MASSES & MAINSTREAM

WHAT THEY CANNOT KILL

LOUIS ARAGON

CULTURE AND COLONIALISM — A. B. MAGIL

THE SOVIET WRITER AND HIS UNION — JOSEPH CLARK

SCIENCE, ART AND SUPERSTRUCTURE — EMILE BURNS

ONE ENCHANTED EVENING
A Story by Ruth Steinberg

THE INDESTRUCTIBLE
A Poem by George Hitchcock

SEPTEMBER, 1953 — 35 cents

Vol. 6, No. 9

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.*

September, 1953

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

"The Perfect Crime"

By LOUIS ARAGON

Paris

SO ETHEL and Julius Rosenberg were to die and the whole world refused to believe it. Never, perhaps, in all the history of humankind had a more universal rejection of destiny (Destiny, said Napoleon, is politics) expressed itself with such strength, such stubbornness, such desperate hope. Each day would add an outcry, a hundred new outcries, in which were fused pity, indignation, the certainly of innocence, the reasons which bring men kneeling at the foot of the Cross, which bring others to the altars of Reason, princes and priests, rulers sensitive to the anger of the ruled, those who have nothing and those who have everything, the immense contagion of warm-blooded peoples.

It seemed that multitudes were tearing this protest, as if it were raw, bleeding flesh, from their troubled consciences. And the protest swelled to the point where people thought it irresistible, to the point where the newspapers, with each new dawn, echoed this protest and multiplied it tenfold; and all, even those who customarily refuse their voices to causes they consider uncertain or mixed up with politics, found themselves in a deeply disturbed state, in such a commonly shared anguish, that those who only yesterday were enemies and even those who today remained enemies, whose major quarrels mattered less than the fear of realizing their helplessness to defeat death—all, from the street to the factory, yes, and the scholar whose hand is stopped at the core of an experiment, yes, and the poet who no longer knows what a rose is, and the cabinet minister who wonders: "Have I really reached such a point of indifference that I am frozen?" and the woman, hugging her child in her arms, be she queen or peasant,—all formed a torrent which filled the universe with its roar. And this sentiment, with all the strength of those who pray, moved even Rome, where prayer is of stone; it moved, with all the generosity of the French people, even the Elysee* where the people's voice can never get beyond

* The President's residence.

the great trees in its garden . . . Impossible, impossible, they'll never dare!

Someone wrote to me from a small town in the Gard region that we were wrong (he was a *Figaro* and *Literary Figaro* reader who also reads *Les Lettres Françaises*) to make such a fuss, *Figaro* and *Lettres Françaises,* about the fatal date of June 18, because *he* knew that the Rosenbergs would not die, that it was impossible. You could see the idea of this impossibility growing in the eyes of men reading the evening paper (this was June 17) about everything which justified certainty of victory, universal agreement on innocence finally recognized, about everything which expressed horror of a crime which assuredly would never be committed, before which a Supreme Court Justice had just hesitated; and his name, until now unknown, Justice Douglas, was a fresh breeze on all lips, Justice Douglas, and no, this crime will never be committed; this general in mufti, when all is said and done, is a man, and then—after all—what a psychological mistake it would be, what a monstrous error!

No, no, even if this tribunal which is to meet . . . even if everything seems lost . . . at the last minute . . . he can still grant clemency, and who knows? this clearly monstrous thing that has been organized, this telephone placed near those who are to die in order to tempt them in the supreme moment, to incite them to the cowardice which can save them, deliver them. . . . Admit you are guilty, Ethel and Julius, and denounce, invent accomplices who will take your place, and whose flesh in place of yours will be grilled . . . this telephone, who knows, President Eisenhower will use it to cry to death: "Stop!"

THAT evening of June 17th, at the Place de la Nation, the nation was there, represented by the people of Paris. The uncertain light of this troubled month of June had become fiery toward six o'clock as if to outline more sharply that hope hidden in the people's hearts. Rudimentary portraits, like primitive daguerrotypes, of Julius and Ethel were swaying overhead making, as far as the eye could see, the square a vast sea of human quivering—and from the platform we could read on red bunting stretched at our feet this inscription:

"As you saved Nazim Hikmet
You shall save the Rosenbergs!"

And among the throng was being sold the book by the condemned couple, *Death House Letters,* in its pearl-gray jacket in the traditional *Nouvelle Revue Française* format which had appeared only two days earlier and for which, it was announced over the loudspeaker, the publisher Gallimard and the distributor Messageries Hachette were giving all their profits for the benefit of the Rosenberg children.

And enemy brothers, twelve hundred Socialists and Communists, the Vitry organizations, arrived together at the square to keep a vow made

the evening before while the great cry of '36, *"Unity, Unity!"* was reverberating in the square as if, taking wing and flying out through the portico of the Place de la Nation, it was going to win all of France and the world! People surprised at doing so were greeting each other. The words of the speeches were no longer the habitual words. Oh French language, you are made for these things! How beautiful you are when you speak the grammar of multitudes!

Our song burst forth— What else could we sing but the Marseillaise? Our song, which came from the Bastille to the Nation, our song which on the lips of our national heroes was the reconciliation of the past and the future, the certainty of life triumphant! *Allons enfants de la patrie . . .* our song! Who didn't thrill, that evening, in the Rosenbergs' sunlight, when from the common breast arose the words

Contre nous de la tyrannie
L'étendard sanglant est levé . . .

(The bloody banner of tyranny is raised against us.)

Who didn't tremble at the thought of that banner? For we were people of all kinds, merged with our opinions, our prejudices, our fixed ideas, all, for varying and contradictory reasons, so anxious that the banner in the song be not the star-spangled banner, because of Lincoln and Roosevelt, because of Washington Irving, Emerson, Walt Whitman, Theodore Dreiser . . . because of a great people and their sons who, twice, came to die on the soil of our invaded France—but No, No! we were refusing to remember John Brown hanging and President Grant greeting Bismarck on the morrow of the Ems telegram, and Wilson putting the Prussian militarists back in the saddle, and Sacco-Vanzetti and Willie McGee.

L'étendard sanglant est levé . . .

No, we didn't want it to be the star-spangled banner. Ethel and Julius shall live, and each one was watching his neighbor singing: What is the meaning of these words for him, these words learned by heart, sung by heart. . . . L'étendard sanglant . . . ah! if Ethel and Julius were really to die, don't you understand that that banner that flies on the Place de la Concorde (and don't remind me of the red and black colors that waved there ten years ago), that the stars in that flag, if Ethel and Julius were to die, would change into tears? But the French anthem continues and rises and its words, the words of insurgent liberty: *Ils viennent jusque dans nos bras* (Into our very arms they come). Are *we* singing that? I can imagine this song in Korea . . . "Egorger nos fils, nos compagnes" ("To strangle our children, our wives") . . . Who, who has the right to sing this song? Here, in this solemn moment, a fearful certainty takes shape: Beware, men of the White House, of giving it body in the inanimate body of martyrs, beware!

Have your observers at the Place de la Nation felt the pulsation of French unanimity? Let them cable to tell you what is growing in this people, this terrible thing which would be hatred if it were not justice! Let your F.B.I. agents scattered through the throng cable to tell you that the stars are in danger!

I shall never forget the sunlight on the thousands and thousands of bare hands waving, the Rosenbergs' sunlight on the hands voting, *democratically,* as the orator had said, for the letter from the people of Paris to the President of the United States of America. Now you will have to choose, Mr. President, and if you do not heed the democratic sentiment, nothing will ever again permit you to invoke that democracy, in whose name you were fighting in Korea, in whose name you are bearing arms in other places, in whose name you are occupying our ports, our aviation fields. . . . I am not the only one who will remember the Rosenbergs' sunlight on the hands of the people of Paris.

THIS letter, a small group of us—we numbered about fifty persons, including among us a priest and a general—carried that very evening, immediately, to the American Embassy. Beauty of Paris, its stones and its trees, a deep serene light bathed Avenue Gabriel and the cities of France kept watch on the Place de la Concorde which had forgotten the Hitler swastika.* What, then, was the meaning of these helmets, these men advancing on us with their military straps and military gait? We had just come from that great mass of people, free and dignified and calm and sure of themselves at the Place de la Nation. We found it hard to understand the imperative words, the tone that left no room for reply, the pretext: "There's no one at the American embassy until tomorrow morning . . . it's useless to go there to deliver your petitions. . . ." Nobody there anymore? You're fooling! No, they weren't fooling. Their chief admitted: I have orders not to permit you to approach the Embassy. . . . Well, that, at least, is clearer, more candid. A discussion ensued. Across the street, posters in front of the Ambassador Theatre advertised:

AMBASSADOR
THE PERFECT CRIME

Now that made sense. A young man, who came up from behind the helmeted men suddenly created an unexpected diversion. "You're here for the Rosenbergs? But, don't you see, you're making a mistake—they've already been executed!" Strange courage in the police van! What is this provocateur trying to accomplish? One of our people, drawn aside, quickly clubbed and thrown into a car, driven off, will

* The U.S. Embassy stands at the corner of Avenue Gabriel and the Place de la Concorde. The Place de la Concorde has a number of statues representing cities of France surrounding a fountain in the center of the square.

answer the question simply. "But I tell you, there's no one in at the American Embassy." The man in the helmet was arguing with a member of our delegation who had alluded to the Resistance: "Don't mention it!" he said, "These things must be hidden; they are done, but never to be spoken of. . . ." This in a kind of threatening tone.

And yet, on the other side of the Place de la Concorde, near the Concorde subway station, plaques *speak* constantly, to those who are not blind, of the French fight for national independence. "But I'm telling you there's no one in at the American Embassy. . . ." And so Ethel and Julius can wait until tomorrow morning; the clerks have removed their celluloid cuffs; the office opens at 9 a.m. The police thought we could go home until then and sleep peacefully.

ON THIS June 18, Oh thanks to Justice Douglas, they weren't killed; Ethel and Julius had spent an hour together for their wedding anniversary. On this June 18, what games could Michael and Robby have been playing? The Supreme Court Justices were sitting but couldn't come to a decision, despite the fact that the Chief Justice had enjoined them to reach one. Finally, they, too, took off their celluloid cuffs. Tomorrow, tomorrow. . . . From now until then, were they going to sleep peacefully? Nine American justices. . . .

The world was not sleeping peacefully. Like flowers opening after a rain, telegrams multiplied with the 11th hour stay. Those who didn't want the Rosenbergs to die were more numerous on the morning of the 19th than the day before, the day chosen for their death. Now, and despite the fact that this had been going on for years, death was even more unthinkable for them. People who, on the 18th, were still thinking "It's no use," on the 19th sent telegrams. Or, leaving their neighborhoods, they came, their little slip of paper in hand, to the Place de la statement of the President of the American Embassy.

All of this is well known. Also Justice Douglas's stay vacated in the afternoon by a vote of 6-3. These judges, the six who voted to vacate the stay, did not by that vote ask for death. How this works out in the minds of these Pontius Pilates, I don't know. . . . What were they thinking? And then there was the statement of the President of the United States of America.

He was playing two strings. These horrible delays, these inhuman refusals which, for more than two years, kept a man and a woman, condemned to death, waiting each new dawning as they had waited on the dawn before, these delays were the full guarantees of American law. Did the President of the United States of America have to worry about the refusal to examine the admissions of Greenglass, the informer, when six justices out of nine had set them aside with one sweep of their cel-

luloid cuffs? This man had slept normally the night of the 18th to the 19th. And he explained on the 19th why he would sleep well from the 19th to the 20th.

That night did Michael and Robby go to bed like good little children right after dinner? And you in your homes scattered throughout the world, you people who didn't want to believe in their death, people who didn't want the great star-spangled banner suddenly to be darkened, you people who believed in the innocence of Ethel and Julius or simply doubted their guilt, you people who simply found it incomprehensible that the lives of millions of beings could be endangered by the American couple, little people, while the lives of these same millions were being protected by the President of the United States of America, a general who is accustomed to commanding in war, on whose signature depend not only the life of all the Juliuses and all the Ethels, but also of the little Michaels and the little Robbies, peace in Korea and elsewhere—and also war. . . .

You people from everywhere, you who had to get up same as ever the next morning for work which in quite a few places begins earlier than at the American Embassy in Paris, how many times that night did you switch on your radio seeking on one wave length and then on another invalidation of the news? Food for a hope as stubborn as hunger. Luxembourg, Brussels . . . the Voice of America. . . . But, look here, you *must* get some sleep. They couldn't. They learned that a Democratic Congressman was demanding an investigation of Justice Douglas, guilty of having granted a stay. . . . There was also a debate on the time set for the execution. First it was put at 4 a.m. Then at 2 a.m. . . . 1:30 a.m. It's the diversity of European time. One a.m. One o'clock in the morning. At five to one, how many said to themselves: *Only five more minutes!* In the bedroom next to you, Michael and Robby were sleeping. If you were a man, you took Ethel's hand. If you were a woman, —Julius's hand. It was *you* they were going to kill. *Your* children would be orphans. One minute before one o'clock. Wrath in your hearts. Lights out? The hour struck in the darkened bedroom. You said: *They are dead.*

It wasn't true. And not only because they were not led to the chair until six minutes after one.

They didn't die at one o'clock. Julius died at two minutes and forty-five seconds after the time set; Ethel four minutes and thirty seconds later. *Without talking,* said the cable.

Without talking! What do you want, Oh Lord! Just read their book. For more than two years now they've been speaking, crying out their innocence to the world, the truth.

A FRIEND writes me. . . . Is he a friend? . . . : "I am not a Communist. You know that." Oh, yes, I know it. But he writes me:

"Neither Faulkner, nor Steinbeck,

nor Caldwell, nor Hemingway intervened, nor others here, whose message in my eyes no longer counts. Between their message and Ethel and Julius Rosenberg's message there is all the thickness of the electric chair. One of these days—and the time is not far off—the Americans will realize that they have created what they were lacking in order to be a flesh and blood part of humanity: martyrs and saints. . . ."

Yes, Eduard Loeb. And I imagine that there were people the next day at the American Embassy in Paris. F.B.I. agents didn't need to make their report to his Excellency the Ambassador. The people of Paris were simply taking flowers to their own martyrs, their heroes, these people of the Resistance whom the helmeted police would rather not have mentioned any more. Near the Concorde subway station, where our brothers fell and where there are plaques to their memory. And those whom the police pushed back went to Jeanne d'Arc* with their flowers. The police came here, too. I don't know whether it's because there wasn't anybody in at the American Embassy anymore, but the flowers brought by Frenchmen to be placed on stones where Frenchmen fell, at the corner of the street named after Danielle Casanova** or at the foot of the monument of Jeanne d'Arc by Fremiet, were torn away and carried off in police vans. Tristan Tzara, it seems, cried out before this spectacle: "What? So now you're taking flowers off to prison?" The posters remained untouched in front of the Ambassador Theatre: THE PERFECT CRIME. . . .

ALL this will pass, the French have short memories. . . .Yes, who said that? There are some French who are recovering. That's the tone of some of the newspapers. Their argument: with the Rosenbergs alive, protests made sense; with the Rosenbergs dead, you're just playing into the hands of the Communists.

I read this from the pen of a journalist. This one said: "I signed for the Rosenbergs, but . . ." He didn't wish, he added, to play into the hands of the Communists because of the things he has against the Communists, which he formulated. I, who am a Communist, do not recall the end of his sentence. Much will be forgiven this man for having signed while the Rosenbergs were alive.

Even if, with the Rosenbergs dead, he doesn't feel the indecency there is for us in his linking the innocent Rosenbergs with, as Eluard said, men who shouted their guilt, much will be forgiven this man for having signed while the Rosenbergs were alive.

But does he know that there are still living Rosenbergs? Michael and Robby? Who, if we take off our celluloid cuffs, will grow up in their native land as the children of

---

* Joan of Arc's statue is one block from the U.S. Embassy.

** Danielle Casanova, heroic Resistance leader, was murdered by the Nazis.

"traitors." And won't this keep the gentleman from sleeping? To rehabilitate the Rosenbergs, and that without losing a moment's time, at least for Michael and for Robby and then, let's whisper it, for truth and for justice and also because for all of us our dignity as men is at stake in this case. . . . So you say this is playing into the hands of the Communists? Let me thank you; you do us a great honor.

Yes, I think, *since I am a Communist,* that to serve truth and justice, to safeguard human dignity, to say no to despotism, to war, to death, all of this serves the cause of Communism. For me to think this is natural. But you? Can you think it and say it without admitting that in your eyes truth, justice and peace are on the side of the Communists? I'm not asking you to do it. But reflect. There would be no shame in withdrawing your sentence of Monday morning.

For the French do not have a short memory. It is with astonishment that the French learned that Congressmen demanded the impeachment of Justice Douglas, guilty as we all are of not considering as just and good the murder of the Rosenbergs. The French wonder what can be the meaning of this inhumanity, this ferocity, this injustice. . . . And those who, two or three days ago, were still saying: "No, they won't kill them"—my correspondent from the Gard region, for example . . . those who had been saying: "They won't kill them because it would be a psychological mistake, a faux pas. . . ." those people are going to reflect and will go further this time. Not to play into the hands of this one or that one, but because man has the need to reflect as he does to eat and to drink. And to love.

THE President of the United States of America is not, believe me, inept. Nor a crackpot, as people used to say in the old days of a simple chancellor. The President of the United States of America had the Rosenbergs killed for political reasons. Because this serves his policy. Even by shocking the French. Here again, ask yourselves who profits by this crime.

The execution of the Rosenbergs coincides with the provocations in Korea which endanger the armistice and with the provocation in East Berlin that could furnish the pretexts for a second Korea. The execution of the Rosenbergs is the answer to a number of peaceful gestures which have moved the world and in the face of which the President of the United States of America has to react. *He was on the way to losing the cold war.* What the execution of the Rosenbergs does is to revitalize the cold war, a stage toward the world war. By striking with violence, implacably, the President of the United States of America frightens the weak and seeks to create a rift between those who will say: "Let's change the subject" and those who will not permit themselves to be intimidated. The execu

¡NO OLVIDEMOS!

A JULIUS Y ETHEL ROSENBERG

"Let Us Not Forget Julius and Ethel Rosenberg" is the caption on this poster produced by the Mexican artists' group, Taller de Grafica Popular. It has been put on walls and buildings in Mexico City. At the bottom of the poster are the words: "Murdered by the War Government of the United States Because They Loved and Believed in Peace."

tion of the Rosenbergs is an act to isolate in the world those who believe that peace can be saved. It is an act of Pentagon policy, of the policy of American hegemony based on atomic terror, on the anti-Soviet mythology of the inspired stories that had to be backed up by visible, bloody signs.

Also it was necessary for the prestige of the war lords to reaffirm that they alone, with their science, could *invent* the atomic bomb. The others, the lower species, could get it only by the treason and the cleverness of the Jewish Rosenbergs.

The execution of the Rosenbergs shows clearly who endangers the lives of millions of human beings.

Silence to those who are trying to dike up the indignation that this execution arouses, to turn it away—and why? For those are the very people who, having killed the Rosenbergs, engage the S.S. General in their army, the same one who had the patriots of Nimes hanged, against *our allies* who condemned to death the S.S. Oberfuehrerin of Ravensbrueck for having tried recently in Halle to start again a series of Hitlerite putsches.

And the American press stressed the fact that nowhere was the reaction against that execution as powerful and as immediate as in France. I think for my part that it is not a simple matter of chance, and that if this reaction *plays into someone's hands,* it is into the hands of France. Of its theatened independence. Of its culture that doesn't admit of book burnings, Jim-crow ghettoes, lynchings, McCarthyism. Of its sense of grandeur and of justice. Of its love for moral dignity. Of its passion for all human values. France and the French people who carried flowers to the Place de la Concorde or to the feet of Joan of Lorraine, thus take up once more this role which the vulgar insults of a *Life* magazine will not dare to travesty. The France that was at the Place de la Nation the other day is indebted to the Rosenbergs for having found herself again—in an hour of ministerial comedy—with her lofty thoughts, her generous blood, that unity without which the foreigner intrudes and installs himself.

"Unity!" cried the throng at the Place de la Nation. For the rehabilitation of Ethel and Julius Rosenberg so that lies and despotism, injustice and contempt for human sentiment be not permitted to impose on the world their law, which can only be the law of the jungle and of massacre.

(*Translated from the French by E. Socor*)

One Enchanted Evening

A story by RUTH STEINBERG

PETE, the union organizer, took a night off. You may remember what it meant in that year, 1938, to take a night off. It meant one of two things: either a wedding, or God forbid a thousand times, a funeral.

But sometimes a union organizer has a wife. And, as the ballads say, she loves him and he loves her, and sometimes they would like to spend an innocent evening together, reading the papers, listening to the radio, or doing any of the other normal, exquisite things for which marriage is famous. And sometimes, the wife has been hollering for two months that she doesn't know what he looks like any more. So he goes down to union headquarters, puts his foot down and demands one night off. Another two months later, whether he likes it or not, he's got it!

It comes out on a Thursday, since on Thursday, it has been figured out, nothing ever happens.

That is how it happened to Pete. This Thursday fell on him all of a sudden. You might say, that he wasn't exactly emotionally prepared for it. For at five-thirty, which was the hour set for him to leave, when his friends and comrades who loved him began to chase him out, it gave him a queer feeling. Maybe it was the way they put it:

"Go home already. Your wife is waiting." It made him sore.

He left the headquarters angry, and a little defiantly he had said, "And don't call me up on *emergencies.* Pretend I'm out of town!" And he had slammed the door behind him. A minute later, when he was out on the street, Joe called down from the window, "You forgot your hat, Jerk. And give Rosie my love." The hat came sailing down to him, and his anger suddenly died as he looked into Joey's friendly smile.

Pete might be forgiven his quick temper and the stubborn way he had of setting his own body against an antagonist. After all, he was only twenty-four years old, a man full of responsibilities, a full-fledged organizer and a leader of men his own age and his own size and his own profession. He was a leader of the unskilled, and the antagonist was always the guy who tried to prove that these men of which he was one, were not quite as good as other

men. Their business establishments could not run one day without these powerful young Jews and Italians and Negroes who lifted, packed and shipped. But the antagonist said they were useless. Pete was fierce with these men, and rough and unruly were his union brothers, until his name and the name of his militant little trade union began to send a shudder of despair down the backs of the bosses.

Pete was sort of a wild boy. He stood firm on his stocky bandy legs, defying, it seemed, even nature. But he was soft about one thing that everybody knew about, his wife. It's not that he didn't lose his temper with her, too, sometimes. But there was some magic thing inside of him that softened every time he looked at her, so that when he touched her his fighting fist opened and became powerful with love.

And his wife, Rosie, first laid eyes on him at the union headquarters where she, an ordinary union member, saw this leader making noise and being hard as steel. She, who had flinched at every loud sound and despised violence, had looked once at this noisy, angry troublemaker and saw him stop, startled, to let a smile come to his lips, and she had become, all at once, swathed in contentment and security.

That was why she fought with the whole union to give Pete a night off. That was why she fought with Pete when she saw him lose sleep.

SO, AS Pete came down the street to his house, he suddenly ducked into the flower shop and bought daisies, and then stopped at the baker's and got some extra rolls and a special cornbread which was hot out of the oven. And then, in the middle of dinner, although he suddenly started to worry about what *might* be going on down at headquarters and felt a little strange eating at his own table when it was scarcely dark outside, he didn't even mention it to Rosie.

But she, who knew, it seemed, everything that went on in his head, stubbornly made him take his shoes off and lie down on the couch with the newspapers like other people did. So the vague hope that Rosie might suddenly change her mind and tell him to go back to the union died in Pete's heart.

It took him about an hour to settle down. Rosie, who was taking a designing course in Cooper Union, had some sketches to make and although she put her pencil to paper her blue eyes roamed across the room to him to watch in amazement what he did.

He took off one shoe and got a stupid, faraway look in his face while he wiggled his toes. Then, with one shoe off and one shoe on, he went back into the kitchen for the newspapers. He came back loaded down with a bowl of fruit, a piece of cake and a pile of newspapers. Elaborately he fixed up a table near the couch the fruit within arm's reach, the

cake resting royally on the papers. Then, one apple rolled off onto the floor and he chased it to where it went under her chair. He picked it up, shined it on his shirt and put it carefully back onto the top of the rest of the fruit.

He sighed and lay down at full length on the couch with the newspaper over his face. After which he cursed because he had forgotten to take off the other shoe. So he sat up again, took it off and wiggled his toes, found a little hole in his sock and dreamed over it. He lay down again and took a cigarette out of his pocket and lit it with a match, only to discover that he had no ashtray. He looked over at Rosie and she could not stand it any more, so she got up and handed him a glass ashtray. And then he was happy. He had everything and he began to read just as his wife dreamed he would.

As she worked on the sketches and listened peacefully to music coming over the radio, Pete argued aloud with the newspaper and made comments. To whom he referred, or why he had to argue all the time, Rosie had not the faintest idea, yet she agreed with him, from the bottom of her heart.

He moved around, he smoked a cigarette, he ate an apple. She couldn't take her eyes off him, so she began to draw his picture and became so lost in each sweet detail, that she jumped when he addressed her directly.

"What do you say we have another cup of coffee?" he asked seriously.

"Sure!" she said happy, for no reason. "I'd like one," and she started to get up from her chair.

"Wait a minute," he said, waving his hand at her. "Just because you're my wife, doesn't mean you have to make the coffee. I'm home. I'm resting. So I'll get it."

She sat down again, paralyzed. And he threw the newspapers onto the floor, because after all, he was going to do something, so perhaps the necessity for being neat had been disposed of. And in his stockinged feet he went to the kitchen.

ON THE way, he stopped to look at her drawing board. "Hey!" he said, excitedly pointing to the drawing of himself. "That's me! I recognize myself!" He couldn't get over it. "That's remarkable!" he said.

Then the phone rang. She looked at him as he stopped near the doorway of the kitchen, and he simply shrugged his shoulders as if to say, "That phone call is *not* for me! I have nothing to do with that!" In other words, he was innocent.

So Rosie got up and answered the call.

A high-pitched man's voice said, "Hello. Is Pete there, *please?*" His emphasis on the word, "please," placed responsibility on her.

"Just a minute!" she said, perhaps a little unkindly, because she really did not want to share Pete at all on this evening, not even with an anony-

mous voice over the telephone. And that "please," was too urgent for the wife of a union organizer not to recognize as having first call on her husband's heart and mind. She put her hand over the mouthpiece and looked at Pete's head sticking out through the kitchen doorway. "It's for you," she accused.

"Who is it?" he asked, still trying to prove by innocent gestures that it could not possibly be for him. Maybe they wanted some other Pete.

"Who is this?" she asked into the phone.

"The clown!" the voice said.

"The clown," she repeated for Pete.

Pete's mild eyes looked directly into hers, as he said, "I'll take it." And he took the phone from her hand before she noticed that he had already leaped across the length of the room.

"Hello, Berger?" Pete asked loudly. He always yelled into a phone. "What's up?"

Berger's voice flooded the wire. Pete got a startled expression on his face. "Yeah?" he said, astonished, delighted. "Where are you?"

Pete listened again, then said, "Wait a minute!" He put his hand over the mouthpiece. Already Rosie was shaking her head, angry, and Pete's body tensed. She knew he wanted to go out to meet this clown, Berger, and she was stopped.

"Wait a minute!" he whispered intently into her face. "You don't know what I'm going to say, so what are you saying, 'no' for?"

She retreated a little—stopped shaking her head.

"This guy's wife just had a baby And I'm the one he calls. So that means he doesn't have nobody else to call. Right? At least, I ought to go down and have a beer with him. He pleaded. "Can you leave a person alone, on a night like this?"

"I don't want you to go out." He lip trembled a little. "Ask him to come up here."

"Hey! That's a good idea!" He turned his head to look into the mouthpiece of the phone and yelled as though he could see Berger, "Listen. My wife says you should come up here, so we can all celebrate together!" Pause. "Sure, it's all right Third floor. Come on!" And he hung up.

"YOU know who that is?" he asked of Rosie. "That's the Clown!"

She had never heard of the Clown.

"Sure, you know!" he protested. "He's the guy who leads the picket line outside Scully's Toy Company He wears a clown suit to attract the kids and tell them to stay out with their mothers."

Pete's enthusiasm, she knew, was not for the clown part, but for the picket line part of Berger. But Rosie had caught it from him, and she stopped looking back to the evening alone she might have had and was smiling as she put a pot of coffee

the stove, looking forward to seeing a man who had just become a father.

And Pete piled food onto the table. The Jewish lox which he bought for Rosie, and the Italian salami which she had bought for him, were placed side by side for Berger, the lucky father. The remains of the meatloaf, which had done such noble service for three days, and cheese and tomatoes and the cooked prunes, all were moved with beltline precision from icebox to table, until there was no room for more. Then the bread was dumped into a little basket and placed in between everything else. "I bet he's hungry!" Pete said, overwhelmed.

The bell rang and Pete ran to the door. Rosie shyly watched from the kitchen as her husband hugged and pumped the hand of the strange young man who came blinking into the light. Here was Berger—the man who could play clown without makeup. He had a large, grinning, happy mouth, a nose with a bulb on the end of it that was almost white with the cold, and a shock of red hair that at one time must have been clipped close, but now stood straight up reaching for the ceiling. His eyes were two smiling slits in his head.

Pete tore off his friend's overcoat, then stopped and said, "Geez, you're still wearing the clown suit!"

Berger looked at himself, then, startled, at his hosts, as though striving to remember something. He touched his clothes with tapering fingers and spoke suddenly. "I forgot to take it off!" His voice was full of wonder.

He quickly unbuttoned the costume and emerged, thin as a reed, in his dark green pants and a long homemade sweater which hung hopelessly and heavily downward as though desiring to touch the floor.

Pete dragged his guest into the kitchen, quickly introduced Rosie and sat him in a chair. "Eat!" the organizer ordered.

Berger seemed to be fascinated with the sight of so much food. He raised his head and sniffed the aroma of boiling coffee. "Gee!" he said in a queer voice, "that smells good!" Whereupon, he put his head down again, looked at the food, screwed his amazing face into knots and began to cry.

PETE looked at Rosie in astonishment. His expression was one of a boy's consternation that asked the question, "What'd I do now?"

Big sobs burst from Berger. He kept trying to say something, but could not finish a sentence. "My wife, —" he said, "my wife—," and each time he wept anew into his large, crumpled handkerchief.

And timid little Rosie went around to the back of his chair, while her courageous union leader of a husband just stood there frightened, and she touched the strange man on the shoulder and on his red hair, and said, "Take it easy, guy!" And then she smiled and said, "Save some

emotion for the next kid. This is only the first!"

At once, Berger stopped crying and looked at Rosie in consternation, as though the danger of having another child had shocked him into tearlessness, and said, "Another baby! My God!" Then he looked at the table again and said in a calm voice, "Whenever I'm emotionally disturbed, the sight of food makes me cry."

Pete, satisfied that the crisis was over, came to life and said with a belligerent humor, "Oh, yeah! Don't cry over this food. It's not all for you. I'm starved myself." This Rosie knew to be true. Pete was always "starved." He sat down opposite Berger, and as though to demonstrate exactly how hungry he was, he grabbed a chunk of cornbread, slapped a piece of butter on it, the size of which seemed to astound Berger, and began to stuff it into his mouth.

After a certain delicate hesitation which Rosie recognized from her own childhood as a feeble and transparent attempt to conceal hunger from others, Berger began to eat in earnest. He ate everything he saw, and since Pete's appetite improved as he watched his friend, it was not long before everything on the table had disappeared. Berger's stomach even seemed to bulge a little.

Then he suddenly stopped eating. (Every action of Berger's seemed to start and stop suddenly.) He said, "I was very hungry," as though admitting a fault. Suddenly remembering something, he ran into the living room, fumbled in his coat and came back with a cigar for Pete.

"Here!" he said. "Celebrate my baby!" He turned to Rosie. "I didn't bring you anything."

"Did your wife have an easy time of it?" she asked to take the edge off his embarrassment.

"Easy!" he said, almost rising out of his chair. "I should say not!" He remained thoughtful for a while, then leaned over toward Pete and said in his most confidential manner, "Tell me, if you know the answer to this question, and I won't hold it against you if you don't. Can a poor working man like me ever keep a promise to his wife?"

PETE was interested in the cigar. He puffed and chewed away at it as though he had not heard the question. But he had heard. Rosie knew it by the little line that materialized on his forehead. And his answer came soon enough.

He put his fists to the sides of his head and looked into his coffee cup. His brown eyes seemed to be swimming in dreams. "It depends on what you promise," he said. Rosie turned to look at Berger. She was fascinated by his swift intensity and the argumentative, intellectual way he had.

Pete continued. "If you promise your wife a mink coat, well—," He shrugged his shoulders and closed his eyes, "you're a liar. And you can

promise her you'll be working next week or next month, because that ain't up to you. But—," he was quiet again, thinking his thoughts, "what you can promise is to be a man—to fight for a better life. That's what a civilized man can promise."

Berger remained tensely looking into Pete's face as though memorizing his words. It would have been good to be able to paint those two men just then as they looked at each other, figuring out things that were so important, they had to live by them. These ideas were natural to Pete and the words rose to his lips as easily as a song.

Berger then turned to Rosie and said, not so irrelevantly, "My wife was an orphan, just like myself." He wanted to talk about his wife. "We both grew up in orphan asylums."

"Did you meet there?" she asked.

"No. We met at a party. But she says she knew just by looking at me what my whole life was."

Rosie had heated more coffee and placed another cup before Berger, and as she passed him, Pete touched her hand, for Berger's talking of his wife had reminded Pete of Rosie.

"I'll tell you," Berger continued, pointing to his face with his large, exquisite hand, "the kids used to say about me I have a face only a mother could love.

"But the one who really loved me was my grandmother. She brought me up till I was thirteen. She was so fat that she could hardly move, but she cleaned the house and sewed and cooked for me like I was a prince. I don't think she ever ate much," he needed to explain, "but she was fat. She died just from fatness."

"Then they put me in an orphan asylum. That was the place I cried when I sat down to eat. Because I knew my grandmother would be happy if she saw me sit down at a table with so much food."

He smiled indulgently at himself. "I grew up in that place and they kept me there till I finished high school. A year later, I met my wife at a party." He pointed to a spot on his breast. "She comes up to here on me," he said. "Little."

Pete loved a story. As Berger talked he made agreeable murmurs and sounds to show how much he wanted to hear more.

"SYLVIA, my wife," Berger declared, "was a pure girl—in every way. When we fell in love, I said to myself, 'She has no family to take care of her, to tell her when to come home at night. I got to take care of her like a brother.' So that's what I did." He paused and they all pondered deeply on his virtue as a young man.

"I wanted to wait a while before we got married, so's I could save a little money and she could have an advantage out of loving me. 'When I can afford it,' I promised her, 'we'll get married.'"

"So, did I keep my promise? She lived in a room in Brooklyn and I

lived in a room on the East Side, and all I did all night long was lay awake thinking of her. Finally, I said to her, 'Sylvie, what's the use. I can't afford it, but let's get married, because if I don't marry you soon, I'm gonna die.' Well—she said yes. She always says yes to me. Even when she wants to say no she says, 'Yes?' " He imitated her.

"We took a two-room apartment. I warned Sylvia, 'All right, we got married. But *no children.* Not till I save up a hundred dollars.' I wanted her to have a good doctor. I wanted the baby to have security—a few good diapers." He appealed to Pete and Rosie as to judges. "So what happened? The first minute we got married, she's pregnant." He shrugged his shoulders helplessly.

Pete nodded and looked at Rosie. Here they were married a year, also in a two-room apartment, and what did they have to show for it? He was jealous.

"Well," Berger continued, "if I'm not boring you, I'll show you how even the least little promise I made my wife I couldn't keep. Since, in spite of my good intentions: I got married when I was poor; my wife got pregnant when we didn't have a cent, I decided that one thing, at least one thing would be done just like in the books. A month ago, just before the strike, I packed a valise for my wife with nightgowns and stuff for her to take to the hospital. Then I took two bucks out of my pay and put it in a jar in the closet. That would be for a taxi—and incidental expenses. Sylvia said I was crazy. The hospital is only five blocks from our house and Sylvia said she could walk there. But I insisted on the taxi. That's how I had it planned. A taxi. Then I went on strike."

Pete took an apple out of the fruitbowl for himself and handed one to Berger, who took it automatically.

"I've been on that picket line every day for three weeks. And I wear that clown suit. You can imagine how Scully loves me for that," Berger continued. "We've been keeping the customers out and that's a fact. It's a real fancy store and believe me, it looks like hell with the picket line around it.

"ON THURSDAYS, Scully keeps open till nine. So, this afternoon, around five o'clock, a kid from my block, you ought to see him, his nose is always running, comes over to the picket line and says to me, 'Hey Schloimy, your wife is having a baby!' He talks so loud that not only the whole street heard him, but Mr. Scully came running from the back of the store to see if we started the revolution already.

"The guys on the line with me started crowding around and telling me to go home. But when I saw Mr. Scully standing there with that sarcastic smile on his face, I got mad. Sure, he was happy. My wife was gonna have a baby, and that made him very happy, because maybe I

would go home and maybe if I had another mouth to feed I wouldn't stay on strike no more.

"So I started yelling at the guys to get back on the line. And then I really started hollering and screaming. All the misery and bitterness that I had in my heart I let out to the people passing by. I told the whole world my wife was having a baby in a charity hospital and that if they went into the store, they would be helping Scully who wouldn't even give me a two-buck raise. I said everything. I said, 'My baby's blood is on his toys!' Maybe it was an exaggeration, but people just didn't like to go in there and buy toys when they heard me say that.

"All the other guys on the line got excited, too. They pointed to me and they told the people my wife was in labor!"

"What happend when you got home?" Pete asked practically. "Was your wife sore?"

"I came running up the stairs to see if my wife had left, but no, she was still there. All alone. She was lying down and when she saw me, she hollered, 'Schloimy, get a doctor. The baby is coming!' "

He began to get animated and to act out the rest of the story. " 'I'll get a taxi!' I said. You remember I had *promised* her a taxi. But she said, 'Get a doctor! The baby is coming!' I got so scared, I ran out of the house into the street and started screaming at the top of my lungs, 'Help! Help! My wife is having a baby!'

"A woman stuck her head out of a window and said to me, 'So shut up! You think you discovered America? What apartment do you live in?' So I hollered back, 'Help! Help! Apartment nineteen! My wife is having a baby!' Then, maybe you wouldn't believe it. I fainted.

"The next thing I knew I was in my house. There was a whole crowd in my kitchen. A policeman, a doctor from an ambulance and about a dozen neighbors. And when I opened my eyes, two guys were carrying out my wife on a stretcher. So I started screaming again, and the cop held me down and said, 'Congratulations! You're a father!'

"I PUSHED the cop out of my way and ran downstairs. The ambulance was starting and they didn't wait for me. I ran after it. I called them but they didn't hear me. And I chased the ambulance all the way to the hospital, the whole five blocks and then up five flights to the delivery room floor. In a few minutes, the doctor came and told me, 'It's a boy!' That's the whole story, how I couldn't even keep my lousy little promise about the taxi. I'll never forget that!" He shook his head violently. In telling the story, he had recaptured his frustration and agitation, and at the end, his face was pale and his lovely hands shook a little.

"Did you see your wife?" Rosie asked.

He nodded. "They rolled her out on a table. She looked so white! With her eyes closed and a tear running down her cheek. She didn't look at me, but she knew I was there because she said to me, 'Schloimy, you didn't have a chance to eat supper!'

"I stood there like a dope ashamed to say a word. All I could think of to say was, 'Sylvie, the strike is over!'"

"What!" Pete yelled, jumping right out of his chair.

"Yeah!" Berger slapped the side of his face. "Didn't I tell you?" He could not believe he had neglected to tell such a thing.

Pete was beside himself. He ran into the living room to the phone, then ran back. "How did that happen?" he asked. What he meant was, "How could such a thing happen on my night off?"

"Gee!" said Berger. "I thought I told you! You see, we were on that line yelling our heads off and Scully was getting nervous with the blood on his toys. He kept coming to the door and saying to me, 'Go on home, for Christ's sakes!' The more he pleaded with me, the more we yelled, and pointed him out to the people on the street. He was so nervous, he didn't know what he was doing.

"Finally, at eight o'clock, when I didn't have another ounce of strength left, Scully came to the door and said, 'Okay, boys, come inside.'

" 'You ready to meet our demands?' I said.

" 'Yeah!' he said. So I said, 'Okay, guys, call the union. I got to leave you now.' "

PETE could no longer contain himself. He went to the telephone and called the union and shouted over the wire and argued and screamed. But in the end, he had to be satisfied. It was a fact. He had a night off, and the strike was settled without him. "You got your demands," he told Berger. "How do you like that! The one night I don't go in!"

Berger laughed out of sheer happiness.

Pete said, with a grim, satisfied smile, "Scully told me yesterday he'd never settle."

"Yesterday," said Berger, "my wife didn't have a baby!"

"Oh, so now you're gonna tell me he settled out of the goodness of his heart," Pete accused.

"No," said Berger. "He settled because he didn't have one customer for three hours."

The men talked to each other, leaving Rosie out of it, yet talking for her, too, as she washed the dishes and wondered at Berger's happy day. Berger must have told his story three times before he suddenly remembered he had to go to work the next day. Reluctantly, he got up to go.

"Imagine!" he said, as he draped the clown suit over his arm, "the baby has red hair like me. A face only a mother could love." And when the door was shut after him, and Pete and Rosie heard him on

the stairs, he repeated to himself, "Imagine that!"

Pete muttered, "The one night I stay home everything happens!"

Rosie understood his organizer's heart, and she caressed his face, wanting to wipe away the disappointment.

"Don't be silly," he said, turning from her involuntarily.

But when he saw the hurt flicker in her steady blue eyes, he came back to her and stood there rooted to the floor on his bandy legs, his powerful heart booming out, "I love you!" But all his mouth could say was, "So kill me! I didn't say nothing."

"You're blaming me because you took a night off," she said.

"I'm not, I swear!"

She turned and walked away from him. And he came after her, wanting a quick reconciliation. "Listen!" he said. "I'm glad I took the night off. And furthermore, I'm promising you that every chance I'll get, I'll stay home and we'll have a time all by ourselves, no phone calls. Nothing, just you and me."

That night, his wife fell asleep first, into a deep sleep, her arm flung heavily over his chest, pinning him down, keeping him awake looking at the ceiling. And he thought the whole thing over. All about nights off and wives and babies. He thought how he'd come into the union the next day and say to Joey, "Hey! You could have called me up when the Scully strike was settled. My blood was in that strike. I might have liked to sit in on the settlement." And he could hear Joey say, "But Pete! We just pretended you were out of town, just like you told us!"

So he found that it was hard for a poor working man to keep a promise to his wife, except the promise that he'll always try to fight for a better life. For it took almost nine months to the day before he really came home at a reasonable hour. And that was because on that day, also a Thursday, his kid brother-in-law, whose nose also runs, called him on the telephone and said, "Hey, Jerk! Rosie went to the hospital to have a baby!"

Culture and Colonialism

By A. B. MAGIL

ONE of the favorite myths of imperialist propaganda is that the colonial powers bring civilization, culture and enlightenment to backward, benighted peoples. Kipling's "White Man's Burden" looms larger than ever in the columns of the *Times* of New York and the *Times* of London. And more than one capitalist troubador has devoted his talents to singing the "benefits," material and spiritual, brought by the great powers to those whom the poet of aggressive British imperialism called "new-caught, sullen peoples,/ Half-devil and half-child."

It is true that historically the planting of capitalist relations in the colonial areas ended their isolation and linked them with the world market and a technically more advanced culture. But this took place at a cost of millions of slaughtered colonial lives, and under circumstances that stunted and deformed the development of these peoples and enslaved them to alien capitalist buccaneers. Today the super-buccanneers of imperialism have forged new chains for the subject peoples. But whereas in the past they did all this in the name of saving souls, today they do it in the name of saving bodies and minds—of fulfilling what the United Nations Charter calls "the obligation to promote to the utmost . . . the well-being of the inhabitants of these territories."

What kind of education and culture are the imperialist powers bestowing on their colonial serfs? Let us see what they say about themselves—not in the newspapers, magazines and books for public consumption, but in their reports to the United Nations. They are required to transmit information regularly concerning economic, social and educational conditions in the two types of colonies defined in the Charter, "non-self-governing territories" and "trust territories."

Despite glaring omissions, falsifications and distortions, these reports are in effect confessions of guilt. Limiting ourselves to questions of education and culture, we nevertheless get a self-portrait of the imperialist colonial system that exposes the pretensions of what is unsmilingly called "the free world," and reveals it as a world of slavery, tyranny and human degradation.

The reports provided some un-

comfortable moments for the imrialist governments when they came up for discussion in the Trusteeship Committee at last fall's session of the UN General Assembly in New York. On more than one occasion the United States captives among the UN members got out of hand and, together with the delegates of the socialist countries, gave Washington and its imperialist allies the short end of the vote. What gave the anticolonial issue at the UN an especially sharp cutting edge were events outside the proceedings, especially those in Korea and Kenya.

The British are now engaged in "educating" the 5,000,000 Kenya Africans with tanks, machine guns, jails and concentration camps on the pretext of "Mau Mau terrorism," which, if it exists at all, is simply a minor by-product of the massive imperialist terrorism long established there. It is concerning Kenya, as well as other colonies, that the British government obligated itself under the UN Charter's Article 73 to "insure, *with due respect for the culture of the peoples concerned,* their political, economic, social and educational advancement. . . ." [My emphasis—A.B.M.] How is this pledge being carried out in the sphere of education and culture?

THE report on Kenya submitted to the UN by the British government in 1952 states: "Education is compulsory for European children between the ages of seven and fifteen, and in the three main towns, for Asian boys of the same age." (There is a small immigrant Asian minority, consisting chiefly of Indians, who economically and socially are only a notch above the mass of submerged Africans.) In other words, for the children of the overwhelming majority of the population there is no compulsory education, and in 1951 only about 34 percent of African children of school age were enrolled in the schools. This compares with 89 percent of the European, Asian and Arab children. Moreover, all government schools charge fees. There are no higher educational institutions in Kenya. Only nineteen Africans from Kenya held scholarships for higher education overseas, compared with eighty Europeans.

A UN document on education in the non-self-governing territories gives a breakdown by ethnic groups of expenditures on education in Kenya in 1950. This shows that the European population—less than 1 percent of the total—received more than 34 percent of the funds spent on education. All non-Africans combined—less than 4 percent of the population—received about 59 percent of the expenditures.

The very fact that such a breakdown by ethnic groups is possible emphasizes that wherever in the British African colonies there is a European population as little as one-half of 1 percent of the total, jim-crow education is the rule and jim-crow everything else.

Moreover, as part of their Nazi-

like campaign against the people of Kenya, the British have launched a drive on the independent schools established by Africans themselves. Thirty-four of these were closed on a single day on the ground of connection with "Mau Mau," and 150 other schools were warned to "purge" themselves and submit to management by British-controlled district boards or they would be closed at the end of the term. In addition, two indigenous education associations were banned. And it is the Africans who are accused of terrorism!

Judging by the reports to the UN, the educational practices in Kenya are typical for all colonial Africa. If we turn, for example, to the trust territory of Tanganyika, which for years has been the prey of British and other alien big business plunderbunds, we find similar hogging of school funds by a tiny white minority of imperialist settlers. The Soviet representative on the UN Trusteeship Committee, O. O. Yurans, noted that the appropriations for the education of Europeans in Tanganyika were proportionathely "twenty-nine times greater in 1951 than those for Africans. Moreover, the salaries of indigenous teachers were ten times less than those of European teachers."

In a petition to the United Nations concerning Tanganyika, the African Association, Tanga Branch, states:

"For thirty years now the Administering Authority has been responsible for the education of the Africans, and yet not a single doctor or lawyer has been produced. It is also shocking to know that illiteracy amounts to about 90 per cent. Children of school age form about 20 percent of the population, but only 9 percent receive education."

MOVING west to Her Majesty's show colony, the Gold Coast, where the people's anti-imperialist struggle compelled the British to set up in 1951 a much publicized "self-government" — accountable to the British governor who can veto any of its acts—what do we find? No compulsory education. Fees charged for post-primary education—not till January 1952 were they abolished in the primary schools—and the usual small minority of the school age population receiving any education at all.

In many cases the colonial powers have, according to their reports, turned over responsibiilty for indigenous education wholly or partly to various imperialist religious institutions. In the Gold Coast, Uganda, Nyasaland, Sierra Leone, and the British trust territory of Togoland missions operate the most important sectors of the school systems. In British Guiana the churches control most primary schools, and in British Honduras (Belice) they own and manage nearly all primary and secondary institutions. In the Belgian Congo too—that human abattoir whose uranium is now flowing almost exclusively to the United States —the entire indigenous educational system is run by missions.

Beyond the primary stage indigenous education dwindles to such proportions that it is hardly more than a gesture. In Kenya, for example, whereas 339,909 African children (only about one-third of the potential total) attended the primary schools in 1951, in the secondary schools the figure was a mere 2,164. Three times as many non-indigenous children were receiving secondary education as native children. Vocational and technical education in nearly all the non-self-governing and trust territories is also paltry, while higher educational facilities are often non-existent. As for so-called adult literacy campaigns, where they exist at all, the official data indicate that they are of the token variety.

In contrast to the hunger of black Africa for knowledge is the real attitude of the imperialist masters toward their colonial serfs, revealed with unusual candor in the report on British Somaliland:

> "Since a large urban population could not be supported without widespread unemployment and poverty, it is not intended to provide formal education on a large scale nor to aim at mass literacy, but to limit the output of the schools to those who may reasonably be expected to find suitable employment."

In other words, the imperialists confess that they gear indigenous education to the economic backwardness and abysmal poverty which they have ordained as the permanent fate of their colonial peons.

The policies of the other powers differ in detail but not in substance from those of the British. In its report on French Equatorial Africa the French government admits that only 10.85 percent of the school age children are attending schools of all types. No similar figure is given for other French colonies, but on the basis of the limited data in the reports one can roughly estimate that native children attending school are only 5 percent of the school age group in French West Africa, 10 percent in Morocco, and 23 percent in Tunisia.

IN UNITED States-owned Puerto Rico, now doused with the semantic perfume "commonwealth" in an effort to hide the colonial stench, education is free and compulsory, but facilities are so inadequate that large numbers of children are without schooling. Figures in the previously mentioned UN document on education show that of the estimated school population of six to twelve years in 1950-51, 27 percent were not enrolled in public or private schools. The bulletin *Puerto Rican Reports* (April 22, 1952) estimates that "more than half of those in school never go beyond the fourth grade."

In the U.S.-administered trust territory of the Pacific Islands, where nearly two-thirds of the land has been seized for military purposes, there are no facilities for education at the high school or college level. Of the children receiving elementary education, 21.5 percent go to parochial schools. There are wide

discrepancies in the salaries paid to indigenous and American teachers in this trust territory. A native teacher gets as little as $90 a year, according to the report, or about one-forty-fourth of what is paid an American teacher in the islands. The minimum for a native principal is $168 a year, or about one-twenty-ninth of what an American principal receives. The maximum salaries in both categories are also far below those paid Americans.

In American Samoa the per capita expenditure in the public elementary and junior high schools is $26.50 per pupil. That is, it is lower than the lowest level of Negro education in the United States: Mississippi spent $32.55 per capita on its jim-crow schools in 1949-50.

What a commentary all this is on the way the imperialist governments conceive their "responsibilities" to the yoked colonial peoples—the peoples whom they have locked away from the very freedoms in whose name they are preparing a new world war. Moreover, the policy of starving the mind represents something more than an effort to shape education in the mold of economic backwardness and servitude. It is closely linked to the policy of stamping out the native culture and foisting on the colonial peoples the culture of their imperialist oppressors. And both are designed to prevent the emergence of national consciousness and national liberation struggles.

A significant aspect of the drive to exterminate indigenous cultures relates to language. The assault on language is many-pronged; it is manifested in the press through the dominance of newspapers and magazines in the language of the ruling country; in so-called legislative assemblies or councils where English or French or Dutch, as the case may be, is the official language; in such matters as road signs entirely in the oppressor's language (Morocco).

But most of all this attempt to deprive colonial peoples of their mother tongue is expressed in the schools. In some cases the imperialists find it necessary to permit the use of the native language in the first two or three years of school; in other cases they force little children from the beginning to learn the three R's in an idiom completely alien to them. But in nearly every case the language of the ruling power supplants the indigenous tongue in the later primary or intermediate years or in the secondary schools.

The French have developed an entire philosophy of forced Francoization of the peoples they rule. Under the pretense of not practicing racial discrimination and of "integrating" the colonial population into the so-called French Union, these imperialists impose not only their language but French curricula and general cultural patterns on the schools.

The report on French Equatorial Africa informs us that in the secondary schools "a classical and modern education corresponding in every point to that of France is given...."

The same is true of French West Africa.

IN MOROCCO and Tunisia, where the principal mother tongue is one of the languages of world culture, Arabic, there can be no pretext that it is too limited and isolated from the mainstream of international intercourse. Nevertheless, the report on Tunisia describes spoken Arabic as out of the question for purposes of instruction, and classical Arabic as "an inadequate medium in several fields." However, in Tunisia the foreign masters have had to make the concession—so they claim—of giving simultaneous instruction in French and classical Arabic while continuing to pattern the curricula after the French system.

In Morocco, according to the report:

> "Side by side with the spreading of the French language, the Protectorate has firmly adapted one section of the instruction given in its schools to the local culture by organizing secondary courses and examinations stressing peculiarly Moroccan subjects."

Peculiar of the Moroccans, isn't it, when they are offered all the riches of French culture, to show any interest in peculiarly Moroccan subjects?

And what a treat awaits those few Moroccans lucky enough to get into the secondary schools, the *lycees* and colleges, "which follow the same curricula as similar institutions in France." For in these institutions "Arabic is taught like other living languages," and "an important place is reserved in the curricula for Moroccan history and geography."

And in Madagascar the French have graciously arranged it so that in the secondary schools "Malagasy [the native language] is taught in these schools as a living language on the same footing as English and German."

On which the Polish delegate to the UN Trusteeship Committee, Ambassador to the United States Jozef Winiewicz, commented acidly that this "is no doubt a great concession on the part of any administering power. It is like saying that in the schools of Paris, French is being taught like other foreign languages, for instance, Greek."

The Belgian imperialists are no better, though they have their own unique brand of doubletalk. For example, from the report on the Belgian Congo:

> "The government considers that it is in the interests of the native peoples to have their own educational structure, taking into account their environment, needs and languages. French is used as the first language of instruction and as the language of instruction in intermediate schools for general education and secondary modern and classical schools. The native language takes first place in the remaining schools." [Which ones remain?]

And in most of the British colonies, whether in Africa, Asia (Malaya, Hong Kong), the Pacific, or Latin America, the attempt is made to impose English even where the vast

majority of the population does not understand it. Concerning British Honduras, where another of the languages of world culture, Spanish, is the mother tongue, the report informs us: "The curriculum for these schools [primary] is based on English elementary school practice and the language of instruction is English."

IN PUERTO RICO the United States for fifty years suppressed Spanish as a medium of instruction and foisted English on the schools. In 1948, under pressure of the independence movement, English finally gave way to Spanish. But most textbooks are still in English, and, according to *Puerto Rican Reports* (April 22, 1952), "The Puerto Rican personality is developed by teaching the history of the oppressor nation, the United States, before Puerto Rican history, so that youth knows more about Benedict Arnold than about the patriots Betances, De Hostos, Ruiz Belvis, etc."

And under the new Puerto Rican constitution English has equal status with Spanish in the Legislative Assembly—a provision that is not reciprocated in the U.S. Congress.

English is the language of instruction in the schools of the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and Hawaii, though in the case of the latter the United States government report admits that "a special problem is created by the fact that the pupils are accustomed to a different language at home." Could it be that the problem is created not by their own language, but by the attempt to force upon them an alien tongue?

In the trust territory of the Pacific Islands, beginning with the 10-11 year group, there is greater emphasis on English than on the native language; instruction in intermediate schools is entirely in English. Though the U.S. 1951-52 report for this trust territory admits that "the majority of adult Micronesians are not literate," the adult education classes, attended by a mere 430 persons, teach only one language, English. In Guam English is not only used exclusively in the schools—which, incidentally, are segregated—but is the official language of the territory, even though the report admits that "the Chamorro language is still in use." With typical chauvinist arrogance and condescension the report finds that "the Guamanians are so Americanized. . . ."

The paladins of U.S. imperialist culture are not content with forcing their language on their direct subjects. "English for the World!" is the title of an article by W. L. Werner in the October 4, 1952 issue of the *Saturday Review* (financed by Morgan). This crusade, according to the author, "is warfare against the Soviet dictatorship without bloodshed, a war against illiteracy and disease that accompany it, a war for democratic ideas, and for world peace."

Such "bloodless" wars against the languages and cultures of colonial peoples represent — to borrow a phrase of the Polish representative

on the UN Trusteeship Committee —"cultural genocide." And what is involved is more than a question of making it more difficult for children to learn, and more than a question of depriving millions of a mother tongue and culture dear to them. The attempt to uproot the indigenous languages—a clear violation of the UN Charter—has an even deeper significance. A common language is one of the indispensable elements of nationhood. It is therefore one of the elements that helps promote among an oppressed people the movement for self-government and independence. By imposing their own languages on the subject peoples and especially on the younger generation, the imperialist governments are attempting to strangle national development and the liberation struggle.

ALL this must be seen in the context of the general role of the colonies as imperialist booty and levers of power—sources of cheap raw materials, including strategic war materials, spheres of exceptionally profitable investment, and military bases. From these colonial springs flow fabulous wealth for a handful of robber barons in a handful of countries, who in the mad lust for more plunder and power have turned homicidal on a global scale. And to satisfy this lust one-half the human race must live in medieval backwardness, frightful poverty and ignorance.

It was Marx who pointed out in *Capital* that the creation of the colonial system, including "the turning of Africa into a warren for the commercial hunting of black-skins," was one of the principal forcing-beds of mercantile capitalism; and that later, in the industrial capitalist era the exploitation of the colonies was one of the chief means of raising the average rate of profit.

It was Lenin who demonstrated in *Imperialism* that the great expansion of the colonial system in the last quarter of the nineteenth century was one of the principal vehicles for the advance from free competition to the monopoly stage of capitalism, or imperialism; and that, in turn, imperialism greatly accentuated the struggle among the great powers for colonies and a new division of the world.

It was Stalin who in his last published work, *Economic Problems of Socialism in the USSR,* showed that with the postwar disintegration of the single capitalist world market and its replacement by two parallel world markets, one of them non-capitalist, it was no longer a question of bolstering the average rate of profit or even of obtaining super-profit, but of securing *maximum profit* as the basic economic law of modern capitalism. And he showed, furthermore, that it is the objective of maximum profit "that drives monopoly capitalism to such risky undertakings as the enslavement and systematic plunder of colonies and other backward countries, the conversion of a number of independent

countries into dependent countries, the organization of new wars—which to the magnates of modern capitalism is the 'business' best adapted to the extraction of maximum profit—and, lastly, attempts to win world economic supremacy."

This holds especially true for the Wall Street monopolists. And one of the major phenomena of the postwar period is that instead of one oppressor, the colonies now have two: in the drive for maximum profit U.S. big business has muscled its way into the preserves of its British, French, Dutch and other imperialist rivals, using the almighty dollar as a blackjack, and converting most of the colonial and semi-colonial world into an adjunct of U.S. war economy. This sharpens inter-imperialist tensions while at the same time rousing the subject peoples to greater efforts toward self-liberation.

"I would annex the planets," wrote the arch-empire builder of the nineteenth century and mass murderer of the African peoples, Cecil Rhodes. The modern empire-builders of Wall Street and Washington also dream of conquering other planets with their space ships and H-bombs. But their own star is falling. The peoples of the colonial countries are more and more taking into their own hands the enforcement of the pledges in the United Nations Charter. And their action is helping the world fight for peace and freedom.

It is the star of these enslaved and humiliated peoples that is rising all over the world, as it did thirty-six years ago for the once colonial, once backward peoples that are now the free and prosperous citizens of the Soviet Asian republics; as it has risen for the nearly half billion people of China. Who that looks at the realities of Asia, Africa and Latin America today can doubt that imperialist-fostered ignorance and cultural hooliganism will not prevail? The schools of freedom are everywhere.

The Civilizers

By HERMAN MELVILLE

We introduce herewith a new M & M feature, "American Document," which will serve the twofold purpose of recalling neglected aspects of our heritage and illuminating vital problems today.

The following is taken from Herman Melville's first novel, Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life. *The work was originally published in England in* 1846, *having been rejected in this country by the firm of Harper's because "It was impossible that it could be true."*

Actually, Melville's comments on the "Western civilizers" were based on his own direct observations in the Marquesan Islands, Tahiti, Hawaii. He had come to the Pacific in 1841 *as a crew member of the whaler* Acushnet.

Typee *was bitterly attacked by the influential missionary societies, but Melville hit back again in his next novel,* Omoo, *as well as in* Mardi, *which satirized the American slaveholders and the unjust war against Mexico.*

THE enormities perpetrated in the South Seas upon some of the inoffensive islanders well nigh pass belief. These things are seldom proclaimed at home; they happen at the very ends of the earth; they are done in a corner, and there is none to reveal them. But there is, nevertheless, many a petty trader that has navigated the Pacific whose course from island to island might be traced by a series of cold-blooded robberies, kidnappings, and murders, the iniquity of which might be considered almost sufficient to sink her guilty timbers to the bottom of the sea.

Sometimes vague accounts of such things reach our firesides, and we coolly censure them as wrong, impolitic, needlessly severe, and dangerous to the crews of other vessels. How different is our tone when we read the highly wrought description of the massacre of the crew of the *Hobomak* by the Feejees; how we sympathize for the unhappy victims, and with what horror do we regard the diabolical heathens, who, after all, have but avenged the unprovoked injuries which they have received.

We breathe nothing but vengeance, and equip armed vessels to traverse thousands of miles of ocean

in order to execute summary punishment upon the offenders. On arriving at their destination, they burn, slaughter, and destroy, according to the tenor of written instructions, and sailing away from the scene of devastation, call upon all Christendom to applaud their courage and their justice. . . .

The fiend-like skill we display in the invention of all manner of death-dealing engines, the vindictiveness with which we carry on our wars, and the misery and desolation that follow in their train, are enough of themselves to distinguish the white civilized man as the most ferocious animal on the face of the earth.

The term "Savage" is, I conceive, often misapplied, and indeed when I consider the vices, cruelties, and enormities of every kind that spring up in the tainted atmosphere of a feverish civilization, I am inclined to think that so far as the relative wickedness of the parties is concerned, four or five Marquesan Islanders sent to the United States as Missionaries might be quite as useful as an equal number of Americans dispatched to the Islands in a similar capacity. . .

How little do some of these poor islanders comprehend when they look around them, that no inconsiderable part of their disasters originate in certain tea-party excitements, under the influence of which benevolent-looking gentlemen in white cravats solicit alms, and old ladies in spectacles, and young ladies in sober russet low gowns, contribute sixpences towards the creation of a fund, the object of which is to ameliorate the spiritual condition of the Polynesians, but whose end has almost invariably been to accomplish their temporal destruction!

Among the islands of Polynesia, no sooner are the images overturned, the temples demolished, and the idolaters converted into *nominal* Christians, than disease, vice, and premature death make their appearance. The depopulated land is then recruited from the rapacious hordes of enlightened individuals who settle themselves within its borders, and clamorously announce the progress of the Truth. Neat villas, trim gardens, shaven lawns, spires and cupolas arise, while the poor savage soon finds himself an interloper in the country of his fathers, and that too on the very site of the hut where he was born.

NOT until I visited Honolulu was I aware of the fact that the small remnant of the natives had been civilized into draught horses and evangelized into beasts of burden. But so it is. They have been literally broken into the traces, and are harnessed to the vehicles of their spiritual instructors like so many dumb brutes!

Among a multitude of similar exhibitions that I saw, I shall never forget a robust, red-faced, and very ladylike personage, a missionary's spouse, who day after day for months

together took her regular airings in a little go-cart drawn by two of the islanders, one an old gray-headed man, and the other a roguish stripling, both being, with the exception of the fig-leaf, as naked as when they were born.

Over a level piece of ground this pair of *draught* bipeds would go with a shambling, unsightly trot, the youngster hanging back all the time like a knowing horse, while the old hack plodded on and did all the work.

Rattling along through the streets of the town in this stylish equipage, the lady looks about her as magnificently as any queen driven in state to her coronation. A sudden elevation, and a sandy road, however, soon disturb her serenity.

The small wheels become imbedded in the loose soil—the old stager stands tugging and sweating, while the young one frisks about and does nothing; not an inch does the chariot budge.

Will the tender-hearted lady, who has left friends and home for the good of the souls of the poor heathen, will she think a little about their bodies and get out, and ease the wretched old man until the ascent is mounted? Not she; she could not dream of it.

To be sure, she used to think nothing of driving the cows to pasture on the old farm in New England; but times have changed since then. So she retains her seat and bawls out, "Hookee! Hookee!" (Pull, pull.) The old gentleman, frightened at the sound, labors away harder than ever; and the younger one makes a great show of straining himself, but takes care to keep one eye on his mistress, in order to know when to dodge out of harm's way.

At last the good lady loses all patience: "Hookee! hookee!" and rap goes the heavy handle of her huge fan over the naked skull of the old savage; while the young one shies to one side and keeps beyond its range.

"Hookee! hookee!" again she cries —"Hookee tata kannaka!" (Pull strong, men)—but all in vain, and she is obliged in the end to dismount and, sad necessity! actually to walk to the top of the hill.

At the town where this paragon of humility resides, is a spacious and elegant American chapel, where divine service is regularly performed. Twice every Sabbath towards the close of the exercises may be seen a score or two of little wagons ranged along the railing in front of the edifice, with two squalid native footmen in the livery of nakedness standing by each, and waiting for the dismission of the congregation to draw their superiors home.

The Soviet Writer and His Union

By JOSEPH CLARK

WE WERE seated in Alexei Surkov's office in the fine old palace on Vorovsky Street in Moscow which houses the Union of Soviet Writers. I asked the big cheerful poet-editor, who is assistant general secretary of the Writers Union to describe, for readers of *Masses & Mainstream,* the nature of the organization and its operations.

The Union was formed in 1934 at a congress of writers under the chairmanship of Maxim Gorky. It is an All-Union organization and each Soviet republic has its own writers' union under its own leadership. Soviet creative literature, Surkov reminded me, flourishes in no fewer than a hundred languages, forty of which are of peoples who did not have a written language before the Socialist Revolution.

Authors who have had works published are eligible for membership. Since one of the Union's main purposes is to encourage new writers and new literature, there are two categories of members: regular and candidate members. In the latter category are the younger, relatively unknown authors. The congress of the Union elects an executive committee and the interim policies and activities are guided by a presidium and secretariat of the executive. Alexander Fadayev, author of *The Nineteen* and *The Young Guard,* is the general secretary.

Much of the Union's activity is conducted through its sections, devoted to prose-writing, poetry, drama, children's literature, scenario writing, satire, folklore, etc. A general membership meeting of each section elects an executive committeee. Manuscripts as well as published works are frequently discussed at meetings and affairs arranged by the sections. For example, the prose writers' section held a discussion recently based on the novel *The Zhurbins* by a new young Leningrad author, Vsevolod Kochetov, which deals with a worker's family. This discussion not only evaluated the merits and shortcomings of this popular novel but took up the more general theme of how to portray the Soviet man.

A wide variety of periodicals is published by the Union and its various departments. Besides the tri-

weekly central organ *Literaturnaya Gazeta,* there are similar papers issued in other cities and republics. Of great value for authors and readers are the big literary magazines such as *Znamya, Oktyabr, Zvyezda,* and *Novy Mir.* They run to hundreds of pages per issue and publish entire novels, plays, stories and volumes of poetry before they are issued in book form. Similar magazines appear in other languages in the various republics and in cities thousands of miles east of Moscow.

Then there are the more specialized journals devoted to the theatre, cinema, etc. The monthly *Soviet Literature* publicizes work by Soviet authors for readers abroad and appears in English, French, German, Polish and Spanish. Another useful type of periodical is the almanac. These are collections of current writing put out monthly, or several times a year. There are fifty of these almanacs which enable hundreds of authors, new and old, to reach wider audiences and help readers keep up with the current literary output.

The publishing houses of the Union of Soviet Writers issue a prodigious volume of books. Works by Sholokhov, Fadayev, Ehrenburg, Fedin, Pavlenko, Polevoi, Kazakevich, Simonov and others circulate in multi-million editions. Gorky's works have appeared in more than 70 million copies. And when a single edition of a popular novel comes out in a half million copies it is not at all unusual.

AUTHORS' rights and royalties are protected by the Union. Surkov explained that a writer's income is determined by the same principle which prevails throughout socialist society: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his work." Contracts are signed by writers and their publishers, and rates are based on the quality of the work. For the first edition the author collects 100 per cent of the royalties; on succeeding editions through the fifth he gets 50 per cent, and on all remaining editions 40 per cent. On the signing of the contract the author gets 25 per cent in advance. After approval of the manuscript he gets 40 per cent and the remainder after publication. When a writer dies, the rights to his books and income go to his family for fifteen years. After that the book becomes state property.

How are young writers encouraged and developed? "Daily, thousands of manuscripts," Surkov said, "stories, sketches, poems and more ambitious works arrive in newspaper offices, magazines, publishing houses from young people starting to write. The institutions which get such manuscripts are obliged to pay careful attention to everything they get. When they spot talent they must give the young writer every help in publishing his work. They must evaluate all manuscripts, make suggestions and criticize the work with a view to developing talent where it is manifested."

"Youth who show special ability," Surkov continued, "are given opportunities to study. There is, for example, the Gorky Literary Institute. Among its graduates are writers like Simonov, Babayevsky, Aligher and other noted authors." Surkov smiled as he added: "We don't consider that any college can make a writer out of someone who has no talent. But where talent exists it can be developed and trained."

A method used to encourage young writers is the organization of special literary conferences and workshop meetings of new writers. The biggest names in Soviet literature participate in such gatherings. There were two such conferences a year ago, with 300 young writers participating in each. Among recipients of Stalin prizes for literature there have been quite a number of new young writers.

How do you view the responsibilities of the Writers Union in this period of the gradual transition from a socialist to a communist society? I asked Surkov. Soviet writers, he said, do not consider literature a pastime, "but an essential means of education and enlightenment, a means of developing character and a vital part of man's spiritual life. Living as we are in an epoch of gigantic transformations, man too is being transformed. Literature is a form of cognition of reality and it can have a tremendous influence on the human personality. We are trying to fulfill our responsibilities which arise from this epoch, and the times we live in make an enormous demand on our literature."

Though Surkov made it plain that Soviet writers weren't self-satisfied with the contributions they have made, he did proudly assert that Soviet literature caters to a healthy, artistic public taste. "Therefore we have no detective stories, no comics, no pornography, no decadence." In a self-critical vein Surkov indicated that many Soviet authors don't measure up to the development of the vast reading public's mental and spiritual stature. Many have not been able to portray in sufficiently high artistic form the heroes of Soviet society, men and women of labor and creative ability. Surkov expressed deep gratification for Georgi Malenkov's stress, in his report last October to the 19th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, on "the struggle to rear the new and the lofty, and to eradicate that which is obsolescent and moribund in social life."

HOW many times have we in the west heard that Soviet writers are ordered by the Kremlin what and how to write! Anyone acquainted with the rich and varied output of Soviet novels, stories, poetry knows how absurd this charge is. Nevertheless, the slander persists. So I asked Surkov whether he and his colleagues get orders about what to write. He laughed and replied:

"We write books as we want to write

them, as decent writers anywhere do. If we write poorly people won't buy our books. The Soviet writer can't be bought. The themes we choose are as varied as the life we live. They are as varied and vivid as our imagination is capable of creating. No literature in the world is written for as wide and exacting a public as ours. Our literature is not of the ivory tower; it is part of our life. It reflects the thoughts, the feelings, emotions of people and is written for real people who have a vast appreciation of good literature."

Surkov stressed again and again this profound appreciation which Soviet writers have for their reading public. And tied up with this is their feeling for the Communist Party. "The Party is wise and helpful in its attention to literature," Surkov stated.

Recalling Stalin's statement that controversy and a free clash of opinion are necessary to the advancement of science, I asked Surkov how this applied to literature. "It is even more true of literature," he replied, "because in creative work there is not only the criterion of objective facts and laws, but of taste." Surkov cited some of the controversies that have taken place in recent times. There was the struggle against cosmopolitanism and bourgeois nationalism. In the first the target was a denial of national roots and pride, in the latter a rejection of working class internationalism. Then there was the discussion and struggle over formalism, which, Surkov hastened to explain, did not mean an acceptance of the view that form and style were not of vital importance for good art. More recently there was the controversy over whether there can be conflicts in works on Soviet themes since antagonistic classes have been eliminated. These are only a few of the questions which have produced the most widespread discussions. No conference or meeting of writers can take place without differences being aired freely.

A popular poet himself, Surkov was happy to talk about the high esteem in which poetry is held in the Soviet Union. Books of poetry circulate in very large editions. Daily radio programs are devoted to poetry readings and workers' clubs as well as theatres organize regular evenings for the reading of poetry. "Poetry is spiritual food for our people," is the way Surkov put it.

How account for the immense popularity of poetry in the Soviet Union, which contrasts so sharply with the thin books and thinner circulation of poetry in the West? Surkov ascribes it first to the way Soviet literature has developed the great tradition of classical Russian poets. The poetry of Pushkin, Lermontov and Nekrasov was not of the ivory tower, and its very romanticism represented a fresh breeze blowing from a positive not a decadent view of life. Then, with Mayakovsky Soviet poetry carried forward the tradition in terms of the working class revolution. Poetry, more than ever, was dedicated to the

people and social progress and ceased to be the property of an intellectual élite.

Another factor, in Surkov's view, is the influence of the best poetry of the West, which enjoys a tremendous vogue in the Soviet Union. Shakespeare, Goethe and Byron are not just assignments taken up in school, but are read and enjoyed by millions, young and old. In the light of all this it is easy to see why Tvardovsky, Isakovsky, Tikhonov, Surkov, Malyshko and other Soviet poets have such great audiences.

In his advice to young poets—and he devotes considerable time to helping new poets—Surkov likes to quote the lines of Mayakovsky:

"Poetry is like
the extraction of radium:
One gram of metal—
tons of ore.
The poet sifts
a mountain of verbiage
To find the word
he is looking for."

HOW is writing specifically for children encouraged in the Soviet Union? "We consider children's literature," Surkov said, "one of the most important responsibilities of writers; it's a responsibility to the future." Surkov, like most Soviet writers, has participated in many literary gatherings devoted entirely to children, reading his poems to school children and listening respectfully to the opinions of his young readers and listeners. Surkov asked me if I had visited the House of Children's Books. I told him I had and that I marveled at the mountain of mail that comes in daily from children to their favorite authors.

"The main task in writing for younger children," Surkov said, "is to create in the child a faith in man and humanity. The development of personality and molding of character is a fundamental responsibility of those who write for younger readers. Our society discourages individualism and inculcates in youth a recognition of social responsibility. Such an orientation doesn't hinder the development of the individual; on the contrary, it gives full play to the growth of personality and individual character."

Last year a special conference of the Writers Union was devoted entirely to the subject of children's literature. The Union also helps various children's magazines and newspapers develop a taste for good literature, both classical and contemporary.

My interview with Surkov took place on the even of the All-Soviet peace conference. I asked what part writers played in this movement. From its very inception, Surkov said, writers were a leading force in the organization and work of the Soviet peace movement. They also played an active part in the world peace movement. The poet Tikhonov heads the Soviet peace committee and Ehrenburg, Fadayev and

Korneichuk are well known for their activity in the World Peace Council. All this is perfectly natural, Surkov pointed out, because a literature based on humanism must of necessity be an enemy of war.

As for Surkov himself, in his own words, he "is a typical product of the society created by the 25th of October," that, of course, being the date under the old calendar of the Socialist Revolution. When he was eighteen he worked as a docker in Petrograd. Then he enlisted as a soldier in the revolution. He fought in the Red Guard and with the Soviet forces in the civil war and against the foreign interventionists.

Coming from a poor working-class family, he had had only four years of schooling before the revolution. After the revolution he studied and when he was 35, in 1934, he became a professor. But his heart was in writing, especially poetry, and it was his creative talents that won him fame throughout the Soviet Union.

Surkov is editor of one of the most popular Soviet magazines, *Ogonyok* (Little Flame), an illustrated weekly which features short stories, poetry, reportage, special articles on international affairs and color reproductions of famous paintings. He is a deputy of the Supreme Soviet of the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic and of the Moscow City Council. At the 19th congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union he was elected a member of the auditing commission of the Central Committee.

Surkov is now working on a new volume of poetry, *Around the World*. It takes its theme from his visits to sixteen countries in both East and West since the war.

By way of closing the interview I asked Surkov whether Soviet writers would welcome visits by American writers to the Soviet Union. He replied that they would very much like to see guests from the United States. But he added: "It doesn't seem to depend so much on us as on the State Department, whether they can visit us or not."

The Union of Soviet Writers is eager, Surkov said, to facilitate travel and cultural exchange between the Soviet Union and other countries. He pointed out that in the last few years there have been visits to the U.S.S.R. by writers from India as well as China, from Great Britain and France as well as Poland and Czechoslovakia, from Latin America, the Scandinavian countries, Germany and Australia. Authors who have visited the Soviet Union have included Communists, but for the most part they were not Communists. They have come both on individual visits and as members of delegations. They have been free to travel all over the Soviet Union, not only in Russia proper, but in the Caucasus and the central Asian republics. Surkov looks forward to the day when the State Department will lift its iron curtain.

The Indestructible

For Mariano P. Balgos of the Hukbalahap

By GEORGE HITCHCOCK

I.

Manila! City of wounds!
Eight years have gone
Yet tonight again, a seaman in a strange port,
I enter your multiple doors
And you embrace me with your odors and cries.

I walk in the Tondo
And among the sombre houses of the poor
You open your wounds to me:
There I see the sharks' teeth of hunger,
The ulcered sores
The knives of poverty
And am pursued by ragged boys
Who sell their sisters to the sergeants.

I come to a certain *nipa* hut.
Here, Mariano,
Though my generals hunt you with warrants
You sit inviolate in the breast of the people.
Here the general staff of the landless
Talks of liberty:
Hukbo ng bayan laban sa Japon—
The People's Anti-Japanese Army.
I hear your clear, warm voice, Mariano,
Precise in English
Rippling in Tagálog,
Discuss the alphabet of freedom.
I feel your brown hand in mine,
The hand of a Filipino printer
In that of an American seaman.

"Tell America," you say,

"We remember Rizal
"As you remember your Washington
"And that cold winter in Delaware.
"We have learned from your revolution:
"Grant us our own."

Later, I walk through the bombed streets
To the Malacañan Palace.
From this house of hungry pockets
Soriano, Roxas, Laurel,
Yesterday Yamashita's dinner-guests,
Emerge with chlorinated teeth
To devour the young doe of liberty.
I see the hand under the table
The airplanes strangely declared surplus
The bribed inspector
The missing shipment of carpets.
For the war is over;
Order is guaranteed,
And property can resume
Its noiseless gnawing on the poor.

On the way back to my ship
I cross the Pasig. Night arrives.
I look down at that river
And think of Crisanto Evangelista
Strangled and drowned by the Japanese.
I gaze at the Pasig
And it is a river of tearing mouths,
Swallower of tears,
Devourer of the bodies
Of my murdered comrades.

Manila! City of wounds!
Eight years have passed, and these memories
Should have been interred
In the burial-ground of old travelogues.
But I cannot forget.
Nor shall I ever.

II.

Five thousand miles and as many hopes
Removed, air-conditioned America

Sleeps its beauty sleep.
We live here in the street of lost petals
We live in a house of bones;
Here in this land of fractured statues
We chat of summer and swimming and the latest tenor
While tears fall unnoticed
In our breakfast food.

Voices which cry from underground
Are ignored as indelicate.
Broom-straw
Ink-splotch
The cracked bowl
Harass us in our dreams.
Unaware of portents
Unaware of history
Oblivious to hunger
We lift our cups in manicured fingers
And if the child cries in the cellar
Stuff his mouth with rags.
In the eastern sky
Heavens explode like rockets
And the red flag comes again to Bulaçán,
Yet here in this street of lost petals
The peon's anguish is transmuted
To the lilt of violas
And dowager ladies weep at the Nativity
Of worlds they cannot know,
While in suburban cellars
The children of our indifference
Scream like tigers.

Americans, countrymen,
Who of you will see the fist at the window?
Who will caliper October's wind?
Who wakes? Who listens?

Not you, Belshazzars of the country-club,
Morticians of joy, enemies of the jonquil,
For your eyes, which might have seen,
Are glazed with fear
And your hands
Which might have learned to touch

Have lived too long in gloves.

No, if there are those who will listen
(And there are
And there will be)
If there are those
Who will extend diplomatic recognition to the dawn
(And there are
And there will be)
Do not look for them in chanceries
But among bakers of bread
Diggers, fabricants, vintners and creators,
The sawyer in Grays Harbor, Washington,
The longshoreman in New Orleans,
The man on the tractor in Abilene, Kansas,
The blue-fin fisherman of Bodega Bay.

Their ears sharpened to the wind
They hear the wind's arrival.
They listen, Mariano.
Do not despair of them.
My country stirs slowly
In its barbiturate slumbers.
But it stirs.

III.

And you, Mariano . . . ?
While I am sleepless with remembrance,
How do you pass this night?

Do you lie in some still barrio
Remembering Rizal
As the clock ticks toward dawn
And the inevitable militiaman
In the village square?
Are you hunted? Jailed?
Or, surrounded by comrades,
Do you plan the next day's march,
The ascent of mountains, the sudden lunge
From the bamboo thicket,
The rice-fields held, lost, or regained?
And afterwards

In the malarial swamps
Where the machine-guns marked f.o.b. Detroit
And Wilmington and Duluth have driven you,
I see you thumbing Mao Tse-tung *On Practice*
While the dark bats of Luzon
Whir in the night like aviators.

This night, wherever you are, Mariano,
I offer my shame.

For let it be said simply:
You asked for freedom,
My country applauded
And sent you MacArthur.

You requested land for those
Who held no land. My country agreed,
And airmailed each guerilla
A grenadeful of dust
To stop his mouth.

IV.

Now, having spoken so long of terror,
Let us end this conversation with songs
Of sun and bread and the fragrance of jasmine,
Of water and sand and smoke,
Of the five senses which bridge our separate lives
Of the late sunlight heavy as honey
Of grasses at our thighs
Wine in bottles
The bright steel of sickles
Of lantana and hibiscus
And the mynah-birds in the rice-fields.

And we who traffic in these dreams
Let us be prouder of them
Than of myrrh and spices;
For tomorrow's children live in our mind's eye
And should we cease to dream
Will die stillborn.

Remember
Rice is sown beneath water
And sprouts unseen.
Remember
The moles conquer what Alexander
And all of Greece could not,
And in time the coral polyp
In its million nations
Overtops the sea.

Do not forget
That we walk in fields of fists
Which tomorrow's harvesters
Shall see open in fellowship.

We are indestructible, Mariano,
You and I,
Because of our replaceable faces
Because of our exchangeable skins
Because of our numberless hands
Because when we're cut off
And nailed down
And cooped up
And shot dead
And laid out stiff
And given up for lost
We always pop up in some other place
And with some other name—
Juan de la Cruz or Danny or Serge or Mario—
But always with the same voice
Shouting what we have to shout
Singing what we have to sing:

Let the sun rise on Iloilo
Rise over Luzon
Over the Pacific
Over all oceans and all lands.
Let it cast its opulent rays
On all tomorrows
Until Yesterday shall become a word
To be said with reluctance.

Science, Art and Superstructure

By EMILE BURNS

IN THE preface to *The Critique of Political Economy,* Marx summarizes his conclusions in the following sentences:

(1) "In the social production which men carry on, they enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production."

(2) "The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness."

(3) "The mode of production in material life determines the social, political and intellectual life processes in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness."

Hence, we have (1) the forces of production — including the *instruments of production,* and the *peopl* who use them with their *labor ex perience* and *skill;* (2) the relation of production—the property rela tions, class relations—which consti tute the economic structure of societ at each stage; this is the "basis" o which arises (3) the "superstructure —the ideas, views, institutions of sc ciety at each stage; (4) the mode c production (capitalism, Socialism which includes both the *forces* an the *relations* of production; this "d termines the social, political and i tellectual life process in general."

In his statements on Linguistic Stalin shows that language canno be ranked either among bases among superstructures, nor is it a "intermediate" phenomenon ("' such 'intermediate' phenomena do n exist"); nor can it be ranked amon the instruments of production. It a distinct social phenomenon, n falling within the categories name by Marx.

The question has, therefore, be raised whether there are other soci phenomena which are also not i cluded in these categories, and whe

in particular science stands; and questions have also been raised about the place of art.

The present article is an attempt to set out some of the problems, and to suggest some considerations which may be useful for any further discussions.

In *Concerning Marxism in Linguistics,* Stalin makes the point that all social phenomena, in addition to serving society, "have their own specific peculiarities which distinguish them from each other"; and as noted by Maurice Cornforth, Stalin approaches language not arbitrarily — as of necessity either basis or superstructure—but "as it is, in its real development, in its real social role."

If we approach science in this way, Lenin's statement in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism* suggests an important specific peculiarity of all real science:

> "When and under what circumstances we reached, in our knowledge of the essential nature of things, the discovery of alizarin in coal tar or the discovery of electrons in the atom is historically conditional; but that every such discovery is an advance of 'absolutely objective knowledge' is unconditional. In a word, every ideology is historically conditional, but it is unconditionally true that to every scientific ideology (as distinct, for instance, from religious ideology) there corresponds an objective truth, absolute nature."

SCIENCE is therefore a social product to which corresponds an objective truth, nature and the laws of nature. It is a systematized knowledge of nature, used in practice (for knowledge and practice go together and develop together) to change nature for the benefit of man. This knowledge of nature and the use of it in practice are at all stages of human society closely associated with social production, through which in particular the natural sciences arise and develop. There is a constant advance of that "absolutely objective knowledge" of which Lenin wrote, and this body of knowledge is passed on from one stage of society to the next, and serves each succeeding stage.

It is true that each addition to the knowledge of nature is, in one aspect, relative, because the further development of science constantly brings new knowledge relating to the "fact" already "known," modifying, qualifying or adding to the existing body of "absolutely objective knowledge." (This is brought out by Engels in *Anti-Dühring,* using the example of Boyle's Law). But nevertheless there is a continuous advance in the knowledge of nature, and this accumulated knowledge is inherited by all later stages of society.

In this respect—continuity through different modes of production—science seems to have some similarity with the productive forces. The development of the natural sciences through social production, and especially in modern times their association with the development of productive instruments and techniques, suggests that science (or at least some science) is closely related to the forces of production. There can be no doubt that it is correct to include

the scientist, with his labor experience and skill of a special order, as an element in the productive forces, like the skilled worker.

If science is taken to mean not only knowledge of nature and natural laws, but also practice, "scientific labor," then it could be included among the productive forces. But it is not a material productive force, though it helps to develop the instruments of production.

What seems clear is that some sciences are closely linked with production, others are not so closely linked, while in the case of yet others (for example, the science of language, linguistics) it is difficult to see any sense in which they could be classed with the productive forces.

In any case, it cannot be doubted that the basis (the productive relations at each stage of society) is constantly acting on science, determining the direction in which the "absolutely objective knowledge" develops and whether it is or is not used in production. The patent laws, the buying up and suppression of patents, are obvious examples of how capitalist private property and monopoly affect the further development of science; the direction of atomic research in the West is another familiar example. In the early period of capitalist society, capitalist property relations help the development of production and of science; in the declining stage of capitalism, the retarding effect of capitalist property relations is felt both in production and in science.

But the productive relations, th class relations, the "basis," not onl affect science *directly* in this wa Science is also affected *indirectl* through other parts of the superstru ture raised on the basis, and espe cially through the philosophy an religious ideology of the property owning class. Religious ideology an idealist philosophy is always in co flict with the materialist outlook an practice which is essential to th winning and systematizing of "abso lutely objective knowledge." Th conflict, pushed aside in daily life b the urgent needs of production, b comes more obvious in proportion the generalizations of each scien become more abstract, more remo from direct observation and testi in practice.

In a class-divided society, therefo closely interwoven with the "abs lutely objective knowledge" inherit from past societies or newly won that society, in any actual scien there are theories, modes of approa views, which arise directly or in rectly from the productive relatio Such theories and views, arising fr the class relations, in the last res express the interests and conflicts classes in that particular stage of ciety, and may be progressive or actionary, may help society forw or hold it back, may be to one deg or another one-sided, limited, or fa

I SAY "closely interwoven" with "absolutely objective knowled because it is difficult to say that general category of science—scien

method, hypotheses, theories, etc. — is or is not affected by the basis and superstructure. Every approach to reality, and particularly every view of "the essence of things (their qualities and the internal relations between one thing and another)"—to use Mao Tse-tung's phrase in *On Practice* —is of necessity aeffcted by the current philosophical outlook, which will clearly also affect practice and therefore the line of further scientific development in each particular field.

But this does not mean that the accumulation of "absolutely objective knowledge" is impossible in a class society. On the contrary, such knowledge is linked with and tested by practice in all societies; without it, no society could live and develop. When we speak of "bourgeois science" we do not belittle the immense scientific achievements of bourgeois society which in fact are in large measure the starting-point for "socialist science."

Rather we imply, in one degree or another in relation to particular fields of science, that the actual achievements of bourgeois science have been (1) restricted in the direction and line of development by the productive relations; (2) one-sided — for example by narrow specialization without integration with other fields of science, and therefore leading to a blind alley, as a result of the lack of a unifying philosophy; (3) limited by the requirements of bourgeois society—for example, agro-biology, not developed in bourgeois society because, as Hammond pointed out in relation to the period between the wars, the problem was overproduction, surpluses rather than shortages; and only fully developed in a socialist society which seeks abundance; (4) false in its interpretation of such restricted "absolutely objective knowledge" as it amasses, owing to its philosophical approach — for example, Mendel-Morganist genetics; or in another field, Freudian psychology; (5) false because the class interests directly intervene and lead to deliberate distortion or the ignoring of reality, as is especially the case in the social sciences.

How far any particular science developed in the bourgeois period is affected by the class relations of production and the class philosophy and other superstructural elements arising from these class relations cannot be settled in the abstract. It is in the first place a question of fact, or proof in practice, how far any particular body of science is "absolutely objective knowledge." In the second place it is a question of whether even that "absolutely objective knowledge" which has been able to serve the needs of class society is adequate to the needs of a new form of society, or whether it requires a more or less fundamental reworking and broadening to meet these new needs.

Thirdly—and running through all other considerations—it is a question of how far the typical bourgeois mechanistic, metaphysical, idealist approach has in fact warped, restricted or deliberately falsified the interpretation of reality, and thus obstructed

that knowledge of "the essence of things" which only a dialectical materialist approach can reveal. It is the dialectical materialist approach which is the key both to the new discoveries and to the theoretical advances of science in socialist society; while it is socialist society that sets science completely new tasks to solve.

In such an examination of any particular fields of bourgeois science, another factor that must be taken into account is the actual stage of development of bourgeois society itself, and its influence on science in that period. In the bourgeois struggle against feudal ideas, materialist philosophy (with all its mechanistic limitations) played an important part, and was linked with a new approach and new discoveries in science, leading to that rapid growth in man's productive powers which characterized the development of capitalism. Later, and particularly in the monopoly stage of capitalism, the interests of bourgeois society are no longer served by this thorough-going materialist approach and ceaseless expansion of productive powers; the dominant philosophy reverts to idealism, the idealist outlook penetrates much of science (not only the social sciences), and whole branches of pseudo-science (for example, "industrial psychology," "intelligence testing") spring up directly intended to serve the interests of the capitalists against the working class.

THESE considerations seem to apply to all science—the social sciences as well as the natural sciences. The *subject matter* of the social sciences is human society, a part of nature, and "absolutely objective knowledge" is possible and necessary to practice also in this field. Nevertheless, in a class-divided society the class outlook, class philosophy and class interests come more directly into play in the examination of social facts and laws than in the examination of external nature.

In the earlier, developing stages of capitalist society, the approach to reality tends to be truly scientific even in social science. The earlier political economists of capitalism such as Adam Smith and Ricardo made a serious study of their subject and achieved positive results which Marx was able to use and develop. Marx himself contrasts their "genuine scientific research" with "the bad conscience and the evil intent of apologetic" displayed by the later "vulgar," economists. And he explains that it was the "more and more outspoken and threatening forms" of the class struggle which "sounded the knell of scientific bourgeois economy."

It is obvious that with the still further sharpening of the class struggle in the present period it becomes less and less likely that any bourgeois social science will apply "genuine scientific research" to its subject matter and even such restricted "facts" as it may assemble will be built up more and more into apologetics and outright distortion to serve the interests of the dominant class.

IN THE field of art (music, literature), which is generally recognized as a part of the superstructure, there are quite different "specific peculiarities." Nevertheless, I am doubtful whether it is possible to separate out "the laws of harmony, of design, of perspective, and so on"—that is the *forms* or techniques—and treat these as "classless," "non-superstructural," while the *content* of any particular artistic work is accepted as "superstructural."

It is true that these laws of harmony, etc., are a part of objective reality, but in this aspect they belong to science. The musician, the artist, or the writer makes use of these laws, in the same way as he makes use of the instruments, the paints, or the typewriter of his period. But what he produces is an artistic work, with a definite *content* for which the forms and materials are the vehicle; and the work as a whole is a part of the superstructure arising from the basis, the class relations.

At the same time, just as in the case of science it is necessary to see that the expression "bourgeois science" does not imply the total rejection of all science developed in the bourgeois period, so also the expression "bourgeois art" does not imply the total rejection of all artistic products of the bourgeois period, or of the bourgeoisie (as opposed to "proletarian" artistic products). Misunderstanding of this point can lead to a sectarian approach in the arts, which casts aside the whole of our cultural heritage and awaits the coming of the epoch of "proletarian" art.

Although science has a specific function in relation to nature, to reality, art also has such a function, though this function is different from that of science. In his speech to the First Congress of Soviet Writers in 1934, Gorky, referring to primitive and ancient culture, said it "is a reflection in broad artistic generalizations of the phenomena of nature, of the struggle with nature, and of social life." Another interesting passage in this speech is:

> "Myth is invention. To invent means to extract from the sum of a given reality its cardinal idea and embody it in imagery—that is how we got realism. But if to the idea extracted from the given reality we add—completing the idea, by the logic of hypothesis—the desired, the possible, and thus supplement the image, we obtain that romanticism which is at the basis of myth and is highly beneficial in that it tends to provoke a revolutionary attitude to reality, an attitude that changes the world in a practical way."

These passages seem to give some at least of the specific functions of art: to reflect nature and social life, by extracting a cardinal idea and embodying it in imagery. Progressive art builds up a positive imagery, stimulating "an attitude that changes the world."

The analogy with scientific hypotheses is obvious; the imagination plays a part in every advance of man. Note also Marx (*Capital,* Vol. I, Ch. VII, section 1): "What distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises

his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality." The imagination, basing itself on known reality, "raises a structure" in order to change reality.

IN THE field of bourgeois art, therefore, as in the field of science, the products of man's activity have to be examined concretely, and not simply "categorized" as bourgeois and dismissed. What is of permanent value in art (music, literature) is when the work as a whole truly reflects nature, the struggle with nature, and social life—when it corresponds with the real movement of the forces operating in society at a particular time, and when its essence is "to provide a revolutionary attitude to reality," to express man's ability to change reality, man's determination to rise higher, man's "nobility" as Gorky puts it.

That the expression of this "nobility" in the struggle against nature and within society is heightened in its emotional power, stimulates practice more effectively, by the proper use of *form,* by technical skill in the particular field, is a special feature of art. But it is necessary to remember that the emotional power of form is itself a social product, in fact a *national* product, which is part of "the peculiar psychological make-up developed from generation to generation as a result of dissimilar conditions of existence" as between national groups—not necessarily *nations* in the historical sense. (Compare the expression: culture "socialist in content, national in form.")

In art too the stage of development of bourgeois society has great influence. In its "heroic" stage, when the rising bourgeoisie is gathering its forces for the struggle against feudalism, and in the rosy dawn after it has conquered power, the revolutionary content of bourgeois art, its expression of man's power to conquer is naturally characteristic. At later stages doubt, pessimism, trivialities in place of the real movement of society emerge as the dominant feature, and the function of art "to provoke a revolutionary attitude to reality" passes from the bourgeoisie as a dying class to representatives of the proletariat. But this is only a general tendency, and must not be taken in blanket fashion. In the bourgeois literature of Europe, for example Gorky distinguished between "typical 'good bourgeois' writers, not possessing much talent, but dexterous and trivial, like their readers," and "those great writers who created critical realism and revolutionary romanticism." The bourgeois critical realist and revolutionary romantic is not at all the same thing as the socialist realist; nevertheless his work is of permanent value because it reflects the real movement of society in his time, and therefore a part of the real movement of society as a whole, of man's "nobility" in the struggle against nature and the social forces that hold him back. Such great works, reflecting reality and stimulating human activity, are accumulated and inherited by subsequent societies, and help the

intellectual life of later societies.

FINALLY, I think it is of the greatest importance not to minimize the dependence of our "intellectual life processes in general" on the mode of production, and not to seek secure, "classless" and "permanent" footholds in the intellectual life processes of a class-divided society.

But it is equally necessary to see that man could not have achieved his present degree of mastery over nature if this dependence on the mode of production necessarily robbed intellectual life processes of all validity, of all correspondence with reality. On the contrary, society accumulates a vast fund of "absolutely objective knowledge" and uses it in practice.

The discussion on science, art and superstructure can be very helpful in clearing away both bourgeois influences and sectarian tendencies, and in making us appreciate our cultural heritage in all fields at the same time as we grasp quite clearly what Marx and Engels meant when they wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*:

> "The Communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional property relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas."

The Other War

The ink was hardly dry on the armistice agreement when the Eisenhower administration showed unmistakably that it was continuing the other war —against the American people. The arrest of nine Philadelphia working-class leaders under the thought-control Smith Act and the conviction and sentencing to five years each of the Pittsburgh Communist leader, Steve Nelson, and four colleagues represent new assaults on the right to think, write and read. As such they are part of the larger phenomenon known as McCarthyism—advancing fascism, U.S. style.

Among those arrested in Philadelphia was the poet and journalist, Walter Lowenfels, now out on $10,000 bail. Readers will recall his stirring peace poem, "American Voices," in our June issue, which has also been distributed in pamphlet form. Lowenfels, author of several books of poetry and Philadelphia editor of *The Worker,* joins other journalist victims of the Smith Act: John Gates, editor of the *Daily Worker;* V. J. Jerome, editor of *Political Affairs;* Al Richmond, Philip Connolly and Terry Pettus of the San Francisco *Daily People's World;* William Allan and James Dolsen, *Daily Worker* correspondents.

And Steve Nelson, author of the memorable book, *The Volunteers,* is an anti-fascist hero crucified: sentenced to a total of twenty-five years under the Smith and state sedition acts—a virtual death sentence.

Can we be silent while the monster devours our dearest liberties? Speak up before J. Edgar Hoover's Gestapo stands at *your* door.

books in review

Major Screenplay

SALT OF THE EARTH by Michael Wilson. *The California Quarterly,* Summer 1953. Los Angeles. 75 cents.

A READING of Michael Wilson's screenplay, *Salt of the Earth,* published in the Summer issue of the *California Quarterly,* inspires the feeling that the picture itself is a major event in the history of the American screen. The script is a deeply humane and powerful document of men and women whose personal relations are enriched by their common struggle against exploitation in the mines of Delaware Zinc, Inc.

Political hoodlums and vigilantes have frothed at the mouth in their attacks on this picture. They are afraid of it, as well they might be, because it challenges their right to speak in the name of America. They call it "anti-American" because of its genuine patriotism based on love of the American worker and respect for his dignity and aspirations. Ironically (and inevitably) those who assaulted the picture gave point to one of its major themes, the struggle of Mexican-Americans for equal rights, by their insulting harassment of its star, the screen actress Rosaura Revueltas, winner of a Mexican "Oscar" in 1951. The detention of Miss Revueltas by the United States immigration authorities aroused widespread indignation in Mexico and evoked solidarity action by the Mexican film workers' union.

Salt of the Earth is the story of Ramon and Esperanza Quintero and their children. Ramon is a miner and a leader in the strike for equal rights with the "Anglos" in the mine fields. He comes to this situation with some confusions. He is not free of outworn traditions and he resents his wife's attempt to fight by his side. At times he sees the fight as one of Mexican-Americans against "Anglos" rather than Mexican-Americans and "Anglos" united against the mine owners. Through his growth and the growth of his wife we see all the miners and their wives rise to new stature and deeper understanding both of themselves and of the impersonal forces against which they are pitted. *Salt of the Earth* is a story of hope and of triumph.

Michael Wilson's screenplay avoids the sociological trap into

which so many well-intentioned writers fall, writers who see only the degeneration of isolated workers under the pressures of exploitation. *Salt of the Earth* offers a more fundamental truth: that exploitation, however brutal, cannot quench the basic dignity and spirit of the working class. This is the real miracle of the world today, a miracle common to the mine fields of the Americas and the rubber plantations of Malaya.

With only the screenplay as a guide it is difficult to comment on the work of the director, Herbert J. Biberman, or the producer, Paul Jarrico. Yet their own words indicate the spirit in which they have worked. They write:

> "If our film can illuminate the truth that the lives and struggles of ordinary people are the richest untapped source of contemporary American art, and if it can demonstrate that such films can be made by these people themselves, then it will have achieved a basic purpose."

All those responsible for the picture, shot on location in a New Mexico mining town and sponsored by the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, have shown real heroism in continuing their work despite threats of violence and vigilante action. With the exception of the professional, Rosaura Revueltas, miners and their wives made up the cast. Juan Chacon, president of Local 890, played the role of Ramon Quintero.

In publishing the screenplay the *California Quarterly* points out that "movies are made to be seen, not read." *Salt of the Earth* must be seen and seen by millions. It would be a crime against American culture if the finished work did not reach its audience.

Writing in this issue of the *California Quarterly* Rosaura Revueltas describes her leavetaking from the company when she was forced to return to Mexico:

> "It wasn't a happy leave-taking. There were bitter memories I could not leave behind. But I also carried home with me the spirit that had made this picture possible, the determination that would see it completed, and the inner assurance that a handful of ignorant and frightened men could never prevent its being shown to the peoples of the world."

Now it is up to us to justify that inner assurance.

IRA WALLACH

Not So Simple

SIMPLE TAKES A WIFE, by Langston Hughes. *Simon and Schuster.* $1.95.

AMONG the 66,000 furnished room dwellers who live in Harlem between the two rivers from 110th Street, on the south, to just beyond the Polo Grounds, on the north, is one Jesse B. Semple—called "Simple," for short, by his friends. We don't know Simple's exact address, but it appears from his salty comments on landladies, bars, upper class Negroes and patronizing whites that he lives in the "valley," in

"Deep Harlem," east of Seventh Avenue in the 130's.

Simple and his neighbors, refugees from the sterner racism of the South, understand and denounce the jimcrow nuances of New York City with a fierce race consciousness. This rooming house set, whose addresses denote the place where they bathe, sleep and change clothes, and for whom their favorite tavern must serve as a living room, furnish the characters and the action in Langston Hughes' *Simple Takes a Wife.*

Hughes takes us with Simple as he moves among his friends, understanding their problems, discussing his own, working hard to get a divorce so that he can marry Joyce. To pay for this divorce from his estranged wife in Baltimore, Simple explains that it took "a whole lot of NOT having what you want, to get what you want most." But most of Simple's conversations range far from the purely personal. Simple doesn't think Negroes have made as much progress as some say. "I tell them," says Simple to his friend, "that white folks can measure their race problem by how far they have come. But Negroes measure ours by how far we have got to go." He then continues, hitting at the theory of Negro progress that is limited to advancing a few big shots:

> "Them white folks are always telling me, 'Isn't it wonderful the progress that's been made amongst your people. Look at Dr. Bunche!'
>
> "All I say is 'Look at me.'"

When it is pointed out to Simple that Negroes can now stay at th Waldorf-Astoria, he answers, "M Semple cannot stay there right no —because Mr. Semple ain't able And he will not accept the explana tion that his disability is due t money and not race for "if I wer not of the colored race, smart as am, I would have money." Nor Simple satisfied with two Negroes i Congress when "there ought to h *two dozen* colored Congressmen who aren't there because souther Negroes are not allowed to vote. R minded of the Supreme Court mandate against voting restriction Simple asks rhetorically:

> "Can a Negro take time off from wo to go running to the Supreme Cou every time the Klan keeps him from vo ing? We can't enforce no laws by ou selves."

Simple has a word for the cop too, and in saying it, he uses th Negro folk characteristic of treatin a serious problem, like police brutal ity, with humorous derision. Be-Bo says Simple, "makes plenty of sense because it originated "from the p lice beating Negroes' heads, . . beaten right out of some Negro head into them horns and saxo phones and piano keys . . ." Polic men, says Simple are likely to que tion him any time about "what a you doing in this neighborhood

> "Then I have to go into my whol pedigree because I am a black man a white neighborhood. And if my answe do not satisfy them, Bop! Mop! . . . B Bop! . . . If they do not hit me th have already hurt my soul."

In Simple, Hughes has found the perfect protagonist for the thousands of racial battles that are fought in conversations in every ghetto throughout the United States. It is a warm and human story of distant relatives arriving unexpectedly and sharing the cubicle of a room until they can get a foot on the ladder of New York life. We share the problems of a young couple falling in love, marrying and rearing their first child in their own one-room home. But we sense the quality of laughing at heartbreak, or being able to "escape" through the humor derived from commonplace situations, of bitterness which evades frustration. For Simple, the composite of Harlem's common man, is not defeated nor dejected, even though the road ahead is not clearly marked.

On one thing Simple is irrevocably determined: to be free from jim crow and to avenge the many insults the South has handed him and his people. He dreams one night he was a bird and wishes on awaking he could make the dream true for a while. Among the things he would like to do as a bird is to "just fly *over* the South, stopping only long enough to spread my tail feathers and show my contempt." And musing on the racist "blood theories," Simple twits their proponents:

"Why is Negro blood so much more powerful than any other kind of blood in the world? If a man has Irish blood in him, people will say, 'He's *part* Irish.' If he has a little Jewish blood, they'll say, 'He's *half* Jewish.' But if he has just a small bit of colored blood in him, Bam!—*'He's a Negro!'* . . . Now, that is what I do not understand—why one drop is so powerful. . . ."

I suspect it is the author who steers Simple away from more basic political topics, keeping the discussions on the level of "race talk." For there was a much wider topical range in Hughes' first volume about Simple—*Simple Speaks His Mind.* Whereas in the first book, Simple had some sharp observations to make on the Un-American Activities Committee, he now limits his discussion of Congress to the absence of Negroes. And it should be remembered that Hughes, since the appearance of *Simple Speaks His Mind,* has been a "guest" of Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

It is also notable that Hughes before McCarthy did not fare nearly as well as did Simple before the Un-Americans, for Simple really "told off" that "old Georgia chairman" with some biting comments on jimcrow. Simple still has bite in discussing jimcrow, but he "talks at the big gate," out of earshot of the oppressors, to his anonymous friend. However, Simple remains a healthy representative of Negro ghetto dwellers continuing in every way they know to struggle for first class American citizenship.

I hope that in future stories, Hughes will let us see and hear Simple (who is a poorly-paid worker) in his relationships with other workers and his employers. So far

we have only seen him after work, relaxing over a beer, discussing his and other Negroes' problems, within the relationship of Negro to Negro. Hughes should give us more of Simple's sides, for as one colloquy in *Simple Speaks His Mind* went:

"'Life is not so simple,' cautioned his friend on one of Simple's propositions.

"'Neither am I,' said Simple."

The present volume exhibits an artistic weakness: Hughes combines the reporter's eye, the novelist's ear, but misses the third dimension of the ghetto scene as reflected in the real characters of whom Simple is a composite. One feels that Simple and those around him can do little more than complain, futilely, of the oppressive jimcrow conditions under which they live. Despite the charm and the many nuggets of wisdom in this panorama of Harlem, the reader can conclude that Simple and his friends will remain as they are indefinitely.

It would be a mistake to say that this makes *Simple Takes a Wife* poor or insubstantial reading. On the contrary, with all of his weaknesses, Hughes has given us a vivid picture of Negro life and its richness, a picture which is sharply opposed to the "arty" degeneracy of writers like Richard Wright and Ralph Ellison. For even though he is held under wraps by the author, Simple is a healthy, probing, salty young Negro, a pleasant relief from Ellison's *Invisible Man* and Wright's fascistic killer in *The Outsider*. Simple may not show us the way to the future, but he certainly gives us a seldom seen and delightful picture of today.

ABNER BERRY

Target: Children

THE GAME OF DEATH, by Albert E. Kahn. *Cameron & Kahn.* Cloth, $3.00; paper, $1.00.

IT IS the peculiar virtue of some books that they illuminate and make clear what until their publication has been obscured by the current avalanche of pro-war propaganda. Such a book is doubly precious now when all the media of public opinion produce narcotics to make us accept the horrible as natural and sane. So were the German people soothed into accepting the murder of 6,000,000 Jews as simply an ordinary manifestation of normal statecraft. So the American people are being lulled into similar acceptance now when plots for world conquest are palmed off as merely virtuous efforts at liberation, and when American concentration camps, built and ready, go all unnoticed and unmentioned.

Punch drunk from repeated onslaughts against decency, dulled by incessant incitements to war, we involuntarily accept the brutal, inadvertently accomodate the cheap, and scarcely murmur when school, radio

television, books, courts and FBI combine to transform our children from humans into automatons conditioned to favor and participate in world slaughter. Albert E. Kahn's new book concerns this cold war plot against our children. It is its virtue that its documented indignation restores, at least momentarily, our dulled vision until we can perceive again the horror of systematically indoctrinating the children of America with visions of violent death as an intrinsic part of the school curriculum.

In pursuing its pages we feel with new urgency what we have almost passively accepted—the fact that the nation's schools have been transformed into "instruments of national policy," into factories manufacturing the ideology of predatory war. As when America was sane, before the days of loyalty oaths and imprisonment for political belief, we feel the shame of discharging teachers for the sole crime of advocating peace while permitting the country's schools to become overcrowded, ramshackle firetraps because all public moneys are needed for wars, hot and cold.

The book's picture of little children trooping to school with white sheets, to be used to cover their bodies in atomic drills, might well stand as a symbol of the United States today. For that matter so might all of the book's content—the loyalty programs under which children are being ripped from their parents because the latter have announced themselves for peace; the brutalities of the reform schools; the deliberate and systematic persecution of Negro children; the use of the FBI to terrorize children because of the political opinions of their parents; the increasing use of narcotics among teen agers and the rising casualties of juvenile gang warfare; the use of the radio, motion pictures, television and comic books, of which one hundred million copies are sold monthly, to condition children to concepts of violence, war, crime and sudden death. All of these things are, unfortunately, a fair enough representation of present day America.

Kahn's book is a valiant contribution to the fight for peace. There may be those uninterested in the high politics, in the charges and counter-charges of the cold war, but surely there can be few uninterested in its effects upon their children. This subject is a powerful common denominator, a mighty maker for coalition. Already the volume, truly shocking in its revelations, has attracted wide attention. Such figures as Professor Henry J. Cadbury, of Harvard University, chairman of the American Friends Service Committee; Bishop Arthur W. Moulton, of Salt Lake City, and Bertha Capen Reynolds, former Associate Director of the Smith College School for Social Work, have urged its distribution in the fight for peace.

The Game of Death is the first selection of the Union Book Club

and the first book to be issued by the new publishers, Cameron & Kahn, who are publishing for thousands of American trade unionists as well as the general public. Both are to be congratulated on a book which seeks to restore America to sanity while saving the world and its children from the destruction of atomic war.

RICHARD O. BOYER

Facts As Weapons

LABOR FACT BOOK 11, prepared by Labor Research Association. *International Publishers.* $2.

ONE of Bernard Baruch's biographers says that his favorite reading in his teen years at City College of New York was "Poor's" manual of investments. Baruch was preparing himself 64 years ago for the future "killings" in copper that were to make him the "elder statesman" of Wall Street. The authors of the eleventh *Labor Fact Book* are also keen readers of "Poor's" and "Moody's" and other encyclopedias of profits. But their objectives have nothing in common with Baruch's. They are arming the labor movement with the information it needs for its struggle with Wall Street—not preparing for a market "killing."

The Eleventh *Labor Fact Book* is the latest product of the ripe scholars of the Labor Research Association, who this year are celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of their collective work. The LRA idea was not entirely new in America. The Rand School of Social Science set up a research department nearly a dozen years earlier under the direction of a young Marxist scholar named Alexander Trachtenberg. And Trachtenberg's *Labor Year Books,* which began coming out in 1916, are precious library items today.

LRA, however, was able to carry the idea of arming the workers with facts much further with the cooperation of the group of bold economists, who have been working together 25 years. This group came together at the call of Robert W. Dunn, a brilliant student of labor. Dunn, a former textile union organizer, had already won high praise with three pioneer books. One was *American Foreign Investments,* a full-length study of Wall Street's holdings abroad, with special attention to Latin America. Another was *The Americanization of Labor*, an expose of the fraudulent company unions and welfare plans that masked the open shop horrors. The third was the sensational, but well-documented study of *The Labor Spy.* This first nationwide study of the subject was written in collaboration with Sidney Howard, the playwright, but the research work was Dunn's.

Dunn was not just writing and investigating, however. He was using his spy data as ammunition in the struggle against the open shoppers before the book came off the press I remember, for instance, how h

drove a high-placed Corporations Auxiliary spy, whom he had uncovered, out of a silk union in Paterson, N. J., in the middle 1920's. He dealt a heavy blow to a group of labor spies in the AFL textile union in New Bedford about the same time. One of these spies had been in the loom fixers' union many years. This use of facts as labor weapons has been an LRA habit ever since.

The LRA is primarily a fact-finding group serving the needs of trade unions. It handles research projects for various independent, CIO and AFL unions. But it has also published dozens of books and scores of pamphlets in its 25 years. And it puts out valuable monthly bulletins. One of these—*Economic Notes*—has been giving labor the economic weather to guide its present bargaining plans or to prepare for coming depressions.

Many economists, in and out of the universities, and many labor correspondents have helped LRA through the years. Some of the finest help has come from two most careful scholars—Grace Hutchins, author of *Labor and Silk* and *Women Who Work,* and Anna Rochester.

Anna Rochester's *Rulers of America,* an LRA book published in 1936, aroused more thoughtful attention than any factual study of Wall Street that appeared at the time. It showed how the Morgans, the du Ponts, the Rockefellers and Mellons divide up the wealth of America and much of the world. It was a vanguard book in its field, preceding *America's Sixty Families* and the work of the New Deal's National Resources Committee and the Temporary National Economic Committee.

LRA began its work with its remarkable Labor-and-Industry volumes that told the story of the class struggle in the trustified industries. Dunn himself did two of the best—*Labor and Autos* and *Labor and Textiles.* Other books told of the workers and capitalists in coal, steel, silk, clothing, shoes, lumber and other industries.

The art of pamphleteering was skillfully developed by LRA in the series of 40 *International Pamphlets.* These booklets blend fact and feeling together. They have a permanent value. They tell the stories of historic labor struggles, labor martyrs, colonial revolts, company unions, war profits, the Negro nation and the struggle against lynching, the rise of monopolists like Mellon and the dictatorship of the courts. These pamphlets have simplicity and vigor and sometimes fine literary quality as well.

The *Labor Fact Books* that have been appearing biennially for twenty years, have a different technique. Here the vital information that labor needs is packed in its place like bright efficient tools in an orderly tool box. Every fact is in its family group where one can pick it up quickly and use it.

The eleventh *Labor Fact Book* naturally lays special emphasis on

the effects of the United States government's war program on profits, standards of living, and the drive to destroy American liberties. Some of the most important fact chapters are on the growing trade union struggles, which the Taft-Hartleyites are unable to curb. In this small volume are marshaled the facts that help explain our country and the world. It is a book that is indispensable both for the ordinary citizen as well as the specialist.

ART SHIELDS

letters

To M&M:

WE ARE native-born citizens of the United States. We are both veterans of World War II in the Pacific theatre of operations; the former as a public relations specialist and enlisted war correspondent in the U.S. Coast Guard; the latter as a sergeant in the Women's Army Corps awarded combat star for the New Guinea campaign and holder of the Philippines Liberation Medal.

We are currently residing in Geneva, Switzerland, for the purpose of pursuing specialized studies; the former in graphic arts, on the "G.I. Bill"; the latter in linguistics and interpreting.

On May 20 and June 4, 1953, we made due application for passport renewal and for a new passport, respectively, with the American Consulate General in Geneva. We have been informed in writing (letter dated July 17, 1953) that the Department of State of the United States Government has refused us passports and that "this decision is based on allegations to the Department of State that Mr. Casetta is a Communist and that both of you have been engaged in furthering the activities of the Communist Party." Our passports have been confiscated.

We most vigorously protest this outrageous violation of our fundamental rights as American citizens. We hold the action of the Department of State to be without legal or moral basis, and we refuse to submit to it.

We are aware that such distinguished Americans as Dr. W. E. B. Du Bois, Corliss Lamont, Paul Robeson and many others have been refused passports in the United States while eminent figures abroad have been denied United States visas; the fact that such refusals have been extended to us, two obscure students, is indicative of the extent to which the Department of State is now resorting to repressive measures. We are alarmed and angry.

We affirm our faith in the true democratic principles and traditions of the United States and the American people, and express confidence that our stand against these Gestapo methods will be supported by freedom-loving people at home and abroad.

MARIO CASETTA
ANNA CASETTA
Geneva, Switzerland

[In another letter Mr. Casetta informs us that the State Department action is evidently in reprisal for a holiday greeting card he had sent to friends last Christmas. The card was a woodcut by Mr. Casetta, showing a young woman seated in thought. Underneath were the words in French: "Just think: More than half the people of the world are women and women want peace." Shortly after he mailed the card Mr. Casetta was questioned about his political views by the Swiss police who showed him a photostatic copy of the card.—The Editors.]

To M&M:

FIRST, MY congratulations on the best little cultural magazine extant in the U.S.A. Best wishes, too, for increased coverage and, infinitely important, more readers.

Now, a suggestion. Betty Sanders in her article [July M&M] writes that we in the U.S. are deplorably ignorant of the contributions of our Latin American brothers and sisters to the common treasury of mankind. I agreed. It therefore seems to me that some kind of modest goals ought to be aimed at by *M&M* to help change this situation. Could we not have an article in each issue devoted to the achievements of some outstanding American (in the legitimate sense) personage? Surely, the greater responsibility for spreading such knowledge rests with us rather than with our friends in other hemispheres. D.D.

Detroit

[*M&M* plans to publish in the near future a special Latin American issue, devoted to fiction, poetry, articles and drawings by writers and artists below the Rio Grande. We also plan to present Latin American cultural material more often in our regular issues.—The Editors.]

To M&M:

DEEPLY IMPRESSED by Neruda's article [July *M&M*]. I hope this will result in much good poetry that will be learned by millions. We still have the job of rejecting the mystical and obscure in our heritage from Walt Whitman. He negated his own democratic philosophy by obscurity and mysticism in many of his poems. The only person who suggested anything along this line was Gus Hall in a letter to his daughter [January *M&M*]. Neruda's criticism of his own work should spur us on here to clarify what in our poetic heritage should be accepted and what rejected. I hope to see new powerful poems of clarity and simplicity.

New York S.S.