new Masses

MAY 1, 1934 10c

Into the Streets May First

Into the streets May First!
Into the roaring Square!
Shake the midtown towers!
Shatter the downtown air!
Come with a storm of banners,
Come with an earthquake tread,
Bells, hurl out of your belfries,
Red flag, leap out your red!
Out of the shops and factories,
Up with the sickle and hammer,
Comrades, these are our tools,
A song and a banner!
Roll song, from the sea of our hearts,
Banner, leap and be free;
Song and banner together,
Down with the bourgeoisie!
Sweep the big city, march forward,
The day is a barricade;
We hurl the bright bomb of the sun,
The moon like a hand grenade.
Pour forth like a second flood!
Thunder the alps of the air!
Subways are roaring our millions—
Comrades, into the Square!

—ALFRED HAYES

GET YOUR RESERVED SEATS NOW!

GIGANTIC
MAY DAY CELEBRATION

TUESDAY, MAY 1st, 7:30 P. M. at
MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

50th STREET AND 8th AVENUE

AUSPICES: COMMUNIST PARTY, NEW YORK DISTRICT

C. A. Hathaway - Chas. Krumbein - S. Kingston

COLORFUL MASS DANCE PAGEANT
by the Workers Dance League

General Admission 25c
(incl. 1c tax for U. C.)
Reserved Seats . . $1
TICKETS at NEW MASSES

MASS SINGING *by all Choruses of the Workers Music League*

WORKERS INTERNATIONAL RELIEF BAND

SIQUEIROS

FAMOUS MEXICAN REVOLUTIONARY ARTIST

will speak on

The Technique of Revolutionary Art

on Sunday Afternoon, April 29th, 1934

at 3 o'clock sharp

at the IRVING PLAZA

IRVING PLACE at 15th STREET

HUGO GELLERT, Chairman

Admission: Thirty-five Cents

Under the Auspices of THE JOHN REED CLUB

New Masses

MAY 1, 1934

MAY DAY, given to the world by the American working-class in 1886, occurs this year in a framework probably unparalleled in history. A smoldering old world may break into flames any day and a new world will arise. A forecast of the new world—more than that, the new world itself, is here: the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, comprising one-sixth of the world. May Day, 1934, will be a threat — and a promise — in the remaining five-sixths. A threat to the ruling classes, who maintain power only by the most violent terrorism of the Swastika; a promise to the liberated working-class of the Soviet Union and to the enslaved millions outside, that the rule of Hitler, Mussolini and their disciples is temporary, the final stand of a moribund and a frantic world capitalism. Here in America, for the first time in history, May Day will be observed in the deepest South, in Birmingham, Ala., where white and black workingmen will speak from the base of the Confederate Statue (within hearing distance of the cells where the Scottsboro boys are imprisoned). The United Front May Day Committee announces demonstrations in every part of the country, from New York to Berkeley, Calif. The program of the class struggle now embraces far more than that of the first May Day in 1886 when the principal demand was for the eight hour day. Now the millions who down tools May Day will cry for higher wages and shorter hours; for the passage of H.R. 7598, the Unemployment Insurance bill, for immediate cash relief. Hundreds of thousands will tramp through American streets shouting opposition to compulsory arbitration, to company unions. They will demand the right of organization and insist upon recognition of the unions which workers themselves choose. International solidarity against Fascism, against war, will be voiced in a hundred languages. Prominent on the agenda of the countless May Day meetings from Johannesburg to Kobe will be the proletarian slogan, "For Soviet Power!"

STREET SCENE—BERLIN *William Sanderson*

IN their delightfully nonchalant way the Japanese imperialists have again dropped a stink bomb into the international arena. Only yesterday they poured honeyed words of friendship and cooperation into the long and willing ears of Secretary Hull; today they proceed, without apology or explanation, to warn munitions manufacturers, airplane salesmen and other "rescuers" of distraught China, that it is for Japan and no one else to determine which commercial or industrial or other operations in China are a menace to the peace of Asia. The Japanese imperialists have appointed themselves guardians of peace and order in the East. Theirs is the sole responsibility, theirs the final judgment. Sir John Simon, the spokesman of English capitalism, protests. English imperialists too want to have a hand in preserving peace in Asia. The Roosevelt government, spokesman of American capitalism, also protests. It too wants to have a hand in preserving peace in Asia. Indeed all of them are so eager to preserve peace in Asia that they are ready to plunge mankind into another, better, and bloodier world war.

CAPITALISM is in a mess. Japanese capitalists must sell abroad or go under. England must sell or go under. France, Germany, the United States, they all must find markets or perish. China is still backward. China is the ideal market. Japanese imperialism wants to hog it. The other imperialist countries object. Geographically and militarily Japan has the upper hand. A clash of imperialist armies would seem inevitable. But after all, China is not an inanimate thing, not a corpse. China is stirring. Revolution and counter revolution are grappling for supremacy. Al-

STREET SCENE—BERLIN

William Sanderson

STREET SCENE—BERLIN

William Sanderson

ready one-fourth of China is Soviet. The Communists are fighting and winning victories. According to the latest dispatch (April 24) the Chinese Red Army has dealt a crushing defeat to the Nanking forces in a battle at Chi Cheng, on the Kiangsi-Fukien border, surrounding and disarming five regiments. Such dispatches are frequent. Soviet China is growing, expanding, gathering strength. It is not going to yield easily to imperialist blandishments or force. And even the part of China under Chiang Kai-Shek presents numerous difficulties to the imperialists. Chiang Kai-Shek is fickle, his loyalties precarious. Now he flirts with Japan, now with the United States. He is for sale to the highest bidder. At the present time all factors seem to push him into the arms of American imperialism. First, America can provide more money than Japan, which is in grave financial straits. And secondly, Japan's brutal aggressions in Shanghai and Manchukuo have aroused the bitter hatred of the Chinese masses, even of those not under the influence of Communist ideas. The imperialists in the East are in a mess. Innumerable contradictions are driving them at one another's throats. The single program on which it may be possible for them to unite is opposition to Soviet China and Soviet Russia. Whether they will be able to reconcile their commercial rivalries and embark on their great crusade against the two workers' republics will to a great extent be determined by the revolutionary workers' action in their own countries.

ARTIFICIALLY created barriers to strike action can withstand pressure only so long; at a certain time the strain becomes irresistible. America is watching the barriers crumble now. The Rooseveltian demagogy, the elaborate strategy of arbitration and consultation, all the measures adopted to facilitate delay and befuddlement, go by the board as the strike-call sounds in one industry after another. The automobile workers are in the vanguard. The mile-long picket line about the Chevrolet and Fisher Body plants at St. Louis is the model the workers in that industry are adopting. In Cleveland close to 10,000 men are out, including 2,000 filling station men. And latest dispatches show 7,000 on strike at the Fisher plant in Tarrytown. Roosevelt's Detroit experiment in "human engineering" conducted with national fanfare is proving a monumental flop; the surge of strikers has

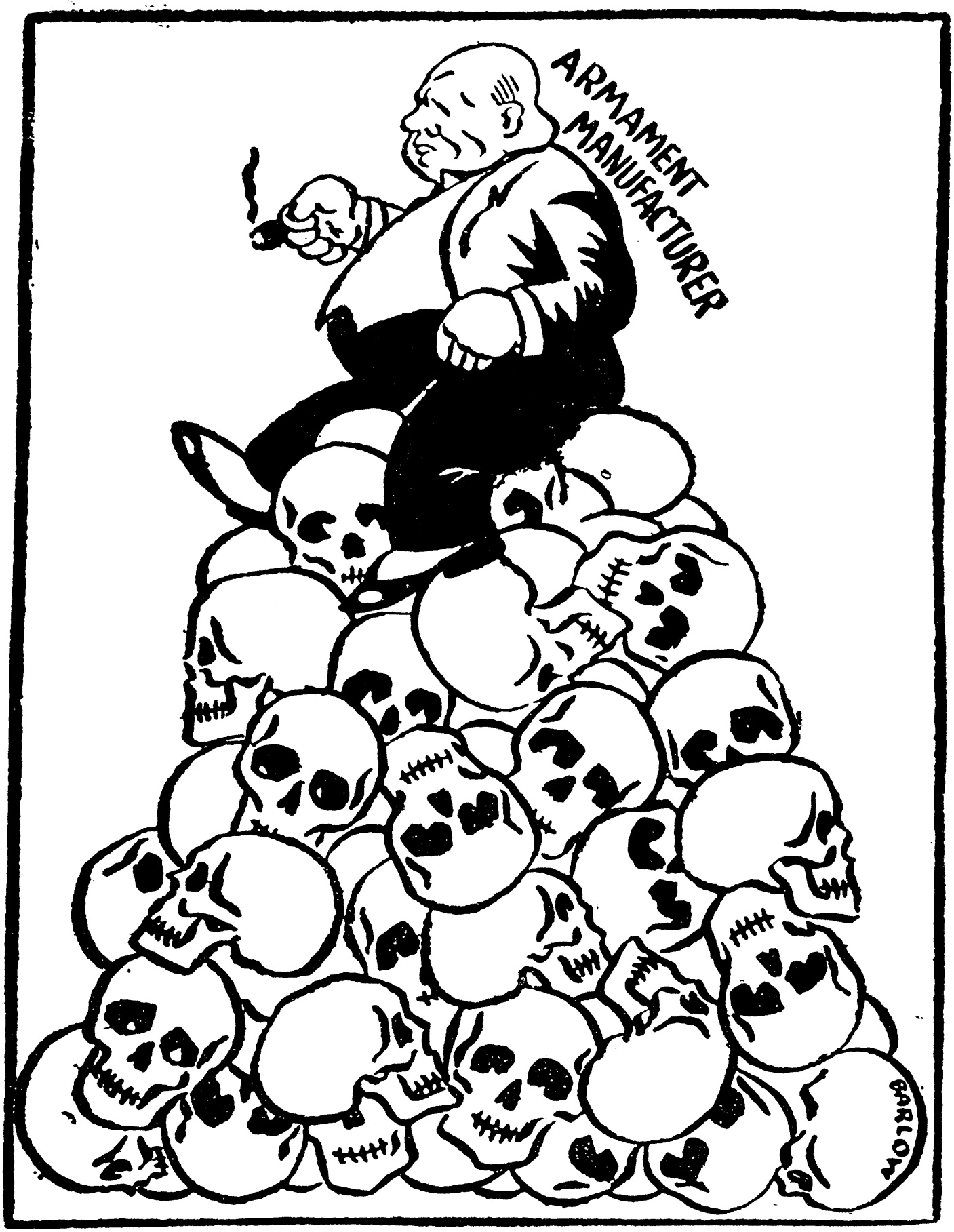
HE MADE HIS PILE *Barlow in Pleb*

apparently only begun. Throughout all these strikes the same demands are heard; "Recognize the union the men choose; reinstate workers fired for union activities; increase wages!" At St. Louis the principal demand of the 4,000 strikers is the reinstatement of some 250 to 400 men who were fired and blacklisted for talking organization. In Cleveland the 10,000 fight for union recognition and 30 percent increase in wage rate. Here the most significant development is the loss of prestige James P. McSweeney, A.F. of L. organizer, suffered, his obstructionist acts so angering the strikers that they voted to bar him from their mass meetings. At Detroit the strikes continue despite the sell-out maneuvers of Matthew B. Smith.

EVERY one of the automobile strikes is characterized by the fullest mobilization of the law's authority, with legions of mounted and motorcycle police, machine guns and tear gas squads. Nevertheless proletarian solidarity is manifest everywhere. For instance, at Cleveland the jobless, organized in the Unemployed Councils, lend a direct hand in strike relief and see to it that nobody scabs. In Alabama the miners continue their brave stand against the National Guard and the company gunmen sworn in as deputies. The shooting of the Negro striker England has steeled the Negro and white miners. They know now what they can expect from the boss and his government. Picketing continues at all mines, and latest word is that 500 men marched on the Red Diamond mine, where Ed England was killed. Guns are mounted at the Margaret and the Acmar works of the Alabama Fuel and Iron Company. Here too the A. F. of L. busily scurries around trying to "arbitrate"—its euphemism for "sell-out." In Buffalo the airplane workers' strike at the Curtis and Consolidated companies goes into its fourth week, 2,000 pickets circling the plants twenty-four hours daily, marching through the night to keep out the strikebreakers, who are fittingly housed in the Y. M. C. A. In many places the strikers are abandoning the principles of the reactionary A.F. of L. unions for those of the Trade Union Unity League: industrial unions for craft unions; mass picketing for round-the-table arbitration; unity and solidarity instead of division of forces; in short, class-struggle for class-collaboration.

THE Alabama miners strike was "settled" last week, yet already there is talk of another strike of the more than 20,000 workers. Meanwhile, in the same region, 8,000 ore miners employed by steel companies went out, adding new numbers to the spreading revolt against the Blue Eagle whose sheltering wings are just big enough to protect employers' profits. A heartening sign following an N.R.A "settlement" comes from the Appalachian coal fields, where the miners won only a slight increase in pay for the day force. The major part of the workers, on the night shift, under the "settlement" involving a few cents more per ton and an hour less a day of work, actually is getting a wage cut—a result which explains the unsettlement of so many "settlements." Though in this case the miners are divided into seven different unions—there are also some company unions—the U.M.W.A.—Lewis influence is widespread. Lately, however, the Rank and File Miners have been pressing harder the slogan of Rank and File Fighting Unity and have formed committees in most of the unions. Their demands include a $6 wage scale, the 6-hour day and 5-day week, and passage of the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill. Based on this program, the Rank and File Committee of the Progressive Miners of America has formed a joint committee with one from the U.M.W.A., while the Rank and File Committee in the U.M.W.A. has begun publication of a weekly, the Coal Digger.

A NEW ally in the workers' fight for some measure of economic protection against the effects of the crisis has



HE MADE HIS PILE

Barlow in Pleb

entered the field—the Inter-Professional Association for Social Insurance. The association's program is sound, its personnel outstandingly capable, and its plan of action far-reaching. The announcements which have come to us from Mary Van Kleeck, chairman of the national council, state its objective clearly:

> To cooperate with industrial workers in promoting unemployment insurance and other social insurance. Activity will be concentrated on this objective. The Association, composed of members from various professions and vocations, is intended to become an acknowledged source of information on this topic, and as such to influence and to stimulate action in the professional and vocational groups.

The standards which the association raises for unemployment insurance are high: all unemployed workers to receive income enabling them to maintain their standard of living; the cost to be a charge exclusively on industry and government; a federal law to govern; administration of the law through direct workers' representatives; and, most important, the legislation to become effective *immediately*, without waiting to build up future "reserves" while the unemployed starve. The New York Chapter holds its first open meeting and symposium, with a representative list of speakers, Sunday evening, April 29, at the Engineering Auditorium, 29 West 39th Street.

The Week's Papers

WEDNESDAY—Roosevelt rejects McLeod bill to pay bank depositors. . . . His fervent appeal to New York Legislature for child labor amendment fails as Senate committee unanimously kills it. . . . Negro coal striker killed by deputies in Alabama. . . . All Omaha street cars stopped by strike. A.F. of L. leaders fail in effort to cripple strike. . . . Secretary of Labor Perkins reports 419,000 hired by industry in March. . . . Daily Worker continues exposure of George Williams, scab herder who sued Harry Raymond over taxi strike stories. . . . Man who counted his phone calls proves to jury's satisfaction that New York Telephone Company cheats.

Thursday—Army to rush $17,500,000 war orders, for motorization and planes. . . . Jobless and hungry, the Tammany gang is closing in on Curry, the "leader" who guessed wrong. . . . Silver bloc yielding to Roosevelt's insistence on permissive, not mandatory legislation on monetization of metal. . . . Increase in milk price set for Monday. . . . Washington soon to face demand by Cuba for extradition of Machado as murderer. . . . Baltimore sailors and longshoremen march to Washington to protest shutting down of seamen's relief project. . . . Machine guns and gas squads sent to Alabama coal strike area. . . . New York Telephone Company says it couldn't cheat subscribers even if it wanted to, and it doesn't want to.

Friday—General Johnson tells newspaper publishers they have "put N.R.A. across." Also, that no evidence has been found that any large corporation or business interest is violating the N.R.A. . . . Jacob Maged, little New Jersey tailor, is sentenced to 30 days as N.R.A. violator He pressed suits for 35 cents, shaving N.R.A. price a nickel. . . . Five Navy planes to depart from San Diego for extensive survey of Aleutian Islands, nearest United States territory to Japan, to "study the weather." . . . Tammany ousts Curry.

Saturday — Baltimore seamen who marched to Washington demand to see Roosevelt. "Demand and be damned," Roosevelt's secretary tells them, refusing. . . . Fleet's sham battle for Panama Canal results in a draw. . . . Mrs. Maged, wife of imprisoned Jersey tailor, says "N.R.A. is a fake."

Sunday — Du Pont under N.R.A. made 90 cents a share profit, as against 35 cents a share in 1933. . . . Roosevelt approves "differentials" intended to assure permanent lower wages for southern workers. Urges 50,000 coal miners to return to work. . . . Mme. Schumann-Heink defies Nazi death threat and sings at anti-Nazi concert in Carnegie Hall. . . . Judge who sentenced Maged says he'll free N.R.A. violator (first and only one to be imprisoned) if he won't "defy" Blue Buzzard any more. . . .

Monday—Eight thousand automobile workers strike in Cleveland. . . . Two thousand filling station men out there for a week. . . . 3,000 body workers strike in St. Louis. . . . Hotel men plan raise in rates for fall. . . . Head of bakers' organization announces coming rise in price of bread. . . . Negro worker shot to death in crowded court room in Crocket, Tex. . . . Universe grows to

New Masses

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new astronomical figures on basis of Mount Wilson Observatory report. . . . So does number of Dillinger's escapes. . . . Mother who let baby dig in Central Park can't pay $2 fine, spends four hours in jail. . . . Senate Committee approves bill permitting mailing of birth control literature. . . . Secretary Hull predicts lower tariff and intensified drive for foreign trade. . . . Maged is brought to court, treated to lecture by judge, who says he never meant to keep him in jail, and turned loose. Photographed putting Blue Eagle up in window.

Tuesday — Chief agitators for silver legislation shown to be heavy buyers of the metal. . . . Roosevelt, scolding 'lazy" people for not planning ahead, calls C.C.C. "one of my pet children." . . . Tourist tide sets in toward United States on basis of inflated dollar.

All Out of Step But Trotsky

THE French bourgeois politicians have just discovered in the Barbizon forest a big "red" wolf. According to reports, the monster spits fire, snorts revolution, and threatens the suburbs of Paris with a "Fourth International." This horrendous picture of Leon Trotsky, conjured up by the corrupt French press, is calculated to divert the attention of the indignant masses from the Stavisky ignominies and to inspire a dread of revolution in the pigeon breasts of philistines who might otherwise manifest a mild opposition to Fascism. Of course, not all French politicians are knaves. Some are fools. These believe Trotsky to be a "dangerous Red." ("The Third International is bad enough, but a Fourth International would be really terrible!") They have not sense enough to hail an ally when they see one. The idiots should be made to understand that any effort on their part to deport Trotsky would be ludicrously ill-advised. Trotsky is their friend. Regardless of his revolutionary protestations, objectively he is a splitter, a counter-revolutionist, an enemy of the working class.

Even Trotsky's closest associates and warmest personal friends have gradually come to realize the truth of Stalin's characterization of Trotsky and his followers as the "advance troops of counter-revolution." One by one his lieutenants have abandoned him: Radek, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Sosnovsky, Preobrazhensky, and finally the finest and noblest of them all, Christian Rakovsky; one of the oldest and most revered members of the revolutionary movement, one of the founders of the Second and later the Third Internationals, the organizer of a number of socialist parties in the Balkans, an intimate friend and collaborator of Trotsky for over three decades, and during the last years one of the staunchest supporters and the most influential leader of Trotskyism in the U.S.S.R.; the same Rakovsky who, if we believe the Trotskyites, had been repeatedly executed, starved, assassinated, tortured by the cruel Stalinites.

In a recent communication to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, applying for readmittance to the Party, Rakovsky wrote in part:

> I hereby beg that it be considered that differences of opinion no longer separate me from the Party, that I fully and absolutely approve of the general line of the Party, also that I have broken irrevocably with counter-revolutionary Trotskyism. . . . The Party would not be able to carry out the enormous task of the radical reconstruction of the economy of the country without adopting an attitude of Bolshevist irreconcilability to all petty bourgeois deviations and fluctuations, resolutely suppressing them. It would not be able to carry out its tasks if at the same time the Central Committee did not insure the observance of that revolutionary, strict, 'almost military' observance (as Lenin said), which is demanded from each Bolshevik Communist in carrying out the decisions of the congress and other instances.
>
> Stalin personifies this Bolshevist ideological irreconcilability and organizational discipline and unity in word and deed. It was against these principles that the attacks of the opposition were actually directed when they attacked Stalin's personality. In my person, one of the last representatives of the opposition today declares that what we formerly considered deficiencies of Stalin's leadership are its merits.
>
> Together with the whole Party and the working class I repeat:
>
> *Only because of having a leader with the ideological irreconcilability, political astuteness and strong will such as Stalin was the Soviet country able to overcome the most difficult task of socialist reconstruction.*
>
> During the period of my remaining outside the Party, the Trotskyist faction to which I belonged has rolled ever further down the anti-Leninist path. From petty bourgeois deviation within the Communist Party, it fell along the slope of adaptability to opportunism, transformed itself into a variety of social democracy, and finally found itself practically in the camp of counter-revolution.
>
> The realization of this deplorable truth drove me with ever greater force to seek an issue from this situation. The only possible issue was a precise and open acknowledgement of my errors.
>
> I call upon all my former partisans who continue to adhere to Trotzkyist opinions to follow my example. A careful example of the radical change which has taken place in the internal and external situation is sufficient to convince every person who considers himself a bolshevik of the necessity of such a step. To recognize this honestly is not shameful, but the strict duty of every bolshevist.
>
> *Many know that an old, personal friendship connects me with Trotsky. Now my path and Trotsky's have abruptly diverged. At the present moment, when the polarization of all social classes and forces is occurring, when the world is divided ever more clearly into two opposite camps, and the Communist International and the Party of the Communists, the Bolsheviks of the U.S.S.R. are in the center of the revolutionary camp, all attempts to maintain an intermediate position are vain.*

Question: Will the Trotskyites again resort to the weary canard about "forced recantation?" Bukharin was forced to recant. Rykov was forced. Tomsky was forced. Radek was forced. Zinoviev was forced. Kamenev was forced. Sosnovsky was forced. Preobrazhensky was forced. And now Rakovsky also forced? Fighters, tried and steeled in revolutionary battles, men whom neither prisons, nor exile, nor hard labor in Siberia, nor persecution by the Czars could force to yield one iota of their Bolshevik principles—according to the Trotskyites such heroic men suddenly turned hypocrites and cowards under the "whip" of Stalin. Only Trotsky is principled. Only Trotsky is honest. This is not megalomania; not madness; this is counter revolution.

SMILIN' THROUGH

Richard Correll

SMILIN' THROUGH

Richard Correll

Education Under the Crisis

2. The Colleges

OAKLEY JOHNSON

"HAVE you a job for a P.B.K.?" plaintively asks The American Scholar, official organ of the Phi Beta Kappa fraternity (October, 1933), and publishes its office address and telephone number in the hope of hearing about one. The American Association of University Professors, in the report of Committee Z (Bulletin, February, 1933), expresses concern over the condition of the "substantial proportion" of unemployed among the 2,000 Ph.D.'s who had graduated the preceding year. The Joint Committee on Emergency Aid to Education recommends a Federal grant of $30,000,000 to "assist students to attend institutions of higher education." Some 5,680 dismissals of college teachers have taken place in the last two years (The School Review, March, 1934) and salary cuts to college teachers and reductions in college appropriations have been practically universal.

Thousands of students who "normally" work their way through college cannot do so now; many who formerly paid tuition have nothing to pay with. The "new leisure" has, to be sure, turned thousands toward college who until recently would have been employed, and the total college enrollment appears to have actually increased during the depression. But for those who can go to college, and who manage to graduate, *there are no jobs.*

Teachers' examinations were not given in New York this past fall because already there were over a thousand teachers available for appointment to high school positions alone, and over five thousand for elementary school positions: this was "an effort to stem the tide of excess teachers being added to the eligible lists of the Board of Education." In February, 1933, 1,750 teacher training college students were transferred to the academic courses of the three city colleges — Hunter College, Brooklyn City College, and the College of the City of New York—for the same reason. An effort was made in May to close the summer schools, thwarted only by the mass protests of the students themselves who, led by the National Student League, presented their demands directly at the City Hall.

Columbia University Law School raised its fees more than 25 percent and a number of other colleges did likewise. Even the "free" City College of New York imposed new or increased fees — library and laboratory fees, fees for technical courses, special fees for not fully qualified students who enrolled for certain courses, charges for text books to juniors and seniors, additional fees for each credit point in excess of 128, and so on.

The depression bears down with special force upon students who have to earn their way. Student workers at Columbia University were given a forty percent wage cut. At Hunter, student earnings had dropped fifty percent up to last June, and the number of Hunter students who were employed outside the college dropped from 1,644 in 1929 to 314 in 1933. Barnard College had a "very perplexing" problem on its hands last October, according to Dean Virginia C. Gildersleeve's annual report, since three times as many as usual applied for aid from the college funds, and six times as much money as in a normal year was borrowed from the Alumnae Student Loan Committee.

When college students graduate they become either professional or other "white collar" workers; but unemployment is widespread among professionals and among all types of white collar workers. It was reported last May that 3,324 professionals were receiving relief work in New York from the Gibson Committee, 610 engineers, 954 teachers, 17 physicians, 32 lawyers, and 307 accountants. Over thirty percent of the chemists are unemployed and over fifty percent of the engineers. Probably one-fourth of the dentists are dependent in part on private or public relief. The Dean of the Columbia University School of Library Service said a year ago there were too many librarians; there were then, also, as many students in journalism schools as there were positions in existence and the positions were all filled. What has happened to the additional thousands of graduates —journalists, librarians, and others — since then? Where can college trained workers get jobs?[1]

The colleges are running on less money, of course. The School Review, March, 1934, reports a decrease of $56,860,000 in college budgets for educational and general purposes, and says "expenditures for capital outlays have practically ceased." Publicly controlled colleges (Technology Review, March, 1934) have had their incomes reduced 40 percent (though government war expenditures have increased 82 percent). Even the privately endowed colleges, their incomes reduced 31 percent, are fearful of deficits: Princeton University, according to the President, Harold Willis Dodds, was obliged to cut sharply its expenditure in order to balance its budget; President Dodds complained that funds were not available to meet the many student requests for scholarships and loans. Walter Lippmann recently called for more money for women's colleges on the ground that they are neglected by those who give endowments. The Rockefeller General Education Board reduced its appropriations from $10,816,146 in 1932 to $2,423,303 in 1933. The income of the twenty-one ranking public libraries of the United States, important educational and cultural factors, was reduced from $11,600,000 two years ago to $8,800,000 this year, although the book circulation jumped from 33,400,000 to 42,900,000.

With the general college situation what it is, we can expect that the 68 jim-crowed Negro colleges are still worse off.[2] Contemptuously treated by the governmental authorities of the South, dependent largely on religious-minded and reactionary philanthropists, these colleges have always been handicapped, depression or no. The total enrollment in 1932-3 was 20,296, students. But no Negro college, owing to opposition on the part of the Southern white colleges, has a Phi Beta Kappa Chapter, though 41 of the 68 colleges are recognized as "institutions of higher education." Langston Hughes, surveying the Negro college campuses (Journal and Guide, June 25, 1932), declared that conditions are growing worse not only for Negro workers, but for Negro students, and severely condemned the reactionary policies of the Negro colleges. The viciousness of this controlled education is seen in the statement of Howard K. Beale, writing in the Journal of Negro Education, January, 1934: "a recent questionnaire given by a Negro professor to Negro teachers revealed that more than half of these teachers believed in an inherent inferiority of the race."

(In passing, we may note that Federal appropriations for the education of American Indians, under the direct supervision of the Department of the Interior, have been cut. In Michigan, the Federal Mt. Pleasant School for Indians has been closed.)

For scientific research the colleges are now ill prepared. The depression has "nibbled away at the budgets of research," says the Technology Review, March, 1934, until in some institutions it has swallowed the total. The tabulated expenditures of colleges and universities prepared more than a year ago by Henry G. Badger (The Economic Outlook in Higher Education for 1932-3, U.S. Depart-

[1] This situation is not confined to the United States. "Can We Find Jobs?" asks a writer in The Student Vanguard, Nov. 1932, who surveys the condition of British professional workers, and finds widespread unemployment and no new openings for students to look forward to.

[2] Even in the North three states have separate Negro teachers' colleges—New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Ohio,—says Howard K. Beale (Journal of Negro Education, January, 1934). Concerning "white" colleges which admit Negroes, he said: "Oberlin College, once famous for its traditional friendship for Negroes, excludes its Negro alumni, some of them university professors, from its alumni club in the national capital."

ment of the Interior) reveal noticeably empty columns under the heading, "organized research." Of a list of about seventy privately controlled colleges, only five had sums provided for research; of a similar list of publicly controlled colleges, fully twenty-five had completely discontinued provision for research; of a similar list of teachers' colleges, only four had sums provided for research.

The crisis has reached college teachers, too: "Unemployment among university and college teachers has been slow in developing during the depression," remarks the Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors (May, 1933), "but is now becoming rapidly worse and during the coming year it will be of great seriousness." This carefully phrased prophecy has proved correct. In addition to the 5,680 dismissed instructors already referred to, current reports announce new cuts in the staffs of several colleges; Yale College, for instance, has "released" some twenty instructors and paid assistants this present semester, in addition to the score dismissed last year. It is notorious that the dismissals and salary cuts are directed almost entirely at the untitled faculty members, at the instructors, tutors, fellows, and graduate student assistants. In addition — at Columbia University, for example—graduate assistants are kept on for one or more semesters, working steadily under the heads of their departments *for nothing,* in hope of promised jobs.

There are 971,584 students in the 1,078 colleges — including the 832 privately controlled colleges—of the United States. Of these colleges 801 grant degrees: they include 136 schools of law, 74 schools of medicine, 67 schools of pharmacy, 40 schools of dentistry. In addition to the 1,078 colleges there are several thousand normal schools, art schools, business "colleges" (though 1,500 of them have closed on account of the depression). In all of them students are working like mad, many enduring privations and trying to earn their way, preparing themselves to be extremely useful in careers that haven't a ghost of a chance—in a capitalist regime under crisis.

To be sure, we have—or had—the C.W.A. We have "made work" for some white collar workers part of the time in "research" projects that insult the starving poor with house-to-house invitations to attend night school in their leisure time.

College Deans and Presidents Point the Way Out—So, with this vista for college graduates—and their teachers in the vast majority of the colleges suffering severe salary cuts—advice from the top comes thick and fast. Avoid "withering idleness," the students are told. "Initiative is at a greater premium than ever in the job-hunting world nowadays," says the New York Times, March 4, 1934. Graduates should hunt around for Boy Scout groups to direct, organize discussion groups to lead discussions in, persuade people to go on nature hikes so as to have something to be in charge of. The Times, a year ago, named five college graduates who asked for jobs without pay, so that they could at least start their "delayed careers." More to the point was the scheme of the Collegiate Secretarial Institute of New York, which formed a Parents' Association to function as an employment agency: the members of the association "are for the most part fathers of the students and heads of some of the leading business firms," stated the New York American (July 23, 1933), and they "will co-operate in providing temporary and permanent jobs for the students." . . . Franklin Delano Roosevelt, addressing the Future Farmers of America from the south portico of the White House last June, urged farm youth to study forestry, assuring them that though they would never become millionaires, they would "be doing something more important than becoming millionaires." Doctor Alvin Johnson of the New School for Social Research tells jobless college graduates to go back to the land.

Ohio State University, having just gotten through expelling seven students for opposition to compulsory R.O.T.C., is virtuously calling a Citizens' Conference on the Crisis in Education. New York University held a conference last summer in order to "point the way to economies that will not impair the structure of the educational system,"—a good prelude to further retrenchment.

President Frederick B. Robinson of the City College of New York told 200 prospective medical students: "In spite of increasingly prohibitive scholastic standards, the volume and pressure of students come up and swamp the medical schools." Since the medical schools could not eliminate enough applicants on the basis of marks, they were, the president said, weeding out those who lacked a "gracious personality" (Time, January 22, 1934). The Buckness Journal of Education, January, 1932, editorially observes that "each young person applying for a position in the secondary schools of the state this spring will be one of a line of seven or eight who will have graduated and been properly certificated," and declares, therefore, "a fifth year of training for high school teachers is desirable."

"Optimism Urged on School Affairs" is the headline of a typical Eunice Barnard story in the New York Times of July 4, 1933, describing the annual convention of the National Education Association. Commissioner of Education Zook took time off to celebrate Independence Day by soft-pedaling the actual retrogression in education: "We have come through with far less injury than we anticipated," he said. A part of this optimism reflects itself in the demagogy now fashionable about utilizing the "new leisure." Grover Whalen, when he was N.R.A. chairman, had a regular Committee on Leisure Time, of which Raymond B. Fosdick was chairman. Alfred E. Smith, backed by Edward P. Mulrooney, wanted to "publicize" leisure,—"inform the public of the recreational and educational facilities available to them." Adult educational classes were held to be "vital for leisure" and to be necessary for a "balanced life" by a symposium under the auspices of the American Women's Association last fall. President Nicholas Murray Butler and Matthew Woll held forth at length on the "leisure problem" at Grover Whalen's series of hearings on the subject at the New York City Bar Association Building on November 17, 1933. "Unwise" use of leisure was frowned upon and "service stations" were advocated as a means of seeing that leisure was properly used.—All of this because of upper-class suspicion of proletarian leisure! No correct distinction made between the enforced leisure of unemployment and the genuine leisure which follows a shortened work-day! Is this because of fear that the unemployed intelligentsia will organize during their leisure time?—will attend Communist meetings and demonstrations? This must be the "bright perilous face of leisure" which, judging from her article in the Journal of Adult Education, so frightens Dorothy Canfield Fisher.

The breakdown of the schools and colleges, on the one hand, and the N.R.A. fear of "leisure" on the other, is responsible for the great increase in adult educational projects since the crisis began. The free classes in vocational training in New York City, organized in 1931 for the unemployed, with unemployed teachers who received $15 a week from relief funds, grew at one time to over 18,000 students. In Lansing, Michigan, a "People's University" was established by the Young Men's Christian Association after the city evening schools shut down. Seventy-one teachers taught 2,615 students without pay, and the impartial character of the instruction may be judged from the fact that the Political Science class met in the directors' room of the American State Bank and was taught by "Businessman" John F. Brisbin, and the class in Current Industrial Problems met in the Olds Motor Administration Building and was taught by Superintendent F. W. Openlander of the Reo Motor Car Company (Time, January 29, 1934). Over a thousand adult educational enterprises, as stated in a recent report of the American Association for Adult Education, are in operation throughout the country. And their object? To make faster workers of some of the unemployed, perhaps, who can then take jobs away from some who are employed now; to give, in some instances, "made" jobs to unemployed teachers; or, as Dr. William John Cooper, former U.S. Commissioner of Education, advised in 1931, the second year of the crisis, to teach people to have hobbies; but, above all, to keep the unemployed intellectuals and would-be intellectuals so occupied in harmless activities that they will have no time to ponder on the class causes of their "plight."

BE CRITICAL
BE SOCIAL-MINDED
HAVE INTEGRITY AND CHARACTER
—Free advice to students from well-off leaders.

Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt advised the 1933 graduating class of the Washington Col-

lege of Law to have a "social-minded code of ethics." President F. B. Robinson told the freshman class at C.C.N.Y. last September to develop a critical attitude: "learn to use your mind so as to subject to critical examination all that is currently accepted," said Dr. Robinson, who, only a few months before, had expelled 31 first-class students who had subjected his militaristic ideas to very critical examination. Dr. Ralph Cooper Hutchinson, president of Washington and Jefferson College, declared in a public address recently that "education in high schools, colleges and universities has become the great American racket." What is wrong, then? President Hutchinson explained: "The first change which may be anticipated will be a student emphasis on personal integrity and character," he said, blaming defalcations, concealment of corporation assets or liabilities, watering of stock, evasion of income taxes, bribery, and municipal graft upon college graduates (New York Times, November 13, 1933).

In the meantime, demagogic and radical advice is given to students, too. Students have been too docile, Commissioner George F. Zook told a student convention at Washington. The American University in Washington has announced a "School of Public Affairs" for a "limited number" of the "best graduate and undergraduate students in the field of the social sciences," who will have the privilege of round-table discussions with government officials. Harvard had already prepared, early last summer, to offer courses in government planning. The Rev. Dr. John Howard Melish told the graduates of the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn that they should undertake the "task of creating a new world." Dr. Mary E. Woolley of Mt. Holyoke College pleaded with her 1933 graduates to work for a "more rational world order."

But students see, on the one hand, such university rulers as Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia University, who opposes the Child Labor Amendment (inadequate as it is) and invites fascist lecturers to the campus, and Dr. Robinson of C.C.N.Y., who expels anti-R.O.T.C. students and praises the "wholesome spirit of good-fellowship" at a Rotary Club meeting, and President George W. Rightmire of Ohio State University, who investigates the *sincerity* of students who don't want to take military training and expels those he doesn't like; and they remember President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard who whitewashed the Sacco-Vanzetti frame-up and removed the last obstacle to their judicial murder. And, on the other hand, they find that sincere student interest in social and political affairs is not welcomed. When two Yale students took part in picketing a New Haven foundry and were fined heavily by the judge, Dean Clarence Whittlesey Mendell said, "Yale College does not approve of the participation of undergraduates in affairs outside the college about which they are not informed." (Needless to say, the question of being "informed" on public controversy could very quickly be answered by a genuinely fair investigation.)

Students Fight for Their Rights—and for Their Teachers—In the mess of official talk about students taking part in public affairs and official punishing of those who do, one shining fact shows itself: the students are not passive. There is a growing disposition to fight against the imposition of fees, the closing down of summer and continuation schools, the militarization program, the censorship and arrogance of college administration leaders.

That the method of struggle is effective is shown by the National Student League victory last spring in the fight to force the reopening of the summer session in New York City Colleges, which had been officially discontinued. The N.S.L. has tempered the fee-imposing enthusiasm of certain boards of education who apparently had no faith in free colleges, and has drawn sharp attention to other aspects of retrenchment policies in the colleges, to the discrimination against Negro colleges and against individual Negro students in Northern colleges, and to the increasing expenditures for Reserve Officers Training Corps along with militarization and growing fascization of the campuses. The recent series of New York American attacks on the N.S.L. by Ralph M. Easley is a tribute to its strength.

The students have fought on behalf of victimized teachers, too: witness the Donald Henderson case at Columbia and the Leo Gallagher case in Southern California. . . . What —in this juncture—have college teachers done for the colleges and for themselves?

The gigantic attack on the colleges, made under cover of the "depression," is in fact an attack upon intellectuals as a class,—an attack upon middle class professional and white collar workers. It is an attempt not only to reduce the standard of living of teacher-intellectuals, but to reduce the *over-production* of intellectuals by striking at higher education. Obviously the danger to education itself and to the educated can be abolished only by abolishing capitalism. But in the meantime students and teachers and professional workers *must* resist the attack. Particularly must college teachers, last to wake up and last to act, organize for struggle.

Catholic Fascism in Austria

JAN TIMESCU

VIENNA.

SIX WEEKS have elapsed since its bloody victory, and Austrian Fascism has made no progress at all with its "work of reconstruction." "Exploiting the victory over Marxism," is causing the Fascist rulers many sleepless nights, according to the confession of a Jesuit priest, Bichlmaier, an authoritative spokesman for the regime.

The way in which clerico-Fascism started work was far from original. Although it continues to protest that it is blazing a trail of its own, it is copying the terrorist measures employed by Italian and Nazi Fascism against the working class down to the last detail. The programmatic utterances of the Catholic Fascist government: "We are Christians and are not motivated by class hatred even against the revolutionary classes hostile to us" were more than useless. Catholic Austrian Fascism has on its conscience more proletarian victims, in proportion to the population, than even Hitler Fascism. More than 1000 dead, several thousand wounded and overcrowded prisons are part of the balance sheet of Fascist victory. Thousands of revolutionary workers have been discharged in the state and municipal enterprises. "Unreliable families" are being evicted from the Vienna municipal apartments, in accordance with an announcement of the Catholic Commissioner Schmitz. All the class organizations of the Austrian workers have been dissolved or "coordinated." Prominent Catholic or reactionary "labor leaders" have been placed at the head of the numerous proletarian mass organizations as "government commissioners." The workers' economic organizations, such as the Labor Bank, the consumers' cooperatives and the cooperative wholesale societies, have either been closed or robbed of their right to administer themselves. The Socialist trade unions have been destroyed at a single blow, their place being taken by the Fascist "unitary trade union," which is to function "in a Christian, patriotic and social spirit," according to the plan of the Clerical government. To give this unctuous government program a more concrete content the Clerical dictatorship appointed the entire trade union executive, consisting of the leaders of the Christian and "Yellow" unions, together with some Socialist leaders.

The theory of Austrian Fascism; the development of "Catholic Solidarism" as expounded by the Papal encyclical, as we see, is sharply contradicted by its everyday practice. A few details of the anti-labor policy of "reconstruction" Clerico-Fascism. Immediately after the "victory over Marxism" a government emergency decree ordered a longer working day

for bank employees. The Catholic hirelings of domestic and foreign finance capital suddenly abjured their "solidarity" with those exploited by bankers! Another stroke of the governmental pen abolished the rights of factory councils; these rights had been annulled some time ago in governmental enterprises. One of the first governmental measures of Catholic Fascism was the "return" of healthy, municipal undertakings to private enterprise. Profitable municipal enterprises, such as the "Oesterreichische Heilmittelstelle," or the "Gesiba," a non-profit building and settlement company, were turned over to private business. With the introduction of compulsory arbitration the workers have been deprived of the right to strike. This is one of the Fascist government's decrees which fulfilled an old desire of the Austrian employers.

It will surprise no one to learn that Dollfuss and his Heimwehr ministers also promise the starving unemployed a large scale "work creation program" and have already projected several highways of strategic importance following the Hitler model. Their bold announcement in their propaganda that "Austrian business is recovering" has also been copied from Mussolini and Hitler. None the less, it is true that the number of unemployed receiving relief is steadily decreasing, partly because of cuts in the relief rolls, and partly through the drafting of young, reliable unemployed into various military organizations of Austrian Fascism. When we consider that some 80,000 mercenaries are now enrolled in the Heimwehr formations according to official figures, these Austrian Storm Troopers represent a respectable proportion of the total of some 500,000 unemployed.

But returning to our point of departure, what is the specific nature of Austrian Clerico-Fascism? The hypocrisy with which it mouths "love and friendliness towards the workers" is not specifically typical. The Italian Fascists —and Hitler's Nazis even more so—were able to mask their true class character.

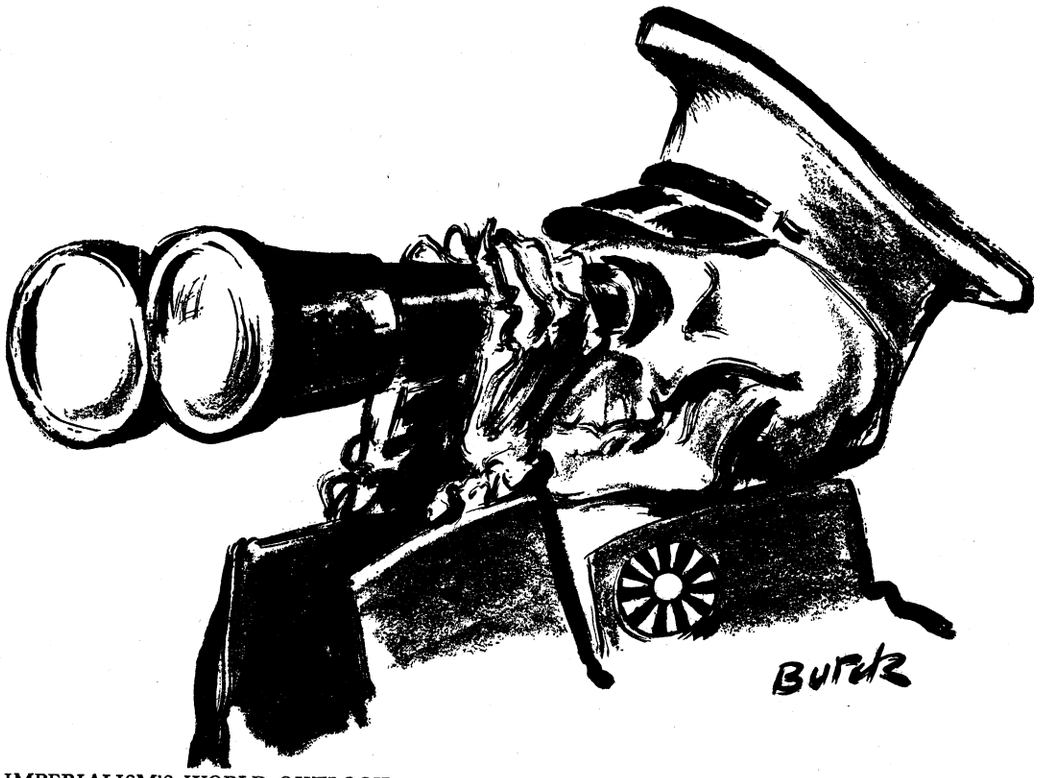
The specific features of Austrian Fascism are determined by the inner structure of its organization and Austria's key position in Europe today. In Germany Hitler Fascism was able to create a mass basis for itself, but in Austria Heimwehr Fascism has been unable to do so up to the present day. That is why Austrian finance capitalism was compelled to call upon the services of the Catholic Church, in addition to the armed Heimwehr mercenaries. Close collaboration developed between the Heimwehr soldateska, led by a clique of monarchist officers, and the Catholic clergy, with its extensive church estates and its far-flung ecclesiastical machinery. These two supporting pillars are most characteristic of Austrian Clerico-Fascism. Only on this basis do the sudden shifts in governmental policy become understandable. Artillery against proletarian homes, defenseless proletarian women and children, at the orders of a bloodthirsty officers' camarilla, and immediately after the bombardment passionate wooing of the working class—was the official government program. This peculiar parallelism can also be observed in the feverish arming of the Heimwehr troops simultaneously with the Catholic offensive in the "social field." This also elucidates the scarcely concealed race between the two allies; the soldatska and the clergy. Major Fey, the Vice-Chancellor, in his capacity as commander of the Heimwehr, initiated a provocative relief campaign for the relatives of the hundred policemen and Heimwehr soldiers who fell in the civil war, which rapidly totalled 1,000,000 schillings with big contributions from banks and industrialists. Shortly thereafter the Catholic clergy also commenced its "solidarity campaign." With the tactfulness of the tricky class enemy, the Catholic Church, under the patronage of Cardinal Innitzer and Frau Dollfuss, took over the organization of a begging campaign for the wives and children of the proletarian victims of the fighting. Although this "solidarity campaign" attains no such million total, reaching less than 30 percent of the Fey Fund for the ten thousand it proposes to aid, the Fascist regime and the Catholic Church attain their ends. Without sacrificing any of its huge church estates, the Catholic clergy administers all this "work of love" at the State's request and at State expense, at the same time aiming to lay a mass base for the Church.

True enough, the 20,000 "St. Joseph" soup kitchen portions daily are not enough for more than a fraction of those starving. Nor is the Innitzer Fund any serious effort to put an end to the tremendous wave of begging throughout Vienna and the industrial towns. But what is of much greater value to the clergy from the standpoint of organization is that by means of this Catholic relief campaign the clergy plays the role of the sole authorized factor in a new social policy. Catholic parishes are governmental organs; starving families receive whatever little relief there is only upon their recommendation. "Soul-saving" stations have been established in the municipal apartments, which cleverly approach the proletarian families along the lines of the "Catholic Action" program, trying to convert the vacillating impoverished masses with their breadlines and Catholic advisory bureaus.

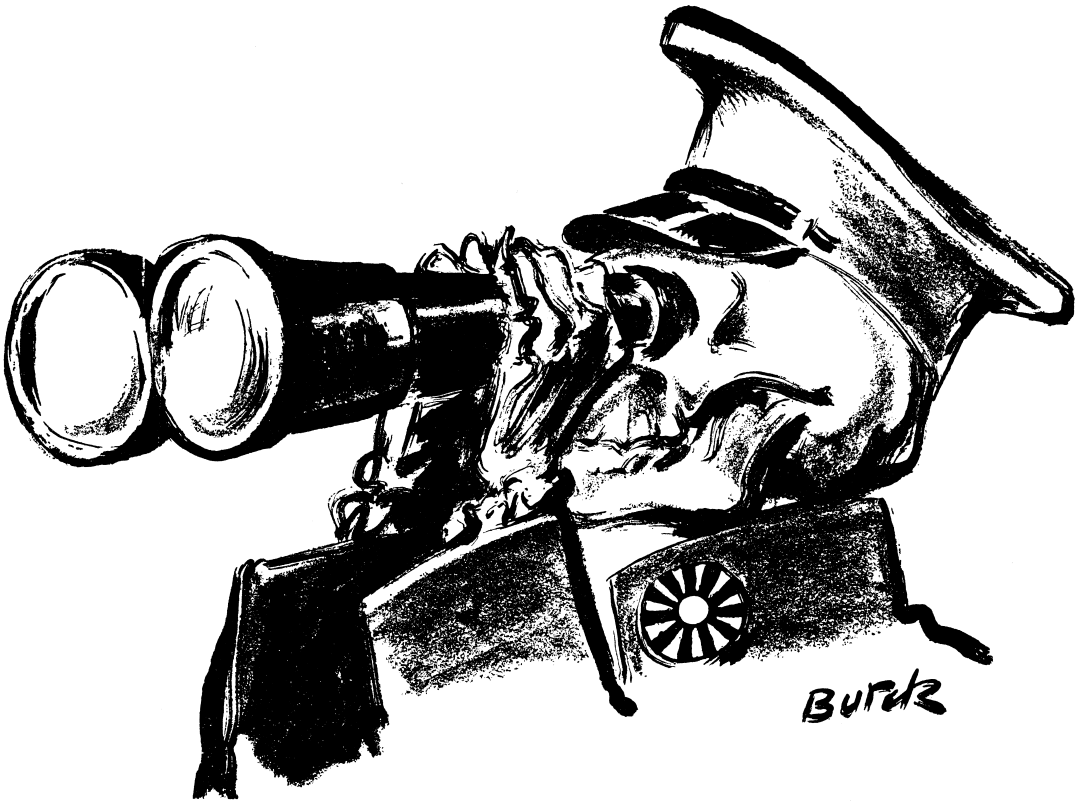
The Catholic Church also has seized almost dictatorial privileges in the field of education in the Fascist State. The clericalization of the schools assures the clergy unlimited opportunities for influencing Austria's younger generation. It also supervises all societies and the newspapers, as well as the censorship of art and literature. It is not astonishing that with these new positions of power and its nationwide web of connections the Catholic clergy has become the driving force in Austria.

Austria's key position in the European chessboard today is another factor which made possible the evolution of a specifically Austrian form of Fascism. Hemmed in between two Fascist great powers and forming a dam blocking Hitler-Germany's imperialist aims towards the East, the Austrian bourgeoisie can have a Fascist state of its own only through Italy's consent. The fact that Austria did not effect "Anschlus" with Hitler-Germany, but after perilous vacillations formed a Fascist regime of its own is largely due to its extremely important strategic location in Central Europe. Part of Italian Fascism's system of alliances and tied to the leading-strings of Vatican diplomacy, the new Austrian vassal state serves the ends of Italy's imperialism as well as the interests of the Catholic World Church.

The proletariat of Austria will see that the life of this artificially created Fascist buffer state should not be unduly prolonged.

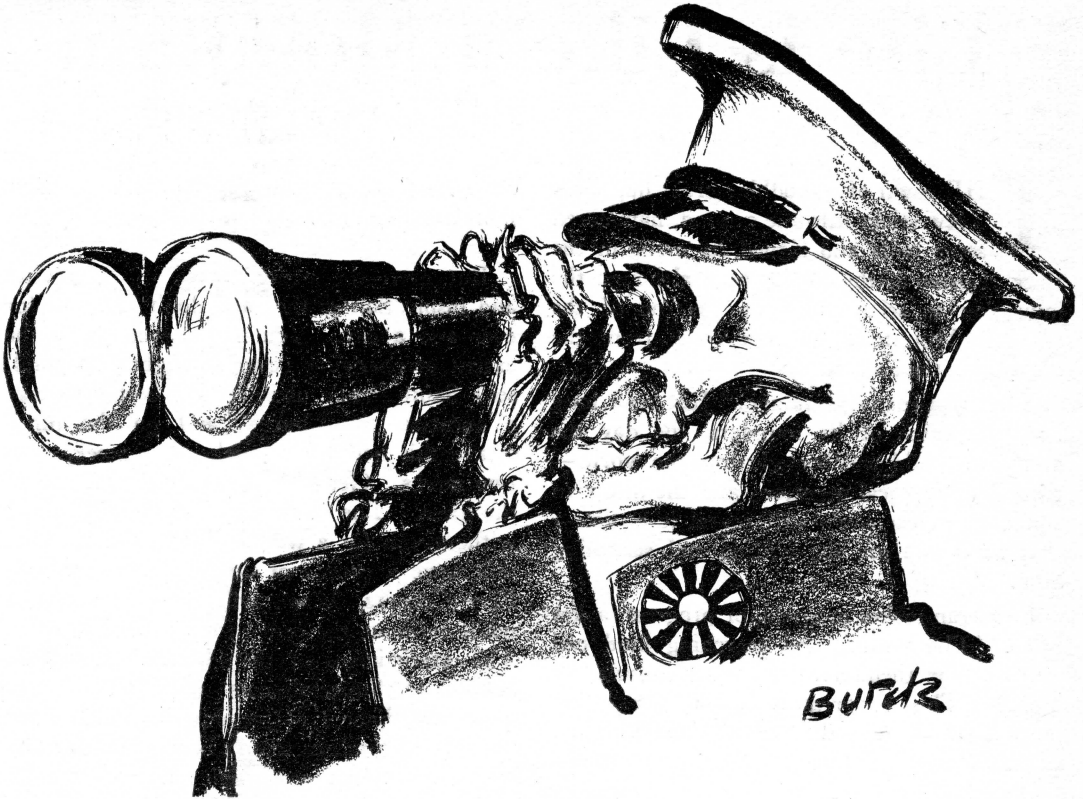


IMPERIALISM'S WORLD OUTLOOK *Jacob Burck*



IMPERIALISM'S WORLD OUTLOOK

Jacob Burck



IMPERIALISM'S WORLD OUTLOOK

Jacob Burck

Life is Like a Mountain RR Yoohoo!

EMJO BASSHE

THE town of Woodbine crept up, stuck a few sticks into the ground, hammered some nails and signed its name in the thick register at the county seat, although the invitation to settle itself on the top of the Catskill Mountains did not come from the mountains themselves.

That was many years ago. Just how long ago, the name of its founders, the day the first white child was brought into the world—these are historical questions and the historian and Sage of the town will reveal it to you—that is, if you are the willing and searching kind.

But Man makes progress, or progress makes Man. (The willing and searching kind can find out for themselves if they'll consult the Sage.) This progress caused a city called New York to blossom, multiply and puff up. It swallowed millions as they came to its shores, walked up to its doors or rolled in in trains. It had plenty of room. It was growing. Cellars and skyscrapers. Room for everybody.

Some poets sang of New York. They called it all kinds of beautiful names. Other poets called it hell. They said the great city froze them in the winter and burned them in the summer. There's no satisfying poets. But the priests, who are experts on hell, and great realists when it comes to describing their own, very own, real estate development, are so blinded by their dogmas that they never see how close to hell they are when they preach hell in New York.

But to quarrel with priests is like trying to convince a hungry rattler that he's man's best friend. It isn't done in good society.

And so we'll take the latter-day poets for granted and admit that in the summer time New York is hell. If any qualifications are necessary let's clinch the bargain and say—it's hell in the cellars of New York, at the button machine, fourth floor rear walk up cold water flat, scrubbing floors, washing Mrs. Plunderbilt's pure Belgian unmentionables.

The rich, who are excellent teachers in many ways, have long ago learned (sheer inspiration) that both Winter and Summer are splendid for vacations. They have proven it beyond a shadow of doubt. No Marxian critic will dare deny them *that!* If he does, that means he's never heard of Nice, Pasadena, the Alps, Bermuda, Bournemouth, Palm Beach, Hot Springs, Riviera, round-the-world trips, the Crimea and Caucasian Mountains (alas! the Reds have absconded with the last two) and many others. These places are monuments to the originality of the rich, their wisdom and, above all, their superb knowledge of climatic conditions the world over.

Which is as it should be. Give the devil his due and he won't ask for rebate. The rich have more time than the poor and so have more time (and money) to spend.

But even the poor, devoid of originality and inspiration as they are, don't like hell for ever and a day. You might even go to the extent of changing (ever so slightly as you'll see) Saint Paul's ukase: "It's better to take a vacation than burn," and go the limit. Leave this hell for a weekend, a week, even two weeks. Get some air, see the sky, roll in the grass. The sweatshop can struggle along without you for a week. Three Forks, Ark., will have a couple of dozen shirtwaists less. Five Corners, Miss., will have to starve a while without the order for artificial flowers. The statisticians at the Harvard Graduate School of Supersalesmen will have ninety gross less diapers to jot down. What's the hurry? Capitalism wasn't born yesterday and won't die tomorrow at high noon.

Our Woodbine takes on life. It dumps utilitarian architecture wherever legal seals, deeds and fences will permit it. It snoops around and watches city dumps for discarded beds. Packing cases become dining tables, crates assume the functional importance of closets, dressers and flower stands.

Presto! Hail! Huzzah! "Hotel Gloria," "Mountain Country Club," "Grande Tavern," "Imperial Inn" open their doors, bid you welcome, chant hospitality until—

You come.

And you will. If the sweatshop is your Union League Club, if the pickle works your Park Avenue penthouse, if a rag pickers' subcellar is your Waldorf-Astoria.

"What is profit?" asks Pilate Junior.

"It's petty larceny when its small profit and grand larceny when it's big," say you.

"Go on!" says Pilate Junior.

Can a man be honest though he feed at the trough of profit? What would happen to the owner of "Hotel Amazing" if he emblazoned a sign over his doors reading: "Expensive but dirty." "Firetrap, but you pay for it." "This magnificent hotel may crumble to pieces any minute, but you pay in advance—why worry?" His bank balance would shrink and he'd have to go to work. And work is no part of his system.

Everything is ideal here. Sport, food, water—but you tenement rats won't know the difference anyway!

Wornout city waiters come here "for the season" to become your retainers. Students will make up your bed for whatever tips you'll let fall in their way. The gnarled hands of an old woman will be your bus boy.

Yesteryear's season or tomorrow's season. The factories, shops, works, offices, tenements will let go their grasp in June, July, or August, long enough for their victims to taste hospitality at so much per bed, per meal, per towel, per blade of grass, per day, per week.

The long winter washes this Garden of Joy with avalanches of snow and purifies the air with strong winds. (Nature is not as dumb as you think it is!)

And then comes Spring.

And April.

May First.

And what's May First? It's the first day in May, the Sage will tell you. As the Sage knows almost nothing and *even that* he learned from his father, it is not at all surprising that he harkened to the Constitution and handed out a permit for a meeting to be held on the Square. (The Sage, I'll have you know, is an official here.)

But—

Having heard nothing, seen nothing, read nothing, since Lincoln split the last log, the Sage was "flumdounded" as he said himself when he heard what the permit was issued for.

"Ain't heard of sech a thing in—"

Reds is okay in the big city and in the papers, but here— Never did hear of sech a thing in all my borned days.

What he hadn't seen terrified the Sage; everything that was new to him seemed dangerous. He wanted to put on smoked glasses, stuff cotton in his ears.

And he advised others to do the same.

Is there any reason why the International Holiday of the workers should not be celebrated here? Can the high altitude quench the cry of the workers? In Mexico City, in the Andes, on the Alps the toilers renew their struggle against the masters—why not here?

A thousand workers gather in the little square. The town has come outdoors. Tongues are as loose as blades on a fan.

"The Reds is goin' to speak—they ain't got no right."

(The Constitution is something you hear 'bout in school if you aint missed class that mornin'.)

Oh yes, there they are. The American Legion. Ever hear of them? They won a war. Found out there is God. Discovered a country. (See the twenty-four sheets spread out on the billboards. They read: "For God and Country!" and have the seal of the Legion so that you'll know who pays for advertising God and Country.)

More than that. These A.L. boys know something you don't know. They can puncture a tire in less time than you can say Jefferson, you yellow belly. They can show their ideals by drilling a hole in a gasoline tank with

an expert touch, you lousy furriner. They can damage a motor with much more facility than you ever dreamed (and be patriotic), you rotten commoonist.

That is if the cars belong to you.

And they did.

The speaker of the day is on the platform. He speaks simply. But he says things that were never heard of in all the borned days of the Sage or the boys who will be boys, in peace as well as in war. Yet there is nothing about the orator that a one hundred percenter would consider "menacing." He is young. Shy. Almost apologetic. But his words cut deeply, the truth strikes hard, facts disrupt your thoughts.

But no one is insulted, no family broken up, not a single woman is nationalized.

But deaf years and blind eyes see and hear more. The sum total of a couple of thousand percentages decide their sacred rights have been trampled upon.

Clang! clang! The fire department. Whirrr! The fire truck makes a bee line for the speakers' platform. (These smoke-eaters will not be hissed at the next firemen's parade —no sir!) But wholesale murder is avoided by—the truck veers away from the platform by just a few inches.

A battery of percenters suddenly begin to fling eggs at the speaker. The egg patriots chant in chorus "Hang the Red! Lynch him! Kill him!" (The South may justly be proud of its educational system.)

The stand is turned over. Percenters, their wives and sweethearts carry away souvenirs from the wreckage.

(Have I forgotten to tell you that the speaker was not lynched? If he had been, you would have heard of it and so I thought I'd leave that out.)

Suddenly there is a cry: "He insulted the flag! Defiled the flag!" (A high-toned word this "defiled." Only the Sage knows what it means.) The Stars and Stripes! The Forty Eight States!

(Must I tell you that the orator of the day is *invited* to settle his bones in the cooler? That the boys have now become a mob howling itself blue and white and red in the face?)

Howl!

The air is rent to pieces with a great shout: "He blew his nose! He blew his nose!"

It's a wail now. It is gaining momentum. It sounds like ten thousand wolves at a drunken wake, it has the genteel musical quality of a siren on a battleship.

And while the despoiler of the home, the wrecker of the Constitution, the nose blower, the sum total of evil and all and all is being locked up in the cooler—

Our heroes are celebrating *their* day, *Der Tag* is theirs to remember, the beer is on the house, the kisses are being pro rated . . . The printer is setting:

> Our heroes have once again proven that they are heroes. We can safely trust ourselves to their wisdom and we can place our property, our children, nay, our very lives in their hands. They have proven their heroism before and they've proven it now. They have faced danger for our sakes and our hearts go out to them. Hail to our heroes!

for posterity.

Blow the trumpet! The Doge's feet are scraping the ground! The Grand Figure, the upholder of the law, the keeper of the scales of justice, the recipient of the fees as permitted by the statutes: The Justice of the Peace.

Justice, peace, law—it's all contained in the twenty odd pounds of legal haberdashery given to the great man upon his assumption of office. That he is not so unwise is proven by the pages still uncut.

His Honor smacks his lips. This is no traffic case—it's a national (count the stars), historical (Betsy Ross), profitable (the customers will hear about it, the justice is in the real estate business when he is off duty).

The charge, fully imbedded with mossy, archaic words, the nose blower is ushered in, palaver, bail is set and the merry music box of justice starts its syncopated tune.

Whoa! Not so fast! You can't go down hill at that pace! A defender appears. A lawyer. Not a *hired,* retaining fee kind of a counsellor, but a guy like you and me who knows that you don't have to go slumming to be in communion with hunger; a guy who's felt the sting of the whip on his back, who sold his finger tips for the end slice of a loaf of bread.

He knows the Doge and he knows the percenters. He puts the proverbial two and two together and four is not the answer. Up he draws a petition and insinuates that the dogs who bite you are not your peers (in spite of the Constitution) and asks that some other "peers" in some other place be found to sit in judgment of the flag and the nose.

But the judge at the other end of the county oils his thinking machine and gives this here petition the merry run around.

Is it not charged that the defendant violated subdivision K, paragraph 98, section 2760 of the penal law to wit: "He did blow his nose and wipe his face and clothing with an American flag?"

Heh?

It's sure that he's guilty, ain't it? Then ain't it just hunky dory to have him tried by the peers who know that he's guilty? It'll cost less. It'll make it homelike and a good time will be had by all.

A policeman is standing in front of the court house.

"What's going on there?" asks a stranger.

"Commoonist meeting," is the sour answer.

The major portion of the townspeople are gathered inside. The tables are turned now. They *have* to listen. Woe to them! They may learn something.

The Sage squirms and tickles his ears. "Nothin' like it . . ."

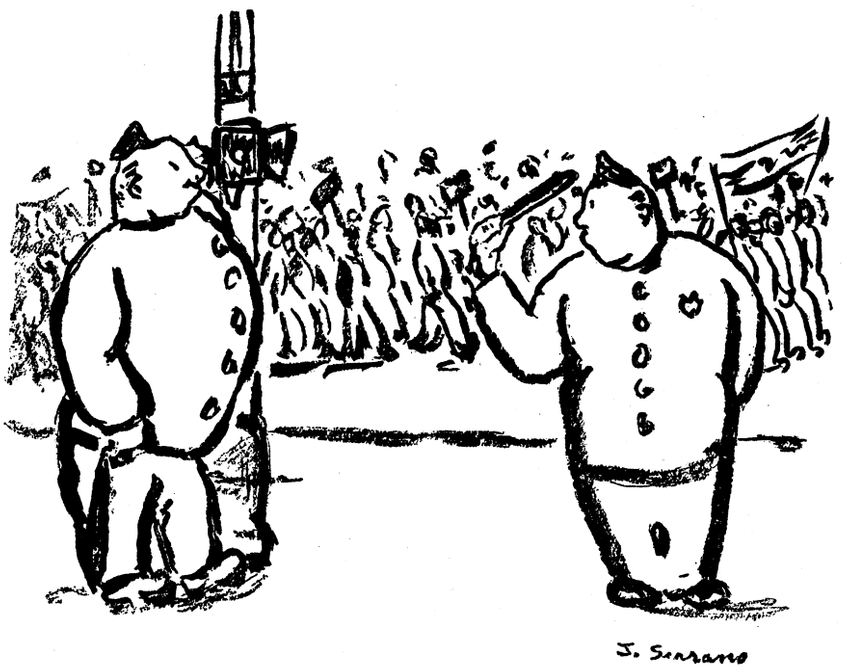
The prospective jurors are like new born babes. They have no prejudices, love their neighbors and think twice before striking a fly.

But the defence is skeptical. It questions, it worms out phobias, puts its finger on the sack of malice and clears the air of the prospective peers.

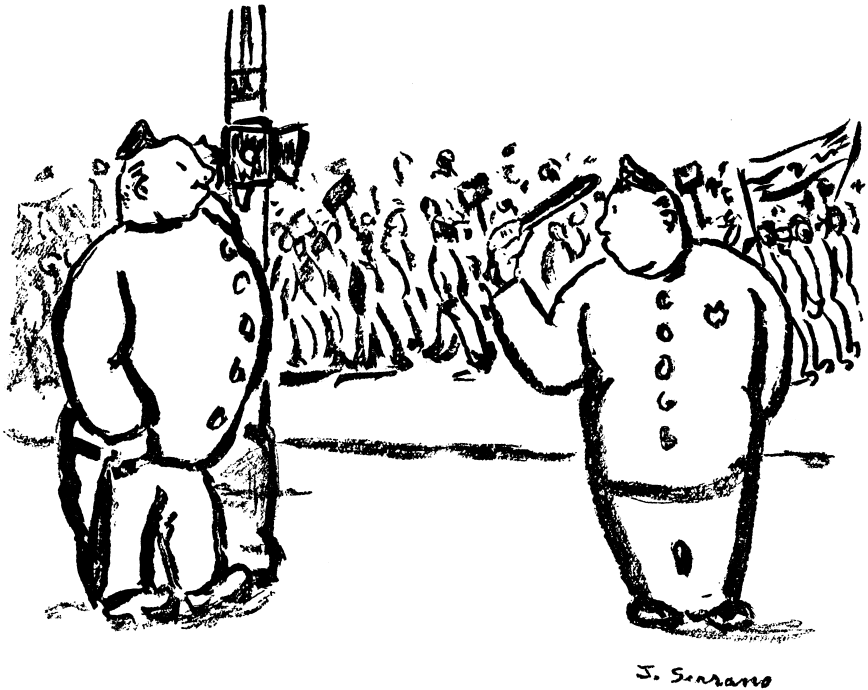
The prosecution has little to say. It knows who's white. But the trial must go on. Six good men and true are finally chosen. (Six is enough for a nose. Now if it were the whole head . . .)

Lights, heat, seats, a crowd that "ain't heard nothin' in a long time" and the trial rolls on. Nine days. *The* boys appear and swagger through their parts like hams given lines for the first time; they fabricate, chew their lies expertly and squirm like toads on a hot griddle.

The town keepers of peace and order shuffle



"THE CAPTAIN SAYS TO START THE RIOT NOW!" *J. Serrano*



"THE CAPTAIN SAYS TO START THE RIOT NOW!"

J. Serrano

in, hesitate only when they have to tell the truth, swear that they've sworn to uphold the flag—ring their bells of innocence so loudly that you are certain they rehearsed their parts up to the minute.

The defence batters them to pieces, crushes their wits to a pulp, lectures them on their duties (which is silly since our worthies know a trifle more English than a Siberian Eskimo).

In the meantime the Press puts aside the boiler plate propaganda from the Ribbed Underwear Association, Enamel Ware League and a treatise on how to raise less and less vegetables from the Department of Agriculture and lashes out in blind fury against the defendant and his defender.

The illiterati of the environs are not idle by any means. Their epistles to the editor are full of the charm, well trodden slime, plus plagiarisms from K.K.K. sonnets, I beg to remain, An Old Subscriber.

But do what you will you can't make a jury agree when it ain't in no fit frame for to convict, can you now? It disagrees.

The Sage ain't never heard the like of it sence his borned days or his father before him or I ain't what I am.

Got to have a new trial. Just got to. Wouldn't be "fine business," would it now?

The dates are shuffled and one is chosen.

Hold your horses.

But—

Who's goin' to pay for the first one, I ask you? Heh?

Them things cost money and money ain't to be had just by tryin' noses.

The town will pay.

No. The County.

You.

You.

We ain't got a nickel.

We ain't got a dime.

What—no money to try a Red what defiles the flag and blows his nose inter her?

That's it.

What's the people goin' to say?

Lots.

What's the defendant say?

"Contradictions of capitalism.—Rich capitalism is so poor it can't try a poor Red!" and he sniggers to boot.

What's the Sage say?

"Never in my borned days . . ."

What's the Cuckoo say: "Life is like a mountain railroad yoohoo!"

A Letter from America

To The New Masses:

THERE was an inevitable death in my family and I had to rush up into Canada. I had not been back for some years, although I saw Windsor, Ontario, in 1929. I had seen it in 1924. A parasite town of measly, cobbled streets clinging to the fattening flanks of Detroit: in the sweller eastern sections, old brick houses like old dowagers with the same established musty look, suggesting interior rot, that one sees in the old brownstones of Philadelphia and Boston. Most in evidence a shabby Canadian middle class yearning towards the turnstiles across the Detroit river, the houses facing that way, the downtown buildings keeling that way, the movement of the crowds almost always that way; and at evening the dismal backflow of returning clerks and sweatshop workers into this native home of theirs that is nothing but a foreign cantonment camp.

In 1929 the change is amazing. Windsor as Toronto beyond it had shot up vertically, concentrated and squeezed down on the tough haunches of an immigrant proletariat, and are popping up skyscraper after skyscraper. The downtown sections condensed, tense, the people in the streets looking bug-bitten, as though a plague of St. Vitus had crossed the Great Lakes and struck. Shambling, stolid, slow-going and slow-grinning Canada, the furry British pet, its scraggy tail trailing out to the Pacific, is fattening up, polishing its pelt, bellying out in the east—the agrarian tail growing scraggier and longer and dragging itself wet in Vancouver Bay. U. S. puffs and puffs and puffs and blows its credit up: Canada puffs at its own borrowed little balloon, too. U. S. Builds and climbs, builds and climbs, a high tariff wall: Canada builds and climbs. U. S. rationalizes and speeds up: Canada winds and fires, winds and fires—its workers. Presto! A new fifteen-story hotel in Windsor, twenty-five-story office buildings in Toronto: installment Fords, installment radios, installment vacuum cleaners and washers, and mortgages galore, and speedier speed-ups, and rottener and rottener fringe sections all around the towns. She's Britain's swelling and puffing pet Dominion sucking at the Wall Street feed pipe: American investments double the British total, the Canadian Pacific Railway strangles public ownership, and the Canadian farmer starves while Canadian grain exports top the world's.

Then the return in early '34. I was in a hurry, I thought the tragedy was personal, that only one of the old was dying. Canadians, city Canadians, sport bowler hats (derbies to you) and chinchilla coats and scottish woollens and plaid scarfs. The inflated city middle classes. But now where were they? What I saw, packing into street cars, turning street corners in that stolid hurry that is half-British, half-American, were shabby mobs, the middle class of a few years before, wrapped in four-year-old coats and five-year-old caps, the derbies gone, the imperial look only a cold tweak of malice in their eyes now. There's the tragic cross of the Canadian bourgeois, his walk both the British lurch and the Yankee shuffle—he dare not be what he wants to be, he would be America and he must be England—and between two imperialisms he's nothing at all, just a battered petty middle class, now inflated and now deflated, and huddling for warmth. But there is no warmth. The factories are smokeless and cold, and empty, empty, all the way in, and his fur is getting scraggier and scraggier.

When I got there I knew that there was one death, but I was becoming uncertain. This was that proud Queen City of Homes. Enter the homes and they turn out to be mausoleums, ghosts stalking. No work; nowhere to go without money; what to do:—and in one I hear a young woman break down and cry out—"We're just decaying—everything—decay, decay, is all one sees and meets!"

I tried to read the newspapers. The one "liberal" newspaper of 1924 has narrowed its print, tied up its tongue, closed its pink eyes and gone into the sweet capitalist coma it had always been yearning for. No need for N.R.A.'s and A.A.A.'s here. Master Beatty of the Canadian Pacific Railway swims about in the depression soup, crumbs up the country and sucks it all up. Fascism isn't even tacit: it clamps the country, its decorative fringes the new C.C.F. and its core the fascized Mounted Police. The capitalist newspapers gloat openly that the Canadian senate has had its conservatism assured for the next ten years—no matter what the legislature does.

Wherever I go there is only this desperate fascist silence, except for a haggard parrot that follows one everywhere and speaks King's English and Wall Street gibberish in one and the same breath.

Until I begin to hear voices. Between the newsprint lines, out on the streets, within the crowds, you begin to hear voices. There's the name—Stratford; then Hespeler, Rouyn, Hearst, Winnipeg, even Toronto: Echoes of strikes, of workers on the move, of riots, of picket lines—until it becomes a roar. I attend a meeting of 4,000 in a packed hall and hear the magic word in Canada—"Tim Buck." The dead city rocks. There are no moans here, no ghosts. Men's eyes flash, powerful voices call and answer. The government has sent tanks and machine guns to quell a strike in Stratford, the provincial police crack down on Hespeler, beat up workers in Rouyn, attack picket lines in Toronto. And for answer the workers capture a council in one town, win aldermanships in another, pile up mounting votes everywhere and organize from one end of the country to the other. Here is reality, even in one hall—though to the authorities it's non-existent, outlawed, nameless. All the better. The roar of reality in that one hall ran through the moribund streets and stayed there. For when I got out they had come alive.

Barney Conal.

Marching With a Song

ASHLEY PETTIS

ONE OF the most significant developments within the revolutionary movement has been the growth of music and music making of a nature which helps to unite and inspire masses of workers. The necessity for this kind of music as a weapon in the class struggle daily becomes more apparent. As in Russia, the idea: "We must develop our musical resources for the building of socialism" has made music both a unique power and an integral part of the lives of the people, so we are witnessing in America the gathering together of groups of workers for the making of music which is expressive of their lives and aspirations. Most of these songs have been derived from the revolutionary music of foreign lands, but because of their universal content have served the purpose of inspiring and uniting groups of workers of diverse and far-removed peoples. In addition to the formation of workers' choruses in various cities recently, reports have come in of revolutionary songs improvised by the Negroes in the south, in conjunction with white workers. In New York and many other cities, revolutionary musical organizations are springing up under the name of "Pierre Degeyter Clubs," which are uniting the forces of class-conscious and politically-minded musicians. The functions of these groups are expanding daily through Service Bureaus, so that the activities of our musical craftsmen are becoming indissolubly linked with the lives of the workers in making available the best music to workers' organizations. In New York the Composers' Collective of the Pierre Degeyter Club has already done valuable work in the production of a number of mass songs now being sung by workers' choruses.

THE NEW MASSES feels that the time is ripe for the development of music by the various composers of America for the constantly increasing number of singing workers; a music which is characteristic of them; truly representative of their awakening consciousness and growing power; of their determination and hopes. With this in mind, Alfred Hayes' poem, *Into the Streets May First* was sent out to the Composers' Collective of the Pierre Degeyter Club, New York, as well as to a group comprising some of the most accomplished musicians of America. It was originally planned to have a national, general contest, but the time was too limited to do so and make a selection for performance and publication by May 1st. At a future date we hope to have a national contest in the production of mass songs.

The response to the request for musical settings of the poem submitted, transcended our greatest expectations. A jury comprising not only musicians from the Pierre Degeyter Club of New York, but from the rank and file selected what was considered the most practical song for our purpose. Not only was the musical excellence considered and the appropriateness of the setting, but its appeal to those who are not professional musicians. We want this song not only to be sung by a trained chorus, but to inspire others to join in the singing.

The composers who submitted contributions include Lahn Adohmyan, Aaron Copland, Isadore Freed, Wallingford Riegger, Carl Sands, Mitya Stillman, L. E. Swift and one composer who conceals his identity under the *nom de plume* "XYZ."

The general quality of the musical settings was so high that it is greatly to be regretted that all these songs are not available for workers' groups throughout the country.

The creation of new mass songs in America is, of course, only in its inception. Hence we find, in the various settings of *Into the Streets May First,* music of a great diversity of types. That of Carl Sands is of a familiar character, in no sense experimental. The harmonies are simple; the tune "catchy;" the whole somewhat in the style of Stephen Foster, which one of the judges considered to be typically "American" — though obviously America of another day.

Certain of the songs, such as those by Adohmyan and "XYZ" have marked excellence in the melodic and rhythmic conception, but from the standpoint of harmonic construction are perhaps too sophisticated and "modern" for singers in workers' groups for whom mass songs are written. It is not that experiments and "revolutionary" musical tendencies are to be discouraged or eliminated in the creation of such songs. But it is absolutely necessary at this stage in the creation of the mass songs, to preserve the best of the old traditions, harmonic and melodic, at the same time injecting new life into these old forms so that the most unsophisticated singer may be drawn into the singing-in order that "he who runs" may sing! A completely new and different harmonic structure in songs which have "popularity" in the best sense as one of their principal aims, tends to repel. The undesirability of this is obvious. These songs with the addition of a less complex and "static" accompaniment, should prove to be practical and valuable compositions.

For the practical purposes of our contest, the compositions of both Swift and Freed were too long. In fact Swift added a quatrain to the Hayes poem, which, when set to music in its entirety was too long for publication in THE NEW MASSES. The Swift song possesses a fine, marching swing, and has an interesting combination of "modern" revolutionary harmonic color with a melodic "catchiness" which shows the skill and experience of the composer of the "Scottsboro Song" in the writing of mass songs.

The imposing magnificence and effectiveness of Isadore Freed's score (with piano and drum or tympani accompaniment *ad libitum*) mark it apart from all the other songs entered in the contest. It should be made available for every chorus in America. Such a work is both good propaganda and splendid art! Its performance should have an extraordinarily moving and stirring effect upon any audience. The harmonies are bold and flaming in color. Here indeed the "red flag leaps its red!" May we soon hear this composition in public performance.

Fine craftsmanship is apparent in the construction of both the Riegger and Stillman songs. (Riegger submitted two scores.) These settings from the standpoint of practicability and musical excellence are valuable additions to the literature of the mass song. They are in nowise experimental. The character of the modulations, in the setting by Stillman, might prove somewhat of a deterrent in popularizing it. The tune is "catchy." The simpler of the Riegger songs in all probability would be whistled after one hearing.

Aaron Copland's composition, published in this issue, is most certainly an interesting and practical example of mass song. Taking everything into consideration, the judges were unanimous in making this selection. It has vigor, directness. Its spirit is identical with that of the poem. The unfamiliar, "experimental" nature of the harmonies which occur occasionally, does not tend to make the unsophisticated singer question. Copland has chosen a musical style of time-honored tradition, but he has imbued it with fresh vitality and meaning. The subtle alteration of harmonies and melodic intervals in progressions of a familiar nature, save it from being relegated to the category of the platitudinous. The harmonic structure, which in less skillful hands would have been mere "Pomp and Circumstance," here possesses freshness and newness! Some of the intervals may be somewhat difficult upon a first hearing or singing, but we believe the ear will very readily accustom itself to their sound.

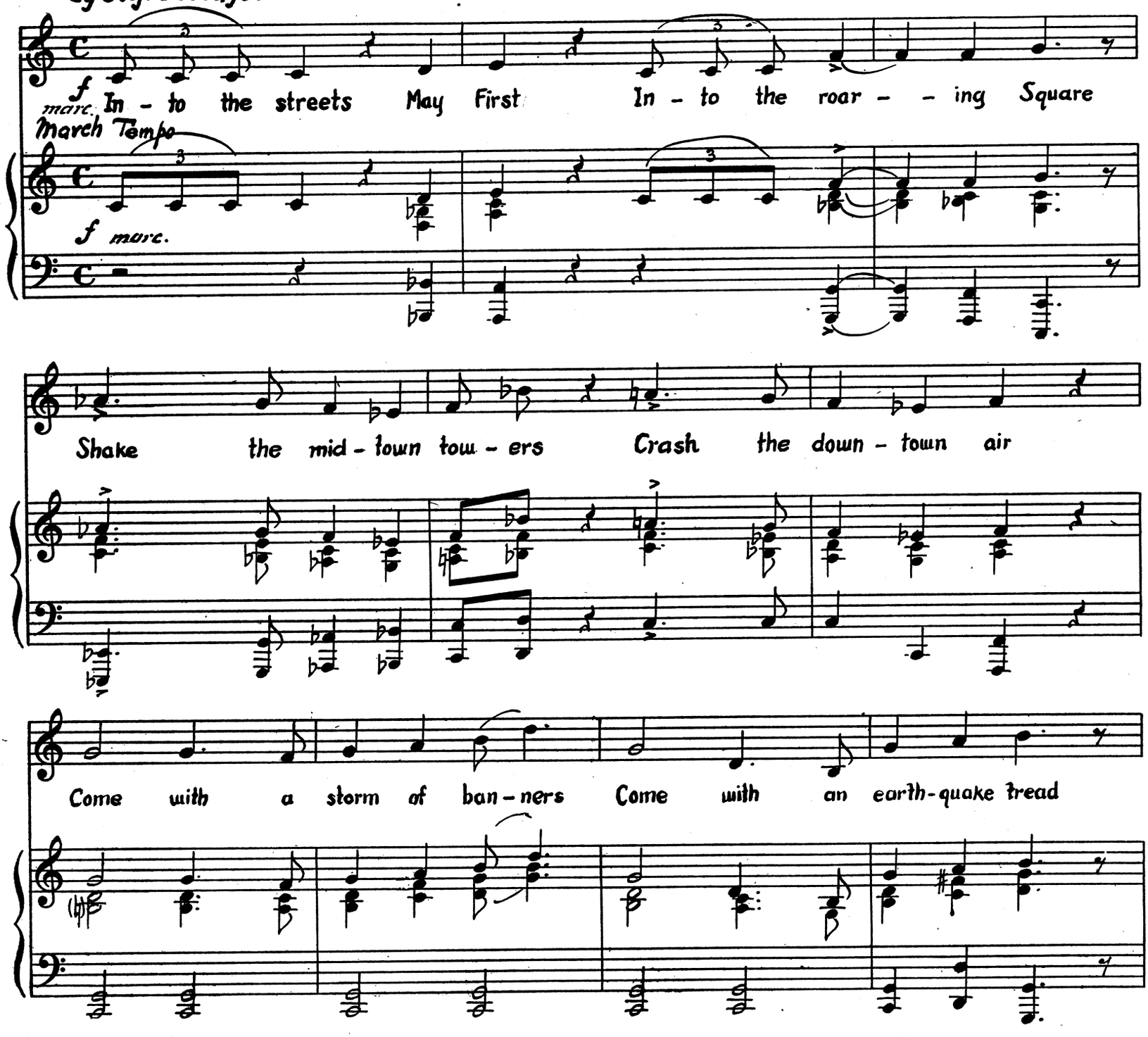
The Workers' Music League is featuring Aaron Copland's setting of *Into the Streets May First* this Sunday evening (April 29), at its Second Annual American Workers' Music Olympiad. The entire ensemble of 800 voices, comprising the revolutionary worker's choruses of New York, will participate. The place is City College Auditorium, 23rd Street and Lexington, New York City.

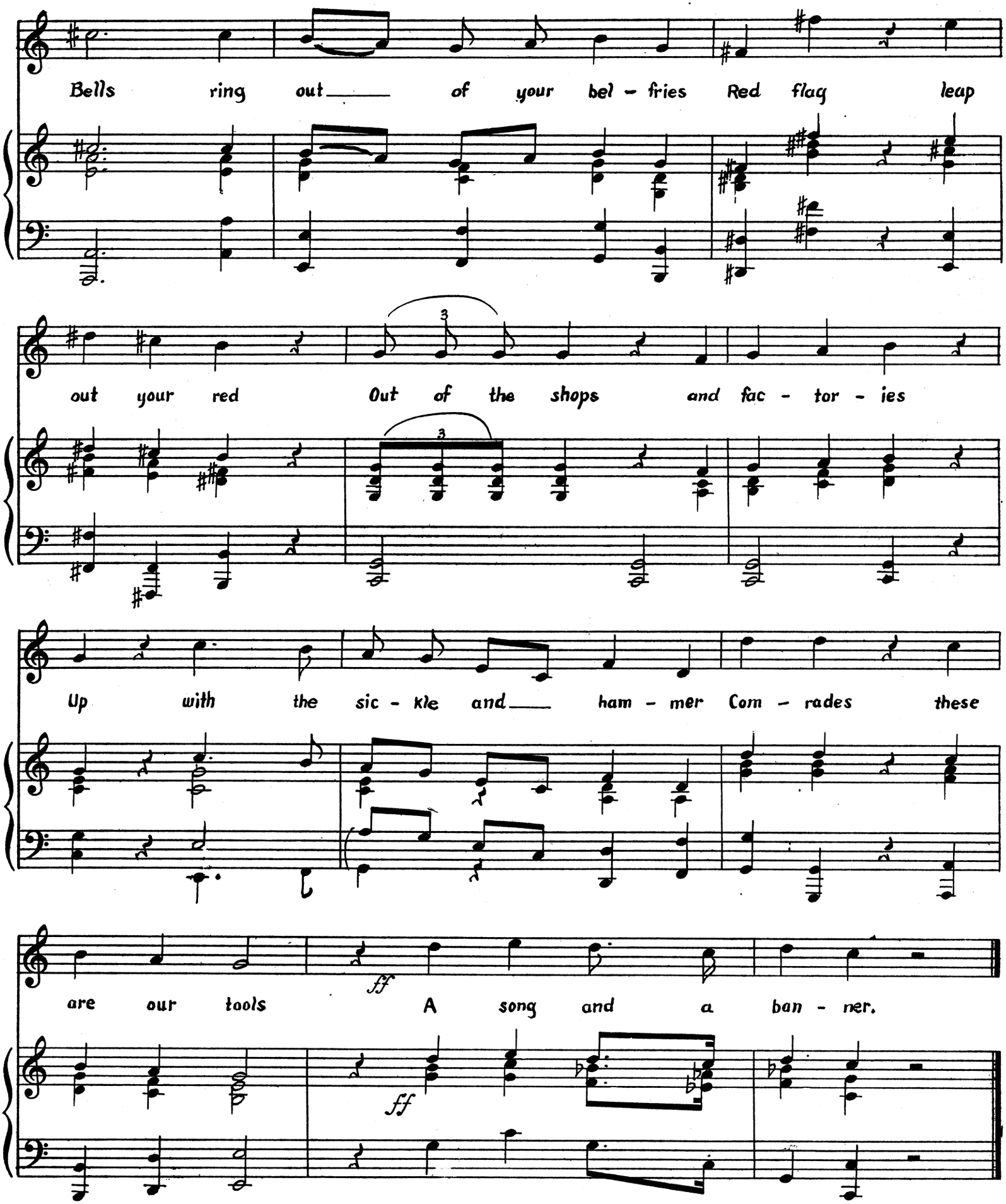
THE NEW MASSES is grateful to all the participants in their first musical contest, and believes its pride in the notable result is richly justified.

INTO THE STREETS MAY FIRST

Words adapted from a poem by Alfred Hayes

Music by Aaron Copland




Bells ring out of your bel - fries Red flag leap
out your red Out of the shops and fac - tor - ies
Up with the sic - kle and ham - mer Com - rades these
are our tools A song and a ban - ner.
ff
ff

David Alfaro Siqueiros

CHARMION VON WIEGAND

A PAINTER may be revolutionary in technique and far from revolutionary in politics, like Picasso; he may be revolutionary in politics and painfully academic in technique, like many Soviet painters today; but to few painters has it been granted to be revolutionary innovators both in painting and in politics, to advance the technique of their craft *and* to lead working-class struggles. This rare combination is possessed by David Alfaro Siqueiros, a national figure in the arts and politics of Mexico, but only now attracting the attention of American critics as a result of his recent exhibition at the Delphic Studios. Siqueiros is known to aesthetes in Europe and North America as one of the founders and leaders of the Mexican art movement, the most important of our century. To hundreds of thousands of Mexican workers and peasants, he is known as a fighter, an orator of unusual power, an organizer and agitator loved by the masses and hated by the property-owners. More than any of the Mexican painters, perhaps Siqueiros has managed to fuse revolutionary content and form in his art, while making his art but one form of revolutionary action.

The Mexican rennaissance in art, as everyone knows, was a direct product of the Mexican revolution; its painters, who have won international fame, have been profoundly influenced by the armed struggle of the masses for land, for work, in some cases for a socialist society. Siqueiros learned to know the masses not from books or pamphlets but in the heat of battle. When the revolution broke out in 1910, he was an art student; the following year he was an officer in Carranza's army, in whose ranks he fought for six years. During all these times, he never touched brush or paint, but his understanding of Mexico, of the class-struggle, of art was slowly maturing in his mind. In 1917 he went to Paris, officially as military attaché for the government of Mexico (then revolutionary) actually to resume the study of his craft. Four years with Picasso, some months in Spain brought him abreast of modern trends in bourgeois art. Then Siqueiros was ready to unite his two chief interests: art and revolution. It was he who wrote and issued the now famous manifesto launching the Revolutionary Syndicate of Technical Workers, Painters, and Sculptors, which developed José Clemente Orozco, Xavier Guerrero, Diego Rivera, Carlos Merida, Jean Charlot and a host of other painters; and initiated the greatest movement of revolutionary painting in the contemporary world.

The provocative and fruitful document composed by Siqueiros emphasized the revolutionary social theme in art. Easel painting, it boldly declared, was dead; individualistic art must give way to monumental, popular art. "Since the social moment," the manifesto proclaimed, "is one of transition between a decrepit order and a new one, the creators of beauty must put forth their utmost efforts to make their production of ideological value to the people." In the twelve years that have passed since this manifesto was issued and the Syndicate organized, the Mexican artists have created powerful frescoes which have left their impression on European and North American art schools; they have led to a general revival of interest in mural paintings; they have cracked the illusory ivory tower of bourgeois art by hurling their flaming challenge of mass art.

But Siqueiros, has already outgrown some of the ideas of the Syndicate; he finds the aesthetics of the manifesto, still practised by leading Mexican artists, antiquated, archaic, "Social-utopian," to use his own phrase. What was revolutionary in the twenties cannot, Siqueiros says, meet the revolutionary problems of the thirties. Just what Siqueiros is after cannot be gathered solely from his recent exhibition in the Delphic Studios. Since walls cannot be transported, the exhibition did not reveal Siqueiros as a mural painter at all. There were easel paintings—those despicable little frames which the Mexican painters condemn but are compelled now and then, when walls are lacking, to paint); and of these the majority were portraits. Among them was the magnificent head of Emiliano Zapata, hero of the agrarian revolution, a painting greatly admired by Sergei Eisenstein. The portraiture of Siqueiros has something in it of the Spanish tradition, particularly of El Greco and Gorja; like these Spanish masters he penetrates the human psyche and, with extraordinary impersonality, evokes the essential nature of each model. Compared with some of the other Mexican painters, his color is surprisingly conservative; he has neither the pleasing decorative hues of Rivera nor the ecstatic rhythm of Orozco; his is the sombre-shadowed palette of the Spanish school—deep browns, green blacks, tawny ochres illuminated with lights that are like smoky torches. Above all, the work of Siqueiros shown at the Delphic Studios had that innate sense of drama which one finds in the Spanish bullfight and the Spanish dance, in both of which native sadism and sensuality, blended with ascetic restraint, produce folk rituals profoundly impressive. But the Spanish element in Siqueiros paintings is merged with another; their impersonal stolidity echoes the stone ritual masks of Aztec and Maya; the Indian is superimposed on the Spaniard.

Siquerios, however, considers his easel paintings of secondary importance; he would like to be judged by his frescoes. Only one picture at the Delphic Studios, gave some indication of the artist's powers in this direction, an overlife size nude of a woman martyred by the Chinese counter-revolution. The size, the dark tones, the deep modeling, the dramatic conception conveyed the impression of monumental sculpture. In addition, this painting involves a technical innovation. Since, Siqueiros argues, we live in a period when the revolutionary movement is ruthlessly persecuted, and is in many countries compelled to be illegal, we must cease to be enslaved by expensive technical equipment; we must learn to convey the revolutionary message to masses in any medium that comes to hand; so his powerful symbol of the Chinese struggle is done not on canvas but on sacking, not with oils but with automobile paint.

This technical innovation is part of Siqueiros' recent development as a revolutionary painter. He himself divides his evolution as a mural painter into three main periods, represented respectively by his murals in Mexico, California, and the Argentine. The photographs of these murals which he has with him in New York reveal a logical development; and, despite the fact that Siqueiros has spent less time on painting than most of his contemporaries, a remarkable growth.

His first period coincides with the rise of the Syndicate, whose painters revived fresco and made this public art the servant of the revolutionary movement of that time. A member of the Syndicate—a full-blooded Indian named Xavier Guererro—made an extremely important technical contribution to these murals by discovering that the method of frescoing used by the Indians throughout Mexico on the walls of their houses from time immemorial was like fourteenth century Italian fresco which the Syndicate painters had been trying in vain to imitate. Guerrero, incidentally, one of Mexico's best painters, today devotes himself entirely to organizational work in the Mexican Communist Party. With the technical equipment thus obtained, the Syndicate painters decorated the walls of the National Preparatory School in the capital. On the stairway of that building, Siqueiros painted his celebrated *Burial of a Worker,* a fresco showing six Mexican workers holding aloft their comrade's coffin in solemn funeral procession. The figures are organically racial in form, monumentally rigid as the smiling archaic Apollos of the Greek, as integrated with the wall as Egyptian reliefs. But the *Burial of a Worker* was never completed; it is the frustrated fragment of a great concept because its revolutionary implications aroused the protest of the reactionaries. The government cancelled its contract with the painters of the Syndicate; the Syndicate itself was dissolved; boards were clapped over Siqueiros' fresco, concealing it from the world. Strangely

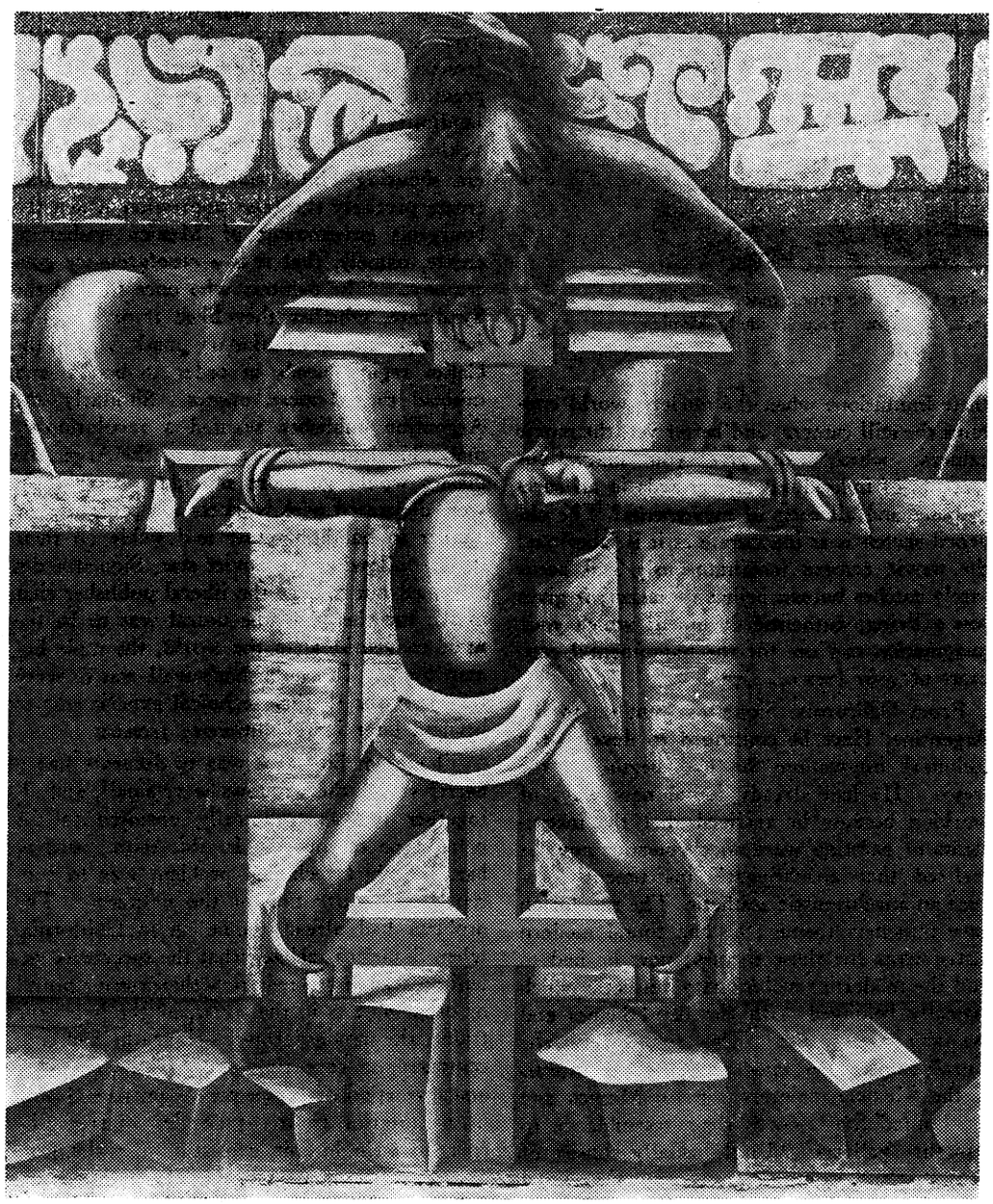
enough, today, years after the dissolution of the Syndicate, the Mexican government permits visitors to see the early frescos of other Mexican painters in the Preparatoria; the fresco of Siqueiros alone remains boarded up. In this way the reactionary bourgeois regime revenges itself on the artist who for years led strikes and demonstrations.

The attitude of the Mexican government partly explains the next phase of Siqueiros' activities. Shut out from walls which welcomed other ex-members of the Syndicate, he ceased painting altogether for six years and threw all his energies into the revolutionary movement. Yet all this time he felt no sense of deprivation; he did not think that had given up something "superior" for something "inferior"; to him art was one form of revolutionary agitation; robbed of this form, he eagerly seized upon others—organization, oratory, journalism, agitation.

During this period Siqueiros thought he was through with painting forever. But in 1930 he was arrested for his part in a May Day demonstration in Mexico City. He was confined in prison for a number of months. In the isolation of his cell, his energy was compelled to pour itself out on easel painting. During the year he made over 100 small canvases. His long absence from brush and paint and his turbulent years among workers and peasants fighting for their rights with rifles in their hands had almost completely obliterated his memories of the studios of Paris and Madrid in which he had passed his apprenticeship; he became wholly Mexican, turning out paintings that resembled the Mexican primitives. His prison term was followed by a year in exile; he was confined to the town of Taxco and forbidden all political activity. Here he set up his easel and began a series of vast overlife sized heads, portraits as sombre as the Mexican hills. Distinguished visitors came to him. Sergei Eisenstein, at that time working in Mexico on the magnificent film later mutilated by a would-be Democratic governor of California, obtained government permission to have a peek at the concealed *Burial of a Worker* in the Preparatoria. The Soviet film genius was so impressed by the fragment, that he used its composition as a basis for the funeral scene in his movie. Other visitors also came, among them the noted French art historian Elie Faure who spread to Europe the news of Siqueiros' newest achievements. In 1932 Siqueiros held an exhibition of his work in the capital.

This exhibition brought to Siqueiros an invitation from Los Angeles to instruct in the Chouinard School of Art. The seven or eight months which he spent in California mark the second stage of his development as a mural painter. Here he painted three frescoes; all of them on the outside walls of the buildings involved; one at the Chouinard School, another at the Plaza Art Center, and a third on a special wall in the garden of Dudley Murphy, a Hollywood movie director. The fact that these murals were on exterior walls is of great significance to Siqueiros' work, and possibly to modern revolutionary art. His manifesto twelve years ago had already expressed the idea that the important art of our age is to be found not in the studios of the modernists and sur-realists in Paris, but in the agitation and propaganda of revolutionary ideas on walls accessible to the masses. Along with other members of the Syndicate, he was under the illusion that the walls of the government buildings in Mexico City corresponded to what the revolutionary artists were seeking. But time taught him otherwsie. The walls in the Preparatoria and the National Palace are not accessible to the masses; these buildings are frequented by government officials, students, army officers, bureaucrats, politicians; practically never by workers or peons. How—Siqueiros began to ask himself two or three years ago—could murals actually be made accessible to the masses? Obviously by painting them on walls which the masses can see; walls which face the *street* where the masses walk; the exterior walls of skyscrapers and public buildings which now carry cheap paintings advertising cigarettes, cereals, automobiles.

The substitution of the exterior for the interior wall was the first technical innovation which Siqueiros made in the revolutionary fresco. But this innovation created problems of its own. Italian fresco—lime and sand plaster—was not suited to a modern cement building; a series of experiments taught Siqueiros that white cement was the logical medium for the exterior fresco. But this medium, ideal for cement buildings, had one disadvantage; it dried too quickly for the pigment to be applied to a damp surface. Again, Siqueiros, free of academic illusions, turned for his solution to the technique of modern advertising. If Lucky Strike ads can be painted on exterior walls by a *group* of men working *rapidly* with the *spray-gun* instead of the hand-brush, why cannot revolutionary frescoes be



"TROPICAL AMERICA," outdoor fresco, 90 x 48 feet, in the Plaza Art Center, Los Angeles, collectively painted with mechanical instruments by 35 artists.

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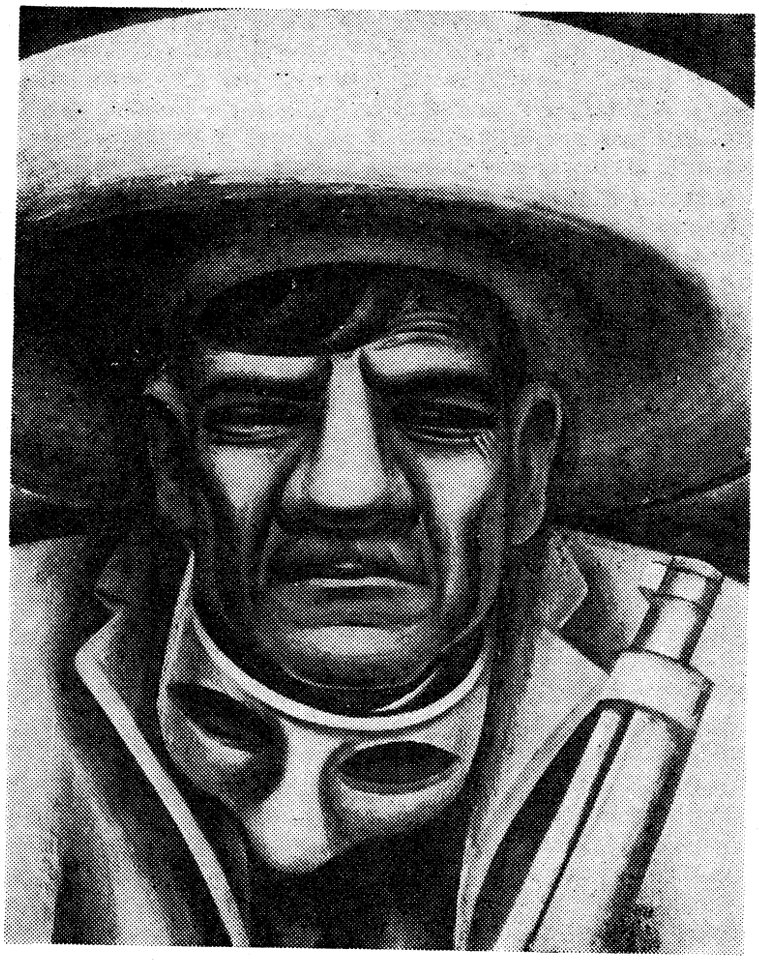


Detail from "MEXICO OF TODAY," showing Calles, the strong man of the new Mexican bourgeoisie with the demagogic mask. Outdoor fresco in Santa Monica.

painted the same way? Modern painting, Siqueiros realized, including Mexican mural painting, has been using archaic methods; its instruments, particularly the hand brush, have remained unchanged through the ages. The modern revolutionary fresco, Siqueiros decided, needs modern technical equipment. So he organized a collective of twenty professional painters to work on the Chouinard fresco. They coated the wall with cement guns, traced their drawings with the aid of an electric projector, and applied the pigment with air brushes. In two weeks, the group completed a mural showing the vast figure of an agitator addressing a group of workers.

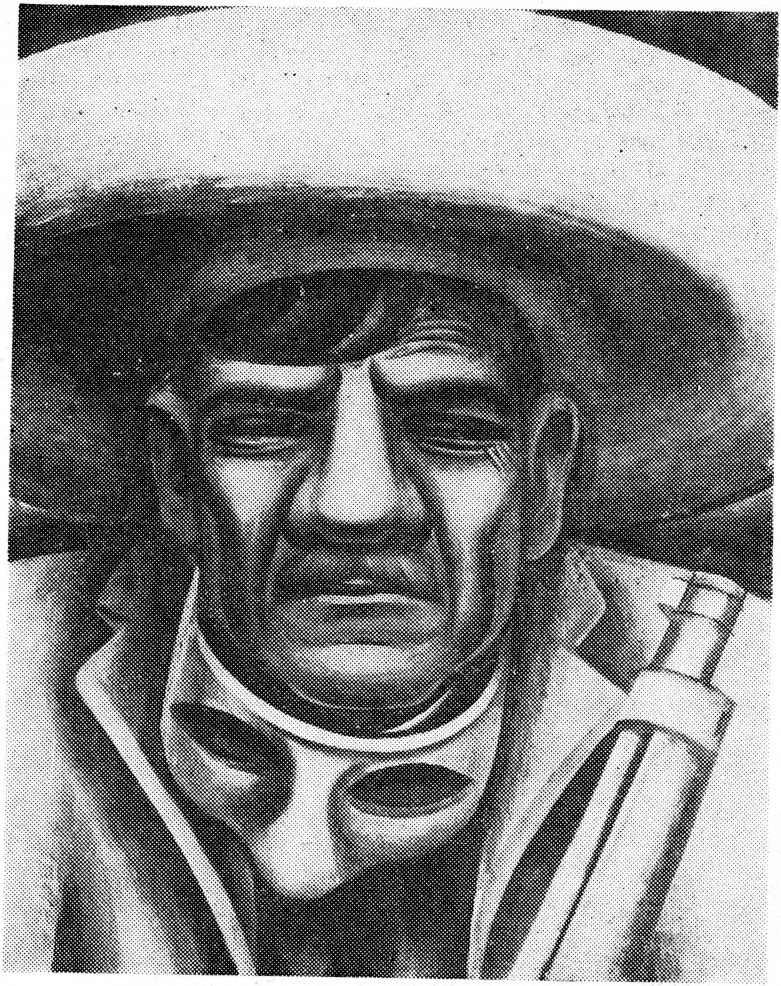
Whatever the aesthetic merits of this fresco, it marks an important advance in the technique of mural painting. For the first time, a revolutionary theme is painted on a wall which can be seen by masses moving in the streets. Siqueiros himself, on looking back at this first exterior fresco, points out that while it is revolutionary in theme, its form is still static and sculptural, like the Mexican murals which he is seeking to leave behind. This necessitated further technical experiments in connection with his second California mural, the Plaza Art Center. Paintings are static, Siqueiros realized, because the artist bases them on a crude shorthand called sketching. Why use the human eye, the hand, the pencil, with all their limitations when the modern world contains the still camera, and better yet, the movie camera, which can give you marvellous sketches of individuals and crowds in all sorts of poses and all sorts of movements? The old pencil sketch is as inaccurate as it is laborious; the movie camera instantaneously and accurately catches human beings in action; it gives you a living, authentic document which your imagination can use for the monumental concepts of your fresco.

From California, Siqueiros went on to the Argentine. Here he continued to develop the technical innovations he had begun in the fresco. He had already found new ways of working because he realized that the instruments of painting were anachronistic; now he realized that anachronistic instruments produce an anachronistic aesthetic. The revolution gave him new themes; he had found modern instruments for those themes; now he had to find the modern, revolutionary aesthetic which logically belonged with the new themes and the new instruments. The trouble with the mural painting so far—including the murals of the Mexican painters both in Mexico and the United States—was their resemblance to a picture gallery. Murals usually consist of a series of pictures in no way integrally related to the architecture of the building which they decorate; each of these pictures is an independent unit; it could be removed and framed as a panel and exhibited by itself. Panel painting must therefore be abandoned; the fresco must be an integral part of the building it decorates.

The fascist government of the Argentine would not give Siqueiros a wall; but a well-known Argentine publisher with pretentions to liberalism commissioned him to decorate a room in his private palatial residence outside of Buenos Aires. The publisher, naturally, wanted Siqueiros to paint a very, very revolutionary mural; but Siqueiros determined to do nothing of the kind. He had learned in Mexico as we have seen that the frescoes on the government buildings were seen not by workers and peasants, as dreamed by the Syndicate, but by politicians, students, army officers, and tourists. He had, however, learned still another lesson. The revolutionary painters of Mexico thought they were putting something over on the government; they were, in the name of art, obtaining public walls for revolutionary propaganda. But it turned out that the government was putting something over on the revolutionary painters. The frescoes depicting workers with red flags and peasant with machetes cutting down the landlords and generals; the hammer and sickle; the Soviet star; the banners and streamers shouting "land and liberty!"—all these create precisely the false impression which the bourgeois government of Mexico wishes to create, namely, that it is a *revolutionary* government. The painters who once formed the Syndicate, whether they liked it or not, had fashioned the revolutionary mask which the Calles regime needs in order to betray and mislead the Mexican masses. Similarly, the Argentine publisher wanted a revolutionary mask; his demagogic betrayal of the Argentine masses would go more smoothly if *his* walls were decorated with workers and peasants, red banner in hand, hammer and sickle on their lapels, following the Soviet star. Siqueiros determined not to give the liberal publisher that mask; the theme of the mural was to be the most conventional in the world, the nude human form. The publisher's wall was to serve the artist for further technical experiments to be used later in revolutionary frescoes.

The room Siqueiros was to decorate had a barrel vault; the windows were small, and altogether it was technically unsuited to the panel type of mural. In this room, used as bar, the chief technical problem was to concentrate the attention of the spectator. The problem had already come up in California, when Siqueiros realized that the spectators' attention was distracted from the exterior mural by other objects in the street, by the light, the traffic, the moving crowds. Hence he had concentrated on capturing attention by emphasis and distortion of perspective. Confronted now by an interior vault, he decided to treat the room as a single unit, consisting of walls, ceiling and floor, to be treated as one decorative design, three dimensional in composition and dynamic in expression. For this purpose, he

Detail from "MEXICO OF TODAY," showing Calles, the strong man of the new Mexican bourgeoisie with the demagogic mask. Outdoor fresco in Santa Monica.



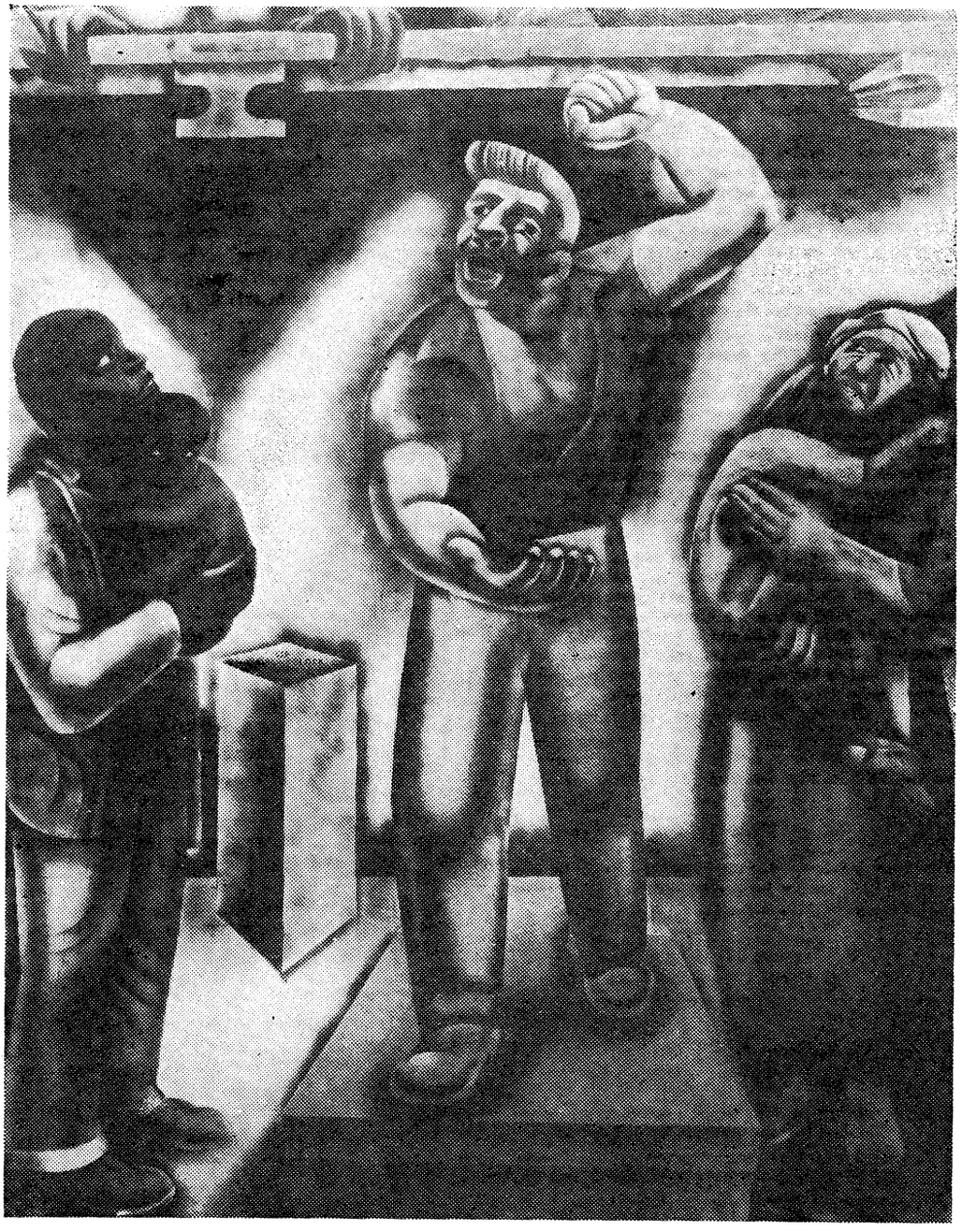
Detail from "MEXICO OF TODAY," showing Calles, the strong man of the new Mexican bourgeoisie with the demagogic mask. Outdoor fresco in Santa Monica.

had to abandon all the rules of perspective followed by painters without question since the Italian Renaissance. Here again, Siqueiros realized, painting was behind life; the perspective of the Renaissance was based on the metaphysics of humanism; it was a mechanical, logical construction of space rather than a scientific one. Modern man has in his daily life long ago abandoned this perspective; the development of the train, the automobile and the airplane, the popularization of theories of relativity have long ago annihilated the ideas of space held by the Renaissance and still slavishly followed by painters. Now it was up to revolutionary painting to adapt modern ideas of space to its needs.

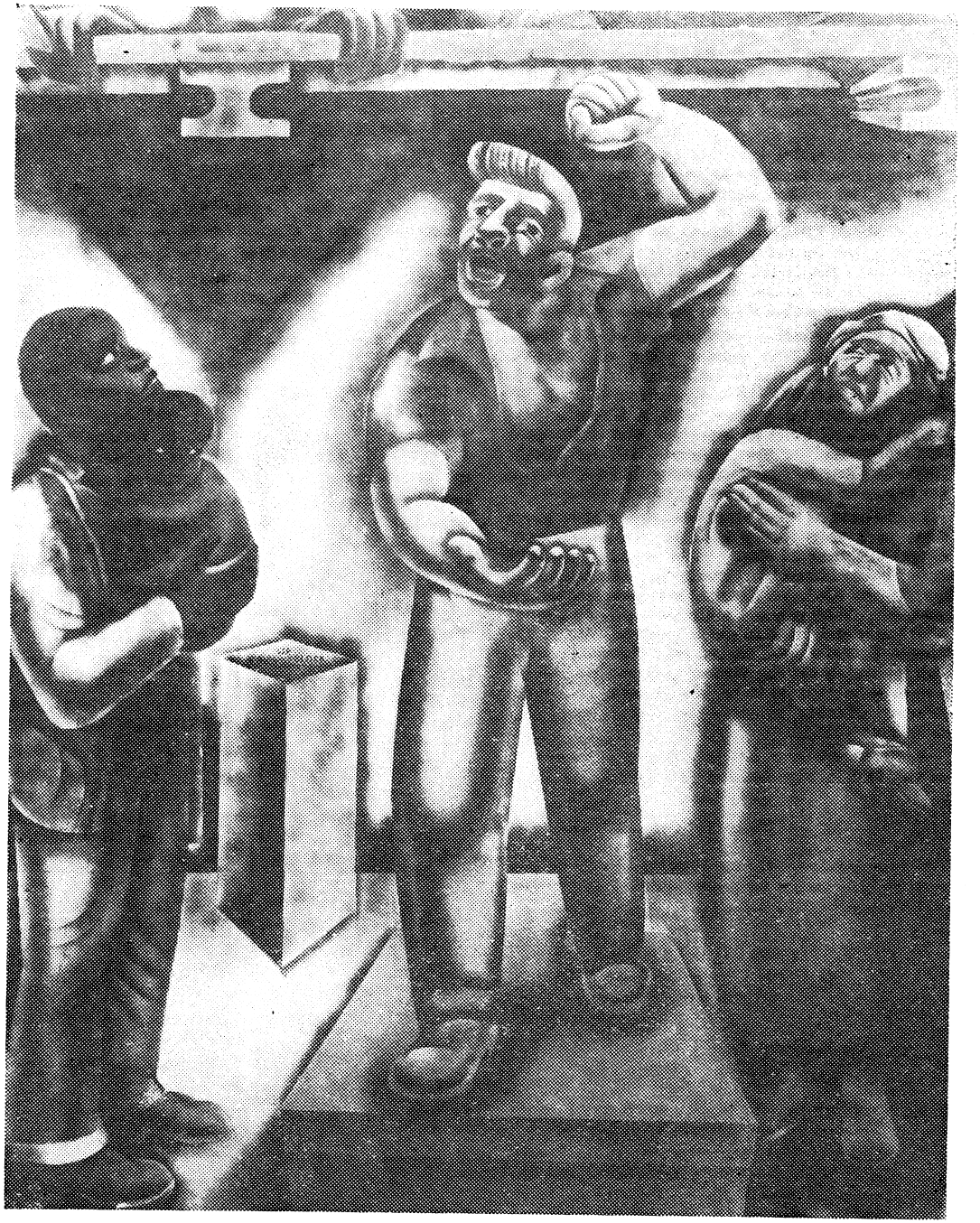
Photographs of Siqueiros' Argentine mural (copies of which he brought with him to New York) give some vague idea of his application of the new perspective. But apart from his actual achievements in this type of painting there is no doubt that his theories are highly suggestive and may possibly mark a turning point in art. Siqueiros wishes to bring art closer to the scientific knowledge of the contemporary world; he urges artists to study the scientific and aesthetic laws of motion in the plastic arts and to develop the technique of painting to the point where it corresponds to our present ideas of space and perspective. He considers his Argentine fresco a first experiment in this direction, an experiment in which he tried to combine the laws which Michelangelo intuitively followed in the Sistine Chapel and the laws of space and perspective evolved by modern science.

While Siqueiros has devoted the past three years to painting, he has not for one moment disassociated himself from the revolutionary movement. Indeed, he does not think of the two apart; he cannot understand the phrase art *and* revolution. For him painting continues to be *one* of the instruments of revolutionary agitation and propaganda, and all his experiments with theme, form and technique are directed toward this end. He is too seasoned a working-class fighter to suffer from the illusion that capitalists or their governments will give painters walls for genuinely revolutionary frescoes; the past twelve years have taught him the conditions under which such walls are obtainable. The new mural, he believes, can only flourish where state power is in the hands of the proletariat, and he looks to the U.S.S.R. as the only country today where work such as his could be carried on without hindrance. In capitalist countries, on the other hand, he sees a sharpening of the class-struggle, a growing tendency on the part of the capitalists to drive the revolutionary movement underground. In this period of illegality, Siqueiros believes, art can be an important revolutionary weapon if the artists fighting in the ranks of the proletariat will master methods adapted to the illegal struggle. When the artist paints only one canvas or one wall, the enemy can destroy it before many workers have had a chance to see it. Hence the revolutionary artist, he says, must learn to reproduce his work, he must master engraving, wood-blocks, lithography, the reproduction of posters; he must master the use of machines adaptable to his work, such as the still and movie cameras, the spray gun, the printing machine; he must learn to paint on new materials, such as sacking or wood, with new types of pigment, such as Duco; so that he may never be at a loss, creating revolutionary art with whatever comes to hand. Above all he must learn to work not only by himself but in groups, close to the organizations of the working-class which are fighting for the new world.

Thus Siqueiros, who twelve years ago initiated an important movement in the plastic arts, bids fair to initiate another today. Both as painter and theoretician, he has the equipment for being one of the leaders toward a new type of revolutionary mural, as well as directing the younger revolutionary artists. If those who admire him and believe in him see any possible internal obstacle to the great work ahead of him, it lies chiefly in remnants of the old romantic turbulence and bravado. This trend reveals itself technically in his indifference to assuring the permanence of that part of his work which should be permanent, such as the Chouinard fresco which, after only one year, is already showing signs of fading; and generally in a certain lack of that discipline which should logically go with his unusual gifts. Perhaps that romanticism, rooted in some kind of obscure uncertainty, is to some extent responsible for the artist's audacity in leaping forward to new discoveries; yet it needs integration with his imagination, intellect and will for him to avoid the most dangerous pitfalls of romantic irresponsibility and to render the maximum service not only to his art but to the revolutionary cause.



"WORKERS' MEETING," outdoor fresco in the Chouinard School of Art, painted with mechanical instruments on the basis of collective work.



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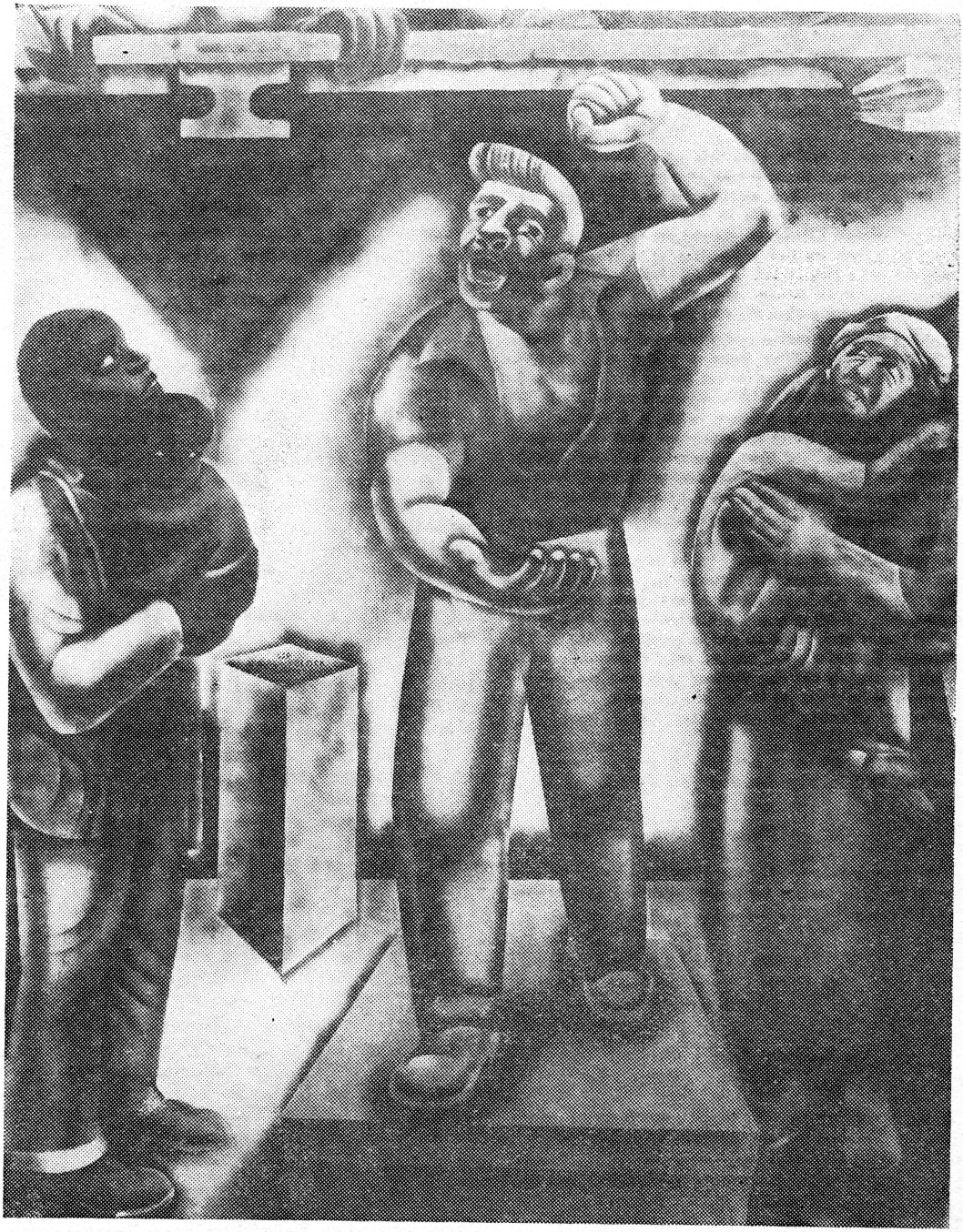

"WORKERS' MEETING," outdoor fresco in the Chouinard School of Art, painted with mechanical instruments on the basis of collective work.

Correspondence

Censorship in Prison

To The New Masses:

Recently three books by James T. Farrell including *The Young Manhood of Studs Lonigan* were mailed to Leon Blum, militant laundry worker, imprisoned in Great Meadows Prison.

Farrell, who saw Blum when a delegation visited him on March 17, had offered to send them to him, and Blum eagerly accepted.

Warden J. H. Wilson wrote Farrell as follows upon receipt of the package:

I forwarded these books to the Catholic Chaplain for his opinion as to whether they should be circulated within this prison, and received the following notation:—"These books should not be circulated in this prison." I am therefore returning the three books.

Farrell answered:

I have just received from you a letter dated April 16th. In that letter you state that you are returning three books which I sent to Mr. Leon Blum (Samuel Blumenzweig, No. 8074) because it was the opinion of your Catholic Chaplain that "these books should not be circulated in the prison."

I do not perceive how this is a consideration of whether or not these books should circulate in the prison. Rather they were sent to Mr. Blum and it is impossible for me to conceive how you and your Catholic Chaplain should refuse to give them to Mr. Blum on the grounds that they are or are not fit to be circulated in the prison. Your actions impress me as being unqualifiedly high-handed. By what legal rights do you pursue such a policy?

Mr. Blum is not a communicant of the Roman Catholic faith. Why must a priest of that faith be made the censor of what books Mr. Blum may or may not receive? When you receive books for Catholic prisoners written with a Catholic bias, do you submit them to a person who is unequivocally opposed to the principles of the Roman Catholic Church, and then accept his opinions on the fitness of such books for Catholic prisoners?

In the case of these three books, you have given them to a man totally unfit to make any intelligent judgment of them. The books in question describe conditions for which the institutions of the Roman Catholic Church are considerably responsible. And you ask a Catholic priest to judge whether a man who is not a communicant of the Roman Catholic faith should read them? In addition, you give me the feeling that you are asking a man who appears to be Mr. Blum's intellectual inferior whether or not Mr. Blum may read these books.

Again, I ask why you take the impertinence to pursue such a high-handed policy?

Sincerely yours,

(Signed) James T. Farrell.

We hope readers of The New Masses will join Farrell in this protest by sending letters to Warden J. H. Wilson, Great Meadows Prison, Comstock, New York.

Alfred H. Hirsch, Secretary,
National Committee for the Defense
of Political Prisoners.

An Editor Is Disturbed

To The New Masses:

It is interesting to note the leftward trend of the times as revealed by the editorials in the religious periodicals of the country, particularly those periodicals intended for the rising generation. In the Walther League Messenger, a magazine with a very wide circulation among young Lutherans, the editor is frankly disturbed by the numerous inquiries he recently received with respect to Socialism and Communism. "Within the last year," he states, "our editorial mail has brought more letters on socialism than the total that we received before this time.... If these communications were merely the disgruntled expression of 'cranks' that frequently clutter an editor's correspondence files, they could be dismissed without alarm. But we have every reason to believe that many of these letters come from earnest, intelligent individuals who are dissatisfied with the attitude of the Church toward the families on the wrong side of the railroad tracks, the unemployed factory workers and the inhabitants of the depression colonies that fringe the least desirable sections of our large cities."

This enlightening situation falls directly in line with an observation made a year ago by a Christian writer of international fame in the Presbyterian. The following excerpt from the observation was printed in The Missionary Review of the World, May, 1933: "National religions are moribund; political liberalism is dead; democracy is here no more; a deep disillusion has settled down on men. Communism is gaining increasing strength and political leaders live in fear of a radical uprising."

Pekin, Ill. Fred Hamann.

More Light on the Committee

To The New Masses:

Strange fish came to light in the April 17 article on the Committee for the Nation in The New Masses. Reading this after the excellent piece on Father Coughlin by Marguerite Young in a previous issue, gives one rather a comprehensive notion of the menagerie styling itself the Committee for the Nation, but there are other details of the picture to be painted in.

Recently the New York World-Telegram, in an interview with Raymond Moley of the Brain Trust, quoted Moley as saying Wirt had appeared last summer at Warm Springs, Ga., in the company of a certain Dr. Christians of Tennessee, leader of one of the many mushroom fascist bands. S .J. Lenihan, for all of his valuable information, does not bring out that Herman A. Metz, German-American big business Hitler leader and joint agent of the Rockefellers as well as the German Dye Trust, was a stockholder with Rumely in the defunct New York Evening Mail, an important connection.

The connection between the Silver Shirts and the Hitler movement on the one hand and between the Silver Shirts and the Committee for the Nation is much closer than the Lenihan article brings out. The April 7 issue of the magazine Today brought out factually that the Silver Shirts had been created on the inspiration of Nazi agents in the United States, quoting an enthusiastic Silver Shirter on this. It also brought out the connection between the Order of '76 and the Silver Shirts. Royal Scott Gulden, head of the Order of '76, was recently quoted in an interview by the New York Herald Tribune as stating that the organization had 100,000 *armed* members in New York City, mostly concentrated in the Park Avenue and Upper Fifth Avenue Social Register area.

The April 7 issue of Today also shows clearly that William Dudley Pelley, of the Silver Shirts, is modeling himself after Hitler and is appealing to wealthy dupes for funds.

Much remains to the picture, however. A recent correspondent of yours named H. T. Adams pointed out that Ivy Lee, press agent for the Rockefellers, was the man backing Father Coughlin on the air. This is important. Metz is a Rockefeller-Ford-Dye Trust man. The Rockefellers have important tie-ups with the German chemical industry through the gasoline hydrogenation process. Ford has the second largest automobile plant in Germany, and Ford, like Hitler, is strongly anti-Semitic. Lenihan brings out that Ford has been or is connected with Rumely.

Ivy Lee has been, it is known, acting as press agent for Hitler as well, both himself and some of his associates having conferred with Hitler in Germany on ways and means of white-washing the Nazi massacre bands. Significantly enough, Hitler has come through with his *quid pro quo* for the Rockefellers and Ford. It is worth recalling that Hitler recently said every German should own an automobile, which means they will consume more Rockefeller-Dye Trust gasoline. Also note that the forced labor program in Germany is for the building of automobile roads, a favor to the gasoline and auto people and also of value to the Nazis in the war they are planning.

Now recall the excellent point made by H. T. Adams that the Roosevelt government is a Rockefeller government whereas the Hoover gang was a Morgan government. Washington government offices are now full of Rockefeller men, and the oil industry has made the biggest gains through inflation. Gains given to Germany through inflation have also helped Rockefeller-Ford-General Motors in Germany. The picture is very complete.

Hitler is moving toward war, and don't overlook the fact that he counts on the United States being actively on his side. The French know this and for this reason France is spending huge sums in this country to counteract the big wave of anti-French propaganda unloosed here in recent years. The economic interests of American capitalists are quite a bit toward the side of Germany in the coming conflict, by reason of the terrific sums of money Germany owes here which the capitalists are anxious to get back in some form. Loans to the Allies were what prompted J. P. Morgan to bring this country into the war on the side of the Allies, it is worth remembering.

The Committee for the Nation-Silver Shirts-Sons of '76- Nazi situation is so important that I think The New Masses should put out a brochure on the subject. Included should be the story in the Daily Worker some time last year, and never denied, that Albert H. Wiggin, former head of the Rockefeller Chase Bank, was urging New York bankers to line up for Hitler as a means of staving off Communism.

White Plains, N. Y. Joseph Thorns.

Revolutionary Criticism

To The New Masses:

A word of commendation is in order for Genevieve Taggard's article, *Poet Among Imagists,* in which she reviews William Carlos Williams' *Collected Poems,* in your issue of April 3. The final paragraph, describing Mr. Williams as "a poet fallen among Imagists," and drawing a pertinent distinction between the "real objects" of the Imagist and the "real ideas" of the revolutionist, is a fine brief summary of the social nature of significant literary art. I found other parts of Miss Taggard's brief essay a little too clipped—a little too "Imagist" in its criticism of an Imagist. But that is secondary.

The principal reason for this note is that Miss Taggard's article, quite aside from its consignment of Mr. Williams to the Imagists, raises a general question that will be answered by actual practice in the arts and in criticism in good time but that meanwhile can to good purpose be talked about. This is the question of building a thorough revolutionary critique of art in the American movement. Any thorough critique is well-rounded enough to be valuable to the artist as well as to the reader or spectator.

Miss Taggard's article is intended for the artist and the connoisseur as well as for the general

reader; if anything, too much in favor of the former. It not only deals with the social nature of poetry. It deals seriously with the problem of form in poetry. In many quarters there will be an objection or an indifference to it on this account. And that is why it raises a question, since it appears in THE NEW MASSES and in view of THE NEW MASSES program.

In the effort these days to develop here in America a new revolutionary culture the matter of form is too often understood as something belonging to the ivory tower of the 'nineties. The danger of this view is that the ivory tower tradition in art, the ivory tower concept of form as an apotheosis of dilettantism, can only be overthrown if there is developed a new concentration on form, toward the concretion of the revolutionary motive with its material, that will be as disciplined as that of any period in the long history of poetry.

In recent revolutionary criticism there has been much emphasis on the problem of what to write but very little on the problem of how to write. If technique is important in the revolution itself, and if creative cultural expression is part of the revolution, it is consistent to proclaim that technique is of the highest importance to the revolutionary artist.

The revolutionary artist will naturally despise the smug facility of the bourgeois artist. But his hatred should not confuse him. What he despises most is facility in motivation rather than in form.

If the advancing company of new American artists are to continue contributing to the creation of a new culture, I think they should become early converts to the principle of building well. And here I am not espousing a doctrine that will discourage any sincere artist, whether in a university or in a mining camp, no matter how difficult his handicaps may be.

In other words, I am not encouraging the development of a special sort of priesthood for the arts, based on technique that is so proficient in a narrow way that it is all but ritualistic. I am not advocating a "closed circle."

It is necessary to understand that a closed circle already exists in the arts in America. In the case of the more successful bourgeois artists, you might call the closed circle a wedding ring symbolizing the marriage of these elements to capitalism—which it is the purpose of the revolutionary artist to help to supplant; in the case of the novice, you might call the closed circle a hoop to jump through. What I want to encourage instead by an emphasis on form, in all its phases, is the forging by revolutionary artists of a sickle that will cut through the existing closed circle, the ring or hoop that represents the slavishness and sycophancy of bourgeois art. Such a sickle will be well-forged and well-tempered. A body of art worthy of identification by that particular symbol will also be well-forged and well-tempered. And may it be observed that the sickle is not a closed circle.

Granville Hicks in THE NEW MASSES has already emphasized the question of form in art. He has touched on it at least in connection with the novel. The problem does not vary in principle in any branch of art.

A main consideration in the present letter, however, has to do strictly with the policy of THE NEW MASSES, regarding art and art criticism. Miss Taggard's review is a convenient example of the proposition I have in mind. A critical review like Miss Taggard's first of all will not have a wide general appeal. This kind of writing, as I have said, is mainly for the artist and connoisseur. Few general readers will get as far as the final two paragraphs. But—and this leads to the crux of the matter—I hope that the editors of THE NEW MASSES will agree that reviews of this type may be of much value to writers themselves, however academic these articles may seem in the main to other subscribers. Nor do I believe that at this time the editors ought to be too impatient with a commentator who seems to overemphasize the formal side of art, as long as the commentator in question is going somewhere with a lively mind, and is anxious to speak out as he goes along.

I realize that in writing this way I am myself in some danger of seeming to overemphasize the formal side of art. Therefore I hasten to add that I would be the last to want to be understood as opposing the open-armed enthusiasm with which NEW MASSES critics have urged upon American writers a concentration upon revolutionary or proletarian material and have welcomed all such manifestations, however crude. It is rather that my respect for such material and my belief that it is the only source of the real art of the present and future makes me want to see it properly appreciated and treated—in other words, lived up to.

THE NEW MASSES is already doing much to extend the "reach" of books having any revolutionary significance. This is more than half the battle and is certainly the major obligation of the publication on the literary front. To summarize a generalization, however, I want to urge a little more frequent publication of timely critical reviews that will claim the attention of artists themselves, though not to the exclusion of other interests. I don't mean to suggest, of course, any enlargement of the departments of the magazine now devoted to the arts if this would require the curtailment of other departments. For the objective that I have in mind, the services of several competent critics are available, apparently, for the asking. And I believe the newer writers in America, as well as the older ones who are still capable of growing, would be signally benefited in their work by articles of this kind, whether or not they agree with the critical premise in every case.

A good deal is being said these days about the establishment in America of a body of revolutionary art—literary, plastic and otherwise. But it is easy to forget that thus far there has not been established any real revolutionary critique in the field of art. It seems to me that this is one of the things THE NEW MASSES is especially fitted to bring about.

WILLIAM GARDENER.

Join a Mass Organization

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In reply to letter of school supervisor—Dear Comrade: You are not separate from the rest of the workers. There are plenty of organizations you could do work in, and not be found out. After all, millions of workers, by being active in the workers' movement, by marching in demonstrations, etc., take this chance of being found out and losing their jobs. And if you should become active and should be fired on account of militant activity, if you have an organization behind you, you will have thousands of workers ready to fight for your reinstatement.

I am an office worker who still has her job but that does not stop me from being active in the Young Communist League and participating in demonstrations and mass meetings. You should immediately join a mass organization and begin to acquire a Marxist-Leninist education either through reading by yourself, or with a small study group formed with your friends, or by attending the Workers School. Then you will quickly see how easy it is to solve your present problems.

LIL SHERWIN.

Scrutinizing Fascism

TO THE NEW MASSES:

May I call to the attention of readers of THE NEW MASSES an institution recently founded in Paris which is of the very greatest importance in the world struggle against Fascism. It is the "Institute for the Study of Fascism." I have visited the headquarters of this institute, studied its program, and talked to those who are directing it; and I can, from personal observation, guarantee its work. I was much impressed by the personnel and feel that it is doing one of the most important jobs on the whole anti-fascist front. The institute is under the guidance of most distinguished writers, scientists, and artists. It assembles and analyzes the most important fascist documents and books whether published in Germany or elsewhere. It published a Bulletin in several languages, giving the most accurate and scientific information on the teachings of fascism. It also publishes most accurate scientific brochures on various phases of the fascist programme by leading jurists, anthropologists, historians, etc.

This Institute is a world clearing house for absolutely accurate anti-fascist information and deserves the support of all persons and organizations interested in exposing the dangers and scientific falsehoods behind the fascist menace. Its work necessarily requires funds. I know of no way in which those who wish to aid in fighting the menace of Fascism can put their dollars to better use than by supporting the "Institute for the Study of Fascism," 22 Rue des Fossés Saint Bernard, Paris, V.

Cleveland. LEO GALLAGHER.

An Improvement

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In reviewing *We Gather Strength,* in the April issue of Poetry: A Magazine of Verse, I assumed a rather critical attitude toward poetry printed in THE NEW MASSES. May I explain, for the benefit of those who might think I was referring to the weekly NEW MASSES, that the review was written over six months prior to publication. Since the time of the writing the entire editorial staff of NEW MASSES has been changed, and I now feel that under the new editorial arrangement there has been a tremendous improvement in the quality of poetry published, and that at last we may hope for a real revolutionary poetry movement in America.

WILLARD MAAS.

Staten Island, N. Y.

The Law and Labor

TO THE NEW MASSES:

It may not be commonly known that there is such an organization as the International Juridical Association. This group, composed largely of lawyers, interests itself in the law as it affects labor, the alien, the Negro and related subjects. It publishes a Monthly Bulletin which collects and comments on decisions and other legal developments within the field of its interests, and conducts forums dealing with these subjects. It does legal research for any organization that seeks to ameliorate the conditions of persecuted groups.

The organization is entirely non-partisan but has the interests of labor as its primary concern. Among your readers there must be persons who want to read our Bulletin and to help us in our research tasks. Subscription to the Bulletin is $1 a year; for those who want to work more actively, membership is open at an additional charge of $1. We should welcome an opportunity to send sample copies of the Bulletin or additional information upon request.

ISADORE POLIER,
Executive Director.

Two More Pamphlets

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Conversation with friends has convinced me that I omitted two very important pamphlets from the *Five-Inch Shelf of Booklets*: *Under Arrest, Workers' Defense in the Courts*" (5c) and Piatnitsky's *Twenty-one Points of the Communist International* (3c).

The first belongs under the head of Certain Vital Problems (anybody who has read of Dimitroff will understand); the second, belonging under the head of Party Controversy, explains the Leninist conditions which political parties must meet to be eligible for admittance to the Third (Communist) International. (The Twenty-one Points will be helpful to those who can't tell the difference between the United Front and Lovestone-Trotzkyist capitulation to reformism.)

This brings the list of the *Five-Inch Shelf* up to thirty-eight pamphlets — not too many, I hope, for real students of Communism.

OAKLEY JOHNSON.

Books

The Experts Help

EMPIRE IN THE EAST, edited by Joseph Barnes. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $3.25.

That the Far East, particularly China, is the sore spot in our world economy today is admitted by everyone. It is to acquaint the American people with Far Eastern problems, that this new book, *Empire in the East,* has been published through the efforts of the American Council of the Institute of Pacific Relations. The book consists of ten interrelated essays, each written by a writer who is supposedly an expert in his field. In the preface Mr. Barnes tells us that "the American Council itself is an unofficial body engaged in long term research and educational work. It passes no resolutions and works for no specific policies . . ." The futility of such an attitude toward any question is nowhere better illustrated than in this volume.

If the American people did read this *Empire in the East,* would they really learn what is going on in the Far East? Mr. Peffer, the writer of the chapter on "Peace or War," saves us the trouble of answering this question. He writes: "The point has been made several times in the preceding chapters that we have cherished vain expectations from the Far East . . . We have driven ourselves in aggressions on the Far East which have brought us to the verge of war and sometimes over. The event has demonstrated that the prizes were not worth the risks. All this is incontrovertible and also irrelevant for practical purposes." Precisely! Everything that went before in this volume was "irrelevant." Much excellent material, true. Many vital figures, true. But when you have finished reading them, you are just forced to say, "Well, what of it, what has it to do with the immediate situation?"

There is no intention to belittle the many important facts gathered in this volume. We merely argue with the approach to the problem, with what is done with these facts. Furthermore, we are enormously interested in those facts which seem to be studiously omitted. Of the ten essays, we recommend highly for their factual interest, Lattimore's chapter on "China and the Barbarians," Orchard's "The Japanese Dilemma," Barnes' "Soviet Siberia," Clark's "Changing Markets," Field's "Battle of the Bankers," and Peffer's "Peace or War."

Apparently, Mr. Peffer undertook in his last chapter to sum up for his colleagues. What he writes does not seem to me to follow from what preceded. But it is amusing to watch the complicated antics he goes through in order to avoid calling a spade a spade. He hems and haws and he haws and hems, but he cannot bring himself to say that the large bankers and industrialists who subjugate and oppress colonial and semi-colonial peoples are simply imperialist robbers. He cannot bring himself to say that it is the profit system of production which forces these imperialists to their bloody plunder. Here is the way he puts it: "In the nature of our society we of the West cannot literally get out of the Far East . . . If, under our present society, we cannot get out and cannot stay in without advancing irresistibly toward wars, the only alternative is to change the content and the direction of the motive forces of our society . . . In effect, this entails the recasting of our social forms . . . It means control over the movements of private capital to other parts of the world . . . it means the reorganization of our domestic economy so that it will no longer be necessary to find outlets, by means of national policies, for surplus production and surplus capital . . . But that drastic and fundamental changes are coming in any case is also self evident: either changes or catastrophe." We wonder what he means by catastrophe.

We now come to the vital difference between the authors of *Empire in the East* and ourselves. How can ten experts and observers of the Far East ignore entirely Soviet China and what it means to the struggling Chinese people, and how can they ignore the rapidly forming ring of intervention against the Soviet Union? It cannot be that they are blind. It cannot be that they are vicious, for then they would at least attack both Soviet powers. Can it be that the hand that feeds them guides them?

The Chinese Soviets in October, 1932, controlled one-sixth of the total area of China. In December, 1933, they increased that control to one-fourth of China and governed a population of approximately one hundred million. Soviet China has improved the conditions of the workers and peasants under its rule by leaps and bounds. It has established an eight hour day. It has organized over five hundred cooperatives. It has established thousands of schools for children and adults, supplying free education, free books, and for children free food. It has recently opened the Karl Marx University in Suikin, the capital of Soviet China. Soviet China has successfully withstood six powerful military campaigns led by Chiang Kai-shek with imperialist support. The Red Army has turned every offensive against the Soviets into an offensive against the Kuomintang militarists. Soviet China is the only force in China that is genuinely fighting for the national liberation of the country.

But what do our ten experts say about Soviet China? They mention it briefly only four times in single sentences in the entire volume: on pages 35, 111, 112, and 224. The first quotation speaks for all: "Such a catastrophe would mean a general spread of the so-called Communism already prevalent in parts of south central China, which is neither textbook Marxism nor Russian revolution, but the violence of collapse and despair, destroying every system that it can reach, Chinese or foreign." This sounds very much like what the new Japanese foreign minister, Koki Hirota said, before the Japanese Diet, on January 23, 1934: "Meanwhile we are watching, not without grave misgivings, the atrocities of the Communist Party and the increasing rampancy of the Red Armies in China."

There is also the matter of the fifty million dollar loan which the American Reconstruction Finance Corporation issued to Chiang Kai-shek about eight months ago in the form of a wheat and cotton loan. In reality China did not need wheat and cotton and the loan was for the express purpose of financing the attacks against the Soviets. The book under review mentions this matter parenthetically on page 138 merely to point out that this is one of the few loans which Chiang Kai-shek may repay.

And are our experts completely unaware that in the long run, regardless of the changing contradictions between the various imperialist powers, their great common enemy is the Soviet Union, and that on this issue they will unite as one? Are they unaware of the significance of the feverish military preparations in Manchuria and North China for an attack on the Soviet Union? Are they unaware of the latest move in Sinkiang by Great Britain, which has transformed that province into a British "Manchukuo" bordering on the Soviet Union on the west of China? Last June Viscount Ishii, head of the Japanese mission to the World Economic Conference, in a speech over the radio, commenting on the friendly agreements reached with Roosevelt, said: "Please remember that these regions (Manchuria, Jehol, and North China) are contiguous to a vast country—vast in area and vast in population—whose aim is to subvert and destroy the ideas and institutions and systems which you and we and most of the civilized world consider essential and even sacred."

If the authors of *Empire in the East* are unaware of these rapidly developing forces in the Far East, then they cannot claim to be experts. If they are aware of these facts and consciously avoid discussing them in the volume they have published, then we can come to only one conclusion—that they are supporters of imperialism.

JOHN PHILLIPS.

With Malice Towards None

ON THE SHORE, by Albert Halper. The Viking Press. $2.

On the Shore, Halper's second volume to be published (although it was written at an earlier date than *Union Square*), is a fairly closely connected series of sketches of the author's life in Chicago as taken from the vantage of New York.

Halper is a good writer. By this I do not mean that he is formed. Unlike Farrell and

Caldwell, let us say, he has not worked out a distinct style. But more important than this, he has no bias. I believe, however, that he has been unfairly criticized by revolutionary critics for *Union Square*. Mike Gold did not even give it a review by any sort of standard whatsoever. He spat on it. But there is no malice in Halper's work. *Union Square* was counter-revolutionary because of emphasis. So far as it went it was accurate enough. It gave one surface of literary and Communist life in New York. But it did not go deep enough. His treatment of the psychology of riots was definitely wrong, but all through the book were conversations heard in my own lifetime.

Halper's first published work of any length appeared serially in Pagany. *A Farewell to the Rising Sun* was a clever burlesque of Hemingway, but after the first few installments Halper became so engrossed with his style and subject matter that he outdid Hemingway and the work lost its genre.

Union Square was more on a dead level. *On the Shore,* on the other hand, is more substantially real. Essentially fervent material treated in a detached manner. *White Laughter* in it smacks of Sherwood Anderson. Parts or at least paragraphs of *Young Writer Remembering Chicago* are reminiscent of Sandburg. But the stories are often very good—for example, the one about a kid drowning because of pennies and the one where the Negro is murdered in Chicago markets right under the nose of the cops.

I feel that Halper's fate is still undecided. It is incorrect to merely attack him. He is sincere and honest and struggling. The trouble with him is that he tries to be too objective and detached. He relies upon emphasis rather than bias. And this is wrong. Every writer should have a bias. We can only hope that his bias may become Communist. For his own good and ours.

NORMAN MACLEOD.

The Church Whistles

THE GATES OF HELL, by Erik v. Kuhnelt-Leddihn. Translated by I. J. Collins. Sheed and Ward. $2.50.

Reminiscent of Hergesheimer's external gloss, of the bravura flair of Rafael Sabatini, and of the self-conscious cosmopolitanism of E. Phillips Oppenheim, this story, written in German by a young Hungarian but first published in English, is "an historical novel of the present day" wherein the Church Militant carries on the struggle against the heretics who foolishly believe themselves capable of breaking the power of God's authorized agents. "Where the Agitation Bureaux of the Communist International have sown, the Propaganda of the Faith will soon reap. That is precisely the tragedy of all heretics; that they are forever doing productive work for the Mother Church from which alone they derive all their ideas after all."

Purporting to tell the story of a Jesuit spy in the Soviet Union, the account is actually a vehicle for the distortion of the historical position of the masses and for slandering the motives and attainments of the victorious Russian proletariat. The sum total meaning of, literally, the hundreds of misleading generalizations and downright lies in the book is that Bolshevism must perish because it exists in a vulgar vacuum despite its dependence on the basic principles of catholicism—"the prohibition of usury, trade-unionism, or the idea of the guilds, (and) opposition to the Superman-complex of the individualistic Nietzschean school." The class basis of the guilds, the ecclesiastical alternative to individualism, and the capitalist rôle of the Church itself is, of course, not mentioned. Bolshevism, the solemn ukase declares, must perish; the Church will always remain a vital necessity; and the implication follows that something embodying the fundamentals of catholicism will supersede the unsympathetic "Anti-Christ of the Kremlin."

This undisguised invitation to Fascism, written by an isolated young neurotic hugging his miseries and raveling his maladjustments in the monotonous twilight of the disintegrating Church, panders to the hatreds and vices of a ruling minority which has glutted itself with the chattels of a material world while postulating at the same time the ecstasy of merging with a non-material Absolute. The Church whistles in the dark and hopes to be heard by the fascist barbarians, who are sufficiently "civilized" to recognize the advantage of having a worthy ally in lifting the swag.

PETER MARTIN.

Poets and Peasants

THE FOOL OF VENUS. The Story of Peire Vidal, by George Cronyn. New York: Covici-Friede. 438 *Pages.* $3.

Literature, especially in the narrative forms, has devoted itself in one way or another to the hero. We have had the saint as hero, the knight as hero, the conqueror as hero, the great lover as hero, the emancipated woman as heroine, the Victorian gentleman as hero, the reformer as hero, the artist as hero, and in our own immediate day the worker as hero. Since there is plenty of scope for heroism in the life of the worker, who has such an actual and cruel fight on his hands, the worker as hero provides an enduring and fertile theme for novelists.

The artist as hero, the chief theme of fiction before the depression, turned out a disap-

pointment. Try hard as they could, novelists found little that was heroic in their subject. Actually they were compelled to justify and apologize, to show that under the conditions in which he existed and worked, living a frustrated life in an unresponsive society and a degenerating political and economic system, the artist could not be heroic.

The Fool of Venus, though it is the story of a twelfth century troubadour, belongs to that vanished and unbemoaned era. It is an attempt again to present the artist as hero by finding him in a "heroic" age when noblemen themselves were often troubadours and when baser born poets received honors and sometimes slept with duchesses. And yet it is impossible, even for so determined an idol-carver as Mr. Cronyn, to quite achieve a hero. He has not the capacity, lacking certain basic narrative gifts, to make even a character. Vidal wears a costume and jerks through a series of marionette gestures, along with other marionettes fashioned from remembrances of Shakespeare, Froissart, Cervantes, Malory, and other writers of the courtly and the aristocratic.

The likelihood that the artist, unless he was a hero under another condition, was never a hero, is emphasized in this novel. He is, even as a troubadour, a dependent who begins his career as a clown and receives greater applause for juggling words than balls, because verbal feats are more entertaining to the masters. Artists can only hope to become heroes as artists, in a world without classes, and then they will need no compensating doctrine of the sanctity and majesty of art.

Here and there in the book are references to others than lords and ladies and heavenly singers. A peasant, for instance, is ordered to get a wolf-skin; in doing so he has a finger torn off, and is paid a few coins for his loss. Vidal puts on the wolf-skin in order to make an unconventional appearance before a lady. The incident is treated as comedy. Where were Mr. Cronyn's eyes when he arranged it?

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

The Old Freeman

A JOURNAL OF THESE DAYS, by Albert Jay Nock. William Morrow. $2.75.

Albert Jay Nock is ruddy, rational, a gentleman, a scholar, a clubman—cultured, critical, skeptical, gifted in mannered irony and its precise expression, not without incisive fire—the best Anglo-American model extant within that social octave between (1) the tart, cloistered Anglo-catholic schoolman and (2) the Bradford millionaire. He has prejudices, acutely selected from the tapestry of Western thought and separated from the whole with the apex of an angle subtended by an intellectual chord, J-J' (John Jay-Thos. Jefferson), —excuse these mathrobatics; this is close work; they're needed. That is to say: chill old-story integrity plus/contra reasoned democratic culture and humanity, dialectically meeting, firmly and literately expressed. Jay and Jefferson together form a compound mirror before which, if you get my idea, Albert Jay Nock the personality is accustomed discreetly to try on, adjust, rake, emphasize, and subdue his reasoned opinions, his cultivated antipathies, appraising each composed effect with a judicious, not wholly dispassionate eye. Fitting, too, now I think of it: Jay, progenitor of the body; Jefferson, ancestor of the mind; the heart and the head. Then one could imagine the sparks to be generated at that point where the Jay and Jeffersonian forces converging meet.

Fanciful? Personal? I think there is truth in it, nevertheless. In Albert Jay Nock the personality you don't find that putty-like amenability, with its concomitant never-exhausted capacity for self-justification, which is the essential characteristic of the Wellses and Lippmanns. Yesterday he recoiled in grim horror at the thought that men still visited Cambridge and shook the death-scorched hand of A. Lawrence Lowell; tomorrow he will not be of different mind. Yesterday he decided that confiscation of the profits of privilege would be necessary before democracy could be tried in fact; he has neither let his belief degenerate into economic theosophy as have many single taxers, nor has he tried to read its substance into the platform of some political opportunist as did Henry George himself. Tomorrow, as today, he will be pointing out that states are essentially antisocial, that politicians are their criminal servants, that liberals are their touts and procurers. And whatever he elects to say will be said in traditional English so exactly chosen, so finely cadenced and composed, and yet so seemingly casual and on occasion colloquial, that the language of the Babbitts, Phelpses, and Brownells will seem at once straitjacketed and tissue-thin by comparison.

But Albert Jay Nock's theory of the means to basic social change—the single tax—is uninstrumented and uninstrumentable. Historically social change has proceeded through class force contra class force, dialetically; and to think that it will be accomplished otherwise, as long as class exploitation exists, is virtually to deny the truth of the formal logic by which Mr. Nock sets such educational store. In the Georgian philosophy, however, the basic condition of social change must be established through propaganda, parliamentary advocacy, and the ballot, by and among persons in whom class compulsions must be superficial and the power of reason overwhelmingly supreme. In other words, for its successful realization the single tax requires an especially designed human race. Hence the single tax must remain a theory, irrelevant to the actualities of the social struggle, though satisfying as intellectual furniture to individuals who, being able to afford it, find themselves best pleased with the critical, peripheral, inert and comfortingly superior role of the sociocultural connoisseur.

In the work under inspection, a journal kept during eighteen months of the Roosevelt regime, the personality and connoisseurship of Mr. Nock are attractively and often stimulatingly displayed apropos current things and past. Now the author comments on the political news of a day, now on rural customs in Rhode Island; now the U.S.S.R. attracts his pen, now the anatomy of language, household horticulture, the opera, or the superstition attaching to the stair at the Club Anonyme. As he turns casually from mass turmoil to such trivia as engage the attention of seasoned men-of-letters or -about-town — savourers of the curious, the native, the quaint —one notes sociological blindspots: the state being a predatory instrument, no mode of society retaining the state form can represent much more than a change of rascals; no worthwhile social order can be established unless a temple of reason and sound culture is first established under the hat of each of its mature citizens—the "change in the heart of man," that insuperable difficulty posited by Tolstoy and other belated primitive Christians, including H. Brickell and J. W. Krutch, to render resignation mandatory; the nationwide struggle of the Left Wing against fascism among rulers and social-fascism among workers in a phenomenon too minor for mention. Some such blindspots are exhibited, others implied. Their existence moves one to reflect that to be uninvolved, after all, is not so much to be free as to be shut off in many respects from sociological reality. The penalty of a position above the battle is that it is likely also to be beside the point.

MURRAY GODWIN.

Without Plan or Purpose

THE MAKING OF THE MODERN JEW, by Milton Steinberg. Bobbs-Merrill. $2.50.

It is to be presumed that this book was written in answer to a growing demand for an adequate analysis of the position of the Jew in modern society. This assumption is most assuredly to be justified both from the title, *The Making of the Modern Jew,* and from the opening sentence: "The Christian world has alternately hated and idealized the Jew; it has never understood him." Further

support for this presumption, if further support is needed, can be gathered from the advertising copy on the dust cover. Of course this ought not be pressed too far, for dust covers are notoriously employed to throw dust in the eyes of the reader. But on the dust cover of this book one reads: "Both Jew and non-Jew will find this book absorbing from first to last. For both it is crammed with unfamiliar information . . . It is history shot through with poetry, glowing with dramatic intensity, enriched by penetrating psychological insight, and made compelling by the forceful logic of a learned and brilliant analyst."

Unfortunately it is none of these things. Rabbi Steinberg's attempt to unravel the Jewish mystery proves one of two things—either the writer is no magician or there is nothing in the hat. For this book is at its best only a retelling of familiar events in Jewish history—told perhaps with a slightly more felicitous literary style than generally characterizes Jewish history writing. And at its worst—and it frequently descends to its worst—it is a confused and tiringly repetitive bit of special pleading for a lost cause. The reader is never quite sure of what it is that Rabbi Steinberg wants to say about the varied course of Jewish history; he sketches with sympathy the attempts of the Jews to take advantage of the increasing liberty that is given to them with each advance in a civilized order of society; and then he castigates them for doing that very thing. Part of the time Rabbi Steinberg is driven to admit that both internally and externally the character of Jewish life is changing; and then again he indulges in a nostalgic yearning for the past when those changes were not inevitably forcing the Jews to a choice and a decision which Rabbi Steinberg is not able to comprehend thoroughly. You cannot have it both ways.

The secret of Rabbi Steinberg's confusion comes with his final chapter in which he tries to advocate the position of conservative Judaism. This is a Judaism without plan or purpose. It can best be described as a sand bar on which life cannot be sustained and which is cut off from the sources of supply by the murky waters of orthodoxy on the one hand and the rising tide of change on the other. None but weaklings would permit themselves to stay in such a perilous position.

The great error of this book, and of many others that have been written and will be written on Jewish subjects, now that Hitler has focused attention on the Jews, is that it has no philosophy of history. One must be sure of the forces that make humans act as they do, and of the sort of social order that is to be desired, before one can be qualified to "understand" the course of history. Failing to posit such fundamentals this book becomes what Rabbi Steinberg somewhere calls Jewish life, " a record formless and inchoate; a tortuous wandering through dark and labyrinthine caverns."

A real study of the Jews is needed, but it must be made with a thorough appreciation of the basic role of economic forms in determining the inward and outward development of a minority people. Rabbi Steinberg would do well to read Karl Marx and to devote more than a few scattered sentences of confused praise and condemnation to that experiment hall which is today called the Soviet Union. And his description of Jewish life would gain enormously if he understood that one cannot talk of "the Jews," but must make a distinction between Jews who have property and those whom Michael Gold has called "Jews without money."

BENJAMIN B. GOLDSTEIN.

Recollections of Roumania

EASTER SUN, by Peter Neagoe. Coward-McCann. $2.

For several years Peter Neagoe has been publishing his stories of Roumanian peasant life in the little magazines, and they have made something of a stir among those few critics who follow the profession of guessing who will be among the finds of the future. And certainly Neagoe's stories have stood out from the run of little magazine writing; they have had about them a peculiarly unforced vividness that is utterly remote from the manipulating of Faulkner's horror-tales and even more foreign to the ordinary lot of plodding accounts of agrarian habits that are so fantastically boring to urban readers.

Neagoe's stories, however, have been remote from an infinitude of other matters besides; fundamentally, despite sharply fresh writing and impressively alive character-creation, they have limited themselves to the usual picturing of village activities, much as though each village were an isolated outpost of humanity, without ties of any kind with any other community in the world. *Easter Sun* is unceasingly alive with plot; yet I have been wondering why, after it has been read through, it seems to have been as fragmentary as the slightest of Neagoe's sketches. The truth is that it remains a picture, even if a rather long and turbulent one.

Ileana is a girl of extraordinary beauty, regarded with a worshipful awe by the young men of the village, on all of whom she looks with disdain, and regarded with a profound jealousy by the women. It is the latter who start the legend that she is possessed by the devil, and she is so unprecedentedly beautiful, and so haughty, that the men readily believe it. All except Tedescu, the hunchback school teacher, who is a comparatively educated man. Ileana becomes still more aloof, and when one day, in the nearby city, where she has gone to sell in the market, she meets a well-to-do young peasant she is ripe for love. Serafim Corbu is accustomed to success with women, and the fact that he is engaged to a girl who will bring him a sizeable dowry has no restraining effect on his attitude toward Ileana. The village girl comes to rely on him completely, the more so that conditions in her home have grown unbearable for her, since her father, taking up the gossip of the neighbors, has begun to rave about the Evil One. Disillusionment follows, of course. At the end Ileana rides away with the patient Tedescu, leaving an insane father and a village full of relieved peasants.

This is superb realistic writing. Nevertheless one puts aside its realism and wonders about a reality that is excluded as rigidly as though the book were pure fantasy. There is no sign of any kind here of that Roumanian Fascism which surely should have some influence over both the minds and the bellies of any such group of villagers living a few miles from a city.

The jacket reports that Neagoe lives in Chatham, New Jersey, and apparently he writes from memory of a rather distant past. The omissions that are forced on him should not hurt him with the critics who study the little magazines; they will probably hail his novel with a smug delight as though his omissions were deliberate.

CLIFTON CUTHBERT.

The Methods of Madness

THE RACIAL MYTH, by Paul Radin. Whittlesey House. $1.50.

In a critique of the feverish romanticism and grandiose narcissism that characterize the race theories of Nazi Germany mere scientific refutation of doctrine is inadequate; one must also uncover its social and economic roots.

This Radin has done and not without discernment and pungency. Defending the Marxian thesis with a frankness and vigor unprecedented in American anthropological literature he develops upon the essential fact, evaded by ivory tower social scientists, that the current fostering of these palpably irrational myths is an aspect of "the last wild attempt to stave off the impending transformation of the economic system." In the background of his entire discussion of race mythology is his conclusion that we are at a turning point in human history in which either the constructive realism of Soviet Russia (he still speaks of it as "the Russian experiment") or the destructive romanticism of Hitler's Third Reich must prevail. His application of the Marxian method is by no means consistent throughout the essay, and his attempt to wed it with the Freudian method sometimes leads to tenuous formulations and a confusing terminology. But his expressions of revolutionary sympathies are trenchant and explicit.

The book is effective polemics rather than an attempt at a definitive analysis of the racial myth. It is chiefly concerned with tracing the broad currents of cultural history from the Stone Age to the present. For in Nazi Germany all history is being rewritten in terms of the official creed that race determines cultural development and that the Nordic race alone has been responsible for civilization. Even the cultures of ancient times in Asia and in Greece—when the Northern races were actually primitives "decapitating thistles on the shores of the Baltic"—are being attributed by Nazi historians to the work of Nordic conquerers of the native populations and the decline of these cultures is laid to unrestrained mixture of races. It is against these unconscionable distortions of history that Radin directs his proofs that the influence of race on culture is nil; that persons of all races, nationalities, and religions have contributed to the advancement of civilization. He does not deal alone with German racial and nationalistic claims but with race superiority myths throughout history, and thus he shows the close tieup of the rise of economic nationalism and cultural nationalism in all European capitalist countries. To explain the peculiar intensity of the Nordic myth, he offers the hazardous judgment that it is a "compensation myth of confused late comers," having its origin in the feeling of inferiority derived from the fact that the Northern races did not actively participate in civilization until its fundamental bases had already been established. Underestimating the virulence of white chauvinism and the extent of nationalistic symbolism in the United States, he is surprisingly sanguine about the situation in this country.

Many pertinent refutations of the fundamental assumptions of Nazi race theory are scantily treated; the telling points that there never was an Aryan race and that the Germans are not to any appreciable extent Nordics are stated almost as asides.

BERNHARD J. STERN.

Stevedore

MICHAEL GOLD

THE Theatre Union has just produced its second play, *Stevedore,* by Paul Peters and George Sklar, and has established the fact that here at last the American revolutionary movement has begun to find itself expressed adequately on the stage.

It was a long time coming, this consummation. The streak of shoddy liberalism that stultified such fellow-travelers' ventures as the New Playwright's Theatre is absent from this organization, also the groping amateurism that hung like a doleful curse over many of the first workers' theatre groups, and blighted their sincere will-to-revolutionary-drama.

Stevedore is not a perfect script or production. The same can be said of the Pulitzer Prize plays of the past ten years. We have as yet no Shakespeares among the American playwrights, nor any Meyerholds or Max Reinhardts among the directors.

But isn't it a glorious thing to be able to say to bourgeois Broadway: here, from the depths of our poverty, without your resources of high-salaried stars, and publicity men, and hundred-thousand-dollar budgets, and all the rest of the rhinestone-studded machine, working against all the odds of class prejudice and the skepticism of bourgeois critics, the struggling revolutionary theatre has matched you technically?

Yes, many a Broadway crap-shooter in the theatre arts will see *Stevedore* before its run is over, and will undoubtedly marvel at its last scene, and speculate on how he can make money with it on Broadway. I would advise him not to try the transfusion: the red blood of this passionate giant will not mix with the sickly fluid that flows in the veins of his pampered invalid. It's not merely a technical trick, Mr. Shyster; the play is a unity, and comes out of a new world. It has something new and of terrific importance to say; and a thousand of your play-carpenters putting their sly brains together could never learn how to say it.

All week a "race riot" has been brewing. The Negro stevedores have been organizing into a union with the revolutionary white workers. The shipping bosses have brought in gangsters to break it up, and as ever, the race question has been used for a red herring. Some slut of a white woman has been cheating on her husband, and her cheap Romeo wants to break with her. They quarrel, and he smacks her around in good Southern style. She screams hysterically, her husband finds her, and to hide her guilt she says a Negro has attacked her. Immediately there is a round-up of Negro workers, and the shipping bosses are glad to use the newspaper excitement as a means of crushing the young union.

One of the more militant stevedores, Lonnie, is the chief victim of their persecution. The white organizer saves him from lynching. But the lynching spirit is whipped higher and higher by the boss-gangsters, and finally culminates in a pogrom.

It is here that the play mounts to its magnificent climax. The Negro workers decide to defend themselves. They won't run away and hide like rabbits. They won't let the whites kill them with impunity, burn their houses to the ground.

The white organizer arrives. Many of the Negroes will have nothing to do with him; he is white, therefore an enemy. But this cool, strong Leninist leader does not argue; he merely informs them he is going to get the other white workers to help defend the barricade.

They build a barricade, and arm themselves with bricks, lumps of coal, table legs, and rusty old shotguns. The women boil water to pour on the boss-gangsters. The tension is almost too much to bear, and makes one want to climb over the footlights and grab something, too.

The white boss-gangsters arrive, and yell their foul taunts. But the Negro workers stand their ground like men; and when the gangsters begin shooting, they answer them. It is a tremendous battle scene that is staged here, exciting because it falls into no mock heroics. These are plain, hard-working, good-humored people such as you and I know, and they are fighting for their lives. You want to help them; and when big, lovable, motherly Binnie who runs a lunch-room and bosses the husky stevedores with her spicy tongue, picks up an old gun and pops off one of the gangsters, the audience cheers. It cheers not only because a brute is dead, but because something has happened in the soul of a working-class mother.

Lonnie is killed. But Blacksnake, a powerful giant, assumes the leadership. The white boss-gangsters are winning in this uneven battle of bricks against automatics, when Lem Morris, the union leader, arrives with the white stevedores. And black and white workers unite, for the first time on an American stage, to beat off their common enemy. The boss-gangsters are whipped. "They're running!" Blacksnake cries joyfully. The play ends, but this powerful image of Negro and white working-class unity is stamped upon one's mind forever. This is what has happened in life; and this is what must be made to happen. It is really one of those unforgettable experiences in the theatre, the thing that makes the theatre, at its high moments, a supreme teacher of the masses.

But it isn't only in its climax that this play demonstrates its proletarian power. The work scene on the dock, when the stevedores are piling sugar sacks at midnight, under the glare of electricity, is one of those portraits of a

new and vital world that has not reached the stage hitherto. It is real, and the rhythmic work-chants that Paul Peters listened to while working on these same docks in New Orleans, are the pillars of a new poetry. We don't want the stale Belasco realism on our proletarian stage, that seizes surfaces and hoards soulless objects like a miser. The mechanics of photography are only a means to an end. In this dock scene in *Stevedore* I believe a start has been made toward a new poetry of working-class life.

The scene in the union office, with its single mimeograph machine, is another sketch full of vistas and instigations. No attempt was made to show the red banners, and pictures of Lenin, and the benches and tables one might find in such a union hall. Instead, there are two workers turning out strike leaflets on a mimeograph. To anyone who knows the revolutionary labor movement, there is something quite touching in this dramatic focus on the mimeograph. Nobody has yet written poems to this humble little machine, this primitive printing press that has called so many workers to demonstrations and picket lines, wounds, danger and victory. It has exposed many a horrible injustice when all the great million-dollar presses were silent; it has traveled secretly in the stokehold of many a ship, it lives in cellars of Hitler Germany, it is the voice of the Alabama sharecroppers and the friend of the coal miners. It was good to see it cast as one of the heroes of a proletarian play, with a glamorous spotlight beating on it, and making it a figure of the imagination.

Stevedore, I repeat, is the most successful attempt at a proletarian drama we have yet had in America. The Theatre Union, with its professionalism, its insistence on technique, its policy of low prices and organized audiences, is the ablest group that has yet attempted to build a revolutionary theatre here. The New York workers have begun to realize this, and it is wonderful to see and hear them in this theatre, joining with the actors in nightly demonstrations of feeling. There has never been anything like it in the bourgeois theatre, this mass participation.

A play like *Stevedore,* and the background in which it has been born, satisfies all of one's dreams of what a worker's theatre might be. It has reached that point of skill where it becomes a mass-force, in this case, a call to action for Negro and white solidarity in the class struggle. The issue isn't clouded, befuddled with literary embroideries as it has been in some of the earlier experiments by fellow-travelers. All is direct, honest, and politically conscious.

Yet this is only a beginning. The rough plastering still shows of the new house. *Stevedore* is crowded with those set "propaganda" speeches that are really a technical blunder, in any playwright's play. It is not the content of these speeches that one objects to, but the fact that they are not worked into the action skilfully enough. We are just beginning to learn things in America, and one of the things a crystallizing Marxist criticism of literature is teaching us is that the dialectics of action and imagery are the tools of literature, and not the "idealistic" speeches that are superimposed like decorations; in other words, the structure must be functional, it must teach its own moral. When it fails, all the added words and speeches in the world will only further bungle the matter.

Stevedore has this structure, but did not seem to trust in itself or the intelligence of its audience sufficiently, at various points.

It has another fault; that of its lapses into photographic realism in dialogue. The dream of every playwright is to wed the crude raw truth of life with the shining splendor of poetry. The American theatre has suffered year after year from plays whose dialogue was written by hacks incapable of writing a business letter. The proletarian drama is epic, heroic, satirical, poetic, in its aims and content; it must of necessity find a different speech than the drab prosy naturalism of the Broadway merchants. Writers like Sean O'Casey have indicated what this new speech might be; though, of course, when it is done badly, it becomes pretentious, false, and like the worst of O'Neill, which is worse, everyone admits, than Sam Shipman at his worst.

But we will yet have poetic drama, we will have beauty, and depth, and splendor in our proletarian theatre, even as now we have more strength and meaning than all the Broadway gamblers and racketeers. This is just the beginning.

It is a splendid beginning. Michael Blankfort, who directed *Stevedore,* is a discovery in the theatre. He has handled technical problems that would be bungled by several dozen big Broadway names, and has carried them off with fine imagination. There is a memorable cast, of whom Georgette Harvey and others are well-known, though Rex Ingram, who plays Blacksnake, seems to me on his way to equal fame. He shapes up like another Gilpin or Robeson, in this, his first important role.

Go and see this play, by all means. You can buy a seat for as low as thirty cents, and you will be participating in one of the most exciting adventures that has thus far happened in the world of revolutionary art. It will be something to tell to your Soviet grandchildren; how in 1934, in the depths of the crisis, there was a great surge of worker's art, and the beginnings of a revolutionary theatre, and a battle play called *Stevedore,* that brought Negro and white workers into closer brotherhood of mutual understanding.

Let's Show Our Teeth

ROBERT FORSYTHE

MR. ROCKEFELLER'S boys were serving a particularly juicy helping of tripe at the Radio City Music Hall last week. It is something called *Stand Up and Cheer* and it has Warner Baxter as the hero who pulls the nation out of the depression by standing up and cheering. I know, but you'll simply have to take my word for it or go see it yourself. The idea was suggested by Will Rogers. Does that give you a clue? In short, the crisis is only a state of mind. If we can forget our troubles and learn to be happy again, ten million men will go back to work tomorrow. A new cabinet post is established: Secretary of Amusement. We have a bounden duty to be happy. Mr. Rogers is happy. The polo ponies are happy. Mr. Hearst is happy but a little apprehensive. The crisis seems to be something like Prohibition. It was put over on us when the boys were off to war. The blue noses who insist on being unhappy are the people to watch. And there is a plot. Mr. Baxter, the Secretary of Amusement, is being plotted against. About this time, if you've been able to follow it at all, you get cock-eyed. Who are the plotters? The terrible Communists pointing out that no laugh in the world was ever louder than the sounds from an empty stomach? Not at all. They are the Big Interests who gather around a table and maintain that you can't laugh a man back to work and that no smile ever compensated for a severe case of malnutrition.

Some of the daily reviewers regretted that the producers felt it necessary to make the film the usual musical comedy rather than the satire it might have been. But it was never intended to be a satire. They conceive of the thing as a serious business and it is played exactly in that fashion. The satiric shafts, if any, are aimed at the old fogies who can't be convinced that all we need do to get back to 1928 is to show our teeth.

The finale is a triumph for laughter and jollity and half-wittedness. There is a mysterious horseman galloping across the horizon representing Paul Revere or Benedict Arnold or possibly John Hay Whitney. Marching straight into the camera with their vapid faces wreathed in Hollywood-extra smiles are representatives of this great nation. And here the producers had another problem. A crowd of people is just a lot of people in a crowd. You must distinguish them in some way. So the marchers in the film are soldiers, sailors, policemen, nurses in uniform, street cleaners, school

children (having plenty of time to march, what with the schools being closed), Scottish kilties, more sailors (on leave from Riverside Drive), Boy Scouts, eight locomotive engineers with their overalls creased and a marcel, eight Hollywood farmers and three hundred assorted chorus girls representing (a) the D. A. R., (2) the Campfire Girls, (3) the Athletic Girls of the New Era, (d) Virtue and (e) Billy Minsky.

On the good side were several of the dance routines, at which Hollywood always excels, and the knockabout team, Mitchell and Durant, who represented two senators sent to remonstrate with the Secretary of Amusement and who practically annihilated one another in the same criminal act they used to do in the vaudeville houses three times a day. Hollywood can be some good to somebody, anyhow. It will put ten years on the lives of those gentlemen. There is also another four-year old wonder, Shirley Temple, who is not allowed to be as vulgar as the usual film youngster.

After coming this far I have only one more word to say: If you're in the neighborhood of New York, forget that you ever heard of motion pictures. Go down to the Civic Repertory Theatre and see *Stevedore.* Ladies and gentlemen, what a play!

Between Ourselves

SAMUEL ORNITZ, who is completing the second half of *In New Kentucky,* asks us to say that the song *The Hungry Miners Blues* was written by Aunt Molly Jackson, during the miners' struggles in Kentucky several years ago.

He writes: "I had taken it for granted that the song was well known to the readers of THE NEW MASSES since I had incorporated it in several articles with full acknowledgments; also it was published in *Harlan Miners Speak.*"

Ornitz expects to finish the play in a few weeks. Meanwhile the Group Theatre in New York is reading it.

John Spivak is back in New York, making arrangements to publish a book based on his stories in THE NEW MASSES. He got in ahead of his later stories, of which there are nearly a half dozen still to come. The next one will appear in THE NEW MASSES May 8.

Robert Gessner, author of *Upsurge, Massacre,* and *Broken Arrow,* has been down in the anthracite district of Pennsylvania and has a story to tell. We have material to present on the doctors, nurses (12 hours work a day, seven days a week), druggists, architects, and—in short, we need a 48 page paper.

Granville Hicks' next article in his series on *Revolution and the Novel,* which deals with "Selection and Emphasis" will appear next week.

Emjo Basshe, who was one of the dramatists who organized the Playwrights' Theatre of several years ago, is the author of *Earth* and *The Centuries.*

Oakley Johnson formerly was an instructor at the College of the City of New York.

Charmion von Wiegand is an artist and journalist.

Benjamin B. Goldstein, formerly a rabbi in Birmingham, Ala., was forced out of his position there due to his activity in the Scottsboro case.

A benefit dance recital for THE NEW MASSES will be given May 27 by Tamiris, revolutionary dance leader and her group at the City College Auditorium, 23d Street and Lexington Avenue, New York.

A Timely

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Marguerite YOUNG

Washington Correspondent of THE NEW MASSES and the Daily Worker.

Joseph NORTH

One of the Editors of THE NEW MASSES

Harry GANNES

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Literary Editor of THE NEW MASSES

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(The meeting will be over in plenty of time to attend the Film and Photo League Movie Costume Ball at Webster Hall where there will be dancing until 3 A. M.)

New Masses Lecture Bureau Activities

●

SEVERAL speakers have been added to THE NEW MASSES Lecture Bureau. Among them are Jerome Hellerstein, chairman of the Research Committee of the International Juridical Association; Edward Dahlberg, novelist.

☞ Clubs and Organizations should get in touch with us regarding dates and the unusual terms on which they are available.

☞ Stanley Burnshaw, one of the editors of THE NEW MASSES, has started on his extended lecture tour. After speaking in Rochester, N. Y., April 26 and Detroit, April 28, his itinerary will be:

CHICAGO—MAY 3, 1934—8 P. M.
at
Medical and Dental Arts Building Auditorium
185 North Wabash Avenue
on
"CULTURE AND FASCISM"
Auspices Pen and Hammer

MILWAUKEE—MAY 5, 1934—8 P. M.
at
Conservatory Hall
Wisconsin College of Music Building
on
"REVOLUTIONARY LITERATURE IN THE UNITED STATES TODAY"
Auspices John Reed Club

MADISON, WIS.,—MAY 6, 1934—
at
Memorial Union
Auspices National Student League

DAVENPORT, IA.,—MAY 7 or 8, 1934—
at
Bakery Auditorium
on
"CULTURE AND FASCISM"

Burnshaw expects to speak in St. Louis May 9 or 10, in Indianapolis May 13 and then will go on to Cincinnati and a number of other cities.

New Masses Lecture Bureau
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THE NEW MASSES
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by Agnes Smedley

Agnes Smedley is a revolutionary writer who spent many years in China and was there when Soviet Republic No. 2—Soviet China—was established.

The AMERICAN SCENE

by John L. Spivak

The labor journalist who contributed "A Letter to the President," "Wildcat Williams" and other stories during his tour of America for THE NEW MASSES has several others ready.

A SHORT STORY

by James T. Farrell

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