NOVEMBER, 1961
50 cents

Mainstream

BABI YAR
by
Yevtushenko

✦

POETRY
by Lowenfels
and Birney

✦

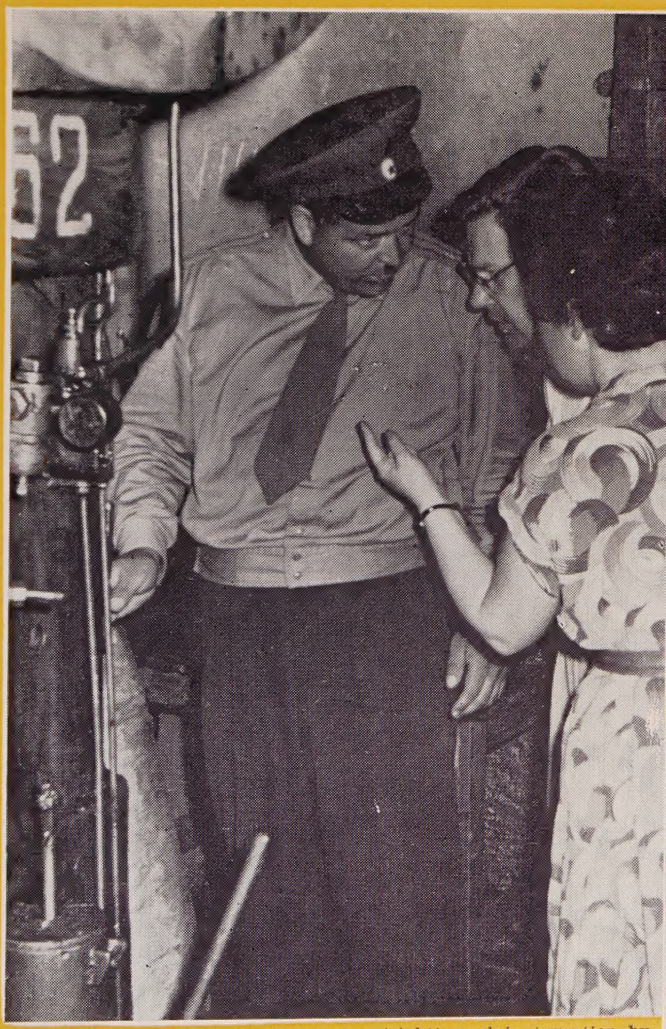
ON THE
RIVATE EYE"
N FICTION
R. F. Shaw

✦

Lu Hsun

✦

REVIEWS



Russian guard (left) and interpreter (right) explain invention by prisoner to author Bonosky (center).

NSIDE A SOVIET PRISON CAMP

Vol. 14, No. 11

Mainstream

NOVEMBER, 1961

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

Among Our Contributors

Lu Hsun is the Chinese writer who has been called the father of modern Chinese literature. His stories and essays are available in excellent English translations (Foreign Language Press, Peking). *Irwin Silber* is the author of the widely acclaimed volume, *Songs of the Civil War* (Columbia University Press). He currently is with *Sing out,* the folk song magazine. *Y. Yevtushenko* is the young Russian poet. *Philip Bonosky,* the American writer, is the author of two novels, *Burning Valley* and *The Magic Fern* (International Publishers). *Walter Lowenfels* edited *Walt Whitman's Civil War* and is author of volumes of poetry of his own. A contributing editor of this magazine, he is currently in Europe traveling. *R. F. Shaw* is a young graduate student who appears in our pages frequently. A student of modern European politics, this is his first venture into literary criticism. *Earle Birney* is making his first appearance in our pages. Currently teaching in Canada, he has been widely published in Canada and the United States. *Leon Josephson,* author of *The Individual and Soviet Law* (New Century), appeared in our August issue with his article on "The Law and Negro Education."

Next Month

A report from Eastern Europe by *Walter Lowenfels.* Writing about the tense Berlin situation and the dangers of a world war, Mr. Lowenfels underscores the need for a sane Berlin policy and disarmament. *Reuben Borough* returns with an article on Robert Ingersol, the "great agnostic."

Mike Davidow is represented by his account of a recent trip to the USSR.

in the mainstream

"Poetry in Our Time"

We are pubilshing in this issue the text of the poem *Babi Yar,* written by the young Soviet poet, Yevgeny Yevtushenko, and originally published in the Moscow *Literary Gazette.* A few words of explanation are necessary.

It is a fact of some sad significance to Americans that the only poets around whom any controversy can be aroused today happen to be Soviet poets. Not only is what they say of great importance in Moscow, but their poems are read and discussed all over the world. In Moscow itself, what poets have to say can, and often does, draw enormous or small crowds depending on how high the passions run and to what extent the poet draws blood. What American poet alive would not envy that huge meeting of some 5000 Muscovites around the statue of that typical forerunner of today's Soviet poets, Mayakovsky, to hear poets read their verse? That is in the great tradition of revolutionary romanticism, of Byron and Shelly, of Victor Hugo; and even of the same tradition in our country that was alive to some extent during the vital Thirties.

But what is there left today? If Ezra Pound is a confirmed fascist and active traitor, a working anti-Semite — still, award him the Bollinger prize. If T. S. Eliot writes the lines:

> Rachel *nee* Rabinovich
> Tears at the grapes with murderous paws . . .

or the scarcely more elegant:

> The rats are underneath the piles.
> The jew is underneath the lot.
> Money in furs . . .

let it all pass: this poet's anti-Semitism is hallowed. It is the privilege of an ex-patriate, a Tory, a Royalist and an Anglo-Catholic.

The sensationalism that accompanies any discussion of Soviet art in the American press — extending, in this case, to a pharasaical editorial in the *Times* — finds its source, not in any dedication to art and truth, but to the far less noble aims and ends of the Cold War.

Yet this episode is not without some compensations. Each new slander must be built on the ruins of an old slander — though the reader is not encouraged to note the fact. In this instance, the Cold Warriors in their eagerness to promote the slander of Soviet anti-Semitism inadvertently hoist into the air that old, sanctified slander of an iron-clad press, stiff with conformity, that has been standard currency in the anti-Soviet press.

The Literary Gazette, which is published by the Soviet Writers Union, prints a poem which is criticized by a contributor to *Literature and Life,* which is published by the Russian Federation's Writers Union. Much discussion pro and con ensues, culminating in a public reading of poetry before the statue of Mayakovsky, where traditionally poets and their public foregather for just such readings.

This, it seems to us, is a picture of vitality — of literature that has an impact upon life, of writers who are taken with great seriousness. *The New York Times* and *New York Post* may see in Yevtushenko the leader of the advance guard in the yearned-for counter-revolution. And yet we doubt it. For who really wants to fight for freedom to write poetry in a milieu where the poet is considered an eccentric, and with beard and sandal may be hired out to Greenwich Village cafes to lure the visiting firemen from Kansas into a tourist trap?

But even the fate of the serious poets is scarcely more to be envied. Karl Shapiro, a full-time poet and publisher of poets, laments in his introduction to Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer*: "Poetry has lost its significance, its relevance, and even its meaning in our time. To begin again it must repair to the wilderness, outside society, outside the city gates, a million miles from books and their keeper . . ." and he goes on: "In America it has become impossible, except for a few lucky or wise people, to live one's own life; consequently the poets and artists tend to move to the fringes of society. . . . The American way of life has

become illusory; we lead the lives of prisoners while we boast about free speech, free press, and free religion, none of which we actually do enjoy in full. . . . The only thing for nonenslaved men to do is to move out to the edge, lose contact with the machines or organization which are as ubiquitous in this country as in Russia. . . ." And he finishes, quoting from Henry Miller approvingly: "Instead of bucking your head against a stone wall, sit quietly with hands folded and wait for the walls to crumble . . ."

A latter-day Luddite, Shapiro would smash the machines and flee the city, and find freedom in some retreat, some unnamed haven. but whatever it is, it will be some place from which to *watch* the "walls crumble," not fight it; for "combatting the 'system' is nonsense."

So, if we were to take our cue from the dominant American poets themselves, there is nothing here for either American or Soviet poets to aspire to — but only to flee from. If however we differ with Shapiro and see some sense in combatting the system, it is on the best advice of poets from our own tradition who once fought, and cried:

Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! Oh, clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!

I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.

Or, if calling William Blake a mad mystic, it is advised that he be read but not believed, turn then closer home to our own eminently sane Walt Whitman:

Are you he who would assume a place to teach or be a poet here in the States? The place is august, the terms obdurate . . .

For, among other things, to be a poet for America his poetry must answer:

Dies it see behind the apparent custodians, the real custodians, standing, menacing, silent, the mechanics, Manhattanese, Western men, Southerners, significant alike in their apathy and in the promptness of their love?

And, whatever betrayal confronts America, this man our own prophet cries:

Leap from your seats and contend for your lives!

Emerson cries with him:

Things are in the saddle,
And ride mankind . . .
Half for freedom strike and stand —
The astonished Muse finds thousands at her side.

Yevtushenko, rightly or wrongly, leaps to his feet, and his Muse, astonised, finds thousands at her side. Better a thousand times to leap at wrong than to run scared, run disgusted or bored, let others 'foolishly fight the system,' and after one has run far enough, "just sit and watch it happen!"

Leap from your seats, poets of America, and contend for your lives!

Footnotes to Above:

1. "I think they want to get us out of here and get a richer class of people in."

E. E. Cummings, who is the author of this prose lament, knows something about rooms. His landlord is trying to get him out of his rooms at this moment. He began literary life as the author of *The Enormous Room,* an account of his life as a POW in the First World War. Today, doubling as an embattled citizen like the rest of us trying to keep the roof over our heads at a reasonable rental, Mr. Cummings, who has hitherto been innocent of any lower-class consciousness that we know of, at last joins the ranks of lower-case human beings, the archies and mehitabels, the yahoos, and even

. . . in the street where strong
men are digging bread
and I see the brutal faces of
people contented hideous hopeless cruel happy . . .

For all Cummings' measured hatred of socialism, which is his privilege, no doubt, it seems however that landlords come with "freedom," and that in a society where classes "don't exist" nevertheless some are rich and some are poor and the rich get in and the poor go out — and so the age old war of the poor against the rich still goes on, as Cummings testifies, and willy-nilly he's with "us" against the "richer class of people."

2. Le Roi Jones also writes poetry that brings him into collision with the minions of the law. Jones was arrested by "Marshal Joseph

Cafferty," says the news report, "and an FBI agent" (unamed) "while asleep in his apartment . . ."

It seems that the postal inspectors of the Rahway, N. J. Reformatory intercepted a newsletter written by Le Roi Jones and Diene Di Prima which the inspectors considered too obscene for the prisoners to read. Although the problem of protecting prison-enclosed criminals from contamination by reading "obscene" literature intrigues us as a socal phenomenon in its own right, what makes us ask a question is that other part of the news story—the part that tells us of the presence of "an FBI agent." Why was he there? Is it usual for FBI agents to break into the quarters of sleeping poets these days? Since when did J. Edgar Hoover go into the literary criticism business?

Further along in the story we learn what is perhaps the real clue to the FBI's presence — for it seems that Le Roi had visited Cuba and written a version of his visit that doesn't coincide with the opinion of the FBI on this matter. It's not his poetry then — obscene or pure as the lillies — that concerns the FBI. To paraphrase Moliere's gentilhomne, Mr. Jourdan, who was astonished to discover that he was talking prose all the time, our two poets might be suprised to discover that they were talking politics all the time, upper case or lower case, it doesn't make much difference as long as they live in a world divided between "the richer class," (assisted by the FBI) and the rest of us.

DEATH

LU HSUN

Lu Hsun has been called the father of modern Chinese literature. Born in 1881, he was related to intellectuals on his father's side and, on his mother's, to peasants. Family misfortunes forced him out in the world where, as a writer and teacher, he published poems, essays, stories and translations. He remained in Shanghai from 1927 until his death in 1936, devoting his life to the revolutionary literary movement, which was under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party. On this, the 80th anniversary of his birth, we republish the following essay in commemoration.

WHILE preparing a selection of Kaethe Kollwitz's works for publication, I asked Miss Agnes Smedley to write a preface. This struck me as most appropriate because the two of them were good friends. Soon the preface was ready. I made Mr. Mao Tun translate it, and it has now appeared in the Chinese edition. One passage in it reads:

> All these years Kaethe Kollwitz—who never once used any title conferred on her—has made a great many sketches, pencil and ink drawings, woodcuts and etchings. When we study these, two dominant themes are evident: in her younger days her main theme was revolt, but in her later years it was motherly love, the protective maternal instinct, succour and death. All her works are pervaded by the idea of suffering, of tragedy, and a passionate longing to protect the oppressed.
>
> Once I asked her: "Why is it that instead of your former theme of revolt you now seem unable to shake off the idea of death?" She answered in tones of anguish: "It may be because I am growing older every day. . . ."

At that point I stopped to think. I estimated that it must have been in about 1910 that she first took death as her theme, when she was no more than forty-three or four. I stop to think about it now because of my own age, of course. But a dozen or so years ago, as I recall, I did not have such

a feeling about death. No doubt our lives have long been treated so casually as trifles of no consequence that we treat them lightly ourselves, not seriously as Europeans do. Some foreigners say that the Chinese are most afraid of death. But this is not true—actually, most of us die with no clear understanding of the meaning of death.

The general belief in a posthumous existence further strengthens this casual attitude towards death. As everyone knows, we Chinese believe in ghosts (more recently called "souls" or "spirits"); and since there are ghosts, after death we can at least exist as ghost if not as men, which is better than nothing. But the imagined duration of this ghostly existence seems to vary according to a man's property. The poor appear to fancy that when they die their souls will pass into another body, according to Buddhist teaching. Of course the transmigration taught in Buddhism is a complicated process, by no means so simple: but the poor are usually ignorant people who do not know this. That is why criminals condemned to death often show no fear when taken to the execution ground but shout: "Twenty years from now I shall be a stout fellow again!" Moreover, according to popular belief a ghost wears the clothes he had on at the time of death; and since the poor have no good clothes and cannot therefore cut a fine figure as ghosts, it is far better for them to be reborn at once as naked babies. Did you ever see a new-born infant wearing a beggar's rags or a swimming-suit? No, never. Very well, then, that is a fresh start. Someone may object: If you believe in transmigration, in the next existence you may be even worse off or actually become a beast—what a fearful thought. But the poor don't seem to think that way. They firmly believe that they have not committed sins frightful enough to condemn them o becoming beasts: they have not had the position, power or money to commit such sins.

But neither do those men with position, power and money believe that they should become beasts. They either turn Buddhist in order to become saints, or advocate the study of the Confucian classics and a return to ancient ways in order to become Confucian sages. Just as in life they expect to be a privileged class, after death they expect to be exempt from transmigration. As for those who have a little money, though they also believe they should be exempt from transmigration, since they have no high ambitions or lofty plans they just wait placidly. Round about the age of fifty, they look for a burial place, buy a coffin and burn paper money to open a bank account in the nether regions, expecting their sons and grandsons to sacrifice to them every year. This is surely much pleasanter than life on earth. If I were a ghost now, with filial descendents in the world of men, I should not have to sell my articles one by one, or ask

the Peihsin Publishing House* for payment. I could simply lie at ease in my *nanmu*** or fir coffin, while at every festival and at New Year a fine feast and a pile of banknotes would be placed before me. That would be the life!

Generally speaking, apart from the very rich and great, who are not bound by the laws of the nether regions, the poor would like to be reborn at once, while those comfortably-off would like to remain as ghosts for as long as possible. The comfortably-off are willing to remain ghosts because their life as ghosts (this sounds paradoxical but I can think of no better way of expressing it) is the continuation of their life on earth and they are not yet tired of it. Of course there are rulers in the nether regions who are extremely strict and just; but they will make allowances for these ghosts and accept presents from them too, just like good officials on earth.

THEN there are others who are rather casual, who do not think much about death even when they are dying, and I belong to this casual category. Thirty years ago as a medical student I considered the problem of the existence of the soul, but did not know what to conclude. Later I considered whether death was painful or not, and concluded that it varied in different cases. And later still I stopped thinking about the matter and forgot it. During the last ten years I have sometimes written a little about the death of friends, but apparently I never thought of my own. In the last two years I have been ill a great deal and usually for a considerable length of time, which has often reminded me that I am growing older. Of course, I have been constantly reminded of this fact by other writers owing to their friendly or unfriendly concern.

Since last year, whenever I lay on my wicker chair recovering from illness, I would consider what to do when I was well, what articles to write, what books to translate or publish. My plans made, I would conclude: "All right—but I must hurry." This sense of urgency, which I never had before, was due to the fact that unconsciously I had remembered my age. But still I never thought directly of "death."

Not till my serious illness this year did I start thinking distinctly about death. At first I treated my illness as in the past, relying on my Japanese doctor, S —. Though not a specialist in tuberculosis, he is an elderly man with rich experience who studied medicine before me,

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*This publishing house printed most of Lu Hsun's works in the early thirties.

**A hard wood with a fine grain.

is my senior and knows me very well — hence he talks frankly. Of course, however well a doctor knows his patient, he still speaks with a certain reserve; but at least he warned me two or three times, though I never paid any attention and did not tell anyone. Perhaps because things had dragged on so long, and my last attack was so serious, some friends arranged behind my back to invite an American doctor, D —, to see me. He is the only Western specialist on turberculosis in Shanghai. After his examination, though he complimented me on my typically Chinese powers of resistance, he also announced that my end was near, adding that had I been a European I would already have been in my grave for five years. This verdict moved my soft-hearted friends to tears. I did not ask him to prescribe for me, feeling that since he had studied in the West he could hardly have learned how to prescribe for a patient five years dead. But Dr. D's diagnosis was in fact extremely accurate. I later had an X-ray photograph made of my chest which very largely bore out his diagnosis.

Though I paid not too much atention to his announcement, it has influenced me a litt.e I spend all the time on my back, with no energy to talk or read and not enough strength to hold a newspaper. Since my heart is not yet "as tranquil as an old well," I am forced to think. and sometimes I think of death too. But instead of thinking that "twenty years from now I shall be a stout fellow again," or wondering how to prolong my stay in a *nanmu* coffin, my mind dwells on certain trifles before death. It is only now that I am finally sure that I do not believe that men turn into ghosts. It occurred to me to write a will, and I thought: If I were a great nobleman with a huge fortune, my sons, sons-in-law and others would have forced me to write a will long ago; whereas nobody has mentioned it to me. Still, I may as well leave one. I seem to have thought out quite a few items for my family, among which were:

1. Don't accept a cent from anyone for the funeral. This does not apply to old friends.
2. Get the whole thing over quickly, have me buried and be done with it.
3. Do nothing in the way of commemoration.
4. Forget me and look after your own affairs — if you don't you are just too silly.
5. When the child grows up, if he has no gifts let him take some small job to make a living. On no account let him become a writer or artist in name alone.
6. Don't take other people's promises seriously.

7. Never mix with people who injure others but who oppose revenge and advocate tolerance.

THERE were other items, too, but I have forgotten them. I remember also that during a fever I recalled that when a European is dying there is usually some sort of ceremony in which he asks pardon of others and pardons them. Now I have a great many enemies, and what should my answer be if some modernized person asked me my views on this? After some thought I decided: Let them go on hating me. I shall not forgive a single one of them either.

No such ceremony took place, however, and I did not draw up a will. I simply lay there in silence, struck sometimes by a more pressing thought: If this is dying, it isn't really painful. It may not be quite like this at the end, of course; but still, since this happens only once in a lifetime, I can take it. . . . Later, however, there came a change for the better. And now I am wondering whether this was really the state just before dying: a man really dying may not have such ideas. What it will be like though, I still don't know.

Translated by Yang Hsien-yi and Gladys Yang

Actually, transcending the present age is a form of escapism. And this is the path they are bound to take—consciously or otherwise—if they dare not look reality in the face yet insist on styling themselves revolutionaries. If you live in this world, how can you get away from it? This is as much of a fraud as saying you can lift yourself off the ground by your ear.

—LU HSUN
Literature and Revolution (1928)

BABI YAR

Y. YEVTUSHENKO

This controversial poem first appeared in the Literaturnaya Gazeta, *in Moscow, September* 19, 1961. *Babi Yar is a ravine near Kiev where many thousands of Jews were massacred by the Nazis in the Second World War. For comment by the editors, see the column of editorial comment, "In the Mainstream" elsewhere in this issue.*

No sculptured headstones stand on Babi Yar—
the rough-hewn cleft is monolith enough—
and here, alive amid the countless dead,
I feel that I have lived not years but ages,
the ages of the ancient Jewish race.
Today I am a Jew, and here I walk
in Egypt's bondage, dragging leaden feet;
and here I, Dreyfus, face again my foes,
the howling mob that also is my judge.
My lot is to be hounded, spat upon,
reviled by silk—and satin-clad viragos
who jab their dainty sunshades in my face.
. . . I am a little boy in Belastok;
pogromists, breathing hate and vodka, storm
into our home; the floor-boards soak up blood;
I plead that they should spare my mother's life;
a heavy boot kicks me aside. They chant:
"Beat up the Yids and keep our Russia safe."
Our Russia? . . . Oh, my Russian countrymen,
Your love sweeps over frontiers, over creeds,

but often those whose hands were red with blood
invoked the sacred name of our dear land
and called themselves the Russian People's League
. . . And, standing here, I know myself to be
Anne Frank, as tender as a bud in spring,
and as defenceless. Love has come to me,
a love that needs no poet's shining words,
for shining eyes say all that need be said.
How little does life hold for us, my love—
how little, and how much! We may not see
from here the blue of sky, the green of leaf,
but in this darkened room our lips may meet . . .
They're coming?—No, the footsteps that you hear
are but the blessed steps of coming spring.
Knocks at the door?—Be not afraid, my love:
the river breaks its bonds; our winter ends.

The grasses whisper over Babi Yar,
each tree a solemn judge; a deathly silence
clamorous in my ears. I bare my head;
it seems my hair is slowly turning grey
and I am but an endless, soundless moan
mourning the nameless dead of Babi Yar.
Greybeards, husbands, wives and slaughtered babes—
each one of them am I; and while I live
my blood, my flesh, my bones will not forget.
When earth's last anti-Semite is interred
the International will thunder here.
Although I have no Jewish blood in me,
well may they hate me as they hate a Jew
for I have hated them through all my life—
and thus true son of Russia I am.

Translated by *Archie Johnstone*

A VISIT TO A SOVIET PRISON CAMP

PHILLIP BONOSKY

"Why are you so interested in the seamy side of Soviet life?"

The question took me somewhat by surprise. My second visit to the Soviet Union had several objects in mind; but primarily what I wanted to discover, if possible, were those signs, indistinct yet perhaps, perhaps not fully formed, but nevertheless already present in Soviet society which could be recognized as the first green shoots of the coming era of communism, which later the Soviet program would "solemly proclaim the present generation of Soviet people" would live to see, given peace.

So it was not the "seamy side" of Soviet life I was especially interested in. But sometimes it is possible to find a clue to what is positive in life through a close examination of what is "negative," and the kind of criminal (and mentally ill) that occurs in a particular society, his treatment, and his reconciliation or continued antagonism to his society, provides a good index — though only an index — to the actual quality of that society. This fact has been widely recognized by sociologists. We get, we are told, the kind of criminal we deserve.

The Soviet approach to crime and criminals and corresponding theories for the rehabilitation of criminals once had been widely recognized throughout America and Europe as the most advanced of our times, and Harold J. Laski's comment, in his *Reflections on the Revolution of Our Time* (1943), was typical:

> "No one who has examined at first hand the Soviet administration of justice (the sphere of political offenses apart) can doubt that in experimentalism on the one hand, and in quality of human approach, on the other, it is on a level superior to that of most other countries. If, as I be-

> lieve, the administration of courts and prisons is a vital index to the quality of a civilization, this is of the first importance. . . . In this field it is no exaggeration to say that the rest of the world must go to school to the Soviet Union."

But that was before the Cold War had set in, though Harold Laski, a well-known theoretician for the British Labor Party, was by no means sympathetic to the aims of Soviet socialism. Was it still true? And did Laski's qualification about political prisoners still obtain?

That was one of the aims I set myself as part of the object of my second visit to the Soviet Union; for it seemed to me still quite true that, though other, more positive means for testing the "quality of a civilization" existed, nevertheless the question of crime in society remained a "vital index." In this article, therefore, I shall limit myself to only one phase of the description of that enormous civilization, with it tremendous dynamic, that the world knows as the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

This would mean talking to many people, visiting a prison camp, and witnessing, if possible, the working of those by-now famous "comrades courts" that had become institutionalized in the last two or three years. They were the beginnings of the era of popular self-rule, or self-discipline, that were the harbingers of a future communism in which internal restrictions of the State would gradually wither away to be assumed voluntarily by the people themselves.

Soviet theory rejects the concept of the "born criminal" in no matter what disguised "biological-socio" form it may take. Yet crime is still a problem in the Soviet Union. True, it is not comparable as a problem to crime in bourgeois countries. Between 1957 and 1960 the rate of imprisonment had dropped almost 50% — including imprisonment for juvenile delinquency which also dropped about half and continues to drop. The chief cause for crime in the Soviet Union, almost everybody agrees, is rooted in the war. It must be remembered that the Nazis devastated almost one-third of the country, destroyed more than 1000 towns and left over 25 million people without a roof over their heads. Most juvenile delinquents had broken family histories directly traceable to the war — spending their childhood and adolescence under German occupation, without supervision, witnessing untold brutalities and lawlessness, losing one or both parents and learning, under occupation conditions, the worst of human experience.

Leo Sheinin, who had been one of the Soviet prosecutors at the Nuremburg trials, but who had since retired from the legal profession to become a full-time writer (and whose book on his experiences in detec-

tion and crime-fighting, *Diary of a Criminologist*, I found delightful) came to visit me in the quarters of the Writers Union where I interviewed him as a beginning.

Sheinin hardly acts like a man who has retired. He has a very lively and pertinent wit. He has seen all of the seamy sides of both pre- and after-revolutionary life and retains his essential belief in the perfectibility of man no matter what his failings, no matter what his crimes—with the possible exception of the Nazis, who, as a Jew, he had perhaps even more reason to hate.

Our interview turned out to be as much an amusing battle of wits as a fact-finding session, for I played the devil's advocate to him, and he countered my sallies and provocative remarks with sharp and revealing humor. I felt it necessary to "represent" all the skeptics and cynics that ever were about Soviet life—on life in general, perhaps. My reactions are perhaps inevitably colored by the fact that I had the good fortune to fall into the hands of extremely able and intelligent people—with only one exception.

Sheinin gave me an interesting capsule review of the theories governing both the bourgeois approach to the problem of crime and the Soviet, ranging from Lombroso to the present day. He noted rather dryly that Marx, over a hundred years ago, in his articles to the New York *Tribune*, "Population, Crime and Pauperism," first put forward the formula for the relationship of crime to bourgeois society; and Sheinin quoted, more or less from memory, Marx's observation that " . . . maybe there is something rotten at the very core of a social system which increases the wealth and does not diminish its pauperism, and in which crime is increasing more rapidly than the population." Sheinin noted that the proportional increase in crime in the United States was four times the increase in population and he cited a speech which J. Edgar Hoover made in Charleston some time ago, pointing out that the crime rate had risen catastrophically in the last 11 years.

Nevertheless, said Sheinin, "we have none of the following crimes here: no rackets, no gangsters, no kidnapping, no organized prostitution, no drug traffic, no gambling dens, or policy rackets, no counterfeiting, and so on. We do have what we call 'hooliganism', which are matters of coarse behavior, unsocial activity, ranging from accosting women on the street to brawls and drunkeness. Judge Samuel S. Leibowitz, from the United States, when he visited Krukova prison camp (which I would soon visit, P.B.) met a prisoner who had been sentenced to two years for drunkenness in a restaurant, where apparently he had also broken some plates. Leibowitz asked him whether he had paid for the plates, and

the prisoner said that he had. Well, then, said Leibowitz, I don't understand why the man is in prison 2 years, if he paid for the damage. We explained that he was imprisoned not just for the damage but for his unsocial behavior.

"Yes, we still have pick-pockets and thieves But in the last four years our militia institutions have stopped assuming authority over such crimes. The responsibility has been shifted to the people's organizations, where the offendors are brought before a 'comrades court' and there reprimanded, held up to public censure. These 'comrades courts' and volunteer police are made up of ordinary citizens who take on the responsibility of policing the community. They're in charge of maintaining social order. They only wear a badge, but no uniform; they have no power to arrest or to punish. They talk; they reprimand; they appeal to the conscience of the citizen who is misbehaving. Their job is to take over at the level of social behavior — rowdyism, drunkeness, scuffles, discourtesy, etc. This movement came into full swing in 1959, and such misdemeanors as I described already had diminished perceptibly over the previous year. Many cases, even relatively serious ones, never reach court. Let's say a man steals something in the plant where he works. In 95 out of a 100 cases, he'll never come before a regular court that can send him to prison. He will appear before a comrades court of his trade union and there perhaps suffer even worse 'punishment' because there he is judged by his fellow workers, and held up to general scorn. Such malefactors are more afraid of appearing before such comrades courts than before the regular courts, which are more impersonal, and so quite often they ask to be tried before an official court, though the possibility of punishment is greater

"This is the general direction in which law enforcement is moving — through organizations of the people themselves with public pressure, social condemnation, public censure playing a far greater role than imprisonment. Our emphasis is upon re-education, not punishment. The influence of society on criminals must be brought to bear; it is stronger than crime.

"But we do not abolish punishment, even severe punishment. Many kinds of crimes must be punished. But we are against the theory that the only way to fight crime is to punish the offender. Our method is to combine punishment with education.

"We have no 'slave-labor' camps, much as we disappoint our Western well-wishers. We do have reformatory colonies, which are governed mainly by the prisoners themselves. In all prisons there is an education apparatus that offers an education up through the 10th grade. All

prisons have their own libraries, own sport facilities and clubs, their own newspapers in which they publish material sent in by the prisoners themselves. Every colony is 'attached' to a factory. Old workers teach the prisoners new skills. When a prisoner rises to a certain level of work and industry, he can be released before his full time is up. He can return to his place of work without prejudice, usually better equipped to work. In Chlyabryansk, for instance, a factory which specialized in making water and gas pipes, took hundreds of prisoners under their wing and integrated them as workers Two years later the problem was how to close up the prison colony altogether. We closed up a prison in Moscow just before you came, and in Pinsk there are no prisons remaining whatsoever. More cities and towns in our country are becoming prison-less towns. Our goal is to close up all prisons — but that is in the future still.

"In our approach to prisoners we place a great deal of emphasis on trusting them, on assuming they wish to become good healthy members of Soviet society. Anyhow, if you don't show faith in them, you will never reform them; they feel subconsciously that you mistrust them and react accordingly. If you show a prisoner you trust him, even if he doesn't really deserve trust, it will have an enormous psychological effect on him."

AT THIS point I brought up the speech Khrushchev had made at the Third Writers Congress which I had attended in which he described his experience with a thief who had appealed to him directly for help to change his life and Khrushchev had responded, though not without feeling that he was taking some risk. "To put this man on the right track," he said, ". . . it is necessary to believe in man, in his finest traits. . . . We believe that there are no incorrigible people . . . In our conditions we must approach people tactfully, have faith in man, see our ultimate aim: the struggle for communism. We must educate and reform people. . . ."

Yes, Khrushchev's approach was identical with the general approach that all prison offcials cultivated toward their wards. "A criminal," Sheinin said, "must believe that he can go back and resume life without being constantly hounded by his past. Such a knowledge will have a profound effect upon him. It works miracles.

"In our country no prisoners leave prison without hope.

"Yes, we still have criminals. The main reason, as we said, is the war. A second reason is the remnants of capitalist consciousness — or maybe you would say 'unconsciousness' — still alive in the minds of

some. These influences show themselves in contempt for work, a desire to live parasitically off the work of others, lack of family guidance, and so on. But these influences are fought constantly. Art and literature play a great role in the struggle against such influences; and the struggle is being won, as all the facts show.

"WE PAY a great deal of attention to our youth. We have a network of institutions that meet all their requirements from cultural clubs to sport clubs. School is brought close to labor, so that there is no psychological or physical division between the two. You know, we are a workers' country; everybody works. We all believe in labor — which is the key to everything; and in that respect, there is no meeting ground between us and bourgeois theoreticians, for to them escape from labor to a life of leisure off the backs of others is an ideal — in our country a crime."

I asked him about the 'war of the generations'.

"No, we do not have the Western problem of war between the generations — between son and father, for instance, in the same sense as is true in the West. Why? Because the social aims of both father and son are identical, and there can be no division between them. The father wants to build communism; so does the son; how and over what can they have serious quarrels? The older generation — as in bourgeois countries — is not here the generation of hypocrisy and crime, found out by children. Our children admire the deeds of their fathers and grandfathers. If there is anything to criticize it is sometimes the mistaken sentimentality of parents who want to protect their children from the hardships they themselves knew and indulge them beyond what is good for them.

"It is true that the denunciation of the Stalin cult had repercussions among a certain small percentage of the youth, and there were even some flurries here and there. But they were not significant, though understandable. But that period has completely passed. Our youth is a fine youth—serious, hard-working, hard-studying—a new generation wholly formed by socialist forces. . . . "

IT HAD been arranged for me to pay an all-day visit to Krukova prison camp 50 kilometres outside of Moscow.

That morning we picked up the political officer at the Moscow prison headquarters and took the road leading out of Moscow into the birch-filled countryside. On the way, the political officer — an open-faced, cheerful though serious worker, who was perhaps fifty — gave

me a run-down on the necessary information concerning the camp we were about to visit.

It had now about 1000 prisoners; it was an educational labor camp. It produced aluminum kitchen-ware, firemen's helmets as well as spare auto parts. The camp was run as much as possible by the prisoners themselves. There was a prisoner's council which administered the internal affairs of the camp, and within it were sub-divisions of councils whose heads made up the central council. Workers were divided into brigades, just as in factories. The administrative divisions covered such activities as labor education, nutrition, general behavior, "culture and mass work," education, both technical and general, comrades courts — all run by the prisoners selected by secret ballot from among themselves. The prison officials served as the last resort. Though they were the actual power over the camp, they exercised their power discreetly and unwillingly, like a doctor who feels his patient needs him less and less and he's preparing himself, and is happy to prepare himself, to go. Each shift has only four guards, who stand on the outer wooden stockade fences. No guns or arms of any kind are carried by guards within the camp. The emphasis, again, is on education — over and over I would hear this: education, education, education. Education was based upon the moral conviction that the prisoner did not wish to commit crime, or remain at variance with socialist society ("How could you do such a thing?" one would hear being asked the prisoner over and over, from a hurt point of view, as though the prisoner had disgraced not only himself but every Soviet citizen; and his response would be either a helpless shrug or hangdog guilty look: "I was out of my mind; I was drunk; I lost my temper; I was misled; I failed to see . . . etc. etc. . . ." At no time is the prisoner looked upon as a "case" penned inside pathological categories, a thing and not a person, as is almost the universal approach today in bourgeois prisons.)

Everywhere I went, and from everyone I spoke to, I met this feeling of mutual concern, as though it was one of the family who had strayed; and one sits down and racks one's mind for a clue to one's own failure in the failure of the family black sheep. Never is it assumed nor concluded that the criminal is less a person, as a human being, or that he is somehow fatally psychologically motivated in a way that sets his motives apart from "normal" people — unless he has proven pathological symptoms. It is assumed that every man has or had a mother whom he loves and who weeps over his fall from grace; and if he does not have a mother—or lost her in the war—then much in his behavior becomes explicable. It is ironic that as the mother disappears as a human

being in the West to re-emerge as a "symbol" in a psychological charade, she exists in socialist society in her simple and "pure" form as the source of love and tenderness and moral guardian of humanity.

We were met at the gateway entrance to the camp, which differed so radically from the heavily-barred, stone-walled entrance to the usual type of American prison, by the chief administrator or warden, I suppose he would be called, who wore a uniform and limped somewhat and later explained he was recovering from a broken leg. Two guards with guns stood at the entrance. There is no elaborate system of checks and double-checks, no frisking, no electrical eye going over your insides. It was just simply entering an institution, like any other, except for the two guards. My first glimpse of the prisoners showed men in ordinary work clothes with shaven heads walking, apparently bent on some chore or task, across the grounds.

Our party of four or five made its way to the administrative office, which was modestly and characteristically furnished with the usual red carpet, leather chairs arranged facing each other in front of the administrator's desk. There were on display some of the firemen's helmets made by the prisoners, and also a map of the prison with all its departments indicated. Fruit, candy and fruit soda were served and we were invited to ask any questions we chose.

I asked for a general description and introduction to the prison camp system and reserved my specific questions for after I'd made the tour, during which I would also ask questions. Could I speak to the prisoners themselves? "Why not?" I was told.

On our way to the first work-shop, we passed freely through and among the prisoners, and I asked the warden whether he had no fears in circulating so casually among these men. In the United States, I said, it was a common practice for prisoners to capture the warden, or some other prison official, and hold him hostage against demands for improved conditions. "You're not the first to ask that," he said. "I suppose most Americans do. Although I was not here to receive him, Judge Samuel S. Leibowitz came here some time ago and was also impressed by the way in which the prison officials mingled without fear among the prisoners. No, such a thing would not happen here. I have no fears. Besides, I can take care of myself. . . ."

Mention of Judge Samuel S. Leibowitz brought up from other members of our company sly memories of this man's visit. Apparently he had come to Moscow, already the victim of his own propaganda; for he had brought along his own interpreter, his own camera, a tape recorder, his own secretary, and when he visited the camp he demanded

and got special private interviews with prisoners during which apparently he expected to extract horrendous tales of abuse and oppression that the yellow press — and the not-so-yellow — had circulated for years about Soviet prisons. The Soviets had been amazed by him — a pure specimen of a certain bourgeois type, and shrugged their shoulders and let him have his whims. That his whole approach was insulting to them, they let pass; they assumed his desire to see for himself as being sincere and the fact was that when he came to write of his visit, in *Life*, he paid grudging but definite homage to the Soviet prison system.

In my walk with the warden I commented on the fact that it looked absurdly easy to break out of this camp, so lightly guarded, and with only a wooden fence with wire strung on top to discourage break-outs. "It's not as easy as it looks," was his short answer. "But we have no attempts to escape. Where would they go? What would they do? They would only meet Soviet citizens wherever they went. There are no gangs, no apparatus for serving escaped criminals, and even an escaped criminal would have to live an honest life, or become conspicuous again — and so why not wait until you can go back to society with a fresh start? Escape is not in their psychology. . . ."

We entered a work shop. Here spare parts for automobiles were made. It had the air of a workshop anywhere. There were no guards in evidence; the work was supervised by the brigade leader; competitive groups were organized and bonuses and goals for production were part of creating a sense of real and actual working conditions no different from those in any Soviet factory. There were slogans on the wall, exhortations, cartoons, political and local, and in short the atmosphere was the atmosphere of a factory under socialism.

We were led to a drop-forge machine operated by a prisoner in his middle forties. It was explained to me that this man had invented an electronic eye device as a safety measure which prevented the drop from closing upon the worker's hand. He demonstrated for me by placing his hands inside the machine and sending the presser down, surely to mangle the hand; but, suddenly, miraculously, it stopped. He invited me to try, but I was willing to accept his word and demonstrations as sufficient proof. (See cover photo.)

"How was he rewarded for this invention?" I asked.

"By cash bonus, and a reduction in serving time."

I asked then, in general, how the prisoners were paid, how long they worked, etc. They were paid an average of 400-500 rubles (in old money) a month, of which 17 rubles were permited for personal use The prisoners sent home 147,000 rubles in six months, and received

from outside much less — 27,000 rubles in the same period. They worked an eight hour day, but were preparing, as many other factories on the outside also were, to go on a seven-hour day. There was a prison commissary where prisoners could buy certain items for personal consumption.

Most of the prisoners were non-repeaters, and their crimes might be generally classified as crimes of "impulse," usually under abnormal conditions, like anger, the influence of vodka, jealousy, social irresponsibility, the "I-don't-know-what-came-over-me" category, etc.

"Isolation from society" said one of the guards to me, who preferred not to be called a guard but an "educational worker" ("We consider ourselves educational workers, not punishers . . .") "is the main punishment. . . ."

I spoke to several prisoners as I went, asking them how long they worked, how much they were paid, whether they continued their studies or not, etc., and whether, if things were so decent in prison, they didn't prefer to stay there? No, they all agreed with that robust, earthy humor of simple men in an embarrassing position, they preferred to be out. . . . I hesitated to ask them directly what their crimes were, from a certain delicacy, which later I violated and regretted that I did.

The dining room was filled with prisoners sitting around rough board tables, their shaven heads uniformly bent over their bowls of soup. They sent glances at me but not, it seemed to me, with particular curiosity. I was served a bowl of the same soup by the chef, who hovered over me waiting for my reaction like a chef at the Waldorf-Astoria. The soup was highly nutritious, as was the rest of the food, but much too heavy and fatty for my taste.

I visited the prison hospital, then, and exchanged words with the doctor, a woman. No, she told me, they seldom had malingerers ,and in fact, she had few cases to care for altogether.

We passed on to the dormitories, which were rather long dismal rooms with two-tiered bunks of iron beds. (Curiously enough, I had seen exactly those simple iron beds at the Smolny Institute in Leningrad where Lenin and Krupskaya slept.) Prisoners were not confined to barred cells but to dormitories of this type, which hold anywhere from 20 to 50 men. They are, of course, regulated by the prisoners themselves, who have cleaning and other details assigned to them by the proper committees. There I saw an old man standing in front of his bunk, his head drooping, his gaze nailed to the floor. There was such a feeling of despondency in his whole appearance I couldn't bring myself to ask him what he, a rather old man, was in this place for. Later, in the corridor,

I did ask the warden and his reply was that he had shot his son to death in a quarrel. The son was drunk; but the father's remorse was overwhelming, and he walked through prison like a man in a never-ending nightmare, an automaton. They had been unable, as yet, to "reach him."

But another prisoner, apparently one of the dormitory leaders, stepped up to me, almost with a swagger, and demanded, in rather an accusing and almost belligerent tone: "Are you an American?"

"Yes," I said.

"Tell me," he said, "why does your President send U-2 planes over our Soviet Union?"

"In order to spy," I answered. "That's obvious. But then we, in America, are against this policy and fight for peace and co-existence and socialism." Something in his cocky attitude had irked me. "Do you think," I said, "that prison is the best place for a Soviet citizen to build socialism?"

He was taken aback, and the warden looked at him grimly. "What do you say now?" he asked.

The prisoner nodded, half to himself, and then said, more subdued: "No, it is not; but we are here only temporarily —" and he brightened up, and his tone regained its former confidence, "come back in five years —" he held up five fingers —"and you can visit all of us again — but in our homes!"

I shook hands with him and promised I would.

When I left the dormitory I was greeted with an extraordinary sight. In the yard outside were gathered about 100 prisoners. One of the officers spoke to the warden who then said to me: "The prisoners have heard you are an American. They would like to ask you some questions, if you don't mind."

I was nonplussed. I had never been in a situation like this before where — as it turned out — I was agitating for socialism to prisoners in a Soviet prison camp!

Warning that I — fortunately — had no first-hand experience of American prison I agreed to answer what questions I could.

The questions, almost needless to say, concerned the thing closest to their hearts—prison life. What was it like to be a prisoner in America? What kind of crimes were committed? How long did one serve for them? Did one's record follow one after serving time? Could you get a job again? What were the prisons like?

I GAVE an unvarnished picture of prison life in America, climaxed by a description of the torment of Carryl Chessman who, his alleged

crimes to one side, nevertheless had been subjected to intolerable torture — led eight times to the gas chamber and then back again, only to be led once more — the ninth and final time—to his death. His life and death had been elements in the political exigencies of the time, with the White House intervening to postpone his death until President Eisenhower had made his tour to and back from South America where feeling about Chessman ran high.

"*Bozhe moi!*" I heard one of the prisoners say, letting out a long breath. "I'm glad to be in a Soviet prison!"

In the afternoon I watched what might be called a sitting of the parole review board. It was held in the prison recreation auditorium, and when we arrived the first third of the seats were filled with very attentive prisoners who carefully followed the proceeedings going on before three judges seated on stage up front. It was a simple ceremony, and the only officers in uniform were the prison officials whose function was to present the positive case for parole, and the "prosecuting attorney," who happened in this instance to be a woman, severe and professional in her neat uniform. The three judges — only one of whom was a professional full-time judge, theother two being "people's assessors," who were elected to their positions from trade unions — sat around a simple square table. It is revealing that Judge Samuel S. Leibowitz dismissed the two people's assessors with the contemptuous and class-drenched phrase "factory hands," and doubted that these two men, whom he took to be semi-moronic, could possibly play any positive role in the sanctified realm of enforcing or interpreting the law.

On the walls were hung red flags, pictures of Lenin and Mayakovsky, slogans. One of the prison guards—or "re-educators"—was presenting the case for parole of the prisoner, Vladimir Smirnov, who sat astride a stool before the court. The guard pointed out that Smirnov was a good worker, helped his comrades in their work, set a good example in general for the other prisoners and deserved parole. He had been arrested for "hooliganism" and given a 4-year sentence of which he had already served 2½. During his term he had attended evening school and had improved both his education and skills. He was a good prospect for freedom.

The next applicant was a man 25 years old. His name was Alexander Panov. He had been arrested in Moscow for threatening a man with a knife and had been sentenced to 3 years imprisonment. He had been a factory worker. His family consisted of parents and three sisters, he lived with one of his sisters. His behavior in prison had been exemplary and he had won several awards for good work. He had read many

books while in prison and had consistently followed the newspapers and was well aware of his country's new seven-year plan.

The chief assessor questioned him.

"If we grant your request, are you sure you will not repeat?"

"Yes, comrade assessor, I am sure."

"How did you work?"

"Over the norm."

"How did it happen that you assaulted this man?"

"I stopped him on the street and asked him for a light. He refused. That made me angry and we had a fight."

"You were drunk?"

"Yes."

"You are fond of vodka?"

"Yes. But I corrected that in prison."

"You see, that combination landed you in prison. Next time," the chief assessor remarked dryly, "you should carry your own matches."

The prisoners all laughed; not, however, the man waiting for parole.

His "defense" made the point that he worked in the prison orchestra and regularly overfulfilled his work norm by 180%.

We waited, almost as anxiously as the prisoners themselves, for the assessors to return from their consultations. When they did return, they granted freedom to both the prisoners I had watched present their case. Before they had completed their sitting, however, they were to parole some 40 prisoners that day.

LATER, I met the three of them in one of the school-rooms; the "prosecutor" was also present. If she looked severe on the stage, now she was a remarkably beautiful woman, hardly old enough, it seemed, for such work, shy and blushing, and full of laughter. The two "factory hands," in Judge Leibowitz' contemptuous phrase, turned out to be long-time veteran trade-unionists, highly competent and obviously able men. One had lost his arm in the war. It just happened that they were workers, and proud of it; both were Communists, the older one obviously over-ripe for imprisonment in Judge Leibowitz' court for being a revolutionary! We bandied remarks back and forth, and included among my serious questions about their functions, I also asked the woman whether, in her heart of hearts, she wouldn't tend to be more indulgent toward a handsome prisoner than a homely one, which she denied stoutly, but the other judges teased her skeptically nevertheless. She did admit, however, that as a mother with young children, she would be ruthless and pitiless toward a rapist. I asked the professional judge whether his more

formal position and training didn't tend to over-awe the non-professsional judges and whether his opinion did not also tend to be decisive. No, he said, on the contrary: the peoples assessors were hardly ever unduly influenced by his position; they brought to the cases under consideration a humanity and practicality and working-class identification that were apt to be missing from the judgment of a professional. They put up a stiff battle usually for their points of view.

After lunch in the warden's office we interviewed two men who headed the prison council. One had been an engineer and was serving a 3-year term for allowing state money to be frittered away; the other, also, had been involved in some kind of episode where he bore the responsibility for misappropriation of state funds. There was not the slightest trace of humiliation or hangdog resentment about them. They acted and talked like men in charge of an important job, and I had to remind myself sharply that these men actually were prisoners.

They explained how the prison council operated. It was made up of 17 prisoners; each member headed one of the prison "departments" — education, the dining room, cultural mass work, comrades courts before which prison infractions were taken up and punishment recommended though they did not have the power to enforce. They could recommend early parole. The spokesman cited one case to me of a prisoner who had failed to meet his work quota by 50% regularly; and was finally handed out a severe sentence, recommended to the administration by the council, of 7 days and 7 nights isolation.

The two men, somewhat older than what seemed to be the average age of early thirties among the prisoners, also looked much better educated and "sophisticated." One twiddled his fingers as he sat, with shaven head, waiting to speak; he cast glances at the wall clock. (What 'time' was he interested in? I wondered.) He was the engineer and when he spoke to me, he spoke not as a prisoner but as one of the officials who regarded his own case in an objective light. "Though we are temporarily isolated from society," he said to me, "we remain Soviet citizens. . . ."

This constant identification that the prisoners had with "something" that was common to both them and their guards was manifest to me. It was, I think, a profound sense of belonging to Soviet society, their birth-right, which nobody could take from them. They talked sometimes as though they were the victims of a turn of bad luck which did not however reflect anything basic in their characters. This sense of identification with their society was a profound reflection, it seemed to me, of the power of Soviet society in the minds of the people, and here among those least likely to reflect it. Not once did I hear a prisoner, then

or later, who shifted the burden of his guilt from his own shoulders to society's. Here, at the lowest rung of Soviet society, one met the type of individual in whom consciousness must surely be at its weakest. But apparently imprisonment — at least at Krukova — had done the opposite; it had awakened in them a sharper consciousness of both their social links and their obligations. The ruling theory that operates here — that separation from Soviet society is the ultimate punishment possible to a human being — could operate only if that separation was keenly felt because it had a real moral content. I sensed a kind of patient, even good humored, endurance among the prisoners, which expressed itself in the satiric barbs posted by themselves on the wall newspapers, and by the rueful wit with which they referred to themselves and their lot. All in all, however, they came from the lowest segments of the population, untypically with a briefer education, with histories of broken homes (an aftermath of the war), and a generally lower moral and intellectual level. That they were not prize specimens of Soviet society I was well aware; but by the same token their behavior and the successful rehabilitation of so many of them reflected very positively on the approach to their problems and to their types, with a fair chance of eliminating them altogether.

I interviewed several guards and asked them why they chose to be prison guards. Had they any psychological bias in that direction? What kind of men were they? Did a significant number of sadists and bullies crop up as candidates for prison guards?

If so, they were not present at this camp. The guards seemed to be men of intelligence and dedication. The one I spoke to at length had been demobilized from the army, and had been asked by the Communist Party, of which he was a member, whether he would accept this particular assignment. He had been very reluctant because the life did not, at first, appeal to him; he had no experience, no interest in it. But the need was great, and finally he complied. He had changed his mind after becoming involved in the work. He found it engrossing and rewarding. His objective was to establish a personal relationship with his prisoners. "A thousand prisoners means a thousand personalities." The approach had to be individual, not general; the ultimate aim was to turn the entire prison administration, including guard duty, over to the prisoners themselves— prisons run by the prisoners. They had many auxiliary forces to help them in their work. The trade unions, for instance, were a very important force; they maintained contact with the prisoners and often took individuals or even whole prisons under their wing. The families were brought into the picture where necessary. The particular problems of the

prisoners were mastered. They were helped to improve their education —and the majority of present-day criminals lacked adequate schooling for one reason or another—to acquire new skills, and above all never to lose their confidence that, as soon as they proved themselves, they could return to society with no stain on their records. Of course, all this would come to nothing if an objective ally in their work with prisoners did not exist to help and guarantee their rehabilitation: and this was the fact that there was no basic contradiction between the aims and objectives of the prisoners—or of any citizen—and the objectives of his society as a whole. This, fundamentally, was the chief and decisive force for rehabilitating prisoners, and for preventing crime in the first place. Crime more and more tended to become untypical, "accidental," a misfortune; it was not, as in bourgeois society, so often the blind reaction of the cheated against his cheaters, who are hidden behind veils beyond reach.

Was this really a sentimental approach to crime and criminals?

No, he told me, they were not sentimental, although voices have been raised in the Soviet press with that accusation; severe punishment was resorted to when necessary. But the fundamental approach was to trust the prisoner and to believe that he wished to rejoin his society as a healthy and honest member of it.

Are there any political prisoners now in the Soviet Union, as there are in America?

None. This is emphatically stated by all representatives of Soviet life.

"You said there are difficult cases, too. You've shown me much that is positive; but what about the negative? What about those prisoners who are in isolation? Can I see them too?"

"If you wish."

But first, I was to visit that division of the prison where prisoners spend days or weeks with their wives as a reward for good behavior. I was led into a section with closed—but not barred—doors, and the warden knocked on one at random. That it was at random was sufficiently evident, for the prisoner who answered was in his shorts and looked quite flustered. His wife, a demure, partly-ashamed little woman, sat on a bunk in a little room that had some evidence of a woman's hand —but not much.

BOTH came out to speak to me. The prisoner was young—in his late twenties or early thirties. I asked him whether he minded my interviewing him. He said he did not. He told me that he was sentenced to 3 years, worked well, missed his family very much, etc. As we progressed, I became aware of one incongruity—we never touched on what

his crime had been, and I felt nervous about asking. Still I did say: "Would you mind telling me what you were sentenced for?"

He flushed slightly and turned his head away. His wife too looked away. "I would rather not," he said, "it's too unpleasant."

I, too, felt uncomfortable and cut the interview short. Outside, I asked what he had been sentenced for.

"Attempted rape."

And that was that.

Now, we passed through the reception room where prisoners' families came to visit. It should hardly be necessary to add that the prisoners met their wives and were allowed to embrace them and talk to them with a certain amount of privacy; there were no thick glass walls and telephone communications between shadows, no friskings for concealed weapons, or drugs or money.

We passed on to another, more obviously segregated, section of the prison camp—cells with huge doors like barn doors closed tight. A guard stood outside. He opened the door, however, to one of the cells at a nod from the warden. Inside a large bare room, with only a low platform for sleeping, but with a large window that flooded the cell with light, were two young men. They stood up like men at bay when the door opened. Here were no passive, subdued prisoners. They were full of obvious rebellion, with unshaven faces, and smoldering eyes. When the warden directed us to enter, my interpreter drew back with involuntary fear. But the warden assured us we could go in without any danger.

I introduced myself to the two men who stared at me without friendliness or hostility. When I asked them whether they minded answering my questions, they shrugged. What were they in the isolation cell for? For gambling, one said bitterly; and added that he had been innocent. The warden laughed: "Innocent! We found the cards under your bed! And you still deny it!" He made a kind of exasperated gesture toward him, much like an older brother who wanted to beat the tar out of some pigheaded younger brother. The prisoner stuck to his story, however, stubbornly. The other prisoner, too, had been involved in gambling, which is strictly illegal. But, as one of the guards told me, "We don't prohibit gambling for moral reasons; but because it takes their minds off their work and their deliberations about their lives. . . ."

The impression the two young men (who had been arrested for hooliganism) made on me was not of criminality in the sense of calculation, but of a kind of visceral rebellion of youth, which loses its senses and even seems happy to be in a situation where you can only bang

your head against the wall. "After a week there," the warden told me with some grim satisfaction, "they are like silk. . . ."

Nevertheless, I was glad to leave them; and such is the power of a single living example against a thousand contrary abstract statistics and theories that I carried the image of these two young buckos with me from the camp far more vividly than I did perhaps anything else. But, in the balance, I was glad I met them, that I had seen the punishment cells; and even the gesture of the warden, who drew his arm back as though to give the young man a swap across the head, for it was no calculated gesture, and it reassured me by its honesty and its feeling of impulse. It also convinced me that no particular show was being put on for my benefit.

"Suppose," I asked the warden later, "these men were actually as innocent as they claim. How could they get justice? Could they appeal to any forces outside the camp and over your head?"

"Yes."

"How and to whom?"

"They could send a privileged letter to the judge or people's assessor, to their attorney. . . ."

"If the letter was a charge against *you,* personally, would it still get through?"

"I would make a special point of it."

Well, one believes that or not, depending on how much confidence one has in him, in the character of the man involved, in his honesty and objectivity. The best any society can do is provide and guarantee the objective conditions for justice, *social* conditions. It cannot guarantee, after that, what combination of personal, subjective and local contradictions will arise in any particular situation. If a prisoner actually *was* unjustly punished today, would this warden, or any warden, help him to find justice—that is, help him to bring the warden to justice? It is a moral question that goes beyond laws, stipulations, theories; it involves man's own character and conscience, and invades a dimension of humanity where the artist alone is competent. I would spend a whole day at the summer *dacha* of Georgi Medensky, a novelist whose book, *Honor,* concerned itself with prisoners and prison camps and what went on there —an unvanished, unidealized tale, which had aroused a great deal of comment inside and outside the Soviet Union.

The development of the "soul of man under socialism" is, I think, probably the most fascinating possible subject for anyone to study today. There has been not enough time, nor breathing space, to step away from the vast historic process long enough to see it in full perspective—to see

it shaped as the hot metal cools down, for the metal never seems to cool, it is always at white heat. One has to describe it as one lives it, at full speed, at white heat, with one's self also an ever-changing ingredient.

I SPENT the final hour of our stay at the camp discussing what we had seen and making sorties into the theoretical aspects of not only criminals under socialism but of the entire process of change taking place all over the great land and leaving no one unstirred and as he was only the day before yesterday. As I was leaving, the camp warden—in addition to the flowers that the prisoners gave me—brought four or five huge bundles for me to take back to Moscow with me. When I opened them in my hotel, they proved to be enough aluminum pots and pans, made in camp, to set up housekeeping for several families. I gave them away—to at least one American living in Moscow, and brought with me only a souvenir of aluminum clothes pins and some spoons to show to friends who stare at them and find it very difficult to connect the fact that they are here with where they came from.

THERE was a quality about Medensky which must exasperate, even depress, Western intellectuals. For he (like almost all other Russian writers I met) did not "look like a writer." He looked like anybody's country grandfather. His glasses were wrong for an intellectual; he dressed as though just to cover himself; his head was like a farmer's, his manners like a worker's. This sense of being close to one's forebears—farm or factory—seems to be a universal trait among Soviet intellectuals. One never meets the *esthete*—as though the species had entirely vanished from art, and only those open-collared "roughs," like a nation of Whitmans without the poseur quality, ex-peasants and ex-lathe workers, had taken over completely. They have an air about them of being only recent recruits to literature; they have come to you in a hurry, as it were, to make their report and then off they go again to what is, after all, more important than shaping words—life itself. In that much-abused concept, they seem 'close to the people.' They are not anti-esthetic, but they write the way ex-coal miners and ex-farm hands might be expected to write. They approach literature from a utilitarian point of view in the sense of serving, of reporting on things; nowhere did I find anyone who centered upon art as its own object. Difficult as it may be for Westerners to believe it, nevertheless, in Soviet conditions, there seems nothing more illogical than a variation of art for sweet art's sake. I had not read *Honor* but I would guess there were few purple passages in it.

I had noted the same elements in other writers—A. Bek, Pavel

Nilin, and others—as though writing for them carried far more the weight of a *report* to the people. They are incapable of still-lifes; nothing is at rest long enough to refine its shapes and colors. And even in writers like Constantine Fedin, who were shaped by an earlier period to a large degree, the element of literary *practicality* emerges. It is very misleading to think that this is imposed upon writers; it is an imperative which flows out of their circumstances. Objective life remains still so gigantically in motion, with such tremendous propulsive forces in operation that there is no impulse for introspective plunges, for self-analysis in endless mazed and amazed passages. A Pasternak is a fantastically untypical and abnormal phenomenon in such circumstances, and the reaction against him was not primarily political but the instinctive reaction of people against an alien in their midst. That another strain, a minor, untypical literary strain exists I suppose is true; but it is unfed by the mainstream of life, and remains faint and undernourished.

Perhaps this character of Soviet literature as an objective art, a reportorial art to a large extent, could be considered its major weakness also. In any case, the absence of self-conscious estheticism among Soviet literary intellectuals, does not mean the absence of estheticism in all cultural life—as the exquisite art of the ballet, puppet theatre, opera and the almost universal construction of statues and adornments in any nook or cranny that can hold them, amply testify. But even in so "esthetic" an art as ballet, the formal qualities do not predominate: and a collective farmer sitting in the first row of the Bolshoi does not feel that he is in the presence of 'pure art' which mocks his rough life and rough hands. The ballerina comes out on the stage and anxiously looks to see whether he is applauding her!

The Soviet people are a people in a terrible hurry, and so far have little time for polishing surfaces. This is perhaps due not only to their hurry but also to some extent to their proletarian prejudices, which tends to idealize characteristics associated with the personalities and lives of revolutionary men and women who lived stern, ascetic, dedicated, non-materialistic (in the consumer's sense) lives in order to serve the people. Conspicuous consumption and adornment are still associated with parasites and the bourgeois, the enemies of themselves and mankind; affluence will have to become universal before it is unnoticed.

In any case, Medensky's summer home, located in a grove of birches, not too far from a river where boys swam naked, had a charm that reminded me, as the landscape near where A. Beck had his summer home, of things wholly and typically Russian. I was always freshly surprised that new things seemed, to me, not new but remembered—as

though Tolstoy's novels, Chekhov's stories and plays, Gorki's works and been my first visit to Russia and this my second.

The house, made like so many Russian country homes, out of rough wood planks, was two-storied, spacious, and looked out on a garden of strawberries, raspberries and summer flowers, including the solemn, slowly bending sunflowers. It was hot, and the atmosphere was nervous with threatened lightning. Medensky introduced me to his wife, a handsome woman in her late fifties perhaps, with a face familiar to me from Soviet movies for that mature beauty with which Communist heroines were so often portrayed. She had been a teacher and a member of the Moscow City Council for many years. Now she was retired.

Medensky promptly set out to show me his *dacha.* The first stop was the dining room; then in the next room he showed me a portrait of a handsome boy who had been his son, his only son, and had been killed in the war. His wife turned aside and wept. Medensky explained that his wife's two sisters, who also lived in the *dacha,* were widows, their husbands having perished in the war; so, too, his own sister whose husband had died in the Soviet-Finnish war. How often I would meet the widows of the wars!

WE climbed the stairs to the room in which he worked—one end of which opened to a full view of the yard and the nearby cottages. We sat down and, as others had before him, Medensky asked me to give him a "biography" of my life. This meant telling him literally where and when I was born, who my parents were, what my schooling was, what I'd done, and so on, up until the very moment we were sitting together. There was no hurry about it and no stricture to be brief.

Why had I come to see him? It was simple. He had written the novel *Honor,* which dealt with the question of crime and punishment; this book had enjoyed a tremendous success, especially among prisoners, because it had taken their side and lashed out against bureaucratism. It had also been "reviewed" in the *Saturday Review* in New York by a writer who supposed it to be an attack upon the Soviet system and had tried to turn Medensky into an anti-Soviet writer. Quite indignant at this, Medensky had my translator read me a section of his reply to the writer which was to be published shortly in the *Literary Gazette.* He had been told that the book was to appear in the United States, pirated (through this piracy goes both ways) by an American publisher whose hope was to bring out another *Dr. Zhivago.* Or so he felt. In any case he was doing all he could to set the record straight.

He had been particularly interested in crime under socialism for

many years, had visited correction camps, become a friend and counselor of hundreds of prisoners, whose records and histories he followed and with whom he kept up a voluminous correspondence. He began to read me excerpts from this correspondence. The burden of them was their reaction to his book *Honor;* what the book had provoked them into thinking, how close they felt to the author, whose sympathy and understanding they were grateful for. Many continued the correspondence after their release, and Medensky had been honored in more than one case by having a former prisoner name his first child after him. One phrase from the letters remains with me. It was from a man serving a term for "banditry." It read: "I am a prisoner. I was a bandit. But when I think of the past, it seems to me that it was my own life I stole."

How did he understand the phenomenon of crime in a socialist country, I asked. I, myself, I explained, had no utopian notions about the problem; still it remained a problem that deeply interested people. I recalled Khrushchev's speech in which he stressed the need to approach all criminals with trust and sympathy; the aim was to re-educate, not to punish.

Medensky agreed that the human approach to the individual was absolutely essential. There was, basically, no other practical approach, no possibility of reforming a prisoner otherwise. He, like many others, attributed the major source of crime under socialism to the after-effects of the war. Of course crime was rapidly diminishing, but as long as it existed it would force society to deal with it, and would haunt it. He—I noted—like others who spoke of crime in his country, spoke with a kind of pain—as though he was speaking not of those alien, de-humanized creatures called criminals, but of men and women, not much different from himself, who had temporarily strayed, for special reasons, from the path, but who in their heart of hearts yearned to be among the family again, accepted and appreciated. Curious to me was this approach to criminals where every problem had a moral core. How could you do this thing? the erring boy might be asked with deep pain and regret; what were you thinking of? How could you forget yourself as a Soviet citizen who is blazing the way for all mankind to communism? Have you no shame? You have disappointed us; you have hurt us; we feel shame because of you. You must take hold of yourself; reform yourself; work and become one of us again.

THERE is a remarkable absence of psychological clinical jargon. Terms of reference are never categorical but human. The person under consideration is always assumed to have a conscience, moral feel-

ings, and that he can be reached by an appeal to his better side. A Soviet citizen cannot imagine a human being who would voluntarily choose to be outside Soviet society, unless he is the victim of some mental aberration of mind or soul. The profound shock that the Soviet people felt over the U-2 incident was that a Gary Powers could be so morally and intellectually corrupt as to assent to so base an act against them, against his own real interest, which must be, like theirs, in a better society for all mankind. Again, in this context, a Pasternak appears a real fish out of water, "sick" in the Western sense.

Although psychological clinical jargon is never used—with its subtle effect of dehumanizing—nevertheless this does not mean that a personal psychological approach to individuals is not a requisite to reforming them. Medensky emphasized—as the 're-educators' at the prison camp had—the necessity of getting "inside" each individual to find out what makes him tick the way he does. Of course, all this would be supremely futile—getting inside or staying outside the prisoner—if, upon returning to society, Medensky agreed, he was connected inevitably with the same conditions that brought him to prison in the first place. The society itself must not be criminal; it must not spontaneously breed criminals. Judge Samuel S. Leibowitz has confessed, quite candidly, that ". . . there is no question that our prisons are a failure . . . with 80 to 85 per cent of New York City's parolees being returned to prison for even greater crimes than they committed originally. . . ."

Rehabilitation in Soviet society is a success—by and large. This everyone admits, but nobody is satisfied with it. What wrinkles the brow of social thinkers here, like Medensky, is the question: why should there be any crime at all? Why can't it be wiped out entirely from society?

He is a crusader for humane, thoughtful and basic prison theory and practice. He has become, in a way, an unofficial "father" to the prison population, which feels that in him they have found a tribune, and more than a tribune, one who has entered profoundly into their tragedy, understands their moral conflicts and problems, and even more than that, their profound desire to re-tie the nerve ends that connected them with healthy society so that they could function positively in it. "It was my own life I robbed . . ."was most often the burden of regret.

We went downstairs to have tea. It had been threatening rain all afternoon and now a fierce thunderstorm broke. The whole population of Medensky's "kokholz" of women (as they called it) now gathered around the table dominated by a samovar and loaded with home-made cookies and cakes. One of the women picked up a guitar, which little ten-year old Sergei brought to her; cradling it in her lap and touching

it with a thoughtful, tender expression, began to play, and soon the others were singing. They sang plaintive Russian folk songs, all unself-consciously; and then they asked me to sing an American folk song.

It would have violated something important, I think, to have begged off, as I surely would have done in New York; but I sang a Negro folk song, which was translated simultaneously by my translater, and I saw tears in the eyes of the women as they listened to the sad song.

But we turned from this quickly enough and bandied questions back and forth on every subject under the sun—from jazz to abstract art, to which I gave answers as merry, I hope, as this fresh, rain-cleansed afternoon demanded of me—and forgot the faces of American intellectuals I had left behind in New York and saw sometimes rushing about in Moscow hotels, the nerves jumping in their faces, while their narrow-toed Italian shoes beat a tatoo across the floor. Against the background of broad Slavic faces, as open as daylight, as guileless as the pigeons that flocked through the squares, these American faces of tight, ingrown and twisted private lives were as bizarre and sharp as needles and broken glass.

When we got ready to go again, Medensky's wife whispered something to my interpreter, who turned to me, and said: "She asked whether she could kiss you. You remind her of her son who would have been your age. . . ."

We left in a dark smelling of wet sunflowers and tomatoes, with one sister preceding me, walking barefoot in the mud, carrying her shoes. Then, along the dark highway to Moscow, where only 15-16 years ago those criminals *en masse,* the Nazis, had rolled, and were then stopped —I rode pondering everything like a child who wants to know why the sun always comes up in the morning and goes down at night.

Cleveland, Oct. 25—Fifty leading jurists have drafted a penal code to help the courts eliminate organized crime. . . .

Mr. Rector said the major problem in getting the new code adopted was that the concept went against long-established penal law and practice.

"The offender has always been sentenced in accordance with the findings of guilt of a specific offense, with a prescribed penalty for that offense," he said. "We want to change that so the court can give an automatic, extended sentence up to thirty years to keep the dangerous offenders out of society."—N. Y. TIMES.

FOR A HEMIPLEGIC

WALTER LOWENFELS

LILLIAN is alive, more alive than she was. Also—something has died; a little part of the brain that controls the functions of her left arm and leg has become extinct.

We think of death as a single act. . . . Here today, gone tomorrow. There are all kinds. This is one of them. A little death you can recover some life from. . . .

The little deaths are not alone. Always someone dies with you.

Lillian's spasms of pains as she tries to learn to walk and her leg crumples under her strike me like a seismographic shock registering on needles miles away.

It might be wonderful to be yourself, completely intact and alive. It doesn't happen. The molecules won't have it. The air waves are against it. The human grid registers the heartbeat you skip.

I think of Lillian's mind as a lovely lake that mirrors many facets of trees and sky and people. Somehow a stone has fallen into it. It sends ripples over the water of the earth. And none of us are the same.

Whitman spoke of the "divine concrete"—Lillian lives it, very close to the earth. This fact has a series of implications that practically no one except a paraplegic can realize.

Lillian's down-to-earth-ness begins with her feet. She has always to be conscious that she has two feet on the ground, because only one of them is a foot she controls. The other she manipulates from the hip, via the brace that keeps the foot from turning over. She cannot turn around or take a step or climb a curb or go over a doorsill or get in and out of a car or room without careful and conscious navigation.

The ruling word in her life is "balance." She has to strive for the

Greek ideal—balance in all things. If she fails, she falls. The fall is the Great Enemy—always threatening to trip her, to make her clutch, stumble blindly, hit the floor—with the danger of breaking her hip.

THE point I want to get at is that through being handicapped, Lillian is sensitive to angles of being alive that few of us feel. And yet, the minute she says, "I like to see new faces—that's why I look at TV," or "Yes, let's take a ride, I want to inspect the sunset," I realize that things like faces and sunsets are special for her because she spent a period way out where she didn't see faces or sunsets.

Who hasn't dreamed of being dead and coming back alive? It is one of the cornerstones of religion, primitive magic. We beat our fists against the closed door of our consciousness that is either on one side of the mirror or the other. Lillian has been on both sides and returns to give us an occasional glimpse of how it is.

We all like being with children. But who glows in the ambience of children the way Lillian does? She has put up pictures all over the room—our grandchildren; our friends' children

In the old days, when she was being persecuted by the Un-American Committee, she carried with her what she called her "objectifiers." They are tiny Indian figures, a thousand years old, dug up in Mexico. Fingering them while being questioned on the witness stand gave her, she said, a better balance on the relation between herself and the world. The Mexican figurines are on a shelf in our living room. But they have been replaced as "balancers" for Lillian by more living things—children's faces, sunsets, the water of the lake, the falls by the mill.

Lillian might be said to be half out of her skin; often she has to feel around with her right hand to find out where her left arm is. Nothing is established. Nothing is taken for granted. Every inch has to be felt all along the way—otherwise, you may break your arm underneath your own weight, or you may take a step without your brace, or break your foot whose lost nerve has brought back a ghost of the prehensile stage.

ALONG with the Fall, the enemy is the Cold. The circulation on the left side is low. Nothing will keep the balance of body heat except external aids—electric blankets, woolen throws, et. On one level, you might say, life has been reduced for her to an elementary problem: not to fall, not to be cold. And this is reflected in a certain childlike response to many things. On certain complicated questions she will just go silent.

And yet let a deer cross the road, or a sprinkling of snow dot the field outside our windows, or a familiar face brighten our doorway, and she responds like one of those magic Japanese flowers—tiny and shriveled until immersed in water, when the hidden flower comes alive.

In a 19th century world, where the outlook in the U.S.A. was for continual progress and eternal justice, a paralyzed person was a burden. In the 1960's, when the rest of the world is beginning to outstrip us in vision and performance (and we are surrounded by articulate "beats" who make dramatic poems of their failures), Lillian's struggle to be alive gives every face a new look, every day's sunset a different glow. Nothing is the same; all things are different because one tiny centimeter of cortex in her brain has died—leaving the rest of her still terribly alive.

smell of aspirin, and days
when I loved you like peonies
and hyacinths and fields
of daisies . . . fade out.
I love you like a hospital
like a wheel chair,
like the hemiplegics
floating in the pool;
like the young head nurse
walkless from polio
smiling from her chair:
your wife
will be walking by herself soon.

Let's get a bulldozer,
plough up every street we ever lived,
begin all over from scratch,
as if it were the first day
we met, and you were lame
but I never noticed
because you were so much you
and did everything your own way
anyhow.

Believe me it's not all gloomy
like when you're half-paralyzed,
and showering is an agony

on a hard chair.
We can always rely
on doing it together—
You hold the shower rail
and I hold you,
and what love
can be purer or cleaner
than going into the shower
hugging each other?
Just to stand up
and get soaped
clean to the end,
so happy you don't have to
wash alone in that cold
hospital chair.
So, as I said.
it's not all gloomy—
just a question of balance.
I love you,
even though all I say is,
please pass the soap.

In the beginning
it was easy
to stretch out
beyond the typewriter
and start yapping
death at the moon.
Now,
the spine of the Andes
under our fingertips,
the last Inca god
kissing Tierra del Fuego,
our sun-song crossing
the Sierra Nevada.
The two of us—
you with your iron brace,
me with my hand in yours—
faithful only
to being alive.

THE "PRIVATE EYE"

R. F. SHAW

AMONG the minor vices which afflict our civilization, the addiction to mystery stories must rank somewhere between cigarette smoking and golf playing in frequency of occurrence. We are all familiar with the legendary figure of the "private eye"; we have followed him through dark alleys and shady dives in his relentless search for the always mysterious and elusive criminal. But precisely because this image is such a familiar and popular one, it has not often been discussed in a serious way. Most literary critics do not read mystery stories; if they do, they do not write about them, perhaps because they are a little ashamed of their low-brow reading habits. And of course they are right to be ashamed; mystery stories are not and have never been worthwhile literature but rather what is generally known in this country as "entertainment." Nevertheless, even "entertainment" can provide us with indirect but valuable testimony about the society which produces and enjoys it. Like God, the fictional private detective is a purely mythological figure; but the question remains in both cases: why did man invent him?

Lest there be any doubt about the mythological status of the fictional private detective, simply compare this individual with his model, the private detective in real life. It would be difficult to conceive of a more sordid and less appealing figure than the latter. A sociologist might describe him as a white collar worker; he is employed by a large detective agency such as Burns or Pinkerton. Arising during the latter half of the 19th century, these organizations have from the very start functioned as private armies in the service of capital and big business. The duties of the private detective were originally confined to "industrial espionage,"

strikebreaking, protection of company property and the persecution of radical minorities in collaboration with the police. Today the private detective will also investigate insurance claims or handle divorce cases, but his primary function remains what it has always been, to assist those who have money in their unending struggle with those who have not. It is from this unpromising background that the fictional private detective was recruited.

THE mythological private eye differs from his counterpart in real life in two essential ways. On the one hand, he does not work for a large agency, but is almost always self-employed. As a free-lance investigator, the fictional detective is responsible to no one but himself and his client. For this reason, he appears as an independent and self-reliant figure, whose rugged individualism need not be pressed into the mold of a 9 to 5 routine. On the other hand, the fictional detective does not break strikes or handle divorce cases; no client would ever think of asking him to do such things. Whatever his original assignment, the fictional private eye ends up by investigating and solving a crime, usually a murder. Operating as a one man police force in fact if not in name, he is at once more independent and more dedicated than the police themselves. He catches criminals not merely because he is paid to do so (frequently he does not receive a fee at all), but because he enjoys his work, because he firmly believes that murder must be punished. Thus the fictional detective is much more than a simple businessman. He is, first and foremost, a defender of public morals, a servant of society.

It is this curious blend of rugged individualism and public service which accounts for the great appeal of the mythological detective. By virtue of his self-reliance, his individualism and his freedom from external restraint, the private eye is a perfect embodiment of the middle class conception of liberty, which amounts to doing what you please and let the devil take the hindmost. At the same time, because the personal code of the detective coincides with the legal dictates of his society, because he likes to catch criminals, he is in middle class eyes a virtuous man. In this way, the private detective gets the best of two possible worlds. He is an individualist but not an anarchist; he is a public servant but not a cop. In short, the fictional private eye is a specialized version of Adam Smith's ideal entrepreneur, the man whose private ambitions must always and everywhere promote the public welfare. In the mystery story, as in *The Wealth of Nations,* individualism and the social good are two sides of the same benevolent coin.

THERE is only one catch to this idyllic arrangement: Adam Smith was wrong. Not only did the ideal entrepreneur not produce the greatest good for the greatest number, he ended by destroying himself, by giving birth to monopoly capitalism. The rise of the giant corporations in Western Europe and the United States dates from the period 1880-1900. Now, although the roots of the mystery story in serious literature go back as far as Balzac, Dickens, and Poe, it was not until the closing decades of the 19th century that the private detective became an established figure in popular fiction. Sherlock Holmes, the ancestor of all private eyes, was born during the 1890s. Thus the transformation of Adam Smith's ideal entrepreneur into a mythological detective coincides closely with the decline of the real entrepreneur in economic life. Driven from the marketplace by the course of history, our hero disguises himself as a private detective. The birth of the myth compensates for the death of the ideal.

Even on the fictional level, however, the contradictions which give rise to the mystery story are not fully resolved. The individualism and public service of the private detective both stem from his dedication to a personal code of conduct: he enforces the law without being told to do so. The private eye is therefore a moral man; but his morality rests upon that of his society. The basic premise of all mystery stories is that the distinction between good and bad coincides with the distinction between legal and illegal. Unfortunately, this assumption does not always hold good. As capitalism in the 20th century has become increasingly dependent upon force and violence for its survival, the private detective is placed in a serious dilemma. If he is good, he may not be legal; if he is legal, he may not be good. It is the gradual unfolding and deepening of this contradiction which creates the inner dialectic of the evolution of the mystery story.

WITH the advent of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, the development of the modern private detective begins. Sherlock Holmes is not merely an individualist; he is very close to being a mental case. A brief list of the great detective's little idiosyncrasies would provide Dr. Freud with ample food for thought. Holmes is addicted to the use of cocaine and other refreshing stimulants; he is prone to semi-catatonic trances induced by the playing of the violin; he is a recluse, an incredible egotist, a confirmed misogynist. Holmes rebels against the social conventions of his day not on moral but rather on aesthetic grounds. His eccentricity begins as a defense against boredom. It was in order to avoid the stuffy routine of middle class life that Holmes became a detective in the

first place. As he informs Watson, "My life is spent in one long effort to escape from the commonplaces of existence. These little problems help me to do so." Holmes is a public servant, to be sure; but the society which he serves bores him to tears.

The curious relationship between Holmes and Scotland Yard provides an important clue to the deeper significance of his eccentric behavior. Although he is perfectly willing to cooperate with Scotland Yard, Holmes has nothing but contempt for the intelligence and mentality of the police. They for their part are convinced that Holmes is too "unorthodox" and "theoretical" to make a good detective. Why do the police find Holmes "unorthodox"? On the face of it, it is because he employs deductive techniques alien to official police routine. Another, more interesting explanation, is hinted at by Watson when he observes on several occasions that Holmes would have made a magnificent criminal. The great detective modestly agrees. Watson's insight is verified by the mysterious link between Holmes and his arch-opponent, Dr. Moriarty. The two men resemble each other closely in their cunning, their egotism, their relentlessness. The first series of Sherlock Holmes adventures ends with Holmes and Moriarty grappling together on the edge of a cliff. They are presumed to have plunged to a common grave in this fatal embrace. Linked to Holmes even in death, Moriarty represents the alter-ego of the great detective, the image of what our hero might have become were he not a public servant. Just as Holmes the eccentric stands behind Holmes the detective, so Holmes the potential criminal lurks behind both.

IN the modern English "whodunnit," this insinuation of latent criminality in the detective himself has almost entirely disappeared. Hercule Poirot and Lord Peter Whimsey (the respective creations of Agatha Christie and Dorothy Sayers) have retained Holmes' egotism but not his zest for life and eccentric habits. Poirot and his counterparts are perfectly respectable people; it is true that they are also extremely dull. Their dedication to the status quo has been affirmed at the expense of the fascinating but dangerous individualism of a Sherlock Holmes. The latter's real descendents were unable to take root in England; they fled from the Victorian parlor and made their way across the stormy Atlantic. In the American "hardboiled" detective story of the '20s and '30s, the spirit of the mad genius from Baker Street lives on.

Like Holmes, the American private eye rejects the social conventions of his time. But unlike Holmes, he feels his society to be not merely dull but also corrupt. Surrounded by crime and violence everywhere, the "hardboiled" private eye can retain his purity only through a life of self-

imposed isolation. His alienation is far more acute than Holmes'; he is not an eccentric but rather an outcast. With Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe, alienation is represented on a purely physical plane. Wolfe refuses to ever leave his own house, and spends most of his time drinking beer and playing with orchids. More profound and more disturbing, however, is the moral isolation of Raymond Chandler's Philip Marlowe. In a society where everything is for sale, Marlowe is the only man who cannot be bought. His tough honesty condemns him to a solitary and difficult existence. Beaten, bruised and exhausted, he pursues the elusive killer through the demi-monde of high society and low morals, always alone, always despised. In the end, he gets his man, but no one seems to care; virtue is its own and only reward. A similar tone of underlying futility and despair pervades the spy thrillers of Eric Ambler and dominates the most famous of all American mystery stories, Dashiell Hammett's *The Maltese Falcon.* Sam Spade joins forces with a band of adventurers in search of a priceless jeweled statue of a falcon; but when the bird is found at last, it turns out to be a fake. Now the detective must save his own skin by informing on the girl he loves, who is also the real murderer. For Sam Spade, neither crime nor virtue pays; moreover, it is increasingly difficult to distinguish between the two.

Because the private eye intends to save society in spite of himself, he invariably finds himself in trouble with the police. The latter are either too stupid to catch the killer or too corrupt to care. In either case, they do not appreciate the private detective's zeal. Perry Mason and Hamilton Burger, Nero Wolfe and Inspector Cramer spend more time fighting each other than they do in looking for the criminal. Frequently enough, the police are themselves in league with the killer; Dashiell Hammett's *Red Harvest* provides a classic example of this theme. But even when the police are honest, they do not trust the private eye. He is, like Phillip Marlowe, too alienated to be reliable. Finally, in *The Maltese Falcon* among others, the clash between detective and police is carried to its logical conclusion: Sam Spade becomes the chief murder suspect. In order to exonerate himself, he is compelled to find the real criminal, who happens to be his girl friend. What was only a vague suspicion in the case of Sherlock Holmes now appears as a direct accusation: the private eye is in danger of turning into his opposite.

IT IS the growing contradiction between individualism and public service in the mystery story which creates this fatal dilemma. By upholding his own personal code of behavior, the private detective has placed himself in opposition to a society whose fabric is permeated with crime and

corruption. That society responds by condemning the private eye as a threat to the status quo, a potential criminal If the detective insists upon retaining his personal standards, he must now do so in conscious defiance of his society. He must, in short, cease to be a detective and become a rebel. On the other hand, if he wishes to continue in his chosen profession, he must abandon his own code and sacrifice his precious individualism. Dashiell Hammett resolved this contradiction by ceasing to write mystery stories and turning to other pursuits. His successors have adopted the opposite alternative. In order to save the mystery story, they have converted the private detective into an organization man.

The first of two possible variations on this theme is symbolized by Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer. At first glance, this hero seems to be more rather than less of an individualist than any of his predecessors. For Hammer, nothing is forbidden. He kills when he pleases, takes his women where he finds them and always acts as judge, jury and executioner rolled into one. Yet despite his obsession with personal revenge, no one ever accuses Hammer of being a criminal. He is never required to defend his actions; his right to kill goes unquestioned. Precisely because he can do what he likes, Hammer is not an individualist at all. Vengeance is his, but only because his personal verdict always coincides with the official one. In other words, Mike Hammer's private ruthlessness is an integral part of the public ruthlessness of his society. Like the Nazi storm trooper, whose moral degradation he shares, Hammer is permitted to go to any lengths only because his system depends upon such men for its own survival. Mike Hammer is an organization man; but the name of his organization is Murder Incorporated.

Like the fascist thug, Hammer frequently uses anti-Communism as an excuse for his sadistic behavior. Together with Shell Scott and other modern detectives of the "hardboiled" variety, Hammer discovers that the real criminal is often a Russian agent. In the holy war against the Communist infidel, the most vicious crimes are always the best. For this reason, many of Mike Hammer's sucsessors have joined the C.I.A. or similar organizations, and now circle the globe, exterminating whom they please. Ian Fleming's English spy, James Bond, is perhaps the best known of these "freedom fighters." Unlike the shabby private eye of the '30s, Bond is a dapper aristocrat, who takes equal pride in his mastery of assassination and knowledge of good wines. Curiously enough, Bond's opponent is not usually a Russian but rather a colored man in the service of the Soviets. A more revealing commentary on the true significance of the anti-Communist crusade would be hard to find.

With his taste for violence and polished manners, James Bond stands

midway between Mike Hammer and the other type of modern detective, the corporate executive. Henry Kane's Peter Chambers belongs to this group, as do Peter Gunn and the Hawaiian Eye of television. Like Bond, these well paid sleuths lead an aristocratic existence, with the best of wine, women and song always at their disposal. They command high fees for their services but do not exert themselves in pursuit of the criminal. If there is dirty work to be done, they will do it; but they never rumple their Brooks Brothers suits in the process. The police is not their enemy but rather a trusted friend. In short, detectives like Peter Gunn are not detectives at all, but rather respectable businessmen who happen to specialize in ridding society of undesirables. The system is good to them, and they, in return, are good to the system. It is true, of course, that corporate executives do not make good individualists; but then, one cannot have everything.

BECAUSE the original individualism of the private detective was a myth to begin with, the disappearance of that individualism marks the end of the myth. The modern private eye is much closer to reality than his self-reliant ancestors. Like the real detective, he is in business for profit rather than pleasure; like the real detective, he is a soldier in the class war rather than a public servant. This development is not an accidental one; it follows from the logic of the mystery story itself. The individualism of Sam Spade was suspect because the detective's personal code was in conflict with the values of his society. In order to retain the ideal of public service, the personal code had to be scrapped, the individualism abandoned. But by virtue of this fact, the mystery story now becomes a commentary not on the detective alone but also on his society as a whole. Because the two are increasingly identical, the faults of one are the faults of the other. Within the framework of Spillane's stories, Mike Hammer is a virtuous man Within any other framework, he is a vicious criminal. By failing to condemn his hero, Spillane ends by condemning both himself and his society. Like the lieutenant in Kafka's "In The Penal Colony," the modern detective is thus an insane cog in an insane wheel; the two fit together because both are crooked. But it is not the mystery story which tells us this but rather our own personal values. Anyone who is not disgusted by Mike Hammer or bored by Peter Gunn will not be disgusted or bored by anything in this society. Conversely, anyone who rejects Mike Hammer and Peter Gunn must reject the society which accepts them. Now that the mystery story is incapable of discovering the real criminal, it is up to the rest of us to find and condemn him.

THREE POEMS

EARLE BIRNEY

RESTRICTED AREA

Stranger be warned, our land is queer
where Nature smiles the most, have fear
You may be just the one in thirty
with whom the whitest beach plays dirty
You may have just that gait in walking
which sets our tallest hostels rocking

A certain curvature of nose
may find a campus elm allergic
Some tint of skin or name or clothes
some breath or gesture thaumaturgic
can set the roofs of suburbs leaking
bands discording, golfers shrieking

Please understand it isn't mine
but Nature's whim to keep them lonely
All I can do is tack this sign
FOR GENTILES ONLY

REMARKS DECODED FROM OUTER SPACE

The difference is picayune
scarcely a notch on the indicator

Whether your young men come to us now
or a few millenia later
We've noticed a billion or two
of more fertile species vanish
The heat may soon be too much for you all
It will do little good to be clannish
Continue to raise if you wish
your separate umbrellas of bombs
suck the rocket's dug in your mouth
or retire to a shelter of psalms
You must understand that we're here
to emulsify the stars
and level the protons out through space
Do you think we're not also on Mars?

EACH LIE

For each lie from a screen
for twenty on a page
a hundred thousand charming eyes
will see the atoms rage
Each mouth we coach to speak
first of itself alone
will blow us back the Auschwitz breath
and build a world of bone.

RiGhT FaCe

"Monkey Business"

Collectors of abstract art flocked to an East Side gallery yesterday, where they purchased forty finger-paintings by a three-year-old chimpanzee.

The paintings, which were sold less than an hour after the show had started, brought prices ranging from $25 to $95.

The artist, Beauty, who lives at the Cincinnati Zoo, was not on hand. She is susceptible to pneumonia, like other chimps, and zoo officials would not allow her to make the trip to New York.

One expert said Beauty was now in her "circular period." Previously, she had undergone an undisciplined and "wild period." In addition, the chimp is said to be concentrating on color selection.

Her big moment came yesterday at the Bianchini Gallery, where her works will be shown through Nov. 4. About sixty paintings remain unsold.

from the *New York Times*

"Gorgeous George"

In gratitude, one movie actress gave him a Lincoln Continental convertible. Another lady, still tingling from his touch, gave him a stereo phonograph; still another thanked him with a complete set of expensive china. In Hollywood, where $1,000 gifts are exchanged as casually as husbands and wives, hairdressers are rarely so rewarded. But George Masters, hair stylist of Saks Fifth Avenue in Beverely Hills, is more adored than all the cars, phonographs and dinnerware can tell. At 23, George of Beverly Hills is Hollywood's answer to Kenneth of Lilly Daché, the man that Jackie Kennedy made famous.

He has flown to San Francisco for two hours to "do" Perle Mesta, and to Europe for two months as Jennifer Jone's personal hairdresser. His income this year will be $65,000, but George is dissatisfied ("If I could do what I want, I'd give it all up and be a beach bum").

Time Magazine

WE DARE BE FREE

LEON JOSEPHSON

IN HIS introduction to the *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right,* Marx said that the purpose of his *Critique* was to rouse his fellow-countrymen to consciousness of their state. "Our business," he said, "is to deny the Germans a single moment of self-delusion and resignation. The real oppression must be made more oppressive by making men more consicous of it. The real shame must be made more shameful by publishing it. Every corner of German society must be exposed to view as the skeleton in the cupboard of German society. Our petrified social structure must be broken up by forcing it to dance to its own tune. To knock spirit into them the German people must be taught to view themselves with horror."

Herbert Aptheker in his latest book, DARE WE BE FREE? is always the scholar, always dealing with objective historical and legal fact; ever seeking to reawaken and "knock the spirit of liberty back into them." It is amazing to see Aptheker, the layman, grasp the essential legal principles involved and express their legal, moral and social essence in crystal clear terms without any of the "barbaric language" of the professional lawyer.

Under the Foreign Agents Registration Act the agency must be proven in order to establish guilt. No Communist was ever tried, let alone convicted, because the Attorney General and J. Edgar Hoover publicly stated that they could find no evidence to warrant a conviction. But under the McCarran law a "finding" is made within the law, that is, a statement is made in the law's preamble that the "Communist Party is a foreign dominated agency." Proof of illegal acts is unnecessary A Board is set up

and authorized to draw inferences of foreign control from ideological evidence. It is authorized to extend the law to "Communist Front Organizations."

What ideological standard constitutes due process? In the opinion rendered by the McCarran Board in the case of the Communist Party, it held that "it is unimportant whether the opinions of the American Communist Party was the earlier opinion," "whether it was independently arrived at," "whether it is also the opinion of many other groups in the United States." The Board found that "the Marxist-Leninist classics are one of the chief means by which the CPSU directs, dominates and controls the CPUSA." So the Board *found* the CPUSA to be a foreign agent and ordered it to register, that is, to publicly confess to all of the slander and vilifications contained in the McCarran law.

THE McCarran law is a Bill of Attainder. It singles out the Communist Party, defines its activities as an international conspiracy in fascist terms, and inflicts punishment without a judicial trial. It voids the First Amendment by establishing prior restraints effected through registration, which is in fact, licensing of free speech. It annuls the Fifth Amendment by compelling self-incrimination because registration is prima facie evidence that its members are guilty of substantive crime. It annuls the legal principle that is *personal* by making every member of the Communist Party guilty of failure to register as a separate crime. In other words, it creates a new crime of guilt by association. It makes any public organization a Communist Front organization if it "*substantially contributes* to the establishment within the U.S. of a totalitarian dictatorship under foreign control." It makes an organization guilty simply on the basis of its beliefs, or the beliefs of some of its members, and not because of any acts committed. It destroys every principle of democratic government contained in the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Constitution and/or the previous decisions of our courts.

IN short, the McCarran law has cancelled out every vestige of American liberty and democracy as we have known it. Aptheker points all these things out clearly and in simple language. The title of Aptheker's book "DARE WE BE FREE?" raises the question, do we, the American people, *deserve to be free?* Like Marx, Aptheker "makes the real oppression more oppressive by making men more conscious of it."

In one of his best passages, in the chapter "What Registration Means," Aptheker says:

"Communists would refuse to label themselves the hateful things they

re called in the McCarran Act not only because they know these labels re monstrous slanders and not only out of ordinary self-respect and not only because they would never descend to the role of informers upon friends and comrades. They would refuse to so label themselves because they see in the requirement a monstrous hoax aiming at all progressive and democratic and equalitarian thought. They see the McCarran Act and its registration procedure as a way-station on the well-marked road toward fascism at home and war abroad, toward cataclysmic disaster for the American people and for all humanity.

"To consider oneself in his heart a Communist is no small thing. One who is a Communist only hopes he really is worthy of that magnificent title. A man or a woman does not easily affirm that he or she belongs anywhere with such company as Dolores Ibarruri, Sean O'Casey, Louis Aragon, Maxim Gorky, Anna Seghers, Theodore Dreiser, Pablo Picasso, Bertolt Bercht, Clara Zetkin, Gabriel Peri, Julius Fucik, Georgi Dimitroff, Ernst Thaelmann—and Lenin. One who is a Communist does not easily affirm that he belongs among the great and million-strong army of the known and unknown leaders of the Resistance against Hitler, those who were in the front rank of the immortal Red Army's defeat of fascism, those who have organized the poor and down-trodden, the oppressed and despised, the hated and vilified throughout the world for a century now, and who have led in the building of magnificent societies, infinitely better than those they replaced, in one-third of the globe?

"Surely to seek to be a part of this sacred company is not something of which one is to be ashamed; it is rather something to aspire to and work towards. But to put oneself down as a traitor; to become an informer; to join in making a mockery of the Bill of Rights; to vitiate the freedom of one's own country—all these patriotic duties are for the Gitlows and Laitners and Budenzes in the FBI stable."

Justice Frankfurter wrote the majority opinion in the McCarran case. He held that the "Finding" in the bill is the result of 20 years of hearings by various Congressional committees and is not reviewable by the court. In other words, guilt is established as a matter of law.

Aptheker's biting irony is directed against this same Frankfurter. Here is a man who in 1920, when the government went on a witch-hunting spree warned that "Free men cannot be driven. . . . They respect justice and follow truth, but arbitrary power they will oppose until the end of time."

But in the years between the intervention against Russia and the Cold War, Frankfurter has become lost in a legal jungle of countless legal precedents. He cannot see the legal forest for the legal trees or precedents.

To him the legal form is everything and the content nothing at all. Unwittingly, he is the most reactionary justice of the present Supreme Court.

On February 13 1950, Congressman Rankin of the Un-American Committee spoke for the McCarran bill and expressed his anti-semitic feelings as follows:

"Remember Communism is Yiddish. I understand that every member of the Politburo around Stalin is either Yiddish or married to one, and that includes Stalin himself. They have murdered more white Christians in the Ukraine in the last thirty years than have been killed in all the rest of the world since crucifixion."

President Truman in his veto passage to Congress said that the McCarran Act "would betray our finest traditions, would make a mockery of the Bill of Rights, throw away the ideals which are the fundamental basis of a free society. . . . I can think of no better way to make a mockery of the deep American belief in human freedom and dignity than to put the provisions of the McCarran Act on our statute books." Despite the President's veto, this same vile Ku Kluxer and anti-semite, Rankin, declared that "Frankfurter was the man who wrote the President's veto message." Why? Because Frankfurter is a Jew and "Communism is Yiddish." It is ironic that fascism, the road to which has been cleared by the McCarran Act, will make no distinction between Frankfurter, the former liberal, and Frankfurter, the present reactionary; between Frankfurter, the Jew, and Frankfurter, the twister of legal logic.

"Fiat justitia, pereat mundus!" Justice must prevail though the whole world perish. And the world would perish—if it were at all possible for the Rankins and Frankfurters to carry it out.

ONE of the first things taught law school freshmen is that "a court must never issue a vain decree," that is, never order a man to do an impossible act. For the order of necessity cannot be complied with and the courts are made to look foolish. The dignity of the court (oh, *sanctum sanctorum*) is tarnished. Aptheker points out that the registration part of the McCarran Act is a vain decree. It cannot be complied with! It must be defied!

Thoreau, writing about the Fugitive Slave Law might have been writing about the McCarran law. He said:

I hear a good deal said about trampling this law under foot. Why, one need not go out of his way to do that. This law arises not to the level of the head or the reason; its natural habitat is in the dirt. It was born and bred, and has its life, only in the dust and mire, on a level with the feet; and he who walks with freedom, and does not with Hindoo mercy avoid treading on every venomous

reptile, will inevitably tread on it, and so trample it under foot—and Webster, its maker, with it, like the dirt-bug and its ball."

When Bismark passed his Anti-Socialist Laws, Engels wrote:

"The irony of history turns everything upside down. We the 'revolutionists,' the 'upsetters,' we thrive much better with legal than illegal means. The parties of order, as they call themselves, perish because of the legal conditions set by themselves. They cry out in despair: *la legalite nous tue*—legality is our death—while we with the same legality acquire swelling muscles and red cheeks and look the picture of health. . . . Meantime, they are grinding out new laws against revolution. Again, everything has been set upside down. The fanatics of anti-revolution of today, are not they the revolutionists of yesterday?"

There is a dialectic to political suppression. The greatest anti-revolutionists, the Czar, Chiang Kai-shek, Hitler and company were all thrown on the dung heap of history. Communist Parties have been declared illegal in dozens of countries but nowhere was a Communist Party destroyed by reaction. Indeed, they grew stronger! Once in the USA, trade unions were declared by our courts to be "conspiracies to harm an employer in the lawful pursuit of his business." Good and brave men went to jail for organizing, but today the right to organize is recognized by our courts. The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church!

Aptheker's book is a *must* for every Communist, every Progressive, every student, every American. It should be reprinted in a cheap half-million edition. It sould be read and passed on to others to read. Aptheker's book is the reissue of Paine's *Rights of Man* brought up to today's facts.

communications

LOIS L. Barnes in her review of my book, "Songs of the Civil War," (*Mainstream* September 1961) asserts that the volume should be a *song* book — a collection of songs designed primarily for "interest in singing the songs today." With the assumption, she naturally concludes that a large portion of the songs included in the work should be eliminated. Confederate songs, minstrel and dialect songs, propaganda ditties, and the frequently cliché-ridden songs of another era, by this token, do not belong in such a work.

It is on this fundamental premise that the burden of her criticism of my book seems to rest.

The only trouble with this criticism is that I did not set out to put together a *song* book, but rather a study and analysis of the subject explicitly stated in the title — "Songs of the Civil War." This should be quite apparent from the fact that more than one-third of the book is devoted to documentation of sources and social, political and musicological analysis of the songs in the volume.

The idea that an editor (particularly in dealing with historical materials) must stand behind the point of view of his sources seems to me transparently foolish. In a book which attempts to give a picture of the songs of the Civil War — *as they were sung* — it would be unthinkable to censor out materials because the editor does not agree with their viewpoint. Rather, it is the editor's obligation to present a well-rounded analysis of his material placing it in as complete a social context as possible. He should also, it seems to me, thoroughly document his sources and adopt a consistent policy of keeping changes in the original text and melody to an absolute minimum.

MISS Barnes, attempting to buttress her argument that the collection is really a *song* book, seems to make much of the fact that the tunes were arranged for piano and guitar. But this, it seems to me, is a triviality — since the arrangements are designed to make the music more accessible to readers. That the book will result in performances of the songs is undoubtedly true, but performance too can be presented in documentary fashion — and the accompanying record album issued by Folkways Records is proof of this. (Incidentally, Miss Barnes also feels impelled to register her criticism of the recording without having heard it. This is beyond comprehension.)

What is involved here, it seems to me, is a type of anti-intellectualism which, I hope, the readers of *Mainstream* do not share Half-history may seem to make effective propaganda for the democratic cause, but in the long run the truth is much more valuable and effective.

In place of the songs which she would expunge from this collection, Miss Barnes suggests more folksongs of the Civil War to be included. Again, I think she misses the point. The great majority of folksongs which deal with the Civil War were composed and sung years after the war, as the folk created ballads out of their war-time memories.

There *is* an interesing study to be made of the Civil War folksongs — a work which is currently being undertaken by Prof. Charles Haywood. But this is not the same as a book of "Songs of the Civil War." Miss Barnes' knowledge of such songs seems limited to the works of Sandburg, Lomax and Botkin — although comparatively few Civil War folksongs are contained in the collections edited by these men. Let me urge her to look through, as I have done, Vance Randolph's monumental four-volume study of Ozark folksongs, H. M. Belden's fine study of Missouri folksongs, the Duke University anthology of North Carolina Folklore, Edward Dolph's collection of soldier songs (and many others listed in my bibliography) for a most rewarding search. Let her also (as I have done) listen to Library of Congress field recordings of Civil War folksongs from traditional singers; she might also examine the more than 50 different Civil songsters referred to in my notes, for despite her misgivings about such printed sources, these collections contain a good deal of genuine folk song — among them a number which she commends the book for including.

Miss Barnes disagrees with my approach to "dialect" material. Frankly, I don't understand why. The folksongs in my book, including the Negro folk songs, are presented in simple, direct English with no attempt to reproduce the local and regional dialects of the singers. (If this were a study in language development, there might be a point in attempting to write down dialect.) I do not feel it proper to attempt to transcribe Negro dialect, for instance, unless one were both prepared and scientifically equipped to do the same for all dialects. (The editors of *Mainstream* apparently do not suffer from such an injunction. On pages 58-60 of this same issue, a rather crude and futile effort is made to reproduce the local dialect of Negroes and whites in Fayette County, Tennessee.)

ASIDE from the actual dialects of real people, there are the spurious dialects reflecting the various chauvinistic stereotypes (particularly Negro, Irish and German) which flourished in the Civil War period.

Many of the most popular and interesting songs of the Civil War were written employing such dialect material. To have altered these songs would have made them meaningless as history — and so a few songs of this genre were included in my book. Let me add that my introductory comments on these songs included an analysis of the minstrel stage and the tradition of national stereotypes together with an explicit warning that these dialects were completely false and reflected an undemocratic, backwards point of view.

There are other points on which Miss Barnes and I do not see eye to eye, but I fear I may have already overstated my case as it is. In any event, I hope that the curious will read my book and decide for themselves.

IRWIN SILBER

books in review

Written in Blood

POEMS BY REVOLUTIONARY MARTYRS, Peking, 1960

"Chop my head off? Never mind:
So long as my doctrine is true.
You may murder Hsia Ming-han,
But more will follow, and push through!"

THESE are the last words, left just before his execution by the Kuomintang, of Hsia Ming-han, one of the Communist leaders active in Hunan and Hupei between 1925 and 1928,

General Yeh Ting, Commander of the New 4th Army, after his capture by the treacherous KMT who in January 1941 ordered the New 4th into a pocket in southern Anhwei and then attacked it, wrote:

"The door for man is tightly barred,
The hole for dogs is open.
A voice bawls:
—Crawl out and have your freedom!
I long for freedom but deep down I know
Man cannot crawl through the hole for dogs.
I await that day
When earth's inner fire will burst forth
And consume this living coffin and myself.
Amid the soaring flames and blood
I shall attain immortality."

These are but two examples from a distinguished collection of poetry—*Poems by Revolutionary Martyrs.* First published in 1959, it has recently passed the 700,000 mark, establishing a sales record for a book of poetry. The 600 authors represented in this volume were not primarily poets. They were, first and foremost, dedicated Communists who gave their lives for the people's cause.

Many of the 157 poems compiled in the volume, written just before the authors' execution, express their proud choice of death rather than submission to the enemy. For, along with the horrible tortures inflicted on the political

prisoners to extort confessions, it was also the practice of the KMT to force them into betrayal of their faith and comrades. "The Confession" by Chen Jan (1923-1949), an underground worker tortured to death at the headquarters of the infamous Sino-American Cooperation Organizations in Chungking, Szechuan, is typical of the reaction of numerous martyrs. Here is the last of three stanzas:

"At death I laugh aloud,
The devil's palace shakes with my laughter;
Here is my confession, that of a Communist:
At the top of my voice I sing
The funeral march of the Chiang Dynasty!"

The fountain-head of all this staunch faith may be seen, among others, in a poem by Ho Chin-tsay (1901-1928), a Red Army Division Commander who died in battle against the KMT. It was one of two stanzas on developments of the revolution at the time:

"The blossoms are in the bud,
Fresher in colour than peaches,
Awaiting the touch of the Spring breeze to unfold in full bloom.
I believe it will not be long
Before they spread and fructify all over the world!"

In general, most of the older revolutionaries wrote in the classical style while the younger ones used free verse. But almost everyone has his or her own distinctive mode of expression. For instance, a peasant woman revolutionary by the name of Wei Ma who was shot sometime during the First Revolutionary Civil War (1924-27), declaimed in her native Kwangtung vernacular:

"Both buglers and riflemen are out in array!
So many soldiers to my funeral speed!
And so many officials act as filial sons!
I depart for Hades well content indeed."

VERY different is this in tone from the poems on the same theme already quoted. And even more so from the young poets who wrote free verse, as illustrated by the following quotation from Yin Fu's "Words Written in Blood" dedicated to martyrs killed by the British police of Shanghai in the May 30th incident, 1925:

"Today—their paradise.
Tomorrow—their hell;
Today—with our blood words are written,
Tomorrow—their tears can be bathed in.
I am the beginning of an insurrection,
The eldest son of History,
The sea petrel,
The spur of the times."

Yin Fu was executed with four other Communist writers near Shanghai in 1931. Another young poet whose work was marked by distinctive, personal qualities was Chen Huei, killed in hand-to-hand fighting against the Japanese invaders in 1944. Here is a long excerpt from one of his poems:

Song For My Motherland

I
Chide myself
For not being
A lyrist.
For,
O my Motherland,
I am yours,
A toilers' son
With big hands and big feet.

I love you deeply,
Deeply,
But cannot,
Like the loud singers of the Marseillaise
Behind the barricades of the fighting
Paris Commune
Under the scorching sun,
Pluck the strings of the lyre
And draw from it
Humanity's first
Most beautiful song
To dedicate to you
As a greeting.

Nor can I
Play a piccolo
While astride a buffalo,
Nor blow the bamboo flute
Ever so lightly, lightly,
On an August thrashing ground,
So that the music
Wafts over the mud walls
And falls in the willows' shade
Along the river.
But when I
Lift my face
Towards your—
My Motherland's—
High azure skies,
Above extensive plains
And the clouds floating
Leisurely therein;
Or when I turn my eyes
On the small red flowers
That stand out
From crevices of rocks,
O how my heart
Beats with excitement!
I belong to you
My Motherland—
A purple-black
Young warrior.

When I cross the plains
With the old Mauser
Aslant my back,
And spot the black forts
Flying the enemy's
Red-dot flags,
O how my blood
Churns in my veins!
Even as the hurricane-like onsweep
Of my motherland's proud mounted
cavalry
Coming over the deep snow-covered
Steppes
From outside the Great Wall . . .
O my Motherland!
With milk of love
You have succoured me;
So I
Will defend you
With my flesh and blood;

Perhaps tomorrow
I shall fall
In the bayonet charge,
And the enemy's knife
Will cut my bowels open
But not a tear
Will I shed under the enemy's knife
O my Motherland!
But will laugh aloud,
Because
I,
Your son with the big hands and the
big feet,
Your defender, Will leave my life
As a lofty paean
To you.
I will sing,
O Motherland,
That flowers of love may grow
On the heap of yellow earth
That covers my bones!

Whatever one may say about the merits of this unique collection of poems, one thing is certain: All who read it through will be deeply moved by the great poetry that was the substance of the martyrs' lives.

letters to the editor

On Hemingway

Dear Editors,

Received fifteen minutes ago the August 1961 copy of Mainstream. Just completed reading "S.F.'s" article on Ernest Hemingway. I write to express my appreciation of the article, that in a few words, gave me an astronaut's view of Hemingway, a writer, whose works I read at times, but did not fully comprehend until a few minutes ago.

Sincerely,

S. K. D.

Dear Editors:

Now that Hemingway is dead, the build-up is on to make him a legend. Well, he was a legend, but let's not get sickening about him as S. F. tends to in the current issue. To state that, 'But none commanded the affection he did. And the reason was that there was love for the working people in his books, so that millions looked upon him as a friend' . . . is utter bunk.

I doubt that many people looked on "Papa" with affection. They admired and were fascinated by him because he looked and acted the part of the AUTHOR—he was the romantic image of the dashing, reckless, writer . . . although obviously dashing and reckless have little to do with writing. Hemingway was the motion picture conception of a writer.

As for 'love for the working people in his books,' S. F. must have discovered a new set of Hemingway books. Except for the book TO HAVE AND TO HAVE NOT, no major character in any Hemingway book ever really worked, was concerned about rent, food, or family. The fact is Hemingway patronized his bull fighters, boxers, and fishermen. Every Hemingway major character is actually concerned with only one thing—formal manners, the stiff upper lip bit, of the English 'upper' classes.

Also, considering his status, Hemingway gave but passive support to the new Cuban government of Castro, and

the same goes for his anti-war feelings. I fully agree with S. F. that Hemingway could not understand the "new kind of world" which socialism is producing. For the hard fact is, Hemingway had a childish mentality—he reached his maturity in his early stories and never advanced beyond that. His articles in last year's Life were assinine, and his god of "courage" is certainly kid stuff.

Let us give Hemingway his due: he was the greatest literary stylist we've known, he deflated and streamlined writing, cut out the phony flourishes, made literary dialogue life-like and realistic. In his early stories he explored many unsaid (for the times) facets of life—sex, divorce, homosexuality, and violence. He probably aroused more interest in writing among young people than any other author in the last 100 years.

Saying that, we've had Hemingway. I have a hunch he deliberately set out to establish the picture of the muscular-author. Perhaps "Papa's" tragedy was, he believed his own publicity.

Sincerely,

J. C.

August Issue

Dear Editors,

I must congratulate the readers of *Mainstream* on having the privilege of reading "A True Legend, A Radio Play," which appeared in the August issue. It should be most effective as a play, and to a modern Marxist thinker it is proof that his convictions leave plenty of room for warm, human sentiments.

The article on the "The Law and Negro Education" seems very important. In fact, the whole magazine seems to me very worth while.

A Reader in Florida

September Issue

Dear Sirs:

Your September issue seemed the best since the new management, so to speak. The Hungarian play was very good; Sidney Finkelstein seems to be your only really good remaining regular contributor, and mentions of or publications by Kenneth Fearing have been far too scarce these past decades. It was fitting to honor him in the same issue with Hemingway. Perhaps your issue was good because it was honest, literary and Left—and had no propaganda or nonsense (like Bonosky's eulogies of the paradise in East Germany).

As an aesthetic consideration, my idea is that the cover was more commanding and attractive the old way—only type. The illustrations on the cover never are balanced and jar the eyes. Why not relegate them onto inside or cover (inside cover) positions and have them bleed on four or at least three sides?

Yours truly,

F. W.