beside his still black head in the formal folds of ceremonial honor.

Collis English lies in his coffin. Collis English, 26, veteran of World War II, is being buried with honor by his government. Collis English, one of the Trenton Six, lived six years behind prison bars, and now he lies among the stars and the roses and the satin and the sunbeams. Finished and snuffed and stiff with death; dead of heartache; dead of heartstrain and heartpain, of heartsickness and heartbreak. Dead, so dead, of the heart disease. His heart burst before the bars would burst. And now he is dead and this is his funeral.

In choir loft and balcony, filling up the pews, are some 800 mourners. Black and white they settle down in the church, settle down with pain and anger. Which is more present here, pain or anger, when the black family shrouded and banded with black grief comes to take its place in the front pews, and eyes are forced to center on two figures in the procession? Is anger more painful or pain more angry when eyes and ears are crowded with the immense grief of the mother and sister of this dead man? Who of the 800 can endure the sight of Mrs. Bessie Mitchell moving heavily and uncertainly, her proud head bowed in sorrow and her mobile, sensitive brown face quivering with agony? Can the 800 persons encompass even among their number the vastness of the awesome, small, stooped delicacy of Mrs. Emma

English? The presence of their sorrow here, the reason for their sorrow, is too big for the church's four walls. It is larger than the town of Trenton, New Jersey; wider than the distance from Maine to Texas; deeper than the Mississippi River; older than the Constitution of these United States; taller than the Empire State building, and swifter to span distances than the newest jet plane. It is sorrow with a voice full of fury.

Bessie Mitchell's voice is sorrow-rough and fury-sharp as it tears the thin web of sound stretched out through the church by the congregation, singing a Hymn of Solace. Bessie Mitchell's voice and the timidly proffered hymn make a strange pattern of point and counter point. The congregation sings:

"Come ye disconsolate, where e'er ye
languish
Come to the mercy seat, fervently
kneel.
Here bring your wounded hearts
Here tell your anguish.
Earth has no sorrow
That heaven cannot heal . . ."

And Bessie Mitchell shouts: "They *murdered* him! O people, people! The law murdered my brother! I tell you, it *was* murder!"

THE funeral rites proceed over, under and around the agony of Mrs. Mitchell the sister and Mrs. English the mother. Sometimes the two of them are quiet and spent against the high wood backs of the pews. Other women hover over them constantly, with small bottles, soft clothes and steady, compassionate hands. Sometimes their grief is audible like the low, running sound of a river moaning to itself at night. Sometimes the voice of Mrs. English calls out a wordless loss. And sometimes and often, the furious sorrow of Bessie Mitchell, the fighter, spouts up like a geyser. In those moments it seems she must surely be heard and understood and answered by the rage of women in Africa and Alabama and Asia who know the exact measure of her pain.

A church reporter speaks. Two trade union leaders, black and white, speak with the voices of thousands of union members, black and white. NAACP leaders speak and a young Negro woman poet reads messages of condolence. When another young Negro woman sings tenderly and passionately . . . "To you, beloved comrade, we make this solemn vow, the fight will still go on . . ." Bessie Mitchell half rises from her seat, stretches out her arms to the figure in the Navy uniform stiffened out against the stiffly folded, stiffly starry-flag, and cries:

"He *was* my comrade, my brother! He was a fighter and they *murdered* him! O it was murder, Collis. Tell everybody they *murdered* you!"

A man reads the obituary and the 800 bow their heads through the hideously brief moments it takes to tell the story of Collis English's life. . . . He was born, reads the man. He grew through childhood, into ado-

lescence, finished high school. He was known as a fine lad in his community. Then he answered the call of his country, and in the service of his country he contracted the rheumatic fever which finally and fatally affected his heart. He was discharged from the Navy after three years' service. He served six years in prison and in prison he died. . . . The obituary is finished.

From behind the muffling fall of her black mourner's veil the voice of Bessie Mitchell is heard. It sounds far away and sad and amazed as she says:

"So young, so young, he never *even* had a girl friend. They didn't *even* let him have time to be in love, my poor little brother. . . ."

The Negro doctor who diagnosed the heart condition of Collis English for the state of New Jersey speaks. Because he told the truth about that heart, the doctor himself is now under indictment for perjury. He stands above the body of the former prisoner and says with slow, bitter comprehension: "I told the truth about his heart and it seems he had to die to prove my diagnosis was correct."

The national executive secretary of the Civil Rights Congress speaks. Quietly, through tight lips, William L. Patterson says: "We say that you were murdered, Collis English. We know who murdered you, and we promise you that they will be punished for their murder." His brief speech is punctuated by repeated choruses of "amen" and "that's true" from the congregation.

Many ministers speak and offer solace of various kinds to the bereaved family. Some offer memories of the Collis English they knew. Some recount the ways in which they helped to fight for his freedom. Some urge more action and some urge more prayer.

Bessie Mitchell leans on the shoulder of William Patterson and sobs:

"O Collis, we've got to let the people know about your murder."

THE funeral program is done. Now the undertakers in their striped grey pants and their decorous black coats and their air of properly arranged and modest mournfulness take charge. They are nimble and authoritative at their task of directing the congregation into two lines which file past the casket to take their last (and for some, their first and last) look at Collis English.

Negro and white, men, women, young people and children are tense with the anger of sorrow and the sorrow of anger. A teen-aged Negro girl wearing a kerchief on her head stops in front of the coffin. A moment before, when she had glimpsed the neat pleats of the smart Navy uniform, she turned to a friend behind her in the line and said: "He looks real nice." Now her soft little face is startled out of contour by fearful confrontation of death's finality; death that is so dead and can *never* look nice. As she stares wide-eyed,

tears spurt up from a well deep in her heart she had never known was there. The line goes on.

And among those who view the body of Collis English are:

Mrs. Josephine Grayson, widow of Francis Grayson, one of the Martinsville Seven, murdered by the State of Virginia; Mrs. Rosalie McGee, widow of Willie McGee, murdered by the State of Mississippi; Mrs. Amy Mallard and Doris Mallard, widow and daughter of Robert Mallard, murdered by the Klan of Georgia.

When these women face the still, slim form of Collis English, most of the other mourners must turn their own faces away. But Doris Mallard returns to the casket a second time. The second time she holds the tiny hand of her six-year-old brother, Johnny. When her turn comes again, Doris Mallard lifts Johnny fiercely, and holds his tiny wriggling body for a terrible moment above the stone-stillness of Collis English.

The last member of the congregation to stand beside the coffin is a Negro man about 25 years old. He walks gravely to the bier, bends toward the face for a suspended second, straightens up lightly and swiftly, touches the folded finality of Collis English's hands with one of his own. Then he turns and swings away up the church aisle with his head high. To those who saw the gesture and recognized it as a common form of greeting or farewell among Negro young people, usually accompanied by the phrase: "Give me some skin," it was a gesture almost too poignant to have witnessed. It said: "Everything is *rough* out here, man, but we'll make it on through somehow. You played your part, man. I appreciate it, daddy. Thanks, man. Here's some skin."

The pallbearers move up to the casket now. Among them are men who made up four of the Trenton Six. These four were freed after five years in prison. One still remains behind bars. The four look hard at the rigidity which is all that is left of the man who suffered and hoped and fought for freedom by their sides for half a decade. Their faces are almost as closed and silent as the face in the coffin.

THE time has come for the immediate family to take their last look at their son and brother. But neither Mrs. English nor Mrs. Mitchell can move from their seats and so the agile undertakers obligingly wheel the casket up to the two of them. Bessie Mitchell makes a hoarse, ragged sound and falls speechless toward the coffin.

Fragile and bent, Mrs. Emma English, unyielding mother of two unyielding children, walks softly past her daughter to her son. Gently and tenderly her work-gnarled black hands lift the white silk at the foot of the casket. Slowly, gently, and tenderly, she covers the face of her dead child. In the curve of her slight black figure at this instant, there is all deli-

cacy and all resiliency. In her gesture there is mountain strength and flower beauty; earth patience and warm sun-love; rain fierceness and rain tenderness; tall forest dignity and never-ending river-rushing faith in life. In this instant, with this gesture, the mother of Collis English becomes all the world's oppressed women, all the world's robbed mothers.

But when Mrs. English has completed her task, something occurs which seems to have been deliberately contrived to mock the grief of mother and sister; to mock the angry sorrow of the funeral. First, the casket is closed with the funeral ritual.

Then, over the burst heart, the sealed mouth, the rigid limbs, the dreadful death of Collis English is draped the flag of the United States of America. It had been forgotten, or not clearly known by most of the mourners that this was to be a burial with full military honor. The colors of his country shroud the coffin, the casket, the bier, the body, the death and the life of Collis English.

Now flag, casket, flowers, pallbearers, ministers, speakers, family and mourners leave the church, are gathered into a 60-car procession, ride through the town of Trenton, capitol of the state of New Jersey, and enter the Greenwood Cemetery. And there in the hushed burial place the mockery that had been barely a slight smirk in the church broadens into a loose-lipped, leering grin.

Lined up in formation, white-gloved hands resting on their up-barrelled guns, are some ten white soldiers with white scarves wound around their necks and white helmets slanting across their faces. They stand as though on guard. On guard of what?

In the tent erected over the open grave, the coffin has been lowered. The pallbearers clutch edges of the American flag, now stretched taut above Collis English's last and first resting place in or on his country's earth. In the few chairs the family sits, and those of the mourners who can find room pack the rest of the small space. A minister consigns ashes to ashes and dust to dust and then there is a sudden splitting, outrageous explosion of sound. The soldiers are firing their guns. The government of the United States salutes Collis English in his grave with three heavy blasts from ten or more guns fired by ten or more white soldiers from the Jim Crow ranks of the United States Army.

In the howling shock of silence that follows the blast, two of the soldiers enter the tent and stand at either end of the grave. They remove the flag from the hands of the pallbearers. Then, in silence that is like sound, they begin a strange, precise, intricate, ritualistic folding of the bright striped and starred material. When they have folded it according to their formula, one brings the bundled flag over to Mrs. English. (Now the grin of mockery takes on

ven new dimensions and becomes he reckless, heedless cackle of a nadman who thinks he is clever.))n top of the bundle are three shiny mpty bullet shells. The white sol- lier bows low before the black moth- r presents the bundle of cloth and pent metal to her and speaks rapidly nd briefly. The only wirds he says vhich can be distinguished are:

". . . your country honors you . . . on, who fought honorably in the ervice of . . ."

The funeral of Collis English is ver. As people drift away from the ent down the rows of graves, Bessie Mitchell stops a group of Negro and white women and asks painfully, through lips cracked with sobbing:

"You all are going to Washington tomorrow, aren't you?"

Shocked by the morning's contrasts, and still sorrowing in spirit beside the grave of Collis English, one of the women replies, wonderingly:

"To Washington? Why, Bessie?"

Bessie Mitchell's eyes, swollen with pain, stare in bewildered surprise.

"Why? To be in the demonstration to free the Rosenbergs, that's why," she says.

THIS issue is dedicated to the observance of Negro History Week, founded 28 years ago by the eminent Negro historian Dr. Carter G. Woodson. For us the central and inspiring lesson of Negro history is summed up in the teaching of Frederick Douglass that there can be no progress without struggle. In the struggle of the American masses today for peace and freedom, Negro-white unity is the absolute precondition for success.

It is significant that the two Americans whom the peoples of the world have especially recognized and honored for their leadership in the peace struggle are great leaders of the Negro liberation movement.

Paul Robeson, recent winner of a Stalin Peace Prize, was cited in the award as a "standard bearer of the oppressed Negro people and all honest Americans struggling against imperialist reactionaries preparing a disastrous war for the Americans."

Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois has been awarded a Grand International Prize by the World Peace Council. The author of *In Battle for Peace* shares this honor with such other distinguished cultural leaders as the Mexican artist Leopoldo Mendez; the Indian novelist Mulk Raj Anand; the Icelandic novelist Halldor Laxness; the German film producers Kurt and Jeanne Stern; the late Paul Eluard, French poet; and Nikola Vaptsarov, Bulgarian poet. On behalf of our readers we proudly salute Mr. Robeson and Dr. Du Bois, who are contributing editors of this magazine.

CHARLES W. CHESNUTT

A Pioneer Negro Novelist

By SAMUEL SILLEN

THE standard histories of American literature either ignore Charles W. Chesnutt or dispose of him in a couple of sentences that betray at best a nodding acquaintance with his work. One looks in vain for a reference to the Negro novelist even in a generally progressive history like Parrington's. Long out of print, obtainable only in a few libraries, are such trail-blazing books as *The Conjure Woman, The Wife of His Youth, The House Behind the Cedars, The Marrow of Tradition, The Colonel's Dream.* And the result is that most white readers have never so much as heard the name of a distinguished writer in whom the Negro people have taken just pride for over half a century.

There is scandal here, but no mystery. If a Frederick Douglass scarcely exists for the white bourgeois historians, infected with chauvinist rot, why should they celebrate the man who wrote Douglass' biography in 1899? And if the latest book by W. E. B. Du Bois does not merit mention in America's free press, why should the old books by the friend and admirer of Du Bois?

The truth is that no honest person who reads Chesnutt, as William Dean Howells long ago observed, "can fail to recognize in the writer a portent of the sort of Negro equality against which no series of hangings and burnings will finally prevail." For he was a sharp-eyed, militant and highly talented critic of the whole abominable system of Negro oppression in this country. His pioneering realism at the turn of the century boldly and brilliantly refuted the "white supremacy" filth of Thomas Dixon's racist novels and the sickening "plantation" fables of Thomas Nelson Page.

On a quite different level, Chesnutt also disagreed with his white liberal friends, such as the novelist George Washington Cable, himself driven from the South for his advanced views. When Cable counseled moderation in dealing with the Bourbon politicians, Chesnutt wrote him in 1890:

"It is easy enough to temporize with the bull when you are on the other side of the fence, but when you are in the pasture with him, as the colored people of the South are, the case is different." The Negro writer wanted freedom for the Negro "not five years hence, or a generation hence, but now, while he is alive, and can appreciate it; posthumous fame is a glorious thing, even if it is

only posthumous; posthumous liberty is not, in the homely language of the rural Southerner, 'wu'th shucks'. . . ."

Instructive too is Chesnutt's comment on Howells, who had assured his readers in a friendly review of *The Marrow of Tradition* that in the "republic of letters," at least, all men are free and equal. Chesnutt wrote his publishers, Houghton, Mifflin, in 1901: "My friend, Mr. Howells, has remarked several times that there is no color line in literature. On that point I take issue with him. I am pretty fairly convinced that the color line runs everywhere so far as the United States is concerned."

The story of that color line in literature, as in every other area of American life, is the story of Charles Waddell Chesnutt. Fortunately, we are now able for the first time to study in detail this dramatic, often maddening, and in many ways inspiring story, thanks to the recent biography by Helen M. Chesnutt, the novelist's daughter.* The biography is an absorbing study based on the manuscript journals, correspondence and other papers which Miss Chesnutt has just turned over to the Fisk University collection. It amplifies considerably the sympathetic view of Chesnutt that we had previously gained from Negro scholars like Benjamin Brawley, Sterling Brown and Hugh Gloster. And it illuminates not only Chesnutt's life and time, but the continuing problem of the Negro writer in capitalist America.

THE novelist was born in Cleveland, on June 20, 1858. His parents, free Negroes of North Carolina, had come North by wagon train in 1856. Chesnutt's mother had at great personal risk secretly taught slave children to read and write; his father, who worked as a driver-conductor on the horsecars in Cleveland, enlisted and served as a teamster throughout the Civil War.

After the war the family returned to Fayetteville, N. C., where in the spring days of Reconstruction the father became a county commissioner and justice of the peace. Charles attended one of the schools set up by the Freedmen's Bureau, went to work at 14 and at that age published his first story in a weekly newspaper run by a Negro. He began to teach in little country schools, married Susan Perry, and at 22 became principal of the Normal School in Fayetteville.

Chesnutt had been studying by himself for years—Latin, music, stenography, German—because, as he wrote in his journal for 1878, "first class teachers" would not teach a Negro and he would have no other. "I will go to the North, where, although the prejudice sticks, yet a man may enjoy these privileges if he has money to pay for them." He studied French and German from a Mr. Neufeld, of whom he wrote: " 'A fellow

* *Charles Waddell Chesnutt: Pioneer of the Color Line*, by Helen M. Chesnutt. The University of North Carolina Press, 1952.

feeling makes us wondrous kind.' The people here, some of them at any rate, are prejudiced to Neufeld because he is a foreigner and a Jew. He says they are so much prejudiced that he would just like to hurt them real bad once. I wish he would. Some of these purse-proud aristocrats seem to think they own the whole world, and that other people live only because they graciously vouchsafe to permit them."

Such healthy anger (later dismissed as "bitterness" by his critics) fed his impulse to write a book in which he could express himself as a Negro. He had been impressed with the success of *A Fool's Errand,* the anti-Ku Klux Klan novel by Albion Tourgee, who had come down from Ohio to be a judge of the Superior Court in North Carolina during Reconstruction. Young Chesnutt's journal entry in 1880 keynotes his literary career:

"And if Judge Tourgee, with his necessarily limited intercourse with colored people, and with his limited stay in the South, can write such interesting descriptions, such vivid pictures of southern life and character as to make himself rich and famous, why could not a colored man who has lived among colored people all his life . . . why could not such a man, if he possessed the same ability, write as good a book about the South as Judge Tourgee has written? But the man is yet to make his appearance; and if I can't be the man, I shall be the first to rejoice at his debut, and give God speed to his work."

He was to be the man. To be sure, the Negro people had produced novelists and short story writers of power even before the Civil War: William Wells Brown, Martin Delany, Frances E. W. Harper, Frederick Douglass, among others. And from Chesnutt's own generation were to come other fiction writers of stature, notably Du Bois. But it was Chesnutt himself who was to give the main impetus to Negro fiction in the period that he described in a much later essay as "Post-Bellum—Pre-Harlem."

In 1880, the year he traveled from Fayetteville to Raleigh to report a speech of Frederick Douglass for the Raleigh *Signal,* Chesnutt made this interesting resolve:

"The object of my writings would be not so much the elevation of the colored people as the elevation of the whites—for I consider the unjust spirit of caste which is so insidious as to pervade a whole nation, and so powerful as to subject a whole race and all connected with it to scorn and social ostracism—I consider this a barrier to the moral progress of the American people; and I would be one of the first to head a determined organized crusade against it."

He hesitated about leaving the South after the betrayal of Reconstruction, but he longed for "civilization and companionship," and he felt he could best serve his people by developing his powers elsewhere. So he came to New York, where he worked as a reporter for Dow, Jones and Co., the Wall Street news firm. Then he decided to settle his family in the city of his birth, and it was in Cleveland that he was to live most

of his life. Chesnutt studied law and was admitted to the Ohio Bar. Eventually he made a comfortable living not as a lawyer or as an author, as he hoped, but as a highly skilled court reporter.

IT WAS a story contest run by the S. S. McClure syndicate that launched Chesnutt's professional writing career in 1885. Two years later *The Atlantic Monthly,* publishing a Negro author for the first time, accepted "The Goophered Grapevine," part of a series of seven folk stories later collected in Chesnutt's first book, *The Conjure Woman,* published in 1899.

The tales in *The Conjure Woman* are related by a wily ex-slave, "Uncle Julius," to a white couple that have settled in North Carolina. These stories in dialect bear a resemblance to the "Uncle Remus" tales. But a critic like Van Wyck Brooks gives a misleading impression when he writes, in *The Confident Years,* that Chesnutt's characters retain a "slave psychology" and that the stories are told "in the manner of Thomas Nelson Page and Joel Chandler Harris." For Chesnutt shows the tragedy of slavery, and the shrewd maneuvers of his protagonist, his sly wit and his keen awareness of his own interests make him "quite different from the fawning 'uncles' portrayed by the school of Thomas Nelson Page," as Hugh Gloster notes in his *Negro Voices in American Literature.*

At the same time the stories do reflect, I feel, the pressures of a domineering literary fashion, and it was scarcely a virtue that so few readers realized the author was a Negro. On the question of dialect, Chesnutt had his own grave doubts, finding that "it is almost a despairing task to write it." He told his publishers:

> "The fact is, of course, that there is no such thing as a Negro dialect; that what we call by that name is the attempt to express, with such a degree of phonetic correctness as to suggest the sound, English pronounced as an ignorant old southern Negro would be supposed to speak it, and at the same time to preserve a sufficient approximation to the correct spelling to make it easy reading. I do not imagine I have got my dialect, even now, any more uniform than other writers of the same sort of matter."

And it strikes the reader today, despite Chesnutt's efforts, that something of the stereotype remains in the language of the "conjure" stories, though there is poetic freshness and lively folk humor as well.

Two other books were published by Chesnutt in 1899: the biography of Douglass and *The Wife of His Youth and Other Stories of the Color Line.* The title story of the latter deals with upper-class Negroes in Groveland (Cleveland), while others deal with a variety of themes which Chesnutt was to develop in his novels: injustice in Southern towns, problems of "passing," the "color line" within the race, marriages of Negroes and whites. Chesnutt's first novel, *The House Behind the Cedars*

(1900), unfolds the tragic story of Rena Walden, who passes as a white woman, is cruelly treated by her aristocratic white fiance when he discovers her background, and finds too late that she is truly loved by Frank Fowler, a black man.

But it is *The Marrow of Tradition,* which I recently read with great excitement, that I would like particularly to discuss here. For this work seems to me an American classic. It was published in 1901, when the best-sellers were the romantic *Graustark,* in which a "clean-cut, go-getter" American successfully woos the Princess of a mythical kingdom, and the sentimental *Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch,* whose heroine concludes, "Looks like ever'thing in the world comes right, if we jes' wait long enough." In this literary setting Chesnutt produced a novel of powerful realism, a fiery protest against the anti-Negro terror in the South.

Chesnutt based the novel on the notorious "Wilmington Massacre" in North Carolina during the elections of 1898.* In that bloody year the Bourbon Democrats overthrew by force and fraud the Fusion-Negro Republican coalition that had governed North Carolina since 1894. The climax of the counter-revolutionary violence came in Wilmington (called "Wellington" in the novel) where the Negroes, a solid majority of the population, were represented in the Board of Aldermen and various administrative posts.

CHESNUTT, deeply aroused, abandoned a certain air of detachment that had characterized his books, and wrote with partisan vigor about the state where he had spent his young manhood. He depicted skilfully the social relations of Wellington, the mentality of the lynch leaders, the massacre itself, and the resistance of the Negroes. Reading the book today one can fully understand why, as Chesnutt's daughter reminds us, the novel was acclaimed in its time as "the most important book on the Negro question since *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*"

The Marrow of Tradition is in fact the first novel to deal with the Negro question in the specific setting of imperialism. Chesnutt was conscious that he was describing a new stage in American history ushered in by the Spanish-American War and the conquest of Cuba and the Philippines. In a Jim-Crow railroad car his leading character, Dr. William Miller, reads a newspaper editorial "which set forth in glowing language the inestimable advantages which would follow to certain recently acquired islands by the introduction of American liberty. . . ." And later on Chesnutt observes:

> "The nation was rushing forward with giant strides toward colossal wealth and world-domination, before the exigencies of which mere abstract ethical theories

* For a vivid first-hand account see Herbert Aptheker's *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States,* pp. 812-816.

must not be permitted to stand. The same argument that justified the conquest of an inferior nation could not be denied to those who sought the suppression of an inferior race."

In such a historical context he presents his young Negro doctor who has returned to the South after studying in the medical centers of Paris and Vienna. Dr. Miller's ambition is to establish a hospital in Wellington for his people, but the white editors and politicians oppose him. Whipping up their "White Supremacy" riots, the Major Cartarets and Captain McBanes must crush the Negro surgeon, even though, as Chesnutt shows with telling irony, they must avail themselves of his skills.

The novel exposes the classical frame-up system of the lynchers. An innocent Negro, Sandy, is charged with murder as part of the plot to commit real murder against the Negroes. As Miller explains: "A crime has been committed. Sandy is charged with it. He is black, and therefore he is guilty. No colored lawyers would be allowed in the jail, if one should dare to go there. No white lawyer will intervene. He'll be lynched tonight, without judge, jury, or preacher, unless we can stave the thing off for a day or two."

A noteworthy feature of the novel is the fact that the most militant and heroic figure is not the middle-class Dr. Miller, but "a black giant by the name of Josh Green, who for many years had worked on the docks for Miller's father." When Josh Green was ten years old, the Ku Klux Klan shot his father and drove his mother insane. The scene was branded in his memory.

Josh Green emerges as the leader of the Negroes' resistance in Wellington. At the climax of the novel there is a memorable encounter between the Bourbon rioters and the Negro men who have taken shelter in the hospital, refusing to surrender the arms they have taken up in self-defense.

IT IS in such scenes that the novel achieves its greatest power rather than in the somewhat melodramatic sections involving the tangle of loyalties and conflicts between Dr. Miller's wife and her white half-sister who is married to Major Cartaret. Family scandals, secret wills, concealed identities, and so on, were part of the fictional paraphernalia of the period, though Chesnutt does give them special interest through the "color line" approach. He is at his best when he deals with the basic social clashes in Wellington.

The novel, as was natural, drew blood not only from southern reviewers but from reactionary northern editors and critics like Paul Elmer More, who found that Chesnutt "had done what he could to humiliate the whites" in his "utterly revolting" book. One reviewer noted: "Mr. Chesnutt has made a most powerful argument in favor of social recognition; but it seems a waste of time and energy in the present state of American civilization."

Chesnutt fought back, but he was disheartened by the small sales. "I am beginning to suspect," he wrote his publishers, "that the public as a rule does not care for books in which the principal characters are colored people, or written with a striking sympathy with that race as contrasted with the white race. . . ." The fact that his next novel, *The Colonel's Dream* (1905), exposing peonage and the convict lease system, did not go well was a further blow.

Chesnutt was only 47 when *The Colonel's Dream* appeared; he wrote no other novels up to his death in 1932 at the age of 74. The essential reason for this long silence was the Jim Crow pattern of publishing in this country and the white supremacist literary tastes imposed on the general reading public. Chesnutt deals again and again with this problem in his letters. In 1890, after a story of his was rejected for lack of "humor" by the *Century Magazine,* he wrote: "The kind of stuff I could write, if I were not all the time oppressed by the fear that this line or this sentiment would offend somebody's prejudices, jar on somebody's American-trained sense of propriety, would, I believe, find a ready sale in England." He found himself in a running battle with publishers' standards and wondered if he should not "drop the attempt at realism."

And in 1916, looking back at the novelist's career which he had by then given up, he observed: "Unfortunately for my writings, they were on the unpopular side of the race question, and any success they may have had must have been due to their merit. Dixon, who took the other side, was not satisfied to present it fairly, but made a fortune by prostituting his talent to ignoble uses."

What a grievous loss to Negro culture and American letters as a whole resulted from the oppressive atmosphere in which Chesnutt had to work!

But he had made a major contribution to American literature which is bound to receive increasing recognition with the advances of the Negro liberation movement. Of this movement he was an important part, fighting as he did year after year for full suffrage and representation under the slogan that "no man is free who is not as free as any other man." He took strong issue with his friend Booker T. Washington's defense of restricted franchise and restricted education. "I have never," he wrote Washington, "been able to see how any man with the interest of his people at heart could favor those abominations."

True, Chesnutt did not share fully the advanced position of a Du Bois. Nor did he understand the integral relation between the struggles of the Negro people and of the working class. But in reading his life and work, one feels keenly the courage, wisdom, and originality of the man. He enriched our democratic heritage. He belongs to all people who cherish freedom and truth.

The Future of Negro Music

By ABNER W. BERRY

A CRITICAL examination of Negro music and the contribution of Negro musicians to American music is long past due. For while the Negro liberation movement was at a high-water mark in the year 1952, the Negro people's music has not kept pace with the Negro's social and political struggles. Indeed, there are signs that the only music indigenous to the United States faces a crisis and is endangered by all the influences of social decay. As a result of the assignment of Negro musicians to a "special"—a "Negro"—place in American music, robbed of music's classical heritage and pulled by commercial competition away from folk roots, Negro music is today being kept from fulfilling its rich heritage and potentialities. It is being diverted from its true path by subjectivism and dead-end formalism.

In order to better understand the present crisis a quick backward glance is necessary. The earliest Negro music was functional, growing out of and adapted to the conditions of life in which the Negro slaves found themselves. This was *social* music in the strict sense in that there was no individual creator, and it was performed en masse on the occasion for which it was created. The work song, following the rhythm of the task engaged in, eased the burden and produced the required co-ordination for certain mass tasks. Sorrow songs and spirituals, with their religious content, gave release to pent-up, though subtle, protest and freedom longings when work was done. Moreover, the symbolism drawn from the Bible and used in Negro spirituals produced a hidden form of communication between the rebellious slaves, enabling groups to signal pertinent information through song on forbidden activities.

"The River Jordan" was "spiritual language" for the Ohio River, across which slaves escaped to freedom. "Gabriel's trumpet" meant the call to rise against slavery, and the insertion of the day of the week in the singing of a song signaled the time an important event was to be organized. In other words, Negro music, in its beginnings, was a social and functional instrument, an extension of Negro life, an escape at times, entertainment at other times, and

always a weapon in the freedom fight.

The rise of plantation life after the Civil War brought another development of Negro music in the "reel" and the "jig," probably adapted from Scot and Irish dances. Along with this there appeared many soloists on the violin, banjo and piano. This "escape" music, it should be noted, became the dominant secular music after the so-called Restoration, the defeat of Reconstruction, and the reconquest of the Negro people by the armed white supremacy state.

It was during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, when American capitalism was entering its monopoly stage, foreboding its domination of most of Latin America, Hawaii, the Philippines and other Pacific islands, that this Negro escape music became distorted into music for minstrel shows, with "Mr. Bones" and "Mr. Jones" in blackface. Imperialism began, then, its persistent campaign to corrupt and turn to its own ends the cultural contributions of the Negro people to America. Tap dancing, called "the buck and wing," was made into a farcical accompaniment to the "humorous" patter of a clown in burnt cork. The true humor of the Negro people, their rhythmic tradition executed in the dance, was twisted into a weapon against their creators. Negroes, whether as musicians, comedians or dancers, no longer danced for Negroes; their art, under imperialist pressures, served not for relaxation, but for the commercialized entertainment of whites who paid to have their chauvinist vanity tickled.

UNDER this impact Negro music became separated from its true source, the people, and, with the development of solo artists on various instruments, music was composed or improvised with an eye toward the market. At first the market was limited to Negroes who danced to the new "ragtime" music closely related to the "reels." But it was not long before marginal jobs were secured by Negro musicians on the edge of the musical world—in the white honky-tonks and brothels, mainly in New Orleans. Growing up alongside this music, influencing it and in turn influenced by it, were the "blues," those urban sorrow songs reflecting the domestic tragedy and heartbreak forced on the Negro family by jim-crow practices. In these songs, the Negroes had learned to fashion their misery and tears into a beauty that served them as a kind of spiritual catharsis.

With these elements as raw materials, unlettered Negro musicians, improvising on the piano, cornet, trombone and clarinet, turned their talents to making a new music. Instruments were made to "sing" plaintive melodies rendered in a rhythmic pattern and with a shifting key that produced humor, wit, surprise and sensual agitation. The vigor of this new music depended on its melodic and rhythmic structure based on the

spiritual, work song, blues and reel. But this vigor, a tribute to the inventive genius of the Negro musicians and the richness of the Negro people's musical heritage, was turned to new tasks—that of titillating jaded appetites of upper class whites.

In his book, *Men of Popular Music,* David Ewen writes:

"Nowhere else in America could ragtime have been born but in New Orleans. Shameless hussy that she was, ragtime—with her vitality, abandon, freedom from inhibitions—fitted into the setting of vice as naturally as a diamond in platinum. She thrived in the fetid honky-tonks and brothels, for there she found not only a natural habitat but also her most ardent admirers. . . .

"In that cradle of vice, dissipation pleasure and irresponsibility, ragtime was reared. It was an ungovernable child, shaped and formed by its environment. . . ."

Ewen is the typical white chauvinist "admirer" of jazz music who sees in this musical development only the adding of something new to American music, but ignores what has been done to this new element and the crime being committed against Negro music and musicians. And most critics, including many progressives, accept jazz music as the untarnished and "primitive" music contributed by the Negro people, and assign to Negro musicians the special role of creating and executing this "fabulous music . . . to stir the blood and quicken the beat of the pulse." (Ewen.)

Certainly it is true that jazz stemmed from the Negro people's musical heritage in terms of their own experience. It was a harbinger of that rich flowering of the Negro's musical genius that would have been possible had not the blight of jimcrow settled upon it at birth. Yet even before its corruption jazz was limited to a single mood; it did not satisfy the full range of emotions and it certainly did not express the national aspirations of the Negro people.

It seems to me that those who uncritically accept jazz fail in their duty to fight against the jimcrow which originally forced the Negro musician into the honky-tonk. Barred from his classical heritage—an opera, symphony or concert career—and cut off from his folk roots by the commercial rat race he is forced to run, the Negro musician has been forced into seeking one formalist innovation after another, reworking old themes in order to keep up.

FROM the New Orleans ragtime of Buddy Bolden, Scott Joplin and Jelly Roll Morton, to the jazz music of Joe Oliver, Louis Armstrong and others in Chicago, to the "swing" music of Fletcher Henderson in New York City, there was a continuous technical development of music by Negro musicians. Each development represented a "revolt" against continuous stealing and plagiarizing practiced against Negro musicians by the white music business mo-

nopoly, while Negro artists for the most part lived marginal existences.

But the gap between Negro musicians and the people produced by the jimcrow system can be judged by the fact that the wave of lynchings during the first quarter of the Twentieth Century and the protest movement which arose against it had very little influence on the dominant music of the period. Negro secular music continued in the distorted pattern set in New Orleans. Church music became more infused with pure religiosity, although this division of Negro music more nearly approached the development of "art" music, as witness the arrangements of spirituals by N. Clark Smith ("Steal Away to Jesus"), R. Nathaniel Dett ("Listen to the Lambs"), and the various contributions of Harry T. Burleigh.

As to what Negro music could be was demonstrated by the stirring marching song, "The Negro National Anthem," written by J. Rosamond Johnson, with lyrics by his better known brother, the poet, diplomat and novelist, James Weldon Johnson. It is significant that this song is accepted by Negroes everywhere as just what its name implies. Few Negro gatherings of importance open without singing it.

In their rebellion against jimcrow conditions and limitations Negro musicians resorted to more and more intricate formal innovations, finally arriving at be-bop. In playing be-bop, the musician has no fixed key; he produces intriguing a-tonalities, rhythmic suspense and melodic surprise. The melodic line in be-bop, usually taken from a Tin Pan Alley tune, is kidded by the soloist who plays a counter-melody, often improvised on the spot.

This new music, the latest contribution of Negro musicians, has among its devotees a number of cults grouped around a reigning favorite. There are those who swear by the saxaphonist, Charles (Yardbird) Parker, whose solos are played against a background of strings. Still others follow the trumpeter, Dizzy Gillespie, the saxophonist, Lester Young, the pianists, Errol Garner, Buddy Powell, Theolonius Monk, and others. This is the dead-end into which the white supremacy monopolists of cultural outlets have driven the main body of Negro musical creators.

It is no wonder therefore that at the recent convention of the National Negro Labor Council the Negro workers had to rely on the Negro spiritual and the poetry of Langston Hughes for cultural tools that are functional in their struggle. This points up the fact that Negro workers and Negro musicians cannot find the answer to their problems in laughing down a banal Broadway tune. The Negro masses are engaging in heroic and dramatic struggles. Picket lines, from which the bosses hear "We Shall Not Be Moved" sung, are fighting to break the jimcrow job pattern. The name of Willie McGee is known around the world, and this Mississippi worker who was

nurdered by the state, became a giant dwarfing his tormentors in the course of the fight for his life.

THE Negro people cannot be served by a music which strains for formlessless, is based on improvisations arrived at subjectively and spontaneously, evoking moods to match that of the instrumentalist. Indeed, in rebelling against the limitations of Tin Pan Alley, Negro musicians and those white artists who have joined them in the be-bop cult have retreated into the arms of reaction. For it is this music, more at home in middle-class circles of London, Vienna, West Berlin and Paris than among Jackson, Miss., Negroes, which is being used now by the United States State Department to pollute the national cultures of Western European countries.

The question should arise immediately as to how the imperialists, who are against all national cultures, could in good faith foster the real national culture of the Negro people, a culture which has been and remains one of the principal weapons against Negro oppression. Why, then, does not the State Department popularize "The Negro National Anthem"? Or allow Paul Robeson to sing abroad?

It has been argued by be-bop devotees that the "new music" is both sophisticated and complex and that it has to be listened to carefully to be understood. But "complexity" in itself is no virtue, and it is often a refuge for the artist who has lost contact with the people. In this connection we can learn a great deal from the Soviet discussions of music. It is a misconception, argues the late Andrei A. Zhdanov in his *Essay on Literature, Philosophy and Music,* to honor every instance of complexity as progress. Zhdanov refuted "the claim that classical music is supposedly simpler, and modern music more complex, and the complexity of modern technique represents a forward step, since development always means progression from the particular to the general. It is not true that every instance of complexity is a sign of increased mastery."

In having been driven by the winds of jimcrow to the barren lands of formless form and empty content, many Negro musicians have reached a dead-end from where their music serves as centers for cults and exotic titillation for jaded white rulers and their international victims.

This is not only a tragedy for Negro music and for the Negro liberation movement—it also represents a grave misfortune for American music and culture as a whole. For if the Negro liberation movement is robbed of its cultural arm, all democracy is robbed; and if Negro music as such, the only native American music, is allowed to be frustrated, then the well-springs of music will appear to go dry. I say "appear" because the real well-springs are still flowing. Songs are still being created by small church combinations. Blues singers

are fashioning topical blues, mostly in the South, but to an extent throughout the country. And in the larger churches there still functions a band of serious musicians who keep the classical tradition alive.

It has to be said, though, that folk music is being pushed into the background in the more fashionable Negro churches, while the classics have never been brought to the smaller ones. And whereas the jazz idiom and syncopation are alive in the work of the smaller combinations singing in churches, it seems significant that be-bop is a stranger in both.

IT IS clear that there are creative developments in the field of Negro music. But it is also painfully clear that this music has not kept pace with social and political events—if we except the growth of technique and professional proficiency among Negro musicians. The Negro masses are storming the citadels of jimcrow; they have forced the Negro question into the political arena and no politician can ignore it. But where are the songs to match their spirit and their determination?

The masses being sung in the larger choirs, the jubilees and gospel songs being created by smaller singing groups, and the orchestral experience of Negro musicians, coupled with the growth of a large body of Negro vocalists, have set the stage for a cultural revival wed to the growing freedom movement. But the compartments which separate these sections of Negro music need to be broken down. The body of trained musicians need to get closer to the roots of their inspiration and away from Tin Pan Alley.

This cannot come about without a struggle by the workers for culture. For the fight of the Negro musicians is also the fight of the Negro people and of the working class. In the first place, progressive cultural leaders should be interested in this important phase of American culture and set about uniting with the Negro musicians to break the jimcrow barriers which have kept them hemmed into a musical "ghetto." And critics will have to lose the patronizing attitude toward everything created by Negro musicians and fight with the weapon of criticism against the jimcrow system of the musical monopolists. In this way—and only in this way—can they earn the right to make the type of criticism which needs to be made.

It is time to evaluate critically Negro music and to develop the struggle against jimcrow in music in a new way. Negro music and American music, drawing their strength from the people, must assume their rightful place as arms in the people's fight for freedom and peace.

(*The editors join Mr. Berry in inviting discussion of the serious questions raised in his article.*)

Caliban Speaks

By V. J. JEROME

The death of Canada Lee, the noted Negro artist of stage and cinema, in the spring of 1952, brought back to the author certain impressions inspired by Lee's interpretation of Caliban in the production of Shakespeare's The Tempest *on Broadway in 1945. These lines are an attempt to recapture and set forth those impressions.—V.J.J.*

Out of his rock-bound ghetto
he has come—
garbed primeval—
at the command of Prospero,
his master:

"What, ho! slave! Caliban!
Thou earth, thou! Speak."

And Caliban, earth-bent, crouching,
ominous,
glints hate at the white conqueror,
for whom he lives as one that

"does make our fire,
Fetch in our wood, and serves in offices
That profit us"—

glints hate at the benign lord of the isle:

"This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou cam'st first,
Thou strok'dst me, and made much of me . . .
. . . and then I lov'd thee,
And show'd thee all the qualities o' th' isle,
The fresh springs, brine-pits, barren place and fertile:
Curs'd be that I did so! . . .
For I am all the subjects that you have,
Which first was mine own king: and here you sty me
In this hard rock, whiles you do keep from me
The rest o' th' island."

Out of the thrall the sharp dream rises,
out of him who is Caliban,
here, in the shadows on the stage, crouching,
ominous,
out of him surges the fierce-proud warrior—
towering fore-shadow
of Red Cloud,
Toussaint,
Juarez,
Nat Turner . . .
But Shakespeare grants him no fair field,
summoning Prospero to break in upon him.

"Thou most lying slave"—

the tongue of the white lord has struck
and gashed his speech!
Caliban beats his fist against the sharp dungeoning silence
and strains to make heard his bleeding words,
to trumpet to the earth and to the heavens
his accusing breath ravaged on the threshold of sound:
Give me my right, Shakespeare!
This moment's mine!
I have hungered for it, long, long.
My people are listening to hear me—the slain and the living—
the still unborn are listening.
You let him, my enemy, speak—you let Prospero inflate his learned lies:
The world must hear me, too.
Grant me the lone great moment to plead my cause
that you gave the baited Shylock—like me belied.
Hath not a slave eyes? hath not a slave hands? . . .

"If you prick us, do we not bleed? . . . and if you
wrong us, shall we not revenge?"

I too am your creation.
And will you wrong me, even as Prospero wrongs me?
Will you stifle, dwarf me, chain me,
will you bind my powers,
and binding mine, cramp the sinews of your own skill?
Let me stand forth!
Caliban the plundered of land,

bondman in mine own house.
Blot out the print of underman from Caliban's brow!
Blot out the lie from Caliban's name!
O Shakespeare!
You who gave to Gonzalo, of Prospero's train,
the vision of the commonwealth,
where nevermore shall be

"riches, poverty,
and the use of service"—

who gave to Prospero the sceptre of knowledge
to tame the powers of earth and wave and wind
for man's beneficence—
will you behold that learning plied
to rivet chains upon me
and yet be silent?
Un-gag me! Loosen my hands, man!
Let me stand up against him!
Keep him from hissing his venom into my face:

"Thou most lying slave,
Whom stripes may move, not kindness, I have us'd thee,
Filth as thou art, with human care, and lodg'd thee
In mine own cell, till thou didst seek to violate
The honour of my child."

Lay not on my lips the lie to prop his lie:

". . . would't had been done!
Thou didst prevent me; I had peopl'd else
This isle with Calibans."

Violate . . .
Rather did you, Shakespeare, violate the honor of your child, Caliban.
Undo your assent to Prospero,
lest it be a comfort to the pirate civilizers
who come with conquering tread on freemen's coasts—
who come with trinkets, rum, and Bibles—and guns:
for the Glory of God
and the power of Spain
and the vaults of the Virginia Company.

Theirs are the roads to the silver mines of Potosí
covered with Indian dead.
Theirs the pledges broken, the treaties torn—
by land-grabber, claim shark, empire builder,
to the civilizers' war cry, "The savage must go!"
Theirs the infamy:
Africa raped—
torn from birthland, herded in slave-ship, sold,
forced into canefield and rice swamp,
branded, cropped, castrated,
hunted in forest and marsh.
Theirs the long, cruel noose flung across the centuries for the necks
of Willie McGee and the Seven of Martinsville—
the noose that strangled Gabriel, Vesey, Turner,
whose gallows against the sky are pointing fingers to freedom.
Theirs the scourge on Korean earth
lit up with bomb-blossoms in the night—
Korean children napalm burnt, torn—
planes winging low on moonless paths
along the River Yalu,
over China's new earth,
planes bringing gifts from far-off War Lords,
gifts bacterial from the Atlantic War Lords.

But, Shakespeare, you who muffle Caliban
gave to blind Lear new eyes to see, and words
to speak to all the dispossessed:

> "Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
> That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
> How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
> Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
> From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
> Too little care of this!"

Such speech you gave to him that night upon the heath.
And remember the Moor Othello,
whose great heart you opened
with fiery and noble passion
that lit up for all mankind
the image of its aspiring self. . . .

Out of the thrall the sharp dream rises,
out of him who is Caliban,
here, in the shadows on the stage, crouching,
ominous,
out of him—the fierce-proud warrior:
Out of the dream—the deed!
The fires of my cause lighten the earth.
Continents are rising
with the wrath of centuries.
Sun-red—
already—shine the Eastern spires
of the commonwealth
where nevermore shall be

"riches, poverty,
and the use of service"—

In the clash of changes
mankind hears me!
In my chains the world goes chained:
In my freedom will man be free.

Summer, 1952,
United States Court House,
Foley Square, New York.

Passing of the First-Born

By W. E. B. DU BOIS

Fifty years ago there was first published one of the most influential volumes in the history of American literature: The Souls of Black Folk *by W. E. B. Du Bois. On this golden anniversary the editors are particularly happy to be able to bring to their readers a magnificent chapter from this work. And we know that all our readers join in wishing a happy birthday to Dr. Du Bois. February, the birth-month of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, is also the month in which W. E. B. Du Bois was born eighty-five years ago. All the more reason for celebrating in February Negro History Week.*

O sister, sister, thy first-begotten,
The hands that cling and the feet that follow,
The voice of the child's blood crying yet,
Who hath remembered me? who hath forgotten?
Thou hast forgotten, O summer swallow,
But the world shall end when I forget.

Swinburne

"UNTO you a child is born," sang the bit of yellow paper that fluttered into my room one brown October morning. Then the fear of fatherhood mingled wildly with the joy of creation; I wondered how it looked and how it felt—what were its eyes, and how its hair curled and crumpled itself. And I thought in awe of her,—she who had slept with Death to tear a man-child from underneath her heart, while I was unconsciously wandering. I fled to my wife and child, repeating the while to myself half wonderingly, "Wife and child? Wife and child?"—fled fast and faster than boat and steam-car, and yet must ever impatiently await them; away from the hard-voiced city, away from the flickering sea into my own Berkshire Hills that sit all sadly guarding the gates of Massachusetts.

Up the stairs I ran to the wan mother and whimpering babe, to

the sanctuary on whose altar a life at my bidding had offered itself to win a life, and won. What is this tiny formless thing, this newborn wail from an unknown world,—all head and voice? I handle it curiously, and watch perplexed its winking, breathing, and sneezing. I did not love it then; it seemed a ludicrous thing to love; but her I loved, my girl-mother, she whom now I saw unfolding like the glory of the morning—the transfigured woman.

Through her I came to love the wee thing, as it grew and waxed strong; as its little soul unfolded itself in twitter and cry and half-formed word, and as its eyes caught the gleam and flash of life. How beautiful he was, with his olive-tinted flesh and dark gold ringlets, his eyes of mingled blue and brown, his perfect little limbs, and the soft voluptuous roll which the blood of Africa had moulded into his features! I held him in my arms, after we had sped far away to our Southern home,—held him, and glanced at the hot red soil of Georgia and the breathless city of a hundred hills, and felt a vague unrest. Why was his hair tinted with gold? An evil omen was golden hair in my life. Why had not the brown of his eyes crushed out and killed the blue?—for brown were his father's eyes, and his father's father's. And thus in the Land of the Colorline I saw, as it fell across my baby, the shadow of the Veil.

Within the Veil was he born, said I; and there within shall he live,—a Negro and a Negro's son. Holding in that little head—ah, bitterly!—the unbowed pride of a hunted race, clinging with that tiny dimpled hand—ah, wearily!—to a hope not hopeless but unhopeful, and seeing with those bright wondering eyes that peer into my soul a land whose freedom is to us a mockery and whose liberty a lie. I saw the shadow of the Veil as it passed over my baby, I saw the cold city towering above the blood-red land. I held my face beside his little cheek, showed him the star-children and the twinkling lights as they began to flash, and stilled with an even-song the unvoiced terror of my life.

So sturdy and masterful he grew, so filled with bubbling life, so tremulous with the unspoken wisdom of a life but eighteen months distant from the All-life,—we were not far from worshipping this revelation of the divine, my wife and I. Her own life builded and moulded itself upon the child; he tinged her every dream and idealized her every effort. No hands but hers must touch and garnish those little limbs; no dress or frill must touch them that had not wearied her fingers; no voice but hers could coax him off to Dreamland, and she and he together spoke some soft and unknown tongue and in it held communion. I too mused above his little white bed; saw the strength of my own arm stretched onward through the ages through the newer strength of his; saw the dream

of my black fathers stagger a step onward in the wild phantasm of the world; heard in his baby voice the voice of the Prophet that was to rise within the Veil.

AND so we dreamed and loved and planned by fall and winter and the full flush of the long Southern spring, till the hot winds rolled from the fetid Gulf, till the roses shivered and the still stern sun quivered its awful light over the hills of Atlanta. And then one night the little feet pattered wearily to the wee white bed, and the tiny hands trembled; and a warm flushed face tossed on the pillow, and we knew baby was sick. Ten days he lay there,—a swift week and three endless days, wasting, wasting away. Cheerily the mother nursed him the first days, and laughed into the little eyes that smiled again. Tenderly then she hovered round him, till the smile fled away and Fear crouched beside the little bed.

Then the day ended not, and night was a dreamless terror, and joy and sleep slipped away. I hear now that Voice at midnight calling me from dull and dreamless trance,—crying, "The Shadow of Death! The Shadow of Death!" Out into the starlight I crept, to rouse the gray physician,—the Shadow of Death, the Shadow of Death. The hours trembled on; the night listened; the ghastly dawn glided like a tired thing across the lamplight. Then we two alone looked upon the child as he turned toward us with great eyes, and stretched his string-like hands,—the Shadow of Death! And we spoke no word, and turned away.

He died at eventide, when the sun lay like a brooding sorrow above the western hills, veiling its face; when the winds spoke not, and the trees, the great green trees he loved, stood motionless. I saw his breath beat quicker and quicker, pause, and then his little soul leapt like a star that travels in the night and left a world of darkness in its train. The day changed not; the same tall trees peeped in at the windows, the same green grass glinted in the setting sun. Only in the chamber of death writhed the world's most piteous thing—a childless mother.

I shirk not. I long for work. I pant for a life full of striving. I am no coward, to shrink before the rugged rush of the storm, nor even quail before the awful shadow of the Veil. But hearken, O Death! Is not this my life hard enough,—is not that dull land that stretches its sneering web about me cold enough,—is not all the world beyond these four little walls pitiless enough, but that thou must needs enter here,—thou, O Death? About my head the thundering storm beat like a heartless voice, and the crazy forest pulsed with the curses of the weak; but what cared I, within my home beside my wife and baby boy? Wast thou so jealous of one little coign of happiness that thou must needs enter here,—thou, O Death?

A perfect life was his, all joy and love, with tears to make it brighter, —sweet as a summer's day beside the Housatonic. The world loved him; the women kissed his curls, the men looked gravely into his wonderful eyes, and the children hovered and fluttered about him. I can see him now, changing like the sky from sparkling laughter to darkening frowns, and then to wondering thoughtfulness as he watched the world. He knew no color-line, poor dear,—and the Veil, though it shadowed him, had not yet darkened half his sun. He loved the white matron, he loved his black nurse; and in his little world walked souls alone, uncolored and unclothed. I—yea, all men—are larger and purer by the infinite breadth of that one little life. She who in simple clearness of vision sees beyond the stars said when he had flown, "He will be happy There; he ever loved beautiful things." And I, far more ignorant, and blind by the web of mine own weaving, sit alone winding words and muttering, "If still he be, and he be There, and there be a There, let him be happy, O Fate!"

BLITHE was the morning of his burial, with bird and song and sweet-smelling flowers. The trees whispered to the grass, but the children sat with hushed faces. And yet it seemed a ghostly unreal day,—the wraith of Life. We seemed to rumble down an unknown street behind a little white bundle of posies, with the shadow of a song in our ears. The busy city dinned about us; they did not say much, those pale-faced hurrying men and women; they did not say much,—they only glanced and said, "Niggers!"

We could not lay him in the ground there in Georgia, for the earth there is strangely red; so we bore him away to the northward, with his flowers and his little folded hands. In vain, in vain!—for where, O God! beneath thy broad blue sky shall my dark baby rest in peace,—where Reverence dwells, and Goodness, and a Freedom that is free?

All that day and all that night there sat an awful gladness in my heart,—nay, blame me not if I see the world thus darkly through the Veil,—and my soul whispers ever to me, saying, "Not dead, not dead, but escaped; not bond, but free." No bitter meanness now shall sicken his baby heart till it die a living death, no taunt shall madden his happy boyhood. Fool that I was to think or wish that this little soul should grow choked and deformed within the Veil! I might have known that yonder deep unwordly look that ever and anon floated past his eyes was peering far beyond this narrow Now. In the poise of his little curl-crowned head did there not sit all that wild pride of being which his father had hardly crushed in his own heart? For what, forsooth, shall a Negro want with pride amid the studied humiliations of fifty million fellows? Well sped, my boy, before the world had

dubbed your ambition insolence, had held your ideals unattainable, and taught you to cringe and bow. Better far this nameless void that stops my life than a sea of sorrow for you.

Idle words; he might have borne his burden more bravely than we,—aye, and found it lighter too, some day; for surely, surely this is not the end. Surely there shall yet dawn some mighty morning to lift the Veil and set the prisoned free. Not for me,—I shall die in my bonds,—but for fresh young souls who have not known the night and waken to the morning; a morning when men ask of the workman, not "Is he white?" but "Can he work?" When men ask artists, not "Are they black?" but "Do they know?" Some morning this may be, long, long years to come. But now there wails, on that dark shore within the Veil, the same deep voice, Thou Shalt forego! And all have I foregone at that command, and with small complaint,—all save that fair young form that lies so coldly wed with death in the nest I had builded.

If one must have gone, why not I? Why may I not rest me from this restlessness and sleep from this wide waking? Was not the world's alembic, Time, in his young hands, and is not my time waning? Are there so many workers in the vineyard that the fair promise of this little body could lightly be tossed away? The wretched of my race that line the alleys of the nation sit fatherless and unmothered; but Love sat beside his cradle, and in his ear Wisdom waited to speak. Perhaps now he knows the All-love, and needs not to be wise. Sleep, then, child,—sleep till I sleep and waken to a baby voice and the ceaseless patter of little feet —above the Veil.

A Reply to SIDNEY HOOK

COMMUNISM AND TRUTH

By HERBERT APTHEKER

After the recent wave of firings of university teachers in New York City, Professor Sidney Hook, head of the Department of Philosophy of New York University, wrote a long article in a student newspaper upholding these assaults on academic freedom. Hook, notorious as a mouthpiece of "liberalized" McCarthyism and war-bent imperialism, declared that "no present member of the Communist Party can honestly fulfill his vocation or his unspoken commitment as a scholar and teacher to the ethics and logic of objective, scientific inquiry."

Shortly thereafter a group of students from New York University visited Herbert Aptheker and invited him to challenge Hook to a public debate on the issues raised. Dr. Aptheker sent such a challenge. The further story is explained in the public letter to Hook that follows.

I HAVE received your letter, dated December 12th, in which you reject my proposal to publicly debate your false assertion that the Communist Party of the United States is conspiratorial and that a Communist is incapable of scientific, objective inquiry.

Though the letter is dated December 12, it is postmarked December 17 and was received the next day. Friends tell me that my note to you and your two thousand word reply have already been printed in a university newspaper—this explains, I suppose, your waiting a week before sending me your letter, thus making sure that no reply to it appeared in the same issue. I found it interesting, also, that you sent me a carbon copy of this letter. To whom did the original go?—J. Edgar Hoover, or was it to another of your fellow anti-Communist savants — like Howard Rushmore, or Walter Winchell, or Martin Dies?

Tell me, Professor, do you teach ethics, too, in your Department of Philosophy?

Enough, however, for the externals of your letter. Let us turn, now—taking a deep breath and exhaling slowly—to the contents of the letter.

You begin your epistle, in a characteristically modest manner, by saying that you will not debate with me, for you do not desire to "help build

up an audience" for me; and you end your delightful missive, in a characteristically rapacious manner, by urging that I extend *your* audience by publishing it in *Masses & Mainstream!* Really, Professor, I think you should head the Department of Business Administration rather than the Department of Philosophy—or is there no longer a distinction between the two?

You add that you would no sooner debate with me than you would with a Nazi "who offered to debate me to prove that Hitler was not really an anti-Semite." Well, now, in the first place no Nazi would want to prove any such thing, and in the second place you most certainly are not debating these days with Nazis or fascists, at all, are you? No, you, and the ruling class that pays you, are, with the Nazis, frothing at the mouth to get your fangs once again into the living flesh of socialism, into the U.S.S.R. Your Adenauer government, your great ally in defense of "Western Civilization," has a Foreign Ministry whose staff is 85 percent Nazi, and in whose Ministry of the Interior function twelve of Hitler's generals.

And does your fastidiousness extend to Franco, Professor? General Collins, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, has just left Franco's generals, the *N. Y. Times* of December 19 reports from Madrid, after conferring on how best to spend the $125,000,000 Congress appropriated towards sustaining your fellow upholder of "Western Civilization." Any debates with the Generalissimo, or the General, these days, heroic, open-minded, truth-seeking Professor?

TALKING of fastidiousness, Professor, whatever made you contribute that piece on "What Is 'Guilt by Association'?" to the November 1952 *American Mercury?* Do they pay that well, Professor? I ask, not because of the article's theme, which was really old-hat for you. You were simply lambasting the Communists again, and such "dupes" as the American Association of University Professors and the American Civil Liberties Union and the Public Affairs Committee for having some doubts as to the decency of fastening guilt upon individuals through their past associations. This, as I say, was all part of your noble defense of Western Civilization that you have been conducting so self-sacrificially. But—the *American Mercury?* Why, the chairman of its board, as the magazine proudly announces, is Mr. Russell Maguire. Now, this Mr. Maguire, as *Time Magazine* reminded everyone recently (December 8, 1952, p. 42), made his money through oil and submachine guns and uses it, not only to pay for your articles, but to distribute anti-Semitic and fascist publications such as those of John Beaty, Merwin K. Hart and Allen A. Zoll. Indeed, Mr. Zoll has handled the *Mercury's* ads and its subscrip-

tion department. The *Mercury's* editor, William Bradford Huie (did you find him a pleasant chap?) announces that he knew his boss was a Christian Fronter, but, he says, "if Adolph Hitler was alive and wanted to give a million dollars to the *American Mercury*," he'd hasten to accept it.

Mr. Maguire and Mr. Huie recognize objectivity when they see it, don't they, Professor?

You say, still in your first paragraph, that your "evidence for characterizing the Communist Party as a conspiracy, and its members as professionally unfit to fulfill the vocation of a teacher, has been published many times." That is true—you haven't wanted for publishers and you have, in this, found a lucrative profession. Communism has been damned incessantly and banned repeatedly, but it has not been refuted.

Nothing you say of Communism was not said before by Thiers, Bismarck, Mussolini, Hitler, Hirohito, Franco, Chiang Kai-shek, Al Capone and other statesmen. But a lie—uttered by Hitler in 1932, does not become the truth because it is uttered by Hook in 1952.

On the contrary, it is the same Big Lie, fabricated and spread for the same reason—to prepare the way for fascism and world war.

Communism is not a conspiracy and Communists are not conspirators. From Engels' *Principles of Communism,* written in 1847, where one reads: "Communists know only too well that all conspiracies are not only useless but even harmful," to Lenin's *Tasks of Russian Social-Democrats,* written fifty years later, where Lenin said of himself and his comrades: "They do not believe in conspiracies; they think that the period of conspiracies has long passed away" (*Selected Works,* International Publishers, 1943, Vol. I, p. 382-83), to Dimitrov's denial of the same slander at the Reichstag trial, to Dennis' denial at the first Foley Square trial, to the denial by Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and her fellow-defendants today at the second Foley Square trial, Communists have always opposed conspiracy. Communism being, as the *Communist Manifesto* states, a movement of the vast majority in the interest of the vast majority, and basing itself on science, must be and is, organically and by definition, opposed to conspiracy. Within the limits of a communication this basic proposition cannot be developed fully. Had you agreed to a debate, its development would have been central to my presentation.

HERE let me only add that to think of Lenin, Stalin and Mao Tse-tung as conspirators and the history-making mass movements which they led or lead as conspiracies is either lunacy, depravity or colossal ignorance. To think of a Dr. Norman Bethune, a Theodore Dreiser, a William Z. Foster, a Louis Aragon, a

Pablo Neruda, a Martin Anderson Nexö, a Pablo Picasso, a Dolores Ibarruri, a Nazim Hikmet, a Julius Fuchik, a Gabriel Péri and a thousand more of the most talented, devoted and self-sacrificing leaders of humanity as conspirators also reflects, and can only reflect, lunacy, depravity or colossal ignorance.

I take this opportunity, once again, to challenge you to publicly debate this question with me at any place and time you name.

But, to return to your letter.

Still in your first paragraph, you refer, oh, so blithely and innocently, to "freedom of the press." But you were less naive and more truthful, back in 1934—those "emotional Thirties," as your fellow repentant, Irwin Shaw, so pleadingly called them. Back then, speaking at the University of Virginia, on July 4, you saw that,

> "The right to manufacture anything for the market means the actual power of the owners as a class to determine what the rest of the population shall consume . . . to operate the press, movies, and radios as business enterprises; to control churches and schools. . . . (*International Conciliation,* December, 1934, no. 305, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, p. 455.)

Now, after eighteen more years of the trustification and cartelization of the newspaper business, you call the press of the U.S.—central propaganda device of the millionaire class that owns it, whose salaciousness and anti-humanistic malignity have plumbed new depths of depravity—you call this "free"!

As to your concluding remark, in the first paragraph, concerning my "own fatherland, the Soviet Union," you write this so boldly only because you know that a Communist these days has few rights enforceable in the courts. But this attempted slander, dealt out in your snide way, is like your hostility in general, a mark of honor.

We turn now to the excerpted quotations you have offered in an attempt to prove that a Communist cannot have an objective, scientific approach because he is a lost soul, in pawn to monstrous plotters, or, better, is the willing agent of such monstrous plotters.

To introduce our remarks in this regard we choose to quote Sidney Hook. Writing in the "emotional Thirties," when a volume entitled *Towards The Understanding of Karl Marx: A Revolutionary Interpretation* (John Day, N. Y., 1933) would be in tune with the times—even if, as in this case, it did not really enhance an "understanding of Karl Marx"—our author said (p. x): "No author can guard himself from the will to misunderstand. But he can diminish the dangers of distortion by inviting the reader to follow the argument in its own terms and to judge it in the context of the views opposed."

I agree with these two sentences. Do you, now, Professor? Let us examine your offers of proof in the

right of the above elementary criterion of scholarship, as well as in the right of others, equally axiomatic—such as accurate quotation, for example.

THUS, to show what horrendous creatures we Communists are you quote Lenin this way: "It is necessary to agree to any and every sacrifice and even—if need be—resort to all sorts of stratagems, maneuvers, and illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuges. . . ." And you cite his Selected Works, Vol. X, p. 95. The words you quoted actually read, and I italicize what you carelessly omitted: "It is necessary *to withstand all this,* to agree to any and every sacrifice, and even—if need be—to resort to all sorts of stratagems, manoeuvers, and illegal methods, to evasions and subterfuges . . ." Why omit the four words, Professor? Because if they are included, the reader will ask: What does Lenin mean—"to withstand all this?" The reader will want to know what preceded these words, and what followed these words, written in 1920; the reader will want "to follow the argument in its own terms and to judge it in the context of the views opposed."

Let the reader do that and what does he find. What is it that is to be withstood? Why, the pressure of the bosses who will fight "to prevent Communists from getting into the trade unions" and will, in the course of this use "the police and the courts," and will "insult, bait and persecute them." This is what is to be withstood. And to make his point perfectly clear Lenin follows the quoted words with reference to the persecutions "under tsarism" and to the use by the tsar of "secret service agents" who sought to trap class-conscious workers and so maintain the illegality of the trade-union movement.

Oh, objective Professor, how different is the quotation when fully given and placed in its context! But then, as our young writer Hook said, "No author can guard himself from the will to misunderstand."

Again, you quote the resolutions of the Ninth Convention of the Communist Party of the U.S.A. this way: "In order to carry out their work effectively, and to win the respect and confidence of the workers, all Communists must *at all times* take a position *on every question* that is in line with the policies of the Party." It would have been helpful, if what you sought was to convey truth, had you stated that this convention was held in 1936 and that the italics were not in the original. It would have been helpful, too, and in accordance with elementary standards of scholarship (isn't it shocking that a Communist must point this out to the truth-seeking, dedicated chairman of a philosophy department in a great university?) to have really quoted the entire sentence, rather than to give the reader part of the sentence under false pretenses. The sentence reads, and again

I italicize what you carelessly omitted:

> "In order to carry through their work effectively, and to win the respect and confidence of the workers, all Communists must at all times take a position on every question that is in line with the policies of the Party, *which always are designed to serve the best interests of the masses.*"

A small detail, eh, Professor? And, of course, excising a part of this sentence may convey, as you meant it to convey, that soulless robots are told from on high what they will think about everything and then, by some magic or evil device, do believe that way. What vicious nonsense! The Communist Party operates democratically—a million times more democratically than the corrupt, gangster-ridden big business parties—and its line is hammered out after the most extensive and searching criticism and evaluation. And the line is tested among the people and constantly re-evaluated, with utmost freedom, as a *duty* of the membership. Of course, members remain members voluntarily and membership connotes here, as elsewhere, basic agreement, but nothing is further from a robot, from an unthinking tool, than is a Communist.

AGAIN, you quote William Z. Foster as writing, in 1938, in connection with professional people, that they are to be admitted into the Party if they "show by practical work that they definitely understand the Party line, are prepared to put it into effect, and especially display a thorough readiness to accept Party discipline." You add your own italics, but this is no time to become finicky over relatively picayunish violations of scholarly standards. Foster's point was that professional people, normally of well-to-do or petty-bourgeois backgrounds, might tend, more than workers, to be vacillating, anarchistic and arrogant (would you know anything about this, Professor?). That is why the words immediately following the ones you excerpted, go on to say: "It is not enough that professionals should support our general struggle for democracy and peace; they must also accept the socialist principles of our Party."

And it would have helped, too, if you had told the reader what it was that Foster wanted "put into effect." His preceding section developed that. Here is an example, coming just before your excerpt: ". . . Our doctors must be the first-line champions of an adequate government health program, our lawyers must fight for free legal aid for the masses, our teachers must still further popularize education, our actors must democratize the theatre, our writers must find ways to bring good literature and effective political writing to the masses. . . ." Pretty dangerous stuff, isn't it, Professor?

And then you quote another whole sentence from this 1938 article of

William Z. Foster. "Thus, our teachers must write new school textbooks and rewrite history from the Marxian viewpoint." Horrors!—you write: "this affects *you*" (your eloquent italics), and then, solemnly, you add: "You are an historian." How momentous, and how pretentious!

Shall only the sons-in-law of iron magnates, like Rhodes, and the sons of adjutant-generals, like Schouler, and millionaire dairy farmers like Beard, and editors of big business journals like Oberholtzer, and the scions of Georgia plantation owners like Phillips, write new textbooks and history books? Only the rich, white Anglo-Saxon Republicans and Democrats?! Foster here is saying what Engels said: "All history must be written anew." Of course, and from the viewpoint of the working class and oppressed nationalities, of the vast majority of mankind, from the viewpoint of the masses—the only objective viewpoint there is. I am a Marxist, and an historian, and will write, to the best of my ability, in accordance with my outlook. I think this outlook is the most fruitful for historical investigation; if it isn't, let this be demonstrated—let the omissions and errors be pointed out, let the criticism be unrestrained —but honest!

In your letter you point to "sworn public testimony" to the effect that I and others, acting under the orders of the Soviet police, undertook to "rewrite" American history. It is interesting to find you have such ready access to police files. The testimony you refer to was offered by an informer whose name I have forgotten (I think he was rewarded with a job at Fordham), who testified before the notorious Rapp-Coudert inquisition some twelve or thirteen years ago. His story, if your summary is correct, was a colossal prevarication. Personally, all I remember of his testimony was that when this person, whom I did not know, testified concerning me, he knew me so well that he erroneously rendered both my first and last names, calling me several times Henry Apotheker —what an imaginative alias!

WHAT is left of your communication? A few sentences torn out of context and culled with colossal care from one article amongst thousands in the thirty-one thick volumes of a monthly magazine in existence for a generation. And this is presented as though it were Holy Script! I don't know what it is to you, but I do know what it is to me: it is sentences, sixteen years old, excerpted by an intensely hostile selector, which are poorly conceived and badly phrased.

And then three specific assertions with which you climax your letter—each as false as the other.

You say "the Kremlin decided" that the Negro people in the United States constitute a nation. And that it then "commanded" Communists to adopt this idea which you state,

with noble indignation, "would Jim Crow the American Negroes into a segregated state of their own." This entire paragraph contains more falsehoods than it does words.

The Kremlin has never ordered anyone to believe anything about the Negro people in the United States; the position of the Communist Party on the Negro question in the United States as a national question is entirely misrepresented by you, and your idea that from this position one arrives at a Jim Crow state reflects not only your colossal ignorance of this whole question, but also the crassest white chauvinism.

You should know that the clearest presentation of the Marxist-Leninist position on the Negro question in the United States yet written is *Negro Liberation* by Harry Haywood, published in 1948 by International Publishers. In that book you will find the following words:

> "What, concretely, is the meaning of the right of self-determination? What should be understood by it? Is it to be identified with separation? As regards the Negroes, is it to be equated to the demand for a separate Negro state in the Black Belt—a Negro republic? [a demand, let me add, that has been raised by various Negro newspapers and leaders, at different times, for the past hundred years—H.A.] Does it run counter to the principle of Negro and white unity, so essential to the struggle for Negro rights and democracy? Is it not a capitulation to Jim Crow or segregation, as many of the critics of this principle contend? . . .
>
> "The right of self-determination means none of these things. Quite the contrary." (p. 157)

And again, Mr. Haywood writes: "It would be scraping the very bottom of the foul pit of distortion and calumny to label this democratic need of the Negro people of the Black Belt a concession to Jim Crow or to assert that it plays into the hands of the Bilbos and Talmadges." (p. 161)

Written as though he had you in mind, is it not, Professor Hook? If you did not know this work, you should be scholar enough to be aware of your ignorance; if you did know of it, you deliberately falsified.

And from this you leap to biology and to the Michurin-Lysenko rejection of Weissmann-Morgan theories in this field. Here you quote two sentences from a Professor Zhebrak, as translated and excerpted (it is *not* printed in full, as you falsely assert) in a book authored by two well-known "friendly" inquirers into Soviet life, George S. Counts and Nucia Lodge. This is like King George III quoting Voltaire through excerpting from a translation and abstract by Edmund Burke! Is this an example of the methodology of objective scholarship that you teach in your Department?

THE impression you seek to convey in this tortured excerpt is of a scholar, bound hand and foot to political vulgarians, who leaps to conform to their whim and will. Even the excerpt offered by Counts and Lodge will refute such a slander, for that does present three pages at least of scientific argumentation and self-debate. Moreover, of course, the

source for this whole controversy is the 600-page book, *The Situation in Biological Science: Proceedings of the Lenin Academy of Agricultural Sciences of the U.S.S.R.*, the complete stenographic report of the eight-day meeting held in the Summer of 1948 (published by International Publishers in 1949). Here will be found the most intense kind of public, scientific debate, culminating years of searching, open inquiry, experimentation and investigation into the entire field. And here, too, will be found our friend Professor Zhebrak, participating vigorously and at length in the proceedings (see especially pages 467-476), the result of which was an affirmation on the part of the assembled scientists of their belief that the Michurin-Lysenko theory was in accordance with scientific truth.

It was from Oregon State College that a professor of chemistry was fired a few years ago for daring to suggest, in a letter to the editor of a professional journal, that the theories of Lysenko should be at least examined *prior* to being condemned! Where were your protests in this case, Professor?

From Lysenko you leap to Czechoslovakia and find there—via Vienna and the *New York Times*—"an official pogrom on a high level"! The reportage from Vienna on the people's democracies of eastern Europe is on a par with the reportage from Riga and Bucharest on the Soviet Union that used to adorn the pages of the *Times*, the Hearst press and other pillars of your "free press." There is no person—not to speak of a scholar—who does not know that these newspapers—that all boss-owned newspapers — have consistently carried on the most unrestrained campaign of unadulterated lies against all lands where the people take power into their own hands and become their own bosses. The lies eventually are exposed. (Remember the publication in 1941 of the diary of the U.S. Ambassador to the U.S.S.R., Joseph Davies' *Mission to Moscow* and how he had commented on the treason trials of the late 1930's: "In discussing the trial [with a fellow diplomat] he said that the defendants were undoubtedly guilty; that all of us who attended the trial had practically agreed on that; that the outside world, from the press reports, however, seemed to think that the trial was a put-up job . . . that while he knew it was not, it was probably just as well that the outside world should think so"—remember?) But manufacture of lies exceeds their exposure — thanks to your "free press."

FINALLY, you pen this gem: "Tell us whether as an objective historian you agree with the *Daily Worker's* claim that the framed Slansky trials have no anti-Jewish aspect, whereas the Rosenbergs, charged and convicted of a most heinous crime against the United States, are being punished merely because they are Jews?"

First: most certainly the Czechoslovak trials carry no anti-Jewish aspect. In that country, unlike our own, the display of anti-Semitism is a serious crime, severely punished, and one of the charges, *in those trials,* made by the prosecution was that several of the defendants had been anti-Semitic.

Second: You are certain the trials in Czechoslovakia were "framed," but that the Rosenbergs are really guilty "of a most heinous crime." Your famous "open" mind, seems to be open only at one end! In one trial defendants charged with specific acts of treason, sabotage and murder (including turning over to the tender mercies of the Gestapo the national hero of Czechoslovakia, Julius Fuchik) confess their guilt—but you are sure they were "framed"; in the other case the defendants, though offered their lives if they confess, refuse the offer and persist in maintaining their innocence, but you are sure they are guilty. In one case dozens of witnesses and scores of documents demonstrating the defendants' guilt are introduced, but you know they are "framed"; in the other case there is one decisive witness and his testimony, denied by both defendants, is ridiculed by scientists throughout the country as absurd, but you know those defendants are guilty. In one case no perjurious witnesses are proven to exist; in the other the prosecution itself agrees that one of its witnesses, connected with circumstantial evidence, did perjure himself, at the instigation of an agent of the F.B.I., but you know the Rosenbergs *are* guilty!

Third: What is the "most heinous crime" *charged* against the Rosenbergs? The passing of information —known and never secret—to a war-time ally. This is the *charge*—the "most heinous crime," and this is denied, and despite this, these two parents are to die—and you are satisfied!

Fourth: The *Daily Worker* has never said that the Rosenbergs were condemned "merely because they are Jews." It has said, and I say, that anti-Semitism played and plays a part in this case. Is it accidental that a jury selected in New York City to try Jewish defendants does not have a Jew sitting on it? Is it not a fact that the depraved creatures who have asked the authorities to witness the executions desire especially to see Jews burn? Is it not a fact that this Nazi-like sadism is present in connection with the unprecedented death sentence meted out in this case?

Fifth: Your paragraph conveys a finality as to guilt if one is "charged and convicted" in this country. Mooney was charged and convicted. Sacco and Vanzetti were charged and convicted. The Scottsboro Boys were charged and convicted. Read *Convicting The Innocent* by Professor E. B. Borchard (Yale University Press, 1933), a study of 65 cases of innocent people "charged and convicted" in this country. "Frame-up"

is an American word.

Sixth: I have read the record in this Rosenberg case, and I have read the analysis of the record by the distinguished British barrister, D. N. Pritt, and this study convinces me that the Rosenbergs are innocent and that they are being railroaded to the chair as part of the pro-war and pro-fascist drive of the American ruling class. They are to serve, if they die, as object lessons of the terror to fall upon those who, like them, hate fascism and struggle for peace.

Have *you* read the record? Have *you* studied Pritt's analysis? Should *you* not—as an objective scholar—should you not do that before accepting the justice of the Rosenbergs' pending execution?

AT ONE point you say my "own writings," especially in terms of the history of the Negro people, show a "Kremlin" control. What writings? There have been half a dozen books, about ten pamphlets and hundreds of reviews and articles in scores of newspapers and magazines. You appear to be referring to my recent work—perhaps to my *Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States.* Dr. Du Bois says this is a "milestone on the path to Truth." What do you say? You say that because I am a Communist I must think in such and such a manner, and if I think in such a manner, I cannot be an objective scholar. In exactly the same way teachers are accused as Communists and fired. You say that they must violate the ethics of their profession because as Communists they must think and act in a certain way. But you distort and falsify the position and practices of Communists and on the basis of such distortion come to conclusions which you insist are inevitable.

This is the technique of "constructive treason," of "conspiracy" charges, of Smith Act frame-ups. The way to demonstrate a scholar's lack of objectivity, his failure to adhere to the canons of scholarship is to examine his *writings,* as I have done with your letter; the way to prove the evil or inefficient or tendentious teaching of a teacher—and here there are dozens of teachers involved, with hundreds of years of experience and with thousands of former students—is to examine his or her professional *conduct.* In no case were the teachers accused, even, of being poor teachers. On the contrary, all had exemplary records. It was only on the basis of a syllogism with a false foundation that the persecution is conducted, because the purpose is not the protection of free education but rather its vitiation.

May I add that I find your "defense" of science rather strange. I say this not only because of the unscientific nature of your own communication to me, as demonstrated above, but also because of the abandonment of science which is a hallmark of present bourgeois academicians serving imperialism. These academicians

have embraced either mysticism or formalism, so that a Charles Beard, in his last years, gives up causation and a Professor Bridgman, discussing the "Philosophical Implications of Physics" finds that:

> "The world fades out and eludes us because it becomes meaningless. We cannot even express this in the way we would like. We cannot say that there exists a world beyond any knowledge possible to us because of the nature of knowledge. The very concept of existence becomes meaningless. It is literally true that the only way of reacting to this is to shut up" (*Bulletin,* February, 1950, III, No. 5, of American Academy of Arts and Sciences).

This is the vista of your class, Professor Hook—meaningless existence, in which prudent ones will shut up. This is your "objectivity."

Those who see and yearn for another future—a meaningful, dignified, creative and peaceful future, will not and must not shut up. Those who defend freedom will reject the persecution of Communists and radicals and progressives and those whom a McCarran-McCarthy finds distasteful. History demonstrates that the persecution of Communists is the prelude to the destruction of elementary democratic rights and to the launching of aggressive wars. All who value life itself must reject and oppose such a course.

Have We Heard from YOU?

"Enclosed find $10. *Wish I could afford more. Lots of luck and keep punching."* Every morning's mail brings dozens of letters like this in response to our fund appeal.

The ten dollar bills and the singles and fifties are starting to roll up. From Santa Monica, Cal., M. G. writes: "I would like to say that the magazine has improved over the past year. The publishing venture has brought America a new richness from the pens of heroes." From a Gary steel worker: "Reading *M&M* is a wonderful experience." From a student in the midwest: "I find past and current issues of *M&M* in the University library. Of equal importance to its information, is the courageous spirit transmitted through word and picture."

So we are off to a fine start. Now we must roll up our sleeves for the second month of the campaign. We are still a long ways off from the goal of $7,500 needed to carry on effectively in 1953.

We appeal to you not to postpone. Please add your dollars—today!—to the campaign. Let's see to it that *M&M* moves ahead in the fight for peace, freedom, and progressive culture.

Charles White's Humanist Art

By SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

THANKS to the courtesy of the artist, Charles White, I have been able to see a "preview" of his exhibition of paintings and drawings, which can be seen at the ACA Gallery in New York, February 9-28. It will be, like every exhibition of this artist's work in recent years, an outstanding event in our country's art life. And those who have been following his work will be overjoyed to see that he has made a qualitative leap in a development that from its beginning had held high the banner of realism and love for the working people.

The keynote of Charles White's work may be expressed in the words, "What is truly human is beautiful." It seems to be a simple statement, yet it took centuries of bitter struggle to bring to the fore of social consciousness the true character, the humanity, the depth and beauty of the greatest part of the people, the working people, whose labor has made possible all the achievements of civilization and the discoveries of science. For ages, it was the exploiters of their fellow men who commissioned artists to paint their portraits, demanding that the artists paint them like gods, or portray them in resplendent robes that would emphasize the difference between them and the rest of humanity. In their minds, it was only they who were worth being recorded in art. They could not see the great mass of common humanity as human beings.

Charles White paints the working people, and particularly his own Negro people, not in resplendent robes but in the garments of labor—overalls, battered straw hats, simple cotton dresses—in the fields and at home. And in the beauty and richness of character of these faces and figures he has not merely echoed the portraits of the past, but brought forth something new. For the marks of labor are found in the faces and figures. Along with this appears the strength that comes from having met adversity and refused to succumb to it, and the dignity and confidence which arises out of this strength.

There is a tradition, of course, for this kind of art. It is found in some of the portrait sculpture of Africa, in the work of Rembrandt, Goya,

Daumier and Repin, and in the United States, to name but two, in the work of Winslow Homer and John Sloan. But it can be said flatly that no artist up to now in our country has painted the working people with the depth, richness, love and understanding found in these works of Charles White. They recall something of the quality of the great spirituals, which, created under slavery, expressed in music the dignity, human character, right to love and sorrow, and the determination to fight for liberation, of the Negro people.

A profound lesson emerges from these paintings and drawings, one particularly important in these days when many minds succumb to fear and hysteria. It is the lesson of understanding the strength and unconquerable character of the working people; it is the lesson of confidence in the future. And it is no accident that it should be a Negro artist who teaches us this lesson. For to the Negro people reactionary violence is nothing new. For three hundred years they have met conditions of terrible adversity and conquered them. Today in fighting for their own rights, they are in the forefront of the struggle for the rights of all Americans.

CHARLES WHITE'S road has not been an easy one. He was born thirty-four years ago in Chicago, his father a railroad and steel worker, his mother a domestic worker. They bought him a violin and also, at the age of seven, a paint set. He studied the violin for several years, but what he always wanted to be was an artist, and he drew and painted in his spare time while working as a bus boy, newspaper boy, waiter, sign painter, valet, cook. It was on the work relief projects of the depression years that he was able for the first time to devote full time to painting.

Since then it is as an artist that he has made a precarious living. He has received honors, including two Rosenwald fellowships, a grant in 1952 from the National Academy of Arts and Letters, and most recently a $500 prize award from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in its show of water colors, drawings and prints. He is represented in the Library of Congress, the Whitney museum, the permanent collections of many Negro colleges, as well as in the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. Yet he has never been given real recognition by the United States bourgeoisie. Barred to him, because he is a Negro and also because he is a realist, are the avenues of advancement which open so easily to other painters, particularly the purveyors of worthless abstractions, "automatisms" and meaningless symbolisms.

The trend on the WPA art projects, among many progressive painters, was one of marrying the seeming "liberation" of the abstract and symbolic trends with some hint of a realistic and working class imagery.

From the start Charles White devoted himself to the working class subject. Yet it was not easy to find the best path. He avoided the superficial resemblance to life, the naturalism, of academic art. The problem was to enrich his art with ideas, with profound meaning. For a while he sought this through partly symbolic means such as the simplification of features, the enlargement of the hands, the use of bold brush strokes and gleaming color surfaces. Even this work had the power of standing for the human image as the center of art, and for a loving, realistic approach to people, as against the formalistic currents.

The great step he has made recently, as seen so well in the present show, is towards a greater naturalness, and with this a greater depth of psychology, expressiveness and beauty. He has also tackled more profoundly the problem of groups of people, and therefore of the relationships between people. His technique has become immeasurably richer and more subtle as a tool in his hand. It is this path, of expanding the portrayal of characteristic working class actions and relationships, which promises the most for his future development.

OF THE twelve pictures in the show, three are oil paintings, and in them, along with the tenderness he displays towards his human subjects, such as a man and woman embracing, or a man playing the guitar while a woman listens (this done in memory of the great folk artist, Huddie Ledbetter), he discloses a color of great sensitivity, and realistic, soft play of light. Three are drawings, including the moving one of a Negro woman raising her hands to her face, which won the Metropolitan Museum award. And there are six which are hard to describe. Done with a combination of charcoal and carbon pencil, they have such a wealth of fine detail, a variety of tones and finesse of drawing, that they can be called not drawings, but "paintings" in black and white. It is in these works that the depth and beauty of his human subjects are best disclosed, as well as his ability to give them expressive gestures that for all their seeming simplicity, have an epic character.

One of these, called "Dawn of a New Tomorrow," is reproduced on the cover of this issue. Another, "This Harvest Talk," shows two men in a field sharpening a scythe. It breathes a love of land and respect for labor. A third, of a man clasping a child, is called "Ye Shall Inherit the Earth."

A profound influence on Charles White was his recent journey to Europe, and his discussions with artists of the Soviet Union and the people's democracies, as well as with progressive artists of France and Italy. What he gained was a greater confidence in his own path. As he says, an artist at home sometimes feels that the active, most conscious, fighters for peace and for human rights, as

well as the artists who have chosen the realistic path in order to portray this, are in the minority. But the truth is that the people fighting for peace and the realist artists are throughout the world by far the great majority.

There was a time when White would sit before a canvas or drawing board and wonder what to paint and how to paint it. Today he has no such problems. With each step, in which he united his art with the real life, character, democratic struggles and progress of the Negro people and the American people as a whole, ideas and subjects began to come thick and fast. Compared to the infantile character of the formalist, non-objective and symbolist art, his portrayals of people have a true maturity, the maturity which comes from the role he plays as a person and artist in social life. Yet he does not feel he has attained his artistic maturity. He knows that as he takes up new problems of portraying life and people, he will have to wrestle with new problems of form. The truth is that realistic art is by far the most difficult and demanding kind of art, for it is the enemy of all formulas, all pat stylistic solutions. Charles White works with full confidence in the people and in a world of peace and human progress. It is this confidence that radiates from his work.

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

Bacteriological Warfare

Adolfo Mexiac

EHRENBURG AND SARTRE

AT THE VIENNA CONGRESS

Writers Speak for Peace

The Congress of the Peoples for Peace, which met in Vienna Dec. 12-19, brought together nearly two thousand representatives from 85 countries. From the Americas came 293 delegates, including 27 from the United States who attended despite serious obstacles created by the State Department.

Those present represented a wide diversity of political outlooks, religious beliefs, nations and races. Trade unionists, clergymen, generals, political leaders, writers, artists, scientists, educators exchanged opinions on the three main points of the agenda: the independence and security of nations; terminations of the wars now raging, above all, the Korean war; and relaxation of international tensions.

The two principal documents adopted were the Appeal of the Congress of the Peoples for Peace, and an Address to the Governments of the Five Great Powers. The former called for a five-power peace pact; immediate cessation of hostilities in Korea, Indo-China, and Malaya; an end to the violence employed against the national aspirations of the peoples of Tunisia and Morocco; peaceful settlement of the German and Japanese questions; prohibition of bacteriological warfare and of atomic, chemical and other weapons directed at civilian populations; elimination of the obstacles to international trade and cultural exchange; and a halt to the interference by one state in the affairs of another.

Writers from 41 countries present at the congress also issued an appeal for the creation of national groups of writers to arrange international meetings of writers for peace. We plan to publish the text and a discussion of this appeal in an early issue.

We publish here in abridged form two of the outstanding speeches at the congress: one by the noted Soviet writer and Stalin international peace prize winner, Ilya Ehrenburg, and the other by Jean-Paul Sartre, French existentialist philosopher, novelist and playwright.

ILYA EHRENBURG:

WE ARE happy to meet here not only with the like-minded and friends, but also with the representatives of other parties, other trends, other worlds. We have not come here to convince them of our rightness, to dispute their philosophical or political beliefs. We desire rather to reach understanding with them on how different people and different nations may live in peace on one earth, how to save all cities, all children, all dreams, from napalm, from atom and hydrogen bombs, from ashes, tears and blood.

As a writer whose duty it is to listen to the beating of the human heart, as a man who has lived through two world wars and has seen far too much of woe and ruin, I want to say: we must do all we can, more than we can, but we must save peace!

I read a recent statement by Styles Bridges, the American Senator. He said that the Korean war was not just a Korean war; it was a world war, the fighting in Korea was its most tangible aspect; the third world war was not a thing of the future, it had already begun, it began even before the second world war was over. The third world war was going to be the longest war ever. . . . We are now in a state of war, he said, and probably will be in a state of war for many years to come. The President we have elected will be a wartime President, our economy will remain a war economy. . . . So far as he knew, Bridges said, not a single prominent Republican or Democrat, general or admiral, had any plan for ending the war; it could not be ended on any other conditions save world victory. Senator Styles Bridges added that as far as he knew, this view was shared by Generals Eisenhower, Bradley and MacArthur and by America's responsible political leaders.

What knowledge of history Senator Styles Bridges has, I do not know; nor do I know just what kind of war he prophesies for mankind—a seven-, thirty-, or hundred-year war. But one thing is clear—if it is true that not a single prominent Republican or Democrat, general or admiral, has any plan for ending the war, these gentlemen certainly have a multitude of plans for prolonging and extending the war.

There was a time when the national interest, injury to a nation's sovereignty or honor, were pleaded in justification of war. Even forays for loot were launched to the accompaniment of words about the dignity of nations. But things have changed: today the peoples are invited to prepare for war not in the name of national interests, but despite national interests. In the past, people were told that to safeguard the independence of their country, they must sacrifice their lives; now they are told that they must forfeit the independence of their countries for the only purpose of sacrificing their lives. This sounds like raving; but it represents the program of the men to whom

enator Styles Bridges referred.

The rulers of a country that inugurated its existence with the Decuration of Independence now declare gainst the independence of other ountries, on the plea that "the conept of sovereignty is outworn and o longer corresponds to the needs f the times."

I shall not dwell on the independnce struggle of the Asian and Afriran peoples. Great nations, bearers f cultures, deprived of their right o progress in the name of false rogress, have now awakened. The xample of China, one of the cradles f human civilization, inspires not nly its neighbors; it rouses far-off unisia. By fighting for their indeendence, the peoples of Asia and frica are at the same time fighting or the brotherhood of all peoples, or peace.

I WANT to dwell on the position of those states, which, though many of them have colonies of their own, are now being made to feel the yoke of colonialism. I want to dwell on the fate of states whose sovereignty is recognized by all, but is by no means respected by all.

I may be asked: why should a Soviet delegate deal with things that primarily concern the countries of Western Europe and Latin America. I feel obliged to do so for a number of reasons. In depriving West European and Latin American states of independence, the Washington rulers invariably raise a hue and cry about "Soviet aggression." They say that if Britons must live more frugally, and conduct themselves more modestly, if the French and Italians must convert their ancient cities, precious to all humanity, into bases for foreign armies, if little industrious Denmark must become a landing field for Flying Fortresses, if the Latin American republics must punctually deliver not only raw materials, but also cannon fodder to their northern neighbor, it is all because we, the builders of the Volga-Don Canal, the forest-planters who are raising a huge green wall to stop the desert winds, the men and women who saved Stalingrad and rebuilt Stalingrad, have evil designs on the vineyards of France, on the antiquities of Rome, on what remains of England's liberties and pride, indeed, even on the coffee of Brazil and the saltpetre of Chile.

How can I, a Soviet delegate, refrain from trying to expose this sordid game of men, who, while humbling and humiliating whole nations, would have the world believe that the Russians are to blame for it all! There is still another reason which impels me to touch on the question of West Europe national independence: we, the bearers of Russian culture, long closely associated with the cultures of the other European countries, cannot witness without pain and indignation the impoverishment and humiliation of great and illustrious nations that are part of our continent.

Those who encroach on the na-

tional sovereignty of Italy, France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway and the Latin American republics try to present their victims as accomplices. Not only do they obstruct cultural and economic intercourse; they vilify the good name of the nations. This must be stopped. I want to say, and most emphatically, that never, never, will we, Soviet people, place an equals sign between the criminals and their victims!

The London *Times* writes that even the most broad-minded Briton must feel an instinctive resentment when he has to ask an American policeman for permission to walk on British soil. The Americans have secured for their soldiers in Britain a sort of capitulations regime. A Conservative M.P., Marlow, has told the House of Commons that British troops in defeated Germany do not enjoy the rights extended to American troops in "allied" Britain. Silverman, a Labour M.P., remarked that Americans machine-gunned Chinese war prisoners who dared to sing their national anthem, and it might well be that they will shoot down Britons with impunity, if the British national anthem happened to offend the ear of a U.S. officer or soldier.

WHOLE volumes could be written on United States interference in the internal affairs of Western Europe and Latin America. United States Ambassadors behave like viceroys. In Britain, they maintain some measure of decorum, but elsewhere U.S. diplomats and generals do not even take the trouble to do that. The whole Greek press was indignant at the U.S. Ambassador's open intervention in the election campaign, but a State Department spokesman hastened to express his full agreement with the Ambassador. As for the Dutch, they have even been denied the right to choose their own plays. Not so long ago the United States Ambassador officially reprimanded several "high-placed persons" who ventured to see a play without obtaining the assent of the American Ambassador. *U.S. News* reports that in Italy the Americans cancelled orders for precision instruments because the factory concerned employed Communists. Very few workers in Italy would be classed as *persona grata* by the Americans, and what the U.S. representatives really want is that the Italians cease being Italians!

Interference in the affairs of other countries often takes on forms that are anything but diplomatic. Everyone remembers the much-advertised assignment of 100 million dollars to promote sabotage activities in the Soviet Union and the people's democracies. But similar activities are evident in the West too. The Premier of Hesse admitted that the band of assassins who planned to wipe out many Social-Democrats and Liberals had been organized by the American occupation authorities. The Belgian *Het Volk* writes that the gang exposed in Hesse was a subdivision of

ramified terrorist organization nown as the "Technical Services," hich operates not only in Western ermany, but also in France, Italy, elgium and Holland.

The former United States Ambas-dor to Argentina, Mr. Braden, said month ago that the U.S. constantly, oth intentionally and unintention-ly, interfered in the affairs of other ountries. Intervention by propagan-a, diplomatic or economic pressure, ntimidation or violence, he pointed ut, would probably continue till hu-an nature changed. I will permit yself the observation that, while am a firm believer in the efficacy f education, I do not think that the eoples of the world can wait until fr. Braden and his superiors change heir "human nature." It would take ecades to re-educate these gentry; eanwhile they can at least be taught ot to try to play the host when they re guests.

The Paris *New York Times* cor-espondent writes that in the days of ouis XIV the saying was that when rance sneezed, it meant that all urope had a cold; today it would be rue to say that when the United tates sneezes, it means that the whole Western world has a cold. Indeed, merica's rulers sneeze loud enough, nd one might recall the Russian roverb: "You can't say God bless ou to every sneeze," but I want to ress a different point. In the days f Louis XIV, France gave Europe ascal, Racine, Molière, La Fontaine, oussin. But no one is likely to speak of the cultural hegemony of a country whose only recent contribution to the Western world has been the tedious speeches of moronic senators, *Reader's Digest* and plague-infested fleas.

In saying this, I mean no offense to the people of the United States, a capable, energetic and hard-working people.

BUT the American people are already beginning to feel the burden of war and bloodshed in Korea. The U.S. rulers have done everything they could to prevent many Americans from attending the Congress of the Peoples. But as our President Frederic Joliot-Curie rightly said, ideas travel without visas. The truth about the Congress of the Peoples will reach millions of Americans. They will learn that we are gathered in Vienna not to do spiritual or material injury to the American people, but only to try to avert war.

Millions of Americans will come to know that the Soviet people do not want their land, or their riches, or the territory of their allies; that they are not seeking to undermine the "American way of life"; that they are willing to live in peace with any America, whatever President it may elect, whatever system it may fancy, whatever its ideal of human existence. Sooner or later, the American people will emerge from their isolation, free themselves from the grim nightmare caused in some cases by illusions of grandeur, and in others

by persecution mania. For the sake both of the happiness of the American people and the happiness of all the peoples of the world, may this come to pass sooner and not later.

But other peoples, and primarily the peoples of our country, the people of Europe who have suffered and created so much, cannot wait until the editor from Oxford, Mississippi, comes to his senses. The peoples of Europe have obligations both to the past and to the future. Their grandfathers and great-grandfathers created states, some great in area, others small, yet all great in their expression of national genius; it was their contribution to human culture that Paris was built by the French, that Goethe was a German and that Cervantes is part of the very soul of Spain.

All who cherish the rich spiritual wealth of mankind rejoice to see the peoples of Latin America, who have built a remarkable blend of the ancient Mayan and Aztec civilizations and Iberian culture, oppose to the racism of the United States, the equality of rights of all races; to the neon lights of Broadway and the movie stunts of Hollywood, high achievements in literature and art; to the cult of the dollar, the labor and heroism of the ordinary people of Brazil or Chile, Argentina or Mexico.

The Congress of the Peoples has met at what we are justified in calling a great turning-point in history. The rulers of America are beginning to see how unrealistic are their dreams of world dominion. The gen
eral director of the Internationa
News Service reports from Paris tha
confidence in the U.S.A. and it
leadership in international affairs i
at its lowest ebb at the present time
. . . Even the government leaders ar
helping to foster anti-American feel
ing, he said. This is confirmed by
United Press correspondent wh
notes that anti-American sentimen
is growing in Europe; in France
has reached a dangerously high leve
Time magazine admits that th
United States is losing one Lati
American country after another: "W
have lost Argentina, Bolivia, Guate
mala, Ecuador and, finally, Chile." A
regards military pacts, a United Pres
dispatch states that it is impossib
to rely on Brazil or even Urugua

THE myth of a Soviet threat ha
outlived its time. The well-know
American journalist, Mr. Lippmann
writes that the peoples of Europ
and their governments believe th
Soviet government when it says th
Red Army will not attack them
This confidence, he adds, lies at th
root of the opposition to the Atlan
tic pact program and is the princip
source of anti-American feelin
L'Observateur says that now, at th
close of the year 1952, the Frenc
bourgeoisie no longer thinks as
did five years ago; it no longer b
lieves in the likelihood of an "inv
sion from the East" and it rebe
against the dictates of America.

Much in the world has chang

thin the past year. This is pre-
ely why it has been possible for
enna to be the scene today not of
Congress of peace supporters, but
a much wider assembly, a Con-
ess of the Peoples. Yes, now the
fenders of peace have become not
rties, not currents, not movements,
it peoples!

In the name of the Soviet dele-
tion, I propose to this high as-
mbly that it confirm the inalienable
ght of all peoples to national inde-
endence, the right to live in their
vn way, subject to no foreign order.
he Belgian or the Guatemalan or
e Iranian way of life deserves ex-
tly the same respect as the Amer-
an way of life. Peoples who hold
ifferent views may help one an-
her, exchange books and discover-
s, raw materials and manufactures.
or this, it is essential to observe the
rinciple of reciprocity and recog-
ize the equality of all sovereign
ates. The security of all states must
e guaranteed by a pact between the
reat powers, by abolition of the
arious aggressive blocs, observance
existing treaties of friendship
nd mutual assistance and return of
e United Nations to the principles
n which it was founded.

The French have an old and wise
ying: "A charcoal-burner is master
his own house." Permit me to
nish with the words: "Long live
e charcoal-burner, master in his
vn house."

JEAN-PAUL SARTRE:

THE new and admirable thing about this Congress for Peace is that it is uniting men. There are no diplomats, no technicians, no ministers. But there are men of all kinds, of all opinions. These are not men out of nowhere—they are Chinese, Germans, Frenchmen, and so on. They have nations, and do not deny them; on the contrary. Only their nationality is not an unreal name; it is part of their reality as men; it is their way of living, working, loving and dying; they are Germans, Russians, Italians, and their nationality, at bottom, is merely their particular point of view, as men, on the subject of peace.

In wartime nationalities separate. They are nothing but permission to shoot the enemy on sight: a Frenchman—is merely a target. Today, for the first time, they are bringing people together. We have met not—as with certain previous congresses of intellectuals—in spite of our origins, but *because* you are from Germany and Viet-Nam, and I am from France. And just as one can say that unreality leads to conflict, one can say that what is reality unites: because that which is real is the sum of the ties that bind men together. And if we but think of the sum of the ties that bind us together, we shall see that our making war would be an utterly imbecile enterprise.

There have been splendid reunions of people wanting peace, before or

during other wars, for example at Zimmerwald and at Kienthal. But these men had power and responsibility; they came as delegates from an association or a party. Here there are men who have come in the name of a party, and others who come entirely alone. And there is no question of giving orders to *one* party, or of creating one. There is no question either of creating some great ineffectual machine, as a super-state would be. No! And the name of the Congress says exactly what it means: Congress of the Peoples.

We have resolved, not to substitute ourselves for governments, but to communicate without them. Many, indeed, have come in spite of them. And we are not thinking of setting up an unreal organism which would give orders to ministers. No! But sovereignty comes from the people; we have come, we the ones who are governed, to effect agreement on our demands, and, when we return home, we will express in the national framework a will, which will be at once the will of each people, and the will of all. We shall then see whether it is the government which is at the service of the people, or the people which is at *its* service.

War between the capitalist and socialist states would be inevitable today if one could prove that their economic coexistence is impossible; that is, if it was proved that the people who live under one of the regimes need to work and satisfy their hunger in destroying the other. But then, no one says that. The representatives of the socialist countries tell us precisely that they want peace, and that coexistence is possible. What do the partisans of preventive war, of the rearmament of Europe, of employing the atomic bomb, say? Do they justify the pressure they bring to bear as economic necessity? Not at all. Neither in the words of Burnham, adviser to the State Department, nor of Monnerot and Aron, French theorists who defend the Atlantic pact, will you find this idea.

Aron points out that the present attitude of the U.S.A. towards the Chinese government is not even dictated by economic necessity, since the trade of the United States with China represented, in 1939, 3 per cent of their export trade. What do they say, then? Well, they talk of political imperialism, of the aggressiveness of the socialist countries, of wars of religion, of a crusade against communism. In short, they are political and emotional arguments, directed against attitudes and an ideology.

In a word, they are frightened. So —which comes to the same thing— they seek to make others afraid. And many people who want peace as much surely as we do, let themselves be dragged along to follow and to risk making war on the Others out of terror that the Others might make it on them.

WHAT is opposed to them at this Congress? Simply that all understanding is possible when we

ve up fear, when, instead of losing eself in conjectures on what the her might want, one just asks him. A Chinese government is recogzed by an entire nation; it has all e power in its hands, it directs the onomy of the country, it has a werful army; lastly, it is in China, every normal government is in its untry. For the U.S. and U.N.O. it es not exist; the Chinese governent consists of a handful of exiles ho live in Washington and Lake ccess. Is that not unreal?

Is it not unreal that the French vernment keeps in power the govnment of Bao Dai which no one ants, and makes to it all the conssions which they refused to Ho hi Minh, although the Bao Dai govnment cannot make use of them?

We will never end the list of parations, imaginary lines, false ors, false windows, insupportable nventions, unrealities which can ly be maintained by violence since ey deliberately wreak violence on story.

We do not have, for the most part, e science of technicians nor the mpetence of diplomats; but we ve an immense advantage over em; we are real; the nations are al and they are not themselves able distort history—they *are* history.

We have among us not the spelists who dispose of the nations U.N.O., but the representatives the peoples who suffer most from real situations. They do not come tell us that it is motives of prudence which oblige them to maintain the cuts which tear the world apart and which are protected by armies of occupation. They come to tell us that they can no longer bear these lines, these zones, these cuts and these armies, and it is they who will be the first to tell us how this can be remedied. And when they tell us simply: we want these armies to go, they will have already made us take great steps to progress, because they will have quite simply uncovered for us the truth of the situation. They will do more if the German delegates, for example, tell us that the dismemberment of Germany, which we French deem dangerous for us, is intolerable for them; they will show the deep solidarity which unites any Frenchman who refuses war and any German who wishes German unity.

At U.N.O., at best, agreements are made by mutual concessions; here they will be made by taking into account common needs. But it goes without saying that these difficulties which come from the cold war are born of it. They will not be suppressed without a radical change in international relations.

When people speak of the coexistence of two economic systems, I do not think that they wish to speak of the coexistence of two blocs. A coexistence does not mean a juxtapositon. The latter brings distrust and ends by bringing the cold war to the hot war.

The delegates of Africa and Asia

will tell us how they envisage the role of the peoples of their continents in the establishment of peace. As a European guest, I will tell you what I personally desire for Western Europe. It would be useless to deny that its economy depends daily more and more on the United States. On the other hand, in most of the democracies, the proletariat turns with hope towards the Soviet Union and the Eastern democracies. Today, the result of these two tendencies is a more or less violent conflict between the mass of the peoples and certain leading factions.

BUT tomorrow, if our efforts are persevering enough, these characteristics can, on the contrary, while awaiting a better solution, give to the countries of the West the role of mediator. I do not mean by that that they should intervene as mediators in diplomatic discussions; we are not here to speak of diplomats.

I say that they must be the meeting-place of the currents flowing from capitalist America and the Socialist Soviet Union, where these currents must meet and mix. I say that a new taking up or an intensification of the commercial currents between the Eastern democracies and the democracies of Western Europe would be not only a natural thing, but all would contribute to making Europe, including rehabilitated Germany and rehabilitated Austria, one of the indispensable links between the great powers.

That would be possible under two conditions. The first, that the states of Western Europe could agree together between themselves to examine the means of finding gradually their economic independence and to loosen the ties of the Atlantic pact which turns them quite simply into American soldiers and forces them to set up blocs when they do not want to; according to their new-found independence they could re-establish friendly connections of solidarity with the Eastern democracies and make sense again, for example, of treaties like the Franco-Soviet Pact.

That is then, it seems to me, the aim of the Congress: to make the governments aware, here, by a final resolution and at home by daily action, of the real wishes of the nations; to insist that the powers which have assumed willy-nilly the responsibility of the world listen to the voice of the peoples and obtain a reorientation of international negotiations.

Can we say that we are approaching this goal? No, we are far from it. It will take much effort and time to achieve. Many of us have come to the Congress as delegates mandated by a party; others have no mandate. But all of us who vote for the final resolution should consider themselves on their return home as mandated by the Congress. The Congress must be our conscious will and it is in the name of that will that we shall go back to our countries with new obligations and new tasks.

Leopoldo Mendez

Translating

IRON CITY

By ELEANOR WHEELER

Prague

THE other evening I had an interesting experience I would like to share. It was my early-to-bed evening, but when I got an invitation to the translators' club to hear a discussion by A. Stastny on "My Experiences in Translating Lloyd Brown's *Iron City*," I abandoned my plans and galloped down to hear. I'll give the setting.

The club is very nice (the Czechoslovak Writers' Club), big easy chairs, pleasant lights, a huge portrait of Gorky, one of Nejedly, one of Marie Majerova and one of Konstantin Biebl. The waiter serves anything on order (you pay for it, of course), and the whole atmosphere is relaxing. Then, picture the kind of translators who gather to exchange ideas and advice, many of them experts who might feel justified in striking out alone on the basis of past successes. There was the translator of Dickens, the one who specialized in Shaw's plays, the translator of *Gulliver's Travels* and of Katherine Mansfield, and the speaker of the evening did Caldwell among other authors. His name means "happy," but his brow was furrowed as he told of the difficulties.

I must say I was happy to hear that he had gone at the work with loving care. He said that he had never had such a feeling of responsibility, that in the days when he translated Caldwell he was rather an impressionist himself and sailed along with ease. Now he has outgrown his impressionism and felt that Brown's work was on a much higher plane and demanded a very precise translation which would convey the spirit.

The emphasis during the whole evening was that a translator must

e like a performing artist who ransmits the meaning the composer as to put in the music, that arbitrary interpretations" are impermissible. hey agreed that while it was true vithin limits that a "translation is an xplanation," the explanation must ot harm the artistic spirit of the ork.

Stastny, for example, said that the home run" scene presented almost nsuperable difficulties. No one vould understand because no one lays baseball here, so he smuggled n three and a half pages of explana- on in the text! The editor spotted ight away that this was not Brown nd cut him down to a couple of lines. They may lead off in the preface with some explanation so that the reader is prepared.

Then came the discussion of how to translate characteristic speech. One translator was for using Czech patterns, although he would not go as far as the translator of *Grapes of Wrath,* who had the Okies speaking a Bohemian Mountain dialect. You may snicker, but it is not so simple.

The drawings in this article are by the Soviet artist, V. Visotskovo. They illustrated a Russian translation of the chapter in *Iron City* dealing with the life story of Isaac Zachary, published in the October 1951 issue of *Ogonyok,* organ of the Soviet railroad workers' union.

How do you put a Virginia drawl into Czech? You can't say "you-all."

I ventured to argue with this man, who was not a bit offended in spite of the fact that he is an expert and I an apprentice translator. I pled for leaving an American flavor in the speech, not to take over the Kladno speech entirely, just because Kladno is a steel town and so is Pittsburgh: how would it be to have them talk Kladno and then suddenly start playing baseball; how could they knock pop-flies? The group took sides and the upshot is that they will each probably do as he wants, benefiting from the exchange of ideas.

Other problems were raised: how to say "a radical" in the Anglo-Saxon meaning, how to say Red-baiting. Picketing was evidently unknown here, because there is no good expression for it—demonstrations yes, strikes aplenty, strike-breaker—all that can be directly

translated. And their word for a scab is fine: "dung." "Don't be a scab" comes out "Don't be dung."

The consensus of the meeting was that Brown's work was not only one which demanded a good artistic translation, but correct, ideological formulation to do it justice.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

"Wall Street, Zionism and Anti-Semitism"

By A. B. MAGIL

Author of *ISRAEL IN CRISIS*

and Associate Editor of *MASSES & MAINSTREAM*

RiGhT FaCe

Basic Training

"LEXINGTON.—A school paper, *The Stool Pigeon,* has made its appearance at Lexington High. It is being printed weekly by the journalism class. . . ."—*From the Lincoln, Neb.,* Journal.

Medical Report

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, with sixty to eighty divisions and 5,000 planes spread from northern Norway to the Caucasus, is sick from success."—Hanson W. Baldwin in the New York *Times.*

Sight Unseen

"The contents of a textbook, *State of Asia,* are 'beside the point' in considering whether it is un-American, says Joe Vinardi of Omaha." [Vinardi is chairman of the state American Legion's un-American activities committee.]—*From the Lincoln, Neb.,* Journal.

Foiled

"CANTON, O.—Clifford W. Gehrum has his own method of fighting communism, but it isn't recommended to the faint of heart or lung. . . .

"His method is to appear as a 'Communist' speaker, informing only the presiding officer of his intent. . . .

"On the more discouraging side, Gehrum admits he has confronted audiences which have applauded his speeches."—United Press dispatch.

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

books in review

Upsurge in South Africa

THE CHOICE BEFORE SOUTH AFRICA, by E. S. Sachs. *Philosophical Library.* $5.75.

THE Choice Before South Africa is the latest of several recent books dealing with the explosive problems born of 300 pears of white rule in the Land of the Color Bar. It is in many respects a valuable book: valuable for an understanding of the history and nature of that white rule, and how it has evolved logically into the present near-fascist regime headed by Premier Daniel F. Malan. It is also a disappointing book in that it shares the common fault of other studies of the South African scene in failing to comprehend and interpret the decisive role of the African eight and a half millions, over three-quarters of the country's total population, in challenging the Malan regime and saving South Africa from chaos and ruin.

This failure is especially disappointing in view of the fact that the author, Emil Solomon Sachs, secretary general of the militant and progressive Garment Workers Union, has for over a score of years been in the thick of the struggle for democratic rights in South Africa. He and his union have been the objects of editorial vilification, gangster assaults, and governmental harassment. Almost at the same time that his book was published in London last May, Solly Sachs was among those "named" under the Suppression of Communism Act. He was ordered to resign from his union and other organizations and to participate in none but religious or recreational gatherings. He was arrested for addressing a great demonstration of thousands of garment workers in front of the Johannesburg City Hall, and scores of white and colored union women who protested the arrest fell under the blows of swinging police clubs.

Among the book's assets are the detailed evidence of why and how a vast reservoir of cheap black labor is maintained and what this means in the whole South African economy; and the description of the elaborate and brutally enforced legal apparatus and other coercive means, including the use of machine-guns and bombing planes, whereby Smuts' "Christian trusteeship" and Malan's "Apartheid" have chained the African majority in economic slavery.

The great majority of the people of South Africa have long been denied the most elementary citizenship rights. Today, as Sachs points out,

ven most of the white minority "is n grave danger of losing its demo- ratic rights" at the hands of Nazi- minded Nationalist Party leaders. The uppression of Communism Act, ap- roved by a bare majority of the Jnion Parliament in 1950 after long nd bitter debate, provides the rulers f the country with a club to "intimi- ate and terrorize all opponents of ne Nationalist Party." Under this act, s under the Smith and McCarran cts in the United States, advocates f peace, militant trade unionists, and nemies of Apartheid (Jim Crow) re being muzzled and arrested. The nly right guaranteed opponents of falanazism is the right to go to jail.

"South Africa will either carry rough a democratic revolution, or ithin a generation it will become a ation of poor whites and starving lacks." This is the choice facing his ountry, in the opinion of Sachs. What kind of democratic revolution, nd how is it to be achieved? It is ere tha this book fails us.

What forces in South Africa are oday most actively challenging the scist menace? Clearly it is the Afri- an National Congress and the other rganizations of non-white peoples hich have united in conducting eir Campaign of Defiance of Un- st Laws. This movement, now in s eighth month, is gaining increas- ng enthusiastic mass support, despite olice shoot-to-kill action and the overnment's efforts to crush the De- ance Campaign by jailing all its eaders and more than 8,000 others. (A magistrate in imposing sentence on four of these leaders, under the Suppression of Communism Act, stated: "It is common knowledge that one of the aims of Communism is to break down race barriers and strive for equal rights for all sections of the people, and to do so without any discrimination of race, color, or creed. . . . This would endanger the survival of Europeans, and therefore legislation must be pursued with the object of suppressing Communism.")

Sachs in this book does not once even mention the African National Congress, founded in 1912, and the other mass organizations of the non-white peoples in South Africa. He does not mention the Campaign of Defiance of Unjust Laws, initially projected in 1951. This is no oversight; it is the result of his underestimation of the strength of the Africans' organized will to freedom, and of his failure to perceive that the Africans' own struggle against oppression must be the pivotal center of any democratic revolution in South Africa. A young African leader, J. G. Matthews, puts it this way: "The unity of the African nation which inhabits South Africa is the key to democracy in this country. The most comprehensive freedom in South Africa is the freedom of the African. In the emancipation of the African nation is involved the emancipation of all the minorities—the Indian, Colored and even European!"

With all his long experience in

progressive causes in South Africa, Sachs apparently is blind to this. He seems to think that if only Malan had not taken away certain "safety valves" for the release of African unrest, the Africans would patiently await their deliverance in some vague future. And he comes close to echoing Malan's own propaganda when he says that "an upsurge of black nationalism may become extremely dangerous" because it will be directed "not only against oppression but against the white people as such."

The leaders of the Campaign of Defiance of Unjust Laws anticipated this allegation when they declared, early this year, "The struggle which the national organizations of the non-European people are conducting is not directed against any race or national group. It is against the unjust laws which keep in perpetual subjection and misery vast sections of the population. It is for the transformation of conditions which will restore human dignity, equality, and freedom to every South African."

The choice before South Africa, in this reviewer's judgment, is whether the liberal and progressive sections of white South Africa will accept the invitation implicit in that declaration, an invitation for them to join forces with the non-white South Africans in a common struggle to save their country from fascism.

When Sachs speaks of a "democratic revolution" he really means reformism. He conceives it possible to stop fascist reaction by means of a shift of the balance of forces within the framework of the existing lily-white political system in the Union. He calls for the Labor Party to win over one or two hundred thousand white workers from the Nationalist Party, and for South African liberals to "get into the United Party, the Labor Party, establish friendly contact with the trade unions and inculcate a genuine spirit of democracy, humanism and racial tolerance among them." Thereby, he says, it may be possible to oust the Malan regime and achieve a Rooseveltian "New Deal" and the development of a "progressive capitalism" in South Africa.

From reading this book one would never know South Africa had a Communist Party (dissolved under government duress in 1950) that offered a concept of democratic revolution involving the participation of *all* the people. Nor would one know that American and British monopoly interests have a stranglehold on the economic life of South Africa too strong to be dislodged by any new deal of the sort Sachs envisages.

ALPHAEUS HUNTON