

new
Masses

JULY 31, 1934

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JULY 31, 1934

SOVIET RUSSIA has become the yardstick by which even capitalist observers must measure all attempts at social planning. Thus, when half the United States is in the grip of the worst drought recorded, and a plan for a reforestation belt—1,000 miles long, from Canada to the Texas Panhandle, and 100 miles wide—is announced in Washington, the plan, enormous though it be, must be classified as the greatest of its kind ever undertaken *outside of the Soviet Union*. The reforestation plan will take ten years to complete, however, and meanwhile the drought is here. The insanity of curtailing crops in an effort to control the capitalist "law of supply and demand," and thus raise prices, now becomes fatally evident. Let the drought continue into the middle of August, when it will be too late for quick-growing forage crops, or for soy bean planting, and the population of a vast area of the United States will face a winter without feed for cattle, without food for humans. One million six hundred thousand persons in the drought area are now reported completely dependent on relief to keep from starving. There may be five times that many by winter. The A. A. A. will still have a source of consolation, for prices are up and will go higher. The financial ruin of the farmer, as a self-sufficient unit in the capitalist system in the United States, is pretty nearly complete.

ON his arrival to the United States, Ewald Ammende, General Secretary of the notorious anti-Soviet propaganda agency which parades under the camouflage humanitarian name of Inter-Confessional and International Aid Committee for the Starvation Districts in Soviet Russia, told a horrendous tale of suffering and famine in the Soviet Union. To Ambassador Troyanovsky's rejoinder that "there was no starvation in the Soviet Union" and his advice to the Vienna Aid Committee to evince a little more humanitarian concern with Austria's own victims of drought, unemployment, and hunger, Ewald Ammende, in a letter to the New York Times, again proclaimed "in the most categorical terms" that his Committee, "of which the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna, Dr.



Limbach

Innitzer, is the president, and whose members are among others the head of the Lutheran Church, Dr. Stoekl; the chief rabbi of Vienna, Dr. Feuchtwang, and the leaders of all the other churches and denominations of Vienna, is an organization which pursues purely humanitarian aims and which has nothing to do with any political aspects of propagandistic actions directed against any State and especially not against the Soviet Union." Mr. Ammende just loves the Russian masses, and he will brook no one's interfering with his determination to help them. He went to England and enlisted the aid of the Archbishop of London, the chief rabbi of London and

similar lovers of the Russian folk, and now he has come here to stir the American "humanitarians" into "bringing help to the starving districts of Russia before it is too late, and thus to avoid that again millions of innocent human beings should die there from starvation."

BUT the ungrateful Bolsheviks again spurned Mr. Ammende's gracious offers. Speaking for his Government, Peter Khrisanfov, Attaché of the Embassy of the U. S. S. R. in Washington, assured the American public, in a letter to the Times, that Mr. Ammende's solicitude was "wholly superfluous," that "the sown area this year was the largest

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in the history of the U. S. R. R." and that, "in spite of the drought in some sections, the harvest is expected to compare favorably with the bumper crop of 1933." This statement of the Soviet embassy did not deter the editorial scribe of the Times from indulging in long and doleful ruminations about "millions" of peasants who "are in sullen revolt" against the Soviet regime and collectivization. Minimizing the ravages of the drought in this country and the criminal insanity of our capitalist government in its policy of destroying food-stuffs while millions go hungry, the Times, on the basis of the flimsiest rumors, hastened to lucubrate about the failure of Socialism in the Soviet Union! A few doubtful figures shuffled with some palpable lies, and the Times leaps to the wish-fulfilling editorial conclusion that "Russia is facing a Winter and Spring of famine!" Now news comes pouring in both from Harold Denny in the Ukraine and from Walter Duranty in Moscow and from practically all the other European and American correspondents in the Soviet Union that the food supply this winter will not be inferior to that of last winter and that the drought was defeated by the unprecedented discipline, organization, timely resowing, and careful harvesting of the collective farms. These reports prove incontrovertibly that "the only existing alternative" to the chaos, helplessness, and devastation of the Old Order, the Capitalist Order, is the New Order, the Order represented by a Union of Workers' and Peasants' Republics of the world. We shall wait very anxiously for another editorial in the Times reversing its position on the basis of the reports given by its own correspondents. But we suspect we shall wait in vain.

THOSE who need more evidence to convince themselves of Nazi culpability in the Reichstag fire, should turn to the testimony of Roehm's personal servant, E. Kruse, Storm Trooper 134-522, as reported in the July 23 issue of the London Daily Herald. According to Kruse, who is now himself a fugitive from Nazi "justice," he is the last survivor of the ten incendiaries who set the Reichstag on fire. Kruse's story implicates Roehm, Ernst and Heines directly (Ernst and Heines lit the celluloid strips attached to the explosives) and also General Goering (the incendiaries used Goering's Presidential Palace to enter the underground passage leading

to the Reichstag). He gives details showing how Van der Lubbe was duped by promises of being released secretly and sent to America with a large fortune after an arrest and sentence to satisfy public opinion, as well as how all the men involved in the fire mysteriously vanished one after another. His story is so much in character with Nazi procedure that its authenticity can scarcely be doubted. Still, Kruse's confession is something of an anti-climax. After Hitler's most recent atrocities, even the Reichstag fire appears a piddling performance.

ARE the leaders of the Socialist Party determined to lend aid and comfort to the enemy? On July 1 the Central Committee of the Communist Party suggested to the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party a joint conference of representatives to discuss ways and means for effecting a united front against war and Fascism and a defense of the elementary rights of American workers. The Socialist Party ignored the letter. Two weeks later the New York District of the Communist Party sent a similar appeal offering to call on the Socialist Party three days later or at any other convenient time. The Socialist Party ignored both the letter and the delegation's visit. With the outbreak of Fascist terror in the Pacific Coast General Strike, the New York District sent a second letter repeating its request and emphasizing the urgent need for immediate united action. This letter also was ignored. Throughout the country Communist Party districts have been approaching Socialist Party locals, generally without success. By its present passivity and silence the Socialist Party leadership in the United States is convicting itself of the same policy which in Italy, Germany and Austria led to Fascism. That a united front between the Communist and Socialist parties is essential has been conclusively demonstrated in all Fascist countries. That it is both possible and effectual, the united front achieved in France between the Socialist National Council and the Communist Party has clearly proved. And that united action can be effected in the United States has been recently demonstrated by the united front of Socialists and Communists in Camden, N. J. It is now up to the rank and file members of the Socialist Party to force their leadership to repudiate its present policy—a policy which in actual practice is permitting disruption of the working-

class at a time when the firmest unity is essential.

CAUGHT in an international economic crisis from which they cannot return even to capitalist normality, the capitalist nations look to two "ways" out of the crisis. One is seizure of one another's colonial markets. The world scene is alive today with economic and diplomatic conflict leading inevitably to war. British imperialists arm Germany in their struggle with French imperialists. Italy leans toward England as she struggles with France for control of the Riff. The Versailles bloc is cracking up. Germany and Poland have signed a Ten-Year Treaty. Belgium is being drawn into the British-Italian bloc. Italy, Austria, and Hungary have signed the Rome Pact. Japanese capitalists challenge British imperialist domination in China with a declaration of sole hegemony over Eastern Asia. Japan as principal dumper conflicts sharply with the United States and Britain in world markets. American capitalists fight British capitalists in the war raging in the Chaco. Across these war alliances and conflicts among the imperialist countries cuts, however, a war alliance of all against the Soviet Union. Almost day by day the imperialist powers shift their alignments as their irreconcilable economic conflicts are shadowed by common opposition to the country of the proletariat. But meanwhile they race headlong in war preparations. Japan has increased her armaments by 5 million pounds of equipment, Britain by 5 million pounds, Italy by 8 million pounds, Germany by 27 million pounds. Here in the United States the Roosevelt government has voted the heaviest war budget in the history of the world. More than \$1,300,000,000 is being spent on armaments. The Civilian Conservation Camps are militarizing homeless American youth. Twelve thousand factories have been inspected, approved, and placed on the War Department's key list as prepared to begin war production at once.

THE second main effort of the capitalist class is to shift the burden of the crisis onto the working-class. In Italy, Germany, and Austria the capitalist class has employed the oppressive methods of Fascism to accomplish this. In the United States, as the working-class becomes more militant and makes efforts to throw off the burden of the crisis, the capitalist class' State machin-

ery crashes down with outright terror. Workers' democratic rights have been attacked, striking workers have been shot down in Toledo, San Francisco, Minneapolis, working-class leaders have been railroaded, like Angelo Herndon, for long prison terms, and professionals who have sought to expose the workings of capitalist courts have, like John Howard Lawson, been arrested and charged with criminal libel. In San Francisco's General Strike Fascism swept through the struggle in attacks on peaceful meetings, destruction of left wing union headquarters, wholesale arrests of strikers by police, National Guardsmen, and thugs. Clearly, for the working masses, the workers, farmers, intellectuals, of the United States, war and Fascism are not the way out of the crisis. Their natural opposition must, however, be crystallized, unified. In such united action as the August 1st demonstration against war and Fascism under the leadership of the Communist Party, and the August 4th march under the leadership of the American League Against War and Fascism, this unity is achieved. These are steps on the march to Soviet power, the only way out of the crisis, for the working masses.

IN scores of street battles, the past year, strikers have hurled at the police the taunt: "Why don't you get

Dillinger?" It didn't seem to the strikers that police primarily hired to suppress crime need be quite so active with gas bombs and riot guns directed against workingmen struggling for a decent life, while Dillinger, the headline-created super-bandit, roamed at large. Now, in a Sunday lull between the shooting of strikers in Minneapolis and the enforcing of Fascist terror in Bridgeton, N. J., the police have got Dillinger; and a lovely spectacle they have made of it. Newsreel cameras; first-person stories in the tabloids by the chief man-hunters; a revolting exhibition of the dead criminal's body to thousands of curiosity-seekers (while his bewildered old father tries vainly to get the corpse turned over to him for burial); bids by enterprising impresarios for souvenirs to exhibit for a price (one man offered \$1,000 for his bloody shirt)—by every measure of current capitalist entertainment the exit of Dillinger was a glorious success. By every tenet of psychology, also, Dillinger's career and taking off, dramatized by the press and all other publicity agencies, is certain to breed more Dillingers. Already one youngster, attempting a holdup (and killing a man doing it) has announced: "I'm the new Dillinger." We haven't got, and can't give, a blueprint of the future Communist society, which would be exact on any one detail. But we can be fairly certain of this, that

such a society will not produce Dillingers; nor, if one should emerge, prove itself quite bankrupt of common sense and decency in dealing with him.

THAT pure artist, G. K. Chesterton, is represented by a mystery story, *The Crime of the Communist*, in Collier's. "The Professor of Theoretical Thieving, otherwise the Communist," is suspected of the murder of two pacifistic millionaire philanthropists who have come to inspect Mandeville College with a view to founding a "Commercial Chair to the memory of William Morris"! There is much talk of a "physical force revolution," and a professor of chemistry, engaged in devising secret poison gases, thinks that "Socialism is sentimentalism; and more dangerous than a pestilence, for in that at least the fittest would survive." The professor of T. T., "a wild man" with a "jarring laugh," is thus described by that master Catholic mind, Father Brown: "He only wanted to destroy the Ten Commandments and root up all the religion and civilization that had made him, and wash out all the common sense of ownership and honesty; and let his culture and his country be flattened out by savages from the ends of the earth." But lest our readers misunderstand this to be propaganda, we must reassert that Chesterton is an un-uniformed and pure artist (despite his services as a War Jongleur with such poems as *The Wife of Flanders*); at the end we learn that the Crime of the Communist was not committed by the Communist at all but by the college's speculating bursar! Let us hope that Chesterton will split Collier's honorarium fifty-fifty with the Catholic and Apostolic Church.

WORD comes from Moscow of the death of one of the leading Soviet musical educators and composers, Davidenko. His death comes at the age of thirty-five, just as his great work in developing music for the masses was beginning to bear fruit. Instructor in the Moscow High School of Music, Davidenko was a leading force in the organization of musical education in the U.S.S.R. Davidenko's compositions include many of the most popular Soviet mass songs, notably the *Red Cavalry Song* which has been frequently sung here by the Freiheit Gezung Farein. Davidenko's chief work, his opera *1919*, upon its first performance was hailed as the fullest realization of revolutionary music since the founding of the Soviet Republic.

new **Masses**

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Published weekly by the NEW MASSES, INC., at 31 East 27th Street, New York City. Copyright, 1934, NEW MASSES, INC., Reg. U. S. Patent Office. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission. Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y. under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies, 10 cents. Subscription, \$3.50 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months \$2; three months \$1; Foreign \$4.50 a year; six months \$2.50; three months \$1.25. Subscribers are notified that no change of address can be effected in less than 2 weeks. The NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers, in prose and verse, and of artists. MSS must be accompanied by return postage. The NEW MASSES pays for contributions.





William Gropper

The Time to Fight Is Now

THE West Coast capitalists have given the signal. The clubs, the guns, the gas, the raids—all the apparatus and technique of American Fascism are here. The Vigilantes, whether in San Francisco or Bridgeton, New Jersey, are the potential Storm Troopers. Their ranks need only to be extended and organized on a permanent basis, to be given an “ideology.” They already have their aspiring “Fuehrers.”

Democracy under capitalism functions with relative success during periods of economic stability. But when capitalist economy is staggering under the weight of its manifold contradictions, when workers offer effective resistance to exploitation, then “democracy” goes by the board. Then the capitalist class rules openly at the point of the bayonet. We are face to face with this threat in America today.

Fascist raids on the headquarters of San Francisco working-class organizations, the statements of the press, the failure of any governmental agency to disavow the happenings of the past ten days—it is clear that America is face to

face with Terror. And here in the East—only two hours’ ride from New York—at Bridgeton, N. J., Vigilantes tried, on July 12, to lynch Donald Henderson, organizer of the embattled farm workers.

General Johnson who last week was “literally made ill” by the Hitler atrocities, this week calls a general strike “civil war” and demands the ruthless suppression of all “subversive elements” to whom he politically applies the generic term “rats.” As for Secretary of Labor Perkins, when questioned concerning violence against strikers, she said, “Sometimes violence comes from one side and sometimes from another.” When the Vigilantes began their raids she pussyfooted, “I’m confused about the whole thing. I don’t know what occurred. I don’t know what the word Vigilante means. I don’t know what their relations to the police are.” As for the police who “mopped up” after the Vigilantes, arresting all militant workers in sight, she said, “If a felony has been committed they have the right to raid without a warrant.”

At this writing more than 500 mili-

tant workers and Communist Party members are in jail on the West Coast. The New York Times declares editorially, “Doubtless there must be some more ‘mopping up’ in other cities. . . .”

The history of recent years shows that suppression of ALL opposition groups follows suppression of the Communist Party.

So it was in Italy, in Germany, in Austria, in all lands where Fascism is in control. If the Communist Party is forced underground, then the militant labor unions, the “Progressives,” the “Federal,” A. F. of L. unions, follow. Then the organizations of honest intellectuals. Then complete suppression of all opposition to the ruling class. All sections of American society suffering from monopoly capitalism must come to the support of the Communist Party and help fight off the terror.

We do not say that this suppression of all working-class organizations is inevitable. The attempt is inevitable. It has begun. There is no time to lose. What we have warned of time and again has begun. The time to fight is NOW.



William Gropper



William Gropper

Is Roosevelt Backing the Terror?

THE OPEN LETTER to President Roosevelt which we print below is an attempt to find the answer to this question.

The names signed to it represent only those few whom we have been able to reach personally in the last several days. When President Roosevelt returns from his vacation we intend to present this letter to him, signed by many thousands of names.

We call on all readers of THE NEW MASSES who sup-

port our fight against the threat of Fascism in the United States to sign the letter. Get as many others as you can to sign it, and send the signatures to THE NEW MASSES.

In order not to subject any of the signers to possible reprisals by the rapidly developing "Minute Men," "Vigilantes," and other varieties of fascist bands which American capitalism is now organizing, we shall not print addresses.

But we want signatures, thousands of signatures, to the Open Letter to the President!

TO PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT:

A series of illegal raids on workers' organizations on the Pacific Coast has been given the sanction of the Federal government by the provocative statements of General Johnson. Workers have been assaulted, arrested without warrant, their offices and equipment wrecked. We regard this as the introduction into industrial conflicts of openly Fascist methods with Federal government approval.

It is common knowledge that employers throughout the country are organizing so-called vigilante groups to intimidate and suppress all attempts of labor to better its conditions. In the absence of any word of censure from the head of the government this tendency toward terrorism against workers must gain headway.

We call upon you to disavow any Federal sanction for the raids on the Pacific Coast, and for the provocative statements of General Johnson, which have fostered these violent assaults upon the fundamental rights of the workers to organize.

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The Week's Papers

WEDNESDAY—William Green, A. F. of L. President, announces the San Francisco general strike was "unauthorized" and just "a local issue, of no national significance." . . . Raids continue on Pacific Coast on Communists. . . . Senator Wagner, arriving in Portland to "mediate" strike, is fired at by a guard at dock. . . . United States District Court restrains N.R.A. from enforcing its order that L. Grief and Bros., Baltimore clothiers, must pay \$100,000 in back wages to workers. . . . Moscow-bound plane flying from Chicago, forced into Lake Erie by motor fire. . . . Jersey farm strike may be resumed. . . . Renewed drought hits Southwest and Midwest States. . . . Textile strike begins in Alabama. . . . Minneapolis truckmen's strike continues.

Thursday—Betrayed workers call off San Francisco general strike. . . . Militia mobilized in Portland. . . . Three unionists wounded at Decatur, Ala., while seeking to picket a mill. . . . One hundred and ten persons in movie industry last year received more than the \$75,000 of a President, one actor getting \$315,000. . . . Edward Young Clarke, former K.K.K. official, sentenced in Jacksonville, Fla., to five years in jail for mail frauds. . . . Harriman Hosiery Mills in Tennessee regain Blue Eagle under "arbitrated" N.R.A. strike settlement. . . . H. P. Whitney estate appraised at \$62,808,829 net. . . . Margery Randolph Daniel, aged 8, must not spend more than \$20,000 a year until she's 12, court rules.

Friday—Alabama textile strike involves 22,000 workers, more than 50 mills. . . . Postoffice reports profit of \$5,000,000 for fiscal year, first no-deficit year since 1919. . . . Cold-blooded police attack on Minneapolis striking truck drivers kills one, injures 68. . . . Seattle police, led by Mayor Smith, hurl tear gas into ranks of dock picketers, use guns and clubs. . . . San Francisco truckmen vote to resume work. . . . Newspaper Guild charges Long Island Press violates recently signed agreement with editorial workers. . . . National Industrial Conference Board admits June production and trade declined "more than seasonally." . . . Wholesale commodities prices leap upward. . . . New

York dock workers and seamen continue strike deliberations.

Saturday—President Roosevelt allocates \$15,000,000 for 100-mile wide, 1,000-mile long forest shelter belt from Canadian border to Texas Panhandle, largest project of its kind attempted outside Soviet Union. . . . The good, old-fashioned "pioneer spirit" will bring America out of the depression, Henry Ford says. . . . Massachusetts Institute of Technology announces a secret liquid chemical has been perfected capable of dispelling fog. . . . Truce declared in Minneapolis strike. . . . Portland strike continues. . . . S. S. President Grant refused clearance papers in Seattle because non-union crew was considered inadequate and unsafe. . . . Company's retort was many ships had cleared with even less of a crew. . . . Harriman mill workers vote to reject N.R.A. "compromise." . . . Negotiations for disposing of Soviet Union-U.S. debt question will start in Washington next week.

Sunday—Eighteen dead, 16 injured in bus crash near Ossining, N. Y., caused by defective brakes known to be dangerous. . . . War Department aviation committee recommends increasing army plane strength from present authorized number of 1,800 to 2,320. . . . Federal agents kill John Dillinger in Chicago street when Dillinger emerged from a movie. . . . One hundred and ninety-six of those arrested in San Francisco raids on Communists are still held in jail cells. . . . Roosevelt, on vacation cruise, nears Hawaii. . . . Film actors and actresses teach indecency and undermine morals of boys and girls, says the Rev. Russell M. Sullivan in Boston. . . . Prospect of small wheat and corn crops leads to wild speculation in grain markets. . . . N.R.A. committee asserts employers must give work to "handicapped" workers or government will have to pension them "at enormous public expense." . . . National Economy League says country must stop its "emergency" expenditures or "printing press" inflation will be resorted to. . . . Steel ingot production drops to 27 percent of capacity.

Monday—Kansas farmers begin moving 200,000 head of cattle out of drought stricken territory. . . . San Francisco longshoremen will vote on arbitra-

tion offer. . . . Police convoy strikebreaking trucks in Minneapolis. . . . Anti-picketing injunction directed against Furniture Workers Industrial Union in Jersey City strike is vacated by Federal Court. . . . General Foods corporation net earnings for first six months of 1934 were \$5,822,712. . . . 54-hour week work for chauffeurs is proposed in taxi-trade code. . . . New York and foreign bankers consider bolstering Hitler's tottering regime through a loan from the United States. . . . Washington orders S.S. President Grant cleared.

Tuesday—Commissioner George E. Allen, Washington, D. C., personally investigated many of country's breadlines and Federal relief bureaus. "Snooty administrators antagonize needy," he asserted. "Communists listen to the distressed, fight for them, and that's what relief officials should do." . . . Proposed strike of 30,000 Aluminum Company workers postponed as company agrees to "consider" demands. . . . Rather than carry out Labor Board order to reinstate men fired for union activity (which led to strike of 1,800 at Hopewell, Va.,) Tubize Chatillon Corporation says it will close plant permanently.

The State of the Nation

APPROXIMATELY 20 men will be employed on the Union Park sewer for a 5-cent package of smoking tobacco a day, City Engineer Butler announced Wednesday.

Butler told the city council that he was able to use the single men who stay at the federal transient depot on the project if the city purchases them tobacco.

Commissioners Colburn and Hendricks opposed hiring the men no matter how little the cost.

"There are plenty of Spokane men who need tobacco," Colburn argued. "We ought not hire outsiders."

"The men are here—doing nothing," said Butler. "We might as well use them."

After the council meeting, Butler said that he would employ the men on the nickel-a-day basis.

—*The Spokane (Wash.) Press,*
July 18, 1934.

Fascism in the Pacific Coast Strike

WILLIAM F. DUNNE

SAN FRANCISCO.

THE general strike of all unions, except railway and electrical, in San Francisco, Oakland and the Bay counties—which followed the general strike of marine transport workers in practically all Pacific Coast ports, big and little, reaching from Seattle to San Diego—is now history. All its far-reaching results cannot be appraised in this article. Neither will we deal here with the important question of the various parts played by the class forces and their representatives involved in this great struggle. Here we will take up only two points:

The demagogy with which the attempt was made to cover utter reaction and the organizational methods by which fascist bands were set up to carry out the campaign of red-baiting, house searching and wrecking, beating, union smashing and mass arrests numbering, as this is written, some 500.

It must be remembered, if there is to be any real understanding of the issues in both the strike of the waterfront workers and the general strike, that the waterfront employers among whom are listed the Standard Oil Company with its great tanker fleet and other big oil companies, more or less dominating the other shipping and stevedoring concerns, were engaged in their favorite pastime—they were waging an open-shop campaign. This is the point from which everything else in the strike situation started.

The Communist Party, explaining to great masses of aroused workers the meaning of this drive in connection with the whole capitalist offensive under N.R.A., and getting a tremendous response resulting in the forming of a militant left wing core among the waterfront workers, was endangering the success of the open shop drive. The arbitration issue which later arose was simply a maneuver on the part of the waterfront employers aided by the President's board to confuse and divide the strike ranks.

It is obvious that such questions as that of union-managed hiring halls for longshoremen can under no circumstances be arbitrated simply because this demand expresses the difference between the open shop and the union shop. It is exactly for this reason that the waterfront employers at first agreed to arbitration of all questions. This is why the reactionary union officials on the general strike committee also agreed to it.

It is also the reason why *the longshoremen refused to arbitrate this issue*. This is why it became the breaking point between the reactionary and the left wing leaders like Harry Bridges.

Essentially the issue was the right of workers to organize and manage their own unions. It was understood as such by practically all

workers in the struggle and of course by the employers and their puppets in public office.

The Communist Party and its Western Worker—which for a time was the official organ of the waterfront strike committee—appeared as the most conscious and militant champion of the right to organize and the union shop.

Acting Governor Merriam was, from the first day of the strike, the pace setter for the campaign against the Communist Party—which he tried at all times to identify with “subversive aliens”—and against the more advanced section of the working-class. In a public statement which called for the organization of “citizens’ committees” to aid in driving back the threatening plague of famine,¹ violence² and indescribable terrors still unleashed, Merriam did, so far as this writer is aware, an unprecedented thing: He referred in his capacity as acting governor to the fact that Harry Bridges, responsible head of the striking longshoremen, and an Australian by birth, was an alien. Merriam said:

It should likewise be remembered that I did not order the California national guard to proceed to the San Francisco water front until I had received notice from an alien (Harry Bridges), speaking in behalf of the striking longshoremen, that further operations by the state of California of its state-owned Belt Line railroad along the state-owned harbor would not be “permitted.”

The Acting Governor had preceded these remarks on the strike situation by saying:

A more active and intensified drive to rid this state and nation of alien radical agitators should be undertaken by the workers themselves if they are to enjoy the confidence of the people. (Workers are not people evidently.—B. D.)

“It is the plotting of such alien and vicious schemers, not of the legitimate and recognized objects of bona fide American workers, that has intensified and aggravated our labor problems.”

Truly a calm and dignified statement from the governor of a great commonwealth!

When it is recalled that every union involved in the strike was affiliated to the American Federation of Labor—with the exception of the Marine Workers Industrial Union—it will be seen how little the government officials of American capitalism care about the proprieties of their relations with the “bona fide” labor movement when these organized workers are on the offensive to establish their right to work and live, and the right of their organizations to exist and function.

¹ At no time was there danger of a food shortage.
² All violence of a major character was instituted by the police, troops and fascist bands.

Concretely the demands of the unions were:

Those of the I.L.A.—control of hiring halls; union recognition; higher pay and shorter hours.

Those of the Seamen's Union—control of hiring agencies; union recognition; higher wages, shorter hours and better working conditions.

The other maritime trades had struck in sympathy with the longshoremen and had made their own demands relating to wages, hours, working conditions and union recognition.

The general strike was in support of these unions and their demands; against the use of the National Guard to protect strikebreakers; in protest against the police assault in which two workers were killed and thirty-two wounded by police bullets.

There certainly are no insurrectionary demands here—unless the attitude of the employers and their state is such that these modest demands—of a standard American trade union character—are considered tantamount to a declaration of civil war against the employers and their government.

Now, in regard to demagogy and hypocrisy—the one expressed in approval of bona fide demands, the other in *concern for the welfare of “the people”* whose confidence may be shaken in some 100,000 workers taking part in the general strike in the Bay Counties:

Just who is Acting Governor Merriam?

In answering this question we can afford to believe the Sacramento Bee, published in the capital of the state of which Merriam is acting governor, right under his nose, in fact. He has not as yet taken any action against this paper as a result of an editorial published by it on July 16 which said, among other things, in speaking of the political situation:

Today these forces of retrogression, owing to a peculiar succession of political circumstances, threaten to dominate the state again. And they have chosen as their candidate Acting Governor Frank F. Merriam, a man they can depend upon entirely to do their bidding.

Merriam has been the willing aid of the corporate interests of the state since he began his first term in the legislature in 1916. In 1924 it was his vote, upon which the progressives had counted, that caused the defeat of the King tax bill. . . . Merriam's vote was always on the side of big business . . . he has always been hand in glove with a little group of diehards . . . *the chore boy of the Chandlers and Reguas*.

There is more of this, but this will do. It appears from the above record that as far back as 1921 Merriam sold out his own colleagues for the money and influence of the power trust. (We are not dealing here with the virtues or lack of them in the so-called progressive group.) It seems clear that Acting

Governor Merriam is what workers in their crude way call a rat.

It is this sterling character that sounded the call for the righteous to rally for the struggle against Communism and militant foreign born workers. It was this noble soul that was worried about labor losing the confidence of "the people." It was this Galahad that gave official sanction to the organization of committees and roving bands of corporation hangers-on for the purpose of strikebreaking, hunting down and beating Communists and other workers. It was this creature of the power trust who, together with Mayor Rossi of San Francisco, urged on the fascist storm squads to the raid of workers' homes, the slugging of strikers, the destruction by armed bands of the halls, headquarters, furniture, banners, books and pamphlets, musical instruments, of everything found in workers' clubs—the destruction of cultural collections paid for by workers' dimes and pennies over many long years.

Brave acts these! Heroic persons who perform this great service to society! A striker is known to have a gun in his home. The police arrest him. They take his gun away and release him. He goes home. He is there a few minutes and an armed band breaks in, drags him out and beats him into unconsciousness.

The police are "unable" to find the assailants. So widespread did their form of terror against striking longshoremen and their families become that E. S. Dietrich, chairman of the legal committee of the I.L.A., informed Judge Lazarus that he had instructed stevedores to arm themselves at home, after several of them and their wives had been beaten, and the police seemed unable to catch those responsible (San Francisco News, July 19).

Judge Lazarus was very helpful. He asked Dietrich "to furnish the police with the names of the assailants."

Who were these "assailants" the police "seemed unable to catch?" How were they organized? How did they operate?

The answers to these questions are of great importance since they furnish a sort of blueprint of the byways by which fascist organization is developing rapidly in this country, appearing in rather definite forms in decisive labor struggles.

It is of course impossible to prove at this stage that the anti-red and anti-labor movement which reached its height in California during and after the general strike in the Bay Counties, but which swept up and down the entire coast, was financed directly by the big waterfront employers out of the \$2,000,000 fund they are known to have raised for the fight against unionism.

But it is morally certain that out of the huge total of daily strikebreaking expense some percentage was diverted to financing the activities of the fascist bands. A letter from the head of the Water Front Employers Union (!) fell into the hands of the I.L.A. in San Francisco. A facsimile of this letter was published in the *Western Worker*. From



this letter we learn that the total *daily* expense for strikebreaking in San Pedro alone—the port of Los Angeles—was \$7,000. Multiply this by thirty and we get a total of \$210,000 per month or approximately \$2,000,000 per year. There were times when Hitler was glad to have as much as this at his disposal.

When the general strike broke in the Bay Counties the total daily and monthly expenditures of the employers and their various agencies must have been many times the total expended for like periods in San Pedro. That the various forms of terroristic organization have not lacked funds furnished by the employers one can be sure.

A month or two before the waterfront strike, and increasing in tempo as the strike involved ever larger numbers of workers and the influence of the Communists and left-wing forces increased, there was to be noticed a general tightening up of the police agencies. Raids and arrests mounted in number.

Shortly before the general strike the American Legion organized an Anti-Red Week. Partly to carry through the anti-Red program and partly developing out of the general anti-labor activity around it, there was organized a so-called Citizens' Committee, mainly to broaden out the campaign, but also because of the opposition of a number of Legion posts, where the membership was composed principally of longshoremen and other workers, to the whole campaign which they correctly estimated as a strikebreaking weapon.

Following Anti-Red Week a number of sub-committees were organized. They were to handle such matters as names and addresses of known reds, publicity, finance, general espionage (intelligence service) forms and methods of terror, liaison with other organizations, etc.

Within the County Council of the Legion a close committee was formed to handle all these matters. It was known as the Anti-Red Committee and is said to have consisted at various times of from 10 to 30 members.

When the Crime Prevention Bureau of the San Francisco Police Department was reorganized and became the Anti-Radical and Crime Prevention bureau headed by Captain O'Mara, the Legion Committee through its Citizens' Committee established direct working connections with it.

Selected members of the sub-committees were given about 75 photographs and alleged records of known and suspected Communists. They were given orders to locate, trail and spy upon the person whose photograph they had. They were required to submit detailed reports.

In this way the Legion Anti-Red Committee and its various sub-committees became to all intents a part of the police department, the members devoting themselves mainly to anti-labor espionage.

When the general strike was called Mayor Rossi formed his Constitutional Committee of Five Hundred. Mayor McCracken of Oakland raised the ante considerably and called upon *all* "good citizens" to register for service. It is claimed that some 3,000 registered in response to this call—not a very impressive number for a city which claims some 300,000 population.

The Legion's Anti-Red Committee was largely taken over by and amalgamated with the enlarged Citizens' Committees. The members of these organizations have at least a semi-legal standing and the full backing of the so-called constituted authorities. The members of the Legion's County Council sub-committees have the status of deputy sheriffs or special police. This is not because of any great regard for legality, but chiefly to place any of their worker victims who resist their attacks in the position of resisting an officer of the law.

The operations of these various committees are purely fascist in type. That they resemble also the former activities of the Ku Klux Klan is no contradiction. The outstanding principle of the heroic defenders of capitalist law and order who make up these committees is to take no chances.

This was the principle invoked for their guidance by General Hugh Johnson in his now famous Phi Beta Kappa speech at Berkeley University which gave the signal for letting loose the terror campaign which Acting Governor Merriam and Mayor Rossi had already organized. Johnson referred to "the one-half of one percent of the population" which was not going along with the glorious New Deal. He told his audience that "it would be safer for a cottontail rabbit to slap a wildcat in the face than for this one-half of one percent of our population to try to strangle the rest of us into submission by any such means as this."

"The people," said General Johnson, "would act to wipe out this subversive ele-

CARRY ON!



J. Collins

ment as you clean off a chalk mark on a blackboard with a wet sponge," if the federal government did not act. Labor, said the general, "must run these subversive influences out from its ranks like rats if it is to retain the respect and support of the American people, etc., etc." "Bloody insurrection" was in progress he said.

At the moment the General spoke, about one percent of the population was running this country for its own benefit—for the benefit of its little clique of millionaire monopolists.

Two strikers had been murdered by police and professional thugs. Thirty-two had been wounded by gunfire. There were some 5,000 national guardsmen on the waterfront with tanks and artillery. Thousands of regular and special police were mobilized from Seattle to San Diego. There could not have been less than 30,000 fully armed police and troops against 100,000 unarmed striking workers.

It would seem that these citizens who were opposing the strike openly were fairly well protected without further organization of a fascist character. But General Johnson's speech gave government sanction to what will in all probability prove to be, not the birth of actual fascist terror in America, but something more than that—the first widespread ranging on the loose of this bestial child of capitalism in decay.

On the day on which this is written I have just read of last night in Berkeley. The San Francisco Call-Bulletin reports gleefully "that a mob of 300 men smashed into a Communist hall at 1819 Tenth Street, wrecked four pianos and a radio, splintered several hundred chairs and destroyed a \$1,000 library."

The same paper reports further: "The crash of shattering window glass awakened the residents of 25 widely scattered Berkeley homes early today as emissaries of a mysteri-

ous 'citizens' purging committee' cruised the city and hurled brick-tied notes of warning. 'Leave this community immediately or drastic action will be taken.' " The notes listed as undesirable "communists, bolsheviks, radicals, agitators and other anti-government groups."

The same paper reports approvingly:

"In San Jose, a crowd of 300 vigilantes, cruising around Santa Clara County in automobiles, captured ten known communist leaders, beat them severely and threatened: 'This is just a sample of what you will get—if you're not out of here by dawn.'"

Two facts must be noted: One, the fact that this is *not* "mob" action. It is not an outraged citizenry rising en masse to scotch what they believe, rightly or wrongly, to be a danger of such dread that any measures are justified. This is organized action by less than Johnson's one-half of one percent—although of course the press does its best to create a sympathetic background for it.

Two, one must note again the fact previously referred to, that is, the cowardly character of the attacks—the overwhelming outnumbering of the prospective immediate victims and the outright vandalism of these committees.

The Berkeley atrocities show that the attacks are by no means directed only against itinerant agitators. The workers and other persons who were so courteously warned to leave that fair college town have homes and have lived there for years.

As in Germany, these attacks are directed first of all against the most advanced section of the population—the revolutionary section, Communists and other class conscious workers and intellectuals.

The rest will follow if these onslaughts are

not checked. Trade unions and all other forms of working-class organizations will be next. (In San Francisco these same committees entered the homes of striking longshoremen and beat them and their wives.) Unions which do not resist the present capitalist offensive, intensified as the crisis in the N.R.A. program deepens and the business barometer drops, will not be attacked just yet. But the moment their members are compelled to strike rather than slowly starve on the job under the present wage and working conditions, the Red Scare will be raised and the fascist bands will ride against them.

Anyone who does not understand the meaning of the events dealt with above endangers the united front against fascism. Those who play down the menace of Fascism in the United States are helping to clear the bloody trail it will mark with the bodies of murdered workers.

Let us understand once and for all, on the basis of the wealth of evidence now in our hands from practically every state in the union, with California heading the list, that *the Roosevelt administration*, by word and deed, is *encouraging* and condoning the organization and use of fascist bands against Communists first of all, but against every section of the working-class which resists the onward march of its program of hunger and war as the way of the crisis its masters and their system created.

"The sane and conservative" union officials who welcome and aid these fascist manifestations and acts as a weapon against the hated reds in the labor movement are really helping as their kindred in Germany did, the forces making for the destruction of the unions.

This must be made clear to every American worker organized and unorganized.

American Rhapsody

KENNETH FEARING

He said did you get it, and she said did you get it, and they said did you get it,

at the clinic, at the pawnshop, on the breadline, in jail, shoes and a roof and the rent and a cigarette and bread and a shirt and coffee and sleep—

Reaching at night for a bucket of B. & O. coal among the B. & O. flats in the B. & O. yards,

they said there's another one, get him they said, or staring again at locked and guarded factory gates; or crouched in a burglarproof loft, hand around a gun; or polite, urgent, face before a face behind a steel-barred cage,

All winter she came there, begging for milk. So we had the shacks along the river destroyed by police. But at the uptown exhibit a rich, vital sympathy infused the classic mood. When muriatic acid in the whiskey failed, and running him down with an auto failed, and ground glass failed, we finished the job by shoving a gastube down his throat.

Next year, however, there might be something definite,

Mountains or plains, crossroads, suburbs, cities or the sea, did you take it, was it safe, did you buy it, did you beg it, did you steal it, was it known,

Name, address, relatives, religion, income, sex, bank account, insurance health race experience age

out beyond the lunatic asylum on the city dump; on the junkheap, past the bank, past the church, past the jungle, past the morgue,

where rats eat the crusts and worms eat the satins and maggots eat the mould

and fire eats the headlines, eats the statements and the pictures, eats the promises and proofs, eats the rind of an orange and a rib and a claw and a skull and an eye,

Did you find it, was it there, did they see you, were they waiting, did they shoot, did they stab, did they burn, did they kill—

one on the gallows and one on the picketline and one in the river and one on the ward and another one slugged and another one starved and another insane and another by the torch.

After Hitler—What?

I: Hitler's Rise and Decline

WILLI MUENZENBERG

I WANT TO start by outlining with telegraphic brevity the conditions in Germany that existed before Hitler was given power by Hindenburg. Ever since 1928 Germany has been in the throes of an extremely serious economic crisis. The effects of the Treaty of Versailles, the effects of losing the war, the effects of the Dawes Plan and the Young Plan were felt with extreme severity in Germany. In 1932, for example, there were from eight to nine million permanently unemployed workers in Germany, and five to six million white collar workers, engineers, artisans, etc., who were receiving public relief. This serious economic crisis of the entire industry of Germany was supplemented by a very grave budgetary crisis, with one municipality after another going into bankruptcy. All of these circumstances led to a very serious clash within the ranks of the bourgeoisie.

In 1932 the bourgeoisie undertook the Schleicher experiment in an endeavor to get a real mass basis for its class rule. It failed to get such a mass basis as Schleicher had intended, a basis extending from Gregor Strasser for the Nazis to the reformist trade unions in the person of Leipart.

The rapid growth of the National Socialist Party, the whole development of its movement in this period, was to a great extent the work of Goebbels. It is important for us to study the propaganda work of Goebbels and the methods he employed, both before Hitler came to power and now that the Hitler Party is on the road to decline.

There were two major forces supporting the Hitler Party in its struggle for power: 1—The armed forces of the S.A. and S.S., typified by Roehm and Heines, and 2—The propaganda machine of Goebbels. We must remember that the smallest share in the obtaining of power by the Nazi Party was the share of Adolph Hitler himself. Adolph Hitler is neither a scientist, nor an economist, nor a theoretician, nor a statesman.

But the demagogic propaganda of Goebbels did succeed in bringing masses of middle-class elements, peasants and certain sections of workers under the influence of the Nazis. It may seem strange, dumb and crass as such propaganda was, that it won the masses. But it did, and the extent of its crassness can be seen from this: the Hitler Party through Goebbels issued leaflets—they issued leaflets to the peasants promising that the big estates would be divided up and they would get more land. At the same time the Hitler Party sent confidential letters to the Junkers promising them that their big estates would be increased by lowering their taxes, introducing new methods,

etc. It issued leaflets to tenants, telling them that they would pay half the rent they were paying, and at the same time it told the landlords that when Hitler came to power the rents would be doubled. It promised every group in the population what that group desired. And, strange as it may seem, they all believed it. Therefore it is understandable that the Hitler Party was successful, temporarily, in getting certain masses of workers.

Thus in 1930-1931 the Nazi Party succeeded in getting a real mass basis. But in that period the German Social Democratic Party had been declining steadily. It lost in every election. Its trade unions were losing members at a catastrophic pace. Finally, when the Prussian Government was overthrown in the *coup d'état* of July 20, 1932, and Severing let himself be bounced by two soldiers coming into his office and telling him he was fired, Social Democracy's last iota of prestige disappeared. The masses who had followed it began to go either to the Nazis or to the Communist Party.

The Communist Party in the ensuing winter of 1932-1933 began to win the masses at a rapid rate. It began to attain very considerable successes in its tactic of the united front. The economic difficulties grew worse than ever before. A financial catastrophe involving the whole country threatened. The Schleicher experiment of getting a mass basis for capitalism on the plan of bourgeois democracy failed, and in view of this financial and economic situation finance capitalism was forced, under all circumstances, to lower the living standard of the working-class if capitalism in Germany was to survive.



WILLI MUENZENBERG

Selma Freeman

It was inevitable that Hindenburg, the Junkers and the big business men decided to turn over Germany to Hitler. Hitler took power hoping to become the sole power in Germany. But Hindenburg, Thyssen and the Junkers took certain guarantees to make sure that they retained the real power. They saw to it that they had the majority in the cabinet, holding the key positions; that they kept control of the Reichswehr and that their private army, the Stahlhelm, was not dissolved.

But the strategy of Hitler and Goebbels, on the other hand, was to get the sole dictatorship for the National Socialist Party. During the first few weeks of the Hitler regime they unfolded the most violent wave of chauvinist demagogic propaganda, nationalistic propaganda, the propaganda of "One People, One State, One Party." This propaganda was aimed at displacing the rule of the Hindenburg-Thyssens through the rule of the Nazi Party leaders alone. Thus the program of the Hitlerites was to secure armed support through building up the S.A., the Storm Troopers. They moved to eliminate the Reichswehr from all influence on politics. They set the Reichstag on fire in March in order to scare the voters of the middle-class and get a majority in the March elections of 1933.

But since Hitler came to power the situation in Germany has changed very considerably. He promised to realize true Socialism in Germany, a German Socialism. He promised work to the workers. He promised the middle-class relief from the burden of taxation and the economic difficulties weighing them down. He promised he would return the Saar and the Polish Corridor to Germany as a part of German territory, and that he would nullify the restrictions of the Versailles Treaty.

But Hitler hasn't been able to solve a single one of these difficulties or fulfil a single one of these promises. Not a single one of the economic or social problems facing Germany when he came to power has been solved by the Nazi regime. When Hitler came to power the Communist Party of Germany predicted that it was impossible to patch together the capitalist crazy-quilt and reestablish a sound capitalism in Germany. But there were 20 to 30 million people in Germany who didn't believe it couldn't be done. They believed it could be done and that Hitler could do it.

But in the ensuing months of the Hitler regime the peasants, artisans and middle-class became dissatisfied, more particularly the peasantry. One of the factors making for serious dissatisfaction among the peasantry was the passage of the so-called "Hereditary Farm Law," according to which no farmer could



WILLI MUENZENBERG

Selma Freeman



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ever lose his land through foreclosure, no farmer could sell his land, no farmer could mortgage his land, and the land could only be transmitted to the oldest son. This meant that the other children of the farmer were destined to go begging in the street after he died. This led millions of peasants to begin grumbling against Hitler. And this year, with the bad crop, with the drought they suffered, the government has been compelled to take severe measures regarding farm produce, and this has intensified the dissatisfaction which is breaking out into open revolt.

Another step was the persecution of the Jews, which, through the contacts the Jews had, made it possible to mobilize world opinion in a decisive form against the Hitler regime.

Hitler also suffered one defeat after another in foreign politics. His emissaries went to Paris, to Washington, to London, trying to establish the Hitler regime as having saved Germany from Bolshevism. But Paris looked at Roehm with his 2,500,000 to 3,000,000 armed Storm Troopers, and to them the danger of 2,500,000 armed Germans seemed greater than the statements about having saved the world from Bolshevism. The world imperialists did not give him the support he had expected on the basis of this claim.

Hitler never succeeded in penetrating the working-class to any great extent. In his last speech brought over the radio July 13 he was forced to admit that Communism is alive throughout Germany. We remember when Hitler came to power he said he would destroy Communism in one hundred days, and later he said it was already destroyed. Now he is more modest in his radio speech; he says it will take one hundred years, and that he will fight it one hundred years if necessary. But I am equally sure it won't take so long, because it won't be one hundred weeks before the workers of Germany have swept Hitler off the map.

Then Hitler's final prop of support: what he still had left after dissatisfaction had penetrated the other sections—the National Socialist Factory organization on which he had counted—two-thirds of them voted against Hitler in the Shop Council Elections a few months ago. Then his armed force, the Storm Troopers: an increasing ferment in the Storm Troops can be observed all over Germany. There is a difference between the Storm Troops of today and those of two years ago, when they were outspokenly murder columns: columns of students, bank clerks, lumpen-proletarians, retired officers and non-coms of the former army who went out to murder Communists. But when Hitler and Roehm, dreaming of an expanded Germany, turned the Storm Troops into an organization of two or three million armed men, they were forced to take workers into the Storm Troops. They were forced to take in the masses of the population, and this led to their ruin.

They were forced to take in Socialists, Communists, members of the former trade unions; and the Communists of Germany method-

ically, deliberately, went into the Storm Troop organization. We went into it to smash that organization from within by bringing the spirit of revolt into the Storm Troops. We issued leaflets all over Germany for the Storm Troopers, issued by Communists who are members of the Storm Troops. I need only refer to the Rote Adler (the Red Eagle), the organ of the Revolutionary Storm Troopers. We took up the slogan that Hitler had demagogically launched, the slogan of a Second Revolution. We raised the slogan within the Storm Troops: "Where is the second revolution you talk about, where are the promises you made, why don't you fulfill them?" And this compelled Goebbels to start his demagogic talk against reaction and reactionaries. We used this against him, saying, "Well, if you are against reactionaries, why don't you proceed against them?"

Now for the finance-capitalists that put him in—let us not forget that Hitler did not seize power in an open struggle against the working-class; the working-class prevented by Social-Democracy from making a solid united front, had been compelled to make a retreat. But let us remember that Hitler was put into power by the capitalists to stop the threat of a Communist Germany. They saw the economic situation was getting worse; exports dropped at a phenomenal rate. And they saw the only way out of a crisis that a capitalist can see—the steering of an even sharper capitalist course than before. Hitler was given power and his finance-capitalist backers had to pursue the sharpest, most imperialist, reactionary policy ever pursued by the capitalist class.

Thyssen & Company, the rulers of heavy industry, demanded a severe wage-cut. Furthermore, Hitler was in a dilemma because of the growing dissatisfaction within the Storm Troops. Under these circumstances Hitler went to western Germany and on June 24, a month ago, there took place a decisive conference between Hitler, Goebbels, Krupp, Thyssen and other big industrialists in Krupp's villa near Essen. Hitler was forced to give in and act against the dissatisfied Storm Troops in Germany. It was decided that he had to send the Storm Troops on vacation and issue orders that part of them would never come back from these vacations.

To conserve their own positions of power some of the leaders within the Storm Troops started to oppose this. But they hadn't counted on Hitler. They forgot that Hitler, Goering and Goebbels had been able to put the Reichstag on fire as a giant provocation, and didn't count on the fact that Hitler would decide to strike first, without consulting, without negotiating as to what they wanted, and to murder them without delay.

And these were the events of the night of June 30 to July 1. Goering sent his picked police force and the S.S., and Hitler and Goebbels had 300 of the most prominent Storm Troop leaders within Germany murdered without trial. In the course of this campaign, of these murders, Hitler and Goering also killed Catholic leaders and other leaders

of opposition groups who had nothing to do with Roehm. Moreover, 5,000 subordinate leaders of the Storm Troops were arrested and put in concentration camps to await trial, alongside the Communists.

Hitler tried to explain these murders. He talked about the immoral behavior of Roehm, as if Hitler had not known until June 30 that Roehm and the leaders around him were immoral! In fact, there is a joke now current in Germany that "Hitler wears only black suits today, after the 30th of June." "Why?" "Don't you know that a widow always goes in black?"

Last January 29th, on the anniversary of Hitler's accession to power, Hitler published a letter in the *Voelkischer Beobachter*, the central organ of the Nazi Party, a letter of congratulation to Roehm, which I want to quote:

At the termination of a year of the National Socialist revolution, I am therefore moved to thank you, my dear Ernst, for the immortal service which you have performed for the National Socialist movement and the German people, and to assure you how grateful I am to be able to call such men as you my friend and comrade in battle.

This is what Hitler wrote on January 29, 1934. A few months later, on the 30th of June, Roehm was shot, together with other Storm Troop leaders.

With the events of June 30 a new leaf has been turned in the history of the class struggle in Germany. Now finance-capital in Germany is trying to establish capitalism on a new basis, a narrower basis, without the mass support but with a firmer basis. The finance-capitalists, the lords of heavy industry, the high generals of the Reichswehr, the high bureaucrats and Junkers had to get rid of the Storm Troops because the millions of Storm Troopers had been disintegrated, had been subverted by dissatisfaction and Communist propaganda. Hitler has said the Storm Troops would march again through the streets of Germany after their vacation. He will let a few dozens walk along the streets as samples, but what is important is that the political rôle of the Storm Troops in Germany is finally finished. Today the rôle of the armed force of the Hitler regime in Germany has been taken over by the Special Guards, Goering's police, the Reichswehr, and the Secret State Police.

The Central Committee of the German Communist Party issued a statement on the events of the 30th of June, which I want to quote in part:

With fear and terror of the underground rumblings of the proletarian uprising, the Roehms and Ernsts, the Schleichers, looked for other methods to save the capitalist regime. By means of intensified social demagoguery toward the revolting Storm Troopers they thought they would be able to avoid the worst. The Krupps and Thyssens were afraid of the consequences of this sort of method, and were worried about their unchallenged predominance in the dictatorship system. Their glance was to Hitler a command. The rifles fired.

This analysis by the Central Committee shortly after the 30th of June indicates the

difference politically between the way Schleicher and Strasser wanted to solve the crisis facing the Hitler regime, and the road of Thyssen and the industrialists.

But the 30th of June was not the end of the differences within the capitalist system, but the beginning of even more serious conflicts. The economic situation in Germany is such that the capitalists must cut wages, cost what it may. They have only two alternatives—either they abandon capitalism, or they cut wages if they have to use machine-guns, poison gas, bombs and flame throwers against the workers to reduce the standard of living. The German finance-capitalists must again return to the League of Nations, must again negotiate with the English and American finance capitalists. They must pursue a policy of expansion of capital. They must get loans again from other imperialist powers. This means they must intensify even further the fight against the already oppressed masses.

An indication of the change introduced by the 30th of June is Hitler's own speech a week ago, when he said that "the greatest person in Germany, the person as inviolable as God himself, is Hindenburg." That is the same Hindenburg whom two years ago Hitler opposed as a candidate for President, the same Hindenburg whom Goebbels called nothing but an old fool. And today the Hitlerites have executed the fullest capitulation before Hindenburg and the force he represents. Hitler admitted in his speech (and it holds good today) that any word said against the Reichswehr, the same Reichswehr whom he wanted to eliminate from politics, is high treason, and the person saying it will be shot. Hitler today can be nothing more than Reich Chancellor of Germany. He cannot stop with the murder of June 30th. Only today the cables tell us

that the most notorious Horst Wessel Storm Troop has had to be dissolved. Hitler will have to continue the struggle because the dissatisfaction has not been settled. He cannot solve any of his problems, which with every day grow more serious and profound.

The alignment of forces has shifted. Hitler will remain Chancellor for some time, but not what he dreamed of being—Chancellor in his own right. He hoped to be Chancellor supported by three million Storm Troopers, and other millions following his demagogy. Today he can remain Chancellor only through the finance-capitalists and Junkers, supported by the Reichswehr; he can rest on bayonets alone. Hitler tries to mask and cloud this whole situation. He talks about the wasteful and extravagant life these leaders pursued before he had them shot. But his own Goering, who did the shooting, has no less than one thousand uniforms in his wardrobe, and his leaders build castles, while a man like this von Schirach, a pederast, is at the head of the youth of Germany, a man like Hitler's Horst Wessel, a pimp who lived on the earnings of prostitutes and now has been made the national hero of Germany.

Hitler can no longer play the role of Jesus Christ. He has to be even more brutal, more terroristic, more anti-working-class. He will place Thaelmann on trial because he will have to continue and intensify his effort to smash the Communist movement in Germany, to smash the Communist Party.

The difference between the Nazi Party today and the situation they had before is this: that the demagogic propaganda of the Nazis formerly enabled them to have a mass basis in Germany. Today the workers, peasants and middle-class are falling away from Hitler—to quote the saying, "When the mantle

has fallen, the Duke has to follow too." The events of June 30 occurred largely within the ranks of the National Socialist Party itself. The German working-class was not yet strong enough on June 30 to seize that opportunity to take power for itself. I will discuss in the second half of my article why it was unable, on the 30th of June, to seize that opportunity. But now that finance-capital is building up a narrower class basis of its own, the Social Democratic Party tries to offer its services again to capitalism, as it did before. For example, in the Saar the Communist Party had issued a slogan of voting in the plebiscite for the status quo, voting neither for annexation to France nor to Germany. The Socialist Party had formerly issued that slogan, but now Wels comes from Prague and tells the Socialist Party convention: "A dictatorship of generals is coming in Germany, and this will be something we can play ball with; they will hold it against us very badly if we don't vote to have the Saar returned to Germany. Try to have the Saar returned to Germany." That is the slogan issued by Wels. But we needn't fear about that. We will fix them once for all. Just as Hitler's rôle as Jesus Christ is over, so the Socialist Party can no longer play its rôle as John the Baptist. We will continue the tactics of the united front, as we have successfully up to now, together with the German workers, for a real revolution and not for another bourgeois-social democratic regime. This stage begun with the 30th of June is a stage that will end only with the victory of the German working-class, for the dictatorship of the proletariat within Germany—under the banner of Marx, Lenin, and Stalin, under the leadership of the illegal German Communist Party we shall have a Soviet Germany.

II: After Hitler—A Soviet Germany

THE MOST important fact in German history of the last two years—of decisive importance, not only for the history of Germany, but for the whole history of the international working-class—is that the poison of national socialism was able to dissolve the forces of its bourgeois opponents. It was able to dissolve the German nationalists; it was able to dissolve the Social Democratic Party of Germany—it fully dissolved and destroyed them. But this poison could not attack or break down or dissolve one Weltanschauung, one Party, the theory of Communism, the Communist Party of Germany. The Communist Party of Germany stands as a granite wall, a wall of rock, which blocks Hitler from any approach to the working-class. Without this wall we would have had a new 1914 in the world, a new slaughter of millions. But when this wall stood, when Hitler found this wall could not be dissolved, it was then that Hitler lost his Battle of the Marne.

The theory of Communism, the policies of the Communist International, passed their

final test in Germany in the last year and a half. For the first time (and this is different from what happened in Italy, this constitutes the major difference) a steeled Bolshevik Party, tempered through the teachings of Thaelmann, faced a Fascist assault. Today Hitler has lost his influence with the German masses, and tomorrow he will lose power because he has been unable to crush the revolutionary Party. And this fact is of historical importance for the whole world working-class. Just as in 1917 the revolution in Russia and the establishment of Soviet power hastened the breakdown of the Second International, just in that fashion, since the Communist Party in Germany stood fast against the attacks of Hitler, we Communists throughout the world are today forcing the law of action upon the Social Democrats in every country.

On the 30th of January, 1933, the Socialist Party of Germany was able to refuse our offer of the united front to make it impossible for Hitler to come to power. But today the

Socialist Party of France has had to accept the united front offer made by the Communist Party of Europe. It has had to accept it because of events since the accession of Hitler to power and because of the role of the Communists in Germany today.

Even among our enemies this rôle is recognized. Fascism in Germany considers only the Communists as its enemies. It settles Socialists with jokes and contempt, or it gives them pensions, as to Severing and Loebe, and it leaves them alone. But the only enemy it fights and mentions is Communism and the Communist Party. And when the Fascist organ in New York, the *Deutsche Zeitung* speaks of the Communists, it says, for instance, that I and my speech in Madison Square Garden to 15,000 people on July 6th, show me to be the biggest danger in America as an agent of the Communist International. And when this Fascist paper in New York ends by saying that "Willi Muenzenberg, this Jewish Communist from Germany, is the greatest danger to the United States," then I hear

Goebbels' old familiar tune, I see the little needle of Goebbels, but a little duller than the master himself uses it.

In 1924, after Lenin had died, two major problems faced the Communists within the Communist International: 1—The problem of Socialism in one country—could Socialism be built in one country? and, 2—If it could, would not that happen at the price of the development of the proletarian revolution in other countries?

Today, when dying capitalism manifests such horrible degeneration as the excesses and murders in Germany, we see dying capitalism on hand, while in the Soviet Union under the leadership of Stalin, a new existence is being built for 160 million people. And this was done with the retention of the Communist International, and with the expansion of the world positions of the Communist International. Stalin was right when he said that Leninism is the theory of proletarian revolution in the epoch of imperialism, based upon and derived from Marxism. And Trotsky, who attacked Stalin, ends where all do who leave the road of Marxism—on the garbage heap of history.

We are ready to battle the world on the firmly grounded basis of Marxism. We know Marxism developed through Lenin's and Stalin's labors is the only correct strategy and tactics for the international working-class in all countries. We also discussed the German question in January and February, 1933. I mentioned the Trotskyist position before, largely because it is connected with the German question.

The Trotskyists say we made a mistake in January, 1933 when we didn't declare a general strike ourselves, with or without the Socialists, when we didn't summon the workers to follow us into the streets for an armed uprising. We are ready to bear responsibility for what we did before the Communists of New York today, and before the coming World Congress of the Comintern in Moscow. The events of the last one and a half years have shown that the line of Thaelmann and the German Party was correct. In 1918 we fought for power as a small isolated group, without the masses behind us. We had to do that to show that we differed from the Socialists and that we were a revolutionary party ready to give our lives for the revolution. But the situation in 1933 and 1934 is different. It is no longer necessary to prove to the working-class of Germany that the Communist Party is a revolutionary party by starting an uprising, we don't do it alone, but with the millions of workers and peasants behind us, to fight not only to overthrow the power that exists today, but so that when we take power, we hold power forever.

True enough, the influence of the German Communist Party grew in 1931 and 1932. But we still were a minority within the German working-class. The trade unions were very largely dominated by the Socialist Party. We had made repeated united front offers to the Social Democratic Party of Germany—an



RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

From Izvestia

offer for a joint general strike on the 20th of July, when the Prussian Government was overthrown, an offer for a general strike to prevent Hitler coming to power in January, 1933. And these offers were refused. Should we then, on January 30, 1933—isolated from the majority of the German working-class, from the Socialist workers—when Germany was in a high tide of national chauvinism, of whipped-up emotion, should we have gone out and allowed our best cadres to be killed off, throwing back the revolution in Germany for tens of years? We refused to do that, and we kept the cadres of the Party intact. As a result we accomplished what has never before been accomplished in the history of the world. We took a Party of 300,000 members from legality into illegality, and kept that Party unbroken so that in Germany today we have 125,000 dues-paying members in the illegal Communist Party of Germany.

This disintegration of the Storm Troopers during the past one and a half years, the events of June 30, would have been impossible in Germany without the work of the Communist Party underground; would have been impossible if we hadn't maintained intact our Communist cadres in Germany. Hitler and Goering swore when they came to power they would root out Communism, root and branch, but Goebbels had to admit in a statement not long ago that the Communist Party lives. Today things are otherwise than when Hitler came to power in 1933. A landslide has happened in Germany since then. The

majority of the members of the Social Democratic Party of Germany have come over to us today. Severing and Loebe made their peace with the Nazis; they were given pensions, and this served to show the German workers who would serve the revolution, and who was a traitor to the working-class.

Our work in Germany has not been easy. In Moscow recently I talked with some old Bolsheviks, and they told me that their fight against Czarism was child's play compared with our fight against the mass base of Fascism in Germany. After Hitler came to power, there was a mass psychosis of espionage. Every Storm Trooper was a spy. In every house where there were Storm Troopers, there were three spies. If there were Nazis, they were spies. If the clicking of a typewriter was heard in the night, the next day the Secret Police came to see if it wasn't a Communist leaflet that was being typed.

But today the Nazis are the best sellers of the Rote Fahne in Germany today—the best distributors of our literature are the Storm Troopers and the S.S. men. And when I say this, remember that the distribution of the Rote Fahne is punishable today by death, and even having a revolutionary view in Germany is punishable by ten to fifteen years hard labor.

The conditions under which we work are difficult in other ways. The entire paper supply of Germany is checked to make sure that we don't get paper. Every typewriter store is checked to see that we don't get a machine,



RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION

From Izvestia

to make as difficult as possible, to prevent and suppress, our issuance of illegal papers. I will give you an example of what happened in the city of Karlsruhe; an entire section of the city was roped off by the police and every typewriter was confiscated, to find the machine on which our illegal Rote Fahne was printed. They didn't stop the Rote Fahne, they didn't find the typewriter.

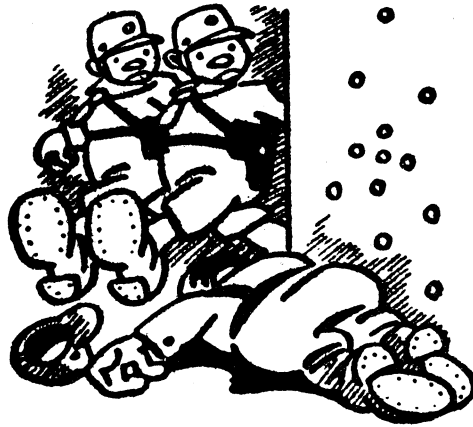
There are today in Germany 100 illegal Communist papers published every week. The Rote Fahne is published every ten days in a printed edition of 60,000. In Germany today, in addition to the illegal Party papers, there are trade union papers, sport papers, W.I.R. papers, I.L.D. papers, and dozens of others. And not only literature is gotten out in Germany today. You can't travel through Germany without seeing on hundreds of smokestacks our slogans: "Down with Hitler," "Free Thaelmann," "Long Live Soviet Germany." And we have found ways of putting them on so they can't be scratched out. We chisel into the brick, and fill it with irremovable paint, and if they chisel it off, we will chisel it in again.

After the events of June 30 we have begun to hold street demonstrations, big street demonstrations in the streets of Germany. Street demonstrations occurred since the 30th of June in Hamburg, in the Ruhr and in Berlin. And we use a number of other methods to put our propaganda across, by surprise methods.

In Hamburg, for example, 1,500 letters were sent by the Red Aid (the German I.L.D.) to prominent members of the bourgeoisie, protesting against the execution of the four workers beheaded in Altona. Half the people who got these letters immediately got cold feet and brought these letters to the Secret Police—just what we wanted to accomplish! The Secret Police, of course, saw these people making a protest!

In Duesseldorf the army received word that there were Red fliers over Duesseldorf, scattering Red propaganda. Military airplanes went up to find these Red planes, and to see where this propaganda was coming from that was falling out of the skies. And this is what had happened: our comrades had written slogans on very fine paper, like cigarette paper, and we put them on top of one of the biggest smokestacks in Duesseldorf during the night. When the factory started next morning, the smoke started up, and these leaflets were carried high into the air, scattering all over the city.

I could go on without end telling of the ingenuity of the methods employed by our comrades in Germany. We have developed specialized methods for work in the Nazi trades unions and in the Storm Troops. We have developed special methods for work in these meetings which are held "against the critics." For example, in Goebbels' big campaign against all critics he sent out the Storm Troopers all over Germany. Seven troopers would come into a cafe, lock all the doors, and say: "There will now be a five minute speech against critics and killjoys." The



From *Komsomolskaia Pravda*

One Storm Trooper to Another:
"What's wrong with Comrade X.... Is he on vacation?"
"No—he didn't want to go on vacation!"

trooper would make his speech, and then our comrade would get up and say:

"What the speaker has just said is perfectly right, but what I want to know is, what will I say to my wife tonight when she asks me why the price of bread is going up? And can you tell me what to tell my neighbor, an unemployed worker, who still can't get work although you promised to give it to him? And I have an uncle in the country who is protesting about his poverty, what shall I tell him?"

By this method we used their own meetings to bring our Communist propaganda to the people who listened to the Nazis. It would take too long to list all the technical methods of propaganda we employ, but the biggest success achieved by the Communist Party of Germany, and this must be emphasized, is that we have developed the best body of functionaries, the best cadres in the entire Communist International. We have an army of independently thinking and independently acting, steeled, Stalinist workers in Germany today. We have workers who are cut off for months at a time from leading bodies, and yet these 100 illegal papers are gotten out at times by workers who have to write the whole paper themselves, without instructions from the top leaders. And they have the correct line by themselves, and in many cases write these papers better than our professional editors. If the Germans say that "every soldier in the Reichswehr is fit to be a non-commissioned officer," then I can say that every Communist is fit to be the general of an army.

We have a staff of Communist functionaries who are small-scale Dimitroffs. The Nazi papers themselves admit this. When Kuntz, a functionary of the German Party in Berlin, was put on trial, the Nazi papers had to quote his words before the sentence was read off, when he said: "And if you crush me to death, I am and I remain a Communist." And these words were printed in every paper in Germany.

I want to mention Comrade Schwarz as another indication of the calibre of the German functionaries today. Comrade Schwarz had charge of the propaganda work in the German

police, a very dangerous post. He was caught by the Nazi police. They searched him, and they didn't find anything on him at all, but they did find a slip of paper with the appointment he had the next day at the Scala Theatre, at 10 o'clock in the morning. They took him to headquarters and they beat him into unconsciousness several times, but he refused to tell the name of the person he had the appointment with. Then they tried this: five Nazi police took him to the theatre at 10 o'clock in the morning, and they stood around him inconspicuously, waiting to see what would happen, and who would keep the appointment. Schwarz saw in the distance the comrade he was to meet, a high official in the Berlin police. He knew what the exposure of this comrade would mean; but he couldn't warn him—the man was 100 steps away—he came closer, only 20 steps away, and Schwarz didn't know what to do. At last, when the man was almost up to him, Schwarz threw himself under a passing auto to warn the man who was coming of danger. Comrade Schwarz was later murdered with Scheer and Eugen Schönhaar, while "trying to escape" the Nazis said, on the road to Potsdam.

That is the type of German worker today. I know the German workers, I come from the German working-class, and I am proud to be a German Communist. I am proud that the works of Marx were written in the language of our Party. I am proud that we have a Party with the traditions behind it of ours. I am proud that the German workers today are different from those in the revolutionary movement of 1914. In 1918 the German Social Democracy when it was protesting against the retention of the Kaiser, came out with placards saying, "Comrades, don't step on the grass, it belongs to the people." But when we make our revolution, we will step on the corns of some people so hard that they will never walk again in all their lives. We are training a force of Bolsheviks, we are training a force of revolutionists who even without arms will fight to tear down the enemy with their teeth, if necessary.

In Altona there is another example of the type of Communists we have in Germany. Four Communists there were sentenced to death. They were brought to the courtyard of the prison with the executioner and his axe awaiting them. The Nazi lieutenant in charge asked the usual question: "What is your last wish: do you want to smoke a cigarette?" and so on. The comrade with his hands handcuffed said, "I would like just to stretch my arms for one moment."

They took off his handcuffs; he slowly raised his arms up, and then with full force brought his fist down in the face of the Nazi lieutenant, knocking his teeth down his throat. Then he went to the scaffold.

Our Communist Party members in Germany fight without thought of family, without thought of mother, child or relative. They live only to keep on fighting, cost what it may. It is not only these comrades whom I told you about who act this way, but millions are



From Komsomolskaia Pravda

One Storm Trooper to Another:

“What’s wrong with Comrade X.... Is he on vacation?”

“No—he didn’t want to go on vacation!”

ready to act as heroically when the time comes.

But with all these achievements we have weaknesses not yet overcome. We are still weak in the trade unions; we are weak in our shop work within the factories. There are still sectarian ideas in the Party, and we had a situation like the one in Hamburg (which incidentally we liquidated) where a Communist Party member said: "All we need is a Communist Party, we don't need trade unions, we don't need the W.I.R., the I.L.D.—all we need is to concentrate on the Party." And we had other comrades who felt that if the Socialists were helping to build the Communist Party it was only fair that we should help build their Party. We liquidated that, too.

But one of our worst weaknesses is in our youth policies. Hitler still has one element of a mass base, that is the masses of German youngsters who are still under his influence. We must get the youth, in Germany as in every other country, because without them no victorious revolution will ever be possible anywhere.

Our national, and social program for the emancipation of the German people is for millions of German workers today the signpost of freedom.

Otto Bauer has telegraphed that he is coming here. I regret it is impossible to arrange a discussion between him and myself. But I want to point out what Bauer says in his recent pamphlet on the Austrian events. Bauer has written a long theoretical pamphlet telling the Austrian workers why they lost their battle, and what is to be done. His major slogan is one of passive resistance; he says: "Don't travel on Austrian railroads, thus you will bankrupt the railway ministry. Don't take baths, so the municipality won't get the water taxes. Don't use the electric light. Don't use gas for cooking." That is the level to which the Austrian democracy has descended.

That is the final drop into the abyss of political idiocy.

Only the Communist Party has given the basic Leninist-Stalinist political tactics and strategy for the revolution. In Germany we see approaching the conditions which Lenin said were the conditions for the ripening of the revolution. We see a favorable international situation, antagonisms between the capitalist powers and the strengthening of the Soviet Union; differences within the bourgeoisie of Germany itself, the middle-class and the peasantry are leaving the Nazis, they are beginning to be either neutral or are turning toward the working-class. The working-class is beginning to come out of its passivity and to manifest a readiness to struggle. And in Germany we have today a Party which is able to, which is mature, and strong enough, which is ready to start the fight for the proletarian seizure of power—a Party which is ready to win this fight. I want to quote what Comrade Stalin says about the new type of Bolsheviks in the Communist Party of Germany. It is this new type that is typified in the German Party today:

"A new Party, a revolutionary fighting Party, which is courageous enough to lead the proletariat into the struggle for the seizure of power, which has sufficient experience to find its way in the complicated situation of the revolutionary environment, and which has sufficient elasticity to remove all the obstacles from its path toward its goal."

I have belonged to the ranks of the labor movement ever since 1906—many comrades whom I have seen here know me in connection with one phase of the movement or another. We are used to keeping our promises. In that we differ from the National Socialists. In my youth, in the Youth International, we promised Liebknecht and Lenin that we would not go to war, and would fight against war.

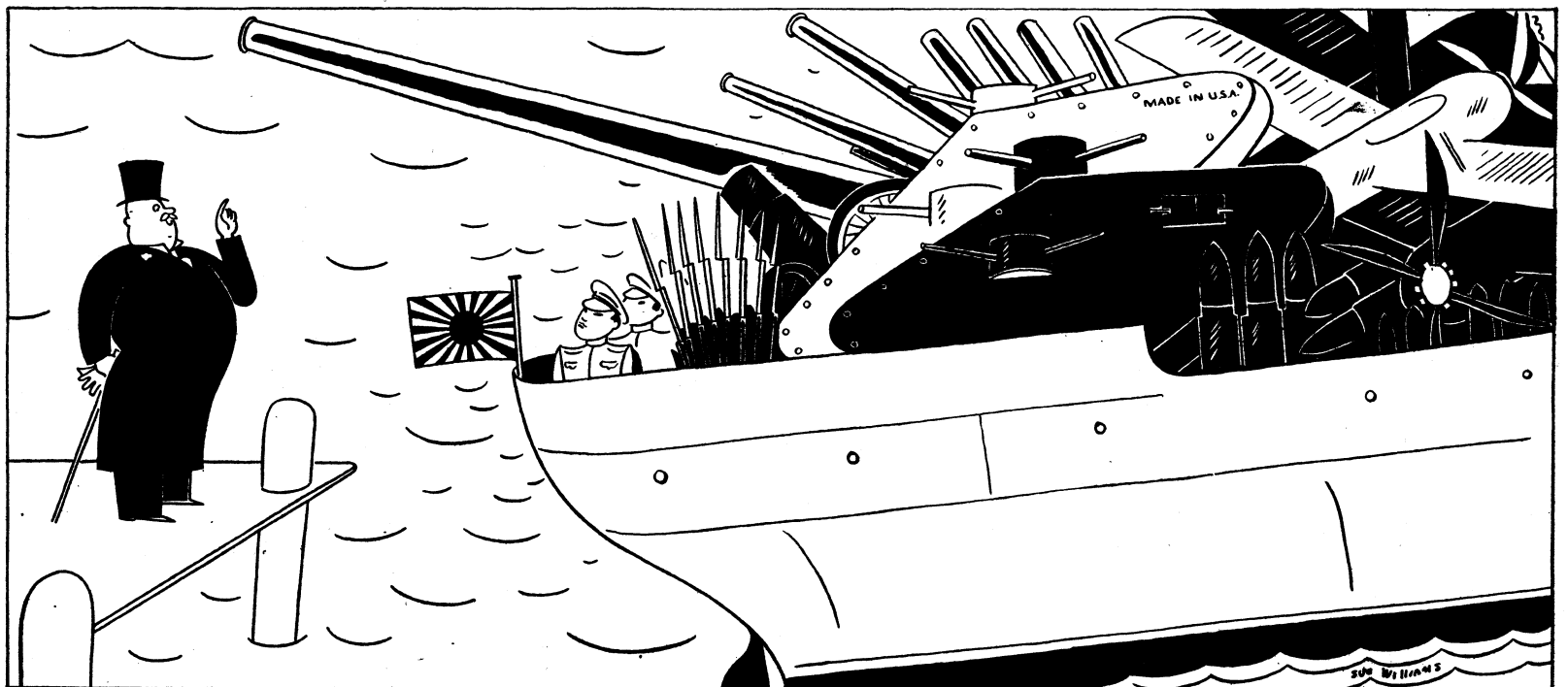
And we kept our promise. And we promised that Hitler would not be able to smash our Communist Party—we kept that promise. And thirdly, I give you our solemn promise that in Germany before long, Hitler will be overthrown and a Soviet Government in Germany will be established. I know the seriousness of this promise. We are fully conscious of the world importance of such a promise. We shall not act rashly. We will prepare every single step of our way, under the guidance of the Communist International. With your aid, with the teachings of Marx and Engels, of Lenin and Stalin, we shall fight and fight to victory.

Hitler is dissolving his Storm Troops while we are building our fighting columns for the revolution. Hitler came to power ahead of us, but he is going to go ahead of us, too. When we do seize power, then never, never, never shall it leave our hands. When the Red Flag is hoisted over the palace of the Kaiser in Berlin, when the Red Flag flying at the mast of a German ship comes sailing into the harbor of New York, as the Russian ships do now—those flags will never be hauled down again.

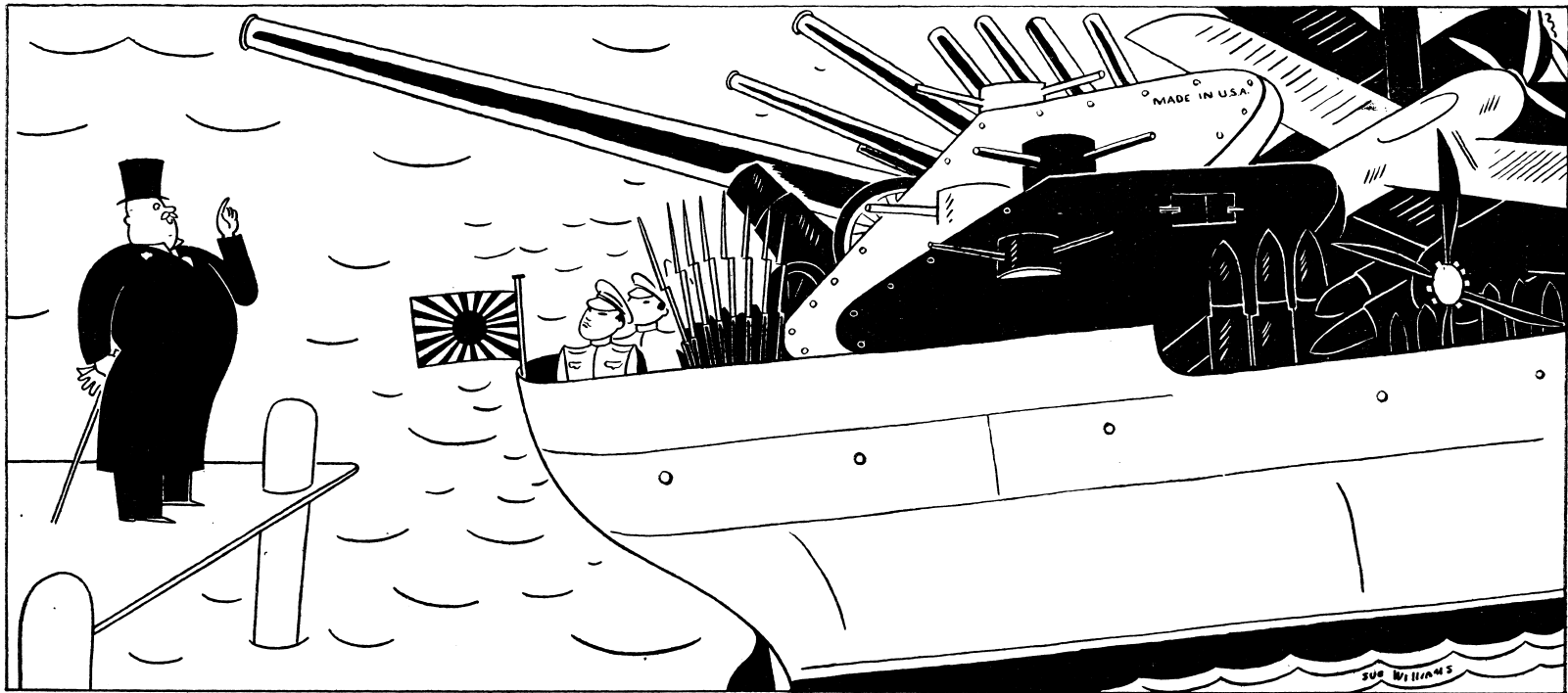
We know the significance of our struggle for the rest of the world. Stalin says that the Russian proletariat is the shock brigade of the world revolution, and we have today in Germany the second shock brigade of the revolution. In the 30 years of my experience in the working-class movement—I went through the World War, I went through the Zimmerwald Conference and the events after the war—never have I been so confident of victory as today.

I am utterly confident that we shall live to see before the end of this decade, the victory of Communism, not only in Germany, but throughout the world.

—Translated by Robert Hamilton.



"REMEMBER, THIS IS SOLD EXCLUSIVELY FOR PEACE PURPOSES!"



"REMEMBER, THIS IS SOLD EXCLUSIVELY FOR PEACE PURPOSES!"

Sue Williams

The Plight of the Postal Subs

ALBERT HALPER

Postmaster General Farley has just reported to President Roosevelt that for the first time since 1919 the Postoffice Department has a balanced budget—indeed a surplus of \$5,000,000. Receiving this glad news on his vacation at sea, President Roosevelt wired back that he was "delighted." How has the Postoffice Department achieved this great goal of a balanced budget? The service is bad—but rates have been reduced. Deliveries have been cut—so has the pay of the lowest stratum of postoffice workers, the substitutes, whose earnings are reckoned by the hour. The conditions under which thousands of postoffice substitute clerks work are set forth in the following article, by Albert Halper, author of Union Square and On the Shore.

One point—an important one—may be brought out here, in regard to the subs. Before the crisis began, postoffice subs in the large cities were mainly college students, incipient

lawyers, student doctors, pharmacy clerks, etc., who subbed until they could get started on their professional career. The average postoffice career of a sub was short, perhaps two or three years. Now, the subs cannot and do not look forward to any day of departure from the postoffice. Their subbing days have become permanent sub jobs, which these hopeless professionals, every avenue toward a career closed by the crisis of capitalist economy, can no more afford to lose than can any other working man. This factor of the permanent status of the postoffice subs has two political results: 1—The postoffice substitute is now fighting for his rights as a postoffice worker, instead of looking on evil conditions as something which will affect him only temporarily. 2—The attitude of the regular postoffice men toward the sub has also changed, resulting, as Halper indicates, in a growing unity between the two groups.—THE EDITORS.

from day to day, in the hope that some work might be forthcoming, has reduced these men to the status of slaves. The last five years have hammered at them cruelly. Their ranks have been thinned out by malnutrition, heart disease, suicides and insanity.

What handicaps these men is the damper put upon them by the Government. When they enter the service they are forced to promise not to speak a word about politics, which indirectly means economic conditions. Of course, this is a promise which no man on earth can keep these days. Even back in the period of "prosperity" five or six years ago I remember the clerks were always arguing about economics when the foremen were not on patrol. One must remember that the percentage of college men runs high in the postal service and holding down jobs in the gloomy Government postal stations certainly prodded one to muse upon the social sciences betimes. The substitute carriers were always worrying about the payments on their uniforms and the substitute clerks were in abject fear of failing in their "scheme" exams.

A postal substitute clerk is a regular civil service employee working in the postoffice but being paid by the hour. He is not a laborer but a skilled workman. He undergoes a rigorous course of training which sometimes takes from twelve to eighteen months to complete, and the course of study has to be learned on the clerk's own time.

Throwing mail is a complicated business. In the average state are about eighty counties, about thirteen hundred towns. These towns are reached directly and indirectly by large, small and medium-sized railroads. Each postal clerk, upon entering the service, is given a certain state to learn. That state is his "scheme." Before he completes his training he has to memorize every town in the state, he must know exactly what county the town is in, what trains go to that town, what days the trains do not go there, and he must also know how to re-route the mail. The scheme is so complicated that I have known many clerks, upon being told what they were up against, to quit immediately, saying frankly that the job wasn't worth the effort. But that was six years ago. Today there is a vast surplus of young men who are willing to study these complicated schemes until they are ready for the bug-house in order to work for the Government for a five-to-ten-dollar a week wage.

To a young man a postal clerk's job means almost intellectual suicide. Working night after night (the subs are mostly given night-shift) becomes a grind and one falls into torpor. The eyes become slack, the face turns dead. The big city postal offices are notorious for their harrowing ventilating systems. The Grand Central postal station was once a big

WHEN I FIRST entered the postal service about six years ago, I listened to a commencement speech delivered by a member of the civil service board which, reviewed today, seems tinged with a certain historic mockery. I remember that we were all herded into a large room in the Federal Building, about four hundred of us who had just passed the complicated civil service examinations for substitute postoffice clerks in Chicago, and told to pay attention to what was said. The speaker up in front, a short fleshy man, cleared his throat and, having gained our attention, started on a pompous harangue which would have done credit to "Senator" Murphy, an old vaudevillian who used to play the Keith circuit and called himself senator because he came up for air only twice during his act.

The gist of the commencement speech was that we ought to feel proud of the opportunity of working for the Government, that from now on we were public servants, that the postal service was one branch of industrial life where there were no layoffs or wage reductions and, in short, any sub entering the service was sitting pretty.

Since that time, despite all these gilt-edged guarantees, a holocaust has hit the postal workers. There have been wage reductions, promises, broken promises, layoffs and sympathy from the Government. The average wage for subs, always pitifully small, has dwindled to the size of a cinder, the pay sometimes ranging from five to seven dollars a week. Many of the subs are married men with children on their hands but, having "jobs," cannot apply for relief from local, state or federal agencies.

The final touch of mockery came in March,

1934 when President Roosevelt, in a widely publicized speech, urged industry at large to increase wages in order to speed recovery; and on the same day, without fanfare, Postmaster General Farley issued an executive order decreasing postal deliveries which meant, in some cases, cutting many substitute employes' pay almost 50 percent. On March 13, 1934 there were simultaneous demonstrations and mass protest meetings throughout the country. In New York City some 3,000 subs and regulars demonstrated before the General Postoffice. As a result of the demonstrations Farley rescinded his March 2 order.

On January 24 the rank and file of postal subs under the leadership of the National Association of Substitute Postoffice Employes, had marched on to Washington in a spectacular parade which broke into the front page of almost every newspaper in the nation.

To soothe the subs' wrath, the Mead Bill was slapped together and put before Congress, a bill so vicious that it was merely mockery piled upon mockery. The bill provided for a minimum wage of fifteen dollars a week, but was put forth in such a manner that the minimum wage could be interpreted as the maximum wage. The bill, furthermore, made no attempt to rid the postal subs of "swinging," which is perhaps the worst curse inflicted upon any branch of American industry. "Swinging," pure and simple, is hanging around the postoffices (without pay, of course) four, six, eight and even ten hours in order to be put on for a few hours work. The subs are forced to "swing," even if there is no work for them, and if they report late they are given demerits, and if the demerits accumulate they are fired.

This hanging around from hour to hour,

vault of a banking house. In this huge room are no doors, no windows. When mail arrives the air grows heavy with germ-laden dust. The bright lights glare down. Clerks hawk and spit. How many cases of tuberculosis have been encouraged in the big city postal stations no one will ever know. The shaking of the mail sacks to release the mail starts the men coughing. These sacks coming in after being dragged over shipping platforms, railroad stations and sidewalks from all over the country, are fine disease carriers. Their surfaces are stained with spittle, tobacco juice, damp and mildew. As far as I know, they are never fumigated. After working in a mail-room a few minutes one takes to hawking at the spittoon bowls. Black phlegm comes forth. If you blow your nose, your handkerchief is as black as soot. If you work long in the service, you spit day and night. It becomes a habit.

Perhaps the most notorious postal sweatshop in the country is the old Main postoffice back in Chicago. In the old days it was known as the "university." This postal branch is famous far and wide for its gigantic lavatory which reposes in a damp and foggy basement. If I were an artist, I would try to put it down on canvas. The toilets stretch in a long row as far as the eye can see. There is no privacy, each man sees his neighbor. Every few minutes a supervisor comes down with a book in his hand checking up on clerks who have a tendency to remain too long. The stools, having "partitions" which reach only to the knees, allow the supervisor's eagle eye to see each and every man. Upon occasions he has been known to count the grunts and strains. I am not exaggerating. Woe unto those clerks who come downstairs to rest and not to function and who sit at stool without taking the precautionary measure of lowering their britches! From a spy-hole in the wall they are spotted, and then the supervisor, demerit book in hand, marches upon his victim.

"Stand up!" the straw boss orders; and the poor clerk stands, there is no helping it. "Why aren't your pants down?" shouts the super. "Two demerits! Report to the detail desk at once!"

I go into these details so that an outsider may catch a glimpse behind the scenes. The postal service is a world unto itself where each clerk is but a time-clock number and nothing more. A man working in a big office two days is swallowed up in the inferno. On all sides insistent racket hammers at the eardrums, the headache chatter of the cancelling machines, the rumble of belts, the crash of iron wheels over iron floors, the rattle and bang of merchandise, relieved by the heaving of one-hundred-pound sacks, sweating, grunting and the knowledge that one is being spied upon.

And yet the subs, until a few years ago or so, did not organize to fight conditions. They did not organize because deep down in every sub's heart (a few years ago) was the hope that the holding down of this night-shift job would be only a temporary measure.

But by the third year of the depression,

around 1932, the plight of the substitutes was such that they had to organize or, from a collective point of view, perish. Not only were their hours slashed but their wage scale was cut. The regulars (carriers and clerks who had gotten appointments) were organized into a number of organizations which were open to the subs, but regulars are a group apart and, until a short time ago when the Government began to squeeze them also, they looked down upon all substitute postal workers, forgetting their own grim apprenticeship. Besides, their organizations affiliated with the A. F. of L., never broke their necks trying to alleviate the condition of the subs. The A. F. of L. organizations of the regulars, in the main, ran along caste lines and had dual locals south of the Mason-Dixon line, Jim Crow locals, one for whites and one for blacks. The executive committees palmed off a sort of company-union, optimistic, get-behind-the-Government, house-organy magazine and further drugged the men. When the wage scale was cut the editorials grumbled modestly but did not go in very strongly for united protest or action. The rank and file were dissatisfied but, having had patience drilled into them for years, did not lift their voice above a murmur.

Then about a year and a half ago, a bombshell rocked the regulars. The subs, both clerks and carriers, banded together and welded an organization which became a fighting machine. The oldtimers rubbed their eyes. The new organization, the N. A. S. P. O. E. (The National Association of Substitute Post Office Employees), under an honest and able leadership, grew by leaps and bounds. In a short time, representing 25,000 substitute clerks, carriers, laborers, and motor vehicle men, it had 68 locals strung like a chain across the country from Maine to California. Then things began to happen. It became the driving force behind demonstrations, protests and marches. It led the attack on the Mead Bill and forced Mead to beat a retreat. It bombarded Congress with petitions and signatures. From the first it would not stand for Jim Crowism, would not stomach dual locals. Its energy and drive have already brought into rapport many regulars who, coming in contact with the awakened subs, have come to understand that the subs' fight is their fight; and when the march on Washington was being organized the regulars gave of their funds generously.

The N. A. S. P. O. E., of course, has been attacked often and viciously by the A. F. of L. groups, who have hurled from their sanctums the words "Reds!" and "Agitators!" But the rank and file of subs are sold on their new organization and these accusations have not impeded the N. A. S. P. O. E.'s growth. The N. A. S. P. O. E.'s position was further consolidated by inaugurating, one and a half years ago, a monthly magazine called the Postal Sub, which puts the magazines issued by the A. F. of L. organizations to shame. The copies of The Postal Sub which I have seen are exceptionally well-written, bristle with fight and are made up well. The magazine has become

such a factor in the struggle for better conditions for postal subs that from all over the country substitute clerks and carriers are sending in nickels and dimes, demanding that the publication go on at all costs.

The importance of the N. A. S. P. O. E. cannot be overestimated. It is a real rank and file movement and what it has done is certainly astonishing. It has taken men untrained in collective bargaining and has welded them into a fighting unit. At its second national convention in Chicago on March 19, 1934, it drew delegates from all parts of the country. It organized, financed and sent six hundred sub carriers and clerks in buses to Washington and succeeded in focusing national attention upon the march. It has brought the regulars closer to the subs and, in some instances, has prodded the A. F. of L. groups into a show of action. On March 13 it massed three thousand subs and regulars on the front steps of the New York Main postoffice in a huge mass protest against the Farley wage-cut.

The N. A. S. P. O. E. is here to stay and means business. Its demands are: A regular job for every sub, a 30-hour week for all regulars with no reduction in pay, sick-leave and vacation with pay for subs, subs hereafter to be made regulars two years from date of substitute appointment, and repeal of the fifteen-percent wage cut.

The march upon Washington in January, 1934 brought some results, even though Postmaster Farley passed the buck to Congress. Congress passed the buck back to Farley and on May 18, 1934 the determined subs were back in Washington, demanding action. They exerted so much pressure in Washington that certain people there grew embarrassed and promised the subs relief.

Of late, conditions have become somewhat alleviated, but the current rise in living expenses has again hacked down the incomes of the men. A long, tough fight lies ahead of them. In the big city offices the sweatshop conditions still flourish. Subs still hang around, waiting hours and hours for work. Some, in desperation by the management, are sent out running special deliveries which net them a few pennies on each call and give them fallen arches. The regulars, too, still feel the pinch, for the New Deal from Washington did not transpose them up to heaven. The postal department is talking cold turkey to them now, right out in the open. Sick leaves have been slashed. If a man says he is ill, the foreman smiles. One has almost to show a burst appendix to get off with pay. On April 3, 1934 this notice, placed on the time-clock of Station "F" in New York City, stared the regulars in the face:

The Auxiliary allowance is 55 percent below the original estimate, which means that sick leave and money has been almost entirely wiped out.

Sick leave will be granted only on satisfactory evidence.

Those affected with indigestion, diarrhea, constipation and head-aches will be denied sick leave.

Come in and work it off.

Housing and Social Insurance

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In your issue of July 10, there is a review by David Ramsey of *Labor Fact Book II*, in which he states that "both from an economic and social viewpoint . . . the . . . constructive program for decent housing" presented by the Pen and Hammer group to the National Unemployment convention in Washington on February 3rd and which was adopted by the convention, is "downright silly and hardly differs from the numerous plans suggested by bourgeois housing experts."

The proposal, as already stated in the columns of *THE NEW MASSES*, calls for an outlay of 67 billion gold dollars. It demands the construction not of "model" workers' homes to be rented to the employed at rates in proportion to their income and to the unemployed free. It provides in addition for the building of hospitals, playgrounds, nurseries, libraries, etc., in the working class sections where they are so badly needed. It further provides for the installation of modern, sanitary facilities in the millions of homes of American workers and farmers who so badly need them.

This represents a big difference from the plans of bourgeois economists. There are all kinds of unemployment insurance schemes, and perhaps Ramsey will say, following the same logic, that there is no difference between the Workers' Unemployment Social Insurance Bill and the Wagner-Lewis and other bills.

On July 28 there will be a conference in New York City of A. F. of L. unions called by the A. F. of L. Committee for Unemployment Insurance and Relief. The building construction program concretized for New York City will, in all probability, be introduced there. This bill is of extreme importance for providing work for the tens of thousands of unemployed building trades workers of New York. It calls for trade union scales and the mobilization of all working class forces on a broad united front basis in the struggle for the bill, which is to be financed not by general taxation, but by taxation on the rich.

I. AMTER, National Secretary,
National Unemployment Council.

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In my review of *Labor Fact Book II* I stated that its editors had uncritically accepted a housing plan proposed by Leonard Sparks and Paul Salter in their article *Housing and Jobs* in *THE NEW MASSES* of April 10. I should like to emphasize that as a Communist I am for any scheme for workers' housing which demands concessions from the capitalist class. My particular criticism was directed against the program mapped out by Sparks and Salter, because they failed to give a clear

class analysis of the present housing situation in the United States, and because they did not offer a revolutionary solution of the problem.

A detailed criticism of their article would take up too much space, but the following points indicate why I think it is a bad plan:

1. Sparks and Salter fail to bring out the fundamental Marxist principle (first pointed out by Engels) that capitalism cannot provide decent housing for workers. Your correspondent John Strachey put the point neatly (*THE NEW MASSES*, May 15) when he said that "it has been proved over and over again that there is no solution to the housing problem before the overthrow of capitalism." This Marxist analysis of the question is never made by Sparks and Salter. Instead they imply that their plan can be carried out within the framework of capitalism, and even state that it could be expanded "if the ruling class in America, and its government representatives were deeply interested in the welfare of the masses of the American people."

But the very facts that Sparks and Salter use show that this is nonsense. Capitalism cannot provide housing for workers. As Strachey has indicated, adequate housing for workers must be preceded by the destruction of the social relations of capitalism.

2. The first error of Sparks and Salter leads them to a second error of an even greater political and economic magnitude. Their plan, if it is to be carried out, implies priming the pump of American business with \$67 billion. It involves the reorganization of American industry so that it will be orientated towards supplying the housing needs of the United States. These are the prerequisites of their plan which "would give work directly to more than nine million unemployed for four years, and indirectly to millions more." But this means that Sparks and Salter would have solved the crisis, at least for four years. And they admit that "The United States would, be, temporarily at least, like Soviet Russia, a country without unemployment."

The only hitch to their miracle is that it could be achieved only by economic planning. The impossibility of planning under capitalism is now admitted even by reformers like H. N. Brailsford and George Soule. Why have Sparks and Salter forgotten this Marxist axiom? I am not the first person to criticize this aspect of their plan. In *THE NEW MASSES* of June 15, Sidney Hill (although he does not discuss their plan) makes the point that: "The first factor which is indispensable to such a [housing] program is comprehensive, far-sighted planning on a national scale."

And since capitalism cannot plan, the launching of their proposed housing scheme would inevitably involve inflation as building costs soared. In England, for example, after the war a housing program was launched

under government auspices. Within two years the costs of cottages went up from £350 to £1,250. What would happen to the workers as all prices skyrocketed because of an inflationary "building boom"? For the past two years special interests have been trying to sell Wall Street on the idea that a giant housing program involving expenditures of \$5 billion yearly for an indefinite period, is *the* solution of the crisis. But the exponents of housing plans forget that the present housing shortage in the United States represents a social need and not a market need. Under capitalism, workers who are living in firetraps represent a source of profits. For the capitalist there is no shortage of housing.

3. The whole plan that Sparks and Salter propose smacks of the social reformer. There is the statement that crime, juvenile delinquency and infant mortality are "not merely a matter of bad housing, but [they are] partly a matter of total city planning." Are they proposing along with Lewis Mumford and the other city planners to eliminate delinquency and crime through the erection of garden cities?

A ludicrous corollary of their social reformer approach is their proposed use of archaic technical methods. Thus they make no mention of pre-fabricated housing or similar innovations in construction. Do they intend to "make more work" by going in for technical retrogression in the style of Hitler and the C.W.A.? How otherwise can they explain their proposal to teach "untrained workers" to become paperhangers, painters, etc. (they even give the exact number of days it would take an unskilled worker to become a paperhanger), when present-day technique has made it uneconomical and unsocial to use any but the most advanced housing technique. They have to take but one more step and include in their plan (which they claim is "relatively kind to the pocket books of taxpayers") proposals that all taxpayers cut their lawns, fix their porches, etc. In this way, they could give jobs to the few unemployed workers who do not fall within the scope of their housing program.

4. The authors completely ignore the relation of workers' housing to social insurance. Under capitalism, any housing program must demand that workers and farmers receive housing as a relief need or a social insurance right.

I have taken so much space, because it seems to me that the issue involved is an important one. The fundamental point at issue is that the value of a Communist statement of position lies in great part in its effectiveness as criticism of the existing order. In other words, a housing plan must be tested not only as to its plausibility, but for the extent to which it undermines the status quo in the

mind of the workers. The plan of Sparks and Salter fails completely to pass this important test.

THE NEW MASSES will perform a very useful service, if it clears up the confusion brought on by its housing articles. There is a world of difference between the article by Sparks and Salter, and the one by Strachey, in which he says bluntly that "when some scheme of social reform is carried out under capitalism, it usually results in an actual worsening of working class conditions." And Hill in his article continually makes points that contradict Sparks and Salter. A definitive solution should be worked out by all the comrades involved with help of the Unemployment Councils, the Federation of Engineers, Architects, and Technicians, the Pen

and Hammer, and the Interprofessional Association for Social Insurance. Then we might have a housing bill that economically and politically would rank with the Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill and the Farmers' Relief Bill.

DAVID RAMSEY.

Any housing plan such as the one under discussion (prepared by the Pen and Hammer of New York, issue of April 10) must be understood to be merely one attempt to formulate this phase of the program for social insurance. It goes without saying that a housing plan flawless in every detail is not likely to result from the work of any single group; an adequate housing plan will doubtless be composed of elements derived from many such suggestions as those offered by Leonard Sparks

and Paul Salter. However, as to the criticism of the plan: Latent in the remark which David Ramsey quotes approvingly from John Strachey is an attitude the danger of which must be emphasized: that "when some scheme of social reform is carried out under capitalism, it usually results in an actual worsening of conditions." Such an attitude, if followed through logically, would lead to the cancellation of all mass efforts short of the actual seizure of power by the proletariat. It would mean cancelling the battles on the strike front for improved work-hours, wages, and conditions; whereas an adequate revolutionary program calls for relentless struggle at every point to wrest all possible concessions from the capitalist class for the proletariat and its allies.

—THE EDITORS.

The Poetry Camps Divide

STANLEY BURNSHAW

In May the author of this reply delivered a series of lectures on revolutionary literature before audiences in several mid-western cities. Harriet Monroe, veteran editor of Poetry, received a report from one of his horrified listeners, and in her July issue articulates this horror in the form of an editorial Art and Propaganda. The following reply is as much a discussion of the problems involved as it is an answer to Poetry's attack. In September Poetry will print in abbreviated form (owing to "space limitations") the reply which we publish in full.—THE EDITORS.

Dear Harriet Monroe:

YOUR current editorial contains so much of value—particularly for your readers—that I regret your having introduced so many confusions into an otherwise useful exposure of your bias. Since you wish to be "objective" about the controversy, you must welcome certain additions necessary to give your readers an accurate picture; as your editorial stands it is hardly that.

Your readers may be shocked by your words that "all art of all ages is propaganda," but they are certain to be confused when they stumble on your remark that "the artist, though possessed by a cause, can rarely become a successful propagandist."

You make two contradictions here. First, if "on the esthetic side . . . all art . . . is propaganda" and if "artists have rarely been successful propagandists," just in what has their esthetic success consisted? Secondly, having stressed the well-known fact that "the artist's message must be so profoundly at the center of his inmost being that it insinuates itself unconsciously into his art," you claim that "the artist, though possessed by a cause, can rarely become a successful propagandist.

When, then, can he become a successful propagandist, all art being propaganda?

There is only one means of dissipating such confusion: Marxist criticism, which finds bad art to be bad propaganda, good art good propaganda, and every creator of a good work of art successful both as artist and propagandist.

But this is mere quibbling in comparison with the statements I am alleged to have made about American poetry. You will surely not object if I publicly regret your choice of an anonymous reporter. After all, you and your readers have been cheated out of what you are entitled to by the fact that your columns contain forthright falsifications. Your reporter "left before the last act, as sleep was about to overcome her" since she "still prefers the stars." I have no objection to being unfavorably compared with the stars, but I am certain, judging from the accuracy of her report, that my eavesdropper fell asleep a good deal earlier than she is willing to admit. That is the only way I can account for some of her statements and still be polite.

I was surprised to hear that I delivered "a series of fiery talks . . . in which Poetry is berated as a decadent in language almost unprintable, and the violent young poet-propagandists on his list are given extravagant adjectives." As for the violent young poets and the adjectives, this must be wishful thinking on the part of Miss Anonymous. It has been your duty as editor of the most widely circulated poetry journal to examine the method of revolutionary literature and you have found that a ruthless self-criticism is one of the procedures that distinguishes it from bourgeois literature. Log-rolling and back-slapping, revolutionary literature leaves to the bourgeois writers, since it is interested not in critical encomiums but in perfecting its artistic instrument as a weapon. You will note,

for instance, in my *Notes on Revolutionary Poetry* (THE NEW MASSES, Feb. 20) three-fourths of the space discuss certain confusions harming revolutionary poetry and criticism of poetry, the rest is a series of suggestions. Similarly in my review of *Upsurge* (THE NEW MASSES, Jan. 2) instead of ballyhooing "one of our boys" in the accepted bourgeois tradition, I attempted to analyze what appeared to be the reasons for the faults of the book as poetry. In view of these documents it hardly seems possible for me to have shed automatically my critical memory by the mere act of mounting a lecture platform. Your reporter "cannot remember the names of the great poets Mr. Burnshaw mentioned." I am afraid this lapse in memory may be accounted for by the fact that I mentioned no great revolutionary poets—since I know of none in America as yet.

In fact the more I study your reporter's account the more I wonder if she was not asleep during the whole performance. Comparing her report with my notes, it all sounds like the nightmare a frightened poetry-reader would expect in thinking about the attack on our good American poetry institutions by what you quaintly call a "Russ-minded communist." It is probably needless to straighten out the paragraph of distorted statements which are supposed to represent my critical opinion of Frost, Millay, Robinson, etc. Any reader who saw my review of Robert Frost in *The Forum* several years ago will immediately recognize your paragraph for what it is: a series of disconnected phrases shamelessly torn out of context in such a way as to present a configuration slanderous in its implications. I can only wonder that in an editorial whose method was supposedly "impartial" you were careless enough to devote so much space to such obvious nonsense which can fool very few.

Similarly I can only wonder that you reprint some of my verse published in Poetry, apparently for purposes of disparagement. The first, a poem of escape, was written in 1924, the second in 1928. If I now have "all the zeal of a new convert," how do you account for the fact that in 1927 appeared two of my "Russ-minded" poems; and in 1928 and 1929 seven such poems? In the 1930 files of Poetry you will find some correspondence in which you refused a collection of revolutionary poems while accepting my *Eartha* sequence. A new convert, Miss Monroe?—or isn't it rather clear to you that honest writers aware of the intensification of the class struggle during the past five years have found it increasingly difficult to write about themes removed from the breakdown of society and its amelioration by proletarian revolution and socialism?

Which brings up the second paragraph by Miss Anonymous—her Lament Number Two which deserves reprinting as a model of misinformation about the Marxist attitude toward literary themes. "Poetry cannot talk about fields and streams and meadows and gallant gentlemen and ladies or the spots on a butterfly's wings," she moans. It may talk of these things if it can—but show me the poet worthy of the name who can be excited into writing about such matters when the entire social system in which he believed is bursting apart in chaos. Revolutionary poets are not any less fond of fields, streams, meadows or the spots on a butterfly's wings than are reactionary poets—but these things cannot interest them when hundreds are dying daily of starvation at the same time that food is destroyed by legislative ordinance; when a government curtails education and appropriates the largest sum in the history of mankind for war materials; when workers are shot down for exercising the rights supposedly guaranteed them by the National Recovery Act. In such times as these a poet's themes are the best record of his sense of values; and if he continues to be primarily concerned with fields, streams, meadows and a butterfly's wing that is all the indictment necessary. Not that poetry "must concern itself with Stalin and the strikers" in the silly sense that your reporter imagines; nor that a poet must limit himself *a priori* to a given set of themes. Anyone even faintly familiar with the creative process knows your reporter is writing rank and vicious nonsense. A poet allied with the proletariat may write about any theme that interests him. Being a normal, rounded human being, he will not be excited exclusively by strikers and Stalin, although these are excellent themes. He will see the implications of the class-struggle in numberless events and objects ignored by bourgeois poets. He will write about love, landscape, friendship, hatred, etc. Not every one of his poems, obviously, will explicitly call for revolution, but the totality of his work will be a weapon fighting on the side of the revolutionary proletariat. There may be fields, streams, meadows, and even a butterfly's wing or two, but not many gallant gentlemen and ladies—instead, per-



Mabel Dwight (Weyhe Galleries)

haps, a gallery of men and women heroes from the ranks of strike-organizers, pickets, and demonstrators.

It is not surprising that *Upsurge* represents for you as for the bulk of bourgeois critics the "best revolutionary verse," for this is clearly a class-judgment. Written in a vehement rhetoric, *Upsurge* becomes associated in your mind with soap-box oratory which you both fear and despise—and it is on the level of rhetorical harangue that you wish to keep the "genuine" proletarian poetry article.

In denigrating revolutionary verse appearing in revolutionary publications as "half-baked efforts," you fail to mention an important distinction which your twenty years of experience unquestionably have taught you and to which the files of Poetry bear overwhelming testimony: that editorial selection of verse frequently involves criteria with which the critic of poetry may be unconcerned. Nevertheless you are careful to avoid any mention of those revolutionary poems which are undeniably as excellent as anything produced in recent years by poets in Poetry, The Nation, Atlantic Monthly, Scribners, et al. Perhaps your hasty judgments should not be taken seriously since as recently as a few weeks before writing your editorial you were entirely ignorant of contemporary revolutionary verse appearing in the central cultural organ of the revolutionary movement—you told me in May that you had not seen a single issue of the weekly NEW MASSES. But such haste to atone

for erstwhile failure in your duty as editor of the largest poetry periodical cannot quite excuse you for ignoring such unquestionable achievements in revolutionary poetry as Michael Gold's *Strange Funeral at Braddock*, Alfred Kreymborg's mass recital *America*, Kenneth Fearing's *Obituary*, Joseph Kalar's *Paper Mill*. You claim to be unaware of the importance of experimental verse recently published. You proclaim that if a great revolutionary poem should arrive at the Poetry office you "may hope that the editors would recognize its quality and print it." This is probably a pious though wasted hope, Miss Monroe, for revolutionary poets are hardly going to elect for their masterpieces an organ surviving on a capitalist subsidy. But even if (for a number of amusing reasons) you should print a revolutionary poem, such publication would have no significance, since you have shown just where you and your periodical stand.

You have drawn the line with admirable clarity. "THE NEW MASSES, Mr. Burnshaw, Mr. Cowley [on the basis of his *Exile's Return*] et al., speaking up vociferously on one side, and Poetry, Mr. Yeats, Mr. MacLeish, Mr. Tate holding their ground more quietly." Yeats' presence on your side is by no means unchallengeable; as for Tate, as you know he is about as shameless a reactionary as the South has been able to compound so far; as for MacLeish, you realize that his *Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's Radio City* entitle him to

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first place among the incipient Fascists of American poetry. Indeed the issue is clearly drawn: against you THE NEW MASSES and the dozen little proletarian magazines flourishing from coast to coast—John Reed Club organs as well as Blast, Dynamo, The Anvil, etc.—fighting with and for the class that is

rising into power, fighting against your solid front of reaction. And don't worry too much about fellow travelers who are now "shouting for the workers' millenium with the Soviet-instructed Communists." You need not "wonder what cause will attract" them next, because these writers who for years had battled straw

men, have at last come to understand their position as artists in the fourth decade of the twentieth century. Among them are several former contributors to Poetry who have now joined the side of the workers and who, you may be assured, must thereby become better artists.

John Dewey Capitulates to "God"

CORLISS LAMONT

JOHN DEWEY, Professor Emeritus at Columbia University and leading philosopher of the American middle-class, has come out for God or at least for the word "God." In so doing he gives valuable aid and comfort to capitalism's utilization of church and religion, especially in times of grave economic crisis, to take the minds of the people off their desperate conditions and to quiet them with dreams of blissful supernatural solutions of all their troubles. In so doing, also, Professor Dewey unmistakably betrays that large part of his past which was spent in fighting supernaturalism. For this move plays directly into the hands of supernaturalism, Idealism, and every other reactionary philosophy. Dewey also betrays that very simple duty of a philosopher which consists in clarifying situations instead of muddling them by an obvious misuse of terms. Nothing that John Dewey has ever done or said shows more clearly, in my opinion, both his actual class allegiances, and the necessity for honest and uncompromising minds to repudiate his leadership.

It is in the current number of The Yale Review, in an article entitled, *The Liberation of Religion*, that Dewey takes his stand on behalf of "God." "We are in the presence," he says, "neither of ideals completely embodied in existence nor yet of ideals that are mere rootless ideals, fantasies, utopias. There are forces in nature and society that generate and support the ideals. They are further unified by the action that gives them coherence and stability. It is this *active* relation between ideal and actual to which I would give the name God." Dewey then goes on to explain that, "Militant atheism is also [like supernaturalism] affected by lack of natural piety. The ties binding man to nature that poets have always celebrated are passed over lightly. The attitude taken is often that of man living in an indifferent and hostile world and issuing blasts of defiance. A religious attitude, however, needs the sense of a connection of man, in the way of both dependence and support, with the enveloping world that imagination feels is a universe. Use of the word 'God,' or 'divine,' to convey the union of actual with ideal may protect man from a sense of isolation and from consequent despair or defiance."

The term "God" has traditionally meant an independently existing personal and supernat-

ural Being ruling over the universe and guaranteeing the triumph of the good. And we certainly cannot accept as legitimate any definition farther removed from historical usage than Matthew Arnold's "a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness"—with power understood as an active force working totally independent of mankind. But Dewey redefines God as meaning merely the actualizing here and now of thoroughly this-earthly and human ideals by human beings in interaction with their environment. One of the best possible comments on this procedure is that which Professor Dewey himself made a few months earlier in discussing a somewhat similar redefinition of God by Dr. Wieman. He describes Dr. Wieman as pleading that in a time of transition and disturbance "many persons will find it helpful and consoling to use the word 'God' to designate what actually are a collection of forces, unified only in their functional effect: the furtherance of goods in human life." Could it be, perhaps, that since Dewey made this statement there has been so much additional "disturbance" in the world that he himself feels the need of something "consoling" as the system of which he is part and parcel disintegrates more and more? And can it be doubted that his trotting out of "God" will be most "helpful" to those "many persons" among the bourgeoisie who will be able to use it to bolster up the influence of a declining religion?

For the news that Dewey believes in God will be for the most part interpreted as the news that he believes in a personal God or at least in Matthew Arnold's concept. No matter how carefully he sets down his illegitimate definition of God, it is certain that old meanings and associations will come crowding in upon such a blessed and hypnotic word, around which throughout history there have been built up great religions and mass emotional response. As a psychologist, John Dewey knows all this perfectly well. If he thinks that he would be misunderstood by saying that he is an atheist (which is what he really is), he could carefully point out what he did and did not mean by that word. Or he could have kept on employing the term "naturalism," which has been the usual title ascribed to his philosophical system. In any case his system has no need, logical or otherwise, for God,

however defined. And this makes Dewey's Yale Review article all the more unjustified from the point of view of unequivocal analysis.

Back in 1913 Lenin had a controversy with Maxim Gorky which throws considerable light on Dewey's position. Gorky had defined God as "a complex of those ideas, worked out by tribes, by nations, by humanity at large, which arouse and organize the social emotions, and which serve to unite the individual with society, and to curb zoological individualism." This definition, like Dewey's, turns God from an independent, active Being into a system of human ideals. Lenin wrote to Gorky, calling his idea of God "obviously wrong and obviously reactionary." He went on to state: "Like the Christian Socialists (the sorriest sort of "Socialism" and its vilest perversion) you employ a trick which (in spite of your best intentions) is on all fours with the hocus-pocus of the priests. All that has in actual practice been *historically* and socially associated with the idea of God (bedevilment, irrational prejudice, and the glorification of ignorance and wretchedness, on the one hand,—and serfdom and monarchy on the other), are eliminated while in place of this historical and social reality is inserted a nice little petty-bourgeois phrase . . . Your words being written went to the *masses* and their *meaning* was determined, not by these your good intentions, but by the *correlation of social forces*—by the objective interrelation of classes . . . By re-decorating the idea of God you actually repaired the chains by which the ignorant workers and peasants are bound . . . In Europe, just as in Russia, *every* defence or justification of the idea of God, even the most refined and well intentioned, is a justification of reaction." And, we may add, in America as well.

Lenin's letter to Gorky applies with equal force to John Dewey and indeed to all others who participate in the racket of religious redefinition. Dewey's position is by no means an isolated one; he is simply the most recent and prominent American philosopher to have adopted such strategy. Redefinitions of God almost identical with Dewey's or very similar to it have been rife in America for some time. And the same game extends to other religious terms, such as immortality, resurrection, and religion itself. In the very article we have been discussing, Dewey makes a new and im-

permissible definition of religion as "the unification of the self through allegiance to inclusive ideal ends," leaving out entirely that which has been the distinguishing trait of all religions, namely, faith in or reliance on supernatural powers, entitles, or states of being. Under Dewey's definition it is, for example, easy to prove that Communism is a religion.

The undoubted effect of Professor Dewey's redefinitions is to strengthen, on behalf of the

present capitalist order, the reactionary forces of church and religion in the community. It will be found that *The Liberation of Religion*, as outlined by Dewey, will mean about the same thing for religion as the slogan of "liberalizing capitalism" means for capitalism. In short, a certain amount of reform together with a subtle use of words functions to preserve and prolong the existence of the old institutions, whether cultural or political and

economic. But it is not only Marxists who should be disgusted with Dewey's surrender to God and religion. All straight-forward and sincere students of philosophy should be repelled by this evasive juggling with words. And they might also ask themselves whether it is not chiefly in Marxist circles that there exists today the intellectual courage to deal with basic issues thoroughly, frankly, and without resort to verbal hocus-pocus.

The Artist and the Revolutionary Movement

MARK GRAUBARD

SEVERAL months ago the John Reed Club of New York arranged an exhibition on the subjects of Hunger, War, and Fascism, which was, to say the least, quite disappointing. Only those artists who function as decorators, butlers or clowns for the rich can escape coming in contact with and responding to the powerful panorama of oppression and struggle expressed by these three words. It is the task of the revolutionary artist to know them, interpret them and heighten their significance by virtue of his intense response and creative ability. There was, however, little doubt on the part of the majority of those who visited the exhibition of the New York John Reed Club artists that hunger, war, and Fascism—the holy trinity of capitalism in 1933-34—were not represented as the worker feels them, as the worker learns their meaning. Very few of the pictures or sculpture exhibited contained even fragments of the class war drama.

It is not difficult to find out why the artists of the John Reed Club failed to represent artistically the vital aspects of present day society. The exhibited works proved that the artists themselves have never been aware of the real meaning of hunger, war, and Fascism, as experienced by the workers in real life; that they had never participated in working-class struggles against these forces. The paintings were more in the nature of hasty homework rather than descriptive, analytical and interpretive records of stirring events. One felt that the artist, after hearing the titles announced, went back to his studio and wracked his brain to think of something he could concoct on any of the three subjects. The result was empty, unconvincing and artificial.

To remove the possibility of such failures in the future it is essential to consider the chief objectives of an organization for revolutionary artists. The aims seem to be threefold. First, to develop the concepts of revolutionary, proletarian art in theory and in practice and to fight on the cultural front. Secondly, to cater to the cultural needs of the revolutionary masses and help in their day to day struggles. And thirdly, to develop the latent artistic capacities of many members of the working-class who, deprived of opportunities for train-

ing, nevertheless are struggling to express the events and emotions which affect them. The weaknesses of the exhibition seemed to be the result of the fact that the John Reed Club was not sufficiently aware of its function in the labor movement and consequently had no immediate contacts with it. To remedy that situation the following plan was suggested:

That the J.R.C. organize groups that should become affiliated with specific trade unions or mass organizations; membership within these groups to be on a voluntary basis according to the interests and work of each individual artist. If, for example, an artist is interested in Negro problems and portrays scenes from Negro life, he would become a member of the group that would cooperate with the League of Struggle for Negro Rights. This group of artists would then join the latter organization, become active members of it, participate in its struggles, acquaint themselves with the problems confronting the Negro masses, and come to know the masses themselves. In the course of time their artistic work will cease to be vague, sentimental and superficial, as it is bound to be in the absence of real experience and understanding, but will be rooted in reality through knowledge and active and emotional participation. In addition, their works will also be of direct use to the revolutionary movement, since their contents will deal with real and living situations understandable to the workers and helpful to them in their activities. This example should illustrate how a J.R.C. group can cooperate with each trade union and revolutionary mass organization and become a real, effective force in the labor movement.

There are many advantages in such a plan. Both artist and the revolutionary movement become organically fused. The artist gains in knowledge of his material and in understanding of the situations that he deals with, a gain which necessarily improves him as an artist. The revolutionary movement, on the other hand, benefits from the propaganda value of such works, using the word propaganda in its real sense of spreading and conveying information and clarity to fellow workers as yet unenlightened on one specific issue or another.

This plan of active participation alone

makes possible the realization of the tasks of a revolutionary artists' organization. The artist ceases to be isolated by a fence of abstractions, participates in actual struggles, learns the real meaning of revolutionary proletarian art and can no longer be misled by the inane flimsiness of bourgeois art and its philosophers. Through the propaganda value of his works he becomes a useful factor in the movement and is actually bringing his art to the masses. This contact will clarify for him the significant theoretical question as to who decides what great art is and what qualities make for greatness. He will realize that the ultimate determining agency lies in the masses freed from bourgeois confusions and the limitations of artistic inexperience. He will find out for himself the meaning of class art and will appreciate why art under capitalism is enslaved and why it can achieve freedom only in a classless society.

The group system will furthermore bring about opportunities for collective work on the basis of cooperation for a common purpose. The works will be offered to the workers at union meetings where they can be exhibited. The workers, necessarily familiar with the subject matter, will get to appreciate the role of art in their daily lives. Those who have any capacity at all will be easily drawn in by the artists who will give them all the help they require. The revolutionary press will also gain in being supplied with relevant drawings.

It follows that should the groups in each trade union and in each mass organization execute their tasks in the fashion described, the J.R.C. of New York will be in possession of a full artistic record of contemporary society. A central exhibition of the organization can then be a panorama of working-class life and struggles rooted in local soil, in time and place. Such an exhibition will not be an exclusive gathering place for intellectuals but for many thousands of workers who will have become familiar with art in their own trade unions and who will be urged by their feeling of solidarity to view artistic representation of struggles of their fellow workers in other industries. Moreover by charging a small admission fee the artist can even manage to get some financial support, aside from selling his works to trade union clubs.

Correspondence

Some Questions for Sinclair

TO THE NEW MASSES:

We think you might be interested in using the enclosed correspondence between Leo Gallagher and Upton Sinclair. Leo Gallagher sent a registered letter to Upton Sinclair on July 14th to ask if he cared to answer the questions asked in his letter of July 6th. Both letters at this time remain among Sinclair's unanswered correspondence.

ESTHER MCCOY,
Election Campaign Committee.

Gallagher to Sinclair

Upton Sinclair,
Pasadena, Calif.

Dear Upton:

The average capitalist politician in determining whom he will support is governed only by personal considerations as to what is to his advantage and what is not to his advantage on the theory that "if you scratch my back I will scratch your back." I know that you are not influenced by such considerations of the average political candidates.

I am not supporting you in your campaign for governor. (Perhaps you will be grateful for this.) I cannot support you because I believe that your program is fantastic, chimerical, and utterly impractical, that it will lead to a disillusionment of the people and consequently advance Fascism. I believe that the Communist Party has the only program in this election which represents the real interests of the workers. I am therefore supporting the Communist Party in this campaign.

You know about my work in Southern California in defense of workers and in the defense of pretended constitutional rights. You know that I have been one of the few in Southern California who have actively attempted to reestablish constitutional liberty here,—constitutional liberty which has been destroyed by the very public officials who have taken the usual Christian oath to uphold the Constitution. In view of my work I ask you for your endorsement of my candidacy for the Supreme Court of California. If you feel that you cannot endorse me I request that you state in detail the reasons why you cannot give me this endorsement. On the other hand, if you feel that you can endorse me I would appreciate not only the endorsement, but a statement of the reasons why you endorse me.

June 29, 1934.

LEO GALLAGHER.

Sinclair to Gallagher

Mr. Leo Gallagher,
Los Angeles, Calif.

My dear Leo Gallagher:

I have your letter of June 29th in which you tell me that you are not supporting my candidacy for governor, but ask me to endorse your candidacy for the Supreme Court of California. You furthermore say that if I cannot endorse you, you wish I would state my reasons.

I am afraid your sense of humor was not working when you wrote me this letter. Of course I cannot endorse your candidacy, and as for the reasons, all you have to do is to turn the statements in your own letter about and you will have my reasons.

You say that you cannot support me because you believe that my program "is fantastic, chimerical, and utterly impractical, and that it will lead to a disillusionment of the people and consequently advance Fascism." As it happens, that is exactly what I believe about your program, and that is exactly why I cannot endorse your candidacy. You say furthermore, "I believe that the Communist Party has the only program in this election which represents the real interests of the workers." It happens that I believe exactly the same thing about the EPIC program, and that is why I am running

on the EPIC program and why I am not endorsing any candidates except those who run on the EPIC program.

I trust that this letter is explicit and covers the points you raise.

June 30, 1934.

UPTON SINCLAIR.

Gallagher to Sinclair

Upton Sinclair,
Pasadena, Calif.

Dear Upton Sinclair:

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter of June 30. It may be that my sense of humor was not working when I wrote you my letter of June 29, but it seems equally clear to me that your sense of logic failed when you dictated your answer of June 30.

You are running for an executive office and it is necessary for the general public to make a selection between the various candidates running for that office. As I stated in my letter to you, I cannot support your program because I believe it fantastic, chimerical and utterly impractical, leading to a disillusionment of the people and consequently advancing Fascism. I stated that I was supporting the Communist Party platform since I believe that the Communist Party has the only platform in this election which represents the real interests of the workers.

On the other hand, I am running for a judicial, theoretically non-partisan office, namely, the Supreme Court of California. I am running against Hartley Shaw of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, and Emmet Seawell, the present incumbent. Seawell is one of the judges of the Supreme Court responsible for the decision in the case of the petition of Warren K. Billings for a recommendation for pardon, 210 Cal. 659. Have you read this decision? Do you know that in this decision the Supreme Court white-washed the police and district attorney's office of San Francisco? No better condemnation of the whole proceedings can be made than was made by Justice Wm. H. Langdon in his dissenting opinion in the following words: "Considered either as an argument of an advocate or as a judicial review of the evidence, the consolidated majority report is unsound and indefensible. It is unsound because its conclusions are not founded upon established facts. Suspensions, conjectures, unwarranted inferences, irreconcilable inconsistencies, and admitted perjuries are treated as facts. It is indefensible because it appeals to passion and prejudice."

You state that one of your first acts as governor will be to pardon Mooney. You must know that one of the reasons why Mooney is now in the penitentiary is because the governor of California used this decision of the Supreme Court as a justification for refusing to pardon Mooney. Do you wish such a man as Seawell to again sit on the Supreme Court of California for twelve years?

My other opponent, Hartley Shaw, has never so far as I know taken an active stand in defence of the Constitution, violated on every hand in Southern California. So far as I know he did not publicly protest when you were arrested in San Pedro for reading the Constitution of the United States. My own experience as a practising attorney before him would lead me to believe that he is extremely technical and consequently inclined to permit fundamental human liberties to be sacrificed on the altar of technicality and form. Do you wish him to be Justice of the Supreme Court?

You must make your choice between Seawell, Shaw, and myself. As far as I know, neither of my opponents is supporting EPIC any more than I myself. And whoever you may favor for this office, are you going to permit a person who may not be qualified for the office to secure it because he as well as the others has refused to endorse EPIC?

Do you not owe a responsibility to the voters of California to state your opinion as to which of the three candidates running for this office is the best qualified to represent the people of California on the Supreme Court?

I do not ask you to endorse me, but I do ask you to endorse some one of the three candidates and to state your reason why you do not endorse me, which reason I sincerely trust will not be a reason which applies to all the candidates for this office, namely, that they do not support EPIC.

July 6, 1934.

LEO GALLAGHER.

Thaelmann Day—July 27

TO THE NEW MASSES:

July 27 has been set aside as Thaelmann Day in New York as part of international observance of World Thaelmann Day.

As a culmination of the day, a mass rally will be held in the Open-Air Arena of the Bronx Coliseum, East 177 St., New York City. The rally will be preceded by a mass farewell banquet to Willi Muenzenberg, member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party in Germany, and member of the German Reichstag for the past ten years.

On the eve of his return to Europe, Muenzenberg will make an authoritative report on the present situation in Germany, the work of the Communist Party of Germany and the outlook for the proletarian revolution.

In view of the widespread interest in what is happening in Germany today, this report should be of considerable interest.

Tickets of admission are 25 cents in advance and 35 cents at the door. Banquet tickets are 60 cents, procurable in advance at the Workers' Bookshop, 50 East 13th Street. Anti-Nazi Federation, 168 West 23rd Street, National Committee to Aid Victims of German Fascism, 870 Broadway. Proceeds will be sent to Germany to help in the defense of Ernst Thaelmann and to strengthen the anti-fascist work over there.

ROBERT HAMILTON.

The Vigilantes Arrive

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I was sitting in a room upstairs with Sam Gardner and George Levison at our Workers' School of International Labor Defense on Haight Street. No classes were in session. Sam was typing some circulars we were going to hand out on the strike. George was reading aloud John Strachey's *Struggle for Power*.

Suddenly we heard a racket downstairs as if someone were banging down the door.

We heard men shouting and climbing the stairs. "Open the door there, you sons of bitches," someone howled and they banged with some sticks. "It's open," said Sam.

Our guests preferred to force their way in. They attacked the door with lead pipes, a chair, their shoes, and the butts of their guns.

They made their entrance: six or seven big husky men, panting, sweating.

I cannot imagine what they expected to encounter—perhaps a whole Red army hidden in the closet, but they were armed with bayonets, pistols, policemen's clubs, rubber hose, broomsticks and lead pipes. One man even carried an umbrella. Sam, who is five feet five and weighs one hundred and twenty-eight pounds, began to laugh.

"Get the hell out of here, you damned red," said one of the men, menacing with his broomstick.

There was a big hulking fellow with a bulging neck, evidently their leader. "Search the place."

They took out the drawers of our desk and dumped the contents on the floor.

Their loot proved to be a volume of Kropotkin: *The Conquest of Bread*, a bottle of black India ink, half-full, two pencils, a handbill, the notice of the death of the young boy who was shot by the police a month or so ago, Edward Carpenter's: *Towards Industrial Freedom*, and a map of our district. The man with the bulging neck seized our Kropotkin.

"What's this," he demanded excited. He squinted at the first page. "We'll need this. It looks pretty bad." He put it in his pocket. "Go on, we're not done here yet. Not by any means. God knows what they've got hidden away."

Sam began to laugh again and one of the men hit him on the side of the head. The bulging neck waved him aside.

"Not yet. We can attend to them later."

The men hacked down the closet door. It was open, of course—we never locked anything—but they hacked it to splinters. Two of them went cautiously in after waving their flashlights about to be sure that we had not concealed any monster there.

"No bombs," they reported.

"No bombs?" said the bulging neck. He looked very crestfallen. "There's SOMETHING in there, isn't there?" he almost pleaded.

Yes, there was something in there, but they were not sure just what. . . . Ah, here it came . . . a painting, a painting. Modernistic. That was bad. It looked like a group of workers. That's it—Russian workers. That man in the center with the beard must be Trotsky or Lenin or whatever his name was. To it, boys! Down they jumped. Again, again. Good.

"Hey, what's this? A package. Wrapped up in paper and tied with a string. Look out there! You never know what these slick fellows have got up their sleeves. Careful. . . . Better make them open it."

Necks craned forward again and breaths were held. . . . Bah! Only George's lunch: three peanut butter sandwiches and a cup-cake.

The closet was empty. One of the men took the typewriter and threw it out of the window. They ripped off the shades and smashed the glass with their clubs.

"You're under arrest," announced the bulging neck.

"You can't arrest us," said George hysterically. "You're crazy. We haven't done anything."

"You're in the pay of the Russian government," said the bulging neck. "Spies from Moscow."

George gazed at the man in despair and shrugged his shoulders.

"You poor fool," he said. He raised his arms to defend himself as they leaped on him—three of the men: one with a piece of hose, the two others with sticks. He fought them off feebly. Sam and I were held so we could not come to his aid. It was a silent scuffle. No one said anything. They just grinned. They left him swaying but still on his feet, with a swollen jaw, bruised shoulders, bleeding eye, pulpy nose.

"We're cleaning up San Francisco and when we get through we'll have run every one of you rats, squealing, out of town. We arrest you on charges of vagrancy."

"Vagrancy?" echoed Sam, "sitting in a room, typing? Does that constitute vagrancy?" There was no use arguing.

"Never you mind," said the bulging neck. "We know what we're doing. On your way, Reds."

We saw they'd wrought havoc on the lower floor. All our chairs were demolished, our pictures destroyed, the windows smashed. We got outside and George nearly cried when he saw they'd torn down our new sign over the door. It was a nice sign, neat and respectable and not shabby like most of our things. We'd saved for seven weeks to get enough money to buy that sign. It had only been up for three days.

They drove us to the Hall of Justice. The courtroom swarmed with our friends, most of them damaged in varying degrees. I recognized Joe Pettis, secretary of the Marine Workers' Industrial Union on Jackson Street.

"You got off easy," was his verdict when he heard our story. "They took an ax to our piano. Our platform is kindling wood. They slammed our typewriters against the wall and gathered in their 'evidence'—a flag, an embroidered banner, and a few notices. They lined us all up against the

wall and whacked us on our rumps. They beat Carl Englebrecht until he had to be taken to the Emergency Hospital with five others, three of them Negroes. John Madero said that the Open Forum Club on Fillmore Street is a mass of wreckage. The I.W.W. headquarters is in ruins. In your case it was a band of 'citizens'—the militia, probably. In our case it was the police. Seventy-five men descended upon the Open Forum Club with bricks and smashed everything to pieces. There was a crowd of people outside and they cheered as the windows were broken, dishes smashed to the floor, and the gas range torn out."

We were milled around some more. Judge Lazarus came in, a bald-headed man with goggles. Someone pointed out Prosecutor Brady, an old fellow who looked as if he were in his eighties, conferring with a colleague. There were lots of policemen in the room who brandished their clubs and kept telling us to shut up.

I bumped up against Esther Millick, one of our organizers. She handed me a paper.

Headlines: "Strike Bred in Moscow." Further on were described as the City's Dregs, and Alley

Spawn. And: "Irate Strikers Throw Off Sinister Red Influence. Staunch to Americanism."

Suddenly there was a great commotion. The photographers had come to take our pictures. There followed a period of maneuvering and rearranging in the front of the court, nearest to the cameras. It appeared that there was a fair-haired English youth up front. He was promptly removed and a call was sent out for a man with a beard. Was there any? No . . . wait, wait a moment, here's one. That's it, shove him up right under the camera's lens. Any Negroes? Here we are, here's one. He's a real black.

Hey, remove this fat fellow. He's entirely too respectable. Looks like a broker or something. Here's a desperate person. He hasn't shaved for three days and his clothes look ragged. Up he goes. And so on.

Flash! The pictures are taken and spirited off to the city editors. In a few minutes the next editions are off the press and we go out to meet the public labeled as "City's Dregs, and Alley Spawn."

ELOISE SAVANNAH.

San Francisco.

Books

Idealistic Physics

ATOMIC THEORY AND THE DESCRIPTION OF NATURE, by Niels Bohr. The University Press and The Macmillan Co. \$2.

MIND AND NATURE, by Herman Weyl. University of Pennsylvania Press. \$1.50.

THE books under review are by two of the most distinguished scientists in the world. Herman Weyl is one of the world's greatest mathematicians and is at present one of Einstein's colleagues at the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton. Niels Bohr, along with Planck and Einstein, blazed the theoretical trail of modern physics.

Three things strike the reader. In the first place both scientists are anxious to draw philosophic deductions from the revolution in physics that has been going on for four decades. Secondly, both are more than anxious to present these philosophic deductions to a wide public. In Professor Bohr's words, they wish to make their subject "more easily accessible to those readers who do not belong to the narrow circle of physicists." The third fact that stands out is that "the serious crisis" in physics that Henri Poincaré noted more than 25 years ago still exists.

All three aspects are connected. Modern atomic physics, relativity theory and quantum mechanics destroyed the neat, over simplified picture of the universe that scientists had drawn in the 19th century. The old basis of mechanical concepts no longer sufficed to hold up the superstructure of theoretical physics. The "crisis" spread from one branch of science to another, as "paradoxes" appeared that could not be solved by the old mechanical approach.

Two schools of scientific thought arose. One, the mechanists, tried to squeeze the new

discoveries into the outworn mechanical framework. The other, the idealists, tried to construct an idealistic synthesis that left plenty of room for mysticism, magic, and God. Bourgeois philosophy, intellectually bankrupt since Hegel, was completely unable to solve the problems that arose in scientific methodology and the theory of knowledge. Instead, the philosophers seized on the confusion of the scientists and fabricated all kinds of vital principles, spirits of the whole, mathematical and organic Gods, and so on. Thus the "crisis" was brought on by the wave of new discoveries that wrecked the foundations of science. This caused the scientists to polish the worn-out dogmas of bourgeois thinkers and start out in sackcloth and ashes to proclaim to all who would listen that all is vanity, and that science must become the handmaiden of the spiritual and religious.

Scientists are getting more and more worried about this chronic state of crisis and scientific penance. Lenin, in his classic analysis of the problem in *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism*, pointed out that science would continue to flounder in a morass until scientists constructed a new philosophic foundation for science based on dialectical materialism.

The truth of Lenin's prediction has been borne out by events in science for the past quarter of a century. In the books under review there is still another example of how scientists find themselves bogged in the swamps of idealism, because they do not accept, or reject, the fundamental principles of dialectical materialism.

Professor Weyl is a subjective idealist. For him "the world does not exist independently" of a perceiving ego. Every time we perceive an object or an event, it is due to the miracle of consciousness. This brand of idealism was

so thoroughly annihilated by Lenin in the above mentioned book that it would be a waste of time to refute Weyl's philosophic bromides.

With Professor Bohr, however, it is a different matter. Most of Weyl's notions as a matter of fact, are derived from Bohr, since the latter has a more original mind. Bohr has not only dressed up old dogmas in new styles, but at times tends to approach his problems clearly, only to end up in confusion because of his idealistic bias. On the basis of the "paradoxes" of modern physics (according to one physicist, matter seems to behave in one way on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and in still another on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays) Professor Bohr has worked out a philosophic principle which he calls "the theory of complementarity." He believes there is an inherent duality in nature, because all things are contradictory. Consequently both aspects of a thing may be true at different times. But the process of discovering one aspect of a phenomenon makes it impossible for us to discover the other aspect. Thus we are in the position of having a strictly one-sided view of nature at all times.

Professor Bohr has derived his theory of complementarity by extending Heisenberg's principle of indeterminacy from the realm of atomic physics to include all of nature, man's relation to the world about him, and all processes of knowing and thinking.

Heisenberg's principle states that one cannot "determine" both the position and velocity of an electron at the same time. Determine one, and you cannot determine the other. Heisenberg was able to draw this startling conclusion by doing some remarkable intellectual sleight-of-hand. His principle arose originally as a mathematical rule which has to be stated in technical lingo in order to prove that logic is faster than Heisenberg's hands. From this valid rule Heisenberg falsely generalized that all things happen in physics, not according to scientific law but according to "probabilities"—more simply, according to chance.

Heisenberg universalized his rule without taking into account either methodological principles or the fact that his generalization had no physical meaning. Whether he did this consciously or because he lacked a correct theory of knowledge is unimportant. His statement was seized upon by people like Edington, who began claiming that electrons possess "free will," that they "can jump around as they please," and other things equally absurd.

Professor Bohr has carried Heisenberg's error to its logical conclusion. He has widened the principle of indeterminism to include all phenomena—physical, biological, and social. From asserting "the subjective character of all physical phenomena," he ends up in the mystical conclusion "that the very problem of the distinction between the living and the dead escapes comprehension in the ordinary sense of the word." One more step and he will be offering us godheads and spiritual essences.

The source of the philosophic (and in many cases physical) errors of Bohr and Heisenberg is their denial of a consistent materialism. This leads them to introduce idealistic errors in their work when they translate their mathematical symbols into physical meaning and content.

They are also the victims of language. Because Einstein's theories deal with the *relativity* of space and time, they think space and time are *subjective*—that they are the products of our minds. But Einstein himself, for all his idealistic leanings, has repeatedly emphasized that "space and time data have a physically real, and not a mere fictitious, significance."

Similarly, when Heisenberg speaks of the "indeterminism" that characterizes an electron, he fails to see that what he really means is that the electron cannot be measured (determined) directly, that it must be dealt with statistically. This does not mean, however, that an electron has free will and can do as it pleases. The behavior of an electron is not due to "pure chance," but is the result of casual relationships, the statistical regularity of which can be determined. It must be remembered that the notion so prevalent today that physics has been reduced to making statements about "probabilities," and not about an objective world, ignores completely the point that there can be no probability without causality.

Modern science therefore has not rejected causality for chance, nor has it disproved the existence of an objective world. Scientists are confronted by "paradoxes" that dialectical materialism would resolve.

To the reviewer it is a significant point that Professor Bohr has been forced to admit the presence of "contradiction" in nature. It shows that the progress of science is such that scientists are driven to *approximations* or *distortions* of the position of dialectical materialism. The internal movement of scientific discovery, as well as the external developments in society, will force scientists to dialectics, if they are adequately to interpret or synthesize the great scientific discoveries of the 20th century.

DAVID RAMSEY.

On the Surface

THE PLANNED ECONOMY IN SOVIET RUSSIA, by Edward Lamb. Dorrance & Co. \$1.75.

This is a sympathetic but somewhat disjointed study of economic and social conditions in the Soviet Union. It illustrates the point that books about the planned economy of the U.S.S.R. are not themselves always very well planned. Mr. Lamb tries to cover the whole Soviet enterprise and in so doing makes his book difficult to read and to assimilate. And while he deals competently enough with the meaning and achievements of Russia's socialist regime, he does not add anything really fresh to the growing mass of information about the U.S.S.R.

In view of its title I had hoped that this

volume might take up at length the technique and detailed working out of social economic planning in the Soviet Union, tracing the procedures in use from the State Planning Commission at the top right on down to the individual factory and collective farm. We badly need such a book, but so far as I know no satisfactory one exists. Certainly Mr. Lamb's does not do the job.

Of course, authors are seldom responsible for the jackets put on their books, but Mr. Lamb surely should have vetoed the misleading one on his. On one side of the front flap is a picture of a church entitled, "The Beauty of Old Russia;" on the other side a picture of fine new workers' homes entitled, "The Utility of the New." This gives the erroneous impression, first, that the Russia of the Soviets does not care about beauty and, second, that beauty and utility are somehow irreconcilable.

It is curious, in view of the much sound information in this book, that Mr. Lamb should have fallen for the myth that Karl Marx has become "God" for the Russian people and Lenin his "prophet" and a canonized "saint." And it is also sad to find the author repeating the charge that the Russian Communists now merely contribute "lip service to world revolution" and have "practically withdrawn from the Third International."

CORLISS LAMONT.

No Road to Life

BOY AND GIRL TRAMPS OF AMERICA, by Thomas Minehan. Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.50.

Two hundred fifty thousand homeless children are on the road today, riding freight-cars across the length and breadth of America in endless search of safe anchorage. Hounded from place to place in their fruitless quest for work, moving (under constant pressure of "twenty-four hour floaters") in the shadow of prison or chain gang for the crime of being unemployed and uncared for, theirs is a desperate struggle for existence. They live in a vicious circle of box cars, hobo jungles, jails, and missions. Worst of all are the missions, most of which can be compared in degradation and filth only to Gorky's *Lower Depths*. Here the homeless must go through the motions of being saved nightly by Jesus in return for a few square feet of filthy floor space to sleep on, and a "meal" of watery corn mush and sour bread. Hostile, brutal police dog their heels everywhere. Malnutrition and tuberculosis are taking a heavy toll among them; most of the homeless kids know the gnawing hunger of days without food. In winter they face the choice of staying north with insufficient clothing and uncertain shelter, or going south where chain gangs wait for them. Why are they homeless, these quarter-million boy and girl tramps?

In an attempt to find an answer to this and other questions, Dr. Minehan, a young sociology professor at the University of Minnesota, disguised himself as a transient and

mingled with homeless youth during his spare time—"on week-ends, holidays, and vacations." He industriously collected thousands of notes, including five hundred case histories. The material is naturally thin, because of the author's short and casual acquaintance with the life he describes. But within its limits, it has the ring of honesty and authenticity. Snatches of case histories are skillfully woven together; here, it seems, are representative boys and girls of the road. Most of them have left depression-poor homes so that there would be one less mouth to feed, and hoping, too, that they might land a job and send some money home. They want work desperately—anything to get off the road.

What is their political philosophy, if any? "Every group of boy tramps contains a Communist," says Minehan. "Bolshevism is spreading rapidly. Practically the only group which will speak for the homeless man and young tramp is the Communist. And the lads on the road are becoming converts." "I'd rather be a Red than starving and dead," they chant by the thousands. We fervently hope the author's estimate of the influence of Communism is true, but on the basis of his thin sampling, we must accept it guardedly. He never tells us what he means by Communist; like many another professor, he may attach the Red label to any dissenter. And the mere will to rebellion is hardly enough. Obviously, the road youngsters are bitter and disillusioned with the society that cheats them of the right to decent childhood and youth. But many of them are also confused and cynical, lacking class-consciousness—and these furnish all-too-fertile soil for the poisonous seeds of Fascism. Herein lies the major task for the Young Communist League—to give guidance to the rebellion smoldering within these stranded workers' kids, first-line victims of the system. And here, incidentally, is rich, virgin territory waiting to be exploited by some London or Gorky within the revolutionary ranks.

Like many a well-meaning liberal, Dr. Minehan follows a competent job of description with an impotent, downright stupid attempt at interpretation and solution that does not at all square with his own facts. The boys he describes in the early part of the book recognize the military and repressive purposes of the C.C.C. camps. They refer to them bitterly as "prisons," "army chain gangs," and "Roosevelt roosts." However, the evidence he himself presents does not prevent Minehan from finding it regrettable, in his conclusion, that there are not still more of these camps, and he even advocates "Child Conservation Camps" along the same lines! Similarly, he sighs for more transient camps for adults after having earlier characterized them as "work-relief projects with much work and no relief," and as "slave camps." Nowhere does he suggest a fundamental solution to the homeless problem, namely, the complete reorganization of society itself. As an indication of his confused sociology, he lumps together and praises indiscriminately the "youth programs of Russia, Italy, Germany and Japan," as if

there weren't a world of difference between the Communist policy that liquidated and liberated the *bezprizorni* and the Fascist policies that make slaves of them in the other countries.

HARRY COOPER.

The Mysterious East

RIVER SUPREME, by Alice Tisdale Hobart. Bobbs-Merrill. Co. \$2.50.

The reduction of China to semi-colonial status has been a raw, crude affair. Imperialist exploitation and oppression are sprawled over the pages of the history books openly enough so that even the untutored can comprehend them. But imperialism has its apologists and friends—some guilefully blind, some woefully but piously blind. Alice Tisdale Hobart is piously and woefully blind. She comes by it naturally. For the imperialism of the American government, while as effective on the whole as that of any of the other imperialists, entered late into the scramble for privileged positions, and had to go about its robbery of the Chinese people in a frank, friendly, open manner, quite with the Roosevelt (F.D.) smile. The result is that there is an impression in this country by and large that the United States is really not in a class with those intriguing, top-hatted, thieving diplomats of Europe who plot in secret conferences.

Thus, "West's impact upon the East" is presented in terms of glorified, individual pioneering. In *Oil for the Lamps of China*, Alice Tisdale Hobart portrayed Stephen Chase, an agent of Standard Oil in Manchuria and the Yangtse Valley, as a sincere, honest man, struggling all his life to come to grips with the essential Chinese character, treating the Chinese well, bringing civilization to them, but rejected by them and his company after a lifetime of devotion to both. She does not present the impact of the Standard Oil on China, but centers her interest in the personal, individual problems of Stephen, caught between the millstones of the Company's demands and the Chinese "hostility." Imperialism does not exist for Mrs. Hobart: there is just the "impact" of two civilizations.

In the same way, *River Supreme*, which sets out to tell the story "of the impact of our industrial civilization," is no more than a highly glorified account of Eben Hawley's ruthless sacrifice of his wife and his life to the struggle to build a shipping trade on the Upper Yangtse River. As a matter of fact, the Hawley struggle is not only against the river. It is also against "that other river, the river of people, increasing in volume through the ages until it, too, has become a sinister force." Old Eben conquered the rapids and treacherous currents; his son attempts to conquer the Chinese. The author does not put the situation that way. She prefers to explain it in terms of "the river," the river conquering, but this time it is the "river of the people" who have "become a sinister force."

The book covers from 1880 to 1925, and yet there is nothing in it about Sun Yat Sen, the Sino-Japanese War, the Russo-Japanese

War, the World War, or the student movement. Imperialism expands and constricts like a boa constrictor, and yet there is not even a reflection of this. The world-historic events, the world-shaping events in China do not impinge. The point of reference is the shipper's business, and the author understands this only in terms of the ruggedness of Old Eben, his individual drama!

The author perhaps can hardly be blamed for not presenting the correct interpretation: but the real point is that she does not know China. For if she had known the mass of Chinese intimately, she could not have escaped understanding the effect that imperialist expansion in the Yangtse, in the shape of Eben Hawley and Stephen Chase, had on the daily lives of the mass of people. She likes the *old* Chinese ways—and only those of the mandarins. She presents the "classic" picture: ancestor worship, the faithful boy, the com-pradore loyal when he is won, "saving face," "squeeze," ceremoniousness, the "lethargic, contented" masses.

The author hopes her book will "make some contribution to the understanding of that interesting but *baffling* phase of our American life—our *contact* with the Far East." The two words I have italicized sum up her attitude. One might ask a riddle: when is a contact not a contact? The answer is obvious, and the author knows it, for she was present when the riddle was answered, when exploitation and oppression emerged openly in the bombardment of Society Hill in Nanking by American gunboats in 1927.

If you want to read about China, read Tretyakov's *Chinese Testament* and Agnes Smedley's *Chinese Destinies*. If you want merely a readable novel, this will do.

ALEXANDER GREGORY.

Case Study of Conversion

A HOUSE ON A STREET, by Dale Curran. Covici-Friede. \$2.

I don't know who was to blame, but it was a pity that this book wasn't reviewed in THE NEW MASSES when it appeared last spring. It is not so important a book as Cantwell's *Land of Plenty* or Rollins' *Shadow Before*, but it is a darn good novel, and it raises some very important problems. It not only raises these problems; it solves some of them. In its own right as a story of real people and also as a significant experiment, it is a book that the revolutionary cultural movement must take into account.

Dale Curran has told the story of an ex-bond salesman in the later years of the depression. Peter Twining, after a year's unemployment, has just got a job managing a small apartment house in Greenwich Village for a real estate firm for which he worked before he went into Wall Street. Peter is a pretty typical college graduate, an adroit salesman but otherwise dumb, violently prejudiced against radicalism, completely convinced that prosperity is just around the corner. His year of unemployment and his poverty have made him

very unhappy, but they haven't taught him much. His education begins when he takes the job in the apartment house.

He learns from Graham, his predecessor, who disappears. He learns from Isabel, a rich girl he had hoped to marry. He learns from Levinsky, his employer, a decent fellow who sympathizes with the unfortunate but always does the thing that will benefit himself. He learns from Bullitt, an artist living in the apartment house. He learns from Eleanor, an ex-actress, with whom he eventually sets up housekeeping. And he learns from Tachibana, a Japanese Communist. After Peter has rescued Tachibana from the police in Union Square, he is ready to say, "I'll have to think it through for myself. I'll try."

The whole secret of Curran's success is his understatement—not the most usual quality in revolutionary fiction. Peter suffers no horrible agonies in the process of being declassed,

and therefore the real significance of that experience is all the more apparent. There is nothing melodramatic about his break with Isabel, and the inevitability of that break is unmistakable. Levinsky is no villain; indeed, he hates the system more than Peter does; but the objective results of his actions are none the less devastating. Tachibana has his faults, personal and political, but he is strong because the revolutionary movement is strong. Even the portrayal of the demonstration in Union Square is moderate, but its implications are perfectly clear. And Peter's conversion, hesitant and tentative though it is, is, the reader feels, absolutely to be depended on.

A secondary source of Curran's strength is his frank, though restrained, idealism. Because Communists know that idealism is not enough, is often hypocritical and always unreliable, they distrust it. But Communism does, nevertheless, offer, in Rebecca Pitts' phrase, some-

thing to believe in, and for the declassed bourgeois that is enormously important. It was not enough for Peter Twining to be poor, though if he had not been poor his eyes would never have been opened; it was not even enough for him to see the rottenness of capitalism; he had to catch something of Tachibana's vision of a decent social order before he was ready for Communism.

Curran's weaknesses are closely related to his virtues. The book is almost too sweetly reasonable; it lacks emotional drive. It is also too much above the ears; it lacks the grossness and vividness of life. But it is straight and honest in every line. Curran makes the most of what he has; he doesn't go floundering about over his depth. And when he has more, he will undoubtedly do better. Unless something happens, we are going to be proud of him.

MARGARET WRIGHT MATHER.

Cops Are Funny People—If At All

ROBERT FORSYTHE

THE police are a constant source of wonder to us. Their élan, their spirit, their soft-spoken politeness in making arrests, their flat feet, their kindness to prisoners in the station house—all these qualities are only equaled by their efficiency and integrity. Their remarkable record last week in San Francisco is only another bannered page in their history. The efficiency of operation there was almost beyond belief. It could have been only sheer intuition and the innate clairvoyance of fine officers which allowed the police to be on the scene exactly two minutes after the Vigilantes had smashed the headquarters of various radical organizations. If it had been one headquarters and one raid, it would have been remarkable but when the same amazing thing happened at least half a dozen times, it could only be put down to heavenly guidance. The fact that they arrested the radicals who were being raided rather than the Vigilantes doing the raiding can only have been an oversight, for it is a well established fact that the police are sworn to preserve law and order and protect private property. A striker caught kicking a can of peaches off a wharf will undoubtedly and justly be shot in the lower abdomen as a lesson in democracy, so it is merely a question of time until the police realize their error and make the proper amends.

As an Easterner I must insist, however, that our officers here are equally proficient and alert, yielding to none in their courage in the face of pregnant women seeking food from relief agencies. The New York police have never flinched in bringing their clubs to rest on such perverse influences. It was, therefore, a source of some embarrassment to have

the San Francisco police triumph coincide with the "kidnaping" of the Connor child in Hartsdale, N. Y. The Hearst papers had a particularly difficult time with this case because a kidnaping, according to the sacred code of San Simeon, is a matter of transcendent importance and yet there had to be headlines left over for scare stories about the Reds. The police in this instance seem to have had trouble in their semaphore service with God because the child, after five days, was found in a thicket several hundred yards from the house. The countryside in the meantime had been practically demolished by flat feet for miles around, but the Connor child seems to have been backward in cooperation. The police had done their usual thorough job of arresting peddlers, knife grinders and broken down bootblacks, some of whom would have undoubtedly languished in durance vile for years to come if the child had not made the error of wandering too close to home. If the Connor baby grows up to be a capitalist, he will realize that he had nothing to fear from the *gendarmérie*. He will find that the police are always kind to capitalists, both large and small.

The psychology of a policeman has always baffled us. Being dependent upon the favor of the political bosses who are for their part dependent upon the favors of the industrial bosses, they are naturally prepared to defend the interests of these same people. But coming as they do out of the homes of working people, it is always an amazing spectacle to see them turning almost immediately against their own class interests. It is due no doubt to their infinitesimal stake in the larger graft of big business, which brings them in plenty

of fives and tens and which assumes, at the holiday seasons, an air of the old good days of serfdom. The limousines of the Wall Street gentlemen and of the dowagers from Park Avenue pass sedately by the patrolmen on their beats, dropping little tokens of their appreciation and love. For this they may be assured of the humble tipping of the officer's hat when they pass on their way to work or shopping next day and every day throughout the year. It is a charming feudal custom and makes up for the hard dealing the police must do with slot machine proprietors, bootleggers, dope peddlers and jail bond sharks. From the latter elements they get the larger money, but not the same social contacts.

If we read the history of the Russian Revolution correctly, it was the winning of the army units which prepared the way for revolt; the police were never won over. Nothing seems to shake their faith in the ruling order, no matter what that order may be. Despite La Guardia's promise not to cut the wages of civil service workers, he reduced the pay for teachers, firemen and policemen almost as soon as he got into office. If this affected the morale of the police or made them more understanding of the troubles of others who were in similar straits the results failed to show it. The terror of O'Ryan's men against the workers and unemployed has been more murderous than ever before. O'Ryan has seen to this by his threat that any officer failing to act in a terroristic manner will be charged with insubordination, but even without that the temper of the New York police was well understood. The fact that they are predominantly Irish and thus under the domination of the Catholic Church with its hatred of all forms of rad-

icalism and particularly of Communism is undoubtedly an important factor, but it does not explain the police of San Francisco or the police of Berlin and Paris.

Some months ago Talcott Powell of the Indianapolis Times, a Scripps-Howard paper, was arrested in Gary, Indiana, where he had gone to inspect the terrain in the event of violence growing out of the proposed steel strike. When they brought him to the police station, an officer started to push Powell around. Powell immediately sat down in a chair. He explained this in his article by saying: "I know what that pushing around means. I've seen it before in police stations. If the prisoner should attempt to defend himself or even ward off the blows, they'll give him a real going over. This is what is known as 'resisting an officer.'"

This statement by Powell interested us particularly because we had seen something of the police of Powell's town of Indianapolis some short time before. We were doing an article on the Dillinger case and were sitting around with the reporters in the press room at police headquarters getting their notion of things in general. While sitting there a policeman came in.

"How do you find a name like St. Ives in the directory—under the S's or under the I's?" he asked.

The reporters told him and he found the address and went out again.

"What did he want to know that for?" we asked.

"St. Ives is one of the strikers out at the Real Silk Hosiery plant," said the reporters. "They're going to watch the house and see what goes on."

"Why would they watch it?"

"Why would they watch it!" they demanded in surprise. "Why d'ye think they'd watch it. They're going to get something on the guy. The Chief of Police is a stockholder in Real Silk. He's busting this strike."

To relieve your mind at once, we can tell you that the reporters were not excited about it. They had no hesitation in saying that the Indianapolis police were so low-down, Dillinger, Genghis Khan or even Hitler would be angels by comparison, but they had even less use for the strikers.

"A bunch of damned red necks," they said.

But anyone who has seen that police station from within or any big city station can be under no misapprehension about justice, equity or the mere elements of humanity. Those police know who does the buttering of the bread, they know when to be rough and when to fawn, they know when to swing the clubs and shoot the guns and when to tip the hat. When Governor Merriam makes a speech and Mayor Rossi makes a speech and General Hugh Johnson makes a speech—all open invitations to murder, the police are not long in understanding their place in life. In such momentous circumstances they can sacrifice a few days of collections on the beat to go out to do a good deed for their masters.

More Red Herring Soup

COHEN and Cohen, of Columbia Pictures, fall right in line with their class brothers of the Sunkist State in their effort to stir up more of the lynch spirit that has been so popular the past week among the California bosses. Their recent film, *Whom the Gods Destroy*, under ordinary circumstances would have been termed innocuous and not any too good. But it deliberately goes out of its way to slander the Communists. *Whom the Gods Destroy* is about a famous theatrical producer who, like Emil Jannings, goes the way of all flesh. He commits a cowardly act and dares not return to society because he is known as dead and his memory is greatly respected. He grows a beard and helps his son become a successful playwright. Of course, the son never knows . . .

Early in the film the producer (Walter Connolly) makes an ocean voyage. He visits the steerage to see how the other half lives. His path is obstructed by an unkempt, disheveled creature. When the producer says, "Excuse me, please," the creature says (with a decidedly foreign accent), "Vy shood I?" He spits at the producer and yells, "You dirty Capitalist, you should be killed!" etc., etc. The final sequence of this incident takes place later when the ship is sinking. There is panic; women and children first. The producer helps the officers hold the men back. But up comes the dirty foreign "Bolshevik" and fights his way to the lifeboat. The producer pushes him back. The red pulls a horrible looking knife; there is murder in his wild eyes. An officer shoots the dirty red down like the dog he is!

Later (and this is what the story is about) the brave producer, thinking of his wife and little boy, manages to save himself by putting on women's clothing and getting into a lifeboat.

But this slimy attitude is nothing new with Columbia pictures. Several times before they have gone out of their way to slander the workers. . . . Remember the attack on the bonus marchers in *Washington Merry-Go-*

Round? Recall the jingo war cry raised up in the name of pacifism, in *No Greater Glory?* And when Ella Winter visited the Cohen brothers here in New York to ask them to contribute to the victims of German Fascism they turned her down because it "would hurt their German business."

Contributing to this season's recruiting films, Warner Brothers present James Cagney in *Here Comes the Navy*. The title has nothing to do with the story and James Cagney has nothing to do with the Navy. The film is old stuff and formula. Go as far back as you can and try to recall all of the sez-who-sez-I school of film making and you have *Here Comes the Navy*. In this particular movie Jimmy as a hard-boiled riveter joins the navy to get even with a hard-boiled petty officer. There are the usual fights. The usual beautiful officer's sister. The usual heroics. The usual stooge, and the usual clinch. However, one cannot say that Cagney is in a jingo film. Warner Bros. try to do their part in spite of Cagney. Never does Sailor Cagney take back the statement that he doesn't like the Navy, the three dollar-a-day admirals, and the fake ceremonial heroics.

The Grand Canary (Fox) at the Music Hall is a cocktail made up from *Daddy Long Legs*, *Arrowsmith*, and *Grand Hotel*. It's about a disillusioned and bitter doctor who sails on a steamer from Liverpool to the Canary Islands. Among other things he falls in love with a sweet and gentle wife of the Canary plantation owner. In the Canary Islands he risks his life to fight the yellow fever epidemic. Of course, the good lady comes down with the fever and he saves her too. He returns to England as a new man and a famous scientist. As he lands he gets a wire stating that the lady had explained everything to her husband; he understands, and she will join the doctor shortly in England. There is the usual subtle fade-out.

IRVING LERNER.

Between Ourselves

ALBERT HALPER, whose article on *The Plight of the Postal Subs* appears in this issue, is engaged on his second novel. The lives of post-office workers will form the background of this work, Halper having been one of them. A suggestion to readers: When you have finished with this current issue turn your copy over to your postman and mention Albert Halper's article.

Kenneth Fearing, whose poem *American Rhapsody* appears in the current issue, is the author of *Angel Arms*, a book of verse.

Arrested for picketing during the Miller Furniture company lockout in Jersey City, Corliss Lamont's trial has been postponed over

his protest. Last year Lamont in collaboration with Margaret Lamont published a first-hand account of their travels in the U.S.S.R., *Russia Day by Day*.

Owing to the industry with which the San Francisco Vigilantes have been fighting "subversive" influences, the newsstand circulation of THE NEW MASSES in San Francisco has suffered a steep drop.

Our business department is hopeful that NEW MASSES readers in the rest of the country will do what they can to help make up this loss in circulation which, during the usual summer falling off, is more difficult to withstand than ever.



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