MASSES & MAINSTREAM

Forward From Geneva:

NEW OUTLOOK FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE

By Samuel Sillen

WHAT MIDWEST AMERICA SHOWED

By Carl Hirsch

The Stature of Thomas Mann

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"I REFUSE TO BEND THE KNEE..."

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The Odyssey of Jazz

By Sidney Finkelstein

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Defending the Theatre

AN EAGERLY servile columnist for one of the big New York dailies must have got a hurry phone call to help save the tottering show of the House Un-American Committee. Its chairman, Rep. Walter, had run into "unlooked for opposition," to quote the press again. The columnist tried to summon up public hatred of what he called "the putrid performance" of the twenty-three theatre personalities, actors and singers, who would not "cooperate" in the final weeks of August with the Committee's little conspiracy to manufacture a "communist conspiracy" in the American theatre, especially on Broadway.

But if there was a "putrid" performance" it was not given in the magnificently American and patriotic "No" of the twenty-three out of the twenty-four witnesses. Rather, the "putrid performance"—and it was widely recognized as such by Americans of the most divergent viewpoints—was put on by the arrogance of an ambitious politician trying to utilize the powers of Congress to dictate his miserable racist opinions as the norm for the American theatre, its actors and its writers.

The resounding "No" of the "hostile witnesses" was a clear and courageous reaffirmation of the Constitutional doctrine—or even the sheerly human one—that the theatre is not a fit subject for the police power of a Congressional Committee, and that the social views of its actors cannot be hunted without spitting on the basic law of this land, the Bill of Rights.

Congressman Walter's interest in the New York theatre did not originate in any esthetic impulse. The co-author of the despised Walter-McCarran law officially branding Italians, Negroes, West Indians, and other "non-Aryan" peoples as less desirable immigrants is not noted for his cultural interests. The Committee's motivation was linked to two elements—the manipulation of Congressional power in an effort to stem the rising tides of anti-war, anti-McCarthyite, humanist thinking in the theatre (as well as in TV, movies and books in varying degrees). This manipulation was tied in with the

broader political effort to keep hot the blacklist terrorism in the fields of popular entertainment. It was also tied in, as Rep. Walter blurted out in his reference to "captive unions" with the effort to curtail the power of the trade unions in these mass communication industries.

Well, it didn't work, thanks to the unwavering patriotism of the twenty-three honorably "hostile witnesses" who would not buy immunity from the small crew of blackmailers operating in the industry by selling out their Americanism. We are sure that this "No" of these witnesses gained strength also from the popular revulsion against McCarthyism, both in the country at large and within the theatre itself. The market for red-baiting trash, with its accent on brutality, hysterics, and with its inevitable implication of inevitable atomic war, is a shrinking one. The right of the people of the theatre—producers and playrights—to satisfy the public's hunger for a different kind of fare must not be hampered or crippled by wandering politicians misusing the powers of Congress for their private political aims. That was the splendid meaning of the patriotic demonstration which caused Rep. Walter and his creaky outfit to quit the stage which they had set up in Foley Square, New York.

THE EDITORS

NEW OUTLOOK FOR CULTURAL EXCHANGE

By SAMUEL SILLEN

ONE must do justice to American hospitality: there is nothing like it —save, perhaps, in our country." This is the testimony not of the oviet farm delegation in 1955 but of the great Russian composer Peter yich Tchaikovsky during his visit to the United States in 1891. Tchaikov-y came here on the invitation of Walter Damrosch, young conductor of ie Symphony Society Orchestra in New York. The Russian was to be a iest conductor at the opening of Music Hall, now known as Carnegie Hall.

At the concert, a gala affair attended by Secretary of State Blaine, chaikovsky drew an ovation when he conducted his own *Marche Solennelle.* n another evening—his 51st birthday—he led the orchestra in his *Third uite.* "I am certain," he wrote home, "that I am ten times as famous here in Europe. At first when other people told me this, I thought it only eir exaggerated kindliness. But now I see that it is really so. Several of y works that are unknown even in Moscow are played here often."

The composer's reception was unmistakably indigenous. He was dined Delmonico's, escorted to the Stock Exchange, and at the Mint he was ven $10,000,000 to hold for a few breath-taking minutes. He made the ip to Niagara Falls, then journeyed to white-stooped Baltimore where he spected the Knabe piano factory. He wrote an article on Wagner for the ew York *Journal* which angered the Wagnerians of the period by calling eir idol a greater symphonic-orchestral than operatic composer.

If the Russian visitor had any complaint, it was about the noisy sen-tionalism and lack of privacy. "It irritates me," he confided to his diary, hat, not satisfied with writing about my music, they must also write about y personal appearance. I cannot bear to think that my shyness is noticed that my 'brusque and jerky bows' fill them with surprise." Nor was he ppy when a live-wire piano firm exploited some favorable remarks of s in a piece of flamboyant advertising copy. [His protest is echoed in illiam Faulkner's essay "On Privacy" in the July, 1955, *Harper's*: "America

has not yet found any place for him who deals only in things of the human spirit except to use his notoriety to sell soap or cigarettes or fountain pens or to advertise automobiles and cruises and resort hotels, or (if he can be taught to contort fast enough to meet the standards) in radio or moving pictures where he can produce enough income tax to be worth attention."]

But despite the obnoxious commercialism and the raucous invasions of privacy, Tchaikovsky was pleased by the popular reception. "It was obvious," he wrote, "that the Americans really took me to heart."

This was not the first time, and certainly not the last, that the American people took the Russians to heart. Carl Sandburg recalls, in his massive study of the Civil War years, how Lincoln's policy of friendship with Russia was attacked by his pro-slavery critics. Hostile newspapers ran cartoons depicting the President as a country bumpkin in the embrace of an enormous bear. A taunting editorial writer sounded the alarm, so familiar to a later generation: "By and by we will doubtless all wear Russian beards, Russian overcoats, and Russian pants; our wives will wear Russian petticoats and hoops. . . ."

In 1863 the presence of friendly Russian ships in American waters was assailed by the slaveholders, who piously rebuked Lincoln for allying himself with a land ruled by a tsar. Seventy years later, their spiritual kinsmen attacked Franklin D. Roosevelt for recognizing a regime which had overthrown the tsar.*

THE history of our cultural relations with Russia, both before and after the Socialist Revolution of 1917, is too little appreciated. It is a colorful history that has resulted in the enrichment of both cultures. Yet there is a widespread impression—intensified in the cold war period—that our significant cultural contacts have been confined to western Europe.

This, surely, was not the view of writers so diverse in outlook as Walt Whitman and Henry James, Oliver Wendell Holmes and Jack London. What serious student of our theatre can ignore the impact of Chekhov and Stanislavsky? And what American musician can neglect the influence of Prokofiev or Shostakovich, not to speak of the earlier Russian classics? Has American film art had nothing to learn from Eisenstein and Pudovkin?

* The reader will find illuminating *Lincoln and the Russians*, by Albert A. Woldman (Cleveland, 1952). I would also strongly recommend two other recent works: *American-Russian Relations*, 1781-1947, by William Appleman Williams (New York, 1952), and *East-West Passage: A Study in Literary Relationships*, by Dorothy Brewster (London, 1954). The latter work, by a distinguished American scholar, has as yet found no American publisher, which is a literary scandal of the cold war period.

NEW YORK HERALD, WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 1891.—QUADRUPLE SHEET.

MUSIC CROWNED IN ITS NEW HOME.

Brilliant Inauguration of Music Hall by the First Festival Concert.

TSCHAIKOWSKY AND BERLIOZ

The Russian Composer and His "Marche Solennelle" Given a Splendid Greeting and the French Master's "Te Deum" Finely Rendered.

CAMPANINI AND DAMROSCH.

About the Programme, the Performance and the Huge Audience Assembled for the Great Event in New York's Musical History.

BISHOP POTTER'S ORATION.

CONDUCTOR WALTER DAMROSCH.

The profound influence of the great Russian writers on the American erary scene may be traced, decade by decade, in Dorothy Brewster's uable *East-West Passage.* I shall not attempt here to review the rich d intriguing record. Actually, of course, it has been a two-way passage. e could fruitfully examine not only the impact of Turgenev on Henry nes and of Tolstoy on Howells, but of Whitman on Mayakovsky, or of rk Twain on Ilya Ilf and Eugene Petrov, co-authors of *The Golden Calf* d *Little Golden America* (Petrov once wrote: "Contemporary American iters whom I had the pleasure of meeting during our trip through the

United States laughed at me a little for the almost maniacal passion I feel for Mark Twain").

To me Walt Whitman best symbolizes the spirit of international fraternity expressed by Oliver Wendell Holmes in his 1866 poem "America to Russia." Holmes wrote:

> "Though watery deserts hold apart
> the worlds of East and West,
> Still beats the selfsame human heart
> in each proud Nation's breast."

Such was the vision of Whitman, whose "dearest dream," as he wrote to his readers in Russia, was "for an internationality of poems and poets binding the lands of the earth closer than all treaties and diplomacy." Whitman kept extensive notes of his reading in Russian literature, history economics. He followed sympathetically the popular movements against the tsar, and he was delighted to learn in 1881 that a Russian translation of his work was being prepared. In a prophetic preface to the intended Russian translation, Whitman exclaimed: "You Russians and we Americans! Our countries so distant, so unlike at first glance—such a difference in social and political conditions, and our respective methods of moral and practical development the last hundred years;—and yet in certain features, and vastest ones, so resembling each other."

Whitman saw that both peoples had their "independent and leading positions" to hold, and he saw himself as the envoy of a binding friendship. The sentiment was reciprocated by Turgenev, who in the 1870's began to translate this "amazing American poet." Similarly, Tolstoy prepared to write a foreword for an edition of Whitman which he sought to get published. And after the Revolution, Maxim Gorky had much to do with the publication of a book on Whitman's life that rapidly went through eight editions.

This year the 100th anniversary of *Leaves of Grass* is being celebrated by the Russians as well as by ourselves. Recently a Whitman festival was held at the Tchaikovsky Memorial Conservatory in Moscow attended by members of the U.S. Embassy and American athletes visiting the Soviet Union. New books on Whitman and collections of his work have been issued. And the newspaper *Izvestia* reports (June 12) that "A whole group of young translators is enthusiastically translating the beloved poet."

What a contrast to the vain efforts of the pre-revolutionary government

n Russia to suppress American letters. Whitman's translator wrote him hat *Leaves of Grass* would "doubtless be prohibited" by the tsarist regime, ut "that would not prohibit its spread much, rather the contrary." The mpress Catherine used an intermediary to dissuade Benjamin Franklin rom visiting Russia, fearing the revolutionary effect of his presence. The sarist censor found "dangerous ideas" in James Fenimore Cooper, who, s Chekhov once wrote, caused many a schoolboy to dream of flight to far-off omantic America. History does move, however, and the Soviet Union, velcoming the vital culture of all lands, has seen nation-wide celebrations f the anniversaries of Franklin, Emerson, Whitman, Bret Harte, and other merican writers.

FOLLOWING the Socialist Revolution, there was a tendency to reverse positions in this country too, but in a less desirable direction. The fficial anti-Sovieteers made every effort to snip the cultural ties which had uch a rich tradition. Yet they did not always succeed. As Miss Brewster otes: "Anyone who remembers the hysterical fear of 'bolshevism' that pre-ailed in the United States after the October Revolution; who has not for-otten the lies with which the truth has never caught up; who remembers he Palmer raids against the 'reds'; who risked mob violence to go to public neetings where one might hear speakers recently returned from Russia— ny of the old survivors of those days will recall the glad surprise at being ble to welcome the Moscow Art Theatre." This brilliant group toured ne United States in 1923 and 1924. It gave 181 performances and was eceived with tremendous enthusiasm.

The history of American-Soviet cultural exchange has had many ups nd downs since then. The uneven course of this relationship will someday e charted by a historian. He will find, I believe, that the scope of inter-hange was a kind of index of political health in this country. Every period f intense reaction has seen a large-scale effort to break contact with Russian rtists and scientists. Every time there has been a social advance the cul-ıral bridge between the countries has been buttressed.

What is more important for us to realize is this: attempts to snuff out ıltural exchange with the Russians have always and invariably been used s part of an offensive against democratic movements in American culture self. It is American culture that has in the first instance suffered from ll those gallant stands against the "Red invasion." For example, when group of hooligans in Congress set out to kill the Federal Theatre Project

in 1938—an assault aimed at a resurgent popular theatre in this country—they raised the old cry of Russian infiltration. Senator Reynolds stormed against plays that bore the "trade-mark of red Russia in their titles, plays spewed from the gutters of the Kremlin." To this elegant bit of dramatic criticism another Senator retorted: "There are those who forever use the bugbear of Communism to scare someone in order that they may themselves rise up and thus be held up as champions against the so-called danger of Communism." The second Senator was from Nevada, and his name was McCarran! *

A high point in Russian-American friendship was reached during World War II. The Soviet novelist Leonid Leonov summed up the splendid possibilities for cultural collaboration that were opened by the wartime partnership: "For the Soviet intellectual, the United States is not a distant transoceanic country. Genuine culture destroys both time and space. This interchange of cultural values during 'peaceful' world conditions aided the two peoples to know one another, but it did not actually bring them really close together. The events of the last few years, however, have given us an opportunity of realizing what an impetus would be given to human progress by their joint forces, united in the struggle for the highest ideals of mankind. It seems to me that in this struggle one would find not merely empty indifferent collaboration, but genuine and vital unity of our two great peoples. . . . Because humanism and not misanthropy must be victorious, participation in the anti-fascist struggle is man's duty to the world, to freedom and human dignity. Let us look into the future."

BUT the future, at least immediately, did not shape up that way. It was not long after Churchill's speech at Fulton in 1946 that we became frozen in an official stance of hostility that was not often distinguishable from plain boorishness. The hospitality of which Tchaikovsky spoke was no longer in public evidence, though the surface of things did not tell the whole story. In the fall of 1946 two Soviet artists, Zoya Haidai and Ivan Patorzhinsky of the Kiev Opera came here as part of a Ukrainian cultural delegation. These artists were then ordered by the Justice Department of their host country to register as foreign agents! They of course refused, as Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky would have refused, and they cut short their visit.

The logical climax of this cold war approach to cultural interchange

* *East-West Passage*, page 250.

vas reached in that notorious issue of *Collier's* in 1951 which shocked a carcely believing world. *Collier's,* with Washington's announced approval, romised the Russians that following our imminent conquest of their ountry we would replace *Boris Godunov* at the Bolshoi with *Guys and Dolls,* nd that the elevated prose of Walter Winchell would be rushed by cable o relieve the Russians bored by Maxim Gorky and Mikhail Sholokhov.

But other ideas are bubbling to the surface now. A decade of snarls and neers is drawing to a close, and we are beginning to hear a different note. t is sounded by that quite unsentimental trade-journal of entertainment *Variety,* which reported a week after Geneva: "A new day seems to be a-awnin' in Russo-American relations, and show biz, always sensitive to the nternational barometer, is quick to react to the change."

THE barometer at the summit registered humanity's pressure for peace. It was not to be mistaken. For the cold war had exacted a price which he people everywhere found no longer tolerable. Geneva mapped a route way from the crackup that has threatened all mankind in the atomic age.

Clearly the conciliatory spirit of Geneva cannot be fulfilled without ultural interchange among nations, and particularly between the United tates and the Soviet Union. The four heads of government rightly placed his question on the Geneva agenda along with the German question, Euro-ean security, and disarmament. It was agreed that:

"The foreign ministers should by means of experts study measures, ncluding those possible in the organs and agencies of the United Nations, vhich could a) bring about a progressive elimination of barriers which nterfere with free communications and peaceful trade between peoples nd b) bring about such free contacts and exchanges as are to the mutual dvantage of the countries and peoples concerned."

I like the phrase "mutual advantage." It gives solidity to the idea of ultural exchange. For this is not a matter of anybody's bestowing gifts, or it is a question of jockeying for position in a propaganda battle. The fact that the existing barriers to cultural exchange have been mutually harm-ul. Both the Soviet Union and the United States will be stimulated and nriched, as they have been in the past, by free contact with the most vital ements in the cultural life of each country.

It should be noted that in the past year the Soviet press has found it ecessary to criticize sharply some cultural figures in the U.S.S.R. who have een belittling the achievements of other nations on the spurious ground

that they were thus defending their own country's heritage. Such writers have been rebuked for distorting the legitimate opposition to "cosmopolitanism." The leaders of Soviet culture emphasize how much the artists and scientists of their country have to learn from all that is creative and truthful in other countries, whatever their social system. This is fundamental to the socialist outlook, which views cultural interchange among nations not as a "tactic" but as a necessary condition for human progress.

The advantages to us of such interchange may be illustrated by a recent article in the New York *Times* (July 31) in which Alan T. Waterman discussed some of the grave problems of scientific training in this country. Mr. Waterman, a physicist and director of the National Science Foundation, warned: "We should be especially mindful of trends that tend to isolate American science from the rest of the world, for science thrives on the free exchange of ideas." Mr. Waterman reminded his readers that the entire scientific community deplores the exclusion of leading scientists from abroad under the immigration and visa requirements. And he added: "It is also regrettable that, at the very time when the Russian language is rapidly catching up with French and German as a leading language of science, woefully few American scientists are acquiring proficiency in it." Certainly the recent Atoms for Peace conference in Geneva dramatized not only the desirability but the necessity of such scientific exchange.

Even before Geneva, as is only now revealed, the State Department was flooded with proposals for easing tensions by exchanging musicians, theatrical groups and scientists with the Soviet Union. "In the last six months several hundred such projects have been put up to the State Deartment by individual Americans and organizations," reports the New York *Times* (Aug. 1). So numerous are these suggestions that the Department has decided to assign special facilities and personnel to handle the job.

AND now the wish of the American people for such interchange is breaking up the logjam of official habit and prejudice. Dates have been reserved for the American debut of the famous violinist David Oistrakh and the Soviet Union's best known pianist Emil Gilels. (The sales of their recordings in this country are soaring.) There are plans for a corresponding trip to Moscow by Yehudi Menuhin and possibly the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Similar plans are being discussed for dance groups and theatrical productions.

"American symphony orchestras are said to be wonderful," said Soviet

composer Aram Khatchaturian in a recent broadcast. "I should very much like to hear one of them in Moscow, say the one which Toscanini conducted [the Symphony of the Air, which recently toured the Far East]. I would also like to have the American public hear our symphony orchestras. Discussions with American musicians might help us and they might prove beneficial to our American colleagues as well."

The cause of friendly communication of ideas, so indispensable for mutual understanding and peace, is no longer in the stage of remote hopes. Signs of its realization multiply daily. Less publicized than the atoms conference, there was a nonetheless significant and fruitful gathering in London this summer dealing with theatre history. It was attended by delegates from eighteen countries, and here too Americans and Russians, Vinton Freedley as well as Samuel Marshak, took part.

To cite another kind of example, for the first time since the end of World War II there has been cooperation between a Hollywood film studio and the Soviet government. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer is filming *Lust for Life,* a biography of Vincent Van Gogh. The studio requested and was granted permission to photograph several Van Gogh paintings in a Soviet museum. The American film public will clearly benefit a great deal more from this than from all of Hollywood's cold war pictures denouncing the Soviet Union in terms that could only suggest the Communists had long ago destroyed all their Van Goghs and all other "non-card-holding" artists.

WHILE the outlook has brightened, and there is more solid ground for optimism than in a decade, it would be foolish to ignore the obstacles that remain to be overcome. The biggest, of course, is opposition to the whole idea of Geneva represented by the kind of people, including many fascist-minded intellectuals, who honored Congressman Walter at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York last month. To the question whether McCarthy was dead they shouted, somewhat desperately to be sure, "No." Walter said Geneva accomplished nothing; we must resist Soviet blandishments and their proposals, made jointly with President Eisenhower, for closer cultural contacts. Nobody will miss the significance of the fact that Walter levelled this attack on peaceful co-existence on the same day that he launched his crusade to stifle the American theatre. Whether or not McCarthy is dead, McCarthyism is not, and it is implacably the enemy of mutually advantageous relations among countries just as it is the sworn enemy of everything vital in American culture.

But there are other obstacles as well. If we truly mean business we will have to revise a lot of concepts and practices, now institutionalized, God help us, in arbitrary laws. For example, according to these laws that flout every traditional American principle, David Oistrakh would have to submit to fingerprinting before taking up the bow. The Soviet scientists who shared what used to be called "secrets" with our men of science at Geneva could not attend a similar conference in Buffalo or Chattanooga unless we do something about the fantastic exclusion acts with which we cut off our nose to spite our face. As the warm reception to the Soviet farm delegation revealed so dramatically, the American people have lost none of that spirit of hospitality that Tchaikovsky praised in 1891. Officialdom will have to start emulating that level of civilized conduct.

And officialdom, never noted for its exquisite esthetic perceptions, must become more modest about picking and choosing who may be our cultural representatives abroad. The whole world knows that Paul Robeson is the best we have. There is no American with greater gifts to create good will for our people and our culture. How are concert-goers in Leningrad, or for that matter London, Tel Aviv or Tokyo, supposed to react to the State Department's ukase that it is contrary to the best interests of the United States for them to hear Mr. Robeson as Othello or as Boris Godunov?

The State Department will not easily be shaken from this policy of suppression which is so damaging to American prestige. Now the Department has refused a passport to the well-known novelist and critic Waldo Frank. Mr. Frank was invited to visit China this coming October to lecture at Chinese universities on Walt Whitman. He was to take part in the ceremonies in Peking honoring the 100th anniversary of *Leaves of Grass*. Clearly such a visit would be an altogether natural and healthy expression of "the Geneva spirit." But instead of welcoming this opportunity for a creative cultural relationship, the State Department has slammed the door with its habitual crudeness. It is hard to believe that American intellectuals will remain silent in the face of such acts of monumental and costly stupidity.

THE inescapable truth is that we must start undoing the ball and chain that has been fastened on cultural expression here if we are to take proper advantage of cultural interchange in the interests of peace. When the government sends out art exhibits, it removes the canvases of artists devoted to realism and humanism, so many of whom have been smeared by McCarthy in the past. The result is calamitous. As the art editor of

the New York *Herald Tribune,* Emily Genauer, has pointed out in a series of articles, the art we do send has not earned us too many friends in Paris. But if every artist named in the Index of the Un-American Committee is to be taboo for display, we will inevitably continue to do injury not only to the individual artists but to the cultural achievement of the American people of which we profess to be proud.

Critics the world over have hailed the plays of Arthur Miller, but he may not leave the country to direct one of his plays, while we monotonously parade *Our Town* abroad as if that alone, along with *Porgy and Bess,* were our contribution to dramatic art in the past generation. The world rejoices in the art of Rockwell Kent, Charles White, William Gropper, but their work is barred from Administration-sponsored exhibits.

All the cold-war standards in culture need a thorough re-examination if this country is to take its proper and proud place in its artistic and scientific relations with other countries. When McCarthy ransacked the U.S. Information Service libraries abroad, when the un-American Committee trampled on the rights and the dignity of American artists, there were many who silently if uneasily complied, arguing the need for some "defense" against the Reds. But it was the defenses of our people that were broken through, bringing us perilously close to war and the total destruction of our liberties. Horizons are changing now. Our best defense, the American people insist, is peaceful co-existence. We deeply share that interest with the Soviet people. It is to our advantage, no less than to theirs, to end the cold war in culture.

What Midwest America Showed

By CARL HIRSCH

TO THE twelve Soviet pilgrims touring the torrid farm country around Biscay, Minnesota this summer, a mid-day picnic of hot dogs and pink lemonade was an obvious refresher.

But a more meaningful offering was in store for them as a group of women from Pipestone County came forward with a small gift. It was a peace pipe, fashioned from native clay.

This became one of the more symbolic of many souvenirs of a memorable summer tour by the group of Soviet farmers, farm experts, farm ministry officials. Theirs was the significant meeting with the people on the flat Iowa plain, just as the Big Four gathered at the "Summit" in Geneva.

By the time the Soviet group had completed their 35-day stay in the U.S. and had covered 3,174 miles of the Middle West in a Greyhound bus, the hot summer of 1955 had burned its way into the annals of international relations as marking an historic turning point.

At Lincoln, Nebraska, where the visiting Russians examined a state university tractor-testing station, we talked to a young engineer, Alvin Brhel. "Yes, Geneva is important, but so is this tour," he said. "I believe that diplomats can go only so far in bringing about better relations —from that point on, the common people have to take over."

What was remarkable about this trip was the number and proportion of people who expressed similar views.

At Washington, Iowa, Mrs. Marie Hora had picked out about a dozen of her plumpest spring roosters for the visiting Russians, prepared roasting ears, hot biscuits, three kinds of pie and a batch of kolachy, made from an old Slavic recipe, as "a special treat."

This young farm wife voiced her views on the improved U.S.-Soviet relations. "If you keep fussing back and forth, you're bound to come to blows," she said. "That's why this friendly exchange is so much better."

The elm-shaded lawn of the Hora

farmstead was fringed with cars that afternoon as neighbors dropped by to meet the visiting Soviet group.

Out in back, George Hora was taking the visitors on a hayrick tour through his 160-acre farm, a showpiece of family farm operations and a winner of many county fair blue ribbons.

The buzz of farm folks' talk around the front veranda dealt with the value of the Soviet group's visit and of the similar current tour of a U.S. farm delegation through the Soviet Union.

"This visit might do some good," was the cautious opinion of neighbor Lloyd Merrick, "if only to open their eyes as to how friendly we really are."

The county Farm Bureau field man, Estel Pilgrim, added, "This gives us a chance to exchange ideas."

"Most people can get along better together if they just talk to each other," was the comment of Edgar Stout. "Why shouldn't that work between us and the Russians as well?"

This tone had been set a week earlier, when the Soviet delegation arrived at Des Moines to find the airport jammed with friendly Iowans, two of whom carried a placard with the word "Welcome" hand-lettered in Russian.

As the Soviet group stepped from the plane, applause broke out across the runway. The visitors were to hear that applause many times again as they toured Iowa, their route forming a four-leaf clover centered in Des Moines.

At times, their bus went roaring through little towns where the populace stood along the flag-decked main stem, applauding.

"We are meeting in a good time," the portly and shaven-headed V. V. Matskevich, delegation chief, told his audiences.

The applause, the warm welcomes, the hearty Iowa farm hospitality, the peace-themed speeches continued everywhere as the Soviet group met with farmers and their families, business groups, Rotarians, church groups, 4-H clubs, chambers of commerce.

The Des Moines *Tribune* headlined a welcome in Russian type. The Cedar Rapids (Ia.) *Gazette* greeted the Russians with "a hearty 'hello'" and said that the visit "should help tremendously."

Crowds everywhere smiled a greeting, clasped the visitors' hands, offered little tokens. A 14-year-old girl gave one of the Russian delegates a small leather purse she had made for his 14-year-old son.

A youngster brought to the visitors a coonskin Davy Crockett cap and said, "I woud like to present this to some Soviet boy."

TO THE Des Moines *Register,* which had originally suggested the exchange farm tours last January, went many plaudits, including a

mass of appreciative mail from Iowa readers and others. One letter "nominated" the paper for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Said the *Register*: "In spite of the often touchy relations between the Soviet and American governments, we are convinced that there is a deep store of good will between the two peoples, and we are glad to have this opportunity to demonstrate this to an official Soviet delegation."

The few ugly incidents which occurred during the tour only served to give emphasis to the fact that the reception which the Soviet group received was so overwhelmingly friendly.

In Minneapolis and Chicago, the delegation came across small groups of demonstrators, DP's with war-like signs. At a farm near Reinback, Ia., a local McCarthyite also appeared with a sign. It was taken from him by a Presbyterian minister.

What amazed newsmen, was the almost complete unanimity of friendliness, motivated by the desire for peace. Coupled with this, however, was the concern of not only farmers and workers, but also industrialists, public officials, farm organization leaders, businessmen, bankers for developing East-West trade in farm produce and farm implements.

From Charles B. Schuman, president of the 1,500,000-member conservative American Farm Bureau Federation, came the opinion that trade with Russia would contribute to world peace and would be a major step in expanding markets for the current big supply of U.S. farm products.

In Minneapolis, Chicago and Detroit, the delegation was treated as potential customers by manufacturers of tractors, trucks and cars.

The president of International Harvester, John McCaffrey, told the visitors that "trade between nations promotes understanding, and where good will, trust and confidence are present, is a powerful and effective handmaiden of peace." At the wind-up of their swing through the IHC Tractor Works in Chicago, the delegates were handed a catalogue of Harvester machinery and introduced to the man who "takes overseas orders."

The Soviets showed every willingness to talk business. However, the matter remained academic so long as the U.S. State Department still maintains rigid restrictions against such commerce.

BUT if the trade routes were still ice-jammed by the cold war, the travel routes were certainly opened further as a result of the U.S.-Soviet farm exchange.

The Soviet group was in fact invited by the Hutchinson (Kansas) *News Herald* to return to the U.S. next year to witness the wheat harvest. For their part, the Russians ex-

tended numerous invitations to farmers, farm editors, public officials to make the trip to the Soviet Union. Particularly, they were invited by Matskevich to visit the big agricultural fair which takes place in Moscow in October.

Questioned by a reporter for the AFL International Typographical Union paper, *Labor's Daily,* and by a group of CIO United Packinghouse Workers, the Soviet visitors stated that any and all U.S. trade union delegations would be welcome in the USSR.

This brought an outburst from AFL President George Meany who issued a sour dictum against East-West interchange, against the exchange of labor delegations particularly, and against Geneva.

Here, Meany revealed once again how far out of step he and his foreign policy advisers are with the peace aspirations of humanity and with the thinking of U.S. trade union membership.

But aside from Meany, there were other disturbing indications that a certain important potential sector of the peace camp in the U.S. has not yet grasped the meaning of Geneva and of the brightening new prospect in international relations.

Thus, the Farmers Union took a polite but cool attitude toward the Soviet farm delegation. Local Democrats sidestepped while the Republicans gave the visitors the full treatment. And only when the Russians got to Chicago did they receive their first overture from a trade union when the packinghouse workers invited them to their headquarters.

However, the spontaneous response of people along the route of the Russians' tour showed conclusively the widespread desire to end the cold war.

The Soviet farm group toured an area that is central to America in more than a geographical sense. Here in the rural Middle West, they met a broad range of Americans, with political attitudes running the scale from Chicago *Tribune* "isolationism" to the Nebraska liberalism typified by the late Sen. George Norris. And in the response especially from farmers, there was some reflection of the deep-going peace sentiment in the countryside, in what Matskevich called "the most peaceful profession."

A typical response here to the Russians was that of a South Dakota woman, who cried out, "Land sakes, they're no different from us!" That reaction was also dramatized in a series of "which-is-which" incidents involving mistaken identity.

One local newspaperman in Nebraska singled out for special attention in his story a member of the traveling party who, he said, sported "a set of Bolshevik whiskers." This "Bolshevik" turned out to be a U.S. State Department interpreter.

In Des Moines, the group was sight-seeing around town, and when they passed by the plant of the Des Moines *Register,* a pressman invited them in for a look around. He singled out one "Russian" and asked him, "How do you like it in this country?" This "Russian" was Jim Russell, farm editor of the Des Moines *Register.*

AS FOR the real "Russians," they were taken into the homes and the hearts of farm folk as they exchanged farm talk, pleasantries, stories about their own homes and their families, and showed that they too liked to hunt and fish and sing folk songs and sit on a porch rocker enjoying the freshness of the clover-sweetened country air.

After the Soviet group had been given a hearty welcome by workers as they went through the Ford River Rouge plant, the Detroit *News* reporter wrote: "What Americans will have to realize after the visit of the touring farm experts is that Russians are just people and Americans don't have a corner on how to make friends."

The visitors made it particularly clear that the farm delegation exchange had been valuable to them in a technical way. Their American hosts often tried to make tourists of them, and the Russians allowed themselves to be dragged off to ballgames, horse races, clambakes and hoedowns. But they conducted a serious study of American agricultural methods and techniques.

They proved to be durable students in the field, even under conditions of 110-degree heat. Across the Corn Belt, they showed a learned inquisitiveness about windrowers, feed mills and grain drills. They asked keen questions of their farmer and industrial hosts:

"Why do you feed Herefords instead of Angus?" "How many man-hours of labor goes into manufacturing a 33-horsepower tractor?" "How many tons of manure in this barn per year?" "What are the figures on how irrigation affects the corn yield?"

With farming as their over-riding concern, they effectively sloughed off the efforts of newsmen to draw them into provocative discussions on divisive matters between the U.S. and USSR. They politely condescended to listen, without reply, when chamber of commerce officials felt obliged to lecture them on the merits of the "free enterprise" system.

Matskevich, with an irrepressible sense of humor, couldn't resist an opportunity to get back at a tiresome Iowa Falls banker.

"How much interest do you charge the people you lend money to?" Matskevich asked.

"From four to seven per cent," the banker answered.

"And how much interest do you pay out to people who save in your bank?" queried the Russian.

"Two per cent," said the banker."
"Hmmm," said Matskevich.

The Soviet delegation leader also had a curt reply for a reporter who was trying to prove something about the capitalist and socialist systems out of the example of the solvent Richard Alleman farm near Slater, Ia.

"Alleman's farm is good because Richard Alleman is a good farmer," declared Matskevich. "If he worked as the director of a Soviet tractor station, he would also be good."

GENERALLY, however, the Soviet visitors avoided any direct comparisons between economic systems but rather stressed the possibilities of fruitful exchange of information in spite of the differences in the U.S. and Soviet farm operations, disparity in size of farms, climate, soils.

The Soviet group made it clear that they carried home with them in their notebooks certain data which they would put to use, concerning hybrid corn production, labor-saving devices, particularly the livestock feeders, also contour-planting, crop rotation, the chemical enrichment of seeds.

Throughout the tour of the farmlands, the good will generated en route was really a by-product. But what was underscored thereby was the fact that any technical and cultural interchange between East and West today is likely to develop improved international relations.

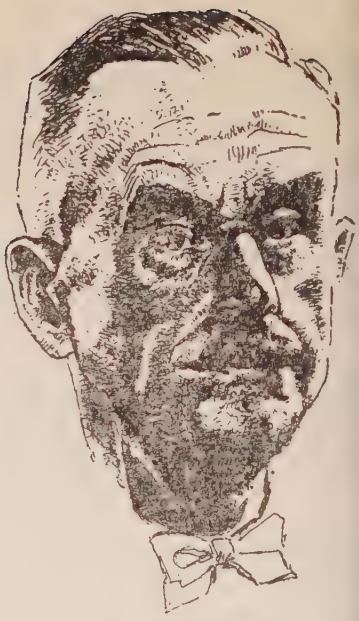
During the long Midwest trip, some of the newspapers, magazines and press associations assigned reporters who spoke Russian, with the idea of "covering" the visiting delegation first-hand. However, it soon became evident to some of the newsmen that the big story was not so much the Russians but rather their American hosts.

Many were frankly unprepared for the open-handed friendliness expressed toward the Soviets. In one dispatch, Associated Press reporter Tom Whitney wrote: "All Iowa has set out with a sort of missionary zeal to show these Russians that Iowa wants to be friends, that Iowa has only good will toward Russians as people."

Through the summer, the U.S. newspapers kept carrying pictures and stories of both the American farm delegation in the USSR and of the Soviet group in this country. It was not always apparent at first glance which was which.

One quote could readily have come from either group. By chance it was a statement by Charles J. Hearst of Cedar Falls, Ia., who was at that moment touring the Gorky state farm near Moscow while the Soviet delegation was visiting near his home in the U.S.

Said Hearst: "We had expected to see some hatred built up for us over these years, but none is apparent."



The Stature of THOMAS MANN

By GEORGE LUKACS

WHEN Thomas Mann died in Switzerland last month at the age of 80, *the world lost one of its genuine literary masters, a great humanist ardently devoted to intellectual freedom and peace. His loss is keenly felt in the United States, his adopted country for fifteen years. Mann came here with his family in* 1938 *following his famous blast against the Nazis and their hideous regime. He lectured for a time at Princeton University, then moved to California, completing there his four-volume epic* Joseph and His Brothers. *In books like* The Coming Victory of Democracy *and* This War, *he helped rouse the nation to resist fascism.*

In 1944 *Mann became an American citizen, but becoming deeply troubled by the rise of fascist forces here in the cold war period (see his remarks below on the Un-American Committee) Mann left the country, warning the people not to disregard the terrible lesson of Germany. Mann himself became the victim of the witch-hunt because of his opposition to the anti-Communist crusade* (Newsweek, *August* 22, *puts it mildly when it acknowledges that "In more recent years he was censured for his seemingly tolerant attitude toward Communists.").*

One of Thomas Mann's last public statements was a letter to his Hungarian readers on the publication of a new editon of his works in this peo-

ple's democracy. We reprint this letter below together with an abridged text (only the abridgement is available to us at the moment) of a preface to the Hungarian edition by the distinguished Marxist critic George Lukacs, a professor at Budapest University whose many literary studies have been highly praised by Thomas Mann.—The Editors.

AN OUTSTANDING event in Hungarian literary life is the publication in Hungarian of Thomas Mann's *Selected Short Stories.* This outstanding author of the middle class, and last representative of critical realism who is worthy of his great predecessors, is at last available to an ever growing public. The preface written especially for the present volume by Thomas Mann adds to its importance. The author has established a still closer link with his old Hungarian readers and made the first contact with new ones.

The older generation has long been attached to him with firm bonds. We, of the older generation, if I may speak for myself, were educated into writers and readers, as it were, on Thomas Mann's writings. I read *Buddenbrooks* and the first short stories when I was still at secondary school, and my development as a critic was decisively influenced by the persistent endeavor to explain, stage by stage, and bring home, both to the public and myself, the evolution of this work as it deepened and unfolded. And I was not alone in my striving. Suffice it to mention Attila Jozsef, my junior by twenty years, who expressed his attachment to Thomas Mann's personality and work in a beautiful poem.

Thomas Mann comes from a Lubeck family of patrician merchants. This background explains the failure of his social criticism, always well-defined in his early efforts, to make itself heard in the political life of his country. Therein lay the seed of the greatest crisis of his career. He let himself be carried away by the tide of the First World War, writing articles and a bulky volume as an apologist of Germany's conduct. What is more—to cite his own words—he fought as "rearguard action" against the idea of greater democracy. In 1918 came the *debacle,* upsetting his whole philosophy and radically revising his earlier political outlook. Soon he came forward as an advocate of the Weimar Republic, boldly opposing every reactionary attempt to restore the monarchy.

One is not surprised to find him irreconcilably and persistently opposed to rising fascism and nazism, a stand which he maintained continuously after they had come to power; nor is it astonishing that his political horizon

continued to widen in this struggle. During World War II he carried on a persistent anti-fascist campaign in the press and over the radio in an endeavor to open the eyes of the German people. He was also one of the first to recognize the designs of American reactionary circles which were

Thomas Mann to the Witch-Hunters

Thomas Mann, like his great compatriot Albert Einstein, actively opposed the thought-control witchhunt carried on by the House Un-American Activities Committee. During the Washington hearings in 1947 *directed against Hollywood artists, Mann took part in a nation-wide broadcast sponsored by the Committee for the Fifth Amendment. His remarks, which later appeared as a foreward to the book* Hollywood on Trial *by Gordon Kahn, are especially appropriate in light of the current Un-American witchhunt against the New York theatre*:

"I have the honor to expose myself as a hostile witness.

"I testify that I am very much interested in the moving picture industry and that, since my arrival in the United States nine years ago, I've seen a great many Hollywood films. If Communist propaganda had been smuggled into any of them, it must have been thoroughly hidden. I, for one, never noticed anything of the sort.

"I testify, moreover, that to my mind the ignorant and superstitious persecution of the believers in a political and economic doctrine which is, after all, the creation of great minds and great thinkers —I testify that this persecution is not only degrading for the persecutors themselves but also very harmful to the cultural reputation of this country.

"As an American citizen of German birth, I finally testify that I am painfully familiar with certain political trends. Spiritual intolerance, political inquisitions, and declining legal security, and all this in the name of an alleged 'state of emergency' . . . that is how it started in Germany. What followed was fascism and what followed fascism was war."

already plotting a new war against the Soviet Union while the war was still on.

It was no surprise when Thomas Mann left the U.S.A. for Switzerland, chiefly because from there he could do most for the re-unification of Germany. During the Goethe Anniversary Year (1949) he gave lectures in both Western and Eastern Germany, and again this year on the occasion of the Schiller Anniversary celebrations. When he was approached for the film rights of *Buddenbrooks,* he consented on the condition that film companies from both Western and Eastern Germany would co-operate in producing the film. Thomas Mann is not a member of the world peace movement. Yet he never misses an opportunity to speak up courageously for peace and boldly to expose the warmongers. Last year he sent a warmly worded message to the Stockholm Peace Congress.

The tremendous development Thomas Mann has undergone will be seen in all clarity if we realize that it has taken place *within* the ken of his middle-class world outlook. Although a member of the middle class, Thomas Mann, as heir and continuer of the best traditions of humanism and as a thorough judge of the social and cultural trends of his time, realized with increasing clarity that the era of the middle class was drawing to a close. This realization led him to the conclusion that the cream of the educated classes must show the way to the inevitable new world of the future—to Socialism.

Thomas Mann has grown into a writer of the middle class who views the life, moral conflicts and destiny of middle-class society from the perspective of the inevitable advent of Socialism of which he is fully aware and which he welcomes.

IT WILL be, therefore, in harmony with Thomas Mann's spirit if we briefly review some features of his writings, features that point beyound the orbit of his philosophical system and in some instances are precursors of its further evolution. . . .

Prior to World War I, he wrote of *Buddenbrooks*s ". . . for in truth I have, more or less, overslept the transformation of the German Burgher into a bourgeois." Is that so? Attentive and intelligent readers of that grand work would, I believe, reply in the negative. The latter part of the novel shows how the cultured patrician (somewhat conservative) Buddenbrooks are being ousted by the Hagenstroms, the *nouveaux riches,* the modern capitalist profiteers and go-getters.

The short story *Death in Venice* represents a poetical anticipation of the ideological crisis of post-war times. To all appearances, this is a tragic version of the Tonio Kroger type, but actually the inner tragedy of its lonesome hero turns into a sketch of the destiny of the German people: having stylized his isolation from society and social progress into a peculiar attitude, the solitary hero succumbs when, on coming into contact with reality, the "underworld" of dormant instincts is released in him. This "underworld" becomes a social reality under Hitler and the fight against this has since become the pivot of Thomas Mann's activities as a man of letters. (Thomas Mann agreed with me when I compared the above short story to *The Patrioteer,* a novel by his brother Heinrich Mann, as a piece of poetic prophecy anticipating imminent national tragedy.)

The central issue of his novel *The Magic Mountain* is the clash between liberal and fascist ideologies. The outcome is left undecided and precisely this testifies to the author's immense ideological development. Naphta, the character representing reaction, advances specious, sophistic arguments advocating death, disintegration, and decay. The liberal-minded Settembrini is intelligent and honest enough to get the upper hand easily in his contest of wits with Naphta, were it not for his utterly uncritical approach to capitalism and exploitation. Anticipating the coming to power of fascism by almost one decade, Thomas Mann showed through the medium of literature that the most effective propaganda line of fascism was its anti-capitalist demagogy.

Several years later, Thomas Mann launched a frontal attack in literature against fascism. I have in mind his short story *Mario and the Magician* in which fascism is exposed with all its brutal and wicked hypnotic effect. Extremely interesting is the character of a Roman gentleman in this short story, who boldly defies the hypnosis of the sorcerer; but the author, in subtle style, shows us that mere defiance is powerless in the face of the hypnosis of demagogy—a positive correct goal must be counterposed to wickedness, if the struggle is to lead to success. Here we see Settembrini's fate repeated—only on a higher plane. The conclusion of the story is, perhaps, even more striking: Mario, the plebeian youth, recovering from his hypnosis, suddenly realizes the contradiction between reality and make-believe, and kills the sorcerer. In contrast to the earlier great novel, the positive way out from the dilemma is portrayed with poetic force.

I SHALL not go on analyzing the idea content of Thomas Mann's work; I should only refer briefly to his juxtaposition of the figure of the great

bourgeois humanist, Goethe, to the barbarity of the Hitler era, and to his representation (in the *Joseph* novel) of resurgence in the character of Potiphar's wife of the "underworld" which turns this refined, well-intentioned and intelligent woman into a fascist witch.

Finally, a few words about that grand novel of the aging Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus,* in which he returns to the favorite theme of his youth: the artist's place in bourgeois society. The problem raised here is not only of the artist in his isolation, but also of the fate of art; not only does the "underworld" break loose in the mind of man who lives aloof from society, but this is the source of the infernal, "underworld," character of art—or more precisely, of the art of imperialism. To all appearances Mann's last comprehensive portrayal of contemporary bourgeois society is deeply pessimistic. Yet the rays of a brighter future are seen piercing through the gloom of tragedy. As in Shakespeare's gloomiest tragedies, a Richmond or an Edgar turns up in the end, signifying by his appearance that it is not the *world,* but only the world of a given society that has crumbled on the ruins of which a new and better world will rise. Similarly, the closing words spoken by the principal character of this novel make us understand that we are witnessing the eclipse not of *art,* but of the art of capitalism only; and that there is a way out of the tragedy of our age—the building of Socialist future.

STRICTLY speaking Thomas Mann the author is no politician; the political struggle as such is never represented in his writings. But in most of his works he does reveal, from a human aspect, the events leading up to these political and social struggles and their consequences. However individual the character and story that form the immediate subject of Thomas Mann's works, the author's ability to discern the typical is strong enough to place both hero and story on to a higher plane where they become an image reflecting the great crises, convulsions, and reversals of our epoch.

Thomas Mann never contents himself with a mere description of people and their lives. On the contrary, in his works the representation of characters and events, and the author's judgment on social and political matters, always form an organic whole. He shows us in which direction, in his opinion, a given character or a given condition is bound to develop within the universal progress of mankind: whether it serves life or death, healthy development and growth, or disease and decay.

Thomas Mann, the man of letters, is growing more outspoken and resolved in his appeal for life and health—peace and Socialism—against death and destruction—war, imperialism and fascism. This is his ever more definite and unequivocal political attitude. This makes him the greatest critical realist of our time.

To My Readers in Hungary

I WAS pleasantly surprised to learn that the New Hungarian Publishing House is not only preparing a new Hungarian edition of *Buddenbrooks* but also the publication of my shorter and longer stories and tales in a number of volumes. I was glad to hear this news and to learn that the publishers are counting on the interest of the Hungarian public in this venture, because it makes me feel proud that my books have a life of their own in the language of Petofi, Madach and Endre Ady. It warms my heart that my life's work is enjoying the esteem of Hungarian intellectuals and the sympathy of the Hungarian reading public.

Political events have brought in their wake regrettable tension, fissure, and alienation, yet I am more convinced than ever of the necessity of universalism about which Friedrich Schiller spoke when in his day there was no escape either, in speech or writing, from the persecuting demon of politics. In the public announcement of his magazine *Die Horen,* he wrote: "The greater the tension engendered in the souls by the limited interests of the present, the more the souls are constrained and suppressed, the more urgent is the need to release them once again and to reunite the politically split world under the banner of truth and beauty."

These concepts are too sublime to be applied to my life and work. But my existence is imbued, and my strivings are guided, by the very real need which Schiller saw with such urgency: to release the constrained souls and to unite the politically split world under a sublimer sign, the sign of "truth and beauty." That is why it is gratifying to have friends not only in the West-European countries and in the "politically split" world of my own language, but also behind the unfortunate "iron curtain." And not because I want to please the whole world with what I have, but because

I see in it the possibility of man's understanding and self-realization, in one word—peace.

I am looking forward with joy to the appearance of the first volume of this collection which is to contain my early works, sketches and short stories written fifty or more years ago. I am thinking chiefly of two pieces to which I have special cause to be attached. "Der kleine Herr Friedmann," first published in the *Neue Deutsche Rundschau* of the S. Fischer Verlag, Berlin, was my first step in literature when I was twenty-two, and this short story levelled the way for the appearance of *Buddenbrooks,* my first novel, which I completed when twenty-five. Then followed the short story "Tonio Kroger," whose youthful, lyrical glow has surprisingly retained its lustre for half a century and has, generation after generation, won anew the sympathy of young hearts. I like to imagine how the faces of my young Hungarian readers will be bent over its pages. The message is of "bygone days," yet seems to have retained some of its validity.

THOMAS MANN
Kilchberg-Zurich, March 14, 1955

Luiz Carlos Prestes

By PAUL ELUARD

I walk in the unknown where men and trees
Are ghosts and the cloudless sky
Is the vault of a nightmare

Yet in the untamed forest
Nothing takes from me what is mine
Neither the appearances of dawn nor the monsters
Of the stifling night
Nor the terrible grief
Which was rooted in Auschwitz*

Nothing can sever me from my beloved land
Brazil where my brothers have need of me
For they have seen stamped on so many lives
Their grief my grief
And the emptiness of their lives

If I am but one man among all men
Let me at least show to all that I count on them
There is an eternal sun for every one of them
I do not want shadow or injustice
The people reveal to me the light
Their need of light in the depths of their distress

I have done nothing but be a man
Who does not renounce a better life
Walking ceaselessly I add up our hopes
I have so many brothers on earth
That I shall never be alone
I unite our forces I appeal to all
We shall lead the rivers
Of victory to their goal

* The German-born wife of Prestes, Communist Party leader of Brazil, was killed by the Nazis in Auschwitz.

In my country the forest is stronger
Than the axe which cleaves the tree
I am in my country where I toil
Until the axe yields
My country is my strength and holds me fast
It belongs to the people it belongs to me
And soon we shall enjoy it

Nothing can now destroy
The hearts which beat in my heart
We all follow the same road
A road of stones of thorns
But our steps tread lightly on the earth
Our heads are bright in the sun

Fom the darkened heart of Brazil
I lift black veils
I send light everywhere
I am he who has faith
I am he who angers
The servants of stupidity
The patrons of selfishness
I wish to conquer happiness
I wish to open every door

My hope goes around the world
From everywhere voices reply to me
Poverty loses ground and I advance
And everywhere our naked hands plant
The seeds of today
The harvests of tomorrow

(Translated from the French by Joseph M. Bernstein)

Praying for Rain

a story

By CHAO SHU-LI

The author, Chao Shu-li, is a well-known Chinese writer. His works include Rhymes of Li Yu-tsai, Hsiaoi Erh-hei's Marriage, Changes in Li Village *and* Registration. *English translations of these works have been published by the Foreign Language Press, Peking. Chao Shu-li has also written several plays and ballads.*

THE Dragon King, according to time-honored Chinese legend, is one of the gods who control rainfall. There are lots of gods of this sort. That is why places which are constantly menaced by drought usually have a temple dedicated to the Dragon King.

In Chintouping the Dragon King's Temple stood on the west bank of the river to the north of the village. The foot of the bank consisted of rocks stretching away to the hills lying to the west of the village. But for these rocks, the old folks held, the village would have been swept out of existence by the river long since.

In the days before liberation, whenever a spell of drought set in, the villagers would gather in the temple to pray for rain. There were a hundred-odd households in the village, and from among them teams of eight were organized to kneel and pray in rotation. The first team lighted the incense and knelt until a stick of incense burned out. Then a second team took its place and did the same. . . . Those "not on duty" were free to toll the bell or beat drums to call the Dragon King's attention to the prayers. So one team followed another, from the first to the last, and the last to the first again, until it rained.

Organization and leadership in this matter were always left to the landlord; and shortly before liberation it was landlord Chou Po-yuan who handled it. Just how he did so can be judged by what Yu Tien-yu, a poor

old peasant, said about him at an accusation meeting during the land reform. "When it came to praying," he'd said, "you put your name down at the head of the first team, but you sent your man along to do the kneeling. You laid down the law and said that anyone who failed to attend prayers at the proper time would be fined a catty of lamp oil. If your man had failed to take your place, he'd have to pay for you! And while we knelt there with empty bellies, you cornered the gain and refused to sell any to us. Then you'd buy up our good land at the rate of one moldy peck of rice a *mou.** *By* the time we'd prayed ten times, half the land in the vilage became yours. And once you said to your in-laws, 'This prayer stuff is just eye-wash, though I've led it. As a matter of fact, I stand to win whether it rains or not. I've got half the land in the village, so if it rains I get more grain. If it doesn't, I can gradually buy up the other half bit by bit for a song!' You're a monster, that's what you are! If liberation hadn't come, we'd all have been dead but you. . . ."

AFTER land reform, all the land in the village reverted to the peasants. But, as ill-luck would have it, that summer drought visited the village again. The government urged the peasants to build canals, sink wells and cart water to save the seedlings . . . to leave no stone unturned to fight the drought.

Well, there was a river handy, so building a canal was feasible. After a discussion at a meeting of the village administration committee Yu Chang-shui, secretary of the Party branch, drew up a plan. They surveyed the lay of the land, and the Party called a meeting to urge the people to put their heart and soul into getting the job done.

The plan was to cut a canal from a point further up the river—about two-thirds of a mile north of Dragon King's Temple—through the big rocks lying by the temple, to feed a network of irrigation ditches in and around the village. It was estimated that the work would take about three weeks to finish. "But," said someone, "if it doesn't rain inside three weeks, the crops will be done for before the canal's finished." "Yes," replied Yu, "but once we have the canal, we can re-sow late crops, even if the present ones are parched. But if we wait three weeks without making the canal, we'll be left with blighted seedlings and nothing to be done about it. We can beat this drought, I tell you, if we make up our minds we will. And once the canal's finished, we won't have to worry about drought any more." This put heart

* A *mou* is one-sixth of an acre.

into the villagers, and they set to work.

But the very day work began, trouble started. Everyone was digging away on a lime-marked line, when from the temple came the sound of the tolling of the bell and the beating of drums. That set everybody talking: "Who on earth's still got such feudal ideas in his head?" "Oh, don't bother about them—just carry on." "Send somebody to stop them—can't work in that bloody row!" "Oh, let them alone. If their praying works, so much the better." "That's right. We build the canal, they pray for rain. There's room for both without interference."

Opinions differed widely. The village head and the Party branch secretary weren't present. They'd gone to work out the allocation of work. The remaining Party members, though they themselves didn't waver, failed to settle the argument. At last, however, it was unanimously agreed that someone should be sent to see who the folks were who were praying in the temple. A youngster volunteered.

ON ENTERING the temple he discovered eight old men. One of them—and the least expected—was Yu Tien-yu. Yu, who had been so active in the land reform. "What, you, too?" exclaimed the lad. "And why not?" retorted Yu. "Well," said the lad, "it was you yourself who accused Chou Po-yuan of using the Dragon King to feather his nest." "That's nothing to do with it," said Yu. "Chou Po-yuan was a wicked so-and-so, but that doesn't make the Dragon King one."

"Anyhow," said the boy, indignantly, "you're just a feudal die-hard!" This enraged all the old men. One of them, the youngster's relative, intervened. "You'd better clear out," he scolded. "If it wasn't for the likes of you offending the Dragon King, it would have rained long ago. No sense you've got, you young whippersnappers. Here's the sun blazing down like a furnace, and you want to stop us praying for rain!"

So, helpless, the lad made his way back to the river side and told people there how matters stood. At noon, the Party members reported to the Party branch what had happened. Yu Chang-shui, the secretary, told them what ought to be done; go on patiently persuading the old men, and at the same time do their level best to build the canal. Once that was finished, no one would go praying for rain.

But the tolling of the bell and the beating of the drums worked on the nerves of those who thought there might still be something in the Dragon King. A few more old men put in their appearance at the temple, and even some of the young ones were forced by their elders to

oin in the praying. The old turn-nd-turn-about system of kneeling nd incense burning was revived. ome of the canal builders, even, hose who hadn't entirely shed their ood opinion of the Dragon King, sed to drop into the temple and owtow to "His Majesty" on their ay to and from work.

Yu Chang-shui, besides urging the arty members and Youth Leaguers redouble their efforts at digging arth and shoveling stones, himself ave a hand to the masons in drilling oles for dynamiting the rocks. The uilding of the canal proceeded apace, nd the people grew confident and nore enthusiastic. The roar of crum-ling rocks drowned the sound of ell and drums. The young men "off uty" in the rotation-praying would ip quietly away from the temple nd join in the work. The old men rumbled that their half-heartedness ined the efficacy of prayer.

But a couple of days later, a new bstacle cropped up to hamper prog-ss. The first part of the canal bed ad to be dug through the rocks ose by the temple. But they were ard and stubborn. After two days' ork it only looked as if chickens ad been scrabbling. Obviously they ad underestimated the difficulties. his section of the canal—five foot ep and fifty foot long—which had be cut through rock—would take month at least.

BY THIS time the people who withdrew or were disgruntled were increasing in numbers. Some shammed illness. Others said they had nothing to eat at home, and couldn't work on empty bellies. Others just left wtihout saying anything. And even some of those who stayed, beefed. "These rocks," they maintained, "can't be broken through in a twelve-month." And others said that now the drought had reached alarming proportions, they had better leave the canal and resume work during the winter. Those who had been on duty in the temple went back, and those who had only kowtowed to the Dragon King before and after working hours now volunteered to be placed on the regular roster.

Fewer and fewer people were working by the river side. The rocks that had been blasted remained where they were. There weren't enough workers to cart them away. For a time blasting ceased altogether. Yu Chang-shui went on urging Party members and Youth Leaguers to carry on the work lest the whole site should become deserted.

He took off his shoes, rolled up his trousers and waded over to the far side of the river. There he sat on a stone, scowling at those wretched rocks and trying to think of some way out. Looking at the young plants just wilting away in the fields,

the water in the river flowing away uselessly, and the bell and drums in the temple keeping up their ineffectua clamor, he felt bitter. "If we fail to get this water at my feet to the fields," he swore, "it'll mean we haven't got a decent Communist Party branch in this village!" The sun was blazing down. The very stone he sat on felt as if it would scorch his trousers. With puckered brows he glared at the rocks. He stayed there for the best part of an hour before a new idea dawned on him.

Wouldn't it be feasible to carry the water over the rocks by rigging up some sort of temporary conduit? After all, they were tapping the river at a point higher than the village. Give the water a channel and it would come rushing down. Yes, it could be done. It would need a row of holes bored in the face of the rocks about five feet from the top, and strong wooden pegs inserted. Then wooden troughs could be laid on the pegs end to end, and there was your conduit. In his mind's eye he already saw a line of troughs with water flowing evenly down to the plain to the north of the village.

His eyes lit up. He stood up and shouted to the people on the far side who were shifting the stones: "Stop work, comrades! I've got an idea!" He crossed over, explained his idea, and a discussion began. Various improvements were suggested. For instance, one of the masons suggested the job would be easier and more rigid if they fixed a row of stanchions on top of the rocks, and ran wire cables to the end of the pegs from the stanchions. "That," he said, "will make a strong cradle for the troughs, and we'll have things properly in hand."

AT A mass meeting next morning the idea was put to the villagers. They all approved. When those who had left heard of the new method, they rejoined the work teams. The Party members and Youth Leaguers worked like Trojans. Some hunted up carpenters, others got busy carting timber, building scaffoldings, sawing logs. . . . The whole place was bubbling with excitement and bustling with activity.

The people who knelt in the temple again dwindled in number. Old Yu Tien-yu tolled the bell furiously.

At the end of a day's work the wooden troughs had taken shape and lay ready by the river side. Two-thirds of the people who had knelt in the temple stole away unobtrusively.

Another two days' work, and the troughs were hoisted on to the supports. The people kneeling in the temple thinned out still more. Not only did the whole of the later re-

ruits to the congregation fade away, out even three of the eight old men now played truant. All the villagers, men and women, young and old, urned out to see the new device. They had never seen antything like t. There was more din and bustle han in a market-place.

The noise and excitement irritated he five old men in the temple, nd they rather lost interest in tolling he bell and beating drums. "Such nsincerity!" wailed Yu Tien-yu. "If he Dragon King's so offended he loesn't send rain for a year, you'll ave only yourselves to blame." The ther four old men, too, curled their ips in disgust. After consulting mong themselves, all five dropped to heir knees and began to pray with reat earnestness. "Your Majesty," leaded Yu Tien-yu eagerly, "no matter what other people think of you, ve five are really faithful. Please ave mercy upon us, have mercy pon us!"

But at this point a deafening upar broke out among the people outde. It sounded as if they had gone mad, and to the old fogies their cries were more disconcerting than the blasts of dynamite. One of the old men cried in amazement, "Some accident must have happened." So saying, he leapt up and ran out. The other four stayed at their posts, but were consumed with curiosity.

Soon the old man returned. "Go and look," he shouted. "The water's been got over, oceans and oceans of it!" The three old men who had been kneeling on the floor got up hurriedly, and started to go out. Old Yu remained where he was. "Can't we be steadfast to the end?" he remonstrated. "Must save the plants now there's water," rejoined one of the elders. "I think His Majesty would forgive us." And the four old men filed out.

Only Yu Tien-yu was left. He kowtowed to the Dragon King. "Your Majesty," he murmured, "please forgive me, too! There's two *mou* of land behind my house—that'll have to be watered, too." And he got up and followed hard on the heels of the other old men.

The Odyssey of Jazz

By SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

OUT of a number of books that have been written, over the past years, a standard history of jazz has emerged which may be outlined as follows. Jazz started in Southern cities such as St. Louis and New Orleans, in the last decade of the 19th century and opening years of the 20th. At this time Negro bands appeared, led by such remarkable trumpeters as Buddy Bolden, Manuel Perez and Bunk Johnson, and the art of the ragtime piano was developed by such men of genius as Scott Joplin, Tony Jackson and Ferdinand "Jelly-Roll" Morton. A central influence on jazz and a home for its flowering was the Storyville or brothel section of New Orleans, where the best jazz pianists played. Storyville was closed in 1917.

After that, jazz moved up the Mississippi River, via the riverboats, to Chicago. There a number of New Orleans musicians, such as Joe "King" Oliver, Louis Armstrong, Jimmy Noone, Johnny and "Baby" Dodds, were heard in splendid bands producing the "classic" music of jazz, largely New Orleans music. There also great blues singing was heard, such as that of the phenomenal Bessie Smith.

In the mid-West and Chicago, a number of young white musicians, such as Bix Biederbecke, Muggsy Spanier, Frank Teschemaker, Benny Goodman and Gene Krupa, learning from listening to the great Negro performers, created an improvisational or "hot jazz" style of their own, sometimes known as "Chicago style." At the same time other currents brought the blues, ragtime and improvised jazz to the attention of the rest of the country, notably New York. One of these was the excitement generated by such groups as the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, which popularized a superficial but exciting white man's version of New Orleans music.

In the Prohibition era of the 1920's, jazz was often heard in the speakeasies, run by gangsters. Then came the depression. Following this, in the middle and late 1930's, large band "swing music" swept the country at the center of its popularity being the Benny Goodman band. Some

notable, if few, break-throughs were made, in bringing Negro musicians into white bands.

Star performers, such as Louis Armstrong on trumpet and Thomas Fats" Waller on piano, reached heights of popularity, in person and on phonograph records. Important musical achievements were made by the Fletcher Henderson bands, which gave New Orleans music a "big band" quality; Edward "Duke" Ellington's band, which brought a new richness of tone color and musical conception to jazz; "Count" Basie's band, which brought to general knowledge a Kansas City" style.

The years of the Second World War saw intensive experiments with new and advanced chord structures," modulations and complex rhythmic patterns, resulting in "bebop," of which the leading figures were John Dizzy" Gillespie and Charlie Parker. Then in the postwar years came progressive jazz," adorned with learned talk about seventh, ninth and eleventh chords, polytonality and polyrhythm, adding instruments such as the flute and French Horn, and with arrangements often written by graduates of the Juilliard School and other conservatories.

Also, in the late 1930's, there rose the "Dixieland Revival," largely made up of white musicians attempting to preserve and keep alive the "classic" New Orleans jazz music in its original purity. Jazz has come to be heard at music festivals, and is reviewed with respect by "classical" music critics. Shining vistas are open before it.

WHAT is wrong with this history? There is certainly a good deal of factual truth in it. The trouble is that it explains practically nothing. It suffers from the one-track approach which has afflicted practically every writer on jazz, as well as most of the jazz enthusiasts. Jazz is seen strictly from the viewpoint of "inside jazz," as a music with mysterious laws of its own, and with no connection to either the music or the social life around it.

The creative, improvisational or "hot" jazz which forms the basis for these histories, however, has never been isolated in this way from the stream of musical and social life. It is first of all part of the great American entertainment industry, the laws of which have affected it at every turn. It is a thin current within the great sea of commercial, manufactured "popular" song and dance music, with which it has continually and inextricably intermingled. Secondly, regardless of how little "classical" musicians may know of jazz, and jazz musicians of "classical" music, jazz is an organic and inextricable part of American music as a whole, including the "classical," each affecting

the other. Thirdly, and most important, neither jazz nor any other aspect of American music can be understood except as reflecting, in its changes, the radical and far-reaching developments in American social and economic life during the century. And central to this social life is the struggle for equal rights, national liberation, and cultural expression of the Negro people.

In *Hear Me Talkin to Ya* (Rinehart and Co., $4.00), Nat Shapiro, an official of Broadcast Music, Inc., and Nat Hentoff, an editor of *Downbeat* magazine, offer a different sort of history, wholly made up of the colorful talk of the musicians themselves, gathered from personal interviews and research into a mass of magazine articles, books and documents. They say, "This is the story of jazz, as told by the musicians whose lives *are* that story. . . . The academic histories are written by non-participants. This is the story—and the stories—that the musicians tell."

This promises a little too much. What emerges from its pages as history is by and large little other than the "standard history" outlined above. And this occurs, not because it is the "true" history, but because it is the framework which the editors accepted before they started the book, and over which they put together the reminiscences, dialogue, and episodes from life stories that make up the text.

It is an achievement, and one that does credit to the editors, that the book shows the sensitivity it does to Jim-Crow and the evils of racism. This is not always so. In the sections dealing with New Orleans, the editors are too occupied in seeing that the brothels are done justice to, in properly lurid colors, to give some inkling of the oppressive denial of all civil rights and brutality constantly suffered by the Negro people, including musicians.

My objection to the emphasis on Storyville is not for prudish reasons. It is that this should be shown not as an example of the gay night-life of New Orleans before the Navy Department cracked down, but as an example of the doubly vicious oppression of the Negro women, forced to make a living by becoming love-objects of a white clientele, and preyed upon as well by police and politicians. Nor are the blues and rags of early jazz an expression of the brothel, but appeared there because, as in the speakeasies of the 1920's, fewer restrictions were put on what a musician could do. The truth comes out not in the descriptions of mirror-lined parlors but in Mutt Carey's "A guy would see everything in those joints and it was all dirty. It was really a hell of a place to work."

We get glimpses in the book of the constant stealing of ideas from Negro musicians by commerical music hucksters, who would capitalize on

these ideas as their own, as in Mary Lou Williams' "So the boppers worked out a music that was hard to steal. I'll say this for the 'leeches' though—they tried. I've seen them in Minton's busily writing on their shirt cuffs or scribbling on the tablecloth." We get an inkling of the anguish suffered by Negro musicians even when, to great fanfare, in the 1930's, some of the Jim-Crow barriers were lifted so that especially gifted (and money-drawing) Negro performers were allowed to appear with white bands.

Thus Roy Eldridge, who toured with Gene Krupa's and Artie Shaw's band, writes, "One thing you can be sure of, as long as I'm in America, I'll never in my life work with a white band again!" Travelling, he was forced to hunt up his own lonely quarters, where a Negro could be permitted to sleep. He was abusively denied entrance to a dance hall where his name was being featured as the main attraction. "When I finally did get in, I played through the first set, trying to keep from crying. By the time I got through the first set, the tears were rolling down my cheeks. I don't know how I made it. I went in a dressing room and stood in a corner crying and saying to myself why the hell did I come out here again when I knew what would happen."

Missing from the book is any picture of the price constantly paid for jobs by the most famous Negro performers, namely a cut or percentage of their life-time income to some manager, agent or publicity expert whose one talent was that he could open or bar the door. Sometimes so much of a musician's income would go to these parasites that, after making a fortune, on paper, from records and tours, he would have to borrow money to pay his income tax. Many songs by Negro musicians were published only after some cultural hoodlum could attach his name to them as co-author, and so share in the royalties.

BUT this is only a small part of the story. Let us go to the 1890's and early years of the 20th century. Why, out of a blues and band music tradition that had previously been largely anonymous and folk, did such names arise as Joplin, Morton, Bolden, Keppard, Oliver, Nelson, now recognized as powerful and original musical creators?

There is a strong parallel to what was happening in the North, and in classical musical circles. Dvorak, teaching in New York in 1893, and inspired by the music sung to him by Henry T. Burleigh, had stated publicly that the folk music of the Negro people was as beautiful as any he had ever heard, and could be the basis for a great American school of musical composition. In this decade and the following one a group

of accomplished Negro composers did arise, such as Burleigh, R. Nathaniel Dett and Will Marion Cook, handling the Negro people's musical folk heritage with great dignity and distinction.

It was a time of flaming lynch pyres, and a brutal assault upon the hard-won freedom of the Negro people, carried on in the South with the connivance of Northern politicians and industry moving to imperialism. The Negro people fought back desperately. And while there was a political setback, with Negro representation in legislature for a time wiped out, there were lasting cultural achievements. This period saw the groundbreaking achievements in the writing of Negro history, by Carter G. Woodson and W. E. B. DuBois; the Niagara Movement, and the ensuing N.A.A.C.P. This spirit lay behind the musical achievements, North and South. They took different forms, of course, in different surroundings. In the North, the Negro composer, such as Dett, was able to work with some dignity and recognition, although inadequate. In the South, fine musical talents, expressing new and powerful creative ideas within the folk and community tradition, fighting to assert a new individuality as musicians, generally had to work as stevedores and bricklayers, while playing music on Saturday nights, or had to take jobs as whorehouse pianists. And today, in the widespread recognition of the achievement of these eary Southern musicians, such as Morton, in laying the basis of jazz, it is not enough to recognize that the way these musicians were forced to live is a blemish on the country's history. One must see also a terrible loss, in the fact that had these musicians been able really to develop their talents, there might have appeared an American Mozart or Dvorak.

LET us turn to the period of the First World War and the 1920's, when jazz moved "up the river" to Chicago. The early, folk-inspired jazz now reached a climax in the blues singing and blues creations of Bessie Smith, the "New Orleans" music played by the King Oliver band in Chicago, the recordings made by Louis Armstrong and Jelly-Roll Morton, and a mass of other records issued by recording companies as a "race series," for the Negro purchasers. In this development, the presence of "river boats" on the Mississippi was the least important. Behind it lay the new intensity of the Negro people's struggle, with a new bitterness inspired by the irony of a war "to save democracy," proclaiming "national self-determination," while Negroes were Jim-Crowed in the army and there were brutal attacks upon Negro soldiers in Southern cities.

Something of this comes through

in Bessie Smith's great "Poor Man's Blues," with such lines as:

Living in your mansion, you don't
know what hard times mean,
Working man's wife is starving, your
wife is living like a queen.
Old man fought all the battles, old
man would fight again today,
He'd do anything you asked him in
the name of the U.S.A.
Now the war is over, old man must
live the same as you.
If it wasn't for the poor man, Mr.
Rich Man, what would you do?

There was a great migration North, away from the violence of life in the South (although in Chicago, too, racist elements instigated "race riots" against the Negro people). The expansion of war industry, with the great demand for labor, enabled thousands of Negro working people to enter industries formerly lily-white. A strong working class base rose in the Negro community of cities like Chicago, forming and joining trade unions, playing an independent role in politics, electing a representative to Congress, sponsoring militant newspapers like the *Chicago Defender*. With this we begin to see more clearly why there was a "flowering" of "New Orleans music" in Chicago, and why there was a growing audience among Negro people for recordings of their own musicians, thus giving the musicians themselves a more secure base from which to work.

The complex 1920's saw other developments. There was the great expansion of tin-pan-alley jazz, taking its nourishment from the Negro blues and ragtime. It was a commercially created music already diluting and mechanizing its materials, and yet was close enough to its sources to have a genuine vitality.

This jazz had not only a United States impact, but a world impact. It was used by Igor Stravinsky in his *L'Histoire du Soldat,* to express a cold, heartless view of humanity running down the drain; by Darius Milhaud, in his *La Creation du Monde* to express a mythical Congo primitivism, as a disillusionment with "dying European culture"; by Kurt Weill, in his *Dreigroschenoper,* or *Three-Penny Opera, to* express, with a combination of blaring vulgarity and haunting pathos, his view of a world in which statesmen and bankers were nothing other than cutthroats, pimps and thieves.

It has frequently been pointed out, and quite correctly, that what Stravinsky, Milhaud and Weill used was not the "real jazz." But the important question still remains, what was it in jazz that lent itself to this use? And the answer touches on a crucial element of jazz, namely that it is not always a direct, open, forthright emotional expression, but most often a

double-edged musical language, with deep feelings expressed under the mask of a sardonic wit. It is the age-old tradition of the folk jester, expressing deep resentments and bitterness under the mask of the buffoon.

It is this "unspoken message" that is understood most by Negro musicians and listeners, least by others. And at the same time it is the very presence of this clown-mask that enables jazz to be misused, misunderstood, and turned into a "jazz-age primitivism," so that the folk humor of the blues is turned into a suggestive lasciviousness, the haunting "speaking tones" of muted trumpet and growling clarinet are turned into raucous noises, the subtle musical and communicative rhythms of the Negro jazz drummer are turned into pounding clamor.

The 1920's brought forth another achievement, that of George Gershwin. Gershwin is considered by jazz historians not to belong to the true line of "hot" or "creative" jazz. It is true that his songs, while captivating, have a night-club or "hot-house" quality, compared to the strength of the folk blues; that his ragtime rhythms have a sophisticated, "indoors" and flighty character, compared to the lusty "open-air" quality of the great New Orleans ragtime march music.

Yet a work like his *Concerto in F* remains a vital piece of music, the best piano concerto yet written in the United States. It could not have come into being without the blues and ragtime. And it conclusively proved the point that this material, stemming from the musical heritage of the Negro people, could be used for extended musical composition; a truth vital to the history of jazz. The same point was made by the music of his opera, *Porgy and Bess,* although he showed there a lamentable ignorance of the real life of the Negro people. Instead he took the miserable view of the people as naive, irresponsible children, a patronizing white man's version of Negro folklore.

THE impact of the depression on jazz is touched on by the editors of *Hear Me Talkin' To Ya,* but omitted is the remarkable music of blues piano which flowered then, much of it appearing at the rent-parties with which Negro families tried to keep shelter over their heads. In the face of adversity, the underground stream of the folk blues, never ceasing to flow, was tapped by unlettered and wonderfully creative pianists such as Montana Taylor, Jimmy Yancey, Meade Lux Lewis and Pete Johnson. This music was later vulgarized as commercial "boogie-woogie" by a tin-pan-alley always ready to snick-

er and then to steal.

Also omitted is any mention of the live and vigorous musical tradition in the Negro churches, which has produced such figures as Mahalia Jackson and Sister Rosetta Tharpe. The editors may claim that this is outside the realm of jazz, but its connection is hinted at in their own book, as when Danny Barker writes of Bessie Smith, "If you had any church background, like people who came from the South as I did, you would recognize a similarity between what she was doing and what those preachers and evangelists from there did, and how they move people."

It is in the treatment of the jazz of the middle and late 1930's, however, that we can most clearly see the sad results of ignoring the social life of a nation when treating of its music. For the new steps taken by groups such as the Ellington, Goodman, Basie and Berigan bands, and the new concept of all of jazz which arose in this time, can not be understood without some attention to the profound transformations that were then taking place in American life.

This was the period of the great union organization drives, the electoral victories of the "New Deal," the militant fight against fascism and its financial supporters at home, the unprecedented bonds formed between the labor movement and the national liberation struggles of the Negro people. A cleansing democratic tidal wave swept through the arts. It was the time of the W.P.A., federal sponsored arts projects, with musicians, writers and painters organizing, strengthening ties to the working class, and turning the face of their work to the people. There was a tremendous rediscovery of American democratic traditions and the riches of folk lore among the people, accompanied by fierce blows against racism and chauvinism.

In the realm of "classical" music, as early as 1931, William Grant Still had produced his groundbreaking *Afro-American Symphony.* Then Aaron Copland turned from the stony abstractions he had been composing to produce *Billy the Kid, Rodeo, Appalachian Spring* and *A Lincoln Portrait,* and Virgil Thompson wrote *The River* and *The Plough That Broke the Plains,* all of them using folk music as their basic material.

And reflecting this spirit were the new developments in jazz. It was widely recognized for the first time that its creative elements have risen not on Broadway and Forty-Ninth Street but out of deep folk roots. A significant public event pointing up this lesson was the *New Masses* "Spirituals to Swing" concert at Carnegie Hall, organized by John Hammond. The Blues were recognized as a music and poetry of great dignity and social feeling.

Typical of the new atmosphere was that an Ellington could drop the appellation of "Jungle Band," forced by the chauvinistic commercial music industry, and be recognized, along with his gifted bandsmen, as a musical creator of great distinction. The music with which a Goodman band was sweeping the country, could be openly recognized as one with origins among the Negro folk and the gifted musicians among the Negro people, and Goodman could openly proclaim this by using Fletcher Henderson as his arranger and bringing Teddy Wilson, Lionel Hampton, Charlie Christian and "Cootie" Williams into his various performing groups.

It is also important to see this social base for the music of the 1930's, manifested in the "classical" music field in much the same way as in jazz. Only thus can we understand why the "progressive" jazz of the 1950's is essentially a downward step from the 1930's. The reason is not that jazz mysteriously reached a peak in the 1930's, from which no further progress was possible. It is that the social conditions of the 1930's are not present in the 1950's. The democratic and anti-fascist atmosphere has been poisoned by the cold war and witch-hunts.

THE Second World War displayed the ironic contradition of a war against the fascist "supermen" in which Negro soldiers were again treated as second class citizens by the local racists. It brought to a high pitch feelings already latent in the jazz world of the late 1930's, where for all the respect and even acclaim given to Negro musicians, they still felt the brutal barriers of Jim-Crow permeating the musical world. Although on some spectacular occasions the barriers were lifted, bands were still not put together on the basis of talent, regardless of color. Negro musicians were still the lowest paid and the most often unemployed, prayed upon by parasites demanding their "cuts" and "percentages," told how to perform and even to dress by white managers and book agents, finding their best ideas pirated to make gravy for others.

Some of these feelings found expression in "bebop" music. The descriptions of the rise of this music, in the pages of *Hear Me Talkin' To Ya,* stress the fact that its studied experiments with complex harmonies and rhythms were aimed at keeping the "no-talent guys" from sitting in at jam sessions with able musicians, and, more important, at creating "something they can't steal because they can't play it." Yet this should be taken more broadly, as an expression of a deep, bitter resentment at the entire oppressive commercial music world in which talents had to

swim with the current or be submerged.

The "bebop" music of Gillespie and Parker emerging at the end of the war contained these bitter feelings, along with an ironic humor, an air of defiance of the commercial jazz world by standing its customary patterns on their head, the creation of a highly specialized "musician's music," and the sensitive exploration of private personal lonely feelings. But musicians had to make a living, and so about "bebop" a press-agents' air of mystery was spread, with each "explanation" only thickening the fog. However, there is nothing secret about a complex chord progression. Many Negro musicians felt that they were working towards a new level of sensitively composed jazz. But, as has happened time and time again in the jazz world, the ball was taken away from them by white musicians, such as Stan Kenton, Woody Herman, Pete Rugulo, Ralph Burns, George Shearing and Dave Brubeck.

There was nothing invidious about the individual musicians themselves. Many of them acknowledged their debt. But the avenues are still broader, the necessary resources more available, and the way to bookings and fame more favorable, to white musicians. And whereas the early "bebop" music had a genuine, if often ironic and embittered emotional content, the "progressive jazz" emerging from the white musicians was little other than sheer formalism, the most empty swing music of the late 1930's now dressed up in "advanced chords" and novel instrumental timbres.

This paralleled almost exactly what was happening in the "classical" world. For here too the dominant movement among composers, instead of carrying on the unfinished business of the 1930's, delving deeper into the use of folk music and the portrayal of the national life, was to a mechanistic and empty "pure music." Dull, shallow and lifeless music was justified as embracing experiments with "new chords," the twelve-tone system, the "unconscious," mysterious metrical patterns in which "silences" were more important than sounds. There were "advances" over Schoenberg and Stravinsky which proved that the pupils could be even more barren than the masters. It reflected the political and cultural atmosphere where to be called a New Dealer was the same as being branded a traitor, and the word "social" was a diminutive—even worse, a disguised form—of socialism. The composer had to foreswear any interest in his fellow human beings, or any view of music in the past which held that this art at any time was moved by social thoughts and human sympathies.

In the same spirit, "progressive jazz" proclaims that it is offering the "tonal language of the future," that its creators come from the conservatories, and that it offers a "people's version" of Milhaud and Hindemith; that its new ideas deal only with "new sounds." Just as in the classical field, a stifling academicism masquerades as the continuation of the "revolt" of the 1920's, so in the popular field now a primarily commercial jazz masquerades as the continuation of the great tradition of creative blues improvisation. Stan Kenton is not the King Oliver of the 1950's, but the Paul Whiteman or Ferdy Grofe.

Some tasteful, entertaining and even appealing music can occasionally be heard. But little of it comes from the heart. And underneath all the fanfare about the recognition of jazz as having "arrived," there is the bitter struggle among musicians for jobs that are becoming fewer and fewer. As always the Negro musicians suffer most heavily from this economic crisis, to which no end is in sight.

In thus expanding on the omissions of *Hear Me Talkin' To Ya,* the intention is not to berate the editors but to indicate the kind of approach to jazz history that our age needs and is calling for. Within the limitations of a standard view of jazz history, the editors have done a splendid job and produced a book that anyone interested in jazz will find fascinating reading.

A number of affecting human portraits rise from its pages, some of them success stories, but most, like those of King Oliver, Bessie Smith, Bix Biederbecke, "Fats" Waller, and Billie Holliday tragic stories of unfulfilled potentialities. And in an important sense, the book opens a door to a new step in the writing on jazz. In its many stories and comments, most of which are by Negro musicians, it indicates that it is about time the Negro people were given an opportunity to produce some books about the music which is, at its best, their own contribution to the American musical heritage.

Of course, this means much more than an invitation to speak and write. It means a breakdown of the still lily-white barriers of university teaching, study and research, where the opportunities exist to collect material and write. It means even more, the creation of conditions by which Negro people, in writing, no longer feel that what they say has to fit the prejudices or meet the approval of white editors, publishers, salesmen, book reviewers, and, for that matter, readers.

Poems

By BILL STORCH

O, SOCIAL PROBLEM

All the walls crept,
At your heels,
Your lamed legs, inept
At running, crawled
Yet you escaped
In nightmares, neither
Dream, nor charade;
Your desire warm
In your open palm,
Your poverty worn
In your heart; a thorn.
Wake up, don't sleep.
It's illegal to steal
What has been stolen
While you dreamt
In infancy's heaven;
It is a lesson
You must understand;
The day is night;
And success is theft;
But not for a child.
A child must not
Toy with adult sin
Or be heard, but
Only listen, until he's
Old enough to live
With death in a comicstrip;
Or rob a bank on TV.

AI, A CHILD

In the opaque winternights
Wet tenements huddle
Cold shoulders tight
Against the ill sunrise
With spines rigid, forbidding
A tiniest light to see
Inside the eyes of sleep
In unheated weddingsuites
Where a dream recoils
Into black oblivions—
A bulb indiscreetly sins
In the obscene halls
Its eyes peering into deepwells
Of stairs that pause
Undecided whether to go up
Or down—in pure silence.

The doors are all locked,
The keys are all lost,
The shades are all shut,
The beds are all unmade,
And Ai, a child is born;
Ai, a child of unrequited birth;
Ai, a child of magic;
Ai, a child who sings;
Ai, a child lovely as a dove;

(These poems are part of a group on the life of a Puerto Rican child in New York City. A letter by the poet appears on p. 63 of this issue.)

Subway Song

By EVA GRAYSON

Our sky is crammed and twisted with a sulphur squatness.
Here is no 'airy dome of blue'
That curved above my first remembered romances of dreams.

This sky, all mustard murky, sultry, sucks back from me
The indraw of my breath.
I choke, I choke. . . .

And yet how howlingly within my lungs
I do insist upon my right to air!
How cunningly I dwell upon some way
Of conquering at last the fine, swift wind
With these strong bellows. . . .
To find at last a place of freedom
Upon the peak of some far possibility!

(Sulphur Mephisto, you have arrived too late;
Too late and fearsome on our scene.
No mushroom shape or name of yours
Can turn us all a-tremble into one great Faust.)

O fumes we all must breathe;
O shape we all must recognize
Upon the damp disaster of the three-cent, five-cent mourning paper!

There simply is not space enough!
We cannot live together with that shape.

(What would you have me do, Mephisto—
Come sidling through the crowd
And hawk your wares for you?
Dark glasses here. Dark glasses')

Surrounding me I see my angry self;
Resentful, staring at mushroom Mephisto.
Mirrored and increased ten thousand times about me
I see the same of me, the only yes of all our lives.
I hear my heart roar with a million beats
And in my ears a million pulses, fury-pumped against
This dark insensient herding into tunnels under skies of sulphur—
I hear us calling to each other above our momentary squatness:

WE SHALL EMERGE!

O pulse of joy and life and possibility,

WE SHALL EMERGE!

"I Refuse to Bend the Knee"

Testimony of HARRY SACHER

WASHINGTON inquisitors prying into American minds for concealed political ideas are finding it increasingly rough. Shop workers, actors, writers, farmers and housewives are talking back to the modern Torquemadas with high courage.

But every step of the way is a struggle. The professions are playing their parts, not the least the legal profession. A man whose quiet heroism will one day receive the national recognition it rightly deserves is Harry Sacher, brilliant New York labor and civil liberties attorney.

Last July Sacher was cited for contempt by a cowering Senate because of his magnificent resistance to Sen. McClellan, successor to Sen. Joe McCarthy as chairman of the Senate sub-committee on Governmental Operations. Sacher defended not only all lawyers' rights to freedom of legal advocacy but he defended the very right of conscience.

This is not the first time Harry Sacher has stood up—and paid the penalty. Cited for contempt by Judge Harold Medina, he served a six-month prison sentence for the crime of vigorously defending his Communist clients. Later he fought back against disbarment proceedings, which still hang over his head.

His keen work as counsel in the motion for a re-trial of thirteen convicted Communist leaders brought national attention to this indefatigable fighter. Sacher's trial of the re-hearing, based on the famous recantation of Harvey Matusow, belongs to courtroom saga. When Judge Dimock granted Sacher's motion for a re-trial in part (ordering new trials for George Blake Charney and Alexander Trachtenberg) it was bound to bring threats of reprisal from Senate reactionaries and the Department of Justice. Sacher was thereupon subpoenaed by the McClellan Committee.

We are proud to present excerpts from the moving testimony given by Harry Sacher before the Senate committee on April 19 last. We are confident that lawyers and laymen alike will be stirred as were we by his courage and will rally to his side to defeat the contempt citation.—The Editors.

Mr. Sourwine. (Committee Counsel). Have you been associated in the defense of prominent members of the Communist Party, U.S.A.?

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire as to the purpose of this type of inquiry? I have no desire to invoke any privileges of any kind, but it does seem to me that unless these inquiries are related to some legislative purpose, that the inquiry is improper.

I am member of the bar of the State of New York and of the Supreme Court of the United States in good standing and I defend and prosecute cases which are brought to me and which I choose to defend or prosecute. Now it seems to me that it can hardly be of national importance whom I defend or whom I represent, and certainly it hardly seems related to a legislative purpose, and I would, therefore, object to that question on the ground that it is not a pertinent inquiry. . . .

Mr. Sourwine. Mr. Sacher, the primary purpose of the question is to identify you—if it is true—as of counsel in certain prominent cases which have involved leaders of the Communist Party.

Mr. Sacher. I object to the question on the ground that no lawyer is identified on the basis of the cases in which he appears professionally. If that is the basis of the inquiry, Mr. Chairman, I respectfully submit it is not relevant or pertinent.

* * * *

Mr. Sourwine. Did you appear in Judge Medina's court in a trial which involved certain leaders of the Communist Party, U.S.A., as counsel for the defense?

Senator McClellan. Now you may answer that.

Mr. Sourwine. That is a matter of record.

Mr. Sacher. Of course it is a matter of record and that is an added ground on which I decline to answer, Mr. Chairman. There is no occasion for the Congress of the United States to call a lawyer before it to inquire in what cases he has participated, particularly when it is a matter of public record as to what case he participates in.

Senator McClellan. The Chair will order you to answer it.

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, I am ashamed of nothing I have done, either professionally or in my private life, but that is no reason why I should be brought to Washington to testify about it. Unless it is relevant and pertinent to some legislative purpose, I must respectfully decline to answer the question, and I should like to ask of the Chair what legislative purpose do you state is being served by my answer to this inquiry?

Senator McClellan. Well, the Chair does not necessarily feel called upon give you all the information that you may desire. . . . So the Chair will rect you to answer the question.

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, permit me to say this: That I think that inquiry to any member of the bar concerning cases in which he has par-cipated carries with it implicitly the notion that attorneys are accountable the legislative branch of the Government for the cases they handle. . . . do not think it is wise to do it. I do not think it is in consonance with our otions of an independent bar, and I respectfully submit that a lawyer ought be as immune from accountability for the cases in which he participates a member of Congress is for his utterances on the floor of the House, ther of the Senate or of the House of Representatives.

Senator McClellan. The question that has been propounded to you is a reliminary question as a matter of background leading into further inquiry. he Chair has already stated his position. The Chair orders you to answer e question.

Mr. Sacher. All right, I will answer the question and state that I did rticipate in the case in question.

Senator McClellan. All right, proceed, Mr. Counsel.

Mr. Sourwine. Mr. Sacher, do you know Harvey Matusow?

Mr. Sacher. I know him in the sense that I met him for the first time my life two days before he took the stand as a witness in support of a otion for a new trial which I was to try in the case of *United States ainst Flynn,* and others, before Judge Dimock in the U.S. District Court r the Southern District of New York.

Mr. Sourwine. What contact have you had with him?

Mr. Sacher. My contacts consisted, as I recall it, of the following: I ink that I first met him on February 8, 1955. I believe that is the day. think I saw him on the 8th of February and on the 9th of February, and en I saw him on succeeding days during which the hearing was being nducted before Judge Dimock, my recollection being that the first date open court hearing on the motion I am speaking of was February 10, 55.

* * * *

Mr. Sourwine. Mr. Sacher, have you defended Gus Hall, a Communist der and bail jumper?

Mr. Sacher. I defended Gus Hall, period.

Mr. Sourwine. Mr. Sacher, have you ever served a prison sentence?

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, is that question related to some legislative purpose, I wonder?

Senator McClellan. The Chair will hear counsel. I was not just certain what the purpose of it was.

Mr. Sourwine. Mr. Chairman, among the measures under consideration by this committee is proposed legislation for the purpose of fixing additional standards with respect to the practice of law in the Federal Courts. Among the suggestions for inclusion in such legislation is a suggestion which would prohibit members of the Communist Party from practicing in Federal Courts. It is germane to the consideration of such legislation to inquire into the circumstances involving the practice of law in Federal Court by persons who are Communists and by persons who are defending Communists. I believe that the inquiries made here and other inquiries which have been made and which will be made in this Matusow case have bearing upon that legislative problem now pending before the committee.

Mr. Sacher. I would like to be heard, Mr. Chairman, if I may.

Senator McClellan. The Chair thinks that you should lay a foundation for that first by asking the witness if he is a member of the Communist Party, if he has ever been, and so forth.

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, may I be heard, please?

Senator McClellan. Briefly.

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, my understanding, when I came here, was as given to me by those who served the subpoena to me, that I was going to be interrogated concerning the Matusow recantation. I believe, and I say this with as much of a sense of responsibility as thirty years of practice at the bar have given me, that I have established rather conclusively by evidence other than Matusow's own recantation before Judge Dimock, that he lied and lied outrageously at the Flynn trial. . . .

The suggestion that my political beliefs or associations are to be inquired into seems to me to be diversionary in character. I maintain that Matusow lied and that, if this committee wants to know how our judicial procedures may be improved, let them wait until Judge Dimock passes judgment on everything that transpired before him. Let there not be here made an attempt to prejudice the determination not only by Judge Dimock but by the people of the United States as to whether or not Matusow lied when he testified at the Flynn trial. Now I submit, Mr. Chairman, that this—if I may say so—that this is doing a disservice to the administration of justice.

Senator McClellan. That is what we are trying to find out. Now let us proceed, Mr. Counsel, and ask the proper questions to lay the foundation for this.

* * * *

Mr. Sourwine. Are you, Mr. Sacher, a member of the Communist Party, U.S.A.?

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, I have been called here because of my representation of the defendants in *United States against Flynn* on a motion for a new trial on the ground that Harvey Matusow committed perjury in their trial. I have answered and am prepared to answer all questions concerning my participation in that case.

I refuse, I refuse categorically, Mr. Chairman, to discuss my beliefs, religious, political, economic or social. I do not do so on the ground of the Fifth Amendment. I do so because it is inconsistent with the dignity of any man to be compelled to disclose his political, religious, economic, social or any other views. And I respectfully submit that an inquiry to me concerning this matter is not pertinent to anything with which this committee is concerned, and is not relevant to any inquiry that may properly be made of me. And I therefore decline on the ground that I cannot with any regard for my own self respect, do otherwise, Mr. Chairman.

Senator McClellan. Well, the Chair does not think that it is beneath the dignity of a good citizen of the United States to answer a question as to whether he is a member of an organization that seeks the overthrow of this Government by force and violence, and therefore, the Chair propounds to you now the question, are you now a member of the Communist Party of the United States.

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, medieval inquisitors also thought there was no impropriety in asking those whom they regarded as heretics to answer the question.

Senator McClellan. The Chair does not care for a lecture. The Chair asked you a question.

Mr. Sacher. And I decline to answer that question, Mr. Chairman.

Senator McClellan. The Chair orders you to answer the question.

Mr. Sacher. I decline to answer that question on the grounds I have already stated.

Senator McClellan. The Chair asks you another question. Have you ever been a member of the Communist Party of the United States?

Mr. Sacher. I respectfully submit, Mr. Chairman, that my conscience

dictates to me that I shall not, under your compulsion or anybody else's compulsion, make any disclosure of any of my beliefs, political, religious, economic or social, past or present, and I decline to answer your question.

Senator McClellan. The Chair orders you to answer the question.

Mr. Sacher. I respectfully decline to answer it.

Senator McClellan. The Chair asks you another question. Have you ever been a member of any organization, Communist Party or by any other name, that advocates and seeks the overthrow of the Government of the United States by force and violence?

Mr. Sacher. I will state to the Chair that I have never been a member of any organization which I believed to be a teacher or advocate of the forcible or violent overthrow of the Government of the United States.

* * * *

Mr. Sourwine. Are you now or have you ever been a member of the Lawyers' Section of the Communist Party, U.S.A.?

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, I have declined before and I decline again—

Senator McClellan. You are ordered to answer the question.

Mr. Sacher. —on the grounds that I have already stated so I needn't take the time of the committee. and I re-emphasize that there is nothing in the purpose of the committee or the Congress which comprehends the validity, the pertinence, or the relevance of an inquiry to me concerning my political beliefs or affiliations. I respectfully decline to answer that question.

Senator McClellan. May I say to you I have great respect for the law profession. I have tried to practice a little law myself. But when we come to the security of our country, an organization that is dedicated obviously to subversive purposes as an objective, I think it becomes the duty of the Congress of the United States and also the duty of the Executive Branch of the Government to try to ferret those things out and expose them if they relate directly to the national security—associations at some time and the knowledge may help the Congress or help other officials of the Government to preserve national security. For that reason the Chair thinks that the question is proper and directs you to answer it.

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, I respectfully say to you that, without any desire to be immodest, I think that in the defense of those that have been charged under the Smith Act or under the Internal Security Act of 1950, I have acted in the best traditions of the profession by defending the rights of people to speak, to publish, to meet under the First Amendment.

Senator McClellan. This question was not related to your defending nyone in court. The question was related to your being present or being a nember of a group of lawyers, presumably, ostensibly from the question—do not know what the answer is—dedicated to the Communist Party.

Mr. Sacher. Mr. Chairman, for thirty years I have practiced law in the tate of New York and elsewhere in the United States, and I think again, vithout being subject to the charge of being immodest, that I have done a eoman's share of the work that had to be done on behalf of the working nen and women of our country. And I feel that my life is a living testiionial to what I am and to what I have done for my country, and I repectfully submit it is a late time of the day for me to have to appear before nybody, after thirty years of honorable practice, to testify to my loyalty to ne democratic institutions of the United States, and I unswervingly and nhesitatingly tell you my devotion is to the best interests of my country. And I believe that I am serving those interests when I refuse to bend the nee to an inquiry concerning my innermost thoughts and beliefs, whether hey be on politics, religion or anything else.

My conscience dictates to me that I shall not, under compulsion, anver any more than John Freeborn Lilliburne answered in the 1640's to ne Court of Star Chamber and on the same grounds, Mr. Chairman, on the rounds that it is incompatible with the dignity of the individual to make ompulsory disclosure of his thoughts and his ideas and his beliefs, I must espectfully decline to answer that question.

Senator McClellan. You have a right to decline, of course, if you wish o invoke your constitutional privilege.

Mr. Sacher. I am invoking my rights as a man and my dignity as a man nd I am not invoking any privileges against self-incrimination. I have ever done anything and I pledge you, Mr. Chairman, I shall never do nything which, so far as I can help will expose me to any criminal harges.

And I say to you that I speak not from fear of incrimination or prosecution. I speak only from the dictates of conscience. And I ask all Americans to join me in resisting inquiries of this kind, for when the day comes vhen Americans will resist inquiries of this kind, we shall once again witess a restoration of those liberties which we so long enjoyed. . . .

Letters:

Editors, M&M:

I HEARTILY endorse Hal Shapiro's reply to Martha Millet (*M&M,* April, 1955). But he by no means exhausts the subject. For instance, Form and Content, sometimes presented as Form vs. Content, as though eternally antagonistic. True, Content often wrestles with Form and is overthrown, but that's something for an elementary class in prosody.

Martha Millet in her article and to some extent Shapiro in his reply concentrate on questions of form and apparently feel there is no argument of content. If only that were so!

Granted, in the pages of *M&M* we are not concerned with poets who completly or primarily project a "content devoted to frustration despair, nausea, isolation, cynicism, mysticism." But progressive poets do not live in vacuums; they are subject to all kinds of pressures from the world around them. Poets are even more susceptible to social pressures and moods than progressives concerned only with door-to-door political work. So a poet has to be as crystal clear on content as a person writing a trade union bulletin or leaflet. On the contrary, most progressive or "modern" poets do not seem clear; seem to work on the premise that—as Shapiro aptly quotes—"A poem should not mean, but be."

I assume the five poems printed at the end of Martha Millet's article (*M&M,* March, 1955) are prime samples of "modern" poetry. The only one that "sent" me was Guillevic's sonnet, translated by Walter Lowenfels. Don't know if it's a good translation; but it makes a good poem in English. It's a sonnet; and the idea seems adequate for the sonnet-form. Nor does it seem crammed into fourteen lines like a size eight foot into a size seven shoe. A series of visual images builds a mood dramatically shattered in the last lines. Yes, form helps to make this an outstanding poem.

But content is equally important. We have an almost perfect balance of the poet's hatred for the "dollar army" and love of his country. It reminds me of Connolly:

"Come, workers, sing a rebel song,
A song of love and hate;
Of love unto the lowly and of
Hatred to the great.
The great who trod our fathers down,
Who steal our children's bread;

Whose hands of greed are stretched
to rob
The living and the dead.

Contrasted with the Guillevic sonnet, Lowenfels' own poem, "Whitman Speaks," seems watered down. The great love of humanity that sings out in the best of Walt Whitman does not come through this sonnet. A sonnet may not be the best form here; but I believe the trouble is one of content, not form.

Similarly, the Bruce Hooton poem does not reflect the great love patriotic Persians must have for their country. "The Nation is Victorious" has some striking images, but it needs a shot of poetic intensity to make it really come alive.

I'd like to consider another poem by Lowenfels. But first, I want to establish two facts: (1) There is not an anti-Lowenfels cult in these parts, even though my fellow San Franciscan, Sam Swing, teed off on him recently (*Jewish Life,* March, 1955). We respect him as a writer and as a fighter for human rights; (2) Lowenfels, less than most poets of stature in the progressive movement, does not rely on the bizarre rhythms and images associated with "modern" poetry, rightly or wrongly. Nevertheless, sometimes he gives the impression of an honest poet fallen among the "moderns," especially when he feels called upon to defend "modern" poetry, as in his rejoinder to Sam Swing in the above-cited issue of *Jewish Life.* I believe that a consideration of his "For the Freedom of Morton Sobell" (*Jewish Life,* Feb., 1955) points up strikingly the problems of form and content. I reproduce it in full:

Mornings or evenings
are very much the same,
but prison walls give dawn
two kinds of flame:

outside the early light
blossoms before our eyes,
flowers, and then melts,
into morning skies;

In prison it's still dark;
only the ceiling grows pale:
Each dawn breaks twice now—
for us—and Sobell in jail.

His prison chains make music
on their iron rings
and on our heart's guitar
his freedom song sings.

My first reaction is that the beautiful dignity of the first three stanzas dissolves in a pretty jingle! This may be a question of form, but I believe, on re-examining the poem, that it has a content-weakness that makes it inevitable for the poet to dwindle away at the end—to throw out the baby with the bath-water.

I don't feel that Lowenfels has asked —much less answered—the all important question: How does this case differ from all other frame-ups?

Consider the last line of the third stanza. Almost any name could be substituted for "Sobell." "Nelson," for instance. If Lowenfels wants to write a poem about Steve Nelson in jail or about Lowenfels in jail, more power to him! But if he wants to write about Sobell in Alcatraz, let his poem be *about* Sobell in Alcatraz!

This is not the time nor the place for a discussion of the Rosenberg-Sobell case. Capable writers such as William Reuben and John Wexley have written important books on the case which are available to most *M&M* readers. But I might in passing point out that the Rosenberg-Sobell case was used by the prosecution to obtain a conviction in the Denver Smith Act trial. The Rosenberg case may be closed; and Sobell may be the "forgotten" man in the minds of many people; but to the McCarthyites it is neither closed nor forgotten. The Rosenberg-Sobell case stands as a symbol to the McCarthyites of the fate they desire for all "Communists": Death or life sentences. And let's not kid ourselves that the McCarthyites will settle for less: If it had not been for the resistance engendered around the Rosenberg-Sobell case, as well as their own resistance, their refusals to "confess," hundreds of alleged Communists might be facing death today instead of prison terms.

I've discussed the above poem with active people in the Sobell campaign here. For the most part they agree with me. They feel that the poem fails to do a job in the fight to obtain justice for Sobell. And a poem that will do a job is badly needed! A less honest poet than Lowenfels might have covered up his lack of content wth bombastic nonsense. We must credit him with not doing so.

A few more words on the Shapiro article. He lists several poets that he thinks are getting to the people and acquiring a mass following. I think the list is worth repeating: Beulah Richardson, Langston Hughes, Edith Segal, Aaron Kramer. The list should be added to, and I'd like to nominate one: Irene Paull, a Minnesotan now living in California. She and her brother, Yank Levine (Yank reading Irene's poems) are an unbeatable team for making poetry "A living part of action, issues, etc."

BARNEY BALEY

Los Angeles

Editors, *M&M*:

In an American prison today, a man close to 74 years of age, ill with

erious heart disease and complicated tomach ailments, is serving a two-ear sentence under the Smith Act. Please permit me to appeal to your eaders for support in winning his parole.

The man I speak of is my husband, Jacob Mindel, to whom I have been married 45 years, with 51 years of uninterrupted friendship and mutual espect between us. My husband is known as a Marxist scholar of long tanding. But since 1948 serious ill-ness compelled him to lead a quiet ife at home.

Not one overt act was cited against ny husband either in the indictment or during the 10-month-long trial, not even ridiculous overt acts such s leaving a certain building or mail-ng 50 envelopes, acts cited against ome of his co-defendants. Instead, he whole case against him was based on the question of "intent." And the only testimony as to his intent was n informer's version of what some-one else had taught in 1941 at a chool of which my husband was in harge. There was no evidence of ny kind offered during the long trial s to anything my husband himself nay have said or taught.

In truth, what my husband could e charged with is his devotion to eace, his ideas for a happy life for ll people. Or could it be an offense o cherish the love and respect of he many who have come to know ny husband during many years of his life, who feel that their lives have been enriched by his humaneness and his ideas of brotherhood.

What my husband meant to people has been brought home to me by the many warm letters of concern I have received from his former students. One of them, for example, writes as follows:

"Perhaps it will be some comfort to you to hear from one of the numberless people whom Pop so profoundly influenced by the profound humaneness that is the mark of a true Communist, the modesty that necessarily flows out of understanding the great cause to which we are dedicated. Who said: 'Nothing human is foreign to me'? That is Pop."

Many eminent Americans, including Supreme Court Justices Black and Douglas, have spoken out against the Smith Act as unconstitutional, and the great organizations of labor and of the Negro people have expressed their revulsion at convicting people for their beliefs, and on the false testimony of paid informers. The recantation of one such informer, Matusow, has already resulted in the granting of a new trial to two of my husband's co-defendants.

I have faith that justice will in time prevail, but time is working speedily against my husband. At his age and in his condition of health, a two-year term in prison may well become a life term, a most unusual and cruel punishment for a man's

ideas, which the Constitution forbids.

During the trial in Foley Square my husband suffered two heart attacks. The hardships of the trial took a heavy toll in the further deterioration of his health.

When my husband went to prison last January, his doctor's affidavit, summarizing his own and other competent medical opinion, stated in part: "Taking into consideration the age of this patient (73½), his chronic progressive heart disease, his chronic stomach disease, his feebleness, and the drastic change from his care at home to prison environment, it is my belief, as a physician, that continued incarceration will be hazardous to his life."

I have great apprehensions that this opinion is being borne out, for after a few months in prison, my husband suffered a fainting spell, a very serious development for a man with heart disease and his other ailments.

If my husband should die in prison, so needlessly, so cruelly, a martyr for his convictions, such a horrible event would bring only disgrace and shame to our country. The people of the world would be shocked by such inhumanity.

I have received heartwarming letters from many people in all walks of life who have written to the Parole Board asking for my husband's parole. Very many who disagree fundamentally with my husband's ideas have also written to the Parole Board, shocked that a man nearly 74 years old, in his precarious state of health, should be in prison.

Here are excerpts from some of the letters I have received:

Waldo Frank, author: "I write this in behalf of Jacob Mindel, an aged and ailing man, who is now in prison obviously because of his unpopular political ideas, which have been made the pretext of accusing him of conspiracy under the Smith Act. In view of the doubts of the justice of this Act held by many of our best citizens and of the cruelty of prison for this harmless man, may I urge you to order his immediate release . . . for the fair name of our country?"

Dr. Charles L. Hill, President of Wilberforce University: "There are many of us who condemn most vehemently the Smith Act on the grounds of its unconstitutionality, and this particular mistreatment of Jacob Mindel only increases our opposition to it."

Rockwell Kent, artist: "On purely humanitarian grounds, I write to intercede with you on behalf of Jacob Mindel and plead with you that, in consideration of his age and physical infirmity, he be released on parole. . . . To release him so that he may spend the remaining years of his life with his wife would be an act of mercy eminently worthy of the Board's discretion."

Prof. Robert Morss Lovett, former

overnor of Virgin Islands: "I am rtain that Mr. Mindel is not in the ghtest degree a danger to the secur- of the United States. He is a vic- n of sedition laws passed in a time war hysteria against freedom of inion and association. As in our st history such hysteria will die and lition laws will be repealed or de- red unconstitutional."

Other prominent Americans who ve addressed appeals to the Federal role Board include Prof. Paul issenden, New York; Prof. J. nk Dobie, Texas; Prof. Thomas Emerson, Conn.; Rev. M. W. Fra- r, Pa.; Rev. M. C. Frenyear, New rk; Dr. Alice Hamilton, Conn.; v. George McPherson Hunter, W. ; Attorney Walter C. Longstreth, ; Rev. Paul McClure, Nevada; Dr. inhold Niebuhr, New York; An- Refrigier, New York; Bertha ynolds, Mass. Appeals to the Parole ard have also come from Canada, gland, France, Mexico and Latin erica.

My husband's life depends on loving care and constant attention can get at home. His only chance parole at the earliest possible date. is eligible for parole in Septem- 1955.

However, there has yet been no in which prisoners convicted er the Smith Act have been nted parole. Much harsher condi- s for parole are imposed on per- convicted for their political ideas than on persons convicted of common crime. I hope that expressions from many democratic and humane people will help me win life-giving freedom for my husband.

I hope that my husband's life may still be saved. But if he is to come back to me alive and free, I need the aid of many more men and women of courage and humanity, ready to speak out in defense of civil liberties and democracy in our land.

It is my fervent hope that the readers of *Masses and Mainstream* will use their influence to secure the release of my husband on parole by writing at once to: Chairman, Federal Parole Board, Washington, D. C. and by asking others to do the same.

I would deeply appreciate receiving a copy of any letter written to the Parole Board.

REBECCA MINDEL

(*The editors of* M&M *strongly support Mrs. Mindel's urgent appeal, and we urge our readers to do whatever they can to help correct this flagrant injustice.*)

Editors, *M&M*:

One of the weakest parts of *M&M* is its poetry.

It is, in my opinion, anemic, cut-and-dried stuff for the most part; and what is worse, it tends to be repetitious both in the themes written of and the choice of poets who do the writing.

What causes this poetic anemia?

A verse that rewrites a political speech is not a poem. When only poems whose images are 100 per cent politically correct are published you necessarily sacrifice the personal lyric, the off-beat outburst, those bright fantasies that Mayakovsky loved to play with; not to speak of Blok, Funaroff, Blake, Burns and others. I do not pit one against the other, but feel that the 100 per cent or nothing policy eliminates much of poetry's most exciting, meaningful stuff from the pages of *M&M*.

It also eliminates the younger poets, whose thinking has not yet crystallized, whose ideas and images are often unclear, imperfect; but who are striving to protest the dehumanization of man which the advocates of war proclaim. It denies such liberal, humanist poets a place to speak out from; it drives them off.

Coterie-building is another result of the 100 per cent or nothing policy.

If an *M&M* reader were to go back and reread a year's issues he would be shocked to see that four or five "accepted" poets dominate almost every issue. It is not that these four or five are poor poets, on the contrary, some of them have a vigorous, brilliant talent; it is rather that they appear to the exclusion of others, and appear so often that when they run out of themes they write poems about each other.

Lastly, the 100 per cent or nothing policy tends to limit experimentation. It makes a writer hesitant to attempt new forms, "incorrect styles," or to handle themes for which he does not have all the answers, themes where he might make a political error. And so our greatest human themes are often left untouched. It tends to create a boring sameness.

It is especially sad to me that *M&M* should be weighed down with such leftist academicism, this 100 per centism—for it is exactly this, though politically directed to the right, which has crippled poetry in so many of the conservative quarterlies and critics' journals. The academic, pedantic, "accepted" poetry which these conservative critics demand has killed the poetic muse, or at least wounded it and *M&M* must not be an accomplice to this crime.

Our traditions are great and greatness does not fear to use traditions to build upon them, to encourage the new, the vital, the doubtful; to take a chance. If we want great poetry we must be rid of sectarianism.

Sincerely yours,
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