



Mainstream

LIFE AND DEATH OF AN AMERICAN TOWN

Kathleen Cronin

Renaud de Jouvenel PARIS LETTER

Annette T. Rubinstein THE JOB OF A. MACLEISH

Barrows Dunham TRIOLETS OF SOCIAL
SIGNIFICANCE

Barbara Giles NO HARD FEELINGS

Walter Lowenfels QU-EST-CE QUE L'AVANT-
GARDE?

P O E M S

by Eve Merriam and George Hanlin

August, 1958

50 cents

Mainstream

AUGUST, 1958

The Life and Death of an American Town:
Kathleen Cronin 1

Paris Letter: *Renaud de Jouvenel* 29

Triolets of Social Significance: *Barrows
Dunham* 33

Contemporary Verses: *Eve Merriam and
George Hanlin* 36

Ask a Foolish Question: *Annete T.
Rubinstein* 37

No Hard Feelings: *Barbara Giles* 43

Qu'est-ce que l'avant-garde?: *Walter
Lowenfels* 49

Books in Review

Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto, edited and
translated by Jacob Sloan: *Louis Harap* 51

No Men are Strangers, by Joseph North:
Meridel Le Sueur 53

The Minutiae of Verdi, by Vincent Sheean:
Max March 55

Moses, Prince of Egypt, by Howard Fast:
Gilbert Ohland 56

The Capitalist Manifesto, by Luis O. Kelso
and Mortimer J. Adler: *Myer Weise* 58

A Friend in Power, by Carlos H. Baker:
Wilkes Sterne 60

Six Days or Forever, by Ray Ginger:
Carol Remes 60

The Underground City, by H. L. Humes:
Lydia Wilson 61

The Bannock of Idaho, by Brigham D. Mad-
sen: *M Le S.* 62

Editor

CHARLES HUMBOLDT

Contributing Editors

HERBERT APTHEKER

JACK BEECHING

PHILLIP BONOSKY

JESUS COLON

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

HUGO GELLERT

BARBARA GILES

SHIRLEY GRAHAM

MILTON HOWARD

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

MERIDEL LE SUEUR

WALTER LOWENFELS

THOMAS MCGRATH

ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN

PHILIP STEVENSON

LIFE AND DEATH OF AN AMERICAN TOWN

KATHLEEN CRONIN

ASTORIA, Ore., Spring, 1958.

Signs outside Astoria, fishing and lumber port at the mouth of the Columbia, claim it is the oldest settlement in the U.S. west of the Rockies. In 1955 the town celebrated its sesquicentennial, with descendants of Lewis and Clark and the Indian woman, Sacajewea, riding with Chamber of Commerce officials in a flag-draped float.

We have nothing to celebrate this year, and could take our text from the rocky headland glimpsed by the 18th century mariners when they were searching for the Columbia—Cape Disappointment.

What's happened to Astoria is the story of what's happened to the Pacific Northwest, but the litany of disaster here has undertones.

History was made under these rain-dark peaks. The trouble is, much of it has never been written, although scores of writers have taken a hack at early Astoria, from Washington Irving, hired by the sons of John Jacob Astor, so the legend goes, to clean up his memory, to Archie Binns who told part of the story in his novels *Lightship* and *Rolling River*.

The historical society preserved the skull of Concomley, the Chinookan Chief who gave the name of a tribal division (Clatsop) to this county; there is a book, *Pacific Graveyard*, about the ships that have died on Clatsop Spit, and artists from all over the world have tried to capture the bowsprit of the Peter Iredale, stark against the sunset.

But the greatest sea tragedy of all has gone unrecorded except for brief mention in the Oregon Blue Book, over the byline of a union official, Robert Hicks. This was the time the entire fishing fleet, powered in those days by oar and sail, went down in a storm in Baker's Bay. No one is alive now who was fishing then; the story has passed into legend, as have the exploits of Gus Snug, the spitman, who outfished—and outlived—a score of daredevils whose boats capsized out in the river's mouth, in the combers.

Tragedy is commonplace where men earn their living on the waves. The trollers put to sea when the storm warnings are up; they could not pay for their gear otherwise. My landlady, Mrs. Jarvi, lost a daughter,

son-in-law, and grandson to the sea; or Sea, as it is called here. The Finns, who were pagans until Christianized at swordpoint by the Swedes in the 12th century, still personify the forces of nature in their speech. There are no words for *the* and *a* in the Finnish language.

One morning, not too long ago, my friend, Emelia Bohm, was one of the most prosperous women in the town, with a husband who skinned a \$16,000 boat. Before the sun had set, she was a widow, and the packers had taken the Snark for the money owing the salvage company.

Astoria has more widows, per capita-wise, than any town on the Pacific Coast, but this has been noted only by the insurance companies, and marine insurance is so high, few can afford it.

The Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union, chartered in 1886, is the oldest organization of workers in the Northwest. Fish markets in Astoria a lusty giant at the turn of the century; and even today, with the town in mortal agony, keeps life in its veins. Yet none of the historians have understood that the packers' importation of Chinese coolies to break the great fish strike of the '90's and what happened to the unwitting scabs—their bleached bones litter the river bed from Pill Rock to Desdemona Sands—is as much a part of the tumultuous history of a turbulent time as was the Tonquin's bloody landfall in 1815 or Lady Washington's unlucky cruise in Murderers' Bay.

Three years ago, the Jaycees rebuilt Fort Clatsop, log by log; but there is no monument to the lumber workers who fell under the snarled bullets of the Crown Company scabs, and the drifting leaves of the years have hidden ground that ran red with blood in 1936.

The long agony of the Finnish-Americans under the Javerts of the Immigration Service has no space in the historical society's archives. Yet it was the foreign-born who wrested the green gold from the hills, turned the stump land into homesteads and brought the sea trove home. Their story, cast in the heroic mould, is buried in the pages of an obscure language paper published in Wisconsin, and in the files of Astoria's own *Toveri* (Comrade)—and what became of these files after the newspaper staff was deported to Finland in 1932? I have searched for them in vain. A marine engine works occupies the space where Parras and Syvanen composed their editorials.

ASTORIA isn't predominantly Finnish, nor was it founded by emigrants from Karelia and Oulun Laani. But it *is* composed, in the main, of first, second and third generation Americans; and at one time four of ten Astorians were Finns.

The first settlers, trappers and lumbermen who ventured down the Columbia in flatboats, after months of walking behind the oxteams on the Barlow Trail, or sailed up the coast from San Francisco after a perilous voyage around the Horn, were Yankees, with Scotch and English names. The Finns, Norwegians, Swedes and Danes came later, driven from the cities of Europe by famine and pestilence; or fleeing from forced service in the armies of the Czar (Finland at the time was a Grand Duchy).

These first immigrants were workers—men, they will tell you with wry humor, "who had strong back and weak head for toil." They came to the mines in Montana, Michigan and the Mesabe; blacklisted there and in the industrial centers of the East, they came to Astoria to harjoittaa halastusta (practice fishing).

After the General Strike of 1905 and the suppression of Finnish liberties in 1910, many intellectuals came to Astoria from Helsinki and Tampere; and the town has a strong liberal tradition. At the time of the civil war in Finland, more Astorians were in sympathy with the Red Guards than with the White Guards. But the winter war with the Soviet Union split the town in two. Ghosts of 1919 were invoked under the steeple of the Finnish-Lutheran Church; suddenly every Finn in Uniontown was either a "Mannerheim" Finn or a "Columbia Hall" Finn. They danced separately, and prudently took their beer apart; but when they met on the street or on the job they fought. Readyng their gear for the spring fishing, they leaped out of their boats to knuckle each other. Five years after Russia took Petsamo, the Winter War was still being re-fought on the net racks of Uniontown. As late as 1945, two members of the longshoreman's union, American veterans of World War II, fought over the Russo-Finnish war naked in the sauna (public steam bath).

Time has wrought changes in the social structure. Finnish-Americans, with the Chinese who worked in the canneries and "Hindoos" from the green chain at the Hammond Mill, were at the bottom of the social scale in 1910. Today they look at you over the polished desk top in the bank and peer at you through the wicket at the unemployment office. They send their kids to college, hold office in the unions and bury their dead at Ocean View.

Many Chinese fled Astoria after the fire which razed the "Chinese quarter" and the business section in 1922; those that are left work in the canneries or carry the mail.

Only in the fishing village of Clifton, a few miles up river, do the inhabitants, Italians, Greeks and Slovenians, who brought their skills from the Aegean and the Adriatic, cling to the old beliefs and customs. Robert Hicks, secretary of the fishermen's union, wrote in the Blue

Book: "As old as history itself, the gillnets used on the Columbia are not much different than those used in the time of Christ." But even here, when Nicky Begleries, third generation of his family to fish these waters, who threw down his law books to return to the shrouded river, follows the salmon to Bristol Bay, Alaska, he goes in 7½ hours by airlift. It took his father, Leon Begleries, a month in a sailing ship; and the passage, made in that season when winter meets summer head on in the Aleutians, was one of the roughest in the annals of the sea.

Elsewhere, Astoria at official levels has repudiated its past. And yet—and is it because of this?—there is little that is left here *but* the past.

THE early-day speculators who made fortunes in fur, and later in fish, lumber and human pelf—Astoria was a center for the shanghaiing of sailors—are dust under the salal bushes at the foot of Coxcomb Hill. Absentee owners with plush offices in Sansome St., San Francisco, control what is left of the timber and Transamerica exploits the salmon runs.

The Columbia is four miles wide between Astoria and Meglar, on the Washington side. But the windjammers that once crowded the roadstead are only a memory in the foam on the draft beer when the old bar pilots get together at Thiel Bros.' and the freighters that cleared through this port for Tsingtao, Shanghai and Tientsin, loaded with flour and the timbers known crudely to the trade as "Jap squares," are rusting in the boneyard back of Tongue Point.

Now, in May of 1958, the town on one of the finest deep-draft fresh water harbors in the world, is smaller than it was 40 years ago. It has spread, fanlike, along Young's Bay and out the road to Jewel, and the river named after Lewis and Clark; and houses with colored roofs now crown the promontory above the narrow, twisting streets of Union town, giving a European flavor to the postcards the tourists buy. But at the center, in the vital areas along the waterfront and the arterial highways leading south and east, the town is dying like one of the old trees the clear cutters have left standing on the maimed hillsides because of the termites or dry rot at the core.

The saws are silent in the Warrentown and Westport mills, and many of the gyppos (small contract loggers) are idle. Some will tell you it's the Embargo, and some blame it on Crown-Zellerbach, the lumber octopus which controls the log market. Either way, the 300 or 400 lumber workers whose dollars made such a pleasant jingle in the Commercial Street cash registers on payday have joined the unemployed or moved away—"2-bedroom home, owner leaving, must sell," one with the phrase "garden in" added as a sort of tragic postscript.

Uptegrove's manufactured cigar boxes here for years; but the paper box industry put it out of business, and the firm's 125 employes drew their final pay checks in 1956.

The plywood plant, a co-op whose shareholders bought their jobs, in some cases laying out \$14,000 for a share on a down payment and \$120 a month, is still running. But hard money and the price collapse in plywood have hung a question mark over every co-op and independent in the industry. It's been a tough lesson in economics for men who dreamed of competing with industrial giants like Georgia-Pacific.

A few months ago several hundred machinists were working on ship repair at Tongue Point. That ended when the Navy withdrew the use of its floating dry docks. Machinists' Lodge 125, with 400 members when I came to Astoria seven years ago, is down to 80 members, 50 of them unemployed; and their telephone has been disconnected.

"What are they living on?" I asked Chuck Diamond, their business agent.

"Hope, and a day's work now and then out of the longshore hall," he replied.

But International Longshoremen's & Warehousemen's Union, Local 50, hasn't enough work for its own members. Lumber is the main cargo item here, as it is in all Pacific Coast ports from Eureka, Calif., north.

High interest rates put the skids under home building. Lumber shipments to the Atlantic Coast are lighter than they were in the '30's. But it is in the export end that this cargo has fallen off most sharply. China trade kept the steam up in the tidewater mills through the last depression. In 1931, Oregon and Washington sent more lumber to China than they shipped to all countries in 1957.

The ILWU, with two locals here, five more upriver and three down the Oregon coast, has fought for a return to this traditional trade pattern. Recently they were joined in the crusade by the two unions in WOOD, by industry spokesmen in shipping, flour and lumber;* Oregon newspaper editors and the board chairman of Portland's First National Bank. The state's two senators also want a new look at our China trade policy, but the State Department thinks otherwise, although there is some "third party trading" going on.

Astoria dockers leave their lumber hooks at home these days. If it were not for the flour mill, they would be drawing unemployment along with the machinists and sawmill workers. In spite of this, routeing the unemployed to the longshore hall is standard practice at the State Unemployment Compensation Commission's local office; whenever there's a

* A hold-out was Crown, with timber here and in British Columbia.

ship in at Pier I, the jobless rush down to 324 West Marine Drive.

The flour mill, on slow bell earlier in the spring, is now running seven days a week, but the cereal workers have their troubles, too. They are fighting automation and her ugly twin sister, the speed-up.

Astoria once had two flour mills, but that was when China trade kept the staff of life coming down the chute 365 days a year. After the embargo, the grain men turned to shipping wheat, a lot of it to Japan. Last year 89 million bushels of wheat went over the Columbia river bar; "enough," says Harry J. Taylor, Local 18 business agent, "to keep a mill like ours running full blast for 27 years."* Taylor is blind, no longer works in the plant; but the mind behind the dark glasses is lawyer-sharp.

In the old days, if there was no work ashore, you could always get on, during the fishing season, as a boat puller. But the trollers and drag boatmen can't afford help these days, and some of them can't afford gear to fish. They tell you tuna imports have beached the fleet.

The fishermen are a hardy breed. Anton Pesonen, the net maker, who worked on the old seining grounds, remembers the 1916-17 strike that forced the packers to provide bedding for the bunk houses, set on piling on a sand bar in midstream. Horses were used to haul in the heavy seines, and sometimes beasts and men "went off their heads" from the harsh, unnatural life on the sand spit.

Oney Piipo, who fished until he was past 70, takes the *Industrialisti*, published in Duluth. At one time he was stationary delegate here for the IWW, with 37 job delegates under him in the woods. He helped organize the Pacific Coast Fishermen's Union, which in 1933 conducted the first successful general strike against the packers, embracing every type of gear from Alaska to Mexico.

The trollers have had no organization since the PCFU was gutted by injunction in 1939. When I came to Astoria, the state CIO Directory listed five IFAWA locals, an Alaska Fishermen's Union sub-local, and two independent fishermen's locals, in addition to the Columbia River Fishermen's Protective Union which at that time was affiliated to ILWU. I was confused, and asked Charley Henne, fast-witted, salt-tongued little man who lobbied for the river and coast stream fishermen for 30 years;

"How many unions are there, anyway, in the fishing industry?"

"Every packer has his union," he said, thrusting a verbal gaff into the heart of the difficulty which is, that without coast-wise affiliation,

* This means that the main agricultural crop of the Northwest—wheat—is going into export channels without any of the value added by manufacturing—a procedure common in "undeveloped" countries and in the American South before the Civil War, but a step backward for our fully industrialized "American century." (Easterners do not realize that Oregon and Washington—east of the Cascades—is wheat country.)

the fishermen today are helpless before the packers. (This spring they took a cut from 38 cents to 33 cents a pound.)

The cannery went down six weeks ago. The women have been telling each other the layoff is only the "usual, seasonal thing," and since it is exhausting to stand on concrete eight hours a day, filleting fish or transferring it from the speeding belts into the cans, there was much joking that last afternoon, as they hosed the fish slime off their white boots.

"Think of the headlines in Portland: 'New Layoffs hit Astoria' and us home getting a good rest on our rocking chair" (unemployment compensation). But some of the laughter was forced—many have families to support, payments to make and old people to look after.

When the packers started importing tuna from Japan, the workers felt a sense of guilt—everyone has a friend or relative who is a fisherman. Now we are accustomed to seeing the trucks loaded with the fish cadavers, and even canned crab which the longshoremen have unloaded from the Tinian, roll down West Marine Drive. We have even stopped worrying over the dockers' charge that no geiger counters were used on fish that may have come from contaminated sections of the sea. And now, suddenly, there is no tuna. CRPA bought a cannery in the Hawaiian Islands last year—there is a rush to look in the children's school atlases. Maybe Sandoz has moved the packing closer to his source of supply.

The fish workers belong to Packing House Local 554; their contract expires May 1. Could the closure be related to that?

The unease over Uniontown is suddenly as palpable as the overcast coming in from the ocean. The wind, free of the stench of butchered fish, adds to the strangeness.

But if Sandoz wants to can tuna—or salmon, after the river opens—he'll have to negotiate. "Low" is \$1.56, and it's too low, say the embattled women.

The gillnetters (river fishermen) are worried that when the season opens again, the canneries will go on strike. They made money on their May fishing this year, for the first time in several years; but the fish pounced in the estuary and it was necessary to close the river to save the run. Salmon, an anadromous fish, must go upstream to spawn. The runs aren't what they were once: the packers used traps until the union stopped them with the Trap and Seine bill in 1948; and the salmon, in spite of the fish ladders, have trouble in getting over the high dams at Bonneville, McNary, The Dalles* and Rock Island.

The fishermen and cannery workers used to be in the same union;

* Built by the government in violation of the 1855 treaty which guaranteed Celilo to the Indians "forever." This ancient fishery is now under water, as are the petroglyphs on the rock walls. And the kilowatts, over which the PUDS and farmers' cooperatives were to have priority under the Bonneville Act, have been siphoned off by the aluminum companies.

now they are apart. If the women walk out, the gillnetters will lose the rest of the season, and the "public will suffer," they tell *The Budget*.

"No gillnetter, crab fisherman or otter trawler ever worried if (we were unemployed because of (one of their strikes),' says Thom Nizich, dark-browed, dynamic young Slovenian who is on UPWA negotiating committee, in a furious reply.

"The time has come when the gillnetters, crab fishermen and otter trawlers should all become affiliated under the United Packing House Workers of America, and work together for the good of all."

THE biggest single payroll in Clatsop County is unemployment insurance. More than \$100,000 was paid out here in March, \$93,672 in April—terrific sums in a county of less than 31,000 souls. Some 73 persons, 250 of them from food processing, 205 from lumber, receive checks for the week ending April 12.

In Salem the unemployment compensation commission revealed statistics about the job situation in the state as a whole. Checks totaling \$18,333,706 were issued during the first three months of this year, a larger amount, said Commissioner Cecelia Gayley, than was paid out in "several recent, *complete* benefit years."

But this is far from the whole story. Some 45 per cent of the labor force is not covered by the state's jobless fund, Mrs. Gayley confided.

During January, Oregon's *insured* unemployment rate was the highest in the nation. In February, it was in second place. On March 1, the rate in the state as a whole was 12.1 per cent; but in the lumber county up to one person in three was still jobless.

By mid-April the state average had dropped to 8.5, only slightly above the national average of 8.1. But the lumber belt—and lumber is Oregon's main industry—remained dangerously job-short; and in Clatsop County there were more people out of work on April 1 than on March 1.

By the middle of last month 16,500 Oregonians had exhausted their benefits, compared to less than half that number a year ago. They have been dropping out of the statistics week by week; and officialdom issues comforting reassurances about the *decline* in *insured* unemployment.

What happens to these forgotten men and women?

Those with families go on relief. In Oregon there is no emergency assistance for single persons who are considered employable.

I asked Bertha Roth, administrator of the public welfare commission, what becomes of single men who have exhausted their benefits. (Even the Salvation Army has moved out of Clatsop County.)

"I don't know," she said.

The situation isn't her fault; it's a "state policy." There is an ex-

widening gap between the caseload and the budget for the biennium.

Even if you qualify for relief, you don't get much. The help given a family of four, "where it appears the father has no job to return to" (the \$64 escape hatch, surely!) may run to \$142 a month, including utilities, fuel and an allowance not to exceed \$45 for rent.

The Andersons made out all right during the fishing season because their neighbor was a gillnetter and "every time he went out we had fishhead stew." Made with milk, potatoes and all-spice, after the old country recipe, it's a tasty dish; and even made with water, it's palatable. They sold or traded everything they owned with negotiable value, from the portable TV to Mr. A.'s caulk boots. "Then he got tired of my nagging and this caseworker hanging around with her lead pencil that could make 2 and 2 come out 5, and even 6 and 7; and he took off." No one known where Mr. Anderson is now; and if Mrs. Anderson wants aid-for-dependent children, she will have to swear out a desertion warrant against their father, "and that's no way to get a man back when the job starts up."

The Walluskis live on a stump farm (small acreage) and were getting along fairly well when it was decided Mr. Walluski (who was hurt in an accident some time ago) was "employable." Their pittance was slashed to \$34 a month, said the neighbor who took in Mrs. Walluski and the baby while Mr. Walluski "went off to look for work." The neighbor doesn't think he'll find it—"no bull buck [logging camp foreman] would be so dumb as to hire him with his bum leg." The union, she says firmly, "should *do* something, he's not the only one unemployed—exonerate their dues, pass some resolutions, or anyway go after their claims."

"Did he have a claim?"

"Now you sound like the caseworker!" He was "done out of his compensation," and she doesn't have the straight of it "because the Walluskis don't speak English good—what matters is they had no food in their house."

The Laurilas were afraid to ask for relief. Someone told them, if they did, they would have to sign over their home. Since their payments exceed the welfare's maximum allowance for rent, it's likely the advice was accurate. Mr. Laurila, a carpenter, has been out of work for months. (Home building here is at a standstill—at a recent meeting of the labor council, several construction locals reported not a man working.) When the rocking chair gave out, the family ate up their state and federal income tax refunds. A longshoreman took them some beans he salvaged when a sack broke open in the hold of a ship he was working; they ate beans for two days. Mrs. Laurila had two days' work in a laundry this

week, but the money won't cover their house payment. She is philosophical; one of ten children, she's "always had it hard," never expected much from life. Mr. Laurila, a third generation Finn, is bitter, mostly at seniority rules and "union bosses," who, he feels, "have it in" for him and won't let him work. Nevertheless, it's union members who have "drug food in here and kept us going," his wife says.

The Haglunds borrowed from relatives as long as they could, to keep up their payments. Then they became one of those statistics under legal notices in *The Budget*, beginning "Notice of Sale" and ending with the grim notation, "date of last publication."

No one knows how many foreclosures (only they're called "repossessionings") there have been on State GI loans in Astoria; the SVA is mum on the subject.

The Groves—he is a machinist—planned to sell their furniture and "hit for California" when he was laid off at Tongue Point. A friend dissuaded them. There's a three-years residence requirement before you can go on relief in that state. They have one more check to go on his unemployment.

Jorma Heikkila did not try to "go on the country." A single man, he's had a steady job for years but he was always an easy touch for a donation or a hard luck story. When the plant shut down, he took it for granted he could get another job, but he never found one. ("Many of these people don't understand the situation they're in," said Mr. Davis at the unemployment office—*employment* office is a misnomer. "They have worked in that mill most of their lives; it's all they know; and now that mill is closed. Their only salvation is to move out of here, but they won't go. This is their home.") It was Mr. Heikkila's home. He went to the sauna in Uniontown every Saturday, and every Sunday he played pinochle with friends. He lived on his savings until they were gone, and then, one day, he disappeared. He may be in Portland where, according to Mrs. Roth, there are breadlines and other accommodations for single, "employable," unemployed men. Or the fishermen may find his body in the river the next time they take out the snag scow to clear the drifts. He was 63; if the job had lasted a bit longer, he would have had his social security.

Where are you, Mr. Heikkila?

Chester Roby came home to Astoria after he got out of the service. That was two years ago, but he has been unable to find steady employment. The last job he had was sorting mail during the Christmas rush. His parents own their home, and they are thrifty people with a few dollars put away; his mother is working, even if his stepfather is not. There is no danger of Chester Roby missing any meals, but he is bored. Lately he

has joined a club, much frequented by other young, unemployed ex-service men. He has taken to drinking and to making wild statements about the foreign-born.

Roy Soderberg is another man who's never had a job outside the armed forces. When I stopped seeing him around, I thought he'd re-enlisted. Then he showed up again, with roached hair. He's been in jail for stealing gas.

A longshoreman told me about August Torilainen, who has a wife and four children but no job. It was rumored there was a ship in, and Mr. Torilainen went down to the longshore hall. The rumor, for once, was true; and the dispatcher was making up the extra gang. He did not select Torilainen, who had never worked in the hold; and then, so I am told, "right there in front of everybody, he busted out crying."

The men were embarrassed; finally one asked: "How is it that you, a grown man, would bawl like this?"

"Maybe you would, too, if you had walked all the way down here on an empty stomach and had four hungry kids at home," Torilainen is reported to have said. Two of the dockers gave him a ride home in their car; on the way they bought him two dozen eggs and some bread and bacon.

That was a month ago. If each of the six Torilainens ate one egg a day the first day, and after that, half an egg a day, how long did the 4 eggs last? This is a very simple problem in arithmetic, but so far no one in Clatsop County has come up with the right answer.

John Hankajoki, an electrician and jack of all trades, has been lucky in finding odd jobs; his wife, Pieta, is a good manager and she takes in sewing. All their friends pointed them out as an example of what a young couple with initiative can do during hard times. An expenditure they red-penciled was the children's school tickets. (There's no free school transportation in the city limits.) Tom, ten, and Anne, six, must walk two miles along a thoroughfare that is a through-lane highway. Last week only the quick action of a pedestrian saved the younger one from being hit by a log truck.

"We've been going at this from the wrong end," says Pieta.

When I ask what she means, she says she's "new at this," and she's only "started to think—but, well, maybe a sidewalk and free bus tickets. There are others who have to walk."

The Blairs—that isn't their name, but it will do—were "fortunate." The mill, where Scotty has operated the trim saw for ten years, is running again—two weeks in four. Already in debt from a strike that has lost three years ago, no wage increase in several years and the Christmas shutdown, they hung on, waiting for the pickup everyone said would come in the spring. This is it.

It isn't depressing to talk to the Blairs; hard up as they are, they're full of fight. Scotty, older than Donna, was through the '35 strike and the '37 lockout when the woodworkers went CIO. He's ashamed of his union, the International Woodworkers of America, recently withdrawn its 1958 contract demands. The papers described this as "labor statism," but Scotty has another name for it and thinks it's a wonder "the Bosses didn't slap us with a pay cut." It kicked the props from under the other union in WOOD, the L&SWU. He thinks this volunteer wage freeze will be voted down by some of the locals in IWA, but not by his own local. "We used to be Four-L here" (a company union started by Colonel Disque to combat the IWW in World War I).

He wonders what the longshoremen, who work on the docks where there's any lumber to load and whom he greatly admires, will "think of us now." They have a deadline of their own to meet, June 15. "What will this do to them?" ILWU, with its \$2.53 an hour base (time and half after six hours), pensions, welfare and dental care for the kids, "is what holds conditions up on this coast." He also worries over what the "Carpenters" (L&SWU) will make of this. *They* are taking a strike vote, and it's going over. "If they get anything at all, even 12 cents, they'll take *us* over." He has no faith in the Carpenters' leadership. The IWA and the L&SWU hit the bricks together in '54; and the Carpenters, according to Scotty, "sold the strike out by signing sweetheart agreements and going back to work while we packed the banner." Maybe the IWA negotiating committee is "going Carpenter on us," he suggests.

"Hartung (Al Hartung, IWA international president) isn't," Donna says firmly. "My pop knew him when he was a faller at Vernonia. It's not any of their faults. Was it the committee, or the rank and file that voted the strike assessment down? And where was you, that think you're so smart, Scotty, at your own last union meeting?"

She is so mad she could kick somebody, if she knew "who to kick." She is a Democrat, and the Republicans are to blame for this—but you can't trust any of the politicians really, except Senator Morse. What should she give a dollar to know, if she had it, is why *The Woodworker* has nothing to say about this unemployment.

"How could they sound off on that?" asks Scotty, "when up until a few days ago we was after an increase . . .?"

And the operators could have paid it, too, says Donna. Their take in '57, she informs me, with 75 per cent of the industry out of work, was as high as ever. The rank and file knows it, and it's her prediction they'll vote this wage freeze down. "The Aberdeen local—and that's Bill Ling's own local [Jim Fadling, a member of the negotiating committee] has voted it down."

"Where did you hear that?" her husband asks, in amazement.

Donna heard it, "never you mind where." Under prodding, she admits it was "in that paper that man sells in Astoria."

Scotty thinks that's "pretty good," going to a California paper to find out what's what in our union." He does not ask *what* paper; he seems to know.

IN MOST of these case histories, the principals had jobless insurance to cushion their descent from a pay check to penury. Let's consider the ones who did not—those on social security, and Astoria's bankrupt small farmers and merchants.

I have a large acquaintance among the former. The Hendricksons are typical. Mr. Hendrickson, a retired coal miner (he just missed John L.'s pension), paid into the social security fund from the beginning, but since he is now 79 his base earnings, when he retired, did not entitle him to the maximum benefit. As a result, he must pay property taxes; and buy food, fuel, clothing and medical attention for himself and his wife on \$66 a month. This is less than the benefit which the self-employed, and some other categories affected by the 1956 amendments, receive on half the deductions Hendricksons paid in. Since there are scores of others in Clatsop County (and thousands throughout the nation) in the same boat, he has started a campaign for corrective legislation, and has had articles on the subject published in several papers. In the meantime he may have to sell his house.

Mr. Peitso is another oldtimer. He owns nothing but some barber shears, the tools of his former trade. He doesn't require as much food as would a younger man, and he has no wife; his problem in this damp, coastal climate is heat. He goes to the county library to keep warm, and is known there as a highly cultured man for he has read everything they have, in both Finnish and English. There was a write-up about Mr. Peitso in a magazine.

Mr. Fefner is a chicken farmer. By peddling his eggs from door to door, he receives a few cents more than he would if he marketed them through the cooperative. However the price of chicken feed has gone up and the price of eggs has gone down. I paid 55 cents for the 12 I bought from him last week, and he had to drive 18 miles to get them to me.

Fefner wants to sell out and go to California: "A man can always find something to do there."

I can't bear to snatch this dream away from Mr. Fefner as he trudges up and down the Uniontown hills with his eggs, so I do not tell him that the rate of insured unemployment in California is higher than it is here.

So it goes. In the meantime, Astorians, employed and unemployed struggle with one of the highest retail food price indexes in the U. It costs more to eat here than it does in New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Pittsburgh, Atlanta, Baltimore, Houston, Kansas City, Minneapolis or Los Angeles. When I ask the storekeeper why a can of soup is 3c more here than in Portland, 100 miles away, he claims it's the "back haul." The differential on clothing, furniture and building supplies is wider still.

In many ways our merchants are hardest hit of all. When I was downtown recently I found the stores as empty of customers as the river is of ships. Between the light company office and my dentist's—a distance of four blocks—I counted 14 vacant shops with many more on the side streets. The small merchants felt the pinch first, as customers transferred to Safeway and Sears-Roebuck. The Chamber of Commerce took time out from trying to attract new businesses to Astoria, to advise those already here not to advertise in *Tyomies-Eteenpain*—that paper, the Chamber of Commerce hinted darkly, was "subversive." This crusade, naturally, failed to stop any leaks in home town spending. Now, even the chains are in difficulty. Piggly Wiggly and Eastern Outfitting have moved out. Along the curbing, the parking meters stretched, as useless as the stumps on Coxcomb Hill (logged off last year by the City Fathers to meet the deficit).

The streets had a Sunday hush. Later they will echo to the tread of people (some of them unemployed, but you might win enough to save the TV set) hurrying to the bingo games, which have replaced the Chinese lotteries of an earlier period. (These, with the saloons and the brothels—"No Orientals allowed"—in which several of the law enforcement officers and leading clergymen had financial stakes, made the old time Astor Street the most notorious skidroad in the Northwest.)

The merchants do not understand what is happening, and those still in business have plastered their windows with Lucky Buck, bargains galore and clearance signs. Mr. Ball, the photographer, who has been here for 30 years, said it was the worst he had seen. I saw only one prospective customer, a man looking at second hand children's shoes in a rummage store window. He did not go in.

You can't "BUY, AND BUY" on your unemployment.

And yet it's the jobless insurance, the social security and the longshoremen's pension (their old timers get \$100 a month *plus* social security) which add up to the main difference between this depression and the one in Hoover's time—the attitude of the people then, and now to being out of work.

In 1932 the unemployed organized here, as elsewhere, to stop the evictions and keep from starving.

Old-timers chuckle over the story of the Warrenton butcher who was trimming some chops when he received a phone call from the Chamber of Commerce. The cleaver went one way, his white apron another and he tore into the street, screaming:

"I must go to Astoria. The Reds have taken the Courthouse!"

The truth was that the jobless, under the leadership of an unemployed Irish sailor named Jimmy O'Neil, were holding a demonstration under the windows of the county judge, Guy Boyington.

There were fewer than 300 people in the demonstration, but most of the town had turned out to watch it; so it appeared that the entire electorate had mobilized behind the starving. All demands were granted.

THIS time the jobless aren't organized—at least in Oregon. Nor have many of the unions, which in the '30's cooperated with the Workers Alliance, displayed initiative in solving the problems of their unemployed members.

In British Columbia, in February, over 300 trade unionists, headed by the International Woodworkers of America's District 1 president Joe Morris, marched on the provincial legislature to present "Labour's Brief on Unemployment." There are more lumber workers off the job on this side of the line than there are in Canada, but the union's stateside officials are silent; district officials red-baited the efforts of an unemployed group in Aberdeen, Wash., to secure federal surplus food commodities. However when a distribution was finally arranged, the union helped with the weighing and packaging. (More than 2,000 customers were served during the first two and a half days of the distribution, and they went home with two tons of flour, two and a half tons of butter, three tons of powdered milk, two and a half tons of corn meal, and seventeen hundred pounds each of cheese and rice.) And it was an IWA official, Secretary Clyde Jernigan of Local 23-90, Port Angeles, who called attention, as long ago as last December, to the critical unemployment situation in the Northwest and scored the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Secretary Ezra Taft Benson for not getting surplus food to the hungry. Oregon is one of three states which is not getting this food.

Some labor papers in the area have hit hard at the Administration's failure to come to grips with the job crisis. These include the longshoremen's *Dispatcher*, published in San Francisco, but with a wide circulation in Oregon; and *The Oregon Labor Press*, official organ of the CIO-AFL state council. Another California paper, with influence here, is *The Lumberjack News and Unemployed Worker*, a mimeographed sheet posted from the redwoods. Its editor, Tom Scribner, a woodworker, sees no solution to the economic ills plaguing the region except through eventual

"farmer-labor ownership of the land and means of production," with "unity of the two unions in lumber and formation of a farm-labor party as immediate goals."

For barbed comment on Eisenhower's economic misnomers, turn to the *Redwood Empire Labor News*, published in Eureka, which said recently:

In order to clarify the cautious terminology of the experts, it should be noted that a slowing up of the slowdown is not as good as an upturn in the down curve, but it is a good deal better than either a speedup of the slowdown, or a deepening of the down curve. And it does suggest that the climate is about right for an adjustment to the readjustment.

ILWU Local 18 in February asked Governor Robert Holmes to hold a state-wide conference on unemployment. Subsequently he did call a meeting in Portland to hear proposals for public works that might be eligible for federal spending. A lot of people showed up: mayors, port commissioners, representatives of the the Corps of Army Engineers, the state labor council's legislative director, George Brown, and ILWU's top man in the area, James S. Fantz.

Jebby Davidson, Democratic national committeeman from Oregon and an attorney for the port of Coos Bay, charged that the Oregon coast was in "danger of starving to death while she is 'studied' to death." The Governor, with his briefcase full of specifications for channel dredging, river and harbor development, flood control and an interstate bridge at Astoria, was sure he would be called to Washington soon. He is still in Salem.

The churches, except for the Seventh Day Adventists who have opened a relief depot, seem unaware of the suffering. At a church rummage sale recently, I inquired why the clothing was *sold* instead of *given* to the unemployed. "It costs money to run a church," I was told.

Rev. Whitman, the Methodist minister, blames Moscow for much of the evil in Astoria—not to mention the world. In 1954, he exhorted his Men's Club not to vote for the Satevepost writer, Richard L. Neuburger, who was challenging Oregon's "give-away Senator," Guy Cordon, at the polls, on the grounds that Neuburger was "pinkish."

Elsewhere, Oregon Methodism is more sensitive to the people's needs. Some 120 ministers signed a petition protesting the inhumanities in the Walter-McCarran law (which, in this state, has driven three non-citizens to death by heart failure and one by suicide). When a delegation headed by the Rev. Mark Chamberlin, chairman of the Oregon Committee for Protection of Foreign Born, called at the immigration service's regional office, Roy J. Norene, who was then inspector, growled:

"Why is it the Presbyterians are never up here? It's always you Methodists!"

Another story the non-believers tell on the clergy here concerns a woman who set out to poll local ministers on the subject of peace. After a two-day search, she heard of one "who is said to believe in that."

It is not the custom among many here to have a minister conduct rites over the dead. We turn, instead, to "someone who has understood the struggle of our life with Sea and Shore." Such a speaker was the late A. N. Koskela of Ilwaco, a mighty oak of a man, whom the Finns still think of as their Vainamoinen.

Astoria has 20 "constructed churches," according to the Chamber of Commerce (the list does not include the Jehovah's Witnesses who put no efforts into stained glass windows); from the attendance point of view a survey found us one of the "two most Godless cities in the state."

IN ADDITION to people out of work because of industry closures, Astoria has its share of workers who can't earn because they are blacklisted.

The Coast Guard "screen," which threw so many seamen on the beach in San Francisco and kept some longshoremen off military cargo in several ports, was more or less inoperative here in that the only military dock installation on the Columbia was at Beaver, an ammunition loading-dump (no longer in use) 30 miles up river. It was a standing joke on the "front" that among the 20 or so ILWU members to whom the Coast Guard had denied passes to work on flour (in practice this ukase was never invoked here) were several whom the Army had cleared to load ammo at Beaver. The fishermen voted not to accept screening; the longshoremen, after trying it out for a year, decided it was a fancy name for the blacklist.

The Walter committee lowered the job boom on Julia Ruuttila, a stenographer. She has been unable to work at her trade since she was subpoenaed before a committee hearing in 1956, and branded a "propagandist for the Communist Party" because of an article she had written for a labor news service criticizing the Walter-McCarran law. The article noted that the law was being used in Oregon and other centers of the foreign born to keep naturalized citizens from participating in partisan politics and as a means of "arranging the disappearance of aliens who have no unions to fight for them." (This was substantiated by disclosures following the William Heikkila kidnapping in San Francisco. Mr. Heikkila is a former Oregon resident.)

Then there is Sulu Viinamaki (that isn't his real name) who has been unable to get a job of any sort in Astoria for years. An intellectual

who speaks and writes several languages and whose hobby is semantics. Mr. Viinamaki, now 74, suffers from several ailments and it is difficult for him to get about, but the Navy for no known reason has his name on a posted list of alleged subversives, and he is "out of bounds" to middies in his grandsons' age bracket, at Tongue Point.

This picturesque headland, curving around a sandy cove where the fishermen's union once held its annual picnic and Greek, Slovenian, Scandinavian and Finnish-Americans swam and drank beer on Sundays with their laughter and song floating over the water, was taken over by the Navy in 1942. Commandeered as a base for seaplanes (the only enemy shell to fall on stateside soil during World War II came from a Japanese submarine just off our coast), the cove is now used as a berthing area for inactive vessels in the reserve fleet.

In spite of the barbed wire, there is fraternization between the middies and the younger, female half of our population, with the result that girls who know how to make laxlooda and were born with the spindrift in their hair now live in places where there is neither fish nor fog. But peacetime Tongue Point's main impact upon our lives—aside from the romantic one—is the way it has fed the myths and shibboleths that have turned neighbor against neighbor and helped to keep us in a politically conscious state, one of its most backward counties.

This is not without its humorous side:

Bob Hicks tells a delightful tale about a Navy hitchhiker to whom he once gave a ride. The young fellow had been at the Point for four months, he confided, but this was only his second time off the base. He had been warned by his officers that almost everyone in Astoria was Communist. He finally became so bored that he ventured into the town and even went into a restaurant and ordered a milkshake.

"And did you see any Communists?" asked Hicks, who had decided to pass himself off as a Portlander.

"Why, yes," the young sailor said, "the place was full of them."

"And what do they look like—Communists?"

"That's the funny part! They look just like anybody else."

AS A matter of fact, Clatsop County until two years ago was a GO stronghold; and Astoria is the home of Rep. Walter Norblad, Oregon's Republican hold-out on Capitol Hill.

Organized labor—and I have the word of Chet Dusten, the AFL-CIO organizational director on this—put Norblad into office.

The union officials very soon realized that the District 1 Congressman was representing NAM instead of the fishermen, farmers, lumber and paper workers who were his constituents, but labor continued to ser-

Norblad back to Washington, term after term. During this interval he voted for Taft-Hartley; the draft-strikers' bill; the offshore oil, timberland and civil rights giveaways; and he has supported appropriations running into hundreds of thousands of dollars to keep the witch hunts going.

Norblad's father, A. W. Norblad, a partner in the law firm which represents the Columbia River Packers Assn., was born in Malmo, Sweden. But his son voted for Walter-McCarran over the President's veto and has resisted all pressure from the home county (where until a few years ago, public notices were printed in both Finnish and English, to modify his position.

But it was not until 1954, when AFL, CIO and independent unions in Oregon began working together, that the Congressman's vote began to slip. That was the year labor discovered that less than half of its members eligible to vote were *registered* to vote.

In 1956 ILWU's Matt Meehan issued an expose on Norblad's life and times. This made sensational reading. The Congressman in his youth had attended a swank military academy when his contemporaries were freezing on the 2,000-mile national Hunger March. While a member of the House fisheries committee, he had voted against forcing the pulp companies to clean up the Columbia; against housing; and, although hailing from a lumber state, to take loggers off unemployment insurance. And he had made trip after trip to Europe while the taxpayers in his home countries lacked carfare to get down town and collect their jobless insurance.

The revolt was on. Norblad was reelected, but his margin was pared almost to the rind in most of his counties.

The Budget called the Congressman's rebuff in his home town the "big surprise of the election."

This year—with lumber inventories mounting and the industry on slow bell—the representative from the southern end of the state, Charles O. Porter, has said China trade is essential to solve the economic difficulties of the Pacific Coast. Norblad remains silent.

On the wall of his father's law office on Commercial Street hangs a framed portrait of the Congressman, standing between Madame and General Chiang Kai-shek. It was taken on a tour of our bases in Asia which included stopovers at Formosa and Quemoy.

The Congressman came through the Republican primary this May, "but we'll get him in November," promises Vale McNabb, the 6-foot-2 boomman who is chairman of Astoria's merged labor council, a man so tough it's said he once lugged a bull elk, single handed, out of the Tillamook Burn.

BUT if you look through the knotholes of the economic facade hiding the boarded up storefronts, dismantled mills and abandoned docks in Clatsop County, you will see, as well as the politician who has become a symbol of all that is wrong with Astoria, the real authors of this ruin: the lumber baron with one foot in Canada and the other here; the banking and insurance empire, breaker of strikes by injunction, whose tentacles reach from San Francisco into every aspect of our lives, from the taxes we pay on our homes and the rates stamped on our water bills to our port commission and our surplus labor market, from which they benefit so greatly.

It is probable that in no other area (820 square miles) will you find so many absentee owners looking after their interests—Transamerica, Crown-Zellerbach, General Petroleum, Richfield, Shell, Spokane, Pacific and Seattle Railway, Pillsbury—and so few residents (only 30,776) to look after theirs as in Clatsop County.

Small wonder that while we were celebrating our farm-labor revolt at the polls in 1956, those forces that look after NAM's interests in the lower echelons moved over into our winning party; with the result that a man from our county was seated in the State Senate at Salem who voted—one of only two Democrats doing so—to retain the state's anti-picketing law.

IN SPITE of our revolutionary tradition, we are political innocents, here in Astoria.

How did this happen when the old Socialist Hall in Uniontown was celebrated as a center of cultural and political activity? And what a place it was! Workers from the farms and fishing boats, the green chains, gang saws, fo'c'sles, clambeds, shingle mills, railway sections, logging camps and the canneries and kitchens of the packers gathered there for dances, meetings, card games and to take coffee with each other.

"Yo, it was wonderful in Astoria in those days," says Mary Franze now 72, in her beautiful, clear voice. "Every night I would hurry to the hall to practice for the play. . . ."

But the foreign born were too tired after work to go to the English classes at the high school; they did not acquire citizenship. *Toveri* took a keen interest in the issues of the day like woman suffrage (it did not become a constitutional amendment in Oregon until 1912; single tax and the 8-hour day on public works were on the ballot the same year)—but its readers could not vote. Political power was vested in a tight little clique of Republicans—some of them still running for, and still being elected to, office here.

It was not until 1923, when the Columbia was closed to fishing

aliens, that the foreign born were goaded into going after their papers.

But citizenship had come too late. The Socialist Hall burned in the same year (there were some who said the fire was set); and although another gathering place, Columbia Hall, was built, things were never the same. The people were growing older; and their children, as children will, had rebelled against the folkways; their imperfect English; the lessons learned in the depression; the editorials so carefully clipped out of *Toveri*, and long since given to the paper drive. The second and third generation read *The Astorian Budget* instead of *Tyomies-Eteenpain*.

And now the Wolf has come again, and it is the children who must drive him from the door.

And here we stand, not so much terrified as taken by surprise, clinging helplessly to our seniority and our down payments, while the world as we have known it, with its symbols of attainment—the memberships in the Elks Club, the Jaycees and the Legion—is devoured before our unbelieving eyes.

TWO weeks have passed. In the bogs the swamp buttercups are a carpet of gold; the summer, that was to bring recovery, is upon us. I feel I must recheck my statistics and case histories before mailing my manuscript. . . .

Mr. Anderson and Mr. Heikkila are still missing, but Mr. Grove is working again, one of 30 called back on ship repair. "He doesn't know whether the job's for six months or six weeks, but it came just in time to save us," says young Mrs. Grove.

Torn between belief and disbelief, I open the semi-monthly bulletin from Mrs. Gayley . . . "favorable weather which raised the snow level and dried out the roads has permitted many (logging) operations to become active which have been down since last Fall." My heart misses a beat, but I read on: ". . . 21,400 fewer jobs were available in mid-April than a year ago. These losses are apparent throughout the enonomy."

Only two industries report more jobs than at this time in 1957—canning with 100 more jobs and state and local government, with 3,200 (caseworkers, hired to sift applications for relief and clerks repenciling claims at the unemployment office. I know.)

Mrs. Gayley is a Holmes appointee (Oregon's liberal, labor-backed Democratic governor); she admits that a "strong factor" in the decline of claimants is the benefit exhaustions, coming at the rate of 1,000 a week.

Hardly anyone in Astoria but me reads Mrs. Gayley; and it's a good thing, I think, going into the kitchen to make coffee. They would die of fright. Wondering how much longer my husband, with only 12

years' seniority, will be working, I'm so worried it's all I can do to get the lid off the coffee can.

IN THE midst of our misery we have an outbreak of headlice in the schools. Some of the doctors (they belong to the Chamber of Commerce, and the tourist season is approaching) take issue on the subject with the public health officer. "NITS, OR NOT?" asks *The Budget*, in a page one story. A friend's little girl burst into tears when told she must have her pony tail shaved off. Her mother and I brood gloomily over the equative factor between vermin and unemployment. An ex-logger writes the newspaper, wanting to know, "what all this hulabaloo is about? . . . In the camps we know how to handle these matters. . . . It was one long struggle in those days to *keep eating*—and to *keep from being eaten*."

A nostalgia for the past overcomes me. There were giants in the land in those days. I get out my father's old Wobbly songbook, and read the words he wanted engraved on his headstone: "The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. Between these two classes, a struggle must go on. . . ."

It was so long ago, father. Your world was bounded by one strike, one camp, one mill. And it's not the same world.

It's mid-May, and I haven't mailed the manuscript.

I must go to Wauna and see Donna Blair first. The sawmill there is one of the backlogs of our economy. If it should be running full time. . . .

It isn't, and Donna is in bed. She has had an abortion. Self-induced is the medical terminology. She offers to get up and cook coffee, if I have time to wait. I push her gently but firmly back on the pillow; I will make the coffee myself and slick up the kitchen, too, if I can find the broom.

There is very little coffee left in the can, and I wonder if I should run out and buy some. But this might offend Donna, and I've hardly enough money to get home on the bus. It's 28 miles.

"I feel like I've been run through a knothole," says Donna. She is my oldest friend; I look at her apprehensively, and suddenly it comes to me that she is like the coffee canister, empty of life and hope.

Mrs. Roth was proud of the way the Westporters (200 sawmill workers idled by the closure of the Shepherd-Morse mill 18 months ago) solved their problem "almost as if they'd made jobs for themselves. We saw very few of them in this office." When their unemployment was gone, they moved to Roseburg, the "lumber capital" of our state. But now it's "terrible" in Roseburg, the union officials say. Slow bell; row after row of vacant houses in the new housing projects there; all the men with no seniority laid off. Mrs. Roth doesn't know this, and she doesn't

know about Donna, and 80 others just like her here in Wauna.

Neither does Mrs. Gayley. You're not unemployed, officially, if you're half employed.

Wauna's a company town. The houses belong to the company, and so does the Store. "We'll be in debt for the rest of our lives," says Donna, picking listlessly at the quilt I have tucked around her shoulders. It's cold here when the sun drops below the mountain rim.

Suddenly she is beating with a feeble fist on the coffee tray. "This can't go on. Something's got to give."

I have a few cents left in my purse when I get off the Portland-to-Astoria bus, so I stop in at the Dagoviches (this is not their name) to buy a *People's World*.

"Pulp and paper contract talks stalled until fall," reports the paper. "The employers threw the IWA deep-freeze deal right into our faces," a union delegate is quoted as saying, when he announced that the committee has voted 85-38 to accept the counter-proposal from the Pacific Coast Pulp-Paper Manufacturers' Association."

I grew up in the lumber camps; and the IWA, which lifted me out of a state of virtual serfdom in a company town (the minimum wage there in 1932 was 20 cents an hour), is my first love and, more important, the one economic commitment of my life. The *World* article is more than I can bear; and I rush to the home of a friend who belongs to one of the locals which has turned the wage freeze down.

"Look what you've done," I scream, forgetting it's been years since I've belonged to a lumber local; I'm hardly in a position to criticize the union's strategy today. "You've endangered the whole wage structure!"

My friend reads the article. The sun lines, from the long days on the boom-sticks over the tidal water, deepen around his eyes. "You think we're in shape to pull the whistle?" he asks finally.

"The laborers in heavy construction won a 50 cent package; they were unemployed all winter!"

"They had something to bargain on. The work on the dams had started."

"You're defending the wage freeze?"

He reminds me his local has turned it down. Then he asks if I know the thinking behind the negotiating committee's action. This spring, for the first time in many years, there's no cargo space reserved for Douglas fir on East Coast docks.

I feel my knees turning to water. This is like the cutbacks in auto and steel, basic to a region. My husband belongs to the ILWU, although it's to the warehouse division. Lumber's our main cargo item. Somehow or other, I manage to get home.

A FRIEND has dropped in with word on the Groves. Burt Grove's job didn't last six months or six weeks. It lasted six days. He's used up his 1956 unemployment, and won't be eligible to draw on his '57 benefits until July. They owe two months' rent and two months' utilities. . . .

"What are they going to do!"

"I don't know," I mumble, preoccupied with my own worries. "Can't they get on relief?"

My friend says they can't; they have Burt's brother living with them and they won't put him out.

It is evening and too late to send off the manuscript today. I'll look through the mail which came while I was at Donna's. Mostly unpaid bills . . . but here is a letter from a logger's wife near Butte Falls:

" . . . it is still very bad here (the job situation), but nothing like in Hillsboro and Lebanon where my brothers are. Roy hasn't had a day's work since last Fall. . . . We were in Coquille recently and thought the Circus was in town; it was people coming in to draw their unemployment. . . ."

"Jim just got back from the District 6 convention (held May 17-18 in Medford), and there was a lot said about the unemployment. (About time, I think ungraciously.) Hartung said it was the first time we've had a depression, with prices at the same time going up and up. They passed a resolution to stop the bomb testing. Bruce Bishop (editor of *The Woodworker*) made a wonderful speech. . . ."

I will enclose the second page in a letter to Donna; it will be better than a get-well-quick card.

My husband hands me *The Budget*, and a headline hits me in the face:

"UNION CALLS FISH STRIKE. 1,000 to quit Thursday in 11 canneries!"

ON TOP of all this unemployment, with the town already on the rocks!, wail the newspapers and the merchants. A poor time to strike mutters the non-canning public. "Only a few days left of the fishing season, and no salmon in the river; they've gone over the dams."

They have forgotten the tuna. Two cargoes, the paper says, are coming from Japan.

I rush downtown to look at the women packing the banner in front of CRPA—a sight I never expected to see in this life. It is the cannery's first strike.

At the foot of Alameda Avenue I run into Sophia Palmrose, a woman I've never thought of as knowing anything about *labor* whatsoever. I

fact, she's been down in my book as a weak sister.

She is livid with excitement, and she wants to buy a beer and tell me how she met the fish buyer in Hellberg's and told him off.

"He said if we don't work on the tuna, they'll move the packing away for good; there'll be nothing left in this town but the flour mill. Know what I said to him?"

"No," I mutter, hiding my surprise in my Schlitz.

"I says: they've been singing that song long enough! Holding us down, and running other industry out so they can have us slaving like fools on them concrete floors, and we're sick and tired of it. They can take their damned old tuna and stuff it up their——."

THE executive board of Astoria's United Labor Council has called a meeting to discuss the strike issues. They have invited both UPWA Local 554 and the packers to state their cases; then they'll decide whether to put the combine on the unfair list.

Transamerica in the Labor Temple! "I always knew the Chamber of Commerce was running that bunch," says my old Wobbly friend disgustedly. It'll end up, he predicts, with Local 554, instead of the packers, on the unfair list.

"Oh, I don't know," says Emil Hendrickson, an astute observer of the economic scene at 79. "I think you're in for a surprise." There's new blood in the council, now, he reminds us. "They're merged with CIO."

I can't go to the meeting, much as I would like to. My union card is only an honorary one these days. How will I live through the night—and all day tomorrow, not knowing what happened until *The Budget* comes out? But I don't have to endure the suspense. My phone rings at midnight, and a cannery worker screams in my ear: "They're on the dirty list, the packers are on the dirty list!"

I expect to find front page denunciation of the action in *The Budget*, but the account is strangely subdued.

In addition to the packers, the labor group's executive board and UPWA, a delegation showed up from the independent longshoremen. (The cannery workers at one time were affiliated to ILWU, then they were raided away by CIO.) "Boy, was we glad to see them longshoremen!" is the story I hear over and over. And: "They're being there was sure a surprise to the Combine!"

One of the tuna ships has arrived. UPWA has refused the packers' plea that it be unloaded and placed in cold storage, and it has been "diverted to an unknown destination," according to *The Budget*.

"There was only 50 tons of tuna abroad; it was mostly loaded with canned crab," a cannery worker tells me over the phone.

She keeps her spy glass trained on Pier I, and she tells me the crab has been unloaded, but "it sure took a long time," and now it's just sitting there on the palette boards.

"There were Coast Guards as thick as sand fleas around the gang plank," she continues.

They were to keep the crew from coming ashore. This is another story, but an interesting one. The ship had been in a "restricted area" before sailing to Japan for the fish.

"Restricted area?"

"Yo," she says impatiently. "Too close to the China coast, or maybe in some port there." It was a Norwegian ship, and Norway is trading with China.

The story's all over town. The Coast Guard thinks Communism can come down the rope hawsers like the rats do. Ha, ha on the Coast Guard. What's subversive wasn't the crew, it was the tuna; and we kept the tuna from landing, ha, ha, ha!!

The Bakke is reported to "have sneaked up river" with its hot cargo. What's happened to the other tuna ship that was due to cross the bar no one seems to know.

In spite of the unemployment, there's a new atmosphere in Astoria. You can sense it the minute you step a foot out the door. All the old legends about the packers are revived, and retold with suitable embellishments: How CRPA took those injunctions on PCFU and CRFPU. What the packers and the immigration did in Alaska; they tried to deport Local 7 out of the country. How Tule Thompson gave money to help frame Bridges, and Sandoz kept 700 gillnetters waiting all day in a meeting while he played golf.

"Let him golf himself out of this one!"

It won't last, of course. All strikes are like this in the beginning. Hope is shared with the coffee in the picket shack; the banners are held up proudly in the rain. Then the employers start from inside to break the strike. . . . I know, how well I know! And it's beginning, it's already beginning here:

"They're saying our strike vote was illegally taken!"

But in spite of rumors and stories, the strike goes on. It seems, somehow, to have injected new life into the dying town.

They can't win, I keep telling myself; they don't have the fishermen. The season is closed, again, on the river; but the trollers are taking their catches to Westport (Wash.); the draggers are converting to shrimp. As for the tuna—who are these women to think they can stop an 11-state banking empire from getting it canned elsewhere under the Bumble Bee brand?

What if the impossible did happen, and these embattled women did win their 7½ cents and their paid holidays? It might draw the shermen back into the union; and topple the political dynasty that has ruled this end of the state for 30 years.

But I am an old woman; I've lived through the rise and fall of the WW, the CIO, the Great Depression, two world wars, and Roosevelt, who was followed by Truman and Eisenhower. This strike won't put the team back in the river sawmills; or take any Strontium 90 out of our river plankton.

It would take more than a strike to save Astoria.

I find that I, the exile from the sunny, inland valley, have come to love this town, lost in the overcast under the rain-dark peaks. I don't want it to die.

TODAY is Memorial Day, Friday, May 30, 1958. I lay aside the manuscript, which I am revising, to go to Greenwood.

The inscription on the stones are testimony that Astorians of 20, 30 and 40 years ago were searching for solutions, even as we are searching for them today. Blackberry vines wander over the graves, and the grass cut only for Decoration Day; the Chamber of Commerce is not likely to route you to Greenwood.

But go there, if you can find the way, and note the insignia over the bones of men who read Daniel DeLeon; the scrolls lovingly inscribed "One who understood the working class" and to "Our Comrade" (dust Emanuel Pickmosa, early-day organizer of the Communist Party of Oregon, this). And place a branch of white bloom from the rowan tree the English-speaking people call mountain ash upon the old, old stone that marks the grave of the Social-Democratic leader, Maria Raunio—member of the Finnish Diet at a time when women in Oregon could not even vote.

I sit at my typewriter again, recalling the legends of the past. But what is the past but the play itself, or is it prologue?

The answer lies hidden in the mistral, blowing in this afternoon from the chill, slopping swells of the Pacific. Already the fog has encircled the net racks, the shed where the loggers hang up their tin hats, and the saw mill where—although it is Saturday—men with seniority are packing flour for International Distributors in Manila.

The young men who have never had a job are on their way home from the longshore hall. Already—so early in the day—the taverns are full of the unemployed. If you are down to your last two bits, you might as well blow it for beer and have good company in which to curse out the Republicans.

The goldbraid from the Point, one or two country officials and barrister from the law office facing the vacant store fronts have taken refuge from the weather in the Elks Club bar. It is very cozy there on the rye on rocks, and they motion for the tall young man and his shadow from the security office to join them. These are the payrolls that seem to go on and on, no matter who else is jobless.

Outside in the overcast, the town's two leading dissenters are abreast with their papers and leaflets. They have serious political differences, but when they meet they stop and exchange greetings. One is a blacksmith but in his neat dark hat and overcoat he looks like a preacher or college professor. The other, wearing a leather jacket and with his head bent to the freshening breeze, looks like what he is—a worker.

"Well, I see you are on your rounds again," one says to the other.

"You, too, Toveri!"

In their tiny soapstone gardens, clinging to the cliffs along Alameda Avenue, the cannery women move, wraith-like, among the peonies. There is vitality in the voices with which they call to the two workers trudging up the hill from the picket line:

"How goes it today, our strike?"

The hill is steep here, and the two pause for breath before reporting that the tie-up is solid. Chinese, Filipino, Slav, Greek, Norwegian, Swedish-Finn, Mannerheim Finn, Columbia Hall Finn, plain American Finn, and descendant of the Yankee first settler—*no one* went through the lines today.

"Se mennee. All right. Is good!"

On a bench outside the Karhuvaara Hotel, the old-timers sit and watch the oncoming storm.

POSTSCRIPT

The strike of 1,000 cannery workers in Astoria, Warrenton, Hammond in Oregon and Ilwaco on the Washington side of the Columbia, ended in victory June 3 when the packers agreed to a 30-hour general wage increase plus a paid holiday (the first they had ever had) on Labor Day.

The wage boost, with the cost of living increase provided in the escalator clause of the union contract, ups the base pay in the canneries from \$1.56 to \$1.66 cents an hour. The strike lasted 11 days.

PARIS LETTER

RENAUD DE JOUVENEL

WHILE de Gaulle's coup d'état came as a most disagreeable surprise to a great many people, it is no secret that it had been prepared a long while back.

It is French reaction's answer to the threat of a new Popular Front, which stood a good chance of lasting once it was cemented. Then no hand could have turned the clock back. Europe would have been lost to those who consider it their private property. Imagine the fearful prospect: John Foster Dulles mortified; the A and H bombs dismantled, so that they could no longer menace the human race. This is not just fantasy. It is what might have happened had France taken her destiny into her own hands, and invited Uncle Sam's boys to leave, taking with them their whale-like cars and military luggage. How relieved we would have been, as Mr. Nixon should know from his glorious South American tour.

To avert this eventuality, reaction put into motion the machinery of the coup d'état, to strangle republican liberties and to install some sort of fascist set-up. For there are all kinds of fascism, and the rulers of each country adapt it as they see fit.

If reaction was fearful of the Popular Front, it was obsessed by memories of the Resistance. Americans know little of that period of our national life. Many seem to imagine that de Gaulle was its uncontested chief and that he fought against the Nazis with all his might; that is to say, that he directed our forces. That is not true. The Resistance in France fought the Nazis by sabotage and in open, progressively greater battles *despite* the orders from London, leading London more than it was led by it. As a matter of fact, de Gaulle was not pleased to see the importance assumed by this people's army on the soil of France. Who knows but that it might become the core of a professional army? That is why it received only a very small part of the arms parachuted behind the German lines. These went to others—who did not always fight the Nazis. The policy of boycotting and frustrating the home-front Resistance continued during and after the Liberation. All the self-control and

patriotic will-power of its members were required to keep up their fighting spirit. And this at a time when we were far from rich in troops.

In the first flush of victory, the Communists, the real leaders of the most active combat units of the Resistance, took part in the government. They proposed and saw to it that numerous social reforms were put into effect (which de Gaulle now has the cheek to claim as his personal gift to the nation). Then the Communists were forced out of the cabinet, and the governments which followed proceeded to nullify the effect of the sentences passed upon collaborators, or even to cancel the sentences themselves. In this way an anti-Resistance was created. All those who had escaped the gallows or had been freed before their terms (and not for good conduct!), all the friends of Petain and Hitler, the spies, provocateurs, torturers, those who supervised the deportation of Frenchmen to forced labor and concentration camps—all these traitors and mercenaries began to reform their ranks.

The plot ripened secretly from year to year. It was not hatched in the small fascist outfits, noisy and visible to the naked eye, but in the dark of cabinets, where a minister here and there quietly stuffed the army, navy, and the police with fascists, eliminating the republicans and substituting trusted hirelings of reaction.

As you know, the Algerian war and the consequent political crisis in Algiers brought matters to a head. Either one could call a halt to the war, and the colonial millionaires would have to pack their bags; or the government would yield to the *colons*, wade deeper in blood and abandon all hope of peace.

So we had a succession of cowardly and rudderless governments, haunted by fear of a Popular Front, pursuing the worst policy, namely that of having none at all, and calling for guidance upon their guardian angels, Dulles and Eisenhower. No wonder those who had dreamt of murdering the Republic for fourteen years were hopeful.

LET me emphasize this; the day the *colons* rose up in Algiers, nothing was lost. The demonstration of the 400,000 in Paris proved that. Here was a symbolic show of force attended by members and representatives of all the republican parties. A few hundred Campagnes Républicaines de Sécurité—a sort of national militia—could have tamed the *colons*, as Jules Moch, then Minister of the Interior, confessed a few days ago. A government truly committed to the defense of the Republic would have arrested a few generals and overwrought politicians; dismissed a few prefects, admirals and colonels; and order would have been restored. Since the majority of the army was republican in its sympathies, a few thousand rioters were no problem. It is an indisputable fact that

the threat from North Africa began as a disorganized uproar, whose initiators did not believe in their own success even after they had occupied Government House in Algiers. It was the government's weakness which gave them heart. Then something unique in our history happened. A Premier betrayed the nation's mandate and was supported in his treason by the President of the Republic. They called in de Gaulle and the first step toward dictatorship was taken.

We have no illusions. De Gaulle has always been a proponent of concentrated personal power. Fascism is taking shape in his shadow. Perhaps he may not continue to hold the sword himself. Although he is a front-man for practically all the great French banks, as well as for the worst war-mongers of Algiers—as is evidenced by the membership of his cabinet—the ultra-fascists may find him unsatisfactory. Then a younger, even more dedicated fascist general will replace him. But should he stay, it will be to cover for all the crimes of fascism, just as Petain covered for all the Hitlerite crimes: arrests, tortures, deportations.

I do not say that this will happen. I am no prophet. I only say that it may happen if the Republic is not saved.

It can be saved. The republicans are by far more numerous than the reactionaries. The Communist Party, largest in the country, is gaining ground daily in spite of the lies told and the acts of violence perpetrated against it; its voting strength represents the will of about a fourth of the electorate. The Left-oriented General Confederation of Labor has the support of from 70 to 90 percent of the workers' votes in the majority of the nation's shops and factories. Our people's level of political development is the highest of any capitalist country's. Our intellectuals are progressives for the most part and often members of progressive organizations. Here the most politically conscious republicans and anti-fascists find themselves face to face with a bourgeoisie unsurpassed in its organization and cunning.

IN INVITING de Gaulle to take over, some people claim to have wanted to avoid a civil war which would have been inevitable in the event of a Popular Front government's coming to power. So they say. But there would have been no danger then of civil war—unless there were foreign intervention to provoke it (recently, that is how civil wars seem to start). But now the situation and its consequences have greatly increased that peril.

At this point, Committees for the Defense of Republican Liberties are being organized everywhere. Never have so many and such diverse people thrown themselves into the struggle.

In my part of Paris, which is a kind of home ground for the intel-

lectuals, the local defense committee includes members of every republican party, men of every profession and of every religion, writers, actors, painters, everyone. The fight waged by these committees and by the working class will weigh heavily in the near future.

I imagine that, as American readers, you want to know something of the stand taken by people like Sartre, Mauriac, Simone de Beauvoir, Maurois, Camus, Aragon, Picasso, Cocteau, and other intellectuals.

I shall try to give you a picture of their position in my next letter.

M. de Jouvenel is a well-known French novelist, critic, and political writer. He has also translated the works of contemporary American authors.

TRIOLETS OF SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

BARROWS DUNHAM

- (1) *The Life of the Intellectual*
A morsel of cheese
Is the worst of temptations.
Place it down where you please,
That morsel of cheese
To a mouse on his knees
Is the wealth of the nations.
That's why morsels of cheese
Are the worst of temptations.
- (2) *The Card Carrier*
I carried a card,
But I never got mention.
It's outrageously hard;
I carried a card,
But I never once jarred
The slightest attention.
So, why carry a card,
If you never get mention?
- (3) *The Former Member*
I'm excessively ex,
And repentance assails me.
Regardless of sex,
I'm excessively ex—
Here, give me those cheques
Or my memory fails me!
I can be an ex-ex,
When repentance assails me.

(4) *Principle of Individuation*

I didn't know Rose
 In the way I knew Susie.
 But that's how it goes:
 I didn't know Rose
 In her old-fashioned clothes
 Would behave like a floosie.
 I didn't know Rose
 In the way I knew Susie.

(5) *Psychiatry*

When a man takes a wife,
 What he wants is a mother.
 There's plenty of strife
 When a man takes a wife:
 Here, throw out that knife,
 Because poison's less bother,
 When a man takes a wife
 While wanting a mother.

THE MODERNIST

My love is a Picasso,
 Two-faced but one at heart:
 She needs no line or lasso,
 She captivates by Art.

For when I kiss her side face,
 Her wide face murmurs, "Dear!"
 And when I kiss her wide face,
 Her side face bites my ear.

And when I seek her bosoms
 In our erotic games,
 I find them in her shoes'—
 Which isn't true of dames

Traditionally fathered,
 Legitimate of line.

I think my love was gathered
Together by design.

The question takes more thinking
Than I am master of.
(My dear, your hip is sinking!)
It's Art, but is it love?

THE DOUBTFUL POET TO HIS POEM

Are you an arrow?
Are you a bomb?
Are you a narrow
Bardical tomb?

Are you an ocean?
Are you a fire?
Are you the motion
Of a desire?

Are you a falcon
Fleet among birds?
Are you a welcome
Shower of words?

Are you a cherub,
Smiling, divine?
But this is the rub:
Are you all mine?

CONTEMPORARY VERSES

ONE THIRD OF A NOTION

Now the Princess P was loved by three,
But in an age of conformity
How could she tell A or B from C?

Where each was the equal of every other
(And each amounted to a third of a man)
Straightway went the wedding plan:
She married them all one, two, three
And never overstepped monogamy.

EVE MERRIAM

A MODERN MIRACLE

The best of reliable sources,
the blind who are leading the blind,
remind us of horrible forces
besetting the best of mankind.

Remarkable chaps in Vienna
reporting from Istanbul
relay via Spanish antenna
the latest from China by Seoul.

Peking, which is next to Holland,
is starving, in ruins, in rack,
says a verified code from New Zealand
translating a code from Iraq.

Out of Saigon a rumor from Munich
confirmed by our sailors on leave
records how depressives go manic
from Murmansk to Yalta to Kiev. . . .

GEORGE HANLIN

ASK A FOOLISH QUESTION

ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN

TWO of our leading reviewers, Brooks Atkinson of the *New York Times* and John Ciardi of the *Saturday Review* have given unqualified praise to Archibald MacLeish's *J.B.*,* a drama in verse based on the Book of Job, which is already scheduled to represent the United States University Theatre at the Brussels World Fair in August.

Strangely, these two enthusiasts, both mature and competent critics, are in diametric disagreement as to the theme of the play which evokes so ecstatic a response from them.

For Ciardi the play is a repudiation of God, and asserts a defiant humanist atheism. For Atkinson it is a deeply felt affirmation of religious faith and submission.

Under the flattering title "Birth of a Classic" Ciardi says, in the *Saturday Review* of March 8, 1958:

And Job triumphs in understanding at last that he needs no forgiveness. Instead he bows his head in its insignificance and forgives God. His triumph is that he need feel guilty no longer: what is monstrous is not of his doing and can therefore be borne. He does not think again of his own great line, "God is unthinkable if we are innocent," but it is there to be thought, and its implications are clear. The final position is humanism, and humanism is man-centered.

And Atkinson, with the heading "Big Epic of Mankind Staged at Yale," says in the *New York Times* of April 24, 1958:

J. B. is staggered by this awful parade of catastrophes that seem to have no relevance to his personal life. Satan is certain that sooner or later he will curse God. Although J. B. listens to the professional cant of politicians, preachers and medicinemen, who have glib answers, he is not impressed. He grieves and rails. But he reiterates that the Lord giveth and the Lord

* *J.B.*, by Archibald MacLeish. Houghton Mifflin Co. \$3.50.

taken away, and in the end he adds that magnificent phrase of moral submission: "Blessed be the name of the Lord."

I think MacLeish may well be equally pleased with both reviews, and not simply because both are equally favorable. Far more important, each of these two answers to the question of God's existence as it is posed in the play equally assumes that it is still, in William James' phrase, a "live question," and that its significance is to be found in its own terms of a solitary man confronting the universe, rather than in the emphasis on social responsibility which emphasis on a rational atheism or agnosticism has historically implied.

Formally the play does, I think, merit the admiration which has been lavished upon it. The verse is easy, varied and frank; it is well adapted to a speaking voice and carries the action forward while commenting upon it, as a drama must do. The two major actors, Mr. Zuss (Zeus) and Mr. Nickels (old Nick himself), maintain a nice balance between their human and symbolic selves; and the devil is a particularly sympathetic spokesman for those angry doubts and indignant remonstrances which readers of the book of Job have always had to express—or stifle.

While following the biblical text with detailed fidelity MacLeish has managed, largely through the between-episodes controversy of Zuss and Nickels, to arouse real suspense as to J.B.'s story and (perhaps less legitimately) as to his own intention in retelling it.

Curiously the concrete incidents chosen to carry this story out in 20th century America seem, from the very beginning, subtly but deliberately selected to develop a theme of which the author is, apparently, never conscious!

In the opening scene—a Thanksgiving dinner of unostentatious but luxurious over-sufficiency (two skilled waitresses and a cook in attendance on the family of seven, for example)—J.B. shows his love for wife and children as well as for good living, and his complete unconsciousness of any other responsibilities than those of personal kindness and a charitable bestowal of the crumbs from his table. He opposes his wife's realistic fear that so much good luck is unlikely to continue, and her superstitious feeling that less enjoyment of the present would help ward off future ill fortune.

Arguing his faith in God's continuing love and protection J.B. comments on the envy of defeated competitors who cannot understand that this beatitude is more than accident. He says:

Not for a watch-tick have I doubted
God was on my side, was good to me.

Even young and poor I knew it.
People called it luck: it wasn't.
I never thought so from the first
Fine silver dollar to the last
Controlling interest in some company
I couldn't get—and got. It isn't
Luck.
It isn't luck when God is good to you.
It's something more.

Listening to this pragmatic religion one assumes that MacLeish is, despite all the sensuous expansiveness of the scene, illustrating something like George Eliot's judgment:

'Tis a vile life that like a garden pool
Lies stagnant in the round of personal loves;
.
A miserable, petty, low-roofed life,
That knows the mighty orbit of the skies
Through nought save light or dark in its own cabin.

This assumption is not invalidated by the somewhat disarming Shavian trick Macleish plays in the next scene (and repeatedly thereafter) of himself so harshly expressing our criticism of his protagonist that we are simultaneously relieved and impelled to protest the severity. In all fairness we cannot help wanting to make some remonstrances when, in reply to Nickels' exaggerated statement:

. . . this world-master,
This pious, flatulent, successful man
Who feasts on turkey and thanks God!—
He sickens me!

Zuss makes only the worse than senseless rejoinder:

Of course he sickens you,
He trusts the will of God and loves—

While this temporarily neutralizes McLeish's dissident audience it also seems to verify our belief in his awareness of the social connotations to his story. These are rapidly developed through the specific accidents which befall poor J.B. and his family.

The oldest soldier son is killed in pointless maneuvers at the end of

a war which has otherwise mightily increased J.B.'s prosperity. A second son and daughter are destroyed, together with a careful of other young people, by the drunken driving of one of the group. The youngest child is raped and murdered by a moronic nineteen year old pervert. One would think that no writer could have planned this series of misfortunes without intending to hint the truth expressed in the well known P.T.A. credo: "No child is safe until every child is safe."

But apparently the obvious moral of his story never even impinged on MacLeish's consciousness. For the last third of the play—after J.B.'s property is destroyed and his oldest daughter is killed by an aerial bombardment which may, conceivably, also have caused his loathsome skin disease—is devoted to the fruitless search for a justification of God's act in the sufferer's personal guilt.

During the course of this quest his wife, Sarah, angrily denounces his desperate anxiety to prove God right, and leaves him when he persists in setting faith above truth and reason. She says:

I will not stay here if you lie—
 Connive in your destruction, cringe to it:
 Not if you betray my children . . .
 I will not stay to listen . . .

They are
 Dead and they were innocent: I will not
 Let you sacrifice their deaths
 To make injustice justice and God good!

When he answers, "I have no choice but to be guilty," she cries out:

We have the choice to live or die,
 All of us . . .
 curse God and die . . .

He persists:

We have no choice but to be guilty.
 God is unthinkable if we are innocent.

Whereupon she rushes out.

But despite the dignity and power of her humanism she has no more idea than J.B. himself that there may be some third alternative more adequate than either God's injustice, or J.B.'s deserving punishment, to explain the catastrophic course of events.

The next scene, with the traditional Job's comforters translated into a

distasteful trio of broken-down evangelist, psychologist and radical, further develops the argument about guilt or innocence, still omitting any real consideration of the social context which might make it meaningful today.

All three figures: the fundamentalist obsessed by original sin, the Freudian by the oedipus complex, and the radical by an absurdly mechanistic history, are of course deliberately caricatured. But the latter two are also inadvertently and ignorantly distorted, since the horrified revulsion at sex impulses which MacLeish attributes to the psychologist is as flatly misleading as is the idolatrous worship of history he attributes to his radical, who is further parodied as spouting a burlesque of mechanical, not dialectical materialism.

The naiveté of these misrepresentations is indicated by such explicit passages as the psychiatrist's unprofessional assertion:

. . . At our
Beginning, in the inmost room,
Each one of us, disgusting monster
Changed by the chilling moon to child,
Violates his mother.

Equally out of character for the "park-bench orator" is his conclusion:

You may be guiltier than Hell
As History counts guilt and not
One smudging thumbprint on your conscience.
Guilt is a sociological accident:
Wrong class—wrong century—
You pay for your luck with your licks, that's all.

Since, however, MacLeish is not naive, we are here again confounded by the determined refusal to consider the question of guilt, or responsibility, in any significant contemporary context. This is the same deliberate blindness which wilfully and inexplicably ignored the pattern of social causation underlying the individual accidents of death through army maneuvers, a drunken joy ride, an uncared-for-degenerate, and an air raid.

Since it is impossible for an answer to be more meaningful than the problem it solves, we cannot expect a logical resolution of the question posed by the play. It is true that the Book of Job provides no satisfactory answer either, but presumably MacLeish was induced to rewrite it by the belief that his interpretation could provide one. Finally the action of the drama is resolved in a highly emotional climax, altogether ir-

relevant to its central problem, but satisfying to most audiences in its unexpected "happy ending" and its affirmation of man's vitality and unquestionable will to live.

Sarah, who has intended suicide, is arrested by the beauty of a few forsythia leaves beginning to bud amidst the rubble that was their home, and she and J.B., having learned nothing but the indifference of the universe, begin life together again with a determination to rely on personal love rather than religion or thought this time. This makes a stirring last act curtain, but it was no failure of such personal love that caused Job's tribulations, and J.B. already knew at the opening of the play that "To be, become, and end are beatiful."

What he did not know, and what neither he nor MacLeish has learned throughout the play, is that no man liveth to himself alone—and no man dieth to himself alone. The whole of which we are each a part must extend further than the boundary marked by ties of blood or the shadow of our own rooftop. Hillel, a wiser man than Job, said: "If I am not for myself, who is for me? But if I am only for myself, what am I?" And Brecht, a wiser man than MacLeish, added: "In these times only those questions which can be answered are worth asking."

NO HARD FEELINGS

BARBARA GILES

RETURNING from a visit to the Deep South, an acquaintance of ours finds herself baffled when attempting to describe the "moderate" position in the integrationist struggle: "Ellen Sue and Caroline Lee tell me together that I don't understand Southern feelings, which are 'naturally' against letting Negro children sit in school with white kids, and that there will be chaos and horror if the law is enforced 'while people still feel that way.' Later on, in the kitchen, Ellen Sue confides to me that she thinks 'all the fuss' against integration has been whipped up by people who 'never learned any better' and that she, personally, is all in favor of 'trying it out.' She asks me not to repeat this to Caroline Lee, who is her friend and 'feels so strongly on the subject.' The next day Caroline Lee gets me aside and explains her *real* position, which is that, speaking for herself, she is all for integration and the sooner it comes the better. Seems she couldn't speak out before Ellen Sue, who is one of her best friends but talks a good deal and might 'spread it all around' against her." Our acquaintance said she had encountered similar situations more than once during her visit. "I suppose," she concluded sadly, "that these are what the editorials describe as 'the people of decent instincts' "—courage not included.

* * *

Memories of France, 1956, to which we hold at this time: the "*Paix en Algérie!*" slogans painted on bridges and walls; the signs on the roads directing one not to the best hotels, the best restaurants, or any gasoline stations, but to the best art exhibits; and the exhibits themselves, that of Picasso's incomparable work occupying an entire castle at Cap d'Antibes; the square named for Gabriel Peri in the town where we stopped for lunch; the copies of *l'Humanité* on the newstands in Paris, in the hands of people on the streets and in the cafés and subways; and the fresh flowers on the graves of Resistance fighters with the placards, "From those who do not forget."

* * *

In Carcassonne, that unbelievably medieval walled city on a hill in

Southern France, tourists may take the Inquisition Walk or they may—as few do—stroll around the unadvertised back streets, where twentieth-century man lives in thirteenth-century dwellings unflawed by anachronisms like plumbing. On the terrace of the ancient hotel with completely modern interior, dinner is served between the stars and the lights of the “new city” far below, after which the Americans put away their cans of Nescafé, get out their scrabble boards, and exchange animated notes on the heat of the day, the high price of gasoline, and the oddity of naming streets “Victor Hugo.” At the table next to ours a young wife who has gaily proclaimed a number of times already that the Inquisition Walk certainly tortured her *feet*—a *bon mot* which, one guesses, will carry her through the coming social season back home—proclaims it again and is admonished with rival gaiety by another wife to be glad she didn’t walk on the back streets, an inquisition too, really: “The smells! And the people! A whole family in rags, positively, and even the dog looking starved! . . .” There is some head-shaking, and the first young woman, turning sweet and thoughtful, remarks that she’s thankful you never see things like that in America. Their husbands interrupt, insisting they pay attention to the game, and the sociological angles of “doing Europe” are forgotten for the evening.

* * *

When the original movie made from *Farewell to Arms* was revived somewhere around 1940, the audience laughed at the hip-waisted dresses and cloches but wept at the death scene. Since the hip-waists and cloches are back upon us, there is still less excuse for the brand-new, superbly tinted, giant-screen production with the same title starring Rock Hudson, who is much too pretty to carry a gun, and Jennifer Jones, who is much too cute to be anything else. Called upon to act valiant, tender, and tragic, they romp over reels of war-stained Italian landscape and Alpine snow with a tears-under-laughter gaiety that would sate an addict of soap opera. During the famous death scene we stole a glance around the audience—as far as we could see, there wasn’t a moist eye in the place. Instead of human feeling the director had provided “dramatic” clinical details of labor in childbirth, while other sequences concentrated on the newest movie gimmick, the travelogue effect—long stretches of beautifully reproduced, authentic scenery, all seeded with Hollywood cliché.

We’re not completely ungrateful. A good travelogue is after all something where otherwise nothing might be, and once in a B-product (whose title we forget) some shots of Roman ruins in the Sahara almost compensated for those of Sophia Loren’s lost, bedraggled remains being smeared over the desert sands. But the superb camera portrayals of M

England couldn't redeem *Peyton Place*—probably nothing could—and when it comes to supposedly serious film-making, we'd rather have the old uncolored, even silent versions than to wait apprehensively for a voice at the end announcing, "So now we say farewell to beautiful arms. . . ."

* * *

We are now in a position to tell you a little about that thing called "togetherness." It is not a word. Neither Webster's nor the Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (2,515 pages) has any mention of it. As a forced addition to the vocabulary it ranks among the coyest and most irritating of its kind, rivaling the current semantics of official Washington which invents "bottoming out" recessions and "peaking up" costs of living. We should have preferred to ignore it but its persistent use, with absence of specific meaning, nagged at us. (Together with whom? When? For what purpose?) Now comes a full page newspaper ad stating explicitly that togetherness is a term "practically invented by *McCall's* . . . and adopted by *Macy's*." Also, it is something that "you don't weigh in at the airport." Nor, we read further, can you "check it through a train or a bus," and you don't need room for it in the car. All right, so what is it? Well, it's like when the whole family goes on vacation trips at the same time in the same vehicle—traveling as comfortably as possible with *Macy's* lightweight luggage and drip-dry clothes, purchased by said family in one big, picnic-like shopping spree—because it's more *fun* that way. So there you have it: a non-word with some intangible connotations but not so elusive as we had thought. You can't hang it on the wall, you can't weight it in at the airport, but you can always buy it at *Macy's*. Just ask for the drip-dry garments department.

* * *

"Compassion," on the other hand, is an unquestioned member-in-good-standing of the English language, but we've never been much taken by it—too vague and mushy as compared with "sympathy" or even "pity"—and our liking has not been increased by the way the book reviewers have used it for several years now. A novel lacking "compassion" is nothing; while a novel in which a *soupçon* of it can possibly be detected gets at least a passing grade. One can understand why, of course, Confronted with a more-or-less typical modern novel peopled by characters you wouldn't care to meet in the dark and featuring a hero who may himself be a monster or may simply be incapable of stirring his stumps enough to cope with anything more menacing than the common house fly—what is a reviewer to do? He can't be old-fashioned enough, in the

literary sense, to hold that this bleak and bitter view of the human race might be unjustified; or priggish enough to declare that the characters of perverts, cheats, and murderers repel him. Neither, on the other hand, can he declare openly that he sympathizes with them; while pity might imply condescension for people who don't understand the proud and lonely workings of Original Sin. But how about "compassion," an encompassing, not-too-committal word, lacking the bluntness of its alternatives? It doesn't compare with "ambiguity" or "levels of meaning" in smartness but at least it's not so old as Original Sin, though it may begin to appear so to the reader. At times it even seems less original.

* * *

From our living room we get a good view of the sky, we hear the sea gulls as they fly inland, while from many streets the sounds of a great city float up unobstructed and clear, and on a still summer night with the windows open the alert ear can quickly learn to distinguish gunshots from firecrackers or dynamite. The people of our neighborhood are "mixed," probably none of them socially akin to the tribes of Park and Fifth Avenues whose totem is the mink, but many who worship the black Persian lamb, though many more must settle for sheep or less. In a fruit-and-vegetable store crowded with black-furred matrons occurs the tritest scene in city life: a starved-looking child snatching for an apple or orange from the crates on the sidewalk. The store's owner dashes out, chases the criminal, and storms back declaring that he can't understand *why* "those kids want to *take* things." Unexpectedly a customer speaks up: "They are hungry. That's why." The proprietor immediately changes his tone: oh, he wouldn't mind, he wouldn't mind in the least giving them something, indeed he'd be glad to, if only they would *ask* him for it. Sighing and rocking, the matrons take up the refrain: ah, if they would ask; that's just the trouble with some people, they'd rather steal than ask. . . . As if on cue, a second child appears—can she have heard the chorus?—and says, "Mister, can I have an apple or something?" For a moment the owner goes stiff, as do the customers. Then he pinches off a twig with three grapes and hands it over, pushing the suppliant slightly in the same gesture. She goes off. They for whom the lambs are slaughtered glance briefly at each other with covert smiles of appreciation and amusement. Then one of them quickly takes up the refrain again and the others join in: no one need starve, no one need steal; would that the poor could all learn this simple lesson—if they would ask, if only they would ask.

* * *

The fact is, even if you lived on Park or Fifth Avenue and never

ventured therefrom, you might learn something about the hunger of children from—of all places—the ads. Placed in one of America's shiniest magazines, among displays of \$12,000 bracelets and \$20,000 necklaces, a single column every month informs readers that in Greece "little Maria lives in a packing case"; in France little Jeannine's daddy "was drafted to serve in Algeria" and her mother can't provide sufficient food for her; while in West Germany little Heide is dangerously undernourished because her mother, who made a "nightmare escape from behind the Iron Curtain," earns such pitifully small wages. The reader may "sponsor" one such human relic of hot and cold war for as little as ten dollars a month through the Save the Children Federation—surely no impossible sum for those on the magazine's subscription list who may be shocked and embarrassed by this printed evidence that the kids of Europe's "free world" cannot live on liberty alone. And for potential contributors who possibly have prejudices against "foreign aid" of all kinds, there is an American youngster available: little Billy Eagle Wing, a resident of an Indian reservation, who is making his "last stand against the poverty and misery that surround him and darken his future." This one is offered at a bargain—only eight dollars—with his inheritance of a "glorious tradition" presumably thrown in free. Which tradition? That of a once truly proud and free people now cut down and confined as second-class citizens in the "poverty and misery that surround" them? Or the "American" one which holds that needy children don't exist if a relative few of them can be conspicuously "taken care of" as occasion for pandhandling by the rich?

* * *

Overheard: Clerk in stationery-lending library store, putting down phone, "Send a mystery novel up to Mrs. H. Her mother died last night." Woman talking to another on street corner, "But it does seem to me she should have the right to *think* about what she wants." Man to small boy at Hayden Planetarium, "Yes, I know they had the Sputnik first—but do you think you could get into one of *their* planetariums for less than a dollar?"

* * *

If a writer could be promised that some years after his death his book would be rediscovered, revived and discussed all over again, would his only reaction be joy at the foretaste of immortality; or would he feel a little bitter perhaps that it would all come too late for the real benefits to reach him? One thing at least we think he has a right to ask—that in the enthusiastic digging up of his good works, the poor ones remain

decently interred with his bones. These reflections arise after reading *Afternoon of an Author*, a new collection of some stories and essays by F. Scott Fitzgerald (Chas. Scribner's Sons. \$4.50), selected by Fitzgerald's biographer, Arthur Mizener, who has provided an introduction to each item in the volume as well as to the whole.

Resurrected thus to a suggestion of trumpets, the writings seem even paler than they might otherwise. Let's face it: it's simply not true, as Fitzgerald's fans claim, that "he couldn't write badly if he tried." He couldn't, or at least didn't, use a stylistic cliché and apparently never had to cope with the problem of awkwardness. But he could and did write near-trash, as no one knew better than he, when it was more urgent to pay his bills than to use time and painful discipline for a novel like *Tender Is the Night* or a short story like "May Day." Mr. Mizener has dug up three more of the prep-school Basil Lee stories, where one would have been more than enough to recall Booth Tarkington, and three concerning a comic-strip Hollywood writer called Pat Hobby, besides a few shallow essays and some thin, wistful tales of lost people and lost illusions—nothing with the sort of social reportage and comment implicit in Fitzgerald's serious work.

It is one thing to reintroduce the flesh and blood of a writer's best creations to a later decade, another to pick at skeletons for "more." And isn't it time that this decade—so like Fitzgerald's yet so unlike—provided some literary flesh and blood of its own? We don't especially mind the current falling back upon popular tunes of the Twenties, having nothing better in that field today. In the case of books, the matter is somewhat different.

* * *

Tale with no social significance: A young woman sophomore at an Eastern college recently bought one of the more extreme chemise dresses and put it on for the first time out of the shop just before her escort of the evening arrived. They walked over to a nearby restaurant, where she discovered that the dress' designer had neglected to allow room in the skirt to enable her to sit down at all. Naturally quick-thinking, she borrowed a pocketknife from her companion, repaired to the powder room, and emerged later with her new, now unhobbled creation concealed under her coat for the rest of the evening. Moral: if you want to dress in fashion, make sure your escort carries a knife.

QU'EST-CE QUE L'AVANT-GARDE?

WALTER LOWENFELS

The French cultural weekly *Les Lettres Francaises*, edited by Louis Aragon, has been conducting an extended inquiry on the topic: What Is the Avant Garde in 1958? The writer of the following was asked to contribute his point of view, which follows.

WHEN Matisse died Picasso said: "Now there are things I cannot say to anyone living." And yet he kept on saying them—differently, of course. The secret of saying what cannot be said is one way of telling a Picasso. The trademark of the avant garde artist is not that he shocks us, but that he knows how to express more of tomorrow than others.

The essential question is—What Time Is It? Vanguard art appears to be advanced only for a moment. As soon as the shock of something new is absorbed we can see that it is really just the art of today, today. (What is so old-fashioned as the imitations in 1958 of the avant garde of 1923?)

What then is avant garde in 1958? The first thing that comes to my mind: the walls of an old colonial palace in Mexico City; a peasant family—mother, father, children, in serapes—walking before mural paintings in which they are the heroes in the very same building in which the *Conquistadores* once ruled.

In poems, too, a new relationship with the audience. In Paris, in the 20's and early 30's: "We are writing for an audience of no one." Today, those of us who believe in the avant garde tradition are trying to speak the language of everyone asking only to live.

The studio painting, and the private studio poem are not over; they simply are no longer avant garde the way they used to be. It's not only Orozco, Siqueiros, Rivera, and the graphic artists of Mexico who indicate the public nature of the art of tomorrow. Picasso is also telling us in his ceramics—tomorrow's children will have all the meat they need, every day, on plates designed by Picasso!

It's true that Picasso's plates are still snatched up by art dealers, not

steel workers. What I am talking about is the idea behind the kiln—the idea that permits the avant garde artist to remain avant garde—even as with Shaw when he was 90, or Picasso at 75, or Rivera in his 70's.

Am I saying that one has to be a partisan of socialism today with belief in and compassion for all humanity, such as Dante had 600 years ago, to be an avant garde artist in 1958? Not at all. I am not laying down any rules, only wondering how the *Art of Tomorrow* can possibly be created by anyone who doesn't believe in the poem of tomorrow today.

These thoughts indicate something of what I had in mind when I said at the University of Minnesota (May Day, 1957) that the future of the USA is too precious to leave in the hands of any politician no matter what their politics, who separate politics from poetry. And I might have added—in the hands of poets who separate peace from the poem of our time.

Peace changes all relations—human and inhuman—rocks, clouds, moon, people—including the relations between words in poems. Peace has become a geological force; war, geological doom. We have put our hands into the mechanism of the universe and nothing remains the same.

What is avant garde in 1958 is to live under skies we have cleared of poison. Out of this new content of the universe, the avant garde poem will be found putting words together differently, in its own way, though it may look like a sonnet invented hundreds of years ago, Guillevis' "Tomorrow's Children," for instance:

But you who know days of a different kind—
 tomorrow's children for whom work is a fête
 and living is what poems are to a poet—
 a passionate art carefully designed:

remember us—the lame, the deaf, the blind—
 not for the stupid things we can't forget,
 the endless dull jobs over which we sweat,
 and the sad stories that we leave behind—

but for the things we loved—and of all of these—
 believe me, in our way we loved to live,
 never giving up hope of something new—

our joys, the little things and the grand deeds
 we loved as much as anyone ever did—
 our greatest joy was opening the way for you.

books in review

Militant Martyr

NOTES FROM THE WARSAW

GHETTO: *The Journal of Emmanuel Ringelblum*: Edited and translated by Jacob Sloan. McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc. \$5.95.

READING this book is a somber experience. It is salutary to be reminded of the unimagined, unbelievable cruelty with which the Nazis afflicted humanity. This book gives an excruciating, factual, detailed account of the bottomless woe suffered by the Jews of Poland as recorded by an historian who himself experienced it. As one reads, the thought occurs to one that probably no other episode in human history approximates so closely Thomas Hobbes' description of the "warre of every man against every man" in which life was "nasty, brutish and short."

It was lucky for the future that the Polish Jewish community had produced a man like Emmanuel Ringelblum, who was born in 1900. He was handsome, vital, selfless, imbued with enormous energy and an inexhaustible sense of social responsibility. His scholarly work on Jewish history had early won him recognition and he was an active leader of the Left wing of the Labor Zionist movement.

Immediately after the Nazis occupied Poland, Ringelblum saw that a first hand record had to be kept of the travail of Polish Jews. He accordingly began to keep a notebook of facts and

events. In time he gathered around him a corps of historians, writers and researchers in an underground organization under cover of the name "*Oneg Shabbath*" (the jolly celebration on the night of the Sabbath). As head of the Ghetto relief organization, Ringelblum was ideally situated to learn what was going on among Jews throughout Poland, to maintain contact with them and to be informed about people and events. In the course of over three years, hundreds of diaries and documents were collected in these archives. Before the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising broke out on April 19, 1943, Ringelblum had succeeded in burying the archives in milk cans under the Ghetto. After the war, they were dug up and they are now being analyzed and preserved in the Jewish Historical Institute in Warsaw. This was most fortunate for, as Ringelblum explained, countless diaries and documents written in the Ghetto which had not been turned over to his archives were destroyed or irretrievably lost amidst the chaos of the mass extermination campaigns that the Nazis instituted after the summer of 1942. His own invaluable journal that he kept for over three years, is probably the most comprehensive account of the Ghetto life. In 1952 this notebook was published in Warsaw in the original Yiddish, of which the book under review is a translation.

As an historian of integrity, Ringelblum took the utmost care that his collaborators in the "*Oneg Shabbath*"

should be scrupulously accurate. In his account of that organization (published in the Yiddish edition but only alluded to and cited in Sloan's preface to the English translation), Ringelblum explains that it was guided by the principles of "all-sidedness" and "objectivity." Although, he said, the "O.S." had the task of recording Nazi inhumanity toward the Jews, "one will find not a little material of humane behavior on the part of Germans." And the same is true, he said, of Poles. "The predominant opinion among us," he wrote, "is that anti-Semitism increased significantly during the war, that the majority of Poles were happy at the misfortune that had befallen the Jews. . . . The careful reader of our materials will find hundreds of documents that show something to the contrary. . . . You will learn of hundreds of cases where peasants for many months hid and took care of Jewish refugees in the poor small towns." And the notebook itself records instances of kindness or decency of Poles and Germans toward Jews. In some cases, he observed, individual Germans were inclined to be decent but changed their tone if anyone else was present.

But the overpowering fact was the inconceivable cruelty of man to man, of Germans toward Jews, Poles to Jews, of Germans to Poles—and Jews to Jews—under the barbaric conditions created by the Nazi occupation. The struggle for sheer survival was fierce. "Everyone looks after himself, first and foremost," Ringelblum remarked on Jan. 1, 1940. A few months later he observed that "The only way Jews can live these days is to break the laws." This was to become increasingly true as conditions worsened. He shows that smuggling of

food and goods from "the Aryan side" was the only means of keeping the Ghetto alive.

The most abhorrent human traits came to the fore in this community of "every man against every man." The overcrowding of the Ghetto, into which over 400,000 Jews were compressed, not only Warsaw Jews but thousands of Jewish refugees from all over Poland, was appalling. There seems to have been a suspension of civilized conduct in large parts of the population, as well as among the Nazis and Poles who had anything to do with the Ghetto. Bribery at every conceivable point was rife. For instance, the mailman had to be bribed to deliver mail; beggars had to bribe the Jewish Council to grant them relief. The most ingenious and multifarious forms of cruelty and sadism were practiced by the Nazis and even by the Jewish police. Informing to the Nazis and Jewish police was widespread. In the midst of this chaotic cruelty a typhus epidemic raged. Human life became incredibly cheap and was taken at the slightest pretext or no pretext at all. Corpses of the starved dead became an accepted part of city life. "The children are no longer afraid of death," wrote Ringelblum on May 11, 1941. "In one courtyard, the children played the game of tickling a corpse." People became totally calloused. "One walks past corpses with indifference," he wrote on Aug. 26, 1941. The plight of the children was heart-rending and horrifying. "People have grown as hard and unfeeling as stone," he wrote that October.

Ringelblum's record of bottomless suffering and inhumanity is piled high detail on detail. In this Inferno, wrote the historian, the heaviest burden fell on the poor. He repeatedly alludes to

the callousness of the rich and their refusal to carry their share of the burden. "Periods of breaking-up," wrote Ringelblum in January, 1942, "have the virtue of illuminating like a giant searchlight evils that have previously been concealed. During these days of hunger, the inhumanity of the Jewish upper class has clearly shown itself. The entire work of the Jewish Council is an evil perpetrated against the poor that cries to the very heaven. If there were a God in the world, he would long ago have flung his thunderbolts and leveled the whole den of wickedness and hypocrisy of those who flay the hide of the poor." The Jewish police, who he says were recruited mainly from the wealthier Jews, evoked hatred for their cruelty.

What resistance was put up by the Jews? Were the Jews more demoralized than other groups? Ringelblum discusses whether there were more informers among the Jews than among other peoples. His own "private opinion," he notes, is that there were not. Otherwise, the "hundreds of illegal operations in the Ghetto—the dairies, flour warehouses, bakeries, factories, transactions in leather and anything that's illegal—all this illegal activity could not be possible if there were that many [an estimated 400] informers."

The notebook is sprinkled with many instances of heroic individual resistance to the Nazis and the police. He reports that there was sabotage by Jewish tailors in the Ghetto uniform factories. But there was much soul-searching at the end of 1942 over the lack of resistance to the mass "resettlement" or transportation of several hundred thousand Jews to the extermination centers. The remaining Jews were determined to resist. "People will no

longer go to the slaughter like lambs," he notes at the end of 1942. "Whomever you talk to, you hear the same cry: The resettlement should never have been permitted. . . . We must put up a resistance, defend ourselves against the enemy, man and child."

The world now knows that this was no idle determination and that resistance did emerge in one of the most heroic battles in all history, the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. "Naturally," he wrote cryptically, "there will be resistance only if it is organized." Otherwise there is no hint in his journal of the feverish organization of the fighting groups that was going on at the time. For these efforts could not be jeopardized by mention in writing. From other sources we know that Ringelblum himself participated in the planning of the rising. However, he was sent to a concentration camp by the Nazis before the battle broke out. The Jewish underground managed his escape from the camp and he hid out until he was betrayed to the Nazis and shot, together with his wife and young son, on the ruins of the Ghetto on March 7, 1944.

His leadership of the archive project places not only the Jews but all humanity in his debt. Jacob Sloan performed a valuable service in making the journal available in a good, workman-like English translation.

LOUIS HARAP

Reporting As Art

NO MEN ARE STRANGERS, by Joseph North. International Publishers. \$3.50.

JOSEPH NORTH'S personal history is also a history of a class and a time, and reading it we cherish our own part

shoulder to shoulder, in their rags, their heads shaven, bony corpse-like, their numbers assuming an immeasurable strength, as though all mankind were assembled here on a day of Resurrection. . . . The trumpets of the honor guard, gleaming brilliantly, pealed the anthems of the Allies . . . the multitudes silent so long began to sing, a low, hesitant rumble at first, then swelling, slowly, gradually, to the crescendo beyond belief; the majestic trains rising over the barracks, the crematorium, over the aisles of the dead, and as the child gripping my hand looked up to me, his great, wild eyes in tears, I felt life's invincibility and wept. . . .

At a time when some seem eager to deny the greatness of our people and of the Communist past these dispatches are a special joy. Such a book is like a collective story told after battle, around some fireside, reminding us how glorious it is to be part of the great, raucous, bright, human struggle. It is the highest duty of the Marxist writer, in this age of international gangsters, to remind the workers of their Bunyanesque stature, to give them back the image of themselves, recall to them their power. This, I think, is what books like North's succeed in doing. I salute this testament of a man, a name, and a class.

MERIDEL LE SUBUR

The Minutiae of Verdi

ORPHEUS AT EIGHTY, by Vincent Sheean. Random House. \$5.00.

STENDHAL, Proust, Shaw and lesser men of letters have written with insight about musical subjects. Vincent Sheean, the author of a recent book on Verdi, does not belong to this per-

ceptive company.

Sheean's book, described as a "meditation" on Verdi, is based on the belief that the composer's career followed an intuitive but sure *progress* to "self-realization," and that the earlier works are milestones in this *progress*. Sheean includes almost all the important known data about Verdi's life. He shows a skill for characterization and for smooth filling in of historical background. Painstaking research lies behind his lengthy ruminations about the history and politics of the *Risorgimento*. But neither his strong feeling for his subject nor his easy articulateness give any particular distinction to his book. The people and the scene are only superficially recreated as is Verdi's "greatness."

Verdi's greatness lies in his music, and ideas about his greatness must derive from the music. But Sheean has chosen instead to concern himself with the minutiae of Verdi's life, which he believes lie at the source of the composer's feelings. These, in turn, are the guide to the music. But such an approach is an evasion whereby any journalist with a mere enthusiasm for a musical subject may with impunity write a book about it. There are no limits to psychological portraiture and "meditation." In the case of Sheean, he does not show any interior intimacy with the music of his subject. His sweeping judgments about it are arbitrary, not integrated with his generalizations about the composer's "greatness."

Sheean uses a flashback technique ("Now, at eighty, he could look back," etc.) to cast his book in a taut dramatic form. But he uses the method trickily, seeming to attribute to Verdi many specious opinions of his own. Thus, the singers Tamagno and Maurel

(the latter the first *Iago* and *Falstaff*) are called stupid and foolish respectively. In adding that Tamagno is remembered only because he sang the first performance of *Otello*, Sheean reveals his own meager and unreliable knowledge. Again, the distaste that is expressed allusively through the book for the theatrical conventions underlying Verdi's operas up to the last period is Sheean's own. Similarly, the contempt for Verdi's predecessors in operatic history is Sheean's, not Verdi's.

As a matter of fact, Sheean's view of Verdi's progress to "self-realization" spurs him to attack all music and musicians lying outside his image of Verdian "true expression." His view seems to require and warrant an attack upon Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti for their "monotonous *cantilena*" and their "excess" ornamentation ("most of it rubbish"). Even Verdi is handled roughly for his use of "old-fashioned" (sic) ornamentation, which is explained away, however, as deliberate hack-work on the composer's part. In his single-minded pursuit of his thesis, Sheean's ignorance or indifference to Italian musical history causes him to define *bel canto* as a "limpid instrumental style" with minimum demands on "intelligence and feeling," thus making a mockery of two and a half centuries of musical culture which moved its audiences particularly by its intelligence and feeling.

Sheean says that Verdi thought little of his early works "by the internal evidence of his later compositions." This is demonstrated only in the assertion and therefore is worthless. But Sheean forces it into his context, and attacks Verdi's early works at length presumably to set off the superiority of the last works. *Ernani*, *Luisa Miller* and

Macbeth are neglected works, no longer in the repertory, and better so, he says. He rails against the "trashy bits" of *Rigoletto*, *Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata* that is, against the arias which "seem false and unfelt," because Verdi allegedly surrendered to operatic tradition and convention and presented them as such pieces. Surely enough, he does not omit the old syllabus-outline saw about Verdi's "guitar-like accompaniment."

And so, as Verdi is praised, other composers are denigrated, and Verdi's stature is increased as others' stature are shortened. Sheean will mention "the greatly overpraised works of Meyerbeer and Halevy" not only as an aside but as an irrelevant one, at that. Apparently, the idea is that such gratuitous potshots will be appreciated by people in the know. They need not have heard Meyerbeer or Halevy or even Rossini, but who has and does it matter? By the time Verdi's librettist, Boito is praised, the reader is forewarned and he anticipates correctly. He is not mistaken when he expects the composer, Ponchielli, to be run down. Boito wrote the libretto for Ponchielli's *Gioconda*, and of course, Sheean says that the music is inferior to the text. And of course this nonsense is given as a self-evident fact.

MAX MARCH

To the Exodus

MOSES, PRINCE OF EGYPT,
Howard Fast. Crown Publisher
\$3.95.

MOSES, *Prince of Egypt*, is Howard Fast's first novel to appear since he publicly broke off relations with t

Communist Party and the progressive movement generally, with a fanfare indicating that he regarded himself as almost a world power. Although this step has gained him wider press coverage and decidedly more prominent bookstore displays, he has not managed to overcome certain basic defects in his recreation of history which, contrary to the general impression, the Left had already pointed out to him.

The chief of these stemmed from what was surely a laudable intention: to discover parallels between crucial periods or dramatic moments in ancient or in American history, and analogous situations today. Such a method is both ingenious and risky because, while it illuminates the meaning of contemporary political life and turns the reader into a partisan, it also fosters in him the illusion that he has been given a true picture of the time and place, in short, the setting of the novel. To accomplish his didactic purpose, Fast employed considerable narrative skill, and one should not underrate a technique which managed to teach modern lessons in the intriguing disguise of togas and cocked hats. But, whatever its popularity and its value for mature as well as **young readers**, it tends to be self-defeating unless the author is careful to refrain from giving a false, modern outlook and psychology to his characters. To avoid this requires prodigious study and great imagination. For the first, Fast has shown a growing lack of patience; of the latter, he has not enough to carry off the project he has set himself.

Fast's best novels, *The Last Frontier*, *The Unvanquished*, *Citizen Tom Paine*, and *Freedom Road* were written when the Left in this country was identified

with, and most often in the leadership of, every struggle of the American people for social betterment, and when it set itself the task of relating their past to the events of the present. His power as a novelist diminished because, with the decline of the influence of the Left, he was cast upon his own creative resources, which were not of themselves strong enough to sustain him.

In this instance, Fast's story, the first part of a trilogy, is based upon Freud's theory, developed in *Moses and Monotheism*, that Moses was an Egyptian prince and disciple of the religious views of an earlier Pharaoh, Ikhnaton. The latter had tried to establish the hegemony of the sun god Aton over the innumerable animal and other tribal deities who buttressed the power of the feudal nobility. During the reign of the pharaoh who succeeded Ikhnaton, Aton was dethroned and every effort was made to erase his name and memory. Moses, wishing to revive his worship, chose a Hebrew people living in Egypt to be the devotees of this one "true god," and so led them out of the land.

Freud's hypothesis, which suggests that the Hebrews, a primitive people worshipping a snake god, ended by killing their new spiritual father, is not at issue, though one might question Fast's elaborated version of them as being "poor devils who in their filth, ignorance and wretchedness, sought solace in their primitive worship." (It is interesting to compare this writing-off with Mann's picture of them in the *Joseph* series.) But it is disconcerting to find Egypt portrayed as a country beset by Roman decadence and fascist dictatorship, while the supporters of the sun god are made into an underground

band of enlightened revolutionaries. Moses turns into a progressive Victor Mature, able to stand any other Egyptian prince on his head; he is kindly to slaves and denounces Ramses to his face. The priest Amon-Teph is the benign fat philosopher of Mr. Fast's "modern" novels. We see Dr. Gregg in loin-cloth as the doctor Aton-Moses, accompanied by his daughter Lola as Merit-Aton.

There is a similar gauche bringing up-to-date of ancient men's way of thinking, to make their cultural horizon comparable with that achieved by contemporary artists, scientists, members of the ruling class, and the like. Fast's astronomers might be on the staff of the Palomar Observatory. Moses addresses a craftsman-sculptor as though he were a neglected Rodin ("I will not see a great artist crawl and belittle himself."), ignoring the fact that a statue of Ramses would be executed according to a priestly formula from which no deviation was permitted. Ramses himself is made to talk like a randy Babbitt: "Don't call me 'holiness'. . . . I'm far from holy. I'm a licentious old goat, as your mother will tell you if you give her half a chance." To strike a democratic note, this elegant confession is balanced by a captive's declaration of independence: "I'm just a dirty Bedouin slave to you, but you would be surprised at how well I get along with women."

All Fast's "rebels," including Moses, sound like 19th century deists, rationalists, materialists and economic determinists. Even an army captain delivers himself of the sage reflections: "If I went looking for a just war, I would still be a peasant in the Delta."

To cap it all, a scientist-engineer, in

the course of a mournful reflection on the corrupt times, evokes a golden age when, laughing and singing, the people "raised up the pyramids and other splendid temples and monuments," presumably in collective and joyful labor. Now, men like Neph have always called up visions of a golden age, but the dubious knowledge of the Old Kingdom that he exhibits would depend upon archeologists' opening the pyramids some 32 centuries later and his reading let us say Breasted's *History of Egypt*—where he would not find the facts to justify his nostalgia.

GILBERT OHLAND

Upside-Down Revolution

THE CAPITALIST MANIFESTO.

A Revolutionary Plan for a Capitalist Distribution of Wealth, by Luis O. Kelso and Mortimer J. Adler. Random House. \$3.75.

THE authors say that the *Capitalist Manifesto* "is intended to replace the *Communist Manifesto* as a call to action," and they would like it to convince first the American people and eventually the whole world. They add, however: ". . . we cannot deceive ourselves that it will ever have the blind emotional appeal that made the earlier Manifesto so powerful a revolutionary force."

After reading their declaration, I agree with them that it will never match the Communist one.

According to the preface, the main credit is due to Mr. Kelso who, after prolonged thought, came to the conclusion that what is required to reno-

our capitalism is a "capitalist revolution." It is understood that the transition from present day capitalism to the future capitalism will be accomplished in the most peaceful way. The word revolution as used here does not mean what some people might think. For that matter many of the terms used have a different meaning than the accepted ones.

The author's conception is on the same level as that of the editor of the *Herald Tribune* Sunday supplement, who feels that the whole trouble with capitalism is the word itself and has suggested that if it were changed to "MUTUALISM" the system could most probably be saved.

It seems that "what has been acclaimed as American Capitalism, Modern Capitalism, or People's Capitalism is a mixture of capitalism and socialism." Is this mixture that causes all the trouble. The *Capitalist Manifesto* calls it a "... public declaration of the principles of 'pure capitalism' and of a program which is calculated to achieve

According to the authors, all existing economic systems are either "laborist capitalist," which makes the Soviet Union "State Capitalist,"—not "pure." What is pure capitalism? "... an anomy in which it is possible for all men to participate as capitalists."

"It should not come as a surprise, therefore, that in a truly capitalist economy, economic freedom and justice will be as widely diffused as the ownership of capital. The thing to be in a capitalist democracy is a citizen-capitalist." One of the guiding aims of the capitalist revolution is that all men should become capitalists. . . ."

As soon as that goal is achieved all will be well. But on page 207 the authors forget themselves and state that "In a completely capitalistic economy, the division would be made on the basis of the relative contributions made to production by the owners of capital and the owners of labor." But if everyone is a capitalist where will they get laborers?

However, Kelso and Adler show no inconsistency on the subject of "high wages" right now—they're against them regardless of what will happen in the future. They consider it is quite unjust to our employers that labor gets 70% of the national income while producing less than "10% of our national wealth. . . ." The other 90% of production is accomplished by the capitalists who own the means of production and it is the machines who really work, not the workers. I am not certain whether the authors, who are very much preoccupied with the creation of a just society, would like the workers to get only 10% of the national income until they all become capitalists.

I think Mr. Kelso and Mr. Adler could profit a great deal if they would read some of the anecdotes in the volume of *Jewish Folklore* by Nathan Ausubel. There is a story of a wise Rabbi who having gotten many complaints from the poor people in the town that the rich got all the sweet cream while the poor had to drink plain milk, immediately found the solution. He declared that from that day on sweet cream should be called milk and milk, sweet cream so the poor people had sweet cream and the rich had milk.

MYER WEISE

Manliness in Academe

A FRIEND IN POWER, By Carlos H. Baker. Scribners. \$3.95.

PROFESSOR Baker, Chairman of Princeton's English Department, has written a novel which he apparently hoped would constitute an avowal of faith in the assumptions and values of respectable academic life.

The pith of *A Friend in Power* can be put very simply: The president of a university is about to retire and a new one is being sought to succeed him. This goes on for the length of the book, and at last the protagonist, Professor Edward Tyler, who has all along served on the committee that is doing the seeking, is selected for the presidency. The problem, which we are given to understand involves a moral crisis for Tyler, is that of power and its uses, how men deal with it and come to terms with it. But here the problem becomes so reduced in scale, so limited in scope, made so trivial by a human and institutional context which cannot support its weight, that it ceases, though the talk about it continues, to have anything to do with power. Because the author cannot control the problem he sets himself, give it the tension and dimension it needs if we are to take it seriously, it dissolves and slips away from him, becomes something else.

What it becomes, though this is not the author's intention, is the book's real failure: it becomes an inquiry into the qualities of leadership, more specifically the qualities the ideal university president needs ideally to rule. Unhappily if we were to enumerate the qualities that Mr. Baker most insists upon as he

reveals Tyler to us we would have perfect image of the prig and the bore—or the ideal university president. authority (the Trustees) he is respectful and yielding; in friendship he is emotionally "manly"; as a father he prays to God that his sons will grow up to be whole, strong men; as a husband he is more than once capable of responding to his wife's charms decorously, making love to her; in recreation, he is nothing if not manly. We are told explicitly, even shown (it is so urgent that we know directly and unmistakably) that he chops wood and fishes for trout with other men; and, lastly, he is perfectly manly about literature. "When the old man was really in the groove . . ." he says to a student, in reference to Shakespeare; and he tells another student again speaking of Shakespeare: "I chose words the way a college chooses its faculty." I shudder to think what Mary McCarthy or Randall Jarrell would have done with this; but here it is a joke; it is said with solemnity: he thinks of no higher tribute to Shakespeare.

He is, as I have said, a prig and a bore—and a philistine; and, perhaps after all, he is the ideal university president.

WILKES STERN

The Great Scopes Trial

SIX DAYS OR FOREVER, by
Ginger. Beacon Press. \$3.95.

THE case of Tennessee v. Thomas Scopes in the summer of 1925 was in itself unimportant.

ly was there never any final verdict, that there was never even an interest in the guilt or innocence of the accused. Its significance lay in its larger connotations. The Scopes trial was one small reflection of a distorted decade in post-war America and of a disenchantment with the concept of man's inevitable progress resulting from World War I. It took place in the era of the Red Hunt and its brutal deportations, the rise of the KKK, a temporary economic boom, and a general acceptance of the status quo.

Such an atmosphere provides a fertile bed for the flourishing of all sorts of reactionary doctrine and rationale. Mr. Ginger in his detailed and thoroughly-researched book delves into one of these doctrines, namely Fundamentalism, around which the trial revolved. For it was a trial to establish that it be a crime in the state of Tennessee to teach "any theory that denies the story of the Divine Creation of man as taught in the Bible, and to teach instead that man has descended from a lower order of animals."

William Jennings Bryan considered an honor to serve as "midwife at the rebirth of the faithful" and took the job as Chief Prosecutor. Regarding himself as High Priest of Fundamentalism, his sermon-like oratory throughout the trial affirmed that all that is knowable is in the Bible, that morality is dependent upon religion. His tenet incurred the bitter wrath of his opponent, defense attorney Clarence Darrow, who sought to prove that truth is knowable for sure.

These violently conflicting concepts delineated with great care and woven into the dramatic episode of the trial. Notwithstanding more than

a few irritating and inappropriate poetic and psychological allusions by the author (to point up Bryan's immaturity, his passion for food is compared with the fetus's oral sensitivity), Bryan's complex character comes through convincingly.

Legal aspects of the trial are detailed at length. Especially startling was the peculiar plea by Darrow for a guilty verdict in order that the case go to the higher courts and the law be declared unconstitutional.

Mr. Ginger's point of departure and unifying thesis is that to the prosecution this trial performed a necessary function in the ritualistic tradition. He shows the dependency of ritual on myth. However, he presses this idea far beyond its importance. Superfluous and sometimes extraneous references serve to distract the reader and muddy the presentation. In general Mr. Ginger is overly academic in his inclusion of more bibliography than is fitting for his subject matter.

The author is at his best in recreating a fantastic spectacle, highlighted by the performances of two great figures in American history. In addition, he has carefully studied the science of evolution and has spared no effort to present the reader with a basic examination of the subject.

CAROL REMES

Vodka to Cognac

THE UNDERGROUND CITY, by
H. L. Humes. Random House. \$4.95.

IN MR. HUMES' fantasy, French Communist Party members and supporters defend a man they know

to have been a collaborator with the Nazis. The French government has condemned Dujardin to death, but the leading Communist character, Alexi Carnot, swears Dujardin is innocent, though the latter tried to have him killed. This is the "Dujardin affair" with which the book opens. To what lengths the Reds will go to embarrass a regime!

Our hero: John Stone, American, former U.S. agent with the French resistance. He swears that Dujardin is guilty—D. tried to have him killed, too. Whereupon—and because of his association with Communists in the wartime Underground—he is investigated by the State Department. The French Left attacks him as well. Although he is a slightly mixed-up 100%er, he is a true American. He defies all and speaks only the truth.

At this point philosophizing takes over. A lovable old American Ambassador expounds Jeffersonian principles and unfolds his life-long dream of world peace. The State Department's Paris security agent muses upon his function in society. The French political scientist and historian, Mersault, former member of the underground resistance and a post-war supporter of de Gaulle, discusses man's fate with the pro-Communist Deputy Maurice Picard. The latter assures Mersault that he, Picard, is at bottom a "pure revolutionary," dedicated to permanent revolt and chaos. When they part, Mersault calls up Intelligence to inform them that Picard is plainly paranoid.

So we switch to psychopathology. For the Communist Carnot turns out to be paranoid as well. We see him last on a plane bound for Moscow for a brain operation—probably a prefrontal

lobotomy; in any event, other characters, French and American, mutter that he will never come out of the anesthetic. The Ambassador, believing that his old vision of peace is shattered, rolls his wheelchair out of a plane into the sea, leaving his Bible open to Jeremiah.

John Stone, now both a security agent and a loyalty risk, takes to drink. Vodka, of course, to begin with, and then cognac.

Mr. Humes' book resembles the current crop of movies in one respect: the scenery is livelier than his characters. The high point of his novel is Stone's journey through the Paris sewers with a passionate engineer connoisseur of drainage systems. Readers of *Les Misérables* will note considerable technological changes since Hugo's day.

LYDIA WILSON

Genocide in Idaho

THE BANNOCK OF IDAHO, by Brigham D. Madsen. Illustrated by M. D. Stewart. Caxton Printers. Caldwell, Idaho. \$5.00.

THIS is another addition to the testimony of the shameful history of genocide practiced against the American Indians by the railroads, land grabbers and predatory exploiters. It is a tale of broken treaties, destruction of food supplies, and the seizure of promised lands.

The Bannocks were a proud and independent nation, who knew how to retaliate when their lands were stolen and for this they were known alternatively as excellent and as "treacherous."

fighters. But as a subordinate at Fort Kearney said of them: "I do not think that the term 'treacherous' is just. We can hardly say that a tribe is treacherous which definitely asserts, through its chief, that it will not permit the passage of white men through their country. It has been in the most manly and direct manner that these Indians have said that if emigrants shoot members of their tribes, they will kill them when they

can."

Readers will find in this book a full history of the Bannock, an account of reservation life, and a fine appendix containing all the treaties and agreements made with them and broken by the United States government. What we have here is no less than a record of a plan of mass extermination.

M. LB S.

Letters

Editor, *Mainstream*:

I am writing this letter in consideration of your article in the March issue of *Mainstream*. Actually, this is the first letter that I have written to an editor of any progressive publication—either in the U.S.A., or here, in Canada, where I live. I can assure you that the only reason why I am not in the habit of writing letters to progressive publications is due only to the circumstances of today, which make it rather "unsafe" to have open and wide contact with them.

Let me say, anyway, that I have been a regular subscriber to *Mainstream* for several years now, and I consider it really superb. When I read all the things which you complain of—unpaid printers, reduced staff, typographical errors, etc. etc.—it makes me boil to think of all the trash that is thriving today in America—such as cheap magazines—and yet *Mainstream* can hardly stay alive. I can well understand your feelings, as I find my own personal circumstances roughly similar. In the province of Quebec, where I live, the life of a progressive person is no bed of roses. First of all, there are not too many progressive people. And contact with them is sometimes risky. For example, any concert given in Montreal by Pete Seeger is always attended by members of the Provincial Police "Anti-Subversive Squad." License numbers of automobiles which are parked near-by are taken down and noted by these police. And a hundred and one more things like this! Secondly, the Province of Quebec is one of the strong-

est outposts of the Catholic Church. Actually, the Catholic Church is much stronger here than even in Italy—where there exists the largest Communist Party outside of the socialist sector. And leftward movement, no matter how slight, seems very remote here—at least in the foreseeable future. Obviously, one can become slightly discouraged under such circumstances—and I feel safe in saying that I think I know, partly at least, the things that an editor of such a magazine as *Mainstream* must face.

In any case, I certainly intend to subscribe to your magazine forever, and, if possible, I will try to get other people to buy it—although I haven't as yet done that (things are *really* tough in Quebec). Also, I will contribute financially from time to time—and will be doing so in a couple of weeks.

As to your specific questions—what articles do I like, writers, etc. etc., all I can say is that I like just about everything. Occasionally, I think that some articles are slightly too long, but apart from that, I have no complaints.

I should point out to you that this letter is not signed. The name and address of my sub is not really mine, but merely a safer place for me to pick up the magazine. It is a known fact that the personal mail of progressive people in Quebec is sometimes tampered with, so unfortunately, I cannot even have *Mainstream* sent directly to me at my home.

My best regards to you, and I look forward to your next edition.

Unsigned

Now Ready

NO MEN ARE STRANGERS

BY JOSEPH NORTH

~~~~~

A book of affirmation in these troubled days is like a fountain of clear waters in a parched time—it is good for the health! Joe North's *No Men Are Strangers* (International Publishers, price \$3.25) is such a book, a kind of modern Pilgrims' Progress except that, instead of dealing in allegory, the author writes of living facts, observed at first hand, reportage from all the fighting fronts of man's struggle for a better world, the human documentation of the most turbulent, swift-moving, epochal half-century of modern history.

Truly a reporter of a special kind, North chronicles his earliest remembrance of his blacksmith father, soon after the turn of the century in Pennsylvania, the shock of his first contacts with bigotry and hardship, his first meeting with Communists. "The beginning of wisdom came when I encountered men who introduced me to a philosophy which scientifically explained Man's existence, and indicated the inevitability of his triumph over hunger, oppression and war."

His on-the-spot observations of America during the Great Depression; his activity in founding the weekly *New Masses* and his lively contacts, as editor of that soon-to-become famous magazine, with the best known writers and artists of that day; his eye-witness narratives of the militant sit-down strikes which helped to usher in the C.I.O.; his stirring coverage of the battlefronts of Spain during the Civil War; his danger-fraught voyages on convoys crossing the Atlantic in World War II; his first grisly entrance into the still-smoking hell of Dachau, all are brilliantly told in this book. Don't fail to order your copy from your nearest bookstore or, by mail, from—

~~~~~

New Century Publishers • 832 Broadway, New York 3

BOOKS FOR YOUR LIBRARY

- THE DAY IS COMING: THE LIFE OF CHARLES
E. RUTHENBERG, by Oakley Johnson \$3.00
- THE GATES OF IVORY, THE GATES OF HORN,
a novel by Thomas McGrath Paper \$1.00; cloth \$2.25
- THE TRUTH ABOUT HUNGARY, by Herbert
Aptheker Paper \$2.00; cloth \$3.00
- PHILOSOPHY IN REVOLUTION, by Howard Selsam \$2.00
- THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF "BIG BILL"
HAYWOOD \$3.50
- THE EMPIRE OF HIGH FINANCE, by Victor Perlo \$3.50
- U.S. AND THE PHILIPPINES, prepared by Labor
Research Association \$.50
- THE ORDEAL OF MANSART, a novel by
W.E.B. Du Bois \$3.50
- TOWARD NEGRO FREEDOM, by Herbert Aptheker
Paper \$2.00; cloth \$2.75
- A LONG DAY IN A SHORT LIFE, a novel by
Albert Maltz \$3.75
- THE STALIN ERA, by Anna Louise Strong
Paper \$1.00; cloth \$2.25
- DECISION IN AFRICA, by W. Alphaeus Hunton \$4.00

At Most Bookstores or

New Century Publishers • 832 Broadway, New York 3, N Y