

new
Masses

MAY 15, 1934

10c

Dillinger's Dilemma: Who's Chasing Whom?
By ROBERT FORSYTHE

JOHNSON'S OWN CODE
He Cuts Pay, Breaks Union, in his Factory
By Anne Allen Barten

Coal Scars and Cold Cream
By ROBERT GESSNER

A MORNING with the DOC
By Albert Halper

"Slum Clearance" Under Capitalism
By JOHN STRACHEY

MOTHER and CHILD
By Langston Hughes



DANCE RECITAL

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Sunday Evening, MAY 27

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SENDER GARLIN

Member of the Daily Worker Staff and a
Contributor to THE NEW MASSES

Goes on a Speaking Tour

arranged by

NEW MASSES LECTURE BUREAU

Sunday Evening, May 20th

WORKERS' SCHOOL

1524 Prospect Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio

Subject:

Do you Believe What You Read?

Auspices:

John Reed Club—Cleveland

Monday Evening, May 21st

HOTEL FORT WAYNE

Temple and Cass Avenues
Detroit, Michigan

Subject:

Reform or Revolution in American
Literature

Auspices:

John Reed Club—Detroit

Tuesday Evening, May 22nd

NATIONAL STUDENT LEAGUE

Ann Arbor, Michigan

Subject:

Do you Believe What You Read?

Auspices:

National Student League—Ann Arbor

Wednesday Evening, May 23rd

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Place will be announced
in next issue.

Subject:

Do you Believe What You Read?

Auspices:

John Reed Club—Chicago

Thursday Evening, May 24th

JOHN REED CLUB

312 West State Street,
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Subject:

Do you Believe What You Read?

Auspices:

John Reed Club—Milwaukee

Saturday Evening, May 26th

PITTSBURGH, PENN.

Place will be announced
in next issue.

Subject:

Do you Believe What You Read?

Auspices:

Pen and Hammer—Pittsburgh

WATCH for ANNOUNCEMENTS
of NEW MASSES SPEAKERS
and ATTEND THEIR MEETINGS

Do You Believe What You Read?

Behind the Headlines from 1886-1934

Illustrated Lecture

by

SENDER GARLIN

Staff Writer of the Daily Worker

at

THE JOHN REED CLUB 430 Sixth Ave.

Friday Evening, May 18, at 8:15

Auspices: The Press League

Admission Twenty-five Cents

THE capitalist government of the United States, deciding to say something about the European war debt situation, finds itself in a tangled muddle. As a result of "clarifications" of the vaguely drawn Johnson act barring American financial markets to governments held in default to this country, Soviet Russia is declared in "default" because it has not paid the Czarist-Kerensky debt; a general default by European countries including Great Britain, is expected next June 15 when instalments on the war debts are again due.

SO far, neither Johnson, Roosevelt nor other officials have been able to give any clear interpretation of the new law. Though originally probably not aimed directly at Soviet Russia, the Johnson law was seized upon by enemies of the workers' republic to have the Export-Import Bank, set up for trade relations with Soviet Russia, declare it would do no business until the "debt" situation is "cleaned up." There is already a hint that the counterclaim against the United States for invasion of Russia by American troops after the Revolution cannot be pressed until the "default" is settled. Another effect will be to bar American money markets to governments whose obligations sell at par or above, leaving the field wide open for the fleecing of thousands of people through South American and other governmental securities which today sell at as low as ten cents on the dollar. The Soviet government has never been in default on any of its obligations. It has thus far consistently refused to concede its responsibility for the Czarist-Kerensky loan, advanced by American financiers first to keep Russian workers in the war trenches and then to finance the Allies' fight against the Bolshevik Revolution. Most of this loan, if not all of it, was spent for American munitions and to pay American bankers. About \$100 million of the \$187 million lent to Bakhmetieff was given him after the Bolshevik Revolution—some funds as late as 1920, three years after the collapse of the Kerensky regime. This money was used by the Kolchaks, Denikins, etc., to make war on the workers' republic.



OUT TO GET IT!

Kainen

ON May 5, known in the U. S. S. R. as "Press Day," the Soviet masses celebrated two major cultural events: the twenty-second anniversary of the Pravda, official organ of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union, and the opening in Moscow of the largest printing plant in Europe, which will turn out daily about eight million copies of the Pravda and five associated newspapers. The phenomenal growth of the Soviet press is an excellent index of the spread of culture in what was once "dark Russia." Under the Czars, the entire press of the Empire never achieved a daily circulation above 2,700,000. But in 1929, the Soviet Union already had 955 newspapers with a total circulation per issue above 12,500,000, while in 1933, the number of newspapers jumped to 9,700, and the total circulation per issue to 36,000,000! These figures assume greater

meaning when one realizes that, because of a shortage of newsprint, circulation is purposely kept down in a way that, in the words of the New York Times report, "would drive an American circulation manager insane." To be certain of one's daily paper, one must subscribe for it—and even that is achieved with difficulty. Papers vanish from the newsstands as soon as they are delivered. One of the usual questions one hears in Moscow is: "Citizen, where did you get your paper?" This amazing growth of the press is especially significant in view of the fact that the Soviet papers are quite free of scandals, murders, rapes and other vulgar attractions which form so great a part of the average commercial newspaper in this and other capitalist lands. The Soviet press is a serious press; it is propagandist, agitator, and organizer of the serious, though thrilling, business of



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building socialism. To think—thirty-six million readers of serious newspapers in a country which not so very long ago was seventy percent illiterate!

AS a contrast to what is happening to the Press in the once "dark" Russia, let us turn to the once "enlightened" Germany. A brief item in the New York Times (May 7, 1934) tells the story. Discussing the suppression of the Gruene Post, a paper owned by the Ullstein publishing house, the Times correspondent says:

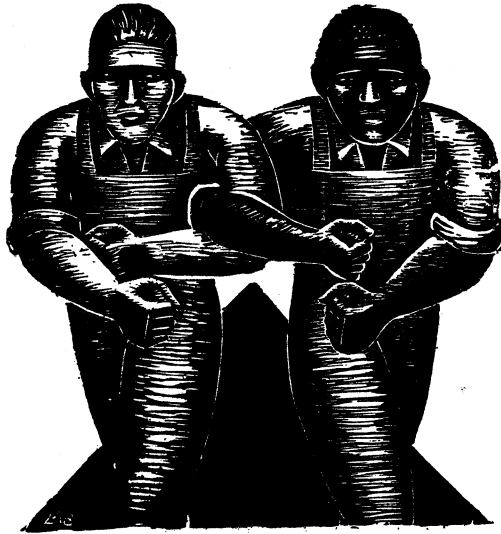
However, it should be recorded that in its Morgenpost the House of Ullstein still has the biggest newspaper in Germany in point of circulation. This once reached 800,000 daily, a huge total here. It took a tumble after the Nazis attained power, but it came back to approximately 350,000 in April, as compared with 340,000 in February and 337,000 in January.

In contrast, the evening edition of the Nazi Angriff dwindled from 94,000 last December to 53,000 in April, despite elaborate propaganda for it, and it has been taken over by the evening edition of the Voelkischer Beobachter. Chancellor Hitler's newspaper, the morning Beobachter, had a circulation of 335,000 in April, having gained 24,000 since December.

Most of the bourgeois papers have been steadily losing. Even the Tageblatt has been unable to profit from the disappearance of its rival, the Vossische Zeitung. The disappearance of two big dailies has implied a loss of 59,000 readers, which is not made up elsewhere, and the shrinkage of the German newspaper-reading public steadily continues.

Such is the decay of culture under Fascism. And lest the reader forget, on May 10 the world will commemorate the first anniversary of the burning of books in Nazi Germany.

WHILE uprooting culture at home, the Nazis are spreading "culture" abroad. It has occurred to Karl Bergmann, Hitler propaganda agent in Berlin, that the United States Congress affords marvelously fertile soil for the Hitler brand of culture. According to Joseph Freeman's sensational report in the May 9 issue of the Daily Worker, a select list of Representatives and Senators—a list from which known liberals, farmer-labor men and Jews were carefully excluded—have received complimentary copies of The American Illustrated News, published in Berlin in the English language. The magazine, beautifully printed and luxuriously illus-



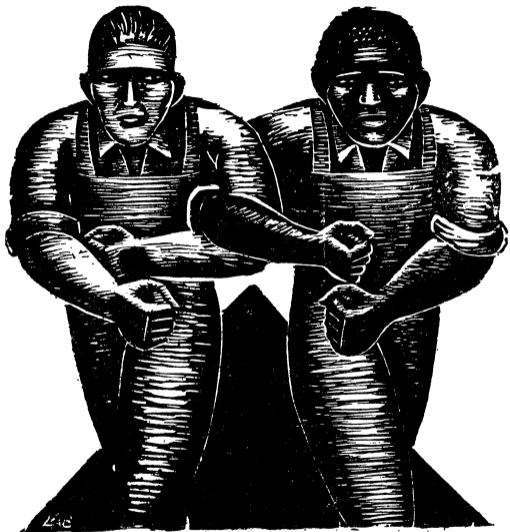
L. Arenal

trated, is frankly official. The articles, written by the leading members of the Hitler government, address themselves directly to the members of the U. S. Congress, extolling Hitler, damning the Jews, inciting against the Marxists, and boasting of being the vanguard in fighting the vile thing known as Communism. Each complimentary copy was accompanied by a personal letter the last paragraph of which reads: "Should you wish to make any comments upon any of the articles we should be grateful if you send us your views on the matter. We should be glad to print these with your picture, which we hope you will send us." In view of the "selected" list, the nature of the comment solicited by Hitler's Ministry of Propaganda can be easily surmised. Joseph Freeman's comment on the whole affair is cogent:

"THE propaganda of The American Illustrated News comes, as its editor accurately phrased it, 'straight from the source,' it is official. But so far, not a single one of the newspapers, congressmen, business organizations and patriotic societies which have carried on a campaign against non-existent propaganda by the Soviet government has said a word about The American Illustrated News. It has been impossible to locate any protests by Hamilton Fish, Ralph Easley, William Randolph Hearst, *et. al.*, that America's 'democratic' institutions are 'menaced' by German Fascist propaganda or any questions regarding the 'propriety' of a foreign government sending propaganda to members of Congress. The distribution from Berlin of official Nazi propaganda to members of the United States

Congress reveals the lengths to which the Hitler-Goebbels-Goering gang is going in its attempts to organize a united capitalist front against the Soviet Union and the revolutionary working class everywhere. Their latest action raises an important international question. The German government has violated the professed non-propaganda policy which the United States insisted upon in recognizing the Soviet Union. If the United States takes no step in this case, if the German government is permitted officially to circulate Nazi propaganda to congressmen or anybody else attacking and slandering Marxists, the Soviet Union, Jews, etc., the United States Government will be, from the diplomatic viewpoint, guilty of a gross act of international discrimination; and from the political viewpoint will go on record openly as an ally of Hitlerism. Naturally, on these considerations alone the United States Government will do nothing to interfere with official Nazi propaganda; if it will do anything at all, it will be under pressure of a mighty protest on the part of American workers and intellectuals, of all those regardless of Party, class, creed, who are fighting to wipe the monstrosity of Fascism from the face of the earth."

IF there exists any doubt among newspaper men as to whether they are workers, it should be thoroughly dispelled by the results of a survey of working conditions among editorial employees in New York City, just completed by the American Newspaper Guild. Preliminary findings of the survey, published in the current issue of the Guild Reporter, reveal to what extent newspaper men are subject to the exploitation and privation suffered by workers in other industries. About 600 newspaper workers answered the 1,500 questionnaires sent out by the Guild. They included reporters, copy readers, deskmen, rewrite men, artists, feature writers, photographers, clerks, editors and copy boys. Of the 600 workers questioned 161 said they were in need of medical care which they could not afford, and 142 had dependents in need of it. Of the 204 who reported on the length of time they were unemployed between jobs, 148 said they were out of work for periods ranging from two months to two years. On the question of working days and hours, the report states: "At the time these questionnaires were turned in, the forty-hour, five-day week had not gone into effect



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of Nation's work in "preserving" world peace. Colby, in the May Current History, doubts whether any nation will risk the condemnation of the League by declaring war. "Instead, a nation is more likely to move suddenly, excusing its action by pointing to the need of self-defense." This is the new Japanese technique which other nations can be expected to follow. As a result, Colby finds, each nation must be prepared more than ever to defend itself. Military men and munition makers now appreciate the services of the League of Nations and can be expected to give it their fullest approval.

"H. R. 7598" is a label of vital import today. It is the official designation for the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill, sponsored by the Unemployed Councils. Behind H. R. 7598 there has already been built up a united front, perhaps the

widest of any in recent years. Every day new bodies of workmen mail resolutions to Washington urging its adoption. Washington doesn't like it. The other day two workers arrested in Chicago for putting up posters calling for militant support of H. R. 7598 on May Day, were held for the Federal authorities, who plan to deport them. The movement on behalf of the bill, growing daily, is creasing the brows of those in Washington who airily inform confidential news agencies, like Kiplinger's, that the Administration will not consider unemployment insurance. They should, to be more accurate, say the Administration is opposed to it; but consider it they must sooner or later. The way the movement is growing it must be soon. For instance: 500 delegates representing 40,000 members in fraternal orders endorsed the bill at a meeting in New York the other day. Delegates were present from the Knights of Columbus,

Sons of Italy, Brith Sholom, the Daily News Chapel, Catholic Council, the Odd Fellows and the Foresters. Massed delegations of workers "persuaded" the Milwaukee City Council to give its endorsement. Many industrial towns have already been forced to heed the workers' demand. The movement grows within the ranks of the American Federation of Labor, within independent unions. Thirty-five delegates representing 11 A. F. of L. locals in Newark endorsed H. R. 9798 last week; this action is being duplicated in every part of the country. Five years of skimping on food, and actually starving, is convincing the American working-class that the American Congress, like God, only helps those who help themselves. The movement behind H. R. 7598 informs Washington that the masses in America have done enough starving for the time. Congressmen cannot sit tight as great bodies of their constituents demand action.

The Week's Papers

WEDNESDAY—Heavy silver buying "puzzles" Wall Street. . . . Students' anti-war demonstrations denounced as a plot by army officer. . . . Of 20,870 clergymen and rabbis questioned in regard to capitalism, 88 per cent favor some sort of co-operative state. Less than one per cent favor Communism. . . . Federal judge in Kentucky enjoins enforcement of N.R.A. code. . . . Jersey judge voids anti-strike injunction. . . . John D. closes road passing rear of his Florida home, barring all observation of his condition. . . . LaGuardia promises merchants future May Day parades won't interfere with shopping. Suggests waterfront as suitable place for parades and demonstrations.

Thursday—Of 1,417 taking bar examination in New York State only 470 pass. . . . Chrysler votes extra dividend. . . . Weirton fighting back at N.R.A., attacks it as unconstitutional. . . . R.F.C. loans pass five billion dollar mark. . . . Woodin dies. . . . Woman in Home for Incurables discovered to be over 100 years old.

Friday—George F. Baker's estate is appraised at \$73,000,000. . . . A. F. of L. organ admits workers made no gain

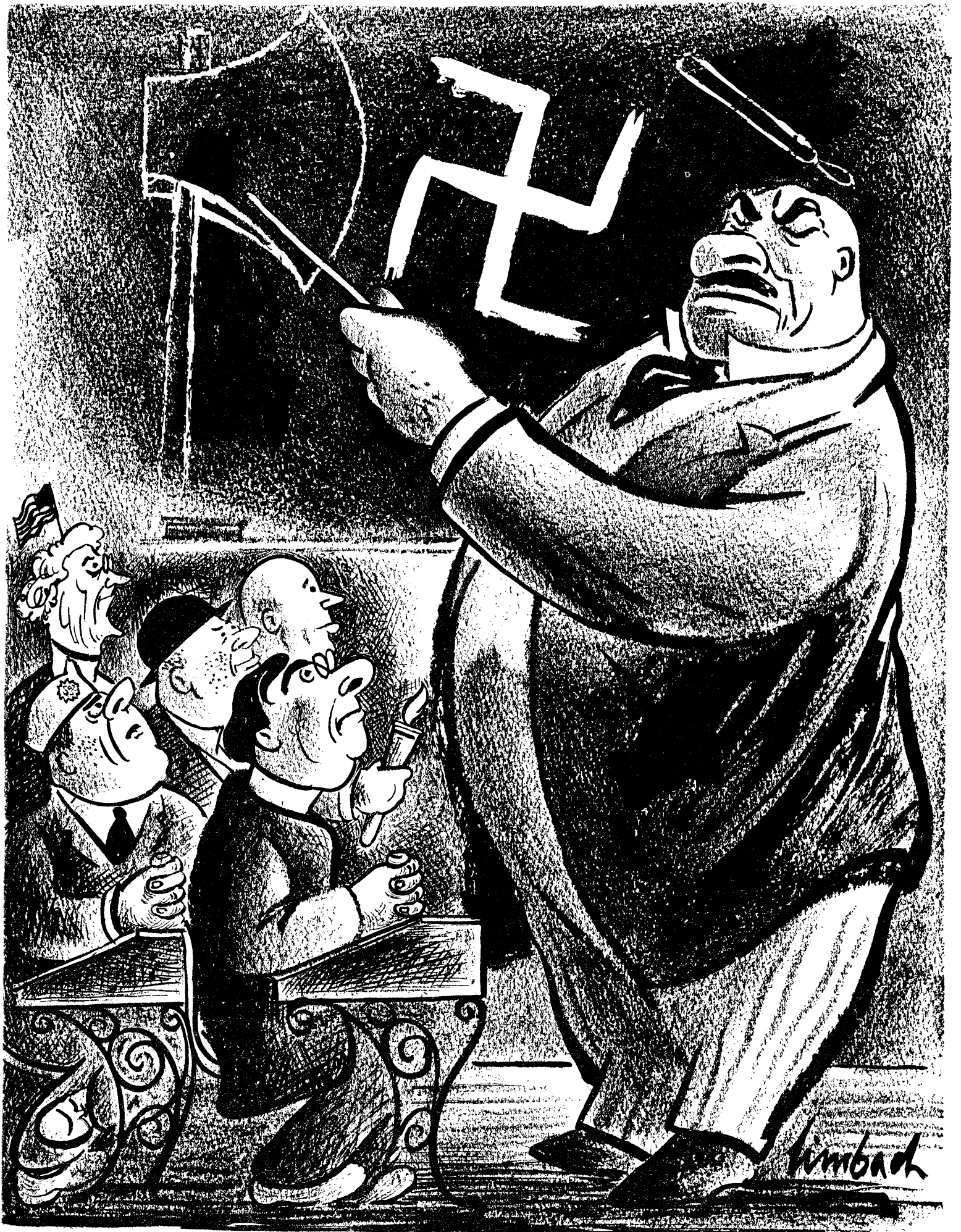
in real wages from March, 1933, to March, 1934. . . . Automobile production in April reported as exceeding any month since 1929. . . . Money in circulation declined slightly in March.

Saturday—Prize headline of week: "Britain, 5 Other Nations, Not in Default on Debts; Russia Held a Defaulter." . . . Senators, after conference with Roosevelt, predict passing of silver legislation. . . . Secretary of State Hull sees imminent danger of war. Urges 1,154,583 students in 1,460 universities and colleges to restore the "moral and spiritual values," etc. Does *not* indorse students' anti-war demonstration.

Sunday—Army prepares to turn over mail route to private lines. . . . Denial made that Roosevelt is pledged to silver program. . . . Attorney General's ruling on default of debts divides Congress, promising hot debate. . . . Stock Exchange Bill slightly toothless now, says Samuel Untermyer. Still, 28 big industrialists make frontal attack on Congress to prevent Senate passing it. Calmly announce they speak for 486,000 small friendless corporations throughout country—none of which is listed on Exchange.

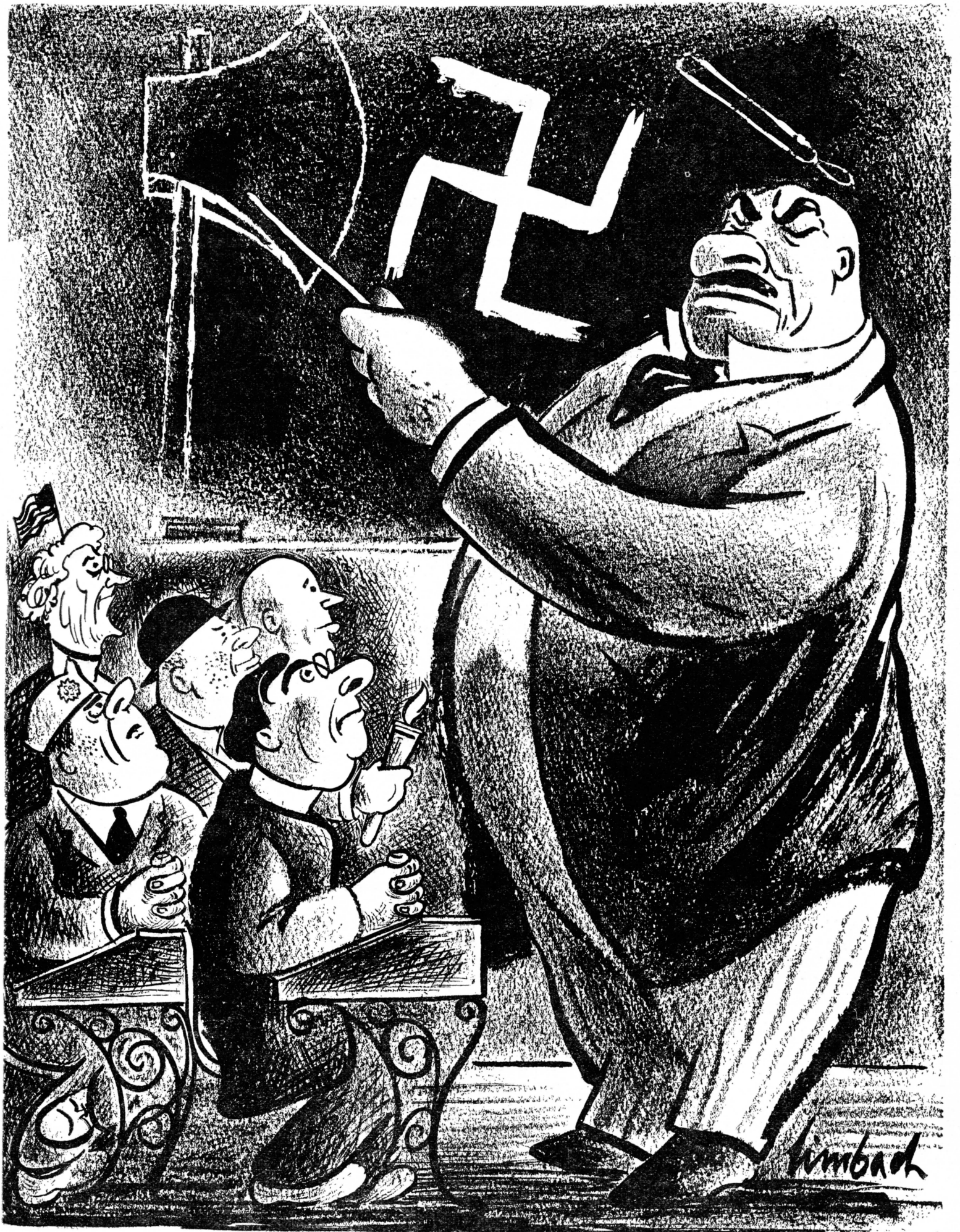
Monday—Insull lands, says he will fight for "vindication." Handsomely conceded he made some mistakes. . . . Runner-up for prize headline: "Policeman in Duel with Hold-up Man; Each Fires Five Times; Bystander Wounded." . . . Late Sheriff Farley's will shows he left entire contents of wonderful tin box to family. . . . Wagner guardedly chides employers for wage-cutting, price raising; sees situation now more critical than in worst period of depression. . . . Pulitzer Prize awards announced, including such items as a Fascist-tinged history of the United States; an editorial naming old-fashioned thrift as the best way out of the crisis, etc. On the whole, this year's performance gets a bad press.

Tuesday—Mellon is promptly cleared by grand jury in his home town on charges of evading income tax. . . . Insull, on the other hand, has to go to jail in Chicago for lack of \$200,000 bail. . . . Washington now expects events of June 15 to rewrite Attorney General Cumming's view of war debts, by revealing most nations in default. . . . Two Negro miners killed by machine guns on picket line in Alabama strike; National Guardsmen come in to prevent workers winning.



PREP SCHOOL

Limbach



PREP SCHOOL

Limbach

General Johnson's Private Code

ANNE ALLEN BARTEN

"**B**UT certainly, he is sincere!" The question of sincerity is a bothersome one to those who are turning for the first time towards the revolutionary working-class movement. They attempt to weigh the "sincere" capitalist against the "insincere" one, the "sincere" liberal, against the "insincere" one, and become lost in a maze of irrelevancy, while the mainstream of objective social events moves swiftly by. Especially in regard to the N.R.A. and its personnel, is the question raised and it cannot always be answered.

Occasionally, there is an opportunity to look into the backyards of gentlemen and see them cavorting, without their Sunday clothes and minus their "for publication" mien. I have had such an illuminating view, recently, of Hugh S. Johnson, Administrator of the National Recovery Administration, himself!

The backyard of the man, who pounding the table, administers the codes, is in this case in Newark, N. J., tucked away in a factory at 768 Frelinghuysen Avenue. It is a very dirty backyard littered with broken unions, and discharged employees. It is a backyard in which the N.R.A. Administrator, General Johnson, as president and part-owner of a factory, acts out to the letter the traditional role of the employer in relationship to his workers, forbidding them the right to organize, discharging one of them who tried to form a union, cutting wages, and finally using the N.R.A. apparatus as a blanket whitewash.

The factory in Gen. Johnson's backyard is the Lea Fabrics, Inc. Its product is the manufacture of carpets for automobiles. It deals almost exclusively with the big auto companies and employs an average of one hundred men. Recently, a worker of Lea Fabrics said to me, "There's plenty of complaining—a lot of dissatisfaction here." That dissatisfaction, now nearly a year old, has a history that dates from the applying of the principles of the N.R.A. to Johnson's Lea Fabrics, Inc.

It dates from July 20, 1933, when two things happened, simultaneously. First: Johnson issued "Bulletin No. 3," signed by him, stating: "The employers' part is to act at once to shorten hours and raise wages," raising hope in the breasts of countless poverty-stricken workers. Second: wages of the workers in Johnson's own plant in Newark were cut \$3 to \$6 a week, with the reduction of the work week from 48 to 40 hours, with no raise in hourly pay. Operators in Lea Fabrics, who had been receiving about \$19.20 a week, now received \$16. Herbert Smalley, recently married electrician and maintenance worker, who had been receiving from \$30.24 to \$35.28 was cut to \$25.20.

Following the cut, during the last part of August, Herbert Smalley, who had worked at

the factory for four years, was fired. The two happenings are tightly connected.

The dismissal of Smalley was quickly suppressed by the press, Johnson issuing the statement that here was no violation of the N.R.A., that Smalley had been fired because of inefficiency.

But Smalley had not been fired from Lea Fabrics, Inc. because of inefficiency. For four years Smalley was considered a good workman. Once, during that time, after a seasonal lay-off, he alone of ten electricians and maintenance workers, was rehired, and later given a raise in pay. All the men in the plant who are not company stoopigeons will testify to Smalley's efficiency. *He was fired with the approval of Hugh Samuel Johnson for protesting the pay cut, and for actively organizing a union to fight it!*

His dismissal was part of a campaign under the N.R.A. to smash a union in Johnson's backyard. The wrecking job was successfully carried through by Ellery K. Files, vice-president and general manager of Lea Fabrics, Inc., with the full awareness of Hugh S. Johnson, part owner of the controlling stock in the company, and the final touches were made by the local N.R.A. Board, working snugger than a glove with Johnson's company!

When the pay cut came in Lea Fabrics, Smalley and the other men in the plant began talking about forming a union. "The N.R.A. is for unions," they told one another, "and we can't afford a cut."

They were inexperienced and did not know how to begin. Several of the workers approached Eric Ross, a leading Socialist of Newark, asking him to advise them. Ross, an unemployed worker, busy with the cares of his small family, promised to help the men form their union, with the understanding that they would undertake the major part of the work themselves. They agreed, Smalley from the first being one of the most active workers, talking constantly in the shop about the union and distributing leaflets at night.

Leaflets were issued by the men to the three working shifts. Out of the 112 then working, about 75 responded to the first meetings. They decided to form an independent union to be called the International Carpet Workers Union. They elected Eric Ross, secretary-treasurer, and decided upon dues books. They decided not to affiliate their union with the A.F. of L. for various reasons, some because of the high entrance fee, and others because they wanted a militant union.

Shortly afterward, Smalley, heartened by the forming of the union, believing he was helping enforce the N.R.A., went in to see Files.

"According to the N.R.A.," Smalley told Files, "we are supposed to work 40 hours a week with the same weekly rate. I'd like a raise in my wages, so I will get what I was making before the hours were cut here." Files, after hemming and hawing, said he would see what could be done.

The building of the union went on. Headquarters were established, and carpet workers from other factories came to meet with Ross and the workers of Lea Fabrics to see what could be done in their shops. A final organization meeting was called during the last week in August. Books were all ready. They were to be distributed that evening.

That morning, Smalley was fired and given an hour and a half to get out of the plant!

The company gave him a week's extra pay and took every precaution that he should not talk to the men before he left the premises. "They practically packed my bag for me," Smalley said to me ruefully. "When I tried to talk to the men, the boss was right back of me!"

"The boss," said Smalley, "told me they had decided in the office that they did not want any dissatisfied employees in the plant!"

With Smalley thrown off the premises, the company called a meeting of the workers at 4 o'clock that afternoon and set about systematically to wreck the union. Files spoke to the assembled, uneasy men who knew about the firing of Smalley.

"We've all been getting on fine until now," Files said, his tone bubbling over with love and fellowship. "Why do you want to bother with this radical union? Don't throw away your money on dues. We haven't any money to raise wages now. But I promise that after the first of the year, everybody will be making as much as he was making before."

The men said little. They were dispirited. They were uncertain as to the intentions of Files. They asked Ross to speak to Files for them.

The company continued its work of wrecking the union. Files demanded a list of the union members from Ross, and when Ross refused to subject the men to certain blacklist, Files refused to discuss anything further, denying that Ross represented the men. "Why isn't your union an A.F. of L. union?" he asked in passing.

Ross, with no clear cut policy, knowing that the workers were dispirited, called an A.F. of L. organizer, Hugh Reilly, to speak at the meeting. Reilly, after hearing the man had first decided to form an independent union, refused to make any speech at all, walking off the platform in answer to the questions of the men.

The men, with a last shred of faith in Hugh S. Johnson and the N.R.A., decided

with Ross to file a complaint against the company with the local N.R.A. Board. Telegrams protesting the dismissal of Smalley and describing the workers' pay-cut as a violation of the N.R.A. were sent to Hugh S. Johnson, to Frances Perkins, to the company, and to the local N.R.A. Board.

But Hugh Samuel Johnson quickly enough endorsed the firing of Smalley and the wage-cut in his factory. He made a statement from Washington declaring *there had been no violation of the N.R.A. in his shop!* A clear picture to the workers in his backyard shop of Johnson's attitude on unions and wage-cuts nationally.

The farcical N.R.A. hearing was a revealing picture of a whitewashing. The State N.R.A. Board put the finishing touches to the demolition of the union for Johnson, even trying to get the desired union list. Those who heard the case, behind closed doors, included members of the State N.R.A. Board and Robert D. Hooke of the U.S. Department of Commerce. They admitted one person into the room at a time for questioning. Reporters were not admitted.

"Their questions were formulated to me as if I were in police court," Ross said to me a few days ago. "I told them their purpose seemed to be to intimidate me and to white-wash Johnson."

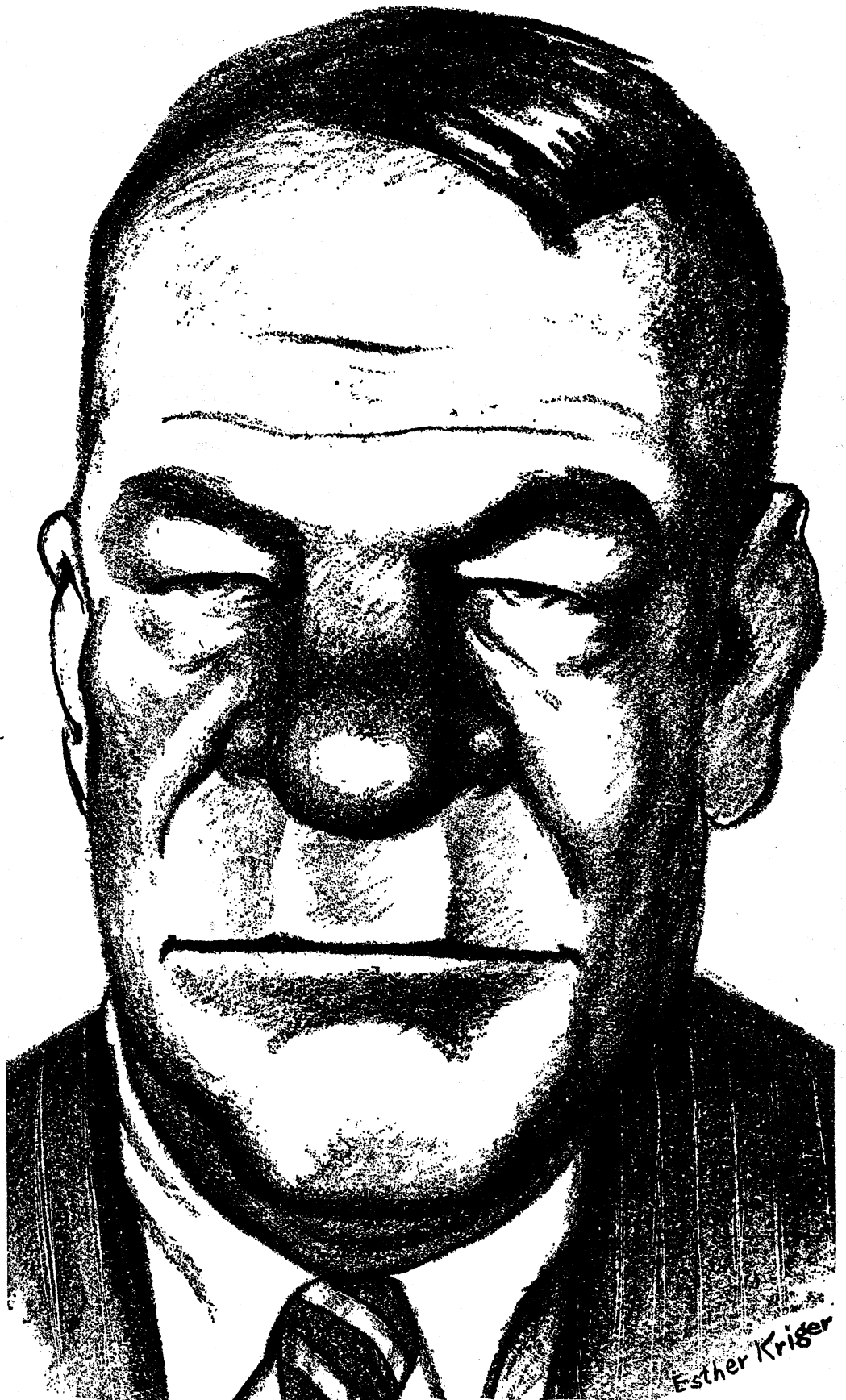
Ross' lawyer took copious notes on the whole proceedings. They were taken from him.

Smalley describes his questioning. "'Have you a list of the names of the union?' Tepper (chairman of the Bureau of Complaints and Compliance) asked me. I said 'No.' 'Could you produce such a list?' I said 'Yes, I could.' He asked me 'Would you?' and I said 'No, not here.'"

Tepper told Smalley: "The only interest I have is to get you back to work," and tried to inveigle him into signing a statement saying he had not authorized or did not know that the telegrams were being sent. When Smalley refused, he snapped, "Forget it," and directed Smalley out a back door to avoid reporters. Smalley's lawyer did little to help him, advising him not to make any statement to reporters, and thus, perhaps, he could get him back his job. But Smalley never got his job back!

The N.R.A. issued the statement that Lea Fabrics, because of an agreement it had made with other carpet manufacturers, did not have permission to sign the code until a few days before (as a matter of fact, the Blue Eagle appeared in the windows of Lea Fabrics just about the time the telegrams were sent). They said that the first pay roll under the code had not taken place at the factory yet. It would take place the following Wednesday, at which time Mr. Files had said there would be an adjustment in pay. Therefore, there had been no violation of the N.R.A.

A number of statements were made after the hearing. Files stated that the union was a "fly-by-night radical union" and that the or-

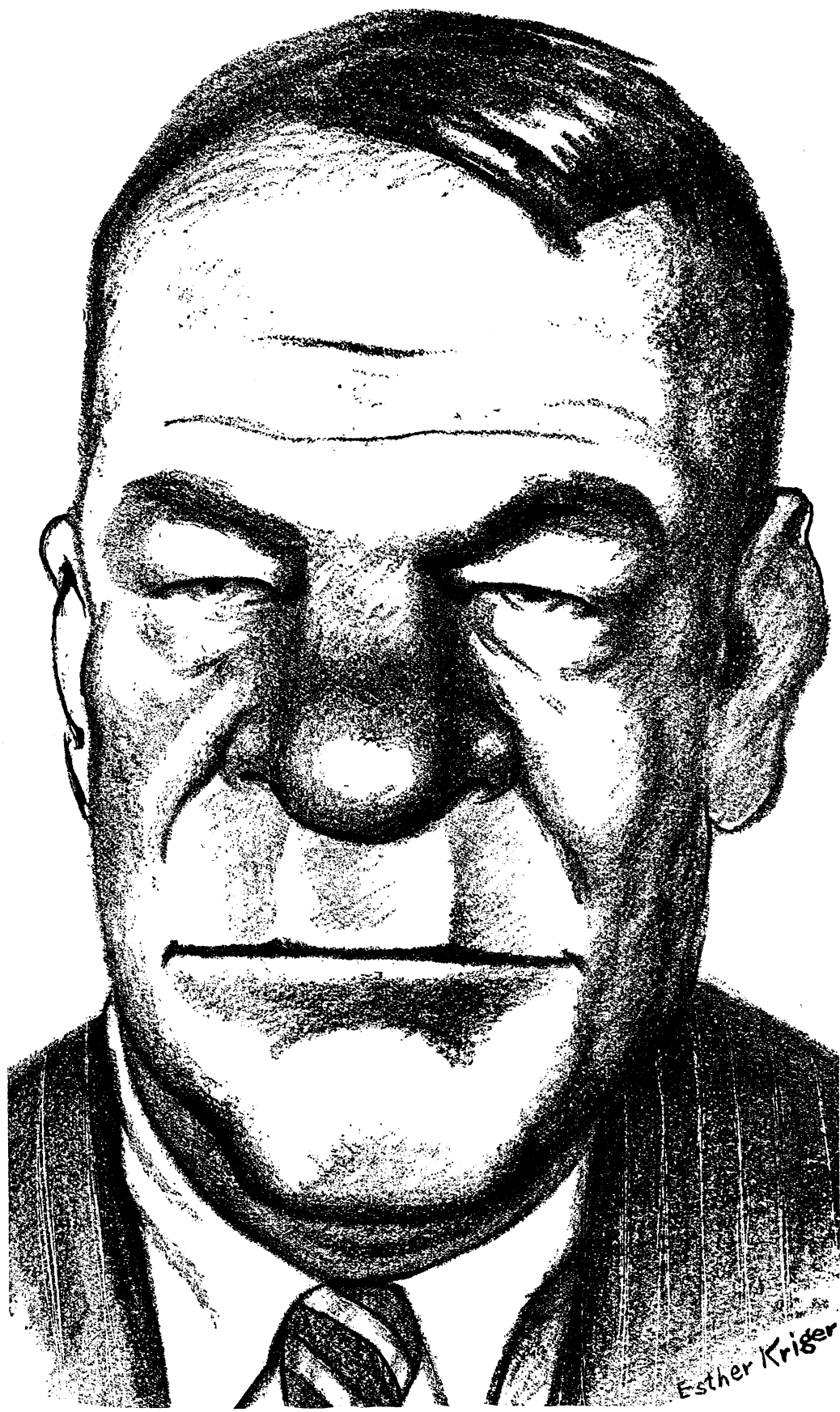


ganizers were "making a soft job for themselves." He unwittingly revealed to one reporter his attitude that certainly reflected Johnson's.

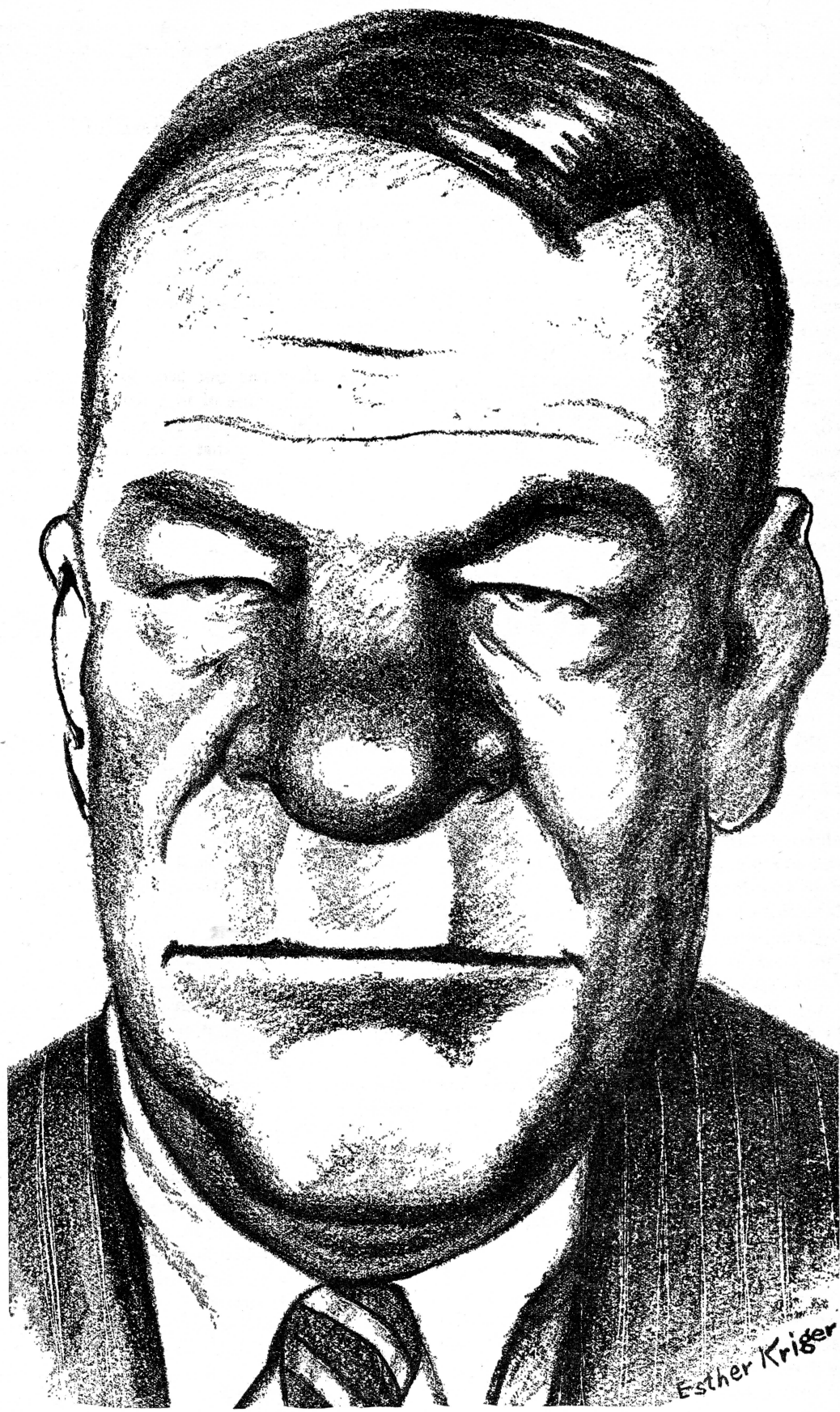
"Frankly," he said, "I did not encourage that union!"

But when the Wednesday of the first pay day under the code came, Johnson and Files did not raise the pay of their workers. Johnson effected the lowering of the standard of

living of the workers in the shop. January first also came and went, and there was no pay increase as promised in the shop's meeting. To some known members of the union, in order to avoid a strike in the entire shop, a three-cent raise was given. Some others were given a small bonus ("Most of us don't get it," a worker said to me, "and even those that do, don't make the same they were making before the N.R.A.")



Esther Kriger



Esther Kriger

Johnson and Files killed the International Carpet Workers Union in their shop. The A.F. of L. that Files mentioned has not been brought in. We look into Johnson's backyard at this time and find a *company union*, where the company executives call several men from each department to meet with them each week and talk about the small bonus given the men. Occasionally small grievances are brought up. But never the basic question of hours, wages, union.

This is altogether in line with Johnson's treatment of the auto manufacturers, two of which, Chrysler and Fisher Body, are his biggest customers of Lea Fabrics, Inc. In the approved automobile code, while not mentioning "company union" outright, there is made a basic part of it the open endorsement of the open shop under the now familiar words of "employers in this industry may exercise

their right to select, retain, or advance employees on the basis of individual merit."

In view of Johnson's close connection with Chrysler, there are other things in addition to the automobile code that are interesting. Note this Federated Press dispatch under date line of July 13, 1933:

Recovery Administration Headquarters has received affidavits from workers dismissed from the Chrysler automobile plants in Detroit to the effect that these men were dismissed because labor spies found them with A.F. of L. leaflets in their hands. Thus far Hugh Johnson has refused to take any action on these dismissals.

Johnson, through the N.R.A., has completely hog-tied the workers in his own backyard in Newark for the time being.

"If we'd a stuck together, the story would have been a different one," one of the work-

ers of Lea Fabrics, sitting in his meagerly furnished home, told me one evening, as several of the workers of the factory were talking things over. The workers in Lea Fabrics, most of them, have learned that lesson and the future may see some organized action arising out of the "dissatisfaction" which Gen. Johnson finds so intolerable.

Smalley, who recently found a job for himself, paying a fraction of what he used to receive unable to establish the wished for home of his own, living very frugally with his bride, indicated a few days ago with a sardonic grin what he thought of Hugh S. Johnson and of the purposes and intents of the N.R.A. generally.

"After what I've seen," he said emphatically, "I don't like to say anything. What I'm thinking about, I couldn't tell a lady!"

Glassford in the Imperial Valley

RICHARD BRANSTEN

Since this article was written a delegation of students, teachers and preachers have received an inkling of the hardships and brutalities to which Imperial Valley workers are subjected daily. The American Civil Liberties Union tried to hold a free-speech meeting May 6 at Brawley. A mob of ranchers, the Federated Press reports, rounded up the visitors, threatened them with death, drove them from town at pistol point, and fired on them a few miles outside the city. Gen. Pelham Glassford, hero of the Bloody Thursday when the bonus marchers were driven from Washington and Camp Anacostia in 1932, promoted now to a Blue Eagle federal mediator, had promised to meet the delegation. He was conveniently out of town when the latter arrived.

WESTMORELAND, CALIF.

BRAWLEY lies in the center of California's Imperial Valley. It is a fine town, boasting two air-cooled hotels, a new adobe city hall, a movie-house and a park, the usual run of stores, and a generous supply of cabarets, dance-halls, bars and gambling rooms. In front of restaurants, dance-halls, and pool-rooms hang the signs "White Trade Only."

Across the railroad track is Mexican town. More pool-halls, more bars, but lacking the signs in front. The Mexicans aren't so particular. They take any trade—and the whites drift over for a "shot" of tequilla or furtively to visit the girls. Only two paved streets are found in Mexican town; the rest are dirt roads. When the wind blows, clouds of dust sweep into the houses. In a corral, still farther from the center of Brawley, is the Mexican living quarter. The houses aren't

luxurious, not like the airy, comfortable white growers' houses. Mexicans, the Brawleyite explains, are ignorant, dirty people: they like to live in shacks made of rough wood, two or three airless rooms to accommodate six or eight or ten; rooms that are cold and damp in winter and oppressively hot in summer. Mexicans don't want to eat any food other than beans and chile and the vegetables in season. But the Brawleyites are not well-informed. The Mexicans really don't like the way they live. Of course, they're used to it. And when asked about it, the Mexicans will shrug and mumble something about his wages. Last winter, he says, he was paid one cent a pound to pick peas. If he worked hard, he could pick about 200 pounds a day. Some pick as high as 300 pounds, but these are the most skilled laborers. From this, the culls were subtracted. He got one day's work a week, sometimes two. There are too many Mexicans who are out of jobs: work is staggered.

Last year, in the San Joaquin Valley, white and Mexican labor won a strike in the cotton fields. The Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union organized the strike, fought bitterly through terror and violence for the workers. They won and wages rose from sixty, to seventy-five cents a hundred pounds. When the lettuce season and the pea season came to the Imperial Valley, the Union came too. And won more strikes, organizing the field workers. The Mexicans learned something—that they could trust this union, that the union would fight for them and not betray them as the Mexican Consul's company union did. The Mexicans didn't say much, but they learned something.

So did the growers. They don't like the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Indus-

trial Union. They don't like it at all. They organized too—into a Grower's and Shipper's Association. They appointed deputies from among their members and from among the American Legion to cooperate with local and state police—good, decent, red-blooded Americans who didn't want to see the Valley run by "outside agitators," by "foreigners," by "communists." They armed their deputies, started a reign of terror. They beat strikers and picketers. They arrested them on charges of vagrancy and violence. Put them in jail. They passed anti-picketing laws, which if enforced would make it a crime to stand in front of a building, or to walk on the sidewalk, or to talk to more than three men at one time. They discovered "Red" plots to blow up bridges, railroads, though none of these plots ever materialized.

The Civil Liberties Union is not a communist organization nor is it connected with the communists in any way. Yet the good citizens of Brawley feel that the A. C. L. U. is "radical"—so when the Civil Liberties' attorney, A. L. Wirin, came to the Valley to defend the prisoners, he was promptly kidnaped and beaten and dumped far out in the desert. Brawleyites are men of action. They won't stand outside interference. They closed the roads into the Valley, destroyed food sent to aid the strikers, permitted no legal advice from non-resident lawyers.

Commissions of investigation (those endless investigations beginning in fanfares and netting an ultimate nothing) followed. The federal commission, appointed by Senator Wagner, "found" that a reign of terror existed in the Valley, largely blamed the growers. "Another Communist plot!" exclaimed the Brawleyites. According to the Brawley News, "the

report was misleading, while the words of 'red' agitators were accepted as facts, as against respectable American citizens, official and business men of this community. The truth is, the committee was not looking for the truth and went out of its way to applaud actions of the communistic leaders who had no interest here, except to spread their propaganda, arouse strife . . ." The Brawleyites are up and coming people. They anticipated Wirt.

No one in the Valley likes to talk about the situation. Things are calm for the moment. Underneath the calm is a determination to handle the situation in the Imperial Valley as the growers know how to handle it—with guns and terror and race hatred. The atmosphere resembles that of Decatur before the trial of the Scottsboro boys: grim hatred, fear, the resolve to brook no interference. The newspapers continue to run articles to propagandize the growers and ranch owners and business men. The Imperial Valley Press (*Covers the Valley like the Sunshine*) editorializes, "by coming to the defense of this radical organization [The Industrial Union] the American Civil Liberties Union becomes tarred with the same stick." The editorial ends with the inflammatory remark that "if

representatives of the two organizations persist in coming here, they will have to accept the consequences." The Brawley News states: "The fact that this union's attorneys [Civil Liberties Union] have taken a decided interest in defending Communist agitators in the local court does not place that organization in very good repute here, it was pointed out." And the usual accusations about the Communists fill the pages, brief anecdotes humorously slanted, to repudiate the activities of the Industrial Union, and a significant short paragraph, ". . . it would have been found that members of the board of supervisors, the district attorney, members of the sheriff's force, and other officials were merely trying out several sub-machine guns, which it is thought will be purchased by the county."

The Civil Liberties Union promises a "good will tour" through the Imperial Valley in conjunction with the Industrial Union the end of this week. The purpose of this tour is "to demonstrate the breakdown of local and state law enforcement by free speech meetings until the federal government accepts the responsibility." General Pelham D. Glassford, formerly of Washington, D.C., whose police killed ex-serviceman Hushka during the Bonus Army Expedition, is in Brawley as the "Spe-

cial Conciliator, representing the Department of Labor, Department of Agriculture and National Labor Board." General Glassford does not approve the proposed "good will tour." He advised the representative of the A. C. L. U., "I personally disapprove your proposed return and good will tour planned for next Saturday because it cannot accomplish anything but aggravation to the situation." General Glassford also published an open letter to the Mexican workers in which he stated: "On April 23, I went to the headquarters of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union at 852 Eighth Street, San Diego. I purchased there the Moscow News, International Press Correspondence, Soviet Russia Today and other Communistic literature.

"I wish to assure the workers of Imperial Valley that the officials and organizers of this union have no interest in the welfare of the workers. Their only objective is to create dissension, destroy private property and foment a strike.

"Any injury to the shippers and growers during the melon season will be even more injurious to the workers. Do not follow the advice of these vile agitators. To do so will bring destitution, despair and hunger, and will add nothing to the welfare of the workers."

I went to see General Glassford at the Hotel Dunlack in Brawley. He has been in the Imperial Valley a little over three weeks and he has worked hard. General Glassford is a tall, good-looking man, and seemed very, very sincere. He wants to be impartial, to bring "sound labor practice to the Imperial Valley." But he doesn't like the Communists. "They're un-American," he insisted. "A bunch of skunks," he added in his American way, and named Pat Chambers and others who led the strikes in the cotton and pea fields.

I asked General Glassford about his open letter quoted above. "Aren't the statements inflammatory? Isn't it true that the Workers' Industrial Union has raised wages for the workers in the cotton fields, succeeded in raising the standard of living?"

"I'm speaking only of the Imperial Valley. The union has undoubtedly done much to improve conditions in some localities. But they do it for the purpose of gaining control of the workers."

"Isn't that the function of unions—to gain control of the workers, to organize them?"

"Yes," he admitted. "My objection is that the Industrial Union wants to stage a series of strikes throughout California. They admit it. A bona fide union should be for the workers. This union isn't. It just isn't."

He stopped, then remarked, "If the Industrial Union is going to fight me, I'm going to fight them."

General Glassford resents certain of the union's leaders who are Communists. He particularly resents the bulletin which, among other things, warned the workers that, "General Glassford was sent to the Imperial Valley to deceive and sell us." The General countered this nicely. "The bulletin makes a personal attack upon me, stating that I am



Jacob Burck



Jacob Burck



Jacob Burck

a rich landowner. It is true that with my mother and brother I own 485 acres in the Salt River Valley in Arizona, and hold a New Mexican ranch in trust for an eastern friend. Also it should be known that this land has been a source of considerable financial loss for several years."

I asked General Glassford, "The Committee of Growers and Shippers headed by A. N. Jack has given inflammatory statements to the press. Why aren't the big owners more dangerous to public peace than the Communists who at the present time want to organize labor and obtain better living conditions for labor?"

He shook his head. "I refuse to accept your assumption about the Communists. Their ultimate objective is not the welfare of the workers. Do you realize that they want to *change* our system, our government? They're not good Americans. Their intermediate objective might be to help the workers, but only to organize them, make them discontented. They use exaggerated propaganda, they exaggerate the terrorism in the Valley. I admit some ugly incidents occurred—such as the kidnaping of Wirin. But the Communists capitalize the terror . . ."

Pat Chambers jailed. Men killed by deputies. Men and women beaten and gassed. The right to assemble, to picket, to ride on the highways, to receive donations of food, forbidden the workers. These are facts. Gen-

eral Glassford feels the terror is exaggerated. The workers don't see it the same way.

"Well, General, I'd like to know why you advise against the attempt of the Civil Liberties Union to make their good will tour?"

He shrugged. "I'm no reformer. I can't come into the Valley in a high-handed way. I've got a program and I've got to base it on facts, not theories—can't expect to build Rome in a day. Now I know two things—the Growers and Shippers are unalterably opposed to the recognition of the Workers' Industrial Union, and they have no love for the American Civil Liberties. I've got to be reasonable. I've got to show a certain partisanship for the purpose of keeping my influence down here. The Growers and Shippers control the banks, the press, the police, the American Legion—everything. I can't aggravate them too much. I can't afford to, that's all, and if I am to accomplish anything, I've got to lean over a little on their side. There's been a tremendous amount of exploitation in this Valley. It's a tough situation."

That was all. General Glassford thinks he is fair. Only he hates the guts of the Communists and anything connected with them. He says, "I want to give everyone a square deal, even the Communists." But he hates the Industrial Union—the only union of agricultural workers in California that has successfully obtained higher wages and better living

conditions for the white worker and the Mexican, the Negro and the Japanese. It is the only union that refuses to betray the worker. And it is strong and growing stronger—that is why the Brawleyites must resort to terror; that is why General Glassford seeks to discredit it.

The good will tour is promised for the end of this week. General Glassford wants to preserve order, to keep things running smoothly. The Brawleyites aren't so sure. They don't wish to encourage outside interference, any meddling in their affairs. They don't want the workers organized. They'll fight any serious attempt—as they have done in the past, with force, with guns and gas, with terror and brutality, with their own elected judges in court. The union will also fight—and win. Last year, the melon pickers received ten to twelve cents a crate. This year the price has been raised "voluntarily" to thirteen and fourteen cents a crate. The union has accomplished much. The workers know that the Industrial Union brings them benefits and fights for them and never backs down on them. "Those skunks," as General Glassford calls them—impartially, for he has made much of his "theoretical" belief in the right of workers to strike and his desire to give both sides a "square deal"—"those skunks" are leading the workers sincerely, honestly, militantly in the struggle for the right to live decently.

Spring in Dearborn

W. D. TROWRIDGE

April drips silver on a land long brown
with decay of ancient yellow,
(yellow is the color of gold
and gold decays its misers);
a bland sun fresh from the algid mists
of the southern ice pack smiles
cool on green grass growing
in the yards of jobless men:
(even the poor may have chlorophyll
in the generous season of spring).

April and April's sun
promising lush fruition
are avatars of the once great Beardless Prophet
and the Prophet's less great Beardless Son:
(Dearborn's geared apotheosis).
The April rain and the April sun
project their line with verity,
promising much in the germinal season—
much until

August and the harvest done:
land grown, land bare, fallow
and no time for growing.
So the rain is snow by ancient tergiversation,
the sun turns into the chilly mist.
and jobless men may go to hell

where it's nice and warm and the devil gives
each unto each his due.

*(put-put put-put chit-put chit-put
peace on earth good will to what the hell
no jew can quote josephus like our own town pump
red schoolhouse fine collection labeled
\$rare americana\$.
when spring seduces dearborn
we will boldly hazard all
to increase V-8 production and restore PROS-PEAR-IT-TEE!)*

Before the April sun again,
the icy winds; a hot belch flares,
the white snow turning red
to a far chant of no-job workers:
their voices sob
strong like angry grief
of an organ in no
cathedral.

Seers and prophets, consulting the cyclic almanac,
gaze solemnly over gray beards and say:
There shall be a reversal of seasons
with spring in Fort Dearborn
becoming a time of harvest
under a sickle moon.

Dillinger's Dilemma

ROBERT FORSYTHE

THE Dillinger case is a serious affair and should be handled in a serious manner but unless you approach it with solemnity and a sincere spirit of public concern you are likely to get laughing. This is particularly an error from the radical point of view because whatever Dillinger may have been, he is definitely a public menace now and any attempt to make him a modern Robin Hood will only play into the hands of those who are anxious to connect Communism with rowdiness and general disrespect for the law. But even the general press with all its cries for vengeance has not been able to keep a straight face. The spectacle, for example, of the Ohio State penitentiary barricading itself lest Dillinger break in is obviously something which would happen only in a Silly Symphony. It is literally true that for weeks jails and station houses in the Middle West were guarded day and night for fear of a Dillinger raid. Police headquarters at Indianapolis were something like a beleaguered sector at St. Mihiel. There were machine guns trained at the entrances and a visitor underwent an examination calculated to discourage these from ever again annoying their public protectors. The real mystery of the case is why there haven't been dozens of deaths from jittery patrolmen.

Of course the point of main interest is what is responsible for Dillinger. If we hint that gangsterism is only a lesser phase of the gangsterism of Big Business which governs our American life, we shall be accused of dealing in the usual black and whites. The fact that it happens to be true is also no excuse and we are thrown back on the customary explanations. (a) He was always a tough guy, a crook, a killer, (b) The severe sentence after his first offense soured him on Law and Order, (c) His present state is a natural rebound from a very strict, Quaker upbringing, (d) He just wants the publicity.

Dillinger comes from the town of Mooresville, Ind., about eighteen miles from Indianapolis. His father was first a grocer, fairly well-to-do, and later a poor farmer. The elder Dillinger, also called John, still lives on the farm with two children of a second wife. He is a Quaker and young John had a careful upbringing. At the time of the War, when jobs were plentiful and wages good, Dillinger left grade school to become a machinist. He was also a star first baseman and one of the young bloods of the town. He got married, had a car and lived the customary small-town life. After the War, work was scarce and he did odd jobs around Mooresville. He also hung out at the poolroom and drug store. His first burst of crime took place within the space of one week. With an older man named Ed Singleton, the town ne'er-do-

well, he broke into a filling station, tapped the till at the feed store and finally held up Frank Morgan, a grocer, as he was coming home on Saturday night with the store's proceeds. It was an amateurish job, with Dillinger bumping Morgan on the head after first giving him ample opportunity to see who was hitting him. They were caught in a few hours and taken to Martinsville for trial.

Singleton had a lawyer and the support of various females who felt sorry for his wife and children. He was given two to fourteen years. The elder Dillinger had no knowledge of courts and was assured further that the best plan in first offenses was to throw oneself on the mercy of the court. Dillinger, therefore, had no lawyer and pleaded guilty. His sentence was ten to twelve years, with a second sentence of two to fourteen which ran concurrently. He was sent first to the reform school and later transferred to the Michigan City Penitentiary in Indiana, which is held to be one of the finest colleges for crooks in America. Singleton was out of jail in two years; Dillinger served approximately nine years before he was paroled. At Michigan City he met the men with whom he was later to be connected—Harry Pierpont, Charles Makley, Russell Clark and John Hamilton.

Pierpont admittedly dominated this group as he dominated the prisoners at Michigan City. He is a good-looking man with a magnetic eye and there is no dispute about his brains. After his parole, Dillinger went back to Mooresville and worked as hired man on a farm. Later there was the robbery of the Massachusetts Avenue Bank in Indianapolis, carried out by Dillinger and Hilton Crouch, the once famous racing driver. Dillinger is said to have worked at this time also with Mary Kinder, Pierpont's sweetheart. The purpose of the Indianapolis bank job was to obtain money for the subsequent break at Michigan City in which the Pierpont gang got free.

Events happened rapidly after this. Dillinger was captured in Dayton for the robbery of a bank in Lima, Ohio. The Pierpont gang went down to Lima and took him out, killing Sheriff Sarber in the battle. It is for this that Pierpont and Makley are now awaiting death in the penitentiary at Columbus. Clark was given a life sentence for the same offense. After the Lima job, the Pierpont gang was free until they were captured in Tucson, Arizona, last January. They had been all over the country previous to this, living the life of ease that comes with wealth.

The scramble for the prisoners at Tucson was in the nature of a cane rush. States fell all over one another for the honor of trying the interesting gentlemen. Pierpont, Makley and Clark were turned over to Ohio. Dil-

linger went to Crown Point, Ind., which boasted not only of the finest jail in the country but of a woman sheriff, Mrs. Lillian Holley, who will ever live to regret that she posed with Mr. Dillinger in the attitude of sweet understanding. In two months Mr. Dillinger was free again, having walked out of the Crown Point bastille in the full light of day. The original stories had him doing it with a wooden pistol which he had carved from a broom and which had amply intimidated the various officials hovering over machine guns, gas bombs, bullet-proof vests and French 75's. Later reports are to the effect that Mr. Dillinger was lavish with his unearned increment and had no more difficulty leaving Crown Point than he would have leaving Scarsdale for an appointment in the Grand Central area.

The escape was a matter of such sensation that the London Times correspondent sent a thousand words to show that nothing of the sort could happen in the Little Isle. It was then also that the humor began to develop in its more delightful form. With thousands or at least millions of police officers, flatfeet, private dicks, state police, amateur sleuths and federal agents looking for him, Mr. Dillinger went back home to Mooresville and spent two days with his father. He sent the car down to a garage to be greased, stopped in at the barber shop and said hello to the fellows and left when he had done all his errands. Hearing that the Warsaw, Ind., police had the finest collection of defense weapons in the land, Dillinger went up and relieved them of their treasures. Surrounded in a flat with one of his various lady friends, he escaped by simply walking out the back door and driving away. At Little Bohemia, the resort in Wisconsin, he shot his way free. Since that time, three weeks ago, there is no trace of him.

There is no way for Dillinger to turn back now, although his friends in Mooresville have made the effort to find one. Even after the killings at Little Bohemia, when the country was roused to a pitch of fury at Dillinger, a petition was circulated in Mooresville and Indianapolis—and had hundreds of signers—asking Governor McNutt to grant amnesty to Dillinger if he surrenders and promises to be good in the future. This seems as startling as the fact that Dillinger, the most hunted man in history, could have been two days in his home town without police being called.

The truth is that Indiana is corrupt from top to bottom. The police force has been too concerned with breaking the strike at the Real Silk Hosiery Co. to worry about Dillinger. We report this as a literal fact. The ramifications of the Dillinger affair extend in all directions and may end in the governor's office. The escape from Crown Point, with its ludicrous tale of the wooden pistol, and the break

from Michigan City were palpably arranged with the connivance of officers in the institutions.

It must be a point of some concern to the professional patriots to realize that the crooks of the Middle West are not Wops, Polacks or Jews. There are the Barrows and Barkers and Pretty Boy Floyds of Texas and Oklahoma, the Tuohys of Minnesota, the Dillingers and Pierponts of Indiana—all native-born.

Dillinger is not stupid. Pierpont is a brilliant man. They know they have nothing but death to expect in the end and yet they go on. There is excitement, easy money while it lasts and a chance for the limelight, but yet it is hopeless. What does it all mean? In the first place they are the products of the general collapse of morals which afflicts the Middle West. We stress the point because the cynicism about public officials and leading business figures in such a representative city as Indianapolis is startling to an outsider. The police force is honeycombed with graft and everybody accepts it as a normal condition.

There is the further fact of the vindictive-

ness of justice. Since there is no attempt to get the economic roots of crime, no effort to wipe out the slums, no plan to overcome unemployment or the conditions of servitude which breed crime, they can meet it only by ruthlessness. Pierpont said: "I would rather die than go back to the 'black hole' at Michigan City. They put me in once for twenty days and then came and told me there had been a mistake. I was the wrong man. But they kept me one day more anyhow and then warned me not to let it happen again." In the black hole in the cellar of the penitentiary, the convict's clothes are taken from him and he sleeps naked on the bare stone floors, and is beaten if he complains.

During the War political offenders in Germany and England were given sentences of eighteen months for sedition; in this country girls of grade school age were sentenced to twenty years for passing out handbills opposing the draft. In penology our system seems to be sentences on an ascending scale. If sentences of fifty years won't cure crime, make them a hundred; if a hundred won't do it,

make them a thousand. But never by any chance try to get at the source of crime.

With all humility may we point out to the sacred flatfeet and the sadists who pass as judges that there is a place where criminals are rehabilitated rather than brutalized and where another incentive is substituted for greed. We refer to that anti-Christian country known as the Soviet Union where the prisoners operate their own prisons, go home for furloughs at intervals and instead of slaying officials with machine guns expend their surplus energies building such projects as the Baltic Black Sea Canal. There is undoubtedly something immoral and anti-American about this and we apologize for mentioning it. America will handle its crime problem if it requires the recruiting of another Expeditionary Force and take Mr. Homer S. Cummings entirely away from his pleasurable occupation of making it impossible for the United States to trade with that terrible collection of states known as the U.S.S.R., where nothing better can be found to do with criminals except make them useful citizens.

A Morning with the Doc

ALBERT HALPER

THE doc is a big, heavy man in his early forties and has a big, heavy face. He was in the Army during the war and something happened to his feet there in the trenches, and now when he walks it always looks as though his shoes are a bit too tight for him. Before the depression, he had a good neighborhood practice among the lower middle class on the West Side of the city, but since bad times had hit Chicago, his practice has fallen off to almost nothing, so that now in the afternoons he has a lot of time to read the sporting sections of all the evening papers and also glance through the medical journals which the association keeps on sending him.

In the morning, however, the doc is a busy man. He makes the rounds of about seven or eight public lower grade schools and also gives toxoids to infants. He works for the city in the morning. He's a health officer, a civil service man. He hasn't been paid for over nine months, but he keeps on the job. He keeps on the job, even though he grumbles. "I'm just an old draught horse," he told me. He and I have been good friends for a long time, ever since the old days when he lanced boils on the back of my neck and forgot to charge me, so when I returned to Chicago I went up to see him to find out how he was getting along.

I called early in the morning because it looked like rain, and his wife gave us breakfast and we sat around. We sat in his little office and I saw that dust had gathered on his books and on his furniture. The rug on the

floor was old and the ribbon in his typewriter had frayed threads sticking out. I saw that he had changed a lot since I had seen him last. There was something heavy about him. His blond crinkly hair still frizzled up around his ears, his eyes were still small and blue, but his mouth was different. His mouth gave one the impression that he had been steadily smoking a lot of cheap, strong cigars.

Finally he looked at the little clock on his desk. "Well, I gotta get going," he said to me. "I've gotta make the morning rounds," and he stood up. "If you've got nothing to do, you can come along."

We went down to the street, got into his old 1928 Dodge sedan and the doc slammed the door. Just before he stepped in, I saw, as his big rear end raised high in the air, that the back of his overcoat was worn down as shiny as gloss.

The car bumped hard going up the street. There were huge holes in the asphalt and the doc told me they had been there for a long, long time. "You've come home to a bankrupt town," he told me and started cursing every politician who had ever put his foot inside the City Hall. In ten minutes, speaking grumpily, in snatches, he told me facts about departmental scandals which every civil service worker in Chicago knows, but which rarely gets into the Chicago papers. And when I mentioned the name of a high public official who had been assassinated down in the south, the doc laughed. "That crook? Did you ever hear of the deal he pulled off on the peoples'

Forest Preserve? He made more than a million on it. And his relatives are sprinkled on every directors' board in town. That crook?" and he laughed again. The doc has a very expressive way of laughing sometimes which saves him a lot of talking.

He was still smiling hard about the mouth as we entered the first school on his list. We went through a side door and into the principal's office. "I'll have to fake your name," he told me, 'because maybe it's against the rules to have you along.'" So when he went into the office he introduced me as Doctor Hall from New York. "He's an old friend of mine," the doc said to the principal.

As soon as we entered the office the principal's secretary got up and pressed a button and then I heard a bell ring through the building. The doc took a key from the wall and we went into another room. Pretty soon I heard a steady tramp of feet and in another minute a long line of little kids entered, forming quietly and standing without making any noise. There must have been about sixty of them. The doc took his hat off and sat down at a desk in his overcoat. As the kids approached, they stuck out their tongues, showed him their hands and waited for him to give them little slips of paper with his name signed on them. They were kids who had been absent from school on account of sickness and had to have the doc's okay.

They passed him slowly. The doc looked at their throats, their hands, behind their ears, their necks. Most of the kids were pale and

scrawny. They came up quietly, a little frightened, holding out their little hands. The doc likes children and children like him, but as they came up to the desk I saw they were afraid of him. He passed a few on, then stopped one little kid.

"When did you eat last?" he asked. The doc has a low, gruff way of speaking and the kid couldn't talk. Finally he mumbled something. He had a large head which drooped like a heavy flower on a thin stem, and he looked very tired. The doc scribbled an address on a piece of paper and gave it to the kid. "Tell your mother to go to that address for relief tickets. You go home and stay home for three days. Understand?" The kid walked away and when he reached the door he started crying. The others stood more quiet than ever. I could see, as they stuck out their tongues, that most of the tongues were spotty. A great many kids had rashes behind their ears. The doc kept busy scribbling on the little pieces of paper.

When the last kid filed by, the doc closed the door, hung the key on the wall of the office and we went out. The principal, before we left, asked me how conditions were among the teachers and school doctors of New York. He told me that the Chicago teachers were way behind in their pay-checks, and he looked sort of tired and helpless as he said it.

Our next stop was another school where the doc again introduced me as Doctor Hall from New York, and after the third or fourth school it got to be like a routine. Everything was the same. We came in, the doc took a key from the wall, the principal's secretary rang a bell and then the little kids came filing in, holding out their little hands for the doc to inspect, looking frightened and standing in line without making a noise. And the more I stared at them as I saw them coming up toward the desk, the more I felt I was looking at a bunch of little old people. It's hard to explain that feeling, but that's the best I can put it. I guess it was their skinny necks that gave me that impression.

At half-past ten we had finished the schools, the doc sat down in his shiny overcoat and made out a report on three long sheets of paper, and then we started on the toxoid calls. During most of this time the doc didn't talk much to me. I hadn't seen him for over four years and you'd think he'd want to ask me questions and find out what was happening in the East, but he didn't seem much interested. He sat with his soft plump hands upon the steering wheel as the old Dodge went bumping along the street. He didn't feel like talking and he was honest enough not to fake conversation. I liked him for that.

Before we got out to make the first toxoid call, he opened his bag in his car and made sure he had all his supplies. We had stopped before a small, lopsided cottage near the railroad tracks.

"Should I come in with you?" I asked the doc.

"Sure, why not?" he said.

So I went inside with him. A woman's face had appeared at a window and the door opened for us right away. The woman held a kid in her arms, a child of about three, a little girl. The woman was short and stumpy and looked Polish. As soon as we entered the kid began to scream. The doc didn't pay any attention to it. He walked past the woman and opened his bag in the kitchen where the light was good, and all the while the kid kept screaming. The doc was making his second appearance; he had given her the needle for the first time a few weeks ago, and the kid hadn't forgotten. The mother came back into the kitchen and, while the kid was screaming, she held its little arm firmly and the doc gave the shot quickly, expertly, drawing the needle out as only physicians who give hundreds of toxoids monthly know how to draw it out. We passed through the rooms, heading for the door. The woman thanked the doc in broken English, then patted her child who had calmed down to a whimper. It was all done briefly. The doc hadn't even taken his hat off.

We drove another block and made our second call. The second flat was full of babies and when we made our exit a trail of bawling kids was scattered throughout the rooms. The mothers couldn't bear the sight of the doc sticking in the needle, so I held the little arms while the doc turned the trick. The doc, glancing at my face, saw that I didn't care much for the job. I had begun to sweat, standing in my hat and overcoat. I took my hat off, laid it on a table.

"Put it on again," he barked at me. "Put it on. Never take off your hat in these homes, you don't know what you'll pick up, bed-bugs, lice, anything." I put my hat on again. When we went out the mothers, who had been standing in another room, thanked us, tears trembling in their eyes. "Are they all right, will they be safe from sickness now?"

"Sure, sure," said the doc gruffly and we went out.

We went from home to home, giving the toxoids. We cut down side streets and over carlines. Such unrelieved poverty I had never seen before, even in Manhattan's East Side tenements. I now knew why the doc's mouth looked as though he had smoked too many cheap, strong cigars. It was horrifying. We saw families living together, four or five pads and soiled mattresses lying on the floor, kids with that plump, humid, in-door look on their faces, their mouths slightly opened as if to suck in some air, a few scratches of fire-wood piled up in the corner, wrapping paper tacked up for window shades. We came in together, the doc and I, without saying a word, and the doc would lay out his bag upon a table, and as he'd measure out a shot and the kids saw the needle, the squalid rooms would fairly burst with screaming. It drove the mothers frantic, but when it was over they thanked us. They pressed our hands. They were burdened down with children which they could not feed, but they wanted these children to live. They thanked us. They followed us to

the door, asking if the children would be all-right now, if they would be safe from sickness now. The doc never answered half of them. He merely gave a curt nod which they may or may not have seen. He went out, walking with that walk of his, as though his shoes were a bit too tight. Then he got into the car, slammed the door and we drove off.

In some of the homes we found men hanging around, though it was still fairly early in the day. As soon as we came in, the men would get up and go into another room and we wouldn't see them any more. They slunk off ashamed. They did not want us to see their defeat and unemployment. Most of them must have been out of work two, three, maybe four years, but they were still a bit ashamed of not being able to land a job. So they got up quietly when we came in, hid themselves in the bedrooms, and didn't come out until we were gone.

But though we left so much pain and wailing behind us, there was no ill feeling toward us. The women would lift up their babies, crooning and soothing them. "It's good for you, the doctor has got to do it," and afterwards the kids would start their terrified screaming. Some of the women frankly could not stand the sight and left us, pressing their palms against their ears, until the job was finished. But I saw that all of them respected the doc. I saw it in their eyes. They saw his heavy, plodding, silent figure. They knew he was honest. They knew he was only doing what he thought was best. They read the papers and knew, also, that he hadn't gotten a cent in over nine months, and here he was plodding on, using up his tires and gasoline, walking up and down smelly hallways, brushing bugs from his coat as he passed their furniture.

At the last call we ran into a lot of trouble. It was almost noon and the doc, who is a regular eater, was getting grouchy. He still performed his job with all the skill at his command, but he always got tired out around a quarter to twelve or so.

The last toxoid we gave was to a boy of eight. He was a skinny gangling kid and he lay sick in bed. We had to climb four flights to get to him, and the doc was puffing when we reached the top. After all, he's over forty, weighs a full two hundred, and his service in France didn't do his feet any good. We went along a dark narrow hall and then the doc knocked. As soon as he knocked, we could hear the kid inside start screaming. We hadn't shown ourselves, but the kid, by some sixth sense, knew the doc had come. A little worried woman in her late thirties, her hair disordered, opened the door. She let us in. The kid, out of sight, began screaming louder than ever. As the doc laid out his bag, the woman went into another room and brought out another kid, a chubby little boy of two. The doc hadn't given this kid a previous shot yet. The mother rolled the child's sleeve and the kid began to smile. The doc spoke soothingly. The kid's smile grew broader than ever. It was beautiful. He was still innocent. It was

the first shot. He looked at the needle and began to gurgle. Then—zip, the job was done, as quick as a twinkling, and then he began to wail. Hearing him bawl, the older brother of eight began chewing on his bedsheets. The doc looked at him. I could see his jaw tighten. He went forward with another needle in his hand. I am not trying to make this gruesome. But there was something terrifying about the whole business. The kid, in bed, backed up against the wall like a cornered tiger.

The woman began to plead with him. "I'll give you a nickel, a nickel," she said. "Only let the doctor do it!"

The kid backed further up against the wall and screamed bloody murder. It was terrible. He was such a young, gangly-looking, terrified kid. As he rose, we saw his dirty winter underwear, his dirty drawers.

"I'll hold him," said his mother, but she couldn't. Then she lost her patience. She began to scream at him. "I'll give you a nickel, a nickel, a nickel!" She got her purse and opened it. She didn't have a cent. I reached down in my pocket and gave her a nickel. "See? The other doctor is giving you a nickel. A nickel, a nickel, a nickel!"

But it wasn't any use. I reached down and gave the woman another nickel. "See? Two nickels, two nickels!" But you couldn't get around that kid. Where he got that lung capacity nobody knows. He was almost blue in the face. The doc saw he had to act fast. Besides, it was almost noon now and he was getting grouchy. He turned to me.

"You grab him," he said. "You used to be a wrestler, apply a hold he can't break."

So I grabbed him. He shouted and scratched out, but I grabbed him. He had the strength of ten fiends, but I grabbed him. I brought him forward, put a foot-lock about his legs to keep him from kicking me and a double arm-lock about his arms to keep his arms steady for the needle. The doc did it in a flash. The kid grew quiet. He began to whimper. The woman thanked me. She was perspiring all over. When we reached the hall, the kid, realizing he had received the needle, began to scream harder than ever.

We rode home, the doc and I. The sun had gone. When we reached Ashland Avenue, a few drops of rain began to strike the car. The doc's quiet, plump hands lay heavy on the wheel. We were about four miles from his

home. His wife had fixed him a lunch and he wanted to get there in a hurry. So he didn't talk much, not for the first mile or so. Then he began to open up. He spoke grumpily, in snatches. What he said came out of the depths of him. He was a big heavy man and he had a lot in his system. He cursed everything. He cursed quietly, savagely, and the fact that in rainy weather his feet hurt him more did not add to his good humor. The rain began to slant across the glass.

The car hit a deep hole and we both banged our heads against the top of the sedan. The doc swore. His face took on a slowly boiled look.

"They won't stand much more," he said. "You can't keep a rag over their eyes forever. There's too much surplus food and clothing laying around and some day they'll wake up to the fact that all they have to do is to reach out and take it."

Just then we hit another deep hole and the doc turned savagely on me. "Now, a man doesn't have to be a prophet or a genius to guess what is going to happen! You can't keep stepping on people forever! They won't stand for it!"

Coal Scars and Cold Cream

A Report on the Anthracite

ROBERT GESSNER

THAT afternoon I left for the coal fields and their 60-odd miles of slums the intellectual radicals around Washington Square College were busily splitting the atom of the revolution. Those classroom revolutionists were so engrossed in the interior decorations of deviation that they remained indoors from such working class actualities as the taxi strike. "When our revolution comes," one of the lofty-browed leaders prophesied to his students, "the intellectuals will take the place of the peasants."

Five hours out of New York, however, is a foreign country few intellectual hair-splitters have ever toured. There is Ireland, 1880; Poland, 1880; Italy, 1880; Lithuania, 1880. Five hours out of New York is one of the most class-divided portions of America, and one of the most backward. Even a hair-splitter could stand in any of the towns and point out the workers and exploiters. You can tell a miner by his scars; they are dark ashen spots under his skin. When they load the cars in the mine they lift hundred-pound chunks, and if you're a complainer and not in good with the boss, you lift your coal in three feet of water, and you can't see the cracks and the chunk breaks open and the razor edges slice your wrists and bits fly into your face. When the company doctor washes your wounds, try as hard as he knows, he never gets the coal

out. You can tell a miner by his scars, by fingers or hands or feet missing, by the color of his skin that has never felt the sun.

From Scranton in the north to Pottsville in the south, from Mauch Chunk in the east to Shamokin in the west, an area of 3600 square miles, there are more saloons than grocery stores and more churches than schools. You can stand on any of those brown barren hills that never get green even in summer and see the cross of a church. The two go together, the church and the saloon. The Saturday night before Easter I saw hundreds of Irishmen and Poles in dozens of saloons drinking all night in order to make the 5:30 a.m. High Mass. Some sang the *Holy City* draped over the radio keeping time with beer mugs. And immorality is born of the saloon and fathered by the church. There are more children running the mining town streets who don't know their fathers' names than anyone has any idea of. Private homes are saloons on the back streets, and the saloons on the main streets have bring-your-own-girl booths. The bring-yourself-to-find-a-girl places, however, are more popular. And almost every saloon has behind the bar a female assistant to the bartender.

The first night I spent in the anthracite I picked up two bachelor miners, both partly drunk. They drank more and talked of seeing the girls before they finally brought me to

their room in a boarding house for bachelor miners. And there in a glance you knew why they whored and drank. All night long wrecks of bones and flesh walked the hall to the toilet in muggy underwear the color of their pasty faces. I felt their mining clothes, wet from the rain and dampness of the mines, their cardboard helmets as feeble protections from tons of falling rock. All night I listened to the asthmatic coughing of my bed-partner and the bed occupants down the hall. "We're getting asthma quicker now," one of them had told me. "Those jack-hammer drills raise more dust in the chambers, coal and rock dust, and that compressed air coming through rusty pipes and that oily machine makes it hard breathing." The miners also complained that the hammer drills, similar to the ones used in street repair work, give the men cancer of the stomach. The wet-cell batteries strapped on their sides and weighing nearly seven pounds give the miners kidney trouble, and when the sulphuric acid leaks it eats into the flesh. Dry cells cost too much, the operators explain.

Small wonder then that you see at night miners in their helmets, faces as black as Haitian Negroes, drinking in the saloons. I have seen them there at midnight, not wanting to go home. And their homes, company "patches," all look alike—medieval clusters huddled in the shadow of a mine-shaft. These

patches in county after county are similar, except for their varied degrees of paintlessness. Ironically enough, two of the worst are called New Boston and New Philadelphia.

Even the girls in the towns, working in shirt factories, have the same psychological desires as the miners. Every town has one or two of these ugly brick structures which have been absorbing the labor of miners' daughters for envelopes as little as \$3-4-5 for two weeks' work. Under contract systems which evade N.R.A. codes the girls still work long, illegal hours for small, unsubstantial pay. Recently a factory dance was held and the girls willingly made up the boss' deficit rather than have their dances outlawed.

Small children come to school doped and fall asleep. Teachers' inquiries discovered that they were fed hooch and bread for breakfast. In the basement of most houses there are stills.

These are some of the visible scars that blemish the anthracite. What forces keep these scars bleeding and never healing? What keeps the anthracite in the grip of 1880, a district where cock-fighting goes on surreptitiously, where liquor stores move into failed banks? Ten days before I arrived a young taxi-driver in Shenandoah shot an old woman through the window of her house because she "hexed" him and had the "evil-eye" on him, but now he is "happy and free" and the community has collected a fund to defend him when his trial comes up.

You can see the answer in any street. On Scranton's main street a movie house had religious posters outside, the kind you see in parochial school rooms, advertising a movie filmed in the Holy Land, called *Jesus of Nazareth*. On Easter Sunday you could see the poor peasants, a white cloth around the women's heads, coming from church with a pussy-willow in their hands. Good Friday was declared a legal holiday and not a bank in the anthracite was open.

One priest has more influence with the miners than any other individual, more than Roosevelt or even their union officials. He is Father Curran of Wilkes-Barre. I called on the monsignor, who has been active politically for almost forty years in settling strikes and organizing unions. He is a freckled, red-faced Irishman who grins and laughs at you when he talks. He has a pair of dark-brown bulldogs of a French breed scurrying happily around his feet.

"How was it, Father," I began, "that you first became interested in miners?"

"Oh," he laughed proudly, his face brightening, "I was once a miner. Yes, when I was 15-16 years old I worked in the mines right here in town."

"That was fine, Father," I said. "Now what did you do when you were a miner?"

"Oh, I opposed the operators," he laughed, leaning forward. "I struck with the men for a raise in wages and shorter hours."

"That was fine, Father. What do you think of shorter hours now?"



Kainen

"Oh," he replied, his benevolent smile disappearing, "shorter hours with the same week's pay doubles the cost of production. Then the people in the cities got to pay a higher price for coal. No, I can't see that."

"How about the miners getting between 80 and 90 cents per ton and the operators selling the same ton for \$10 at the mine and \$15 in the cities?"

"Oh," Father Curran said, gathering his lips together, "the cost of operating a mine is high, putting the props up and the transportation—all that mounts up. And if you pay the miners a better wage, that runs the cost up higher and the price goes up higher. No, I can't see that."

Then he laughed again. His long belly jellied and his jowls were red from innumerable dinners of rare roast beef. You had to laugh with him; it was all a big joke on somebody.

"Okay, Father, but how about the operators?"

"Oh," he said, his eye-brows raising and his lips protruding into a spout, "I'll help the man who needs it. If the rich are on the right side I'll help the rich. I would not for one second stand on one side that would crush the other."

"That's fine, Father, that's fine. Now how do you make up your mind which side to take?"

His blue Irish eyes twinkled. "I never act without first sitting down and thinking the matter over, and then I decide what would be the benefit for all time."

"That sounds fair, Father, but how about a crisis?"

"Oh," he replied, raising his eyebrows happily, "when the employers come to me asking me to quell the rebellious spirit of their workers, I go right out and talk to them and tell them force will never do."

He laughed louder this time. I had never heard so much laughing in an interview before. You got the idea from him that the whole anthracite was a three-ring circus.

"Let's get down to cases, Father. What are your relations with the United Mine Workers of America and Maloney's new union, the United Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania?"

"I was invited to speak many times by the new union," he said. "But I am against the U.M.W.A. If their leaders would step aside and have one union I'd be with them."

He laughed again in his boyish way.

"How do the miners feel about your participation in the United Anthracite union?"

"Oh," he replied, nodding his head assuredly, "90 percent of them are with me. They know I have no axe to grind."

I cut his laugh with a loud question: "Would you grind an axe for them in a strike against the operators?"

Father Curran raised his palm beside his ear. "Provided the cause is just," he said. "I believe in the Golden Rule; keep the balance, keep an equilibrium on conditions as they are."

There was a pause while the room was being filled with rays of celestial benevolence.

"And the unemployed miner?"

"Oh," the priest said, bouncing his finger tips in front of him, "a job will be given to him provided he can fulfill it better than anybody else. He lacks education and culture, but there is an equal opportunity for all. With ambition and sound brains and industry he can rise to the top. The depression is merely an exception to the rule."

I left the good father extolling the virtues of the second Roosevelt in the White House, and reminiscing how he and the First Roosevelt settled the coal strikes of thirty years ago. "And now I work with President Franklin Roosevelt in arbitrating the coal disputes."

I stood outside the parish on Good Friday, still hearing the laughter of the Good Fairy.

Father Curran's influence, however, can not be underestimated. You can estimate his power by the actions of the competitive Protestants, who for many years now, aware of their weakness, have been attempting to combine against the Catholics. But the Baptists said that they all should combine their way; and the Presbyterians said their way; and there has been no combination.

The public schools even reflect the reaction of the Catholic church. The Mount Carmel Superintendent of Schools, Taylor, recently declared himself to fellow teachers as follows: "There's one class you got to look out for—those unemployed. You want to handle them with red-blooded American principles. They need a shot on the mouth to quiet them. They're a bunch of foreigners. Whenever a foreigner needs his face slapped, I'll slap it. *The priest has faith in me because I am impartial.*"

This tirade against foreigners, produced by the pressure of increased unemployment, is the latest demagoguery of both presidents of the two unions—Boylan of the United Mine Workers and Maloney of the new United Anthracite Miners. Thomas Maloney is now the un-



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disputed union leader in District 1, boasting of 48,210 members. It is with Maloney that Father Curran cooperates.

The inner office of the United Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania is crowded with white-collar miners, looking like American Legion politicians. They are all ex-officials of U.M.W., but have carried their A.F. of L. countenances and pouches from one bank office building to another. When I went to keep my appointment with Maloney I went to the top floor of the wrong bank, and when I did finally arrive on the fourteenth floor of the Wilkes-Barre Deposit Bank Building I could not discover much difference between the offices and their personnels.

Tom Maloney is a smart, short-sized Irishman. His two-fanged teeth are prominent when he talks; they show his strength. He has an American Legion button on his lapel and a large ruby ring on his little finger.

"How do you exist?" I asked, after he had cleared the office of the small fry and we faced each other alone over the desk.

"Ah," Maloney answered, his eyes brightening, "that's what's amazing the whole nation. 'How do we exist?' against the U.M.W. and the operators."

He was pacing up and down in the excitement of his stimulated ego. "We have over \$40,000 coming to us in coupons, dues which are rightfully owed us from the check-off, but the operators won't hand it over. I got a case in court on that now."

"But how do you exist now, since the men haven't paid you any dues?"

"Well, there are several locals not in collusion, and—" he looked at me keenly—"several Italian social societies have donated their support. But the \$40,000 from five months of dues—"

"Yes, yes, that's all coming. But have you any contracts with the operators?"

"No, no contracts. Our men work under the 1903 Strike Commission's agreement. But the section bosses in the mines and officials of the U.M.W. go through the collieries having our men sign over under false pretenses their dues to the U.M.W. That takes our \$40,000 claim—"

"What will you do if the courts decide against your \$40,000 claim?"

Maloney's hard eyes smiled, his tusked teeth shone. "I can call a convention in 24 hours," he said, his voice defiant. "By that time I'll have all three districts—1, 7, 9—organized and I can close the mines here within an hour's notice."

"A coal strike in Spring," I asked, "when men are being laid off?"

"I can do it," Maloney said boastfully, ignoring my point.

His disregard of the miners' interests was further evident when I discovered that he, like his competitor Boylan, was for 100 percent American miners and against operators who hired foreign-born workers. Over half of the miners in the anthracite are foreigners

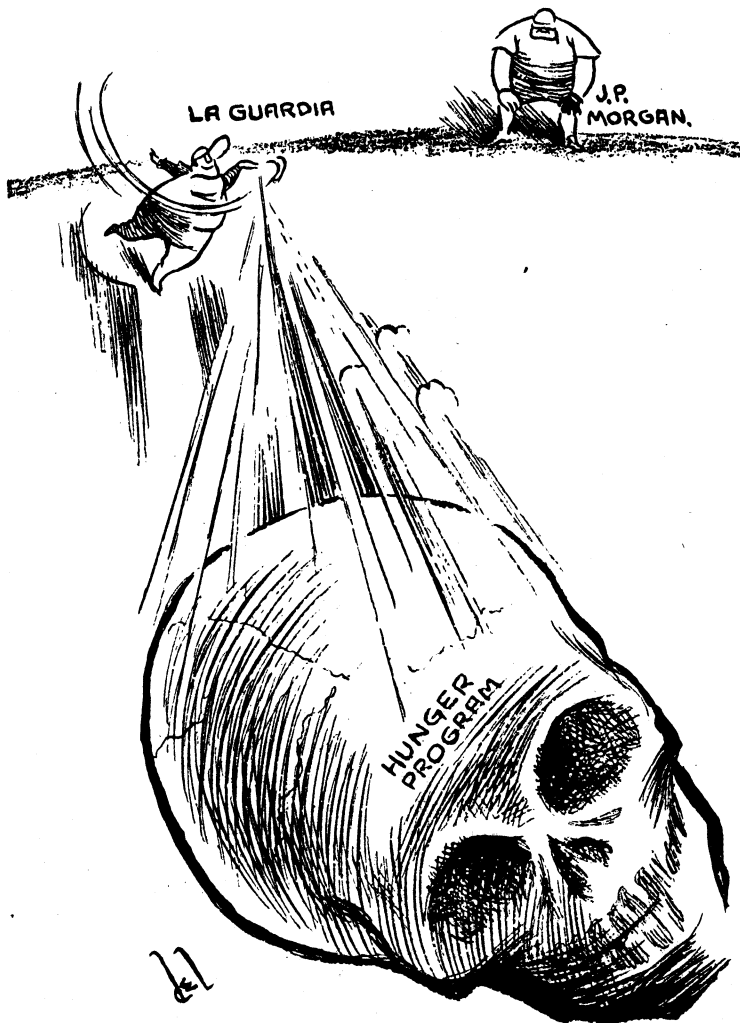
and the other half's parents were. Also, Negroes are not hired in the mines.

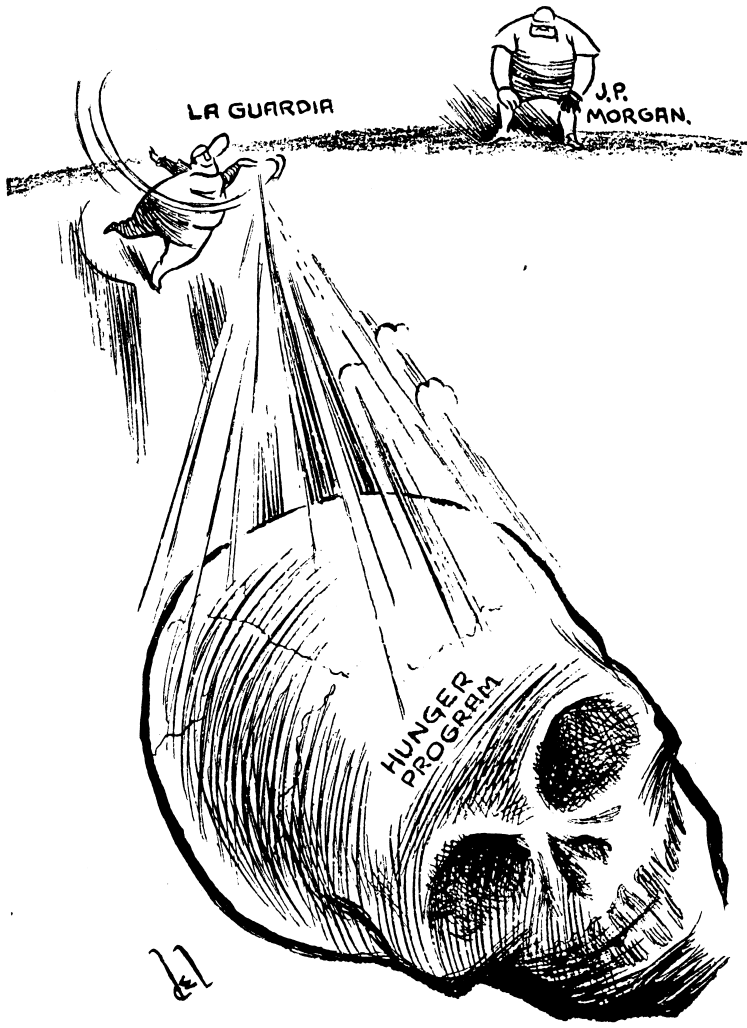
In addition to the betrayals of Boylan, Maloney and Maloney's partner, the notorious Rinaldo Cappellini now serving a jail sentence for arson and wife-desertion, is the liquidation of the miners by the operators through machinery. The Cary-Baxter-Kennedy stripping operations just outside of Mahanoy City are about to operate the largest drag-line stripper in the world. This machine is a portable factory, weighing 600 tons, and walks eight feet with each step of its mechanical shoes. In one minute it can take 9.6 tons of coal out of the ground and deposit them in trucks. It takes one miner eight hours to produce between 2 and 6 tons of coal. One man in the little control box of the giant stripper and his two Diesel engine assistants can produce 578 tons of coal an hour, 4,608 tons in an eight-hour shift. Three miners in an eight-hour shift can produce only between 6 to 18 tons. The stripper can run 24 hours a day, its 12 cubic yard bucket creating in that time 13,824 tons of coal. It also can strip surface rock a thousand times more effectively than man. What do the miners think of this robot? They don't like it. They say it is too damn human for comfort; they don't like the

way it walks eight feet each step, 600 tons and all. For six months between three and four thousand of them held up a four yard stripper, which is but a pea beside this new one. They undoubtedly will picket the 12-yard stripper.

In striking contrast to the highly mechanized improvements inaugurated by the operators, including their five-million dollar breakers capable of receiving 150 cars an hour, is the bootlegging of the unemployed miners. You can see them on the back hills and even now in plain sight from the highways—these "bread holes" as the miners call them, primitive caves into the sides of a hill.

The unemployed miners, as well as high school boys who never have been employed, issue forth with picks, shovels, ropes and buckets: a private industry, medieval as the Ninth Century. You can see them, the ones who aren't in holes, lined along the side of a mountain. The State Militia tried stopping them once, but were frightened off with the warning that snipers would get them "if they started anything." The operators who own the hills have offered to buy the bootleg coal, but their price was lower than what the men could get in the cities. Four men average in a hole and produce between two and three





LA GUARDIA

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tons a day which brings between \$4.50 and \$5.50 a ton unsized. Truckmen from the cities sell the same ton for \$12. It has been estimated that in Philadelphia in one week alone 12,500 tons of bootleg coal were sold. But the human cost is high. Cave-ins are frequent under the primitive mining conditions, as the men can not afford props and other protection.

All these depressing factors, the working and living conditions of the miners, the character and motive of their spiritual and union leaders, might lead a reader to think that there is no revolutionary hope in the anthracite. On the contrary, these very factors prove the stimulants of the rank-and-file movement, which is growing visibly. Such negative signs by their very character could not help but produce positive signs. Dissension is already starting over Maloney, as it is being discov-

ered that his union is a carbon copy of the U.M.W. The younger Catholic miners are not bound as firmly to the church as their fathers. Many of these younger Catholics I have seen in the Unemployed Councils throughout the anthracite; some are the leaders of their own Councils. The large-scale mining operations are making the men aware for the first time since the Molly Maguires that the mine operator is not a fellow-Catholic, or a fellow-Irishman, or a fellow-citizen, but primarily the boss and the exploiter. This class-consciousness is being promulgated by some of the most energetic and effective Communist organizers I've ever seen.

The opportunity for a rank-and-file union is approaching daily, and will become a reality when Maloney's hold on the miners will be dissolved through his inability to get their grievances corrected by the operators. Mal-

oney has no contract with the operators, no hold on them. The rank-and-file are slowly becoming aware of his impotence. As the layoffs now increase through stripping operations and the refinery of 30-year-old culm piles, the ranks of the rank-and-file swell. Joe Dougher, a square-shouldered, square-jawed Irishman, has been the militant leader of the rank-and-file for years and he is now coming into his own. It is not mere prophecy to say that he will be leading the third union, the first union in the anthracite for the benefit of the miner and not the operator, a union which perhaps the intellectual hair-splitters back in New York, too busy fighting one another, but all united in attacking the only Party that is organizing militant labor throughout the country, will perhaps never hear of, but which the miners in Ohio, in Alabama, in West Virginia will know and acclaim.

"Slum Clearance" Under Capitalism

JOHN STRACHEY

LONDON.

AT RECURRING intervals the capitalist press of Britain takes up the question of the slums. A large scale agitation is organized. The Prince of Wales makes "strong speeches" in which he tells us: "We cannot afford the slums." The Bench of Bishops is mobilized. Members of the Cabinet appear at public meetings. The Minister of Health announces a great scheme of slum clearance and rehousing — and nothing whatever happens!

It may be of interest to American readers to hear some of the actual facts of the housing conditions in this country, as a basis of comparison to the housing conditions and needs of America, which are, I read, coming into prominence at the moment.

An attempt to estimate the national housing needs has been undertaken by *The Architects Journal* during the last year. Mr. Philip Massey conducted an inquiry into housing needs in fifteen cities, viz., Liverpool, Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield, Glasgow, Stoke, Bristol, Hull, Cardiff, Newcastle, Bradford, Edinburgh, Dundee and London. These cities have a population of 11,511,275 persons, or just over a quarter of the population of Great Britain.

An attempt was made to measure the housing needs of this population, "taking regard both of overcrowding and of unfit houses."

The following standard of overcrowding was applied:

For the purpose of this inquiry a standard of $1\frac{1}{2}$ persons per room has been taken as representing the line between the overcrowded and the not overcrowded. . . .

On the standard taken: 1 person must have 1 room; 2 must have 2; 3 must have 2; 4 must have 3; 5 must have 4; 6 must have 4; 7 must have 5 and so on. On the whole, it seems that the use of this standard is likely to underestimate rather than overestimate the number of rooms, and houses, really needed.

The meagre character of this standard is illustrated by these examples:

A family of three is not deemed overcrowded if it possesses a two-room dwelling. Whatever may be the composition of such a family *either* all must sleep in one room, leaving, say, the kitchen-living room free at night, *or* there will be no room free at night. It is obviously undesirable that any but very young children should sleep in the same room as their parents. Therefore, the standard is not too generous for such families, while it will be too low a standard to take where one of the rooms is unfit for sleeping, being a kitchen proper, or where the family consists, say, of widow, son and daughter.

Similarly, the use of the "not more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ per room" standard demands that four persons shall have three rooms. Where a family of four consists of man, wife and two small children the provision of three rooms will enable a room to be left free at night. Provided the two bedrooms are capable of holding two adults, the arrangement may be persisted in if the children are of the same sex. If they are not, the third room will also have to be used for sleeping. In that case, the standard cannot be looked on as over-generous.

Similar considerations may be seen to apply to a larger family. Six persons, for example, on the standard adopted, are not considered overcrowded in four rooms. Suppose a four-room house or flat of three bedrooms and kitchen-living room. Unless every room is to be occupied at night, there is only just provision for husband and wife to sleep together and for the children to be sex-separated. If there are three children of one sex and one of the other, *either*

three will have to sleep in one room

or one will have to sleep with parents
or the sexes will not be separated
or all rooms will be occupied at night.

No one would suggest that Mr. Massey's standard was a luxurious one. Yet his inquiry revealed the appalling fact that at the present moment one British subject out of four in the cities which he examined, was living below that standard. A further inquiry revealed that out of the eleven and a half million people covered, no less than half a million were living at three persons per room, while three million were living at over $1\frac{1}{2}$ persons per room.

Mr. Massey had an elaborate method of calculating the number of new rooms which would be needed to bring the whole population up to the $1\frac{1}{2}$ persons per room standard, allowing for the fact that a large proportion of over-crowded houses were unfit for habitation and would have to be pulled down and other accommodations found. On this basis, 578,000 houses are required in the fifteen cities investigated. Mr. Massey calculates that housing conditions are only half as bad for the other three-quarters of the British population (since these are living in less congested areas). On this basis one million four hundred thousand houses are needed in Britain, even to bring the population up to a $1\frac{1}{2}$ persons per room basis.

It will be seen that all Mr. Massey's calculations are extremely conservative and almost certainly gravely under-estimate the real minimum housing needs. For example, no account is taken of the growth of population which will continue until 1940, at any rate. It has always been calculated that 100,000 houses a year are needed in order to cope with

"the replacement rate," *i.e.*, with the number of houses becoming uninhabitable, plus the growth of population. However, the growth of population is now a rapidly diminishing factor, while the number of houses becoming uninhabitable each year may, to some extent, be included in houses reckoned as insanitary by Mr. Massey.

On the other hand, Mr. Massey takes no account of the under-used houses of the British bourgeoisie. There certainly exists a very substantial, though unknown, surplus of house room in Britain, which the workers could and will use when they come to power. The large houses of the bourgeoisie would, of course, need very considerable adaptation for working class needs. But it would be well worth undertaking this work, splitting into flats, etc. An important use to which this accommodation could be put would be for the temporary re-housing of the slum dwellers, while slum areas were being demolished and modern housing erected.

I have lately been making some investigation for another purpose on the question of the physical possibility of satisfying the British housing needs, on the post-revolutionary hypothesis of working class power in Britain. Let us take the hypothesis that it is intended to satisfy the emergency demand for 1,400,000 houses in two years. (A period of, say, six months' preparation for making surveys, plans, etc., training additional labor and increasing the output of building material will be, it will be seen, indispensable.)

This means a rate of building of 700,000 houses a year. Let us further take the hypothesis that the average cost of a 3½-room house (*i.e.*, 350,000 four-room houses, 350,000 three-room houses) will be £300. (The cost of a four-roomed house in 1930 was £351. Hence £300 is about the figure for the provision of 3½ rooms in 1930. Since 1930 building costs have dropped. But 1930 figures must be used in order to be comparable with the 1930 census of production figures, which are the only ones available for the current output of the building industry.) This means that in order to build 700,000 houses a year the output of the building industry must be increased by £210 millions a year.

In 1930 (this is the year of the last census of production) £168 million worth of work on building was undertaken. Of this £44 million consisted of repairs, alterations and maintenance work. This leaves £124 million for work on construction of buildings of all sorts.

Hence if all existing building work is to be continued, the addition of £210 million to the value of working class houses produced would nearly treble the output of the building work proper now being undertaken.

Not all the building work now being undertaken need, however, be continued. After somewhat detailed consideration it seems that the following deductions can be made from this total:

Places of public worship, £2 million.
Existing output of working-class houses, £16 million.
Half output of shops, offices, "other houses," £28 million.
Half output of places of entertainment, £2 million.
Total of "Savings" from present output, £48 million.

This necessitates a net increase of house building production of £162 million.

Now in 1930 some £200 million of work on building was produced by just about 500,000 workers. It is now proposed to make a net increase of work "on buildings" of £162 million per annum, making a total of £362 million. This would presumably necessitate a working force of some 905,000 workers.

It is for consideration whether it would be possible to train the requisite number of craftsmen of various sorts: to provide the necessary managerial and organizational staffs, and to collect the necessary raw materials in, say, a preparatory period of six months.

From the figures at my disposal it would seem that this would necessitate an increase of about 200,000 men, or about 38 per cent of the present number engaged in the trade. (For there were some 100,000 unemployed building workers in 1930.)

The following is a note of the conclusions to which this piece of investigation led me.

"If this task is considered impossible, the question arises of the extent to which new building materials, concrete instead of brick, steel instead of timber, needing a smaller proportion of skilled craftsmen might be used."

Again the question of wholly new building techniques, such as the factory made, "fabricated" house arises.

It would be necessary to adopt some hypothesis of the proportional use of basic raw materials (bricks, concrete, timber, steel, plaster, stone) before working back the above results to the building material trades (and ultimately to the heavy industries) and considering the effect on necessary imports.

It must be remembered that if two years (plus a six months' preparatory period) is considered too short a period in which to attempt to meet the community's emergency housing needs, many thousands of workers will be condemned to live in the unspeakable conditions of capitalist slums, implying the death and/or permanent loss of health for many thousands of working class children and mothers, *for more than two and a half years after a working class capture of power.* Again, the only possible way of solving simultaneously the problems of want and unemployment is by a vast re-direction of productive resources—basically of Labor power. Capitalism has so grossly distorted the proportions of the different branches of production in Great Britain that a vast transference of labor time from some spheres (*e.g.*, mining and luxury trades) to others (*e.g.*, building, educational services)

is inevitable if any form of rational planned economy is to be developed.

Finally, it must not be supposed that the demand for building work would suddenly come to an end at the completion of a two years' program on the above scale. On the contrary, the provision of 1,400,000 houses merely satisfies the extreme emergency demand. In order to house the whole population on a standard which, for example, the bourgeoisie today considers minimal to health and comfort, say, four rooms to three persons, many million more houses are needed. Again, the modernization (installation of gas, electricity and water) into structurally sound houses, and the rebuilding of cities and sections of cities to meet modern traffic requirements, civilized density and amenity (light and air) standards, would provide ample employment for a labor force of 900,000 in the building trade for ten or twenty years.

All these figures must of course, be considered as of illustrative value merely. But it may be that it would be worth while for the revolutionary movement in various countries to work out illustrative schemes of the kind of constructive activity which they would undertake immediately after the establishment of working class power. Needless to say, it has been proved over and over again that there is no solution to the housing problem before the overthrow of capitalism. In spite of all the drum beating and ballyhoo, the princes and the bishops, the amount of slum clearance that has been accomplished in Great Britain is microscopic. Moreover, in those few cases in which slums have been cleared, it turns out that a very great dis-service has been done to the unfortunate workers who were moved to the new "model" housing estates. Figures have recently been produced by the Medical Officer of Health of Stockton, for example, where a slum clearance was actually carried out. To the astonishment of the officer, he discovered that the infant mortality rate and the general health statistics of the workers who had been transferred became much worse in their new "model" surroundings than they had been in the slums.

As a matter of fact there was nothing astonishing about this. The fact was that the workers who had paid 5 shillings a week for their slum rooms, had to pay 10 shillings a week for the new "model" houses, which meant that they had 5 shillings a week less to spend on food. Hence they became even less nourished than before.

Here we have a striking example of the fact that even when some scheme of social reform is carried out under capitalism, it usually results in an actual worsening of working class conditions. Slum clearance turns out to be a veritable death trap when it is carried out under the conditions of British capitalism.

It might be worth the while of the American revolutionary movement to investigate closely what the results of Mr. Roosevelt's new housing plans are likely to be in terms of real working class welfare.

Correspondence

Lauren Gilfillan's "Villainess"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Lauren Gilfillan, author of *I Went to Pit College*, apologized for making me the villainess of her book. After due consideration, I accept her apology. As a young Communist, I have often been considered a social villain by forces of reaction and blind babbitts.

I met Lauren Gilfillan at Pit College. I was receiving a degree in class struggle. I was the section organizer of the Young Communist League in a territory covering some ten miles, involving more than ten towns, or mining camps. Each day in the week I would spend in one of these towns, taking care of a Young Communist League unit, a Pioneer troop, a Woman's Auxiliary, a sewing circle, or a meeting of the Communist Party of the National Miners' Union.

On one of the days which I spent in this fashion in Avella, the children informed me that a friend of mine was here from New York: "Yes," I queried, "What is her name?"

"Lauren Gilfillan," they told me, "and she's an organizer, too."

I soon discovered that Lauren was living at the home of a scab; that she constantly went around snooping, and asking questions and taking notes. During a time of strike, when actual warfare is going on all around, one does not take time to find out whether a person is telling the truth or not. One immediately takes precautions against a possible enemy, whether it be an enemy from the press or from an opposing union. And so, like the proverbial clam, we shut up. But first, we tried to explain to Lauren what we stood for. She could plainly see why the miners were striking. Some of our facts seem to have taken root, it seems, but a great deal just slipped off like so much water off a duck's back. She didn't learn enough at Pit College.

When Miss Gilfillan came to Avella; the great coal strike of 1931 was giving its last gasp. The whirlpool of militant enthusiasm had been broken by hunger and terror. The mines were opening. Men were going back to work. Relief was cut off. The State Troopers attacked and slugged the miners, threw tear gas at their picket lines, jailed and arrested hundreds. For the moment, their spirit was smashed, as only the hand of the law, boss, state and local, can smash it.

Lauren met miners who were blacklisted. She met men who were facing the winter without a cent, without a job, without even the pitiful rations handed out by the union relief, through workers' solidarity. She didn't see the glory and flair of those first months of the strike. She couldn't. She was only out there for three or four short weeks, and a strike that begins in late April and ends in October, cannot be judged by what one sees in the early part of the month of September. So her account can only be considered a superficial story of poverty and demoralization after a lost strike. And this negative picture of poverty, she has shown excellently, but for what?

Lauren laughed at our Y.C.Lers and their meeting. She laughed. But the following week that very Y.C.L. unit which Lauren found so "absurdly funny" organized the children of Avella to march on the Board of Education and demand clothes and food. Not only did they mobilize the mothers and children, but they also won a victory, because milk and lunches were given the children in the schools. And the County board was forced to talk about getting shoes for the barefoot boys and girls. That, even Lauren was forced to admit, was no laughing matter.

And the meeting itself, which Miss Gilfillan so fantastically describes. Yes, we met by candle light. It is cheaper than company-owned electricity. Yes, we sat on sacks of potatoes and meal. There were

not enough chairs to go around. They, too, are a luxury in a coal town. Of course the boys' long legs stuck out in front of them, and when the boys stretched, their long hands nearly touched the ceiling. But they were not so dumb as Lauren makes them. They were in fact pretty smart young men. They knew what Lauren did not know, that the Y.C.L. was for them. One boy at that very meeting had just completed a speaking tour collecting relief for his fellow strikers. His sister was also there, and she had done likewise. Their father had been killed by coal operators' thugs, in the slaughter of 1922, when shots were fired from three in the afternoon to the small hours of the morning, between ambushed union men and yellow dogs.

Lauren Gilfillan speaks of the Daily Worker in the field. Yes, they started fires with our Daily. But did that lessen the effect of the Daily Worker in the coal fields? Hardly! It was what the Daily Worker should be, the beacon light, spreading information eagerly taken in by the hungry miners. Lauren, with the near sightedness of Smith College, couldn't see this.

But enough! I could go on from chapter to chapter. The book has already been reviewed. Lauren Gilfillan has left Pit College. She has written a best seller. The book is a sure fire hit. She can write. She has a knack for sensational reportage. But we know that she has a lot to learn. Lauren complained that the miners were clannish. That she couldn't get underneath them. Not "clannish," but class-conscious, Miss Gilfillan. The miners welcome and sacrifice for their friends. But they are wise through many betrayals. They are also choosy of their friends. Lauren was an outsider. She came to see, and later to write, and so she was treated as such.

HELEN KAY.

At Madison Square

TO THE NEW MASSES:

After marching into Union Square with the John Reed Club on May Day—incidentally, far the largest delegation of professional and white collar workers I ever saw, with the Unemployed Writers' Association, the Pen and Hammer, the Artists' Union, the United Front Supporters, the National Student League, the organizations of technicians and engineers, the teachers, many hundreds of whom had never marched before—I left the Square for a while to find my three kids who were marching with the Pioneers. My wife had marched too; she remained in the Square.

By the time I had walked up along the line of march to 20th Street, I realized that the Pioneers would not arrive for about an hour, so I strolled on to Madison Square to see what the Socialist demonstration was like.

The bulk of the Socialist marchers had arrived, forming—as I approached—a rather impressive little knot over on the northeast corner. For several minutes I watched the final contingents march in. A Socialist carrying one end of a banner and shouting slogans seemed unaware that a Daily Worker stuck out of his coat pocket (the poor Socialists have no English daily, you know). A crowd of shop workers chanted for unemployment insurance (but no one mentioned H.R. 7598). A woman's lone voice shouted "Defend the Soviet Union," followed by scattered applause (the only spontaneous applause I heard during a half hour). . . . A dogged wish-it-were-over-but-see-how-enthusiastic-we-are air, with undertones of buried distrustful resentment, pervaded the crowd of from 8 to 10 thousand who heard Cahan and others tell about the "lovely parade" and "what we have to be happy about," and the "real not fake united front" they had. Every speech I heard attacked the Communists who a few blocks away had mobilized some 100,000 workers and intellectuals.

. . . Yes, they did have a real united front, but it was *real small*. I saw a big sign, "Communist Party," with the hammer and sickle emblem, and under it, in smaller letters, "Opposition." Despite their "opposition" they insisted on slogans that they wanted to "Free Thaelmann" and "Defend the Soviet Union." About a hundred Lovestone followers were in this contingent. . . . Immediately behind the Lovestoneites were the Trotskyites—about a hundred and twenty-five, the two contingents stretching along the street for almost a whole block. Some half-dozen cheer-leaders, of whom Felix Morrow (the best collegian of them all) was one, led a very spirited rendition of the slogan, "Forward to the Fourth International." . . . It was a Trotskyite speaker that Abe Cahan praised when he said the Socialists welcomed the respectable Communists who came there and didn't want to break up anything. (I felt a sympathetic embarrassment as Cahan spoke. People around me, who knew him, saying: "Who's speaking? Cahan? Oh, Cahan,"—and that curious shamed silence) . . .

I hurried back to Union Square to see the Pioneers, and was astonished to see the size of the Pioneer child-army. Five thousand of them (my three among them)! Uniforms, their own fife and drum corps, hundreds of placards made by themselves, slogans, songs, chants—and the inspiring motto, "Workers' Kids of the World, Unite!"

. . . The Communist revolution is coming. We're on the way.

OAKLEY JOHNSON.

The Struggle in New Zealand

TO THE NEW MASSES:

A few copies of *THE NEW MASSES* come out here through the International Bookshop and are very eagerly read. I am a student and am intending showing it to my friends when the University term starts again. We hope to be able to bring out a student paper this year as there is a growing sympathy for Communism among the students, and we realize that no imported paper however fine can replace a production of our own.

We have already made some attempts in this direction. The Phoenix at Auckland University College was too ambitious a venture and lapsed for want of money, while the Student, produced at my University College, was suppressed by the University authorities. This is symptomatic of the general fascization that is taking place in New Zealand, in answer to a rising wave of working-class resistance as expressed in the 1932 riots, the recent strikes and the Gisborne Hunger March, the first of its kind in New Zealand, when forty unemployed strikers marched 300 miles to the capital city to present their demands.

The Unemployment Board had attempted to put the married men of Gisborne on the relief-pay of 5 shillings a week in order to force them into married men's camps miles out into the country. Talk about the wicked Bolsheviks breaking up the home! I don't think even your Mr. Roosevelt has got as far as separating unemployed men and their wives. The Gisborne unemployed have now been out on strike six weeks and are levying the town for food, actually living better than when they were on the dole.

Among the petty bourgeoisie and the impoverished farmers Douglasism spreads like wild-fire, providing a convenient economic theory for Fascism. The New Zealand Legion has come into existence, a typically fascist body with its talk of "national unity" to meet the crisis, "equally as much opposed to Fascism as Communism" and a little mealy-mouthed liberalism to cover up its fascist purposes. All this occurs with the active aid of the New Zealand Labor Party which openly flirts for an alliance with the New Zealand Legion and the Douglas Credit movement.

The Communist Party is rapidly extending its influence. It is now publishing a weekly paper, a great step forward for a country so small and politically backward as New Zealand. Interest is everywhere apparent in Communism.

Wellington, New Zealand C. G. WATSON.

Mother and Child

LANGSTON HUGHES

“A IN’T nobody seen it,” said old lady Lucy Doves. “Ain’t nobody seen it, but the midwife and the doctor — and her husband, I reckon. They say she won’t let a soul come in the room. But it’s still living, cause Mollie Ransom heard it crying. And the woman from Downsville what attended the delivery says it’s as healthy a child as she ever seed, indeed she did.”

“Well, it’s a shame,” said Sister Wiggins, “it’s here. I been living in Boyd’s Center for 22 years, at peace with these white folks; ain’t had no trouble yet, till this child was born—now look at ’em. Just look what’s goin’ on! People acting like a pack o’ wolves.”

“Poor little brat. He ain’t been in the world a week yet,” said Mrs. Sam Jones, taking off her hat, “and done caused more trouble than all the rest of us in a life time. I was born here, and I ain’t never seen the white folks up in arms like they are today. But they don’t need to think they can walk over Sam and me—for we owns our land, it’s bought and paid for, and we sends our children to school. Thank God, this is Ohio. It ain’t Mississippi.”

“White folks is white folks, honey, South or North, North or South,” said Lucy Doves. “I’s lived both places and I know.”

“Yes, but in Mississippi they’d lynched Douglass by now.”

“Where is Douglass?” asked Mattie Crane. “You all know I don’t know much about this mess. Way back yonder on that farm where I lives, you don’t get nothing straight. Where is Douglass?”

“Douglass is here! Saw him just now in de field doin’ his spring plowin’ when I drove de road, as stubborn and bold-faced as he can be. We told him he ought to leave here.”

“Well, I wish he’d go on and get out,” said Sister Wiggins. “If that would help any. His brother’s got more sense than he has, even if he is a 17-year-old child. Clarence left here yesterday and went to Cleveland. But their ma, poor Sister Carter, she’s still trying to battle it out. She told me last night, though, she thinks she’ll have to leave. They won’t let her have no more provisions at de general store. And they ain’t got their spring seed yet. And they can’t pay cash for ’em.”

“Don’t need to tell me! Old man Hartman’s got evil as de rest of de white folks. Didn’t he tell ma husband Saturday night he’d have to pay up every cent of his back bill, or he couldn’t take nothing out of that store. And we been trading there for years.”

“That’s their way o’ striking back at us niggers.”

“Yes, but Lord knows my husband ain’t de father o’ that child.”

“Nor mine.”

“Jim’s got too much pride to go foolin’ round any old loose white woman.”

“Child, you can’t tell about men.”

“I knowed a case once in Detroit where a nigger lived ten years with a white woman, and her husband didn’t know it. He was their chauffeur.”

“That’s all right in the city, but please don’t come bringing it out here to Boyd’s Center where they ain’t but a handful o’ us colored—and we has a hard enough time as it is.”

“You right! This sure has brought the hammer down on our heads.”

“Lawd knows we’re law-biding people, ain’t harmed a soul, yet some o’ these white folks talking ’bout trying to run all de colored folks out o’ de county on account o’ Douglass.”

“They’ll never run me,” said Mrs. Sam Jones.

“Don’t say what they *won’t* do,” said Lucy Doves, “cause they might.”

“Howdy, Sister Jenkins.”

“Howdy!”

“Good evenin’.”

“Yes, de meetin’s due to start directly.”

“Soon as Madam President arrives. Reckon she’s having trouble gettin’ over that road from High Creek.”

“Sit down and tell us what you’s heard, Sister Jenkins.”

“About Douglass?”

“Course ’bout Douglass. What else is anybody talkin’ ’bout nowadays?”

“Well, my daughter told me Douglass’ sister say they was in love.”

“Him and that white woman?”

“Yes. Douglass’ sister say it’s been going on ’fore de woman got married.”

“Uh-huh! Then why didn’t he stop foolin’ with her after she got married? Bad enough, colored boy foolin’ round a unmarried white woman, let alone a married one.”

“Douglass’ sister say they was in love.”

“Well, why did she marry the white man, then?”

“She’s white, ain’t she? And who wouldn’t marry a rich white man? Got his own farm, money and all, even if he were a widower with grown children gone to town. He give her everything she wanted, didn’t he?”

“Everything but the right thing.”

“Well, she must not o’ loved him, sneak-ing round meeting Douglass in de woods.”

“True.”

“But what you reckon she went on and had that colored baby for?”

“She must a thought it was the old man’s baby.”

“She don’t think so now! Mattie say when the doctor left and they brought the child in to show her, she like to went blind. It were near black as me.”

“Do tell!”

“And what did her husband say!”

“Don’t know. Don’t know.”

“He must a fainted.”

“That old white woman what lives cross the crick from us said he’s gonna put her out soon’s she’s able to walk.”

“Ought to put her out!”

“Maybe that’s what Douglass waitin’ for.”

“I heard he wants to take her away.”

“He better take his fool self away ’fore these white folks get madder. Ain’t nobody heard it was a black baby till day before yesterday. Then it leaked out. And now de folks are rarin’ to kill Douglass!”

“I sure am scared!”

“And how come they all said right away it were Douglass?”

“Honey, don’t you know? Colored folks knowed Douglass been eyeing that woman since God knows when, and she been eyeing back at him. You ought to seed ’em when they meet in de store. Course they didn’t speak no more’n Howdy, but their eyes followed one another ’round just like dogs.”

“They was in love, I tell you. Been in love.”

“Mighty funny kind o’ love. Everybody knows can’t no good come out o’ white and colored love. Everybody knows that. And Douglass ain’t no child. He’s twenty-six years old, ain’t he? And Sister Carter sure did try to raise her three chillun right. You can’t blame her.”

“Blame that fool boy, that’s who, and that woman. Plenty colored girls in Camden he could of courted, 10 miles up the road. One or two right here. I got a daughter myself.”

“No, he had to go foolin’ round with a white woman.”

“Yes, a white woman.”

“They say he loved her.”

“What do Douglass say, since it happened?”

“He don’t say nothing.”

“What could he say?”

“Well, he needn’t think he’s gonna keep his young mouth shut and let de white folks take it out on us. Down yonder at de school today, my Dorabelle says they talkin’ ’bout separatin’ de colored from de white and makin’

all de colored children go in a nigger room next term."

"Ain't nothing like that ever happened in Boyd's Center long as I been here—these 22 years."

"White folks is mad now, child, mad clean through."

"Wonder they ain't grabbed Douglass and lynched him."

"It's a wonder!"

"And him calmly out yonder plowin' de field this afternoon."

"He sure is brave."

"Woman's husband liable to kill him."

"Her brother's done said he's gunning for him."

"They liable to burn Negroes' houses down."

"Anything's liable to happen. Lawd, I'm nervous as I can be."

"You can't tell about white folks."

"I ain't nervous. I'm scared."

"Don't say a word!"

"Why don't Sister Carter make him leave here?"

"I wish I knew."

"She told me she were nearly crazy."

"And she can't get Douglass to say nothin', one way or another—if he go, or if he stay—Howdy, Madame President."

"I done told you Douglass loves her."

"He wants to see that white woman, once more again, that's what he wants."

"A white hussy!"

"He's foolin' with fire."

"Poor Mis' Carter. I'm sorry for his mother."

"Poor Mis' Carter."

"Why don't you all say poor Douglass? Poor white woman? Poor child?"

"Madame President's startin' de meetin'."

"Is it boy or girl?"

"Sh-s-s-s! There's de bell."

"I hear it's a boy."

"Thank God, ain't a girl then."

"I hope it looks like Douglass, cause Douglass a fine-looking nigger."

"He's too bold, too bold."

"Shame he's got us all in this mess."

"Shame, shame, shame!"

"Sh-sss-sss!"

"Yes, indeedy!"

"Sisters, can't you hear this bell?"

"Shame!"

"Sh-sss!"

"Madame Secretary, take your chair."

"Shame!"

"The March meeting of the Salvation Rock Ladies' Missionary Society for the Rescue o' the African Heathen is hereby called to order. . . . Sister Burns, raise a hymn. . . . Will you all ladies *please be quiet?* What are you talkin' 'bout back there anyhow?"

Revolution and the Novel

6. *The Problem of Documentation*

GRANVILLE HICKS

IN PREVIOUS articles I have discussed the hero as millionaire, the hero as intellectual, or the hero as worker. To many persons this must seem a surprising procedure. The novelist is not concerned, such critics will say, with millionaires or workers as such but with men. Of course. But after all, certain men are millionaires and others are workers. They are not merely millionaires and workers; they may also be lovers, thinkers, voters, church attendants, creatures of mystery. But the novelist, though he tries to do justice to the many-sided character and varied activities of his hero, must follow a process of selection. If he does not discriminate, if he makes one act as important as another, one emotion as important as another, the result is chaos.

This is the barest commonplace, but it is a commonplace that has to be repeated again and again because so many persons refuse to accept its obvious implications. Let us take a very simple case. When Sinclair Lewis wrote *Babbitt*, he set out to write a novel about a business man, just as when he wrote *Arrowsmith* he set out to write a novel about a doctor, and when he wrote *Work of Art* he set out to write a novel about a hotel-keeper. But, certain critics say, that is not the proper way to write novels, and they point to Edith Wharton and Willa Cather, or perhaps to D. H. Lawrence and James Joyce. The assumption is, of course, that these authors are writing about men and women as men and women, not men and women in some special capacity. In fact, *O, Pioneers!* is as restricted as *Babbitt*, and *Sons and Lovers* is as restricted as

Arrowsmith. What the critics should argue is that it is more important to write about the sex life of a man than it is to write of his business life, or that it is more important to describe the quasi-mystical responses of a frontier woman to the soil than it is to describe the artistic ambitions of the manager of a hotel. But they refuse to admit that there is simply a choice between one kind of selection and another. They try to maintain that there is completeness on their side and partiality on the other, instead of recognizing that there is partiality on both sides, and that the question of which side comes closer to comprehensiveness reduces itself to the problem of what aspects of human life are most important.

John Dos Passos says, "The business of a novelist is, in my opinion, to create characters first and foremost, and then to set them in the snarl of the human currents of his time, so that there results an accurate permanent record of a phase of history." The suggestion that the characters are created first and then set into their environment is unfortunate, for it postulates a separation between character and environment that does not exist in life and would be fatal in literature. But, assuming that this is merely a matter of unhappy phraseology, I should not quarrel with Dos Passos' definition. The typical bourgeois critic, however, would object to the statement because it implies that the novelist must deal with social forces. This objection rests on an assumption, tacit or not, that the fundamental qualities of mankind are independent of these forces. If Dos Passos had said that the busi-

ness of the novelist is to create characters and then to place them in situations that reveal the true nature of mankind, the bourgeois critic would lean back and applaud. For Dos Passos, of course, the two statements are really equivalent, for he believes that any situation, if it is fully to reveal the nature of mankind, must portray the forces that shape that nature.

It is not only revolutionary novelists who try to show their characters in a living social environment and who seek to give an "accurate permanent record of a phase of history." After all, we must not forget Fielding, Jane Austen, Dickens, Thackeray, Tolstoy, Balzac, Zola, Howells. But we can agree that the revolutionary writer is particularly conscious of the intrinsic importance of social movements and of the decisive effect of economic alignments on characters. He is not likely to be guilty, on the one hand, of indifference and ignorance or, on the other, of cowardice. He must show his characters as part of "the snarl of the human currents of his time," or at least of the time he has chosen to write about, for he knows that they cannot be fully understood apart from their social environment.

This means that the revolutionary novelist must consider the problem of documentation. Let us not make the mistake, however, of assuming that this problem exists only for the writer who wishes to portray economic and political movements. The task of such a novelist is essentially no different from that of any other: any novel demands the selection of materials that embody the author's conception of life and permit the expression of his

attitude towards it. The chief distinction is that the revolutionary novelist cannot indulge in any arbitrary manipulation of the materials of experience. The documentation of a novel by D. H. Lawrence, for example, consists of a series of descriptions and analyses of the responses of his characters to various situations, usually involving sexual desires. It is possible, of course, to compare these descriptions and analyses with one's own emotions and one's observations of the emotions of others, and on the basis of such comparison critics have praised or attacked Lawrence's work. The comparison is, however, personal and highly debatable. When, however, the documentation of a novel consists in a record of the events of a strike, let us say, the comparison between the strike in the novel and strikes in real life, though there is still room for differences of interpretation and evaluation, offers much more opportunity for impersonal exactness. Authenticity is always essential, but in the novel that portrays social forces one can tell much more easily when authenticity is lacking.

If we examine some of our revolutionary novels, we discover that this problem of documentation has presented itself in many forms. As is not unnatural, several of the best of these novels are essentially autobiographical. The aim of their authors, however, has not been so much to write about themselves and their lives as to describe the particular environments they have known. Take, for example, Michael Gold's *Jews Without Money* and Jack Conroy's *The Disinherited*. Perhaps it may be objected that neither book is, strictly speaking, a novel; but that does not matter, since both deserve to be called literature. In both, that is, experience is seized upon, understood, interpreted, re-shaped, and communicated to the reader. The important point, however, is that, having chosen the form of the novel, both writers should have remembered what Dos Passos calls the business of the novelist. If these books were frankly collections of episodes, one would accept them as such. But both Gold and Conroy felt—quite rightly, it seems to me—that their materials had a kind of unity that demanded more than merely episodic treatment. They were concerned not only with communicating certain experiences but also with indicating the impact of those experiences. The proof of this lies in the fact that each book ends with the awakening of the central character to class-consciousness. But in both books this awakening comes as a surprise. Something is missing, for otherwise the reader would feel that the climax of the book followed inevitably from everything that had gone before. The trouble is not, I think, in either the character or the amount of the documentation; it is in the failure to portray in terms of the novel a relationship that must have existed in life.

Essentially the same problem exists when the documentation is not derived from first-hand experience. Certain critics assume that the themes of a novelist are limited to the kind of life he has personally led. Unfortu-

nately for these critics—Mr. John Chamberlain, for example—several of the greatest bourgeois writers have deliberately “worked up” the documentation of their novels. At the present moment we can point to two novelists whom Mr. Chamberlain frequently praises—Sinclair Lewis and Theodore Dreiser. How did Lewis get his material for *Arrow-smith*, *Elmer Gantry*, and *Work of Art*? How did Dreiser get his material for *The Financier*, *The Titan*, and *An American Tragedy*? Both writers show that, at least under some conditions, an author can investigate a way of life that is largely foreign to him and can convert the results of his investigation into effective fiction. The difficulty with Lewis is not that his documentation is inaccurate or inadequate; his trouble is superficiality. Dreiser, on the other hand, for all his clumsiness, searches after fundamentals. Lewis does a brilliant job with surfaces, but he is satisfied to stop there. Dreiser at least tries to dig down into the roots, and his work shows that an honest effort at understanding compensates for many defects. Both writers refute Mr. Chamberlain.

The way in which the results of research can be converted into the material of fiction is little different from the process that personal experience must undergo. For purposes of analysis we can distinguish two elements in this process, though in fact they are not separated. One of these elements is essentially intellectual: the author must understand the relations of the different experiences with which he is dealing. The second is more purely emotional: the author must respond, positively and completely, to each of these experiences. The perception of actual relationships organizes his responses, and the result can be described as a unified pattern. This pattern constitutes an adjustment to reality. Communicated to the reader, it modifies the pattern that exists in his consciousness, which is presumably less inclusive and less satisfactorily organized. Thus it changes his response to subsequent experience.

Perhaps I can make this rather schematic statement clearer, at least in its implications for writers, if I cite two specific examples. In *The Jungle*, which is certainly the best of Sinclair's novels, most of the material was gathered during a comparatively brief stay in the stockyards. Nevertheless, in chapter after chapter, the lives of the people have for us the impact of first-hand experience. This means, I believe, that Sinclair has accurately understood the conditions of the stockyards, that is, not only what they are but also why they are. It means, moreover, that he has felt within himself essentially the emotions that would be felt by such persons as Ona and Jurgis. He sees, finally, both the conditions and the response to the conditions as parts of a larger whole, and his response to both the conditions and the emotions aroused in Ona and Jurgis is integrated with this perception. But there are also long passages of straight exposition, in which we are conscious of the author as observer and muckraker. Such passages indi-

cate a lapse in the kind of process I have tried to describe. One-half of the process has stopped, and direct observation is suddenly substituted for imaginative re-creation; the book is no longer a book about Ona and Jurgis, but simply a book about Upton Sinclair and the stockyards. Since the integration I have spoken of is necessarily dynamic and progressive, every such interruption is destructive. That may explain why *The Jungle*, though aimed at the heart of a nation, only reached, in Sinclair's phrase, its stomach.

I do not know whether William Rollins, Jr., observed at first-hand the Gastonia and New Bedford strikes that provide the material for his novel, *The Shadow Before*. In any case I assume that he was only an observer and not a participant, and his situation is therefore comparable to Sinclair's. His perception of the strike made him want to show its impact on several kinds of persons, and he therefore introduces Harry Baumann and the Thayers as well as Mickey, Martin, and the renegade Ramon. (The success of the novel, incidentally, justifies what I said in an earlier article about the suitability of the complex form for the fellow-traveler.) What would ordinarily be called the documentation of the novel—the description of mill conditions, the conduct of the strike, and the trial—is subordinated to the portrayal of the characters. That is, we come to understand conditions through their effect on people as much as through direct description. The success of this method depends, in the first place, on Rollins' own understanding of conditions, which is in general adequate. It also depends on his understanding of the persons on whom those conditions are acting. Here, perhaps, there are momentary lapses, but they are only minor blemishes. In general, Rollins has shown a relationship that can reasonably be described as organic between character and conditions, between character and character, and between one set of conditions and another.

When so many elements are necessary for the success of a novel, it is impossible to say that one is more important than the other. There are certain qualities that are essential for any novelist, revolutionary or otherwise. What interests us now, however, is the way in which these qualities operate in the imaginative processes of the revolutionary writer. I do not want to seem to over-emphasize the intellectual element in the creative process, for I fully realize that by itself it can accomplish nothing. But we ought not to ignore the fact that many novelists, talented in other ways, have failed precisely for want of this quality. There can be no excuse for such failure on the part of the revolutionist. I grow tired, and I imagine others do, at the frequency with which our critics point out that this author or that would have written a better book if he had had a Marxist understanding of the events with which he dealt. Yet it is the sort of thing that one is compelled to say again and again because it is so often both true and important. No theory of social conduct can be a substitute for perception, but a sound

theory is a most valuable guide. A knowledge of the economic role of millionaires is not enough to provide an understanding of any given millionaire, but it is a pre-requisite for such understanding.

And the revolutionary movement offers the writer far more than intellectual guidance. The notion of absolute objectivity, of complete withdrawal from the events presented in a work of fiction, is one of the major fallacies of bourgeois literary theory. It is a fallacy because such objectivity is neither possible nor desirable. I am not discussing, of course, the theory of objective truth; I am merely maintaining that personal objectivity is unattainable. The class struggle is so inclusive that, though one's allegiance may be divided, one cannot remain aloof. And the attempt to remain aloof weakens and sometimes paralyzes the creative faculties. Understanding comes through participation. All experience is a kind of struggle. Partisanship ought to enrich one's understanding of enemies and friends alike. Sometimes, we must admit, it has the

opposite effect, and narrows and distorts the vision. But I doubt if partisanship, even at its worst, is ever so destructive as the attempt to reduce art to lifeless passivity.

The problem of documentation reduces itself, as we have seen, to the problem of the nature of the artist's experiences and the use to which he puts it. The quantity of documentation is relatively important. It is a question to be settled in accordance with the novelist's aim. If he is concerned, as Gold was, with evoking the life of a particular place and a particular kind of people, there must be fullness of documentation. So, too, if he makes a whole profession his theme, as Lewis has done in several books. If he is portraying a particular event, such as a strike, he must give details enough to make the strike a reality, but there is still much room for variation. Grace Lumpkin, for example, has given us, in *To Make My Bread*, a picture of the transformation of backward mountaineers into militant proletarians, and she has therefore fully documented the lives of her characters

before as well as after they go to work in the mills. Rollins, on the other hand, pays no attention to this particular aspect of his characters' lives, and his documentation is therefore entirely different.

It is very seldom, I believe, that the quantity of documentation offers any serious difficulty—though sometimes, as in the local color writers of the last century, there is far too much. The quality of the documentation is always the problem. That there is no easy solution goes without saying, but the nature of the solution is fairly clear. It is probably more difficult for a writer to assimilate material that is gathered by deliberate research than it is for him to draw directly on personal experience. This is not, however, invariably true, for the adaptation of autobiographical material demands a kind of self-understanding that many writers have not achieved. In either case there can be no substitute for the process to which experience is subjected when it passes through the sensitive mind of an artist.

B o o k s

More Marx De Luxe

WHAT MARX REALLY MEANT, by
G. D. H. Cole. Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.00.

THE arrogant title comes appropriately from a British intellectual who has played battledore and shuttlecock with "guild socialism" and various species of Fabian gradualism, who has given sage advice to British capitalist governments and conducted liberals on arm-chair tours "through world chaos" without ever giving hostage to the revolutionary working-class movement. Plenty of warning is given in his opening announcement that he is out to restate Marx in terms of the present, avoiding the "dogmatism" of "some" Marxists. Evidently some sort of revisionism or private Marxism is to follow. Readers new to Marxism may hope to find in a "fresh" presentation some means of reconciling Marx with their own views or a half-way stopping point short of the Communist camp. Those who are at all familiar with the history of the movement, know of the unceasing labors of Marx and Engels, and later of Lenin and the present-day Communists to keep the revolutionary line clear and free from the befuddlements and betrayals of those who would divert it. To opportunists of all shades this is, of course, dogmatism.

To give the devil his due, it must be said emphatically that Mr. Cole is quite familiar with the literature of Marxism and is able, when he chooses, to restate it accurately and clearly. Dozens of times he forswears an opportunity to run up some by-path of distortion or to pull out some old chestnut of "refuta-

tion." In other words, he economizes his revisions in an attempt to strengthen their effectiveness.

The dialectic method of Marx, for instance, is described as clearly as possible in a popular book, although it is not applied by Cole himself, as we shall see. None of Max Eastman's nonsense about the "unnecessary German metaphysics" is found in Cole. The Marxist theory of the state is also plainly put. After stating it succinctly, Cole concludes: "Marx's conception of the state and the transition (to socialism) is utterly plain and unequivocal. Lenin and not Kautsky says what Marx said. . . . For Kautsky, and the Social Democrats as a party, had come to think in terms of the capture and democratization of the capitalist state and not, like Marx, in terms of its overthrow and destruction. . . . On this issue, Marx was unquestionably a Communist, and not a Social Democrat." (Note the phrase, "on this issue.")

So far, so good. We turn to the theory of surplus value and find, up to a certain point, a helpful digest of a difficult topic in technical economics. Cole is particularly good on the relation of value to price in Marx and the contrast between the Marxist approach to this problem and that of the British classical economists upon whose work Marx built his economic theory. But when Cole tries to improve on Marx by reducing the value concept to scarcity in the agents of production and especially when he tries to parade this as "what Marx really meant," the whole structure collapses. For in Marx's analysis, scarcity can no more determine value than a share of common stock can build a house. If human labor

is the foundation of value, as it is with Marx, then scarcity must be relegated, along with the neo-classical economists who prate about it, to the market place where the spoils are divided.

The same sort of personal mauling in the midst of an otherwise fine popular presentation is found in the treatment of the materialist conception of history. This is carefully distinguished from the fatalism which is so often ascribed to it by the enemies of Marxism. "Men make their own history,—within the frame of historically determined conditions." All this is fine. The mutual interaction between the political or ideological superstructure and the economic foundation is well handled. But Cole insists on referring to this, in every paragraph, as the "Realist Conception of History" on the ground that it is realism rather than materialism which confronts idealism in the present period. By this device he wants to shock "some Marxists," *i.e.*, Communists. In this he will be successful, at least to the extent of disgusting them, for the obvious reason that philosophical pretensions to "realism" open the door to all the new-old varieties of pragmatism and eclecticism from the N.R.A. and Dewey back to the Bogdanov group, which Lenin dispatched in 1906, and further. There is trouble enough in keeping clear the meaning of materialism without stepping into the bog of "realism."

The above liberties which Cole takes with Marxism are minor in comparison with his treatment of the economic classes. Here is where Marxism becomes Coleism, if not worse. It seems, according to Cole, that (1) Marx was wrong about the tendency of the middle class to be driven into the ranks of

the proletariat insofar as he wrote before the days of the new petite bourgeoisie created by the dispersion of stock ownership and by the office positions opened up by the development of finance capital, and (2), this new middle class is not only susceptible to Fascism, but through Fascism it may "seize power for itself" (has already seized power in Germany and Italy, he says), and *may* be successful in stabilizing the economic system for a considerable time, *if* it succeeds in taming big capital! In connection with the first point, Cole neglects altogether Lenin's Marxist discussion of newer trends in stock ownership in "Imperialism," and, of course, he neglects the effect of the present crisis in literally proletarianizing large sections of both "new" and "old" middle classes. As for the middle-class rule under Fascism, Cole is actually perpetrating, in a guarded and sophisticated way, the Fascist deceptions which attempt to confuse middle-class victimization with middle-class rule. And Marx's analysis of why, on account of its relation to production, the petty bourgeoisie cannot possibly rule, is nowhere developed.

Cole purports to plead, not for Fascism, but for "Constitutional Socialism" for western Europe and England. Forgetting all about the Marxist theory of the state which he has already expounded, he bewails the Communist "interference" with the progress of constitutional socialism in England. Even in his own terms we see the kinship between his "Socialism" and Fascism. For immediately after reference to the petty bourgeoisie having "seized authority for itself" in Italy and Germany, follows a discussion of the possibility in France and the United States, and then: "Finally Great Britain may succeed in establishing a form of parliamentary Socialism which will leave large elements of Capitalism in operation, and be distinguished from the system dominated by the petty bourgeoisie less in the mechanics than in the nature of the forces which are in control." (My emphasis.)

It appears, then, that there is not so much difference after all between Fascism and Cole's parliamentary socialism. They are only two variants of a "modified" capitalism. Here is further illustration of the essential truth conveyed by the term social-fascism as applied to a program, socialist in words and fascist in direction. Such a program is not "what Marx really meant." He fought its prototypes wherever they appeared in his time. And today no genuine Marxist analysis of class forces could possibly fall into the trap of holding Fascism to be middle-class rule rather than the last stand of big capital.

ADDISON T. CUTLER.

Professional Fascism

AMERICAN FARM POLICY, by Wilson Gee. W. W. Norton and Co. \$1.50.

This volume is but another frantic attempt to put a prop under the rapidly sagging structure of "planned agriculture" under capitalism. In this case the prop is weak as lattice

strips and crumbles as soon as it reaches print.

The publishers boast on the front cover that the book "represents plans for a sound national policy with regard to agriculture." But nowhere in the volume is there a contribution to the present farm problem that has not already become a basis for present A.A.A. policies. Professor Gee's main recommendations are an American A.F. of L. in agriculture and a national planning commission. The former has been proposed by Wallace and Tugwell—or at least wished for many times—and the latter is already a monstrous reality for the purpose of rationalizing the elimination of two million farmers under the long time A.A.A. program.

The book is much wind and no substance—a typically academic approach made up of extensive reading but small understanding, filtered through with hackneyed imprecations against socialized agriculture and the imminent menace of a "red solution."

Its main significance is that it is one of a series of "Social Action Books." The import of this and previous volumes is a pedantic apologetic for American Fascism. They are, in reality, a series of *social fascist books*, weak as yet but heralding the approach of better organized and more competent efforts later.

LEIF DAHL.

Emancipation and Exploitation

WOMEN WHO WORK, by Grace Hutchins. International Publishers. \$2.

Some time ago in an office where I was working several young middle-class business women became very excited: A friend of theirs who held a responsible position on a magazine stayed at her desk until only an hour before her baby was born. The young women, who were feminists, felt that their friend had done a very new and revolutionary thing. She had shown men that a woman could manage a high-salaried position, a home, and have a baby, almost, one might say, on the job. She had not asked for any special privileges before the baby came. She would ask for none later. The child would be put on a formula and cared for by a nurse paid from the combined salaries of the mother and father. The mother would return to her desk in two weeks, and continue her work after what was looked upon as a normal two weeks' vacation.

In the discussion that followed I suggested, in not very moderate terms, that the thing their friend had done was neither new nor revolutionary, since working women have been acting in that manner from bitter necessity for many years. Negro women cotton pickers have had their babies almost between the rows of cotton, sometimes actually there. And they have come back in less than a week's time with the baby laid on a croker sack between the rows, to snatch out a few moments during the long day in order to tend it. Women in factories have worked up to the last minute before their frames, and come back to them long before they should, to help keep the new

baby as well as their other children from starving.

So much has been written from the point of view of the middle-class feminists who are making a sort of artificial heaven for themselves, with Miss Greta Palmer of the *World-Telegram* as the Gabriel who blows their horn, and Mrs. Roosevelt as the official spokesman, it is time a book written for working women and from their point of view should be published.

Grace Hutchins has written that book. In *Women Who Work* she points out with fine skill the difference between the middle-class women, who can pay for extra privileges such as birth control knowledge, and working-class women, who are forced to work like men while receiving less wages, and at the same time give birth to one child after another under the most adverse conditions.

I wish it was possible to give all the rich details of this book, the stories of teachers, nurses, Negro women workers, women in textile mills, on farms, housemaids, scrub-women. The pages take us to all parts of the United States, and we read about wages and living conditions. We hear working-class women speak for themselves. We see them in strikes since the year 1824 when women weavers went out with the men in Pawtucket, Rhode Island. Grace Hutchins shows that women have always been enthusiastic, persistent fighters. It is only when they are left at home and not brought into a strike through action that

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IRON, BLOOD AND PROFITS

An exposure of the World Wide
Munitions Racket

By **GEORGE SELDES**

\$2.50 HARPERS

they become a drag on the men who have left them there.

Evidence is given that women have been drawn increasingly into industry in the last years. There is a chapter on the Soviet Union where women have also entered industry by thousands. But what a difference between the conditions of women there and those who work here! In the Soviet Union they are given equal pay for equal work with men, and while their equality with men is accepted, at the same time intelligent concessions are made to their physical handicaps.

In the Soviet Union, the writer says, women are really becoming emancipated, whereas in this country they are being exploited and used for the benefit of the capitalist owners. It is being planned to use them extensively in the next war. Major-General Hanson E. Ely of the U.S. Army states: "Women will play a greater part in future wars. Governments, including our own, have been studying use of women in war. . . ." The facts given in this chapter on women in war suggests the great impetus women in war industries could add to a strike during an imperialist war.

Their enormous potential and actual energy in fighting along with men and sometimes alone is shown vividly not only in the chapter on strikes, but throughout the whole book. Photographs of strikes and of women leaders supplement the stories and details written down.

The United States has always prided itself on not exploiting its women: we are not like those "foreigners" who force their women into drudgery. I urge everyone to read this book and find out how this country of "emancipated" womanhood rests on the backs of 10,750,000 exploited girls and women.

GRACE LUMPKIN.

Another Liberal Collapses

REDISCOVERING AMERICA, by Harold E. Stearns. Liveright. \$2.

Bourne died, and after the war only Harold Stearns seemed clean among the liberals who had written on politics to produce a "better world." It is true that his first book—*Liberalism in America*, published in 1919—was a plea for faith in the shibboleths of Lippmann's New Republic, but it was an honest and disillusioned plea. He admitted that liberalism had proven itself impotent, and of American liberals he said: "There is a kind of Young Men's Christian Association background to their mind; there is a touch of the chautauqua in them." His single motive for adhering to the liberal parties was an innate fastidious pacifism.

His next book—*America and the Young Intellectual*, published in 1921—indicated that the logic of his political affections had led into a hopelessly barren position. He was sensitive, predisposed to the amenities of a just and civilized life, and inspired by a high moral purpose, but none of these admirable qualities

could lend force to an attempt to animate reformism. And that was precisely his role. He was seeking to give it the militancy and air of realism it so badly needed after the war. No one could believe any longer in the liberalism that had gleefully put on khaki; Stearns came forth to preach a liberalism that seemed at once more idealistic and more sophisticated than the old one.

But even he apparently perceived how weak and incomplete was its metamorphosis from romanticism. It is hardly necessary today to expand the subject of liberalism's failure, but in those days there were few who would have predicted that the buffeted intellectuals could in the end be taken in by a "new capitalism" (1928-29) or by a "new deal" (1933-34). Nevertheless, we may suspect that Stearns anticipated the eventual futility of the pacific evolutionist—and he could adjust himself to no other conception of progress. In 1924 he edited a symposium on *Civilization in the United States*, of which the general conclusion was one of gloom and disgust. He had fled to Paris and silence. In both of his early books there had been hints that he was not unaware of the charm of expatriation.

For some of us he remained a symbol of the last valiant struggle of liberalism—an attractive and irreproachable figure personifying an era now fortunately done with. Then suddenly, last year, he came back from Paris. He announced that after all he is an American. He examined the girls, the sports, the intellectuals, the arts, and the political, racial, and economic situations—and this book is the result. It is appropriately entitled *Rediscovering America*. It has indeed been, for one who has been away so long, a rediscovery.

But of what? Of America? You may search patiently, sympathetically, yet you will not recognize in it the country in which we live. Think of what has happened here during these past ten or twelve years, how much water has gone under the bridge, how profoundly we have changed. No genuine echo of all that is in Stearns' book. There is a chapter called "Harsh Economic Realities," of which the whole point seems to be that our troubles are not economic but moral. There is one on "democracy," in which he remarks that a system of equitable distribution of goods can be attained without necessarily altering the present political structure. There is one on literature, in which he writes that "we have grown up," and one on women, in which he says that the "flapper" has disappeared. *Our America* is not at all in this volume of over 200 pages.

Harold Stearns is in it: a man of imagination and humanity, a personality with charm and wit, a writer with a fine informal style. But, for us, without substance. We are asked, in effect, to acknowledge the reincarnation of a type we had thought vanished—a type whose characteristics, whose mood, had become with the passing of the years altogether dim to us. It is impossible. Can a symbol come to life? Can an idea take on form?

We penetrate the nostalgia that pervades the pages of this book; we feel the poignance of the wide-eyed, pathetically credulous sociability that is actually—loneliness. The past has come back to us. It is perhaps a matter of some interest. The past can never understand the present, but because of this visit the present can understand the past a little better than before. BERNARD SMITH.

The Machine Runs Down

AMONG THE LOST PEOPLE, by Conrad Aiken. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.25.
TENDER IS THE NIGHT, by F. Scott Fitzgerald. Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.25.

The characters in these two books seem like parts of a social mechanism after the switch has been turned off or the gear thrown out. The separate figures continue to move, but more and more feebly and spasmodically. Their eyes cloud; they are perplexed at their loss of strength. In their brains humors and tastes, moods and impressions still flicker, but ideas and purposed action have gone from them. One becomes aware that the only movement in the stories is the movement of running down, of the draining away of energy, of disintegration. This is true not only of the group as a whole but of the particular lives. With a social atmospheric pressure wanting, individuals try from within to hold themselves together as personalities, and they fail. Men and women let each other down without meaning to, without even understanding that betrayal has occurred. Consciousness is merely a solvent.

In *Among the Lost People*, Aiken writes mostly of the functionlessness of the middle classes, drifting intellectuals and small business men on their uppers, all stifled in self-consciousness. Some of the stories are completely circumscribed by the walls of the skull. Mr. Arcularis is represented only by a remarkable dream from which he never wakes. In "Gehenna" Smith, Jones or Robinson thinks for a time that he can destroy reality by staring at the bathroom doorknob. In

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CLARK M. EICHELBERGER
Director, League of Nations Association
Says: IT CAN

CLARENCE A. HATHAWAY
Editor, THE DAILY WORKER
Says: IT CANNOT

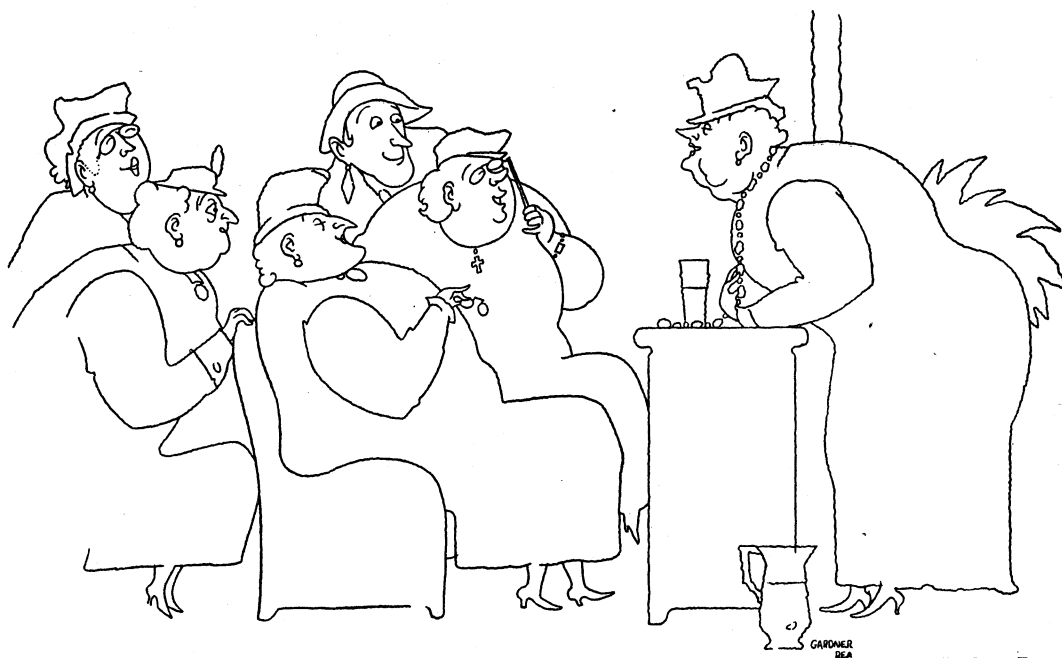
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"Silent Snow, Secret Snow" the brain of a small boy is literally snowed under. Other stories show personal relations wrecked by an impulse or a mood. One man, in a moment of ennui, sends his mistress home on the Owl car the night before Prohibition; a second hits a best friend after his bachelor's dinner; a third steals something in a drug store and gets sent to jail. Regarded merely as Aiken's confessions or as observations in his journal, some of these stories are very good.

Tender is the Night is more pretentious, with rich people, a European background, and the problems of Edith Wharton or Henry James. A young, raw, and glorious movie actress, Rosemary Hoyt, encounters the richer civilization of Dick and Nicole Diver. They are fine and gallant, accomplished in taste and in the non-sequitur wit of the period. (Rosemary goes on a party in which they ride in the car of the Shah of Persia, and build a waiter trap out of piled chairs.) After the story settles on Dick, we learn more of the Diver past. A brilliant young psychiatrist, he had married Nicole out of a clinic for love and to cure her of the schizophrenia which resulted from an incestuous relation with her father. Her great wealth, however, discourages his science, and after Rosemary has disturbed his whole-hearted devotion to Nicole, Dick begins to go to pieces. Nicole has become stronger than he. He indicates his progressive degeneration by inconvenient drinking, by squabbles with servants, and by jokes in bad taste. When he attempts to lift someone on his shoulders on a surf board and fails, Nicole very properly turns from him in disgust to Tommy Barban, a soldier of fortune, an imperialist killer and white guardist. But Nicole is not very happy about it. And Dick disappears as a family doctor in upper New York State.

With the psychological struggles in *Tender is the Night* go occasional spurts of action induced by drink or mood, and by some feeling of insufficiency in the characters or the author. There are fights with the police, the obscure murder of a Negro, a ridiculous duel. There are also social observations. The party tours the battle fields with appropriate reflections, and later sees a group of Gold Star mothers. In their happy faces Dick "perceived all the maturity of an older America." We learn that in 1908 at New Haven girls kissed with their palms pressed against the man's chest. In 1925 in Chicago they kissed so fiercely that blood blotched their lips. But there is at least one passage of broader significance. Fitzgerald is writing of Nicole, who spends money freely but knows how to possess: "... as the whole system swayed and thundered onward it lent a feverish bloom to such processes of hers as wholesale buying, like the flush of a fireman's face holding his post before a spreading blaze. She illustrated very simple principles, containing in herself her own doom, but illustrated them so accurately that there was grace in the procedure, and presently Rosemary would try to imitate it."



"And we must always remember, ladies, that if it weren't for chain gangs we would never have had *Water Boy*."

Gardner Rea

This last sentence could apply not only to the dim directives of these lives, but also, if it were of its kind a better book, to *Tender is the Night*. But a writer with Fitzgerald's point of view can get an effect of hardness and certainty only by great efforts at restricting and rejecting and denying. Fitzgerald has not done this. Instead he has written a soft and uncertain novel about the attempt of irrelevant people to preserve something they never had possessed. OBED BROOKS.

A Scotch Tragedy

CLOUD HOWE, by Lewis Grassie Gibbon.
Doubleday, Doran & Co. \$2.50.

If you want a few hours' entertainment, have a fair knowledge of Scotch dialect and an appreciation of gusty Scotch humor, then *Cloud Howe* is the book for you. If, as a reader of THE NEW MASSES, your object is an understanding of and insight into Scotch life in recent years, your time will be better spent reading Alan Hutt's *Conditions of the Working Class in Great Britain*. It is factual and statistical, but it at least reveals the mainsprings of life in Scotland since the war; *Cloud Howe* resolves itself into a diverting series of sketches which shed little light on those changes in Scotch psychology which have made the Scotch working-class one of the most militant in our time.

But *Cloud Howe* is meant to be more than that. It is supposedly a serious portrayal of a couple "who tried to find some true values in this turbulent modern world." In that aim it fails, for such an aim requires explanation, interpretation, and development, not only of characters and of values, but also of the events which mold and change them. *Cloud Howe* does not meet those requirements—we do not know what values Robert

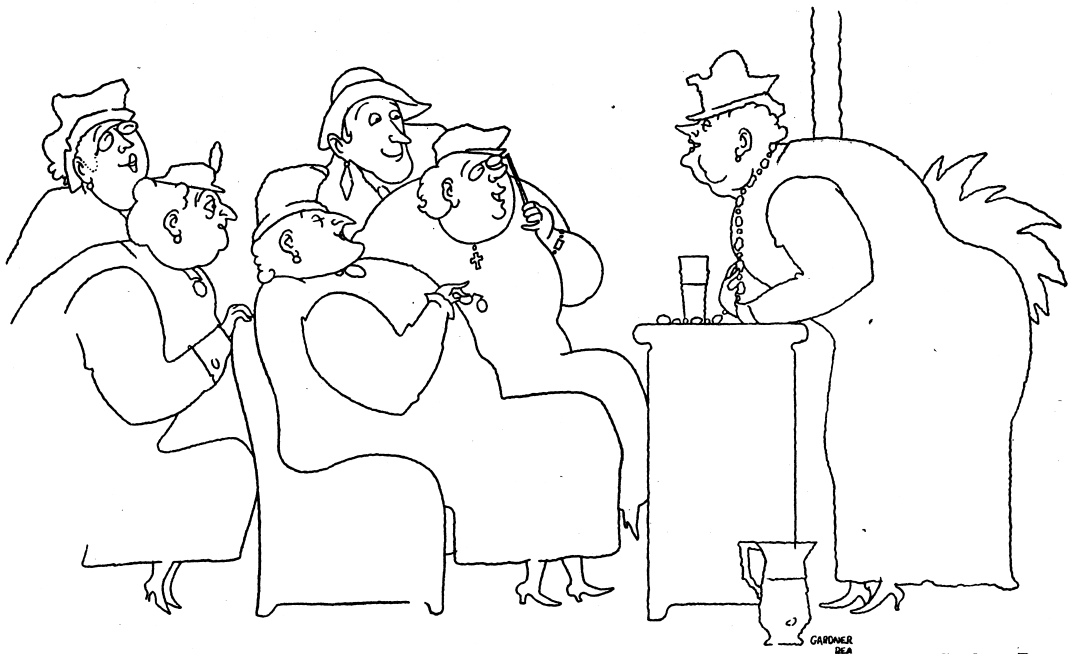
and Chris, the major characters, have held, why these have been unsatisfactory, and what values they seek; the character development is poor—in Chris' case it is merely unconvincing, but in Robert's case it is positively grotesque. Gibbon's failure in this respect is emphasized by his excellence in those portions not requiring development—the sketches portraying the local characters in Seggit, and the greed, pettiness, and emptiness of the lives of the lower middle-class as reflected by them; and the occasional snatches of political satire, among the best of that type of writing I have read.

Gibbon's poor handling of his characters may be explained by the feeling of futility which he uses them to demonstrate: Robert, because he pins his faith in illusions—political action and religion; Chris, because she sees man's life as transitory and unimportant—the only things which matter are the stars, and the sea, and "the everlasting hills." Through her Gibbon sees "the end forever of creeds and of faiths, hopes and beliefs men followed and loved: religion and God, socialism, nationalism—clouds that sailed darkling into the night," and people turning from them to "sloth or toil or the lees of lust."

This is an evasion of the problem which seems to be particularly typical of British writers today. People cannot take to "the everlasting hills" just because they've been betrayed by a MacDonald and their bid for power stabbed in the back by labor politicians. They must learn from their defeats, and from them forge new weapons and tactics with which to win freedom. When Gibbon learns this he will be on his way to a really important Scotch writer. I suspect, however, that it remains for some sturdy son of the Scotch proletariat to write the epic of Scotland's tragedy since the end of the First World War.

JAMES STEELE.

NEW MASSES



"And we must always remember, ladies, that if it weren't for chain gangs we would never have had *Water Boy*."

Gardner Rea

Negro Revolutionary Music

RICHARD FRANK

ONE of the greatest forward strides in the development of the American revolutionary movement has been the policy of the Communist Party upon the Negro question.

In order to realize thoroughly the importance of this, we must recall the history of Marxism in America. Marxism was first brought to America by foreign immigrants. Consequently it was for a long time expressed largely through foreign cultural media. This constituted a great handicap in winning over the basic sections of the American workers. Before the latter could be aroused, it was necessary that they be spoken to through native cultural media. Today, however, the Communist movement is beginning to be expressed in typically American forms.

In the south, the ideology of the international working-class movement is beginning to be expressed in native Negro music. The importance of this cannot be overemphasized. The emergence of the music means that Marxism-Leninism is being expressed in native cultural media, for if the Negroes of America do not form a basic section of the native toiling masses of America, there are no such sections.

Furthermore, Negro culture has this peculiarity. While it is the expression of an oppressed people, it still possesses such virility that it has an irresistible attraction even for ruling-class whites, who even while they brutally oppress the Negro people are fascinated by Negro music and Negro dancing. How much greater then is the influence of this music upon the white workers whose condition in society is similar to that of the Negro workers! Many of the songs sung by white workers are Negro. When the American revolutionary movement finds expression in Negro music, therefore, it is expressing itself in a medium capable of arousing not only the twelve or fifteen million Negroes of America, but also all the toiling masses of America who for generations in one form or another have made Negro music their own.

From Africa, the Negroes brought with them a powerful sense of rhythm. All through the days of slavery, they expressed their suffering, their despair, their hopes, their dreams of a false deliverance through religion, in their spirituals and work-songs, thus creating the most sublime folk-music, with the possible exception of the Russian, of any people on earth.

The Negroes still possess this music as a heritage. Whenever they meet they express themselves spontaneously in song. However, a new stage in the creation of Negro music has commenced. This is the creation of Negro revolutionary folk-music. Whenever the Negro has become revolutionary, he has expressed his new revolutionary spirit musically.

He has done so in two ways: first, by the singing of new revolutionary words to the music of the old spirituals and work-songs; second, by the creation of entirely new revolutionary songs.

Down in Charlotte, N. C., one of the women comrades has changed the old spiritual, *In Dat Great Gittin'-up Mornin'*, to the new words, *In Dat Great Revolutionary Mornin'*. The Negro share-croppers of Alabama have been singing the old song, *We Shall Not Be Moved*, to express their determination to resist evictions. When I mentioned this song to members of the Unemployed Council of Richmond, Va., spontaneously they began producing verses of their own to express their determination not to be evicted. One comrade sang:

In spite of capitalist terror,
We shall not be moved;
In spite of capitalist terror,
We shall not be moved.
Just like a tree that planted
by the water
We shall not be moved.

A white comrade added the stirring words:

Raise the Red Flag higher,
It shall not be moved;
Raise the Red Flag higher,
It shall not be moved.

And this they continued for stanza after stanza. We were actually witnessing and participating in the birth of revolutionary folk-music.

One of these new songs appeared in the *Daily Worker* some time ago. The words which are sung to the tune, *My Mother Hewed a Stone Out of the Mountain*, run "There is a stone hewed out of history, etc.;

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Come a-rollin' through Dixie, etc.; To smash up the rule of the bosses." I mentioned this, and immediately another comrade changed the words to "There is a stone hewed out of misery, etc."

In Norfolk, Va., they sing something like the following:

Oh, Hoover on the right,
And Roosevelt on the left,
Oh, Hoover on the right,
And Roosevelt on the left, etc. . . .
But you ain't gonna rule no more.

Recently I was at a party in the home of a Negro comrade in Jackson Ward, Richmond, Va. The workers were singing spirituals for amusement, and their singing was magnificent. Most of the songs were sung with the old religious words. But occasionally some comrade would inject lines of real class significance. A group of young men stood in a circle. One would tell the others to be silent, and would then sing to them a song containing words which had just come into his mind. The others

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would listen attentively, swaying rhythmically and joining him in singing the refrain, until they too had learned the words. Then they all sang together until another comrade would make them pause to learn his new words. Here was folk-music in the making.

There was one young man in particular, Comrade Cash, who had created a song of his own entitled, *The Song of the Unemployed Council*. Comrade Cash was a real folk-poet, a folk-musician, a troubadour of the people. More and more the revolutionary movement will produce such characters, just as it produced the white ballad-maker of Gastonia, Ella May Wiggins.

Throughout the entire evening, I had been hearing snatches of conversation from every corner of the house, and everywhere there was talk only of revolution — angry, militant words, uttered to the shaking of clinched fists, words of hatred and bitterness at numberless wrongs, while there came from another room deep and continuous singing. Here some worker was describing how a boss had mistreated him. His talk went on endlessly, a narration of one wrong after another. After the narration of each wrong, he paused. "Is that right?" he asked. And then proceeded to narrate another. A Negro woman was describing how the militancy of comrades prevented the removal of furniture from her house. From another corner, the words came, "When God made man, he made *one* man—not two, but one." At the same time, the warmest love glowed in the faces of these proletarians—hatred for their oppressors, but love for their class. Some of them embraced us, two white comrades, with tears in their eyes, because we symbolized to many of them for the first time the unity of the races in the world-wide struggle of the workers.

As I listened, I thought of white bourgeois dancers at their party in John Marshall Hotel some blocks away. If they could know of this other party of Negro workers going on in their city at the same time, would not they shiver with horror?

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I thought of those who academically debated the possibility of revolution in America—and I laughed. What did they know of it? Here was the revolution. Here it lived. Here was the great Red heart of the American Revolution itself. It throbbed in the voices of those singing workers. One who could hear this could never doubt that the American Revolution lives. For here was its great, strong, young voice—the voice of the masses. In my mind's eye, I could see these same workers, thousands and millions strong, marching in that army of the future—the Red Army of America—marching to the singing of these same revolutionary Negro folk-songs.

Among the Negroes, it will be to a great extent through singing that recruiting will be done, for masses of Negro workers are held at illiteracy. Leaflets cannot appeal to them. But singing is their great form of artistic expression. In order to win the Negro people most effectively, the revolutionary movement will have to make use of this instrument.

I recalled that night the academic discussions I had heard concerning the origin of folk-music. These debates were in cloisters far from contact with the folk themselves. But here I had actually witnessed the birth of folk-music in the kitchen of a Negro worker.

Many musicians or students of folk-lore would have given years of their lives to experience what I as a Bolshevik had experienced in the kitchen of a revolutionary Negro. But here is the significant thing. The folk-music being created today is revolutionary folk-music. (Thereby we may feel the pulse of the people.) Outside of the revolutionary movement there is today nothing culturally vital. Hence, from now on artists and students of folk-lore, for the sake merely of their art of science, if for nothing else, if they would attain vitality, must enter the revolutionary movement. Only there can one be in touch with the people, with the society of the future. And no art which lacks contact with the people is ever great.

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Between Ourselves

LANGSTON HUGHES, whose short story in this number will appear in his forthcoming book *The Ways of White Folk*, is in California working on a study of Soviet Asia. He is the chairman of the League of Struggle for Negro Rights.

Richard Frank is the pseudonym of a young native white Southerner who teaches in a Dixie high school. He writes that he has never been out of the South for more than a week. Reading Marx while at college brought him to the Communist position. "I have been working," he says, "undercover for the party ever since I arrived at the necessity of becoming a Bolshevik." He is continuing his study of Southern folk-lore.

Anne Allen Barten, a former Philadelphia newspaperwoman, is at present studying labor conditions under the N.R.A.

Stanley Burnshaw, one of our editors, now on a speaking tour, lectures in Indianapolis the evening of May 13 on "Recent Trends in American Literature" under the auspices of the John Reed Club in their headquarters at 318 Columbia Securities Building, 143 East Ohio Street. He will speak in Cincinnati May 16, under the auspices of the Pen and Hammer, on the second floor of the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks Building, northwest corner Court and Vine Streets. On May 17, at 8 p. m. he is to lecture at the Tyler Hotel in Louisville, Ky., and on the 20th in Flint, Michigan.

The morning mail informs us that the Australian customs authorities, in the name of "His Majesty," have "seized and forfeited" a bundle of THE NEW MASSES mailed to a bookdealer in Sydney, Australia. The King of England informs us through his agents that "such publication is a prohibited import in terms of Section 52 (g) of the Act mentioned pursuant to Customs proclamation No. 221 of 28-7-32." That lines Australia up with Canada, Cuba, and our own Philippines. THE NEW MASSES is no welcome guest in these allegedly democratic countries. No need to mention what Hitler thinks of us, on this first anniversary of his world-famous book burning ceremony.

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