# Mainstream

## MEXICO IMPRISONS ITS GREATEST ARTIST

*Arturo Landa V.*

*Phillip Bonosky:* REPORT FROM BERLIN

*Mikhail Lukonin:* A MIDNIGHT CONVERSATION

*dney Finkelstein:* SIX WAYS OF LOOKING AT REALITY

*Kurt Tucholsky:* [illegible] WORLD IS A COMEDY

*Ho Chi Minh:* FIVE POEMS

THE JAILING OF BEN DAVIS'S BOOK

ecember, 1960 50 cents

Vol. 13, No. 12

# Mainstream

DECEMBER, 1960





MAINSTREAM *is published monthly by Masses & Mainstream, Inc., 832 Broadway, New York N. Y. Subscription rate $5 a year; foreign and Canada $5.75 a year. Single copies 50 cen outside the U.S.A. 60 cents. Re-entered as second class matter February 25, 1948, at the P Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.* 

## *SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT*

1961 promises to be a big year for MAINSTREAM. New fea-
res, new art work, new and provocative articles from here and
road. The January issue, for example, will include one of the most
amatic documents to be published anywhere in 1961. "Hitching
ır Wagon to A Star" is the story of an American Communist,
el Field, who was unjustly imprisoned by the Hungarian gov-
ıment in the Spring of 1949. The article tells of the years leading
to his arrest, of his growth into a Communist, and of his
onizingly lonely years in prison, years of deep questioning of his
ialist beliefs. Finally it is the story of the triumph of socialist
inciples and of renewed faith in the future of mankind. When
. Field was released in 1954 with a full pardon, he astounded
estern observers by choosing to build a new life among his
otors, in Hungary, instead of turning against them. Here for the
st time is the full story, a story which Mr. Field has declined
tell Western correspondents but has made available for exclusive
blication in MAINSTREAM.

The Editors of MAINSTREAM take this opportunity to make a
cial trial offer—*to new subscribers only*—of a three-month
oscription to MAINSTREAM for only $1.00. This offer is good
y for the January-February-March issues. Our *current* sub-
ibers, for each 3-month special trial subscription they solicit for
will receive free any *one* of the following paperbacks (check
e desired):

FILM IN THE BATTLE OF IDEAS, by John Howard Lawson;
IE GATES OF IVORY, THE GATES OF HORN, by Thomas
Grath; THE VOLUNTEERS, by Steve Nelson; WOMEN
AINST SLAVERY, by Samuel Sillen; POEMS BY NAZIM
KMET.

—*The Editors*

# MEXICO IMPRISONS ITS GREATEST ARTIST

*ARTURO LANDA V.*

Siqueiros, a leader of the Mexican Communist Party, is being framed for initiating a demonstration of the National Students Federation in support of Cuba. Under a charge of "social dissolution," he can be held an entire year without a hearing with a final penalty of 2 to 12 years.

Siqueiros has declared that Mexican President Lopez Mateos had him arrested on orders of U.S. ambassador Hill.

Prisons in Mexico are both worse and better than they are in the United States. The prison were Siqueiros is held was built in 1910 and is overcrowded. If he wished to, he could "rent" a "cell of distinction" for about a hundred dollars a month where he would be very comfortable. He prefers to remain in a cell block where the railroad workers are confined, and so sleeps in a small room with three other men. He has more freedom of movement than is usual in a United States prison; during the day he can mingle freely with his fellow prisoners in his cell block. Also he has been given a room where, under the eyess of five guards, he is painting scenery for the prison theatre. He also has begun a portrait of a noted Mexican literary man who died recently, Alfonso Reyes. This had been commissioned by the National College.

He has been allowed to receive foreign newspapermen, but his visiting privileges are not on a par with those accorded to ordinary criminals. Readers are urged to write directly to President Mateos to protest Siqueiros' imprisonment.

DAVID ALFARO SIQUEIROS is the only living member of "L Tres Grandes"—the three greats of the Mexican mural moveme which burst upon the world in an intoxicating blend of color a revolutionary theme in the 1920's. During this past summer he has be working on a mural in the historic Castle of Chapultepec which was have been unveiled on November 20, the fiftieth anniversary of t Mexican Revolution. It occupies a space of 1200 square feet in the H of the Revolution and Siqueiros himself considers it one of the greate efforts of his life, "a synthesis of my revolutionary ideas with the mode conceptions of art."

The mural is unfinished. Siqueiros has been imprisoned by the sa government that commissioned him to paint it. He is under charges carrying arms, injuring policemen, resisting arrest and "dangerous attack

e government admits that he did not commit any of these offenses sonally nor even that he was present when these "crimes" allegedly re committed in the course of a student demonstration. It is because his outspoken support of militant labor in Mexico that he is presumed be responsible for whatever disorders have occurred.

The above charges are misdemeanors for which Siqueiros could have n released on bail. But he also has been charged with "social dissolu-n." This crime is a combination of the U.S. Criminal Syndicalism laws l the Smith Act all rolled up into one package. Passed in 1941, it er has been tested in the higher courts and the consensus of opinion ong outstanding Mexican lawyers is that it is unconstitutional. Since possible punishment (up to twelve years in prison) does not allow bail under the Mexican legal system, Siqueiros probably will wait jail for the two or three years that will elapse before the matter can ne before the Supreme Court.

Siqueiros was arrested on August 9, without a warrant and with the lence that one might expect of police who were apprehending a dan-ous murderer. For five days he was held incommunicado in a cell ched to the offices of the Prosecuting Attorney of the Federal District, ell without light or sanitary services. His wife was permitted to ng him food (none was provided) but was not allowed to see him, were attorneys nor journalists permitted to visit him. Finally he was t to jail, still without a judicial hearing, and since the weekend inter-ed he had no food at all for two days. Arrested on the same day was urnalist, Filomena Mata, 73 years old, who bears one of the illustrious nes of the Mexican Revolution. He had been jailed by Porfirio Diaz years ago with his father whose newspaper, "El Liberal", had offended regime. This generation's Filomena Mata still publishes a paper ed "El Liberal" and has offended the present regime in much the same as did his father, by openly criticizing it. The charges against him identical with the charges against Siqueiros.

Since these arrests were bound to provoke a world wide reaction— ngelica Arenal de Siqueiros, the painter's wife, recently published a of 360 personages and many organizations outside of Mexico who sent protests to the President) the question arises as to why the me felt them to be necessary.

The answer lies on the dinner plate of the average Mexican family. ween 1950 and 1957 the average monthly earnings of the lowest one of Mexican families dropped from $22.00 to $19.80. The next % maintained the level of earnings but not their level of real wages, in that time spiralling prices had greatly decreased what the housewife

government efforts to hold down the prices of the poor man's beans an tortillas, they had gone up sharply. At the same time the gross nation product increased 48% in the seven years and the top 30% of th population increased their income by 30%. The top 5% skimmed off th cream to take 37% of the national income.* In other words the ric were getting richer in Mexico; there are an astonishing number c Cadillacs on the streets of Mexico City in spite of a government ta that doubles their cost. The poor, who have lived with dirt and diseas could put on the dinner table. Meat prices had almost doubled; in spite c and malnutrition for years, were getting so much poorer that soci disturbances were bound to follow.

Although there was a small, but militant labor movement in Mexic before the Revolution (Siqueiros' central panel in his unfinished mur depicts the miners' strike of 1906 which was a revolutionary stor warning) the labor movement in the last twenty years has been supin Built into the country's constitution is a Mediation plan which provid for three arbiters of any labor dispute, one from management, one fro labor, and one from government. As long as the government retained i truly revolutionary character, this provision served as a protection f weak unions, but once the government began to ally itself with th rising bourgeoisie, the measure was turned into its opposite. Preside Adolfo Lopez Mateos was Minister of Labor under the previous regim and he had a record of "settling" labor disputes second to none.

In the Spring of 1958, however, when Lopez Mateos had resigne to become the ruling party's candidate for President, labor began move. A strike of Telegraph workers for higher wages was won. The Section IX of the Teachers Union—the elementary school and kinde garten teachers of Mexico City—struck for higher wages.

It is interesting to note that these first strike movements did n originate in the most depressed class of all—the peasants, but amon workers who were concentrated in cities, for the most part, and who we organized in unions, even though the leadership of those unions was wea and corrupt. The city workers were subjected to special econom pressures. The general cost of living in the country has increased five tim in the past twenty years, and in the cities probably even more because rent raises. Clothing is a small item for the peasant, but a school teach must be presentably dressed even though she earns no more than $72.0 a month. (Clothes are more expensive in Mexico than in the Unit States.) Even by holding two, or even three jobs, even with eve

*These figures taken from "Income Distribution and Economic Development of Mexic by Ifigenia Navarrete, a government economist.

mber of the family working, people in this wage category could not ke ends meet. This and nothing else accounted for the upsurge of labor er so many years of compliance.

The teacher's strike was led by a teacher from the rank and file— by the official union leaders. It was marked by a sit-in of 38 s in the patio of the Ministry of Education, the growing sup- t of other teachers and of parents, and by police violence which luded the beating up and gassing of teachers in a peaceful demonstra- n in front of the Government Palace. The teachers won their strike, but en elections were held, the National Executive Committee refused to w the overwhelming will of the teachers of Section IX to prevail— y imposed their own set of officers. The resulting demonstrations of port for the legally elected officers by both teachers and students e attacked by the police. In the latest of these, students were beaten, gassed, and one student was killed. This was the source of the charges inst Siqueiros; he was supposed to have "inspired" the students violence.

To go back to the summer of 1958, the Teachers' strike was followed a strike of the main section of the railroad workers. The same tern that had obtained in the earlier strikes was seen in this one , i.e. the workers struck against the government itself which was their ployer; they bypassed the bribed and corrupted official leaders to choose lership from the rank and file; they won their demands. The strike beeen brilliantly organized under the leadership of Demetrio Vallejo, an ress railwayman, who earned $58.40 a month. It began with a series stoppages, each day a little longer, until finally the whole central way system was paralyzed. The workers won a general increase of .20 per man. An election was held and Vallejo, was made General etary—at the same salary he had received as an express railwayman.

The pot continued to boil. That same summer the government an- nced an increase in bus fares and this produced a militant student e. Such an increase hit the student pocket book especially hard since beautiful new plant of the University of Mexico is located at the edge of the city and most students had to pay four fares daily. (To modate students who must work, many classes are held in the early nings and in the evenings. The army was called out against the ents, but this strike also was won.

While these dramatic events were going on, two sections of the oil kers began to make demands. A sit-in in the patio of their main ding and a large delegation of women to the leadership were met violence and tear gas. Soldiers called to the scene showed a disposi-

tion to fraternize with the workers—a circumstance which must have bee most alarming to a government which had not faced militant labo action for many years.

On September 6, 1958, there was a social explosion in Mexico Cit It was precipitated by the teachers who announced a public demonstr tion of support for the rank and file candidates in Section IX who election the official leadership had refused to recognize. The demonstr tion had the support of all the unions mentioned for solidarity betwee them had been cemented during their stuggles. It was met by the mo brutal attack from police, riot squads and army; there was a pall of te gas over the Alameda in the center of down town Mexico's touri section; fighting continued in the streets for twelve hours. Among upp class circles, frenzied rumors were circulated that a new revolution w coming and the government was about to fall.

This explosive situation was "handled" by the President-elect Lop Mateos. He held conferences with all of the rank-and-file leaders of t Unions. Lopez Mateos was once a barefoot boy and a Socialist; the worke felt that there was good reason to place their confidence in him. Wi the skill which had held strikes to a minimum during his term in t Ministry of Labor, he made promises that all would be well under h administration and the leaders agreeds to call off further demonstratio

In the early months of his regime, the new President kept some of h promises. He released those who had been arrested on September as well as some agricultural leaders who had been languishing in j without a trial. He began a crash program for the building of ne schools and he made some divisions of lands. The honeymoon did n last long.

The next stage of the struggle produced the situation out of whi came the arrest of Siqueiros and Filomena Mata. In March 1959, t Railroad Workers made an attempt to secure the same gains that h been won on the central lines for the workers on the smaller railw lines of the country. (All of the railways are government owned but th are divided into several systems.) Abandoning all of his social-democra pretensions, President Lopez Mateos struck back hard. In one night ov five thousand militants were arrested all over the country, placed military stockades, held without bail. Other thousands were fired fr their jobs. The Union had prepared various layers of leadership; as so as a new set of leaders appeared it was discovered and arrested. T strike was broken and for some months there was little sign of milita action from the Mexican people.

Recently the teachers called another strike in an attempt to obt

cognition for their properly elected leadership, and for an end to the vernment's punitive actions against militant teachers. A student demstration in support of the teachers was brutally attacked by police on gust 4. The violence on that day (which from published photographs uld seem to be all from the police side) produced the charges against queiros and Filomena Mata, as has been explained. But the social uggle is so interlocked that there can be no doubt that their activities support of the jailed railroad strikers was their real "crime." Siqueiros the Chairman of a Committee in Defense of Political Prisoners which d just held a large National Assembly. Filomena Mata published beracion", the official organ of the Committee. The work of the Comttee has been to collect relief funds for the sixty railroad workers who nain in jail (most of them under charges of "social dissolution"), and agitate for their release.

In the meantime a number of other events had occurred which aggraed the political crisis in Mexico. The first of these was the revolution Cuba which has the profound adherence of the people of Mexico upled with a luke-warm attitude on the part of the Mexican governnt. Tied to the apron strings of U.S. policy as it is, the government has nned meetings in support of Cuba and the police have beaten up and sed students who wished to demonstrate their friendship for Cuba. queiros is a member of the Friends of Cuba society and has marched demonstrations, but was not one of its active leaders.

Another important event, not to be underestimated, was the recent rganization of a moribund Communist Party. Siqueiros is an active mmunist and is said to have taken a leading part in the party congress ich demoted the old leadership and charted a militant course for the ure. He is a member of its Central Committee and of the Political reau (not its General Secretary as has been erroneously reported in both Mexican and the American press).

A third matter that undoubtedly contributed to the arrest of Siqueiros s his outspoken criticism of the present regime and of its President en he lectured in Cuba and in Venezuela where he had been comssioned to paint murals. He characterized the government's action in railroad strike as follows, "The worst aggression committed by any vernment against the working class in the life of our country . . . worse in its scale and in its unconstitutional nature, than any comted by Avila Camacho, Aleman, or Ruiz Cortines." He went on to mmit the unpardonable sin of *lese majesté*. "The direct legal responlity of this aggression rests with the President of the Republic." It he fashion in Mexico to present any criticism of the government

as the failure of some Ministry or bureau, but never as the fault of th President. The acerbic comments of American columnists on the offic and the person of the President are considered bad form in Mexic Siqueiros was bold enough to make the following statements in Ven ezuela a few days before Lopez Mateos made a good-will visit there.

"The President has such power that he can be called the Empero of the Republic."

"The government over which Adolfo Lopez Mateos presides repre sents the lowest stage of a descending line which Avila Camacho bega in an uninterrupted counter revolutionary process." Many people i Mexico believe that there is an element of personal revenge in Siqueiro arrest.

David Alfaro Siqueiros has been a political figure ever since he wa an art student and took part in student strikes against the usurpatio of Huerta. In 1913 he joined the revolutionary force and became Captain. In the 20's he was equally concerned with the beginnings o the Mexican Mural movement and with the struggles of the workers. H organized miners and in 1927 was the General Secretary of the Worker Confederation of the State of Jalisco. He lived in exile for a numbe of years because of his political activities. When the Spanish Civil Wa began, he volunteered and fought under General Lister as a Majo Later he was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and commanded the 29t Brigade. He has been a communist for many years and once served a General Secretary of the party.

Siqueiros has been a stormy petrel in the art world also. During th past three years there has been a campaign in Mexican and Lati American periodicals to depreciate the Mexican movement and especiall Siqueiros. A prominent Mexican artist and muralist, Jose Chavez Morad expressed it this way: "Besides wanting to break the humanistic, realist form of our art, Siqueiros' detractors want to break an artist who link his art with civil rights and the independence of people. They want smash the power that the revolutionary artists had and intimidate th younger artists."

It would seem that the arrest of Siqueiros and the charges again him represent the government's message to the artists and intellectua of Mexico to keep quiet about Cuba and especially to cease all solidari gestures toward the working class. If the reaction to the arrest is a indication, the government's move has failed. Protests have come fro the National Conservatory of Music, from 87 members of the Nation Symphony Orchestra, from the students and teachers of two gover ment-sponsored art academies. A Committee for the Defense of Siquei

s been formed with a broad list of sponsors. In the recently held Bienal owing of paintings and sculpture from both continents, ninety Mexican ists refused to show their works with the result that the Mexican nibition was notably weak. Artists who did hang were boycotted by eir students. Six foreign artists who were guests of the Bienal petitioned e government for the right to pay a visit to Siqueiros. They included k Levine from the United States, winner of the First Prize in the t Bienal; and five Latin Americans, two of whom won prizes and one whom was a member of the Jury. Not only were they not permitted to it Siqueiros; they did not even receive the courtesy of a reply.

In a campaign of demagogy that has few parallels, President Lopez ateos has said that his government is "of the extreme left within the nstitution." He also had announced that social progress will march ward in an orderly fashion; i.e. within the pattern that a paternal- c government has decided upon.

In recent weeks there have been some alarming developments. A nate Committee on Un-Mexican Activities has been formed. In the te of Oaxaca a professor has been accused of "social dissolution" possessing literature "that constitutes propaganda for the diffusion ideas; . . . of a foreign government, that is to say, of the Soviet ion." A meeting of the Workers' and Peasants' Party (a liberal party) ich had been called to discuss the existence of certain large lati- ndia, was broken up by the army. The government plainly intends to et any movement of the workers by force, but in the meantime, the nding cost of living continues to make militants, not to say new olutionists.

From his prison cell Siqueiros summed up the present situation in xico as follows: "I am a victim of a political policy, which, when annot win a discussion—(in this case our public debate on the freeing political prisoners and the defense of constitutional guarantees) takes a pistol and shouts, 'Shut Up.' But prison does not extinguish a itical position that is revolutionary and historically just. My jailing not weakened my position but has strengthened it."

# A MIDNIGHT CONVERSATION

*MIKHAIL LUKONIN*

This poem, although complete in itself, is part of a cycle of poems which was published in consecutive issues of the Soviet literary journal, *October*. *A Midnight Conversation* (*October*, #9, September, 1959) shows the reactions of ordinary Soviet workers to the disclosures about Stalin. (The 21 of December marks the 81st anniversary of Stalin's birth.)

Mikhail Lukonin, the author, was born in Stalingrad in 1918, saw action in the Second World War, and was first published in the early forties. He is connected with the "Young Stalingrad Writers," and writes often about the young workers in that city. Perhaps his most widely read poem is "Road to Peace."

Here is your portrait, with you lighting your pipe,
Your face familiar to the very pock-marks,
Your arm imperiously and powerfully forming an arc over the flam
of the match.

The sound of a winter night-storm whistles through the village of Bykovo
Six March months have passed by already,
Six years!
Moving on into a new life,
The people of Bykovo
Have carried your portrait along with them
And have been taking good care of it.

A shaft of smoke.
Around a little stove—brought together by chance—
A gang of truck drivers
Wait for the weather to let up, cursing the roads.
A penetrating odor steams off their sheepskin coats.
Questions,
arguments
and stories into the morning.
And your portrait.
It has been covered with glass
and framed.
One of the drivers gets up
And walking over to the picture
stares at it fixedly.
And suddenly says:

–Well how are things going, Comrade Stalin?—
ınd that is the way
)ur midnight talk begins.

'ou've heard what was said
At the Congress, haven't you?
Jow our jails and
Camps are emptying out . . .
–Nothing but spies left there.
–They shouldn't be crawling in here.
–And murderers and thieves too . . .
–It is not for nothing that they are in jail.
: has been six years since we have stopped living with our
guard up . . .
–But perhaps we shouldn't have talked that way about him.
Ie would have remained our eternal legend . . .

t this point somebody suddenly speaks up:
–How about changing the subject.
verybody laughs.
—You can change the subject if you want to.
here's no law
against talking now.
would be different
if some snake came crawling around,
ıen we'd . . .—and the driver clenches his fist.
nd they all fall silent.
ıddenly you could hear the snow storm.
–Look at what's going on!
here's no end to the winter in sight.

ne of the drivers,
not so young, picks up a clump of wood and says wearily·
-You call this winter?
's in Kolyma that you have the real frosts!
Vhat have legends got to do with all of this?
he continues,
sitting down near the stove.
-"He would have remained . . ."
'e'll be alive even without the legends.
nd since we've spoken up,
Vhy play blind man's bluff?

Life goes on; our souls have been laid bare.
And life is asking questions of us fellows.
You say:
"We shouldn't have . . ."
But how then
Could I have explained things
When I came back?
Of what was I guilty in the eyes of people?
I understand:
we were walking a difficult path
Our first steps weren't easy to take.
We measured ourselves
By severe measure
And all our old enemies were still around;
they were sly ones, no denying that.
They were wild beasts!
They became our "friends,"
and howled flatteringly to insure themselves for the future.
They did everything possible to divert the people
and draw them away from life
and from us . . .
Just think! how much has been done:
factories
smoke is pouring out of the factories . . .
how much has been done in the country . . .
can we libel those years?
Do you just blot years out?
just tell me.

—Factories yes! Such power . . .
say thank you for them
But he didn't know our farm life,
he had lost contact
—We might have been far ahead now.
—The old man didn't know the village.
—He did once, but he'd forgotten.
You know, I've thought about it all.
Here am I seated as if enthroned,
And right near the running-board of my truck, there is some grai
piled up.
There is no one there to guard it

yet no one touches it.
m would you have been able to sit by like that
a short time back?
You just said: "We shouldn't have . . ."
about the legend
and all that . . .
fe
and the party
have stated the truth.
'e have not disturbed his peace
t that frank talk
s helped us all . . .

ıe snow storm lets up
and passes us by;
d off there in the distance
you can hear the sound of the last truck fading away.
nd I jot down this midnight conversation for myself,
this thin little schoolboy's notebook.

*Translated by Bernard L. Koten*

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR *NEW YORK POST*

*ıe Winston Case*

Is is not sadistic for a government to keep imprisoned a blind and partially ralyzed political prisoner?

This situation exists right here in the United States. In spite of the fact it he is eligible for parole, Henry Winston, a Negro Communist leader who nt blind in jail, still languishes behind bars.

Surely this can only appear as cruel vindictiveness to the peoples of the orld. Can this be the way in which the U.S. asserts its moral leadership? I onder what each of our Presidential candidates will do about this case.

HAROLD BRADEN

# REPORT FROM BERLIN

*PHILLIP BONOSKY*

*East Berlin*

HIS name I had first heard when I was still a boy just leaving High School. It was mentioned in connection with the burning of the Reichstag in Berlin, along with the names of others, now known forever to history. He had been thrown into prison, then, and it was his name that we cried when we picketed the embassies over which hung the monstrous flag with its hooked cross.

And now I was hearing the name and seeing the name again, almost thirty years later: here where they had shot him in Buchenwald. The spot is covered with flowers. To one side stands the gaunt gallows. Only a few feet further are the ovens into which his body, like hundreds of thousands of others, disappeared. His name was Ernst Thaelmann, and his fate was the fate Germany's and Europe's millions, sacrificed on the altar of German imperialism in its most rabid form under that creature created and spawned by the West: Hitler.

Shortly before he died, he smuggled a letter out of prison in which he poignantly predicted his own murder, and at the same time reaffirmed his confidence in ultimate victory—a victory still unwon, a struggle still in deadly course with new personalities, new names but the same ends in view. While I was in Germany, the heirs of Hitler, unoriginal to the last, were returning to the scene of their first great crime—the Reichstag—threatening to refurbish its smoke-stained ruins and reopening that sinister monument to death and horror as an "outpost of democracy," hoping 30 years later that where Hitler failed they will succeed at the same spot, in the same building, seeking for new Van der Lubbes, new Goerings, new Goebbels . . .

As I stand, hopelessly unable to encompass the fact that I stand where thousands died, nevertheless I hear the voice of Hitler returned in the senile and vicious accents of an Adenauer as he quavers to the new Pope in Rome that Germany was ordained by God to erect a "dike for the West against the powerful influence that militates against us from the East." It is just as necessary that this voice be complemented by a voice from Judaism as well, for the next mass murder of Jews cannot be done without the assistance of certain *Judenrats,* and Ben-Gurion supplies the Judas-goat accents: "There is anti-Semitism, there is Nazism, perhaps

high places, but that does not make a people a nation of murderers . . ."
nd this seals then the sale of sub-machine guns, made in Israel, to the
Vest German army. In exchange for the last murder, Krupp agrees to
ay a little over a $1,000 each to the surviving Jewish slave laborers if they
ill agree to free him of his past murders and what remains of his
onscience.

But now, instead of the Cyclone gas, with its German trademark, being
adied for use, it is the monstrous bomb, marked Made in U.S.A., that
denauer is waving over the world like a mad and epileptic Hitler.
uchenwald does not stir his conscience, any more than it stirred the
onsciences of those retired office-holders and petty-bourgeois traders
ho lived blissfully in Weimar just five miles from here, eating Polish
am, drinking stolen French champagne, and on a windy day, closing the
indows against the rank smell of bodies burning. No—they all say
ven now—they were not aware that such things were going on so
ose to their beautiful city of Weimar where Goethe and Schiller lived.
or did they see those long columns of doomed men as they marched
ast their doors to the gates of Hell, welcomed by the grim and mocking
eeting wrought in iron: *Jedem das Seine*: To Each His Fate. They
rug: they are the survivors.

Two coffins sit side by side within a mausoleum where the Hollen-
llerns also lie, their gold-encrusted coffins in tarnished glory, pushed
npatiently aside into the webby shadows: the coffins of Goethe and
hiller. They were the best in humanist thought that Germany has
oduced. But that thought could not prevent their own descendants,
ose even who read their works as they perpetrated their crimes (as I
as told), from committing the most barbarous crimes of this or any
ntury. I stand at the huge memorial to the uncountable dead, and look
er the ever-peaceful vista to Weimar visible in the mild sunlight
d hear the tolling of the bell in the tower warning the world cease-
ssly: Beware, take heed from our deaths!

Everybody now agrees that to murder as the Nazis murdered was
ime beyond crime. But not everybody tells the truth even now, even
anding on the burned bones of countless victims.

Children troop through the museum devoted to the Resistance,
the mementoes of Buchenwald, gape at the lamp shades of human
in, or the piles of baby shoes and the clothes made of women's lovely
ir; and pass on no more perhaps and no less children than before.
least, the German Democratic Republic teaches its children that
urderers once roamed and ruled the land; in the West, nobody teaches
e children that the murderers are among them, for the murderers teach

the teachers there. There in the West they send their children to American movies, like Tennessee Williams' *Suddenly Last Summer,* which continues the peculiar examination of sub-humans without teaching anything about them. West Berliners, with the blessing of the Social-Democratic mayor, are told that the victims of Hitler, across the dividing line, are anti-democratic and deserving of new crematoria—let no one forget that the road to Hell was paved with social-democratic intentions. Willie Brandt, the sinister mayor of West Berlin, has not taken a poll among the dead, who cannot be heard by him when the American generals speak. That is why he connives at the cynical policy of attempting to undermine East Germany's economy, sending over West Germans like locusts and leeches to take whatever they can from East Germany's workingclass and bearing it off. There, too, Walter Reuther makes a yearly pilgrimage to speak on behalf of "freedom," knowing full well, because once before he has said so, such speeches are only paving stones in the road to Hell. The Nazis, too, spoke in their own way "for the workers" and for work and freedom: at the gates of Terezin in Czechoslovakia are the words written tall: *Arbeit Mach Frei,* and the "workers" were indeed "made free"—in the ovens, as one of the survivors of that camp told me, the horror of it still in her eyes.

There can no longer be any real confusion—at least there cannot be among sophisticated people—as to what policy leads where. Reuther cannot misunderstand Adenauer; neither can George Meany, who accepted a medal in advance for as yet unnamed crimes, from this man's boney hands which ache to kill. It is impossible to protest at this late date that one does not understand. Anti-Communism, as Thomas Mann understood so well and said so, is the greatest hoax of our century. It leads straight to Buchenwald; and it is not the Communist alone who ends there, as the world well knows. To plot war on the plea that one must save "democracy" from communism is to carry on the work laid down by Hitler, to carry on—as James B. Carey said—"the war against communism allied with fascism." One can easily fall into the grave one digs for others; which would be poetic justice enough—except that such gravediggers drag millions into the grave with them.

I have visited East Germany—the German Democratic Republic—for 12 days: one day for each year that fascism was in power. I have watched at first hand the open struggle that goes on here at the frontier between imperialism and socialism—one can pass from one social system to the other in a few minutes' stroll, or pay a few *pfennigs* and cross from East to West Berlin and vice-versa by subway. But until one has actually seen it, he can hardly realize just what this means. Among the many

tions spun by our myth-makers on Madison Avenue and the State epartment is the fiction of West Berlin as the "outpost of democracy." est Berlin is decked out like a whore, with everything that glitters cluding Hollywood movies and the bare behinds of girls in night- ub acts, with sick jazz and *Life* magazines: all this is calculated to be esistable to an East German should he come over to look, especially e very young. He may go to see the latest sex-and-sadism movie from ollywood for almost nothing if he shows his E. German passport. He n spend his E. German marks, at four to one, among the various ores where the prices however are higher than in the East, though the ods are more glamorous. If he smuggles over a good Zeiss camera d sells it in the West, so much the better: the East loses, the West ins, and he too loses his soul in the process of gaining his mess of ttage. The United States policy is quite simple: it is based on the inciple that everybody has a price and anybody can be seduced; East rliners are to be infected, not with ideas of democracy but like those no love not wisely nor well, with ideas of neo-fascism, just as any man ll pick up a disease if he lies down with whores.

West Berliners, on the other hand, come over in droves to take nat they can of goods (which they can steal only with the connivance a corrupted East Berliner doing the buying for them), or of culture, om the world-famous Bertoldt Brecht theatre, the *Komische Opera,* the Staat Opera, as well as the symphonies. One goes to the *Komische pera* and feels surrounded by a special type of human being, already ctic with some subtle disease visible only too clearly in the faces of those no live on the sweat of others: they are the mixed breed of American rists, West Berliners, well-to-do Englishmen, etc. There are scarcely y seats left for the East Berliners themselves.

I spent almost an entire day with the customs control of East Berlin, nich covered the subway traffic between the two parts. It was an extra- linary and in many ways a depressing experience. The customs officials, quite young and dedicated, cast their eyes over the commuters of each in as it arrives in this last station in the Eastern zone before passing er, and you may be sure that the woman who looks most like your ntly grandmother or Whistler's no-less saintly mother, carrying a suit- e or bundle, will be the one the official takes off and conducts to the ce where she is ordered to open up her bundle for inspection. As likely not, these suitcases will disgorge chickens, crystal ware, cameras, liquor: ything that will bring a price on the Western side. It was quite an perience to see these "freedom fighters" at close hand. Their dem- ratic beliefs apparently began with the new first commandment: Thou

shalt steal everything you can lay hands on and spirit it over to th West.

I saw one woman caught with 7,000 marks hidden in the secret par of her clothing and body; she was engaged in transferring East marks fro one side to the other and exchanging them for West Marks. Another woma was carrying everything but the kitchen sink; when she opened a suit case up popped a feather bedding, like a jack-in-the-box, pure Germa *hausfrau* there even in crime. She had 3,000 marks on her as well a other tokens of her democratic beliefs: she was on her way "fleeing" to th West from tyranny and persecution. Apparently she also wanted politica asylum for the dead chicken she brought along! She stood there, cold faced, stoney-eyed, sister to the Bitch of Buchenwald; there was not th slightest twinge of conscience visible or even embarrassment at bein caught red-handed. These "freedom fighters" have managed to becom a real menace to East Germany's economy. Over 3 million marks wort of goods and money are confiscated from them every 6 months; but thi represents only a 1% check of the passengers. How many millions mark worth of goods gets through undetected is anyone's guess.

But such sabotage, serious and repulsive in human terms as it may b is not so grievous as another form, more callous really and more disillu sioning. I mean the "flight" of technicians, doctors, mathematicians an other specialists, many of whom owed their entire education to th sacrifice of East Germany's workingclass. Hearing the siren song of th West, a sharp percentage of them lost all sense of gratitude and commo humanity, and decamped, not for political reasons—this represents a sma minority of the motives for going West—but in pursuit of the dollar.

Of course West Germany encourages all this. The penalties mete out to the smugglers by the East Berlin authorities are judicious: the distinguish between the amateurs who want only to raise some easy cas but do not conceive of themselves as enemies of the republic, and th repeaters and professionals who are in league with a West Germa sabotage organization.

I watched the apprehensions and listened to the interrogations. It's sad, sad story: the people are mostly victims not criminals, seduced b West Berlin's glittering promises which they hear any time of the da over the radio and TV.

Not all the work of the customs officials is grim, however—as saw. One of the young officials (they seem to average about 25 years brought in a pretty blonde, who stood tapping her tiny toe indignant as she exposed the contents of her bag; and then swished off when sh was cleared. The other young officials could hardly control their laughte

d they accused the guard of bringing her in only because she was etty, which he didn't deny.

It is a strange feeling to hear a broadcast in English by Americans om West Berlin. Those broadcasts never stop: day in and day out e burden of their song is to corrupt as many people as possible, to lure em into their traps, to turn them into agents against the best hope the world. Over 80 agencies devoted to sabotage, espionage and propanda have their headquarters in West Berlin. They employ thousands; e supposes they have practically the entire population of West Berlin their payroll in one capacity or another. There is no economic base West Berlin for supporting the population honestly. The population on a kind of political dole from the West Germans and Americans. ie West Germans pay a special tax to keep the West Berliners living a level of comfort they are not accustomed to and have no honest ght to. The "standard of living" in West Berlin is considerably higher an the standard in West Germany as a whole. The population there is erally spoonfed like animals that are pampered for some big occasion other: the "big occasion" is what Major Bruno Winzer, press officer the West German Air Force headquarters, revealed to the public after fecting from West Germany (to be followed soon after by other litary officers in strategic positions). At his press conference he realed plans of Adenauer's minions (with of course approval of the ATO forces) for invading East Germany in blitzkrieg fashion, cutting all help from East Germany's allies and confronting the U.S.S.R. with *ait accompli,* and daring it then to start reprisals, which would certainly en turn into a world war.

An absolutely mad and stupid plan, it could only end in disaster: for viet armed forces are stationed in East Germany and are not apparently eep. Khrushchev delivered, very succinctly, the answer to this plan: the German strategists want to commit suicide, that's their affair ." For if Adenauer were "even to lift a finger against the socialist ıntries, we would smash him." The question, however, is whether lenauer is not willing to risk certain destruction of German forces ovided the conflict begun that way would extend to a war with eventual tory for his side.

The German Democratic Republic is under the direction of a valiant d heroic group of anti-fascists, fully aware of their role in preserving ace and saving Germany from destruction. I met two types of admirable rmans in key spots—the very old and the very young. In between is that ge mass of middle-aged Germans who lived through Hitler's palmiest ys, blinded by visions of endless trainloads of spoils from the plundered

European capitals, easy slave labor, easy living all around. They did not resist Hitler. If one probed into the hearts of some of them—who knows how many?—one would find that they still believed that not Hitler's aims but only his methods and tactics were wrong, and not morally wrong but only because they didn't succeed. Nevertheless, they remain in East Germany for one reason or another (and those who could not endure the process of humanization fled to the West) and do their day's work, and whatever else they believe, they do not want to end up cannon fodder for any new mad adventures. Perhaps they will never become positive supporters of socialism; perhaps at best only passive supporters. But meanwhile they work and live, and their children grow up human instead.

But there is a stratum of Germans who survived everything: concentration camps, war, exile, underground struggle; and when Germany was freed by the Red Army, they came back and, sick as some of them were, old as others were, picked up their duties again, and went out to build socialism. Over 30,000 German Communists fell in the underground anti-fascist struggle. Thousands of others—Social Democrats and non-party anti-fascists, also fell. They were the first victims of Hitler. Others struggled against Hitler before, during and after the war, living charmed lives, though the burden upon their spirits and bodies was incalculable.

I met, for instance, a woman surely in her late 60's or early 70's in charge of the educational apparatus of one section of East Berlin's educational system. She had been a Left Social-Democrat before Hitler; had spent several years in a concentration camp, and when she was released continued her underground work throughout the war, and survived. She should have been retired long ago; but she was working ceaselessly to bring to the young her own vision of purity and courage that carried her through the darkest night of the human soul. When I asked her why Hitler's demogogy had not influenced her, she told me, with a slight smile: "We read Marx, Lenin and Stalin, and Hitler could not influence us . . ." Survivors who found courage in the works and name of Stalin during the darkest days and nights of their lives mourn him as a hero who was a victim and do not expunge his name from their memories.

I spent, too, a memorable afternoon with Bruno Apitz, the author of *Naked Among Wolves,* which has become a big hit in Germany and elsewhere. Unique among books on concentration camps, this book has been described as an "optimistic book," although it deals with life in Buchenwald, where Apitz had been an inmate for almost 12 years. It is the story of how the prisoners managed to save a Jewish baby from destruction, outwitting the camp officials in many original and daring ways

Apitz still has a gaunt look, with piercing black eyes, hollowed cheeks. e weighed hardly 90 pounds when he came out of Buchenwald, and en most of his stomach was taken out. But he has a nervous energy ich is all the more surprising when one learns such facts, in addition the fact that he was celebrating his 60th birthday. He had been a ialist since 1914, and had become a member of the German Com- nist Party at the earliest possible moment. Arrested in 1933, because, said to me sardonically, "I had a different opinion of things from tler," he was released that same year, engaged in anti-fascist under- ound work, was rearrested and spent the next 12 years in Buchenwald. ere too he continued his resistance work; he was in charge of "cultural" ivities among the prisoners. "Laughter," he told me, "was my assign- nt: to make the prisoners laugh. Laughter was as necessary as bread. kept them alive." So he composed and directed satirical skits, wrote, ed. "You could tell the Communist prisoners because they were the yest ones" choosing a strange unlikely word to describe prisoners in chenwald.

The story of Buchenwald is probably well-known by now. It is known, doubt, that the political prisoners managed to secure the internal nagement of the camp from the professional criminals in whose hands e Nazi commandant had first placed it. An international resistance mmittee, with representatives of every nationality imprisoned in the np, directed the resistance. Workers conducted ingenious and far- ching sabotage. They were forced as slave laborers to work in the nament shops near the camp where they made weapons—but 20-30 rcent didn't work, or what was more diabolocal, shot backward and led the killer; or they "fixed" cars so that they might run 200 ometres without trouble, and then stop dead.

The resistance was so effectively organized that as the war was ending, was able to contact by clandestine radio the oncoming Americans, and the final moment, it was they themselves who freed themselves with apons they had secretly accumulated for that moment.

It is no use pretending, as I sit across from this man, that I under- nd him. I do not. He tries to bridge the hopeless gap between those o lived and those who came back from the dead with sardonic humor, cause there is something grotesque in speaking about these things to American who cannot possibly, by no effort of the imagination, compass them. For instance, he speaks of the food in 1937 as "good." consisted of 20 grams of bread each day, margarine, a sausage, and e quart of soup. It was of course a starvation diet. The day's ration bread was issued the night before, and of course the prisoners ate the

bread on the spot and had nothing the following day.

But even this diet thinned down later. It always seemed to rain and they carried heavy logs on raw shoulders through the mud, ove seen by the brutal *kapos*. As I had seen with my own eyes, they wer forced, among other senseless punishments, to drag a cart full of rocks fo the guards' amusement. The square chimney rose over the crematori and it was always black with smoke. On the gallows somebody hung, o stretched against the electrified wire some other prisoner stood or droope in the last moment of his agony. Those who were to die—and th guards preferred that they died as easy as possible, giving them as littl trouble as possible—were led into a room ostensibly for a physica examination; as if they were to be measured for their heights, they wer asked to place their heads between two measuring clamps, and whe their heads were in position a guard sent a bullet through them. Or the were taken direct to the "showers" where they died en masse fro Cyclone gas, which, made enormous profits for a German firm, whos directors and profit-takers now live at their ease in "democratic" Wes Germany.

The anti-fascist underground was able to wrest control of th internal management of the camp, which included the power of takin names off the death transport list. There has been criticism voiced inevi ably because the power of life and death lay in their hands to the exte that they could take a name off the list, though the total number c victims had to tally with the commandant's orders. The undergroun adopted the policy that they would save all those who could be usefu to post-Hitler Germany, which they were certain would come: scientist artists, writers—regardless of political affiiliation. It moved me to se how earnestly Apitz spoke to convince me that they had preserved hon in Hell. It would take a fantastic bluntness of soul to presume to con and judge these men—how can a man who has his whole stomach judg a man who has left only a fraction of his? I told him I only listene

"Those who had a purpose and a meaning—an ideology—survived he told me. "The others perished."

The day that Hitler invaded Russia was a somber day for the ant fascists in Buchenwald, and his early victories depressed them all. But the were certain of his eventual defeat. I asked him how he, a Communis managed to retain his faith in the German working class when it ev went to war against socialism? "But the German workingclass ha already failed in 1933," he said. He was a prisoner in Buchenwald becau they had. But he was a Communist, and today he is more a Co munist than ever. "Without it, I would be nothing," he told me simp

om that perspective, by the way, he found it quite possible to absorb e Stalin revelations and other problems that came up in 1956. For en who had touched levels beyond all ordinary human level there was room left for illusion or for disillusion: the struggle transcended erything.

This kind of German one meets throughout Germany, doing the work ey had dedicated their entire lives to. It is a kind of German that is precedented in revolutionary history; for they had to survive the bitterest ow of all, the failure of their own workingclass at a most crucial moment.

The struggle to change the German people is a struggle beset with ormous difficulties. Imagine, if you can, a hard-working honest man oring in his garden to raise food, on his house to repair the roof, r his family who need both desperately; and then imagine a neighbor, nical, rich, with others working for him, loaded down with luxuries and spired by no other purpose than to jeer at his hardworking neighbor y in and day out, try to seduce his children with candy and "fun," ugh at his wife, sow suspicion and rancor between husband and wife, d every time the man turns his back, sets some bullies to tear up the rden, knock holes again in the roof. Imagine that, and you will have a irly good working idea of what East Germany has to cope with.

But effective as such methods have been in the past, they are losing eir force with every passing day. As Anna Seghers told me: "Whenever go and visit West Berlin I am struck by the faces I see there. The ces on the other side are blank: they seem to think about nothing. ere, at least, on our side, the people have been forced to think about cial problems, and their faces show it."

Anna Seghers is only one of the German writers who returned East Germany after the war, but she is representative of the majority German writers, for most of them chose East Germany or no Germany all, like Thomas Mann.

The youth of East Germany clearly have the fate of their country in eir hands. This is not a rhetorical remark, not here: for literally Ger- ny's destiny will depend on whether or not the youth will accept it and fend it. Observers here tell me, with confidence, that the youth are mmitted to socialism, as are the majority of the workingclass; the iance has begun to swing from West now to East, as East Germany oves more and more often that it can beat West Germany on its own ounds. It is beginning to produce more per capita than the West, and course it is free from economic crises, including the abnormal and ctic "booms" which do as much to undermine character as do the sts." Now the trend of emigration has changed in ratio between those

who leave and those who come; a great percentage of those who left for the West now return, chastened and enlightened. Few in this world have such an opportunity to test both societies and then choose between them. The qualitative importance of those who return is far higher than those who never return.

I visited famous Stalinstadt, which is called "a socialist city." It was wholly built after Germany was liberated, a new city standing where only fields were before, where the average age is 34 and where the birth rate is the highest in Germany. It is a city producing iron, and soon steel; it booms with new attractive housing, it has a Friedrich Wolfe theatre; it has numerous nurseries, fine schools, athletic facilities, up-to-date hospitals: everything that socialism brings to make life more beautiful and significant to the working class.

As an ex-steelworker myself I could not help but make comparisons between what the steelworker in the U.S.A. gets in return for his sweat and his life and what the German worker gets: literally the difference is a world. The steelworkers at home were being laid off by the thousands, with steel production falling to less than 50% capacity. But here in Stalinstaat work was booming; they were hurrying to build a steel mill to add to the blast furnaces and foundries, which are fired with "brown coal," that is, lignite—a substance which only the ingenuity of the German chemists turned into a fuel for a country that is short of coal.

I was much interested in how the young were taught, and myself "taught" a class in Berlin. It was a class in English for 17-year-olds. Most of the hour was devoted to answering questions about American life. The students read Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, Langston Hughes, W. E. B. Dubois, and others, in English. They all had the look of workers' children. Only yesterday, as times goes, they would have been sitting drinking in race poison, but today they are told that all races are equal; they suffer therefore with the Negro people, they dream of full equality for the peoples of the entire world. They were being taught by a German woman in her sixties who had come out of retirement—a forced retirement under Hitler—in answer to the call of the Socialist Unity Party for teachers. When the workingclass came to power in East Germany, a crucial question was how to provide enough teachers to staff the schools from which the Nazi-trained teachers—some 90 per cent—had been purged (and for once the word *purge* is wholesome). Workers were drafted directly out of the factories and given hurry-up courses in teaching, and it was from this core that the teachers of New Germany grew.

I interviewed a young worker who had been a teacher, a trad

nionist, and who had just finished translating William Z. Foster's book n the World Trade Union movement. His father and mother had been Communists and he had been taught to believe in Communism as a ttle boy, even though he was forced to join the Hitler Youth. His ather had been arrested and sent to a concentration camp, but his nother had conducted underground work clear through the war without etection. His father had eventually been released. When the youth was rafted into the army, his father counseled him to escape at the first pportunity. "Do not die for Hitler," his father had told him; and he id not. He had become a POW, and studied Marxism in a study group vithin the British prisoners camp in Belgium. After his release he became teacher, and now worked with the trade union center.

Walter Stranka's history was curiously much the same. Stranka won the Heinrich Heine prize for poetry in 1959. He worked with a local factory ight outside Weimar, to which he had been sent after the war; he onducted a poetry circle among the workers there. I was surprised to earn that he made his living directly or indirectly through writing oetry—something impossible in a bourgeois country. I found another oet in Stalinstadt also with his circle from the factory, also making living from poetry. Stranka's parents were Communist and he had een brought up to hate Hitlerism, and he, too, when he was forced into ne army thought only of escaping, which he attempted unsuccessfully to o several times. His wife had lived as a girl through the war, and had nown that Buchenwald lay just over the hill. She told how the Nazi oys tried to court her, and why she could never accept them.

Others, among the younger people, had similar stories to tell—of ow their parents, Communist or Social Democratic, had struggled to keep nem free of Hitlerite poison, and in so many cases, successfully. One vriter told me that his father threatened to close the door on him if he oined the Hitler Youth voluntarily; he knew that he was duty-bound o report his father, as a believing Hitler youth; but . . . he did not. nd step by step his conscience grew with his eyes. One girl whose arents were Communist had been taken by the Nazis from home at the ge of 10 and placed into a camp "away from subversive influences." he camp was in Poland and there she saw how the Poles were treated, nd she stole bread to give the prisoners. She was, however, then an ardent litler youth, believing in the official version of things; as was her ster who, when she learned that her father was a Communist, could ot reconcile that fact with her beliefs and committed suicide. She, owever, had not; even as a child she had begun to pray for Hitler's efeat.

The youth of Germany fight for Germany. So do the old. I attended a street committee meeting of the National Front. With offices in a store amidst the ruins and half-ruins of a typical East Berlin street, the eight or ten members of this committee looked to me, for all the world, like any of the hundreds of groups of people who have met, in just such modest surroundings, down all the years working in the people's cause. all over the world.

The committee was concerned this night with how to get the other residents of their block of 32 houses involved in street committee work, especially the young. They decided, after some discussion, to hold a dance to attract them; but then a split developed between those who wanted "dignified" music and those who wanted jazz. They divided up the houses and each took a number of people they would visit personally. They have at their disposal for each house some 250 marks a month for repairs, and they supervise repair work and social activities. Berlin is still a city of partial ruins, with gaping buildings, pitted with innumerable bullet marks. However there are spots of green where small parks have been planted over the ruins.

The young were the problem for these 8-10 people—most of whom were over 40, and some of whom had been anti-fascists for more than 30 years. They weren't quite sure they understood this strange youth who can, and often do, cross over into Sodom and Gomorrah by taking the subway and return then with odd haircuts, humming strange music, dancing even stranger dances. When we left the street committee headquarters a group of good-natured teen-agers was standing outside with one of the street committee members talking about having a dance. When they heard me speaking English to my wife, one of them—fresh from a British or American movie—carolled after her: "Goodbye, dolling!" It was impudent, but nothing more. It was also perhaps a burlesque with a touch of mockery, not of us, but of them—over there, the movies on the other side.

I interviewed the secretary of the Jewish community, Herr Schenck, for information concerning Germany's Jews. There is only a sad tale to tell: most Jews were gassed; only some 750 Jews are left in 7 communities in East Germany. However, there are over 3,000 Jews who do not enroll themselves in the Jewish community and live as Germans. But Arnold Zweig, whom I heard lecture to writers in the Writers Union on the Nature and Form of the Novel, is enlisted in the Jewish community.

No, Schenk told me, anti-semitism does not exist among the youth, and if it still lingers among the older generation, they do nothing about it. We visited a synagogue with him, the oldest Jewish cemetery in Europe where Moses Mendelsohn lies buried; we had some kosher sausage in a

kosher butcher shop and he gave us a bottle of kosher wine from Bulgaria, and matzoh to eat. He himself spent 5 years in Buchenwald; his is the memory of playing the violin in that dreadful orchestra which the Nazis organized to play for the victims as they walked their last road to the crematoria—piayed for his mother as she disappeared into the ovens.

The Jewish cemetery, he told me, is kept up by funds sent by American Jews; but the money goes to the West Berlin organizations where it is then turned into marks, and someone pockets a nice profit from the transaction. There had been 165,000 Jews in Berlin before Hitler, many of them "rich and naive." They had preferred to deal with Hitler in their own way and refused to struggle. About 55,000 of the richest had been able to buy their way out of Germany, until 1938 when the exits were closed, and those who were left, like himself, too poor to buy their freedom, had gone into the camps, most never to return. As far as he could see, American Jews, especially the well-to-do, were following the same policy of support for a political position as fatal to their survival as the one they supported in Germany, as fatal as the policy of Ben Gurion in Israel.

I lived in a *pension* only five minutes walk from the dividing line between East and West; then for a few days I lived almost within the shadow of Brandenburg Gate which is the entrance to the East from the West Berlin sector. Often I stood at the dividing line and stared across to the other side: the difference physically was small, the same sky hung over both, and people, almost indistinguishable from one another, hurried to their living. I had no curiosity to cross over myself, even as a journalist; I wanted to delay my return to a world where money decides all values as long as I could. The Reichstag, where Dr. Goebbels had staged one of his greatest provocations, stood ruined and black with smoke: Willie Brandt was talking about having it reconstructed so that West Germany could come and conduct its obscene proceedings within a stone's throw of the socialist world, thinking still like Goebbels that if once before the Reichstag could be used as a provocation it could be used so again.

This division is the most fantastic division between human beings in the world, and makes no positive sense whatsoever. West Berlin stands like a gun cocked at the back of East Berliners, who hardly dare turn their backs. West Berliners exist for no other reason than for the day when that trigger is pulled; they have no purpose, no function other than that. That "gun" is literally a gun; it can start a new war. Americans for their own sake, must take it out of the hands of maniacs bent on reviving the gas chambers, on filling new rivers of blood, of those Strausses and Adenauers, those 103 Nazi generals in the Bundeswehr, those storm troopers

and anti-semites, the most indescribable criminals and scum of history who do not care if millions perish so long as German imperialism comes out on top of the mound of corpses! West Berlin, a rot deep within Germany, is not an outpost of "democracy" but of fascism. Everybody who has been here knows that. If they keep quiet about it, it is because they have decided, for reasons as dishonorable as the fact itself, to enlist in the vast conspiracy of silence: West Germany is a hot-bed of war. Willie Brandt knows it, Adenauer knows it, Allen Dulles knows it, Walter Reuther and George Meany know it. The rest of the Americans ought to know it, too, because they are not lost to humanity.

I close with one episode, perhaps of no significance. On the train coming out of Germany, a German boy stuck his head out of the window to look at the countryside and his glasses fell off. His mother gave a cry, and the conductor pulled the signal cord and the train stopped. The boy jumped out and started running back along the tracks until he almost disappeared and his mother, freshly alarmed, wailed after him: "Tomas, Tomas!" In a few minutes Tomas returned, out of breath, but flushed with triumph: he had found his glasses!

To stop a train so that a boy can recover his glasses? Does it mean anything? It seemed to me then that it did: it was a human gesture which New Germany makes more and more often every day. Goethe and Schiller lying in lonely glory in the dream city of Weimar have come into their own again. But it was not the German bourgeoise that could rescue them, but the proletariat, the proletariat that came from Russia, who rebuilt the houses in which Goethe and Schiller lived, bombed by the Allies during the war, and who buried the ashes of their descendants at Buchenwald.

Adenauer, with the Americans behind him, would destroy them again and open up Buchenwald. One follows the other. But just as surely as there are two Germanys there are two Americas: and one of them wants to live.

# FIVE POEMS

*HO CHI MINH*

---

We publish below the translations of five poems by Ho Chi Minh. The first three are extracts from "Prison Diary," a collection of 114 poems composed by the President during his imprisonment in the Chiang Kai-shek jails in Kwang Si (autumn 1942-autumn 1943). The last two were composed during the Resistance (1945-1954). We are indebted to the magazine *Vietnam Advances* for the following poems.

## *DEPARTURE IN THE NIGHT*

The cock has just crowed, it is still dark
With an escort of stars, slowly the moon
Rises to the summit of the autumn mountains.
He who is journeying afar is on the road betimes
In icy gusts, the wind lashes his face.

II

The white of the East has just turned to red
The shadows of night are finally swept away
The warmth is spreading in the boundless universe
And in the traveller awakens the poet.

* * * *

## *SLEEPLESS NIGHTS*

Through interminable nights when sleep escapes me
In prison I have written more than a hundred poems
I lay down my brush after each quatrain
To examine the free sky through the bars.

* * * *

### *THE VISIT OF A CHAIN COMPANION'S WIFE*

The husband is behind
And the wife in front of the bars
They are there so near
But a world divides them
Their frantic eyes
Convey to one another what they cannot say
Their eyes which tears veil
Before a word is spoken
Who seeing them cannot feel moved?

* * * *

### *AUTUMN*

The moon comes in through the window and asks for a poem
I cannot yet compose it, absorbed in military matters
From up in the mirador, on the mountain, the sound of a bell disturbs the autumn dream
It is the news of victory, sent from the interzone.

* * * *

### *MOONLIGHT*

Tonight the moon is quite full, quite round
In the river, the new water joins the Spring sky
In the middle of the current we discussed military matters
On our midnight return, the boat is flooded with moonlight.

# SIX WAYS OF LOOKING AT REALITY

*SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN*

Mr. Finkelstein's most recent book, *Composer and Nation,* will be reviewed in a future issue of *Mainstream* by the English critic Alan D. Bush.

OF all the claims made in modern theorizing on the arts, one of the most fatuous, self-serving and untrue is the assertion that a faithful approach to the reality of the outer world is a matter of "dull copying" or "enslavement to nature;" a process of following well-worn paths and a barrier to freedom of expression. The history of the arts proves the opposite. We will try to illustrate this by a series of excerpts from American prose fiction, all of them written within the space of a century. Each of these passages is inspired by the close observation of actual life, and presents a scene, the reality of which the author wants to impress upon the reader.

The first is from James Fenimore Cooper's *The Pioneers.*

> The roads of Otsego, if we except the principal highways, were, at the early day of trade, but little better than woodpaths. The high trees that were growing on the very verge of the wheel tracks excluded the sun's rays, unless at meridian: and the slowness of the evaporation, united with the rich mould of vegetable decomposition that covered the whole country to the depth of several inches, occasioned but an indifferent foundation for the footing of travellers. Added to these were the constant inequalities of a natural surface, and the constant recurrence of enormous and slippery roots that were laid bare by the removal of the light soil, together with stumps of trees, to make a passage not only difficult but dangerous. Yet the riders, among these numerous obstructions, which were such as would terrify an unpracticed eye, gave no demonstrations of uneasiness, as their horses toiled through the sloughs, or trotted with uncertain paces along the dark route. In many places, the marks on the trees were the only indications of a road, with perhaps an occasional remnant of a pine, that, by being cut close to the earth, so as to leave nothing visible but its base of roots, spreading for twenty feet in every direction, was apparently placed there as beacon to warn the traveller that it was the center of a highway.
>
> Into one of these roads the active Sheriff led the way, first striking out of the footbath, by which they had descended from the sugar bush, across a little bridge, formed of round logs laid loosely on sleepers of pine, in which large openings of a formidable width were frequent. The nag of

> Richard, when it reached one of these gaps, laid its nose along the logs, and stepped across the difficult passage with the sagacity of a man; but the blooded filly which Miss Temple rode disdained so humble a movement. She made a step or two with an unusual caution, and then on reaching the broadest opening, obedient to the curb and whip of her fearless mistress, bounded across the dangerous path with the activity of a squirrel.

Here, writing in 1823, at the age of thirty-four, Cooper shows himself to be still a child of the rational spirit of the American War of Independence and the 18th century enlightenment. He has a logical cast of mind like that of Benjamin Franklin and James Madison. He carefully builds his setting, piece by piece, almost as if he were an engineer, effacing himself in the interest of as great an objectivity as possible. He gives measurements when he thinks them necessary. He likes to make everything clear, to leave no question unanswered, to explain things even scientifically, as in the effect of the lack of sunlight upon the slowness of evaporation, with the resulting formation of a deep mould out of the process of vegetable decomposition. The sentences are often long, like the last one of the first paragraph, but grammar serves its proper function as unifier and grand marshall of the ideas, putting them in proper order and logical relationship to one another. And the tone of the description, the guiding thought, inexpressed, but impelling the selection of detail, is the awareness of the struggle of men to make nature serve them, the first encroachments of civilization upon the wild forests. Indeed, this is the tone and one of the main thoughts of the entire novel, the last sentence of which describes the old scout, Natty Bumppo, moving West again, "the foremost in that band of pioneers who are opening the way for the march of the nation across the continent."

THE second is from Herman Melville's novel *Pierre, or The Ambiguities,* published in 1852.

> The material was a grayish stone, rudely cut and masoned into walls of surprising thickness and strength; along two of which walls—the side ones—were distributed as many rows of arched and stately windows. A capacious, square and wholly unornamented tower rose in front to twice the height of the body of the church; three sides of this tower were pierced with small and narrow aperatures. . . . Built when that part of the city was devoted to private residences, and not to warehouses and offices as now, the old Church of the Apostles had had its days of sanctification and grace; but the tide of change and progress had rolled clean through its broad-aisle and side-aisles, and swept by far the greater part of its congregation two or three miles up town. Some stubborn and elderly old

merchants and accountants, lingered awhile among its dusty pews, listening to the exhortations of a faithful old pastor, who, sticking to his post in this flight of his congregation, still propped his half-palsied form in the worm-eaten pulpit, and occasionally pounded—though now with less vigorous hand—the moth-eaten covering of its desk.

Although much of this highly introvert, symbolic and subjective novel s written in a deliberately artificial literary diction, almost like a parody f various forms of romantic expression, this passage is strong, direct nd realistic description, presenting both a piece of New York City and omething of its history. But the reality Melville describes also has its mbolic character. We feel forces stirring through and about it. He is of ne generation of Emerson and Thoreau. They are all critical of and ometimes aghast at what seems to be the corrupt money-grubbing and ommercialism into which the nation born of the lofty principles of the eclaration of Independence now seems to have moved. And since this eems to be the process of materialism at work, they attack it from the andpoint of philosophic idealism. They are all lay preachers, counter-osing mind or spirit to the actual world. Similarly, this description, with uch more personal involvement, less detachment, than Cooper's, has the ne and rolling sound of a sermon. Striking is the strange, significant, ixtaposition of the sturdy old stone church and the warehouses about . Both the church and the vividly portrayed pastor have symbolic mean-ng, along side of their realistic quality representing the dogged force f principle standing up against the tide of change, which "roll clean rough the aisles," eat away and destroy everything. And so the descrip-on is also an ironic questioning of industrial progress. But unlike other ealists, or the transcendentalists, to Melville the criticism is impotent, ne "tides of change and progress" are all-powerful. And indeed, this so is the dominating theme of the novel. Pierre, who defies compromise, racticality and hypocrisy to stand by principle, only brings the most rrible wreckage on himself and others. This parallels Melville's attitude wards slavery. It is an evil, but is the cure any better?

The third is from *The American,* a comparatively early novel by enry James, who published it in 1877 at the age of thirty-four. The tting is France.

Newman followed the first cross-road to the right—it was bordered with mouldy cottages—and in a few moments saw before him the peaked roofs of the towers. Advancing further he found himself before a vast iron gate, rusty and closed; here he paused for a moment, looking through the bars. The residence was near the road, as if the very highway belonged to it; this gave it a fine old masterly air. Newman

learned afterwards, from a guide-book of the province, that it dated from the realm of Henry III. It presented to the wide-paved area which preceded it, and which was edged with shabby farm-buildings, an immense facade of dark time-stained brick, flanked by two low wings, each of which terminated in a little Dutch-looking pavilion capped with a fantastic roof. The towers rose behind, and behind the towers was a grand group of elms and beeches, now just faintly green. The great feature, however, was a wide green river, which washed the foundation of the pile. The whole mass rose from an island in the circling stream, so that this formed a perfect moat, spanned by a two-arched bridge without a parapet. The dull brick walls, which here and there made a grand straight sweep, the ugly little cupolas of the wings, the deep-set windows, the long steep pinnacles of mossy slate, all mirrored themselves in the quiet water.

Although this description takes place at a most dramatic point in the novel, it represents a momentary detachment from the drama, an opening of the senses to an "impression" of beauty. It is a kind of connoisseur's description of a scene, presented by a consciously developed and trained eye and taste, educated to beauty by the old masters of art, and presenting this scene almost like a painting, with the implication that art helps us to find beauty in nature. The description itself almost seems to have a "patina" on it. The touches indicating age, like the mouldy cottages, the rusty gate, the time-stained brick, the river like a moat, the mossy slate do not have the effect, as they do in Melville, of pointing up the destructive passage of time. Rather, they are part of the special atmosphere and beauty of the scene. And the description embodies the tone of the novel, one of its main themes being the special meaning that European life must have to an American, for it owns a culture which unlike that in America, has so long a tradition still living in it.

The fourth is from Theodore Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*, published in 1925 when the author was fifty-four. The scene is "Lycurgus," an invented name for a typical small manufacturing city in upper New York State.

The depot, from which only a half hour before he had stepped down, was so small and dull, untroubled, as he could plainly see, by much traffic. And the factory section which lay opposite the small city—across the Mohawk—was little more than a red and gray assemblage of buildings with here and there a smokestack projecting upward, and connected with the city by two bridges—a half dozen blocks apart—one of them directly at this depot, a wide traffic bridge across which travelled a car-line following the curves at Central Avenue, dotted here and there with stores and small homes.

But Central Avenue was quite alive with traffic, pedestrians and automobiles. Opposite diagonally from the hotel, which contained a series of wide plate-glass windows, behind which were many chairs interspersed with palms and pillars, was the dry-goods emporium of Stuart and Company, a considerable affair, four stories in height, and of white brick, and at least a hundred feet long, the various windows of which seemed bright and interesting, crowded with as smart models as might be seen anywhere. Also there were other large concerns, a second hotel, various automobile showrooms, a moving picture theatre.

He found himself ambling on and on until suddenly he was out of the business district again and in touch with a wide and tree-shaded thoroughfare of residences, the houses of which, each and every one, appeared to possess more room space, lawn space, general ease and repose and dignity even than any with which he had ever been in contact. In short, as he sensed it from this brief inspection of its very central portion, it seemed a very exceptional, if small city street—rich, luxurious even. So many imposing wrought-iron fences, flower-bordered walks, grouped trees and bushes, expensive and handsome automobiles either beneath porte-cochères within or speeding along the broad thoroughfare without. And in some neighboring shops—those nearest Central Avenue and the business heart where this wide and handsome thoroughfare began, were to be seen such expensive-looking and apparently smart displays of things that might well interest people of means and comfort—motors, jewels, lingerie, leather goods and furniture.

The long sentences are gramatically organized, but more in terms of chain of facts than Cooper's controlled logical structure. Dreiser's primary terest is the amassing of all the significant detail. The description has tone of mental reflection. Unlike the selection from Cooper and Melville, ut more like the passage from James, Dreiser is in part presenting the ene through the eye and mind of the central character of the novel. owever the description is at the opposite extreme, otherwise, from that James. Dreiser is not interested at all in anything picturesque. The oint of view is that of an awareness of class and caste stratifications, of ch and poor, of working people, middle class and gentry, and a percepon of their outward manifestations in the appearance of various sections the city. Thus here too we have a description which embodies in special kind of perception the thought content of the novel. For Clyde riffiths, the "hero," born and raised in mean poverty, has caught a impse of how the rich live. The driving force in him as the novel ogresses becomes the need to attain this satisfying kind of life, to ve well," not according to the pious but impractical precepts of his angelist religious father and mother, but according to the laws proimed by the actual roughhouse of "free enterprise" and the market-

place. And when the opportunity suddenly opens before him, it proves to be his doom.

The differences between the tone and style of these passages are not due primarily to the changes in the way the English language was handled and spoken from one generation to the next. Nor are they due to differences in the social class to which each writer belonged. If none of them were defenders of the great rulers of American economic and political life, the bankers, factory owners, industrialists, or their political spokesmen and servants, none of them had much if any understanding of or fellow feeling with the working class and great mass of the exploited. They are part of the great tradition of bourgeois art, that of critical realism, weighing the realities of bourgeois life against the promises and principles with which the bourgeois class had come to power. Each was in his own way a critic of the failure of actual life to measure up to the potentialities that had seemingly been opened up by the American War of Independence. Dreiser, late in his life, saw the path opened up by the working class out of the despair cumulating in the disasters of the 20th century, and became a Communist. But this was when most of his novelistic career was behind him. The greatest part of the gifted writers in America did not follow the direction pointed out by Dreiser. And in their work critical realism comes to be replaced by despair with the entire concept of human progress itself.

The novel from which the next excerpt is taken, Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises,* was published in 1926, only a year after *An American Tragedy,* but it actually represents a wholly new generation, that which was coming to maturity in the 1920's. Hemingway, at the time the book appeared, was twenty-eight. These scene is the Spanish town of Pamplona where a *fiesta* with bull fights had taken place.

> In the morning it was all over. The fiesta was finished. I woke about nine o'clock, had a bath, dressed, and went down-stairs. The square was emptly and there were no people on the streets. A few children were picking up rocket-sticks in the square. The cafes were just opening and the waiters were carrying out the comfortable white wicker chairs and arranging them around the marble-topped tables in the shade of the arcade. They were sweeping the streets and sprinkling them with a hose.
>
> I sat in one of the wicker chairs and leaned back comfortably. The waiter was in no hurry to come. The white-paper announcements of the unloading of the bulls and the big schedules of special trains were still up on the pillars of the arcade. A waiter wearing a blue apron came out with a bucket of water and a cloth, and commenced to tear down the notices, pulling the paper off in strips and washing and rubbing away the paper that stuck to the stone. The fiesta was over.

WE have here a change not merely from the previous quotation, but from the tradition represented by all the previous quotations. The irst impression might be that of primitivism, or else childishness. The rammatical organization of thought is discarded. The sentences are as imple and short as those in a child's primary school reader. They are, or variety, a few longer ones but hardly less simple, being a string of hort clauses connected by "ands." But the style is a highly artful, alculated "primitivism." It is not so much grammar as an organizer of nought, that is discarded, as though itself, in the sense of any perspec- ive of experience being brought to bear upon the present. We find neither ne experience of the narrator nor the experiences of society and history rought to bear. All generalizations are suspect. Life is incomprehensible, nd all attempts at explanations are frauds. There is no heritage. But ne reality, to cover up and protect the subjective loneliness and bewilder- nent, is the assertion of strength. And so emotion must not be shown. : must only be felt beneath the surface hardness. The description is made p of concrete objects, in simple primary colors, and a few simple actions. rom this point of view, there is not a wasted word, and each image nakes its impact. The description itself, with its clarity and its lack of ny shading, gives the impression of the bright Spanish sun. The ammering rhythms add to the negation of thought or reflection. And ipping this effect is the repetition. "It was all over. The fiesta was nished . . . The fiesta was over." What may be called the purity with hich this effect is attained shows no mean craftsmanship. And the sychology implied in the description reflects the content of the novel self, the significance of which lies in the fact that nothing happens : any significance. People move aimlessly, seeking whatever intensity of ie moment and absorption in it can temporarily be found in drinking, love aking, fishing, watching a bull fight. The "good" people are bound gether by their code, which is that one must always try to keep a grip n oneself, one must try never to weaken, one must thus preserve hatever integrity a human being can assert in a meaningless and corrupt orld. The novel is one of the prime examples of the post-World War I lisillusion," which is excellently described in his *Exile's Return* Malcolm Cowley, who like Hemingway had volunteered to drive an nbulance in France on the outbreak of the war.

> When we first heard of the Armistice we felt a sense of relief too deep to express, and we all got drunk. We had come through, we were still alive, and nobody at all would be killed tomorrow. The composite fatherland for which we had fought and in which some of us still believed—France, Italy, the Allies, our English homeland, democracy, the self-determination

of small nations—had triumphed. We danced in the streets, embraced old women and pretty girls, swore blood brotherhood with soldiers in little bars, drank with our elbows locked in theirs, reeled through the streets with bottles of champagne, fell asleep somewhere. On the next day, after we got over our hangovers, we didn't know what to do, so we got drunk. But slowly, as the days went by, the intoxication passed, and the tears of joy: it appeared that our composite fatherland was dissolving into quarreling statesmen and oil and steel magnates. . . . We returned to New York, appropriately—to the homeland of the uprooted, where everyone you met came from another town and tried to forget it; where nobody seemed to have parents, or a past more distant than last night's swell party, or a future beyond the swell party this evening and the disillusioned book he would write tomorrow.

THE last excerpt is from Willam Faulkner's short novel, *The Old Man,* published in 1939, and typical of his style of writing from about 1929 on. The "old man" is a nickname for the Mississippi River which is now in flood.

When he saw the River again he knew it at once. He should have; it was now ineradicably a part of his past, his life; it would be part of what he would bequeath, if that were in store for him. But four weeks later it would look different from what it did now, and did: he (the old man) had recovered from his debauch, back in banks again, the Old Man, rippling placidly toward the sea, brown and rich as chocolate between leaves whose inner faces were wrinkled as though in frozen and aghast amazement, crowned with the rich green of summer in the willows; beyond them, sixty feet below, slick mules squatted against the broad pull of middle-busters in the richened soil which would not need to be planted, which would need only to be shown a cotton seed to sprout and make, there would be the symmetric miles of strong stalks by July, purple bloom in August, in September the black fields snowed over, spilled, the middles dragged smooth by the long sacks, the long black limber hands plucking, the hot air filled with the whine of gins, the September air then but now June air heavy with locust and (the towns) the small of new paint and the sour smell of the paste which holds wall paper—the towns, the villages, the little lost wood landings on stilts on the inner face of the levee, the lower storeys bright and rank under the new paint and paper and even the marks on spike and post and tree of May's raging water height fading beneath each bright silver gust of summer's loud and inconstant rain; there was a store at the levee's lip, a few saddled and hope-bridled mules in the sleepy dust, a few dogs, a handful of Negroes sitting on the steps beneath the chewing tabacco and malaria medicine signs, and three white men, one of them a deputy sheriff canvassing for votes to beat his superior (who had given him his job) in the August primary, all pausing to watch the skiff emerging from the glitter-glare of the afternoon water

and approach and land, a woman carrying a child stepping out, then a man, a tall man who, approaching, proved to be dressed in a faded but recently washed and quite clean suit of penitentiary clothing, stopping in the dust where the mules dozed and watching with pale cold humorless eyes while the deputy sheriff was still making toward his armpit that gesture which everyone present realized was to have produced a pistol in one flashing motion for a considerable time while still nothing came of it.

The style of this description, which is all one long sentence, seems

to contrast sharply to Hemingway's. Yet they are expressions of a similar subjectivism. In Hemingway it masks itself under a hard surface of concreteness. The anguish is there. But as in comic irony, one has to turn the actual statements upside down to get at it. In Faulkner the subjectivism expresses itself in a welter of emotional proclamations, with the real world seen in constant turbulence. Both writers find themselves in a world without logic or order. The abandonment of logic which shows itself in Hemingway's short machine-gun sentences and phrases is equally apparent in Faulkner's long and loosely knit stream of associations. If Hemingway's picture aims at the sharp clarity and impersonality of a still camera shot, Faulkner's might be compared to a roving motion picture lens, with a "montage" effect as he leaps from the flood waters of June to the subsiding of the flood in July, and then the planting followed by the harvesting of the cotton crop, after this moving back to the June flood, surveying the town, and ending with a "close-up" of the skiff landing with the people in it. But added to this is the constant emotional involvement.

Both styles are forms of naturalism. In Hemingway, it is the concrete fact, the thing, the sight, that is prized, as against any "interpretation" of generalization of it. In Faulkner the naturalism lies in the surface sensuousness of the style, the way in which the writing is saturated with not only sight but sound (the "whine" of gins, the "loud" rain), and smell. He evokes also touch and visceral feelings, with "pull," "snowed over," "dragged smooth," "hands plucking," and intensifies the effect by a mock animism, a personification of nature, like the river which is not only the "old man" but has a "debauch," namely a flood, and the levees which are like amazed faces. Instead of, as in the first four quotations, the description being both a scene and a thought-commentary on reality, presented to the reader as a thinking person, in both Hemingway and Faulkner the scene and the observer fuse as one, so that the language with its sound and images has a poetic intensity. In Hemingway, the intensity comes from the sharp clean and simple images and the pounding, concrete rhythm. In Faulkner, the language itself not only flows like the

flow of association, presenting the process of thought rather than the product of thought, but it embodies a packed sensuous life, almost violent, laying its hands on the reader, trying to grip him, place him under its drugging spell, so that it takes the place of his own independent thought.

This does not mean that Hemingway and Faulkner share the same views of life, people and society. As a writer, Hemingway roams for his scenes over a great part of the world. Faulkner devotes himself for the most part to one imaginary county in Mississippi. Hemingway again and again places at the center of his stories the people for whom he feels the most sympathy and kinship; the common people, the ordinary persons, who come to grips with nature using their own hands, who know how to do things, but are ignored kicked about or oppressed by the corrupt ruling and "civilized" strata of society. They have little knowledge, other than of their own craft and lore, but they have strength, they are decent in their relations to other people, they have an unwritten code of courage and heart; the boxer, the fisherman making his livelihood out of pitting his strength against the great marlins, the bull fighter who must constantly risk his life, and develop so fantastic a skill, in order to rise out of the poverty which would otherwise be his lot; the boat runner who takes rich people out to fish, and is cheated by them; the scout who serves tourists playing at big game hunting; the peasant guerillas of the Spanish Civil War. Faulkner's view of life is the myth created after its defeat by the slave-holding South. His admired people are those who boast a lineage from the old plantation owners, and who represent a kind of blood heritage, like an aristocracy without title descendants of the noble exponents of the chivalry of slave holding, who (so the myth goes) were adored by their slaves. For the "poor white," who works, Faulkner has either contempt or a patronizing, humorous attitude, as if he were observing a lower order of animal. He regards the Negro as a strange, alien kind of being, attaining a kind of primitive nobility when he puts his mind to sleep to become a loyal servant of his white masters, and becoming a horrifying apparition, a "monster," when he tries to gain his freedom or live like white people. It is this subjective fantasy which is made effective to the reader by the style, so gripping in its own packed feeling of reality, its sights, sounds, smells, touch feelings, violent movements, its recreation of irrational thought processes its power to make the readers mind its own and erase all logic, reason or perspective of his own views the reader may bring to bear.

WE have then, six word-pictures of scenes which carry an authentic feeling of actuality, and yet each of the six has its own personality

its own implied portrait at least in outline of the author-observer, its own implied psychology and mode of perception, its own implied view or philisophy of life. And this is found not in any direct statements of his ideas by the writer, but in the way in which the scene itself, seemingly objective, is put together. But this does not mean however that, as modern theory puts it, each artist creates his own reality. For the presence of a real outer world is decisive in each of these passages. The writer has looked at a real scene, or presented a composite of scenes he has known. The reader recognizes this, for the scenes correlate with what he himself has seen as well as with whatever social experience he has made his own, in the form of histories, pictures, and other stories. The basis of artistic communication here as in all art is the real world which artist and audience hold in common.

And so here, in the relation of style to the real world, we have a dialectical situation. The picture is both objective and subjective. It presents the thing viewed and also the viewer. It is objectively true, yet limited, or circumscribed. It is not the "whole picture," nor would one want it to be. The "whole picture" would be nature itself, not art. As recompense for not having the "whole," what we have is not only the objective world of things but the equally real world of people living among things. The six excerpts presented here, six descriptions of scenes which in themselves do not embody a specific date or event in history, nevertheless embody six historically developed modes of thought, out of which we can begin to sketch something of the outline of the development of American history and changes of thought. The outer world is real, and it is precisely because it is real that the artist, like any human being, discovers himself in it, and finds the development of his own mind and personality in the ever changing relationships between himself and it.

THUS the materials of expression of art are both a human creation and a means for reaching out and grasping the reality outside. And far from the real world being "used up" as material for the artist, it is actually ever new and fresh. It can never be "used up." Not only does it change, as human beings in society change it, leaving their imprint on it, but even more important, people themselves are always seeing aspects of it that were not seen before. Far from the artist gaining "freedom" of expression by ignoring outer reality, the opposite holds true. The active observers of reality in its greatest breadth, the active participants in the movements of history and society, have been in art the most original minds and personalities. The richer their grasp of the outer world of

nature and people, the broader the field for their own development of thought and insight, the richer and more abundant the experiences, perceptions and memories upon which they draw.

Certainly, after the psychological sensitivity of a Hemingway or Faulkner, engendered by the shattering experiences of the 20th century, it is impossible for writing to go back to the style of a Cooper, Melville, James or Dreiser. But a heavy price has been paid for this inner sensitivity; a loss of grip upon the real world of nature and people, an alienation from the real life and experiences of the mass of humanity, a mental withdrawal from social life. The writer becomes a master at exploring the "self," but at the same time this "self" has become very small. The task now facing writing is to restore the grasp of real life in all its breadth and movement, with a consequent rationality of mind, as the struggles of our time, involving all people in every land, now throw light upon it. Such writing must show the psychological impact of the 20th century. Similarly the great movements of the working people and colonial people of our time illuminate reality in a way that would have been impossible a century ago, and the very form of the novel must grow to embrace this. As soon as one puts the problem this way, one becomes aware of its enormous difficulties. It is the most difficult challenge facing the writer, and indeed every kind of artist today. But today, as in the past, it is the conquest of the greatest difficulties that bring the most rewarding results.

---

# THE WORLD IS A COMEDY

## *KURT TUCHOLSKY*

The following sketches are from *The World is a Comedy, A Tucholsky Anthology,* translated by Harry Zohn of the Brandeis University German Department, with whose generous permission they are here reprinted. The brief introductory note which follows is from Mr. Zohn's introductory essay to the volume.*

### *AN INTRODUCTION*

Possibly the most striking thing about the after-fame of Kurt Tucholsky, the German-Jewish journalist, publicist, and satirist, is that those who know him at all hail him as an authentic genius and are ready to class him in the first rank of satirists. However, because so much of his work is untranslatable, a good deal being written in the Berlin dialect and making reference to matters comprehensible only within a special framework, Tucholsky is virtually unknown outside the German-speaking world. From 1918 to 1933, the life-span of the Weimar Republic, Tucholsky was the heckling voice in the gallery, the conscience of Germany. A man of uncompromising principles and consistent honesty, of many tensions and conflicting traits—by turns playful, serious, timid, aggressive, melancholy, buoyant, scarcastic, self-critical, skeptical, coarse, and lyrical—Tucholsky possessed a remarkable clairvoyance as to the shape of things to come and was one of the very first in Germany to foresee the Nazi terror. His clear recognition of the suicidal madness of his epoch proved to be his undoing, for Tucholsky took his own life only a few years after his brilliant career had been cut off by the Nazi accession to power. Tucholsky had Berliners in mind with much of his satire, but certain things are universally applicable; like all great satire, the work of Tucholsky transcends the limit of its own period and language by virtue of its truth to human nature. It is this emphasis on the human, all-too-human that insures the timeless significance of Tucholsky's work. His output is sketchy, to be sure, essentially anthological, consisting mainly of lively short pieces, critiques, essays, feuilletons, reportages, monologues, poems, glosses, and aphorisms, employing the peppery idiom of the common man, which is the hallmark of much great satire.

H. Z.

**The World is a Comedy,* Sci-Art Publishers, Harvard Square, Cambridge 38, Mass. $3.75.

## *HERR WENDRINER MAKES A PHONE CALL*

*On the day of Walter Rathenau's funeral in* 1922, *all mail and telephone service in Germany was suspended between* 2:00 *and* 2:10 *p.m.*

"If he won't honor our invoice, I'll simply give him a buzz. Put the envelopes on the chair for now. What's Skalitzer's exchange? Königstadt? Just wait, boy, till I . . . What's that? Huh? What's the matter? Operator! Why don't you answer? How do you like that—she doesn't say why she doesn't answer. Operator! Doesn't the phone work? Miss Tinschmann, whatsamatter with this phone? Is it out of order?? How often have I told you . . . What? What is it! Service suspended? What's the meaning of this? Why . . . ?Oh, on account of Rathenau. Thanks, you can go now . . . On account of Rathenau. Very well. That's only fair. The man was a merchant prince, our greatest statesman. Can't deny that. A disgrace that they shot him. A real decent person. Knew old Rathenau well—that's what I call merchants! Well, they had quite a memorial program for him in the *Reichstag*. Most impressive. A terrific editorial this morning—first-rate. Yes, the government is going to take some pretty strong measures—it has already issued an order. Shooting him from a car—outrageous! The police ought to . . . Operator! Guess the ten minutes aren't up yet. Must have been dead shots, those fellows. Officers, maybe . . . Can't really imagine that, though . . . Had all the boys from Walter's regiment over for dinner that time, didn't I? Such nice, high-class people. Terific personalities, some of them. I got a big kick out of it when the boy became a reserve officer. Operator! Longest ten minutes I ever saw. Operator! If they're on strike one minute more than ten, I've got a good mind to send in a complaint. Operator! I've got to talk to old Skalitzer. A hell of an idea to shut off the phone because of that. That won't bring him back. Let'em spread out the taxes more fairly, that would be more in the spirit of the deceased. Operator! Who's going to shut off the phone when I'm gone? Nobody! Crazy idea, to shut off the phone! How'm I supposed to get through to Skalitzer now? By the time I do, the old boy will be out to lunch. Scan'alous! Those people want more pay, that's all. What kind of trick is that, to shut off the phone right in front of your nose, in broad daylight. All sorts of things happened under the Kaiser, God knows—but I've never seen anything like this! It's an outrage! This is a public nuisance! Let 'em kill each other or not—but they've got the keep it out of the office! And another thing, a Jew shouldn't make such a spectacle of himself. That only stirs up anti-Semitism. Since the 9th of November we haven't had law and order in this

country. Is it necessary to shut off the phones? Who's going to pay me damages if I don't reach Skalitzer? Operator! Just listen—they're making a demonstration outside. Look—red flags yet—just what I like. What are they singing? Operator! They'll carry on like this until there's another revolution! Operator! They can take the whole Republic and . . . Operator! Operator! My political principles are . . . Operator! It's about time! Operator! Give me Königstadt . . . !"

*HERR WENDRINER UNDER THE DICTATORSHIP*

Shush!

Didn't I tell you not to talk so loud? There's stormtroopers outside the movie house . . . can't you see? Get out now. How much is it? I guess it's not going to rain . . . it'll clear up. Come along in. And hold your mouth now! Oh, I beg your pardon . . . Be quiet now. Where are our seats . . . ? First row . . . wonderful. All right—put your coat down over there, now your . . . give it to me.

Previews. That's only a preview. We've seen that one anyway—it's . . . Regierer! Say, that's agood one! What are you doing here? What, in the loges? Oh, well, aristocrats . . . hee, hee . . . Oh, on passes. No kidding?! Say, Regierer has two extra tickets. Welsch is coming too. Let's join them in the lodge. Wait, we'll come and join you . . . can talk at least.

That was the newsreel. Parade in Mecklenburg. Big crowd, huh? . . . Plenty of militia in here—you know, it actually feels like something is missing when they're not around. It does. You get so used to them. Fine-looking fellows, some of them. Hell, I think it's kind of nice, come to think of it. Isn't it, Hannah? There's something festive about it. Sure there is. Well, Regierer, what's with you? What do you say? We'll see? That's what I always say. You know, things don't look so bad to me. When did I see you last? Two months ago . . . in September . . . Well, there you are. Remember what a panic that was? You can't help feeling relieved because it's over . . . now at least you know what's what. Some atmosphere we had then . . . my wife put me to bed for four days, that's how run down I was. Who would have thunk it? Here in the Kurfürstendamm there wasn't a sign of anything. Say, look—that's Gebühr, Otto Gebühr. They say he had on offer from France a while back, they wanted him to do Napoleon. He wouldn't do it. He says the only part he'll take is Dr. Goebbels or perhaps Frederick the Great. Good actor. Real big right now. Big time for me, too! I . . . voted *Staatspartei* that time because somebody had to take responsibility . . . and the party had the right outlook. That's right. Did Welsch

really vote Center? Meshuggeh. I'll ask him later. Anyway, things aren't so bad. I been talking to a businessman from Rome and he says: compared to Rome this country is positively free. You've got your yellow ticket, haven't you? Sure, we've got our yellow ticket. Ten years? I been living in Berlin for over twenty years, so they gave it to me right away. Intermission now. Shush! Say, take a look at that dark-skinned fellow down there! Some Polish Jew, I'll bet . . . lemme tell you something, with kikes like that that's a reason for anti-Semitism. Take a good look at him. Disgusting fellow. What surprises me is that he's still around; why don't they kick him out? . . . Well, I can't complain. On our street everything's in perfect order. Ye've got a very nice storm-trooper on the corner, a real nice fellow. When I go to work in the morning, I slip him a cagarette—he salutes as soon as he sees me coming; salutes my wife too. What did they do to you? What is Regierer saying? They knocked his hat off? How'd that happen? Well, in that case, my good friend, you'd better raise your arm! The way I feel about it is if that flag is our national symbol, you've got to salute it. Shush! Powder keg? I guess so. Do you think I feel quite safe? Every morning my wife rings me up at the office to see if anything is wrong. So far nothing has happened. Say, that was good just now, did you see it? The fellow pretended to be blind when he's actually deaf. Well, lemme tell you something . . . you shouldn't speak his name out loud . . . I'll tell you: About this H.—even if he does come from Czechoslovakia—he sure knows the German mind. At any rate, we have order. That's one thing we've got. As long as you're a citizen and got your yellow pass, nothing happens to you . . . you're under the protection of the state . . . they're very logical about these things. One thing you've got to admit: they know how to put on a show. Phantastic! What? Like the other day on Wittenbergplatz. The way they came marching up with their flags and all that music. Under the Kaiser it was no bett . . Welsch! You're a little late! Half the picture is over. Sit over here. No, not on my hat! Sit on Regierer's hat . . . it's not so new.

Nu, Welsch, what's what? Let's have a look . . . now I can see you better. You look fine. Say, is it true you voted Center . . . There come two storm-troopers. Shush! . . . Is it true that you voted Center? Meshuggeh. Sure, the Center did have Karewski on its list; but that's Jewish business. We . . . not so loud! Keep your voice down that's all I ask. Don't get me into any trouble—times are a little too serious for that. After all, they're perfectly right in expecting us to maintain a certain decorum in public. Perfectly right. It's starting it again. That's Kortner—see, they let him act. I'm telling you, it's no

really so bad. Don't you agree? Sure you do. Cute little number—take a look. We were just speaking about H. With him at least you know he isn't going to break into your safe. With the Communists I don't know. Or rather . . . I know too damn well. Well, right now they can't move a muscle; they're out flat. Serves them right, too. My dear Welsch, the politician's business is to be successful. The business man's too. That's *real politik*. Leave the politics to them and we'll take care of the real estate. Am I right?

Newsreel again? Well, why not?? Shush! When they're showing those pictures, hold your mouth. Let them have their fun—it's not so bad. Anyway, it's good camera work; the other day we saw him from quite close; he was standing there with his lieutenants . . . No! Goebbels is out . . . Didn't you know that? Yes, sure, he's very popular. Maybe that's why. H. keeps his eyes open. Goebbels wanted to speak in the Wintergarden . . . but they wouldn't give him a permit.

Today it was a little weaker. A little weaker. Why? With the stock exchange, it's no use asking. The stock exchange has a smaller . . . don't ask why. Those fellows have a smeller; when things are good they don't say a word and make money, and when things go bad, they drive everybody meshuggeh. Afterwards they'll tell you they knew what was going to happen all along. Charming picture, take a look! Say, did you see that? Those French soldiers running in all directions . . . ? No, that couldn't happen in Germany. What was I saying? Well, even if some people are beefing, if you ask me, the thing has its good side. How so? What do you mean? What has that got to do with the war? What has the Young Plan got to do with war? Go on! Did we make the war? All we did was to cheer. And when it was over we didn't have any butter. Aw, don't tell me. Since when does a nation have to pay for a lost war? It's bad enough we lost it; the other side won, let them pay for it! My dear Welsch . . . I have . . . I am . . . Shush!

I expected . . . my dear Welsch . . . I expected certain things just the same as you did. All right. And now that I see it isn't the way I expected, I've got to admit that this system has its good side too. I mean, it has its historical justification—g'wan! You can't deny that. It has its . . . that is, I mean, the city does look different. And the foreigners will be back soon enough, out of curiosity. You've got to hand it to them: those boys have something. I don't know what it is, but they sure have got it.

That's the end. So let's go home. Oh yet . . . the Horst Wessel song first. What are you gonna do—you've got to take part in it. The English sing their national anthem after the theater too, so we Germans sing a

different song . . . *Marschiern im Geist in unsern Reihen* etc. . . . Oh well.

Beg your pardon . . . tsk, tsk, tsk . . . *it's* raining. So it's raining after all. Wait a while . . . maybe a taxi wil come along. You wait under the marquee; I'll watch for a taxi. That's not a *Sturmtruppführer,* is it *Gauführer* . . . I know the insignia. Get out of the rain. When it rains you should take shelter. Do we have to get wet? Let other people get wet. Here comes a taxi.

Shush! Get in.

## *WHERE DO THE HOLES IN THE CHEESE COME FROM?*

When company is expected in the evening, the children get their dinner early. Children don't have to hear everything grownups say; it isn't proper, and besides it's cheaper that way. There are sandwiches; mother has a nibble, too. Daddy isn't home yet.

"Mummy, Sonya said she's allowed to smoke already—but I'm sure she doesn't know how!"

"You shouldn't talk while eating."

"Mummy, look at the holes in the cheese!"

Two children's voices, in unison: "Stupid Toby! Cheese has always got holes in it." A tearful boy's voice: "I know—but why? Mummy! *Where do the holes in the cheese come from?*"

"Don't talk while you eat."

"But I wanna know where the holes in the cheese come from."

A pause. Then Mummy: "The holes . . . well, a cheese always has holes, the girls are quite right . . . it always has, that's all."

"But Mummy, this cheese doesn't have any holes. Why does this cheese have holes when that one over there doesn't?"

"Now you be quiet and eat. I've told you a hundred times you shouldn't talk at the table. Go ahead and eat!"

"Aw, shucks! I wanna know where the holes in the cheese . . . Ouch! Quit shoving!" Screams. Enter Daddy.

"What's going on here? H'lo, everybody."

"Oh, Junior's being naughty again."

"I didn't do anything. I just wanna know where the holes in the cheese come from. See, this cheese here has got 'em and that one hasn't!"

Daddy: "Well, that's no reason to yell like that! Mummy will explain it to you."

Mummy: "Go ahead, take the boy's side! He isn't supposed to talk while he's eating, and you know it."

Daddy: "If a child asks something, the least you can do is answer
n, I always say."

Mummy: "*Toujours en présence des enfants!* If I think something
ould be explained, I'll do it. Now you hurry up and eat!"

"But Daddy, I wanna know where the holes in the cheese come from."

Daddy: "Well, the holes in the cheese . . . that's because of the way
s made, they make cheese from butter and from milk, then it's
mented and gets moist; they do a good job of that in Switzerland.
hen you're all grown up, we'll take you along to Switzerland some
y. They've got high mountains there with snow on top of them all
e time—that's nice, huh?"

"Sure, Daddy. But where do the holes in the cheese come from?"

"But I just told you. They come when it's manufactured, when they
ke it."

"Yes, but . . . how do they get in it, the holes?"

"Junior, go to bed now and don't make a hole in my head with your
les! On the double! It's late!"

"No, Daddy! Not yet. First tell me how the holes get in the . . . "

Wham! A box on the ear. Piercing screams. The bell Uncle Adolf.

"Good evening. Good evening. H'lo, Margot, how are ya? How's the
ds? Toby, what are you screaming about?"

"I wanna know . . . "

"Shut up!"

"He wants to know . . . "

"Now put the boy to bed and don't bother me with that foolishness.
me, Adolf, we'll go in the living room while they're setting the table."

Uncle Adolf: "Good night! Night-night. Old crybaby. Say, listen.
hatsamatter with him?"

"Margot can't handle him. He wents to know where the holes in the
eese come from and she won't tell him."

"So did you explain it to him?"

"Of course I did."

"No thanks, I won't smoke now—tell me, do *you* know where they
me from?"

"Are you kidding?! Sure I know where they come from. It's during
e manufacture, because of the moisture; that's very simple."

"Well, old man, I've got news for you. You gave the boy a lot of
ll. Some explanation!"

"That's funny, coming from you. Can *you* tell me where the holes
the cheese come from?"

"Thank God I can."

"So go ahead."

"You see, it's like this. The holes in the cheese originate through th so-called casien that's in the cheese."

"Oh, that's nonsense."

"It isn't nonsense."

"Sure it is, it doesn't have a damn thing to do with the casein . . Evening, Martha, hello, Oscar—sit down, won't you. How's things Business? Slow, very slow!"

"What are you too arguing about?"

Daddy: "Now I'll ask you. Oscar, you went to college; you're a lawye Have the holes in the cheese got anything to do with casein?"

Oscar: "No, they don't. The cheese in the holes . . . that is, the hole in the cheese stem from . . . I mean, get them, because the cheese expand too fast during fermentation."

Horselaughs from the suddenly united old foemen Daddy and Uncl Adolf.

"Ha, ha! Hee, hee! A pretty cute explanation. So the cheese expands Did you get that? Ha, ha . . . "

Enter Uncle Sigismund, Aunt Jenny, Dr. Guggenheimer, and Directo Glackeland. A big round of "Good evening! Good evening! How ar you? We were just talking . . . awful funny . . . holes in the cheese, of a things . . . we'll eat in a minute . . . so *you* go ahead and explain . . .

Uncle Sigismund: "So . . . the holes in the cheese come from th cheese contracting because of the cold while it ferments."

A crescendo of babbling voices, then a big outburst of the fu orchestra: "Ha, ha! Because of the cold? Ever eat cold cheese? It's a goo thing you aren't a cheese maker! The cold! Ha, ha!" Uncle Sigismur retires to a corner, sulking. Dr. Guggenheimer: "Before this question ca be decided, you've got to tell me first what kind of cheese you're talkin about. It depends on the cheese, you see."

Mummy: "It's Swiss cheese. We brought some yesterday . . . Marth I trade at Danzel's now, I don't like Mischewski so well any more; th other day he sent us up some raisins that were quite . . . "

Dr. Guggenheimer: "Well, then, if it is Swiss cheese, the matt is very simple. Swiss has holes because it's a hard cheese. All ha cheeses do."

Director Flackeland: "Gentleman, this is a problem for a man practical life . . . the gentleman here are mostly academicians (*no o contradicts*). You see, the holes in the cheese are products of dec caused by the process of fermentation. Yes. The . . . the cheese disin grates precisely . . . er . . . because the cheese . . . " General downwa

ovement of thumbs, an uprising of the people, the storm breaks loose. Humph! We knew that much. You can't get at it with chemical rmulas."

A high voice: "Haven't you people got an encyclopedia?"

A rush at the library. Longfellow, Whitman, Dale Carnegie, Hemgway, the Golden Treasury, where the heck is . . . here it is: *Aardvark to ybernetics.* Chaucer, Chautauqua, chauvinism, Cheboygan, checkers, HEESE. "Let me . . . Step aside . . . sorry. Here we are: "The vesicular uality of some kinds of cheese is due to the development of carbonic id from the sugar of the locked-in whey . . . "

All, in unison: "See?! What did I tell you?"

" . . . of the locked-in whey and is . . . " "Where does it go on? argot, did you tear a page out of the encyclopedia? Well, I'll be darned . . Who got into the book case? Did the children . . . Why don't u keep it locked?"

"I like that! 'Why don't you keep it locked.' I've told you a ndred times to do it yourself."

"Never mind that now. What was it again? Anyway, you were wrong d I was right."

"But you said that the cheese cools off."

"*You* were the one who said that; *I* said the cheese heats up."

"All right, but you didn't say anything about carbolic acid developing om the whey sugar, as it says here."

"What you said was nonsense, that's all."

"What do *you* know about cheese, anyway? You can't even tell Bolle's at cheese from Old Dutch."

"I've eaten more Old Dutch in my life than you have.'

"Stop spitting when you talk to me!"

Now they're all talking at the same time. This is what can be heard: "I'll thank you to watch your manners when you're here as my est! . . . "the sour quality of the sugar whey . . . " " . . . no business lay down the law to me . . . " " . . . Swiss cheese, yes! Emmental cheese, !" "Where do you think you are—at home? We're *nice* people . . . here did you say? You take that back! Right this instant! I won't ve my guests insulted in my own house—in my own home he insults guests! Leave this house this very minute!" "I'll thank God when n out of here—you can take your grub and . . . "

"You won't set foot in my house again!"

"But gentlemen, this is . . . "

"You just shut up—you don't even belong in the family!"

"Well, I've never been so insulted in my life!"

"As a merchant, I . . . "

"Now listen. In the war we had a cheese . . . "

"I wouldn't apologize or make up! I don't care if you croak. You did us dirt, and even when I'm dead you won't set foot in this house again!"

"You legacy hunter, you!"

"Did you hear that . . . ?!"

"And I'm saying it out loud so everybody will hear: L-e-g-a-c-y h-u-n-t-t-e-r! So there! Now you can go ahead and sue me!"

"Why, you cad! A lout, a boor, that's what you are, and it's not surprising, with that father of yours!"

"And your wife? Who is she? What kind of father did she have?"

"Get out, you bum!"

"Where's my hat? In this thieves' den you gotta keep an eye on your things."

"I'll see you in court. You thief!"

"You can do the same to me, too!"

Enter Emma (from Brooklyn), in the doorway: "Ma'am, dinner is soived!"

* * * *

Four suits for defamation of character; two amended wills; one dissolved partnership; three cancelled mortgages; three suits concerning moveable property: one joint theatre subscription, one rocking chair, some bathroom fixtures; one eviction notice from the landlord.

On the scene there remain one forlon Emmental cheese and one small boy who lifts his chubby arms heavenward and, challenging the universe, yells a ringing "Mummy! WHERE DO THE HOLES IN THE CHEESE COME FROM ? ? ? "

# THE JAILING OF BEN DAVIS'S BOOK

The United States Government freed Ben Davis but they kept his book in jail. When he revealed the facts in a letter to the *New York Times*, readers began to write the *Times*. The extracts the *Times* printed were unanimously against the refusal of James W. Bennett, Director of Federal Prisons, to turn over to Mr. Davis the autobiography he had written while serving a five year sentence under the Smith Act. Mr. Davis, twice elected to the New York City Council, is the author of numerous pamphlets and holds at this writing the office of National Secretary of the Communist Party, U.S.A. The editors of *Mainstream* present herewith the documents in the case of the jailing of Mr. Davis's autobiography, as they appeared in the *New York Times*. While we were preparing our documentary account, the first letter in defense of Mr. Bennett appeared in the *Times*—some three months after the original exchange. We invite our readers to write on this matter directly to James V. Bennett, Director, Bureau of Prisons, Washington, D. C.

## *LETTERS TO THE EDITOR*

Herbert J. Mullner says in his review of "Nehru on World History": Nehru wrote this book in a British jail. Are political prisoners in Russian r Chinese jails free to write and publish their reflections?"

I'm sure Mr. Muller is interested in the truth, in the first place with espect to what happens in U.S. prisons. I can speak on the basis of my ersonal experience.

I served a five-year prison sentence in the segregated Federal prison : Terre Haute, Ind., not far from Indiana University, where Mr. Muller eaches. I had been convicted under the conspiracy section of the Smith ct, and was at the time of my conviction both a member of the New ork Council and a member of the National Committee of the Communist arty of the United States.

While in Terre Haute Federal prison, I wrote a book of my "reflec- ons," covering a good deal of my adult activity against Jim-Crow in the nited States, my law practice as a member of the bar of Georgia, and y two terms in the New York City Council. It was a protracted contro- ersy with the prison officials at Terre Haute to obtain permission to write ie book. They asserted that they had to clear the matter with James . Bennett, director of the U. S. Federal prison system in Washington. inally, as the Terre Haute prison officials claimed, permission to write ie book was granted by Mr. Bennett. It was understood that the manu-

script would be turned over to me upon my release. But the prison officials, including Mr. Bennett, would give me no assurance to that effect in writing. I completed the book upon a verbal commitment from the officials.

When, however, my term was ended in January, 1955, the officials refused to turn over the manuscript and promised to send it to my home "for my convenience." When I didn't receive it after a reasonable time I wrote for it. Mr. Bennett flatly refused to hand it over.

Finally, I filed suit to recover the manuscript, citing the fact that two publishing houses were interested in the work. But not even a law suit was able to pry loose the book, which had taken me two-and-a-half painstaking years to complete under enormous difficulties.

*Benjamin J. Davis, New York*

*A REPLY*
*To the Editor*:

It has long been our policy to permit men and women confined in Federal prisons to write manuscripts in their spare time and submit them for publication so long as they do not exploit their own criminal career or that of others. We also require that the manuscript be submitted for review before it is approved for mailing to see that these requirements are followed and that it does not contain defamatory or blasphemous material.

These conditions have been established since experience demonstrated that most manuscripts written for publication had as their purpose the glorification of the writer's criminal career or crime generally, or to promote some unlawful purpose.

In Mr. Davis' case, he was permitted to write a manuscript, knowing these policies and being specifically informed that whether he would be permitted to take the manuscript out at the time of his release would depend upon its content. Mr. Davis failed to comply with our policies. The manuscript was essentially autobiographical in nature and was intended primarily as a propaganda vehicle to promote the views, opinions, policies and philosophy of a member of the Communist party. Some of the chapter headings, such as "Special Treatment in Foley's Square," "A Rigger Trial," "A Three Party Gang-Up," and "Political Persecution" indicate the nature of the document as Communist propaganda and as an indictment of his conviction on the charge of conspiracy to teach and advocate the overthrow of the United States by force. Had Mr. Davis complied with established policies, he would have had his manuscript

t the time of his release, as have many other persons released from ederal prisons.

*James V. Bennett, Director, Bureau of Prisons, Washington D.C.*

* * * *

In a recent letter to the Book Review, Benjamin C. Davis, an ack-owledged member of the Communist Party of the United States, wrote hat, while serving a prison term for conviction under the Smith Act, he eceived permission from James V. Bennett, Director of the Bureau of risons, to write a book of "reflections." He was given verbal assurance hat the manuscript would be turned over to him on his release. This as never done. In reply Mr. Bennett claimed that manuscripts that exploit he criminal's career are not freed for publication. Mr. Davis' manuscript, Ir. Bennett went on, was autobiographical in nature and was intended s a propaganda vehicle to promote the policies and philosophy of the ommunist Party. Excerpts from some of the letters received follow:

* * * *

*o the Editor*:

It is disheartening to learn that the Bureau of Prisons has joined the ost Office in the role of self-appointed censor.

The grim irony of any form of Federal censorship—where the Post ffice refuses to handle a novel by D. H. Lawrence or the Bureau of risons fails to release the manuscript of a Benjamin Davis—is that our overnment takes unto itself one of the characteristics of the totalitarian-m which we as a nation are determined to fight.

Is Mr. Bennett, Director of the Bureau of Prisons, fearful that Ben-min Davis' book will be an insidious tool able to undermine our emocratic beliefs? Mr. Bennett has obviously read the manuscript and has not defected.

*Charles Preston, Chappaqua, N.Y.*

*o the Editor*:

Were other readers as appalled as I to read the exchange of letters? ot until today did I realize that the Federal Government exercised such owers of censorship inside prison walls. Call me hopelessly naive, but I ought the First Amendment protected all of us alike—with or without iminal records.

*Margaret Reynolds, Chicago, Ill.*

*o the Editor*:

I am writing to express my shocked amazement at the letter by James Bennett.

Suppose Mr. Bennett's charge is true; what of it? Who gave th director the right, not only to set himself up as a censor and tell th author what he may or may not write for publication but also to maintai possession of a manuscript after a prisoner is freed? Bennett points i justification to prison regulations which prohibit prisoners from mailin for publication manuscripts containing 'defamatory or blasphemou material.' This is irrelevant; Davis is complaining, not because he coul not mail a publisher his manuscript while in jail, but because Bennet refuses to return it to him now that he has served his sentence. It i not Bennett's job to protect the American people against what he think is defamatory or blasphemous.

*Philip Pollack, New York*

*To the Editor*:

Mr. Bennett's letter was an outrageous alibi for censorship. What i the manuscript, "was intended primarily as a propaganda vehicle"? In thi country we still cherish freedom of expression. The only tolerable form of censorship are those of publisher rejection of manuscript and/or reade rejection at the book counters. Mr. Bennett might better devote his tim to improving prisons, rather than sitting as a judge of what we can an cannot read.

*Murray Gelman, New York*

*To the Editor*:

Obviously, the Warden views the pen as a mighty weapon and seek to blunt it. This view is shared by most totalitarian states. We might poin out, however, that Djilas published quite effectively while imprisone by the present Yugoslav regime.

We in America should realize that we are strong. This strengt derives not from the existence of a police state, but from its absence. Th free expression of political opinion, no matter how repugnant to thos in power, is a fundamental source of strength. We should bear this i mind when the pretensions of the Bennetts or McCarthys first asse themselves.

Presumably, prison officials have the right to deny writing paper t a convict; but, having furnished such paper, are they to have the rig to censor the political thoughts committed to it? American liberty, if is every fully lost, will disappear by erosion from the acts of men lik Bennett, rather than from siezure by men like Davis.

Give him his book and let him publish it!

*S. K. MacLean, Waynesboro, Va.*

*To the Editor*:

The Postal Department and Federal Bureau of Prisons should g

ogether. The Postal Department recently issued a stamp which quoted n part Thomas Jefferson's oath swearing eternal hostility to every tyranny ver the mind of man. Mr. Bennett, on the other hand, believes that he is erforming a patriotic Government function by denying or impeding Ir. Davis in expressing certain ideas or beliefs.

*Charles Wetzel, Madison, Wis.*

*o the Editor*:

To deny access to the working of the Communist mind in a cold ar is as absurd as to deny access to the maps of enemy territory in hot war.

*Sally Chappell, Chicago, Ill.*

## *IN DEFENSE OF MR. BENNETT*

*o the Editor*:

I hope that in the interest of fairness you will publish at least one tter in support of James V. Bennett, Director of Federal Prisons, n refusing to turn over to Benjamin C. Davis the manuscript of his ıtobiography written while in prison following his conviction under ıe Smith Act.

The Communists will stop at nothing to achieve their objective f conquering the world. Khrushchev has bluntly told us, "I will ury you." We live under the constant danger of being annihilated by surprise nuclear-weapons attack launched by the Kremlin.

Why, then, are all your correspondents so excited because our irector of Prisons refuses to permit a Communist to spread Com-ınist propaganda? Why should an official of our Government help hrushchev attain his objective of conquering us?

*Isidor Shaffer, Flushing, N.Y.*

# LETTER FROM CHINA

*ANNA LOUISE STRONG*

This is an excerpt from a letter of the renowned journalist written to a friend in the United States. We reproduce it here in the hope that it will be of interest to our readers.

THERE are plenty of things to say about China, and I have a lot o ideas, but no energy. . . . We all think that your letter plus abou six others I have received from other good friends in the USA, all sho that a book is much needed, but that, instead of the kind I planned, on th "Three Magic Keys," it must be much simpler, since apparently NOBOD in the U.S.A. knows enough about present day China to know eve where to start. . . . So last evening I listed at random SOME of the point that must be made . . . I jot them down, also at random, not yet seein where to put them in the book.

1) One fourth of the human race has moved out of the sphere o hunger and destitution in the past ten years.
2) One fourth of the human race has moved out of illitera into general literacy in the same time.
3) They are not doing it "under compulsion" as Lippmann say they are doing it by the power of their human wills, by thei great desires, under conditions of socialism, and Communis analysis. . . . They are not "blue ants;" they are people who, unt what they called "liberation," were not very different from th other hungry, destitute backward peoples of South Asia and th South Seas. . . . But since 1949 they have gone ahead muc faster than others, at incredible speeds (compare India in foo and steel with China). . . . This incredible speed is not due t militarization or slavery, nor is it due to material foreign ai . . . The U.S.S.R. and other socialist lands gave them valued hel but material aid went also from the U.S.A. to other Asian land . . . What the U.S.S.R chiefly gave them was a revolutiona example and theory which they took and adapted to their cond tions, in such a way that 650,000,000 people became alert, eage moved by desire and hope stronger than the motive of individu gain is under capitalism. . . . "New people" with new stron motivations . . .
4) Among other things, whereas formerly they had a sayin

"there is no way," meaning that conditions and fate were too hard . . . now they believe that "the people make history," the people "conquer nature" and bend it to their joint will. They are not the first to hold this view; one recalls the Stakhanovites in the U.S.S.R. etc. etc. . . . But now it is one fourth of mankind thinking this, which, added to other socialist lands means 40 percent of mankind thinking this. . . . And to this they have added, in the case of China, the sense of a "national liberation" from the foreign occupation which was on their soil for more than 100 years, and which has now been expelled from their soil, except in Taiwan. . . . This combination makes them the biggest collection of energetic forward pushing humans on earth.

5) They began at a very low level of poverty and ruin twelve years ago. . . . They are still at a wage level that to the West seems deep poverty. . . . Yet in the past two years they reorganized their rural economy so that famines and floods and droughts are basically conquered by farmlands two-thirds of which are irrigated at least in part. In most of the countryside their communes offer "free food," plus a small additional wage based on labor. In most of the countryside the once illiterate peasants, who had no industry formerly, now have many small industries, and make iron and steel and farm implements for their own needs. More than half of all the counties have an iron and steel industry.

6) Along with this goes a present campaign for everyone to make inventions, to mechanize, or semi-mechanize all the labor processes. Tens of millions of inventions are raising the industrial production very fast. . . . Simultaneously there is the "cultural revolution," whose aim is to give everyone a high school education very soon, and a college education within about 15 years, what Holland Roberts calls the greatest jump in education ever dreamed. . . . This is done by spare-time colleges, for people who work. Along with this goes also the "ideological revolution," a constant, conscious effort to keep people's thinking changing to conform with the status of production by "rectification campaigns" every couple of years, getting rid of "old superstitions" and "bourgeois ideology" . . .

They go faster in these things than any large collection of people every went before; both because they have the example of the U.S.S.R. from which to learn; and also because they were 40 years behind the U.S.S.R. in their revolution, and even further behind in their technique, and they have to catch up with it

so that all may enter communism together . . . as Khrushche says will occur. . . . The Chinese also think it will occur in nc too many years . . .

Now along with this goes a theme of the march of mankind, nc just China. . . . There are several aspects of it. . . . The first was th feeling I had in 1959 at the October 1 demonstration when I could nc get the idea out of my mind: "This is mankind marching". . . I said to myself: "Now don't exaggerate and don't get starry-eyed. The may be one fourth of mankind but they aren't mankind". . . . But by th next October 1959, my reason had caught up with the facts. For whe I went to the big anniversary session in the Great Hall of the Peopl with delegates from scores of lands and Communist Party leaders fron 4' countries, etc., etc., etc., I said: "By heck, this IS mankind marching' . . . For the Soviet socialist lands have 40 percent of mankind, and whe you add the Communist Parties and their united fronts in capitalist land that will make it more than half mankind, and when you see that th ex-colonial lands are all going towards socialism, willy nilly, because nativ capitalism does not work and does not feed them in this age of imperial ism, then you get three quarters of more of mankind. . . . And when yo add the peace movement of the type promoted by the socialist lands you get pretty nearly ALL of mankind . . . and with what happened i less that two years in Africa and Latin America, it might not take ver long . . .

Well . . . all this is SOME of the content of today's China. . . . Bu I am very tired and do not know how fast I can get it into form,

Yours,

ANNA LOUISE

# INDEX TO VOLUME 13, 1960

(Listed separately are Books in Review, pages 63-64)

## OOKS IN REVIEW

STATEMENT REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, JULY 2, 1946 AND JUNE 11, 1960 (74 STAT. 208) S ING THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION OF MAINSTREAM, published monthly at New York, N. Y., for October 1, 1960.

1. The names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and b managers are: Publisher, Masses & Mainstream, Inc., 832 Broadway, New York 3, Editor, None; Managing Editor, Robert Forrey, 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.; ness Manager, Joseph Felshin, 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.

2. The owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders own holding 1 percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporati names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a parti or other unincorporated firm, its name and address, as well as that of each ind member, must be given.) Masses & Mainstream, Inc., 832 Broadway, New Y N. Y.; Joseph Felshin, 832 Broadway, New York 3, N. Y.

3. The known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or h 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (I are none, so state.) None.

4. Paragraphs 2 and 3 include, in cases where the stockholder or security hold pears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relati name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting; also the stat in the two paragraphs show the affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the c stances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity than that of a bona fide owner.

5. The average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or dist through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the 12 months preced date shown above was: (This information is required by the act of June 11, 196( included in all statements regardless of frequency of issue.) 3000.

JOSEPH FELSHIN, Business M

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 13th day of Octobe

(Seal) MANUEL LICHTENSTEIN, Notary

State of New York, No. 41-

Qualified in Queens

(My commission expires March 30

# THREE RECENT TITLES

## DISARMAMENT AND THE AMERICAN ECONOMY

**A Symposium, edited by Herbert Aptheker**

**Paperback $.75**

Studies in the ideology, politics and economics of disarmament in the U.S.A. presented in the form of papers offered at a symposium under the sponsorship of the Faculty of Social Science by such distinguished Marxist economists as James S. Allen, Robert W. Dunn, Hyman Lumer, Victor Perlo and others. A New Century title.

## THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION: 1763-1783

**By Herbert Aptheker** **Price $3.50**

Was the American Revolution really a REVOLUTION? What were its sources? Did class divisions within the colonies determine its nature? How were Tories and traitors treated by the military? What was the relation of slavery to the independence struggle? These and many other questions are answered in a Marxist analysis that makes this book indispensable. An International title.

## COMPOSER AND NATION: THE FOLK HERITAGE IN MUSIC

**By Sidney Finkelstein** **Price $4.00**

Surveys four centuries of music, the great 19th century composers such as Smetana, Dvorak, Tchaikovsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov, the masters who wrote during the period of the rise of modern nations, such as Vivaldi, Handel and Bach, the classic era of Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven and Schubert, the romantic composers like Schuman, Chopin, Berlioz, Wagner and Brahms, the moderns, like Debussy, Mahler, Stravinsky and others, American jazz, contemporary Soviet music and other musical developments. An International book.

**NEW CENTURY PUBLISHERS, 832 Broadway, New York 3**