I WORK FOR HEARST—By a Hearst Sub-Editor

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# New Masses

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# We

have received a warm response from many readers to our previous requests in this matter, but we must make it again, for we have reached our limit. From political prisoners, from unpaid workers in the labor movement who cannot afford the price, from workers' schools all over the country, which find it a hard enough struggle to pay the rent, calls come to NEW MASSES for gift subscriptions.

We have made these gifts but we cannot afford to add to a list that already burdens our resources. Yet, it is there that NEW MASSES is vitally needed. For many political prisoners, NEW MASSES is the only way by which they can maintain contact with the revolutionary movement. For the worker in the labor movement, NEW MASSES has proved to be a valuable tool for recruiting and organizing. In the workers' schools, NEW MASSES has often proved the most popular and appealing literature for workers making their first approach to the militant labor movement.

We appeal to our readers to help bring NEW MASSES to these people who want it, and need it, but cannot afford it. As our contribution to victims of anti-labor laws and terror, we offer a special Gift-to-the-Labor-Movement subscription, at $3 per year. The subscription will be sent in your name, or anonymously if you prefer. You may designate the person to whom THE NEW MASSES is to be sent, or we will send it to someone on our list. Minutes count today, don't delay!

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**NEW MASSES**

**31 East 27th Street, New York, N. Y.**

New Masses

JULY 21, 1936

## *Steel and the Middle Class*

THE fight to unionize the steel industry will be waged on a wide battlefield, a field with room for many more than the steel monopolists and their workers. The broad middle class of the United States has a real stake in this conflict—so grave a stake, in fact, that it cannot afford to hold itself above the battle.

The C.I.O. has a claim on the full support of the middle class. For this social group to remain indifferent or unsympathetic to the steel drive would be to play into the hands of the most powerful reactionary force in America. This is precisely the course mapped out for the middle class by the steel owners. The full-page advertisements which have appeared in 375 major newspapers, explaining the preference of steel workers for company unions, were not addressed primarily to workers. What would be the point of telling their own employes that they, the workers, were opposed to the Lewis drive? The advertisements and the press handouts were addressed to the middle-class reading public of the country. They were part of the time-worn strategy of monopoly capitalism for diverting the dissatisfaction of middle-class functional groups from their real enemy and turning it against the proletariat.

A higher standard of living for the entire population is vital to the economic welfare of the middle class. It stands to reason that the demand for the services of middle-class professionals and for the merchandise of small shopkeepers is in direct proportion to the ability of the mass of workers to pay for them. A victorious trade-union movement is the surest guarantee of a rising standard of living. A victory for the steel monopolists, with the terrific setback which that would mean to unionism elsewhere, would point the way to industrial serfdom and a debased standard of living throughout the nation.

The depression has seen millions of white-collar workers relegated to the breadlines, or caught between falling wages and rising prices. Increasingly, these workers are turning to trade unionism, to consumers' groups, in order to protect their own immediate interests. In scores of cases they have suddenly been brought face to face with the same black reaction which had hitherto been reserved for manual workers. Their realization has been sharpened that with the proletariat they have a common enemy, and that only in cooperation can either middle class or proletariat attain self-protection.

A victory for the C.I.O. would be a decisive blow for democracy struck at the very fountainhead of reaction in America. In the gigantic steel industry evidence accumulates daily of the stranglehold that steel has on the lives of its workers, through spying, terrorism, and open violence. To allow this to continue is to invite finance capital throughout the country to make a mockery of the civil rights of American workers. To smash this power is to advance immeasurably in the fight to secure democratic rights not only for the steel slaves, but for all.


"What's that, a drought? Raise prices on everything!" *Ernest W. Hainsley.*

## *The Squabble over Austria*

HOWEVER fickle the Nazis may seem, their fever for conquest remains constant. Their present variation in policy toward Austria is a case in point. By placing the brakes on German plans for a violent *Anschluss* with Austria, Hitler hopes to insure a more favorable attitude from Schuschnigg's guardian, Mussolini, toward Nazi expansion in the middle Danube region and the Balkans. Hitler's move was also calculated to prevent Italy from entering an accord with other European powers for the maintenance of peace in Central Europe and the Balkans. The Nazis, furthermore, hoped to persuade Mussolini to stay away from the coming Locarno Conference and to avoid cooperation between Italy, France, and the Soviet Union.

While the Austro-German pact stipulates Nazi non-interference in Austrian

politics and respect for the independent status of that country, in practice it will lead to increased economic and political domination by the Nazis, to a gradual but no less certain realization of the *Anschluss*.

The warlike essence of the agreement consists principally, however, in the fact that it favors the crystallization of a definite alignment of the aggressive powers whose anti-Soviet direction is unmistakable.

### *The Strike Front*

WHILE steel continues to occupy the spotlight in the country's labor news, workers' gains are reported on several other fronts. Despite the deceptive announcement that the strike had come to an end, 6000 workers resumed mass picketing in a vigorous determination to resist the vicious anti-labor policies of Remington-Rand. Wheeling, W. Va., saw the conclusion of a 52-day strike of 5,500 steel workers, to whom the Wheeling Steel Corporation has finally extended full union recognition. The company has also agreed to enter into negotiations with the union on wages, hours, and working conditions.

A tentative agreement was reached in Camden between the United Electrical and Radio Workers and the R.C.A. The plan, which has yet to be approved by the company, involves recognition of the union as the sole agent for collective bargaining if a majority of the plant's workers choose it as such in an election to be conducted by the National Labor Relations Board.

At the same time a strike of vast proportions, involving 100,000 workers, looms in the textile industry. The National Association of Wool Manufacturers, through its president, Arthur Besse, has declined to deal with the union on the ground that his association "has no authority whatsoever to speak for its members in regard to their relations with their employes." Nevertheless, Mr. Besse was glad to take advantage of the opportunity to point out that "By no stretch of the imagination is the industry generally in a position to make wage increases," and to scotch the idea of the industry's granting a thirty-five-hour week. "If a strike comes," replied Thomas F. McMahon, president of the United Textile Workers, "it will be because chiseling employers refuse to stop their exploitations, discrimination, and stretch-outs."

These are only the high spots of the week's onward march, but they are enough to reveal a new Gulliver growing steadily more conscious of his strength.

### *The Dardanelles Conference*

DESPITE the diplomatic cordiality which has marked its sessions, the Dardanelles Conference is witnessing another match between the peace wreckers and those nations which would guarantee peace by collective security. Europe's chief marauders, Nazi Germany and fascist Italy, are not present at the conference; but they have had an advocate in the person of Lord Stanhope, representing Great Britain's National government.

The Turkish straits, gateway to the Black Sea, have been governed since 1923 under the covenant accepted at the Lausanne Conference. This prohibits Turkey from fortifying the Dardanelles. Since Lausanne, however, Germany and Italy have emerged as acute threats to the independence of Turkey and the tranquillity of the Black Sea region as a whole. The present meeting of signatories to the Lausanne pact was called to consider Turkey's request for the right to militarize the straits and to take other defensive measures.

Lord Stanhope, supported significantly by the Japanese, took issue with the Turkish proposal for restricting passage through the straits for warships of non-Black Sea countries. In support of the Turkish draft, Maxim Litvinoff noted that the condition of the Black Sea as a closed sea, with no outlet to the east, removed all justification for the presence of non-Black Sea war vessels, unless these were bound on courtesy visits or sent as part of an international force.

At this point the British and Japanese resorted to a crude stratagem patently favoring the anti-Soviet designs of Germany. Ignoring the fact that the Soviet Union has ports on both the Baltic and the Black Sea, they demanded that the straits be closed to Soviet vessels as well. Thus, the Soviet Union could be prevented from reinforcing its Baltic fleet for a defense against the Nazi naval forces now being built with Britain's consent. It is obvious that if British foreign policy continues to be formulated in a spirit of hostility to the Soviet Union and of solicitude for the warlike plans of the aggressive nations, the possibility of a world war will be considerably aggravated.

### *Security—for Whom?*

THE Chase National Bank is deeply concerned about the "hazards of unemployment and of poverty in old age." So much so that Winthrop W. Aldrich, chairman of its board of directors, went down to Charlottesville, Va., last week to tell the Institute of Public Affairs what is wrong with the Social Security Act.

There is, of course, a great deal that is wrong with the Social Security Act. The tax to support the program places the burden squarely on the shoulders of the workers, who not only will pay a 3 percent tax on their wages, but will ultimately bear the 6 percent payroll tax levied on their employers in the form of higher prices and retarded wage increases. The benefits, moreover, are niggardly in the extreme, and scores of loopholes in the section on unemployment insurance permit rank discrimination in the distribution of benefits.

But these are not the things that worry Mr. Aldrich. He is afraid the whole thing is a bit too generous, and suggests ways of tightening it up. For example:

> Is it not wiser to assume that most workmen safeguard themselves against normal periods of seasonal unemployment and short periods of idleness and let the insurance plan be invoked only against prolonged unemployment? This result can be accomplished by appreciably lengthening the waiting period before unemployment benefits begin. Most of the state laws fix a waiting period of three weeks, but forty-nine weeks a year of employment is very satisfactory employment, and little hardship would be worked by lengthening the waiting period.

Afraid, too, that the payroll tax might not be passed along to the consumer quickly enough, Mr. Aldrich pleads for a more direct method—a "widely distributed tax on all classes of the population" on incomes of over $500 a year, the percentage to be equal for all.

### *Prince versus Paramour*

ONE of the funniest political yarns we have read in a long time appears in Claude Cockburn's brilliant London mimeographed paper, The Week. It concerns Prinz zu Wied, the new German ambassador to Great Britain. The choice of Prinz zu Wied, it turns out, is the product of a vigorous intrigue on the part of Herr von Ribbentrop.

Even his best friends (The Week

relates) would not assert of the prince that his intelligence is up to the standard of even the German nobility. They have said so pretty freely. But that is just why Ribbentrop wants him as ambassador to London. Ribbentrop's idea is simple. He knows that the prince is incapable of carrying out any serious job unaided. This will give Ribbentrop frequent opportunities for hopping over to London where he can pursue his curious social career in the West End.

At this point, the diplomatic plot thickens. General Goering, it turns out, is jealous of Ribbentrop's supposed social success in London. The general is especially envious of Ribbentrop's friendship with Lord Londonderry and other titled persons of that kidney. He has therefore been planning to come to London on a mission. He actually tried to attend the funeral of the late King George. The British Foreign Office thereupon consulted certain political experts as to whether the British public would stand for such an intrusion or not. The experts unanimously agreed that there were certain degrees of insult which even the British public would not stand. General Goering was one of them. He was warned not to come.

Recently, however, General Goering has renewed his maneuvers to get to London. In Berlin it is said that he hopes, like the former kaiser, to be given an honorary rank in a British guards regiment. This would enable him to add a bearskin to his already fantastic collection of uniforms.

Meantime, the addle-pated Prinz zu Wied officially represents the Nazi regime in London. His only serious competitor for the job was the German minister to Cairo, but this poor diplomat lost out because of an unpardonable Nazi crime. He is having an affair with a lady who is doubly non-Aryan. She is an Egyptian Jewess.

## *The E.R.B. Staff*

NOW that Mayor LaGuardia, in his summer sylvan haunt in Pelham Bay Park, has had the political foresight to come out in favor of transfer of the Emergency Relief Bureau staff to civil-service status by direct qualifying examinations—which means virtually automatic transfer—the E.R.B. employes can with renewed hope and energy gird their loins for the battles still to come. For victory is not yet in the bag.

So far, the campaign waged by the American Federation of Government Employes (the union of the E.R.B. staff) for automatic transfer to civil-service status has been a model, combining as it has a clever legal fight with a most effective mass-pressure campaign through the use of radio, public meetings, petitions, support of trade unions, church groups, etc. The union drafted and finally pressed through to enactment in the state legislature the Hendel Law, which permits municipalities to transfer their administrative "emergency" relief staff to permanent civil-service status by any type of examination the local Civil Service Commission may decide upon.

The New York City Commission, through its president, James E. Finegan, has taken the position that the examination must be competitive—open to all, whether experienced or not. Finegan has attempted to justify this stand by a pretended sympathy for the previously existing eligible list. Another specious argument heard elsewhere is the one that to permit non-competitive qualifying exams would "freeze" 11,000 Fusion supporters in permanent city jobs. This is obvious rubbish, since over 90 percent of the staff antedate the Fusion administration. And the argument that competitive examinations would permit the selection of those most highly qualified for the work is also tripe. Any E.R.B. staff employe who has thus far survived the mass spying, terrorizing, and political sniping that have characterized the relief administration's personnel policy before and during Fusion must be well qualified indeed — to say nothing of having had four years of experience under a case load that meant speedup for investigators and clerical staff alike.

What, then, are the forces opposed to automatic transfer? The union has maintained a charitable reserve on this point, but to anyone in close touch with the New York relief setup two answers are obvious: first, Mr. Finegan's job is one which gives him the opportunity by trick competitive examinations to create vacancies which his political pals would like; second, Welfare Commissioner Hodson, who pulls a strong oar behind the scenes, both in the city and in the state relief administrations, has abundantly proved his intransigent anti-union attitude. Competitive examinations would afford a beautiful opportunity for weeding out the union stalwarts whose militant policies in the past have not only gone far to maintain wage-scales and prevent slashing of the staff, but have placed the E.R.B. workers shoulder to shoulder with the unemployed for the maintenance and in-

New Masses

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crease of the city relief appropriations.

This week the union's fight will reach a critical stage. The retention of a seasoned staff in the relief bureaus and the protection of a union which has had the vision to see that the interests of its members are the interests of a million other New Yorkers is a compelling necessity for the community.

### *Prison Censorship*

SAN QUENTIN is notorious throughout the world as the prison where California's millionaires lock up political dissidents. Its walls have caged Tom Mooney, J. B. McNamara, and others who have wanted their fellow-workers to have a better life. But California's rulers think that physical imprisonment is not enough for such "criminals." Minds as well as bodies are to be walled in. The San Quentin authorities decide what prisoners may and may not read.

This week, for example, we were notified that political prisoners may not receive copies of THE NEW MASSES. The decision specifically affects four prisoners: Martin Wilson (Box 57591); Reuel Stanfiell (Box 58034); Pat Chambers (Box 57589) and Albert Hougardy (Box 57590). These men received NEW MASSES subscriptions from our readers who are participating in our Gift-to-the-Labor-Movement campaign.

There is no excuse for the attitude of the San Quentin authorities in forbidding prisoners to read publications of their own choice. But they will continue to take this attitude unless there is a strong protest against it. We urge our readers to write to San Quentin requesting that THE NEW MASSES be delivered to the four prisoners for whom subscriptions have been provided.

### *"Sad Misunderstanding"*

RECENTLY Germany celebrated the 550th anniversary of the founding of Heidelberg University. Ernest Krieck, Nazi professor of philosophy—if that is not a contradiction in terms—set the tone for the gathering. Said Herr Krieck: "We do not know or recognize truth for truth's sake." This is not a new Nazi concept, of course, but Krieck's statement of it was succinct. Nevertheless, he might have condensed it just a bit further by saying simply: "We do not know or recognize truth." To which the rest of the world might reply: "We do not know or recognize Heidelberg."

It took 547 years of patient and laborious effort to build for Heidelberg its reputation as one of the foremost centers of world culture. The university suffered the savage plundering of bloody feudal nobles; it endured the iron hand of the church. These it survived, and by the middle of the nineteenth century the fame of its professors, laboratories, and collections, and its remarkable library of 600,000 volumes, annually drew eager students from all parts of the earth. In three short years Hitler has converted the whole thing into a glorified barracks run by the more academically minded Nazi hacks.

Today the magnificent Heidelberg library stands stripped of the greatest masterpieces of modern literature. The immortal works of Marx and Engels, Heine's lyrics, the novels of Gorky and Rolland—these and many other monumental achievements the new Heidelberg librarians have filed away in bonfires. The university that gave the world such titans of science as Helmholtz, Bunsen, and Kirchhoff now instructs booted and brown-shirted sadists in the divinity of the "Aryan" race and warns them of the perfidy of "Jewish science," such as Einstein's theory of relativity.

The greatest universities of the world spurned the invitations of the Heidelberg clowns. Their indignant refusal to take part in an orgy of academic perversion is described by the German press as a "sad misunderstanding which developed in negotiations with other universities." What the Berliner Tageblatt chooses to view as a "sad misunderstanding" looks to more normal persons like a good swift kick.

# The Elephantine Touch

JIM FARLEY may be no great intellectual, but his sense of smell is keen. Many months ago genial Jim announced the approach of a "dirty campaign." Since then much has been made of the dignity of Alf M. Landon, of the clarity with which he would come to grips with the problems of America. The Republicans would leave mudslinging, slander, and the employment of red herrings to the rowdy Postmaster General. But as the campaign moves along, evidence piles up that the Farley nose, accustomed to its owner's technique, did not deceive him.

Hundreds of red-white-and-blue leaflets are streaming out of G.O.P. headquarters. Few of them are intelligent, fewer are honest, and many are shot through with slanderous innuendo. One of them—called "Churches Next?"—warns that "among those who have his [Roosevelt's] ear are some who so admire Russia that they would not hesitate at the destruction of our churches provided that would give them more money to spend."

> Therefore [warns the author] we must drive the Roosevelt party out of power if we are to retain our freedom of religion and our liberty. The churches have had a difficult time carrying on their work during this depression. Without them this country would be like Russia is today.

This introduction of the religious note is reinforced by the circulation of a reprint of a letter addressed to the President by Rev. Henry E. Lennon, a Milford (N. H.) minister. The Reverend Lennon's remarks were addressed to Roosevelt in reply to the President's request for clerical criticism of his administration. It concludes:

> My dear Mr. Roosevelt, may I make bold to say that the frequent divorces and immediate marriages in the White House and the lawless conduct of your sons at Harvard have shocked the moral sense of the nation.
>
> Your Excellency, I am making these last remarks as a Christian Minister, believing that those in high place and leaders in Israel are religiously bound to give good example to their fellow-men. Furthermore, I consider your wife's and eldest son's political activities, interference, and assumption of the duties of the presidency offensive to the ideas of those who look to the White House for presidential, rather than family-dynasty, leadership.

This sort of thing may be mild in comparison with the scurrilous pamphleteering carried on against the "Jew Deal" by fanatic, openly fascist sects, but it must be remembered that the

Lennon letter is sent out by the national committee of a major party. And each reprint bears the notation: "Why has Mr. Roosevelt remained silent about this and other replies received from clergymen in response to his letter asking their advice? Have you seen them? No! And you won't!"

For the most part, the bogy of Republican literature is Communism. The purpose here is twofold: first, to scare conservative Democrats and even wavering liberals into the Landon camp, and second, to discredit Communism by tying it up with the obvious failures of the New Deal. Occasionally the Roosevelt Administration is indicted for fascism, but only when the accusation is linked up with the menace of Moscow. Thus "Mark Granite," a figment of the creative Republican mind, tells his colleagues of the Bucks County Stove Circle (probably those ol' farmhands Hearst, Morgan, du Pont, and Smith) that

> The second great issue [of the campaign] is the carefully concealed but fixed determination of Franklin Roosevelt to turn this country into a fascist-communist state with a regimented people, government-controlled farming, commerce and industry — a New-Deal-Soviet-American Republic with six Commissioners: Tugwell, Wallace and Ickes, Roosevelt, Hopkins and Farley.

In a similar leaflet, Lee Meriwether, "an American first and a Democrat second," is quoted at great length on the Communist threat. "What is the difference," he asks rhetorically, "between a Russian peasant who is controlled by a Commissar of Agriculture in Moscow, and an American farmer who is controlled by a Secretary of Agriculture in Washington? Neither is a free man." Mr. Meriwether explains to the more simple-minded Republicans the theory of Communism, and it must be said that he does a marvelous piece of condensation:

> The Russian Communist theory is that every citizen belongs to the state, and that his activities must be directed by a small, select group which somehow has managed to seize the seats of authority. . . . Secretary Wallace [to get back to the campaign] tried to do exactly the same thing here in the United States, and President Roosevelt backed him in his efforts.

So far Mr. Meriwether is more silly than sinister, but the wind shifts ominously when he explains:

> Men who toil and save and accumulate property do not voluntarily allow their savings to be turned over to the state without compensation. That policy was not consummated in Russia until rivers of blood had been shed, until owners of shops and factories had been killed or exiled to Siberia.

Here is the authentic note of fascist violence, sounded through the courtesy of the Republican National Committee.

Never does the Republican campaign literature show the least sign of coming to grips with the immediate issues of the day. This would not be serious if it were not for the fact that as its mental poverty becomes more apparent, its viciousness must increase. With less and less to say, it must more and more cloak its barrenness with those same fascist wrappings that have already done service for Mussolini and for Hitler.

Every attempt will be made to brand as Communist the simplest principles of democracy, while both major parties, already given a good head start, may be expected to obscure the real issues with slander and abuse. THE NEW MASSES will treat this matter more fully as the campaign develops. In the meantime it is significant that while the Communist Party adopts the constructive and joyous slogan "Forward to a free, peaceful, prosperous and happy America!" the Republican high command can only croak: "Is it time to change the lines of 'America' to 'My country 'tis of thee; Foul land of tyranny'?"

# The A. F. of L. Council Meets

THE conservative executive council of the American Federation of Labor has been considering all this past week how best to combat the Committee for Industrial Organization, leader of the great steel drive. The council is loaded down with champions of exclusive craft unionism, reactionary leaders who have allowed racketeering to flourish in certain sections of the trade-union movement and who have failed to organize the workers in the great basic industries. As a result of their policies, as John L. Lewis pointed out at the Atlantic City convention of the A.F. of L., only three million of the thirty-five million organizable workers of the United States have been brought into the ranks of the unions.

There has been much talk, within the executive council, of suspending the twelve industrial unions affiliated with the C.I.O. Such action may have been taken by the time we go to press, despite the fact that it would violate the A.F. of L. constitution, which requires a two-thirds vote of the national convention for such a step.

It is important to note the motivating force of the move for suspension.

The chief proponent is William L. Hutcheson, reactionary president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. Head of the Hoover Labor Committee in the 1932 campaign, Hutcheson is a supporter today of the anti-labor Hearst-Landon ticket and an avowed defender of the reactionary decision of the United States Supreme Court. With him is allied John P. Frey of the Metal Trades Department of the A.F. of L. and "National Civic Federation" Woll, both distinguished Red-baiters.

A storm of protests from city central bodies and local unions from all over the country has caused some wavering within the council. A minority of five has developed—not enamored of industrial unionism, but concerned at the rising indignation within the labor movement against the splitting policies of the diehards. From every state in the Union these protests have poured into Washington, with such outstanding central bodies as those of Chicago, Philadelphia, Passaic, N. J., Tampa, Fla., and Columbus, O., demanding that there be no suspension of the C.I.O. unions. Even Green's hometown central body—out in Coshocton, O.—has unanimously backed the C.I.O.

Contrary to the shrill blasts of Mr. Frey, a split in the A.F. of L. is the last thing desired by any true progressive. A powerful, united American Federation of Labor is sorely needed at the present hour, and it was clearly called for by the Communist Party as long ago as last February. A strong Federation, however, can be assured only on the basis of industrial unionism for the basic industries. Any backdown by the conservative executive council is a gain toward that end.

# FIDDLING WHILE THE GREAT PL

## *The Neros of the New Deal*

**A. ROGER PAXTON**

ONCE again drought threatens to break all records. The Department of Agriculture had said of 1930 that it was "the worst drought ever recorded in this country." But then came 1934, shattering all previous records for waste and destruction. The Weather Bureau reports that rain this year has been even scarcer in many states than in 1934.

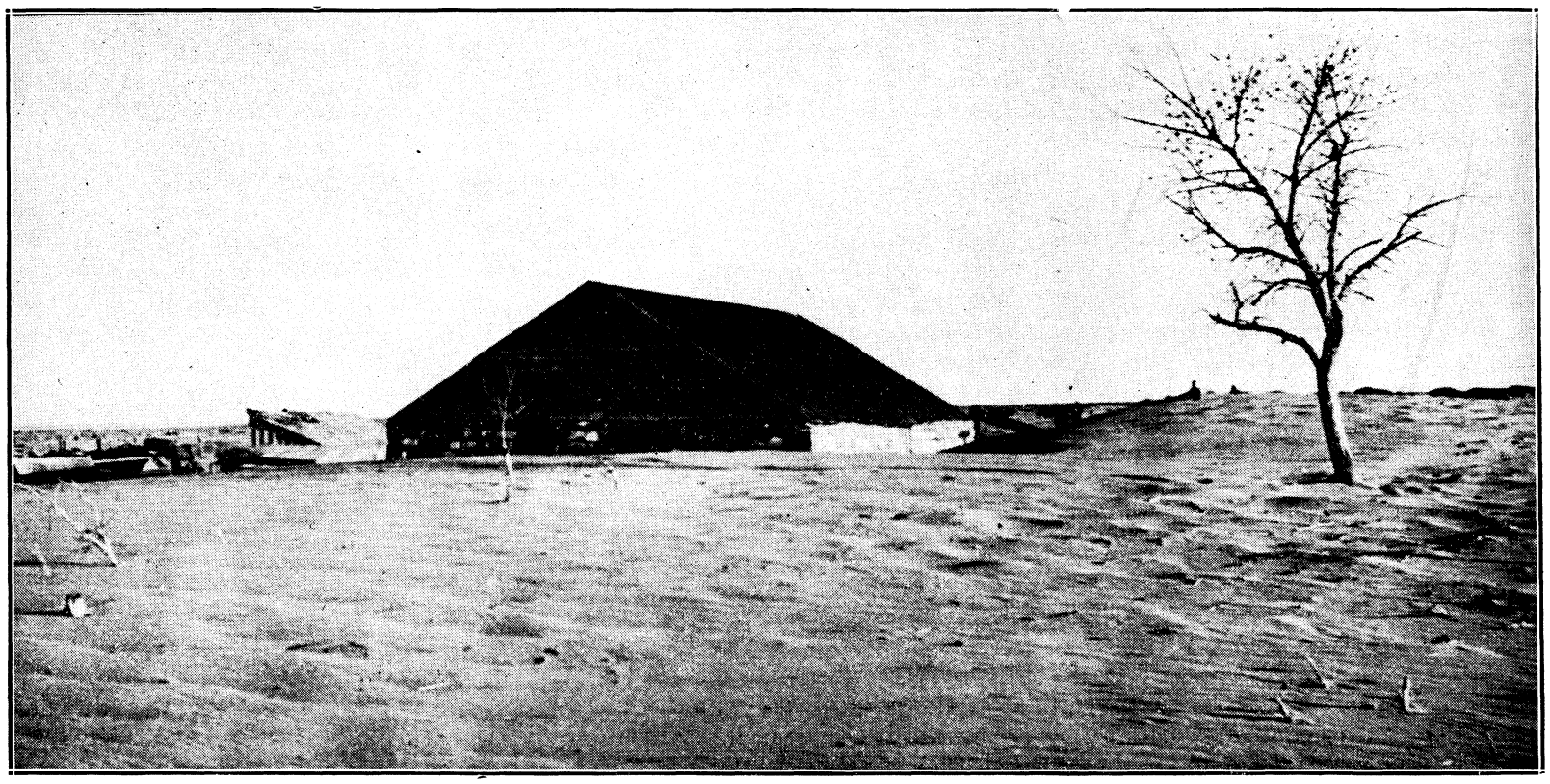
Whether or not crop destruction exceeds 1934, the effect of this drought is likely to be far more devastating to the farmers, thousands of whom had been barely hanging on after six years of drought and depression.

Twenty-seven states have already been stricken—an area comprising half of the United States. From Northern Mississippi up into Canada and from Montana to the Carolinas, the sun's rays have burned up the crops and parched the soil. Even if rain does come, the damage in many areas cannot be undone. The Weather Bureau asserts that drought "now covers most of the states between the Rocky and Appalachian Mountains." Already 268 counties have been designated as primary drought areas, with the heaviest toll occurring in the Dakotas, Montana, and eastern Wyoming, where conditions are worse than in 1934.

For months the government has minimized the danger of drought, even though it knew that subsoil moisture was lacking over large areas of the Great Plains and that the farmers in this dry country had only a slim chance of getting the ideal rainfall necessary to pull the crops through. Moreover, drought is not exactly a rarity on the plains. After six years of consecutive drought the government should have been prepared. As in previous years, the government first ignored the drought. When it could no longer be ignored, the Department of Agriculture lightly dismissed it by coining the term, "The Baby Drought," but went merrily along with its reduction program. As the drought rapidly expanded, the government officials professed great surprise. Conferences were called, investigations were launched; Hopkins, Wallace, Farrell, Gray, and other officials boarded planes and gave out press statements.

Wallace admits that much of the land on the Great Plains should never have been plowed up. He does not admit the government's responsibility. Yet the government's early homestead policy required that the land be divided up into quarter sections of 160 acres. As a result, farmers were forced to "mine" the soil if they were to eke out a living for their families on these inadequate plots. Carl Swanson, a county agent in North Dakota, says that the homestead entries should have been at least 640 acres. He refers to this land settlement policy as "an almost criminal mistake on the part of the government" and charges that it "meant failure and heartbreak to three out of every four men who homesteaded here."

Despite past experiences, the government still has no drought program. Roosevelt tells the reporters that he is *now* working on "long-range regional planning," but the Wall Street Journal reports that he "did not offer any details as to the permanent program." Not long ago Roosevelt had set forth his "shelter belt" scheme of tree planting as the long-range solution. It was quietly killed at the last session of Congress. Then there were the soil-erosion projects, based on the absurd theory that, after visiting these model projects, busted farmers would return home and practice similar methods at their own expense. In addition, there is the Soil Conservation Act, which is just another name for A.A.A. reduction. Despite its new name, the A.A.A. contributes little to soil conservation in relation to the enormity of the problem. For the trivial soil-building practices that it sponsors, its payments, according to H. B. Boyd, assistant director of the A.A.A., "in general" only "cover from half to three-quarters of the cash cost per acre." Moreover, it is soil conservation turned upside down, since the payments are geared to productivity so that the small farmers, least able to bear the cost and holding the worst land, get the lowest payments. The government's program of resettlement was clearly exposed in its own film, *The Plough that Broke the Plain.* This film showed how 50,000 families a month were blown out of the Great Plains in 1934 and ended by announcing that the government is trying to resettle the grand total of 5,000.



THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT: A BARN, ROOF-HIGH IN A DUST DRIFT

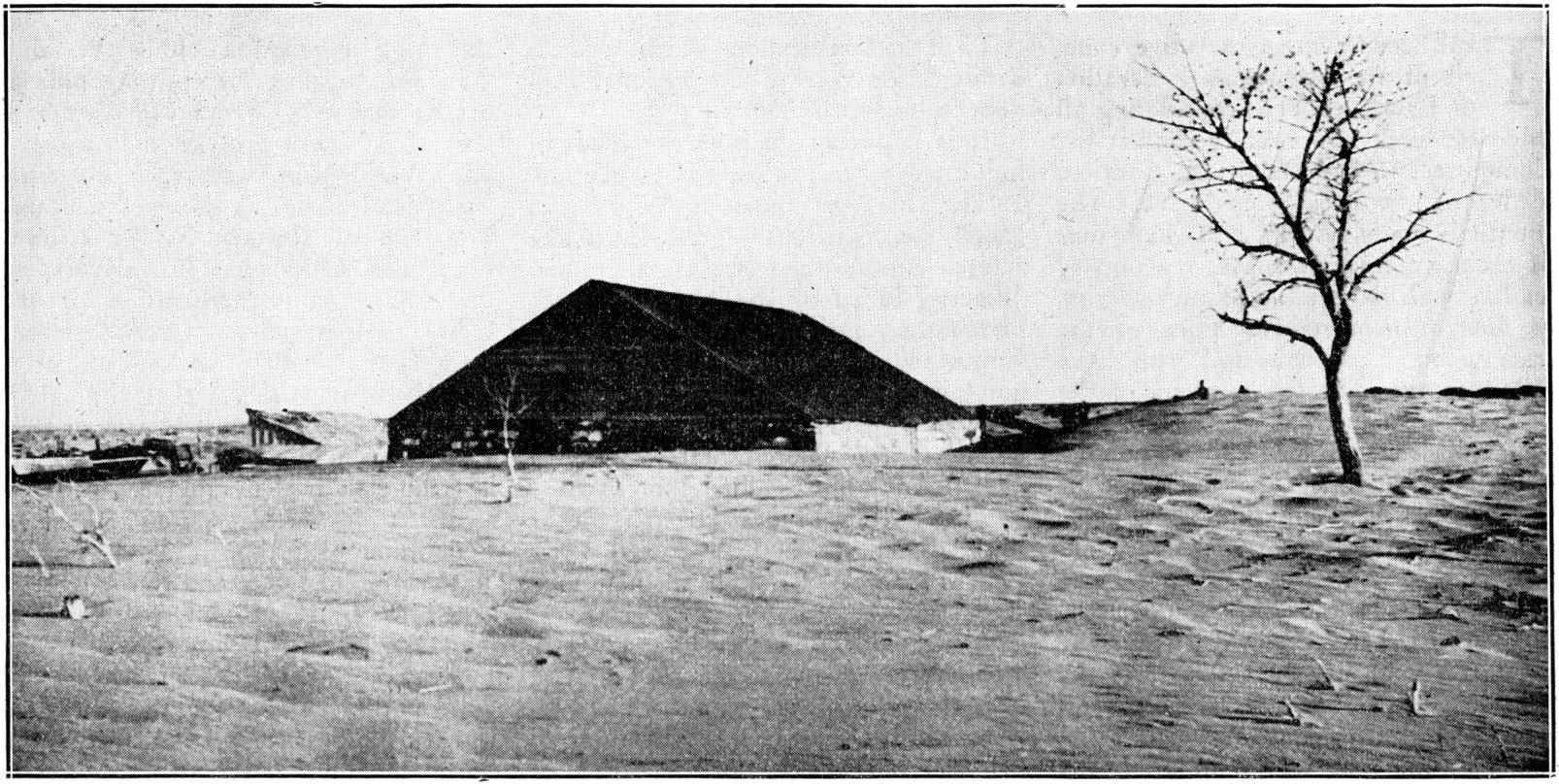
*Resettlement Administration photo.*

After much commotion and ado, the Administration announces the same short-run program of "relief" that proved so inadequate in 1934. It ignores the concrete measures recommended in 1934 by the Farmers National Committee of Action as well as the demands recently made by the Farm Holiday. The A.A.A. now generously permits farmers in the primary drought areas, where nothing will grow, to put crops on their reduced acreage. The government again proposes to purchase livestock. Small growers must liquidate their foundation herds at distress prices, despite the fact that reduction and drought have already brought cattle supplies down to the lowest point in 36 years. The packers are once more able to buy animals at low prices while later using shortage and drought as an excuse for charging high meat prices to the city workers. When the period of liquidation and drought is over, small growers are offered the alternative of replenishing their herds at scarcity prices or of removing themselves from commercial production.

The Resettlement Administration declares that it has been given 18 million dollars with which to make feed and crop loans. It does not mention the fact that 70 million dollars were found inadequate in 1934 or that the F.C.A. loaned only 25 percent of the 47 million dollars which it was allotted this year for making feed and seed loans. All of these loans are made to farmers heavily in debt and burdened with mortgages; yet first liens are required on crops and livestock, and interest rates are 5 percent.

From three to five million persons are reported to be in need of relief, but the W.P.A. offers to take on only 55,000 families at the low rate of $44 a month, and Resettlement proposes to care for 154,500 families at the still lower rate of $20 per month. Only strong pressure from the drought-stricken farmers will force the government to increase its program of relief.

With A.A.A. payments cut 33 percent as compared with 1934, the tiny crop-insurance feature of the Administration's program was made even more ineffectual this year. Roosevelt's attempt to placate the Right by cutting benefit payments to the farmers is likely to increase the Lemke-Coughlin vote in the Northwest and to play squarely into the hands of Landon, Hearst, and the Liberty League. Actually, not one word is said about adequate drought control or even crop insurance in the platforms of the Republican, Democratic, and Union Parties. Here is the most eloquent argument for a Farmer-Labor Party.



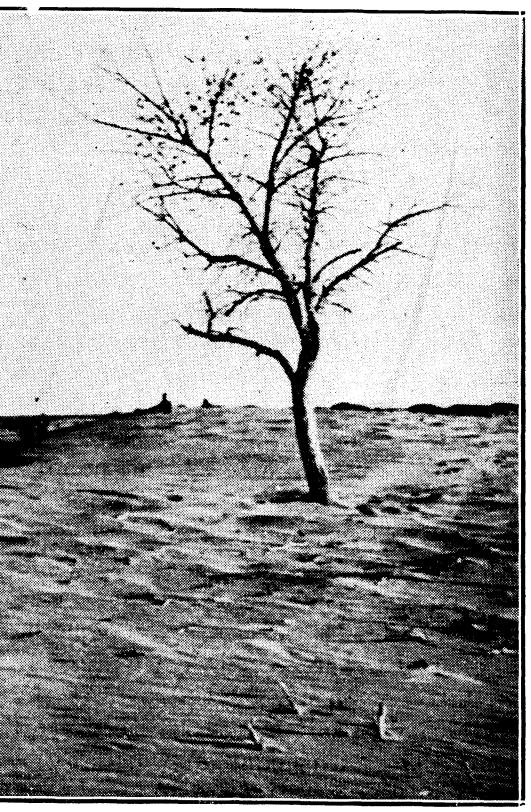
THE GREAT AMERICAN DESERT: A BARN, ROOF-HIGH IN A DUST DRIFT

*Resettlement Administration photo.*

# HILE THE GREAT PLAINS BURN

refers to this land settlement policy as "an almost criminal mistake on the part of the government" and charges that it "meant failure and heartbreak to three out of every four men who homesteaded here."

Despite past experiences, the government still has no drought program. Roosevelt tells the reporters that he is *now* working on "long-range regional planning," but the Wall Street Journal reports that he "did not offer any details as to the permanent program." Not long ago Roosevelt had set forth his "shelter belt" scheme of tree planting as the long-range solution. It was quietly killed at the last session of Congress. Then there were the soil-erosion projects, based on the absurd theory that, after visiting these model projects, busted farmers would return home and practice similar methods at their own expense. In addition, there is the Soil Conservation Act, which is just another name for A.A.A. reduction. Despite its new name, the A.A.A. contributes little to soil conservation in relation to the enormity of the problem. For the trivial soil-building practices that it sponsors, its payments, according to H. B. Boyd, assistant director of the A.A.A., "in general" only "cover from half to three-quarters of the cash cost per acre." Moreover, it is soil conservation turned upside down, since the payments are geared to productivity so that the small farmers, least able to bear the cost and holding the worst land, get the lowest payments. The government's program of resettlement was clearly exposed in its own film, *The Plough that Broke the Plain*. This film showed how 50,000 families a month were blown out of the Great Plains in 1934 and ended by announcing that the government is trying to resettle the grand total of 5,000.



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## *The Farmers Face a Crisis*

### MERIDEL LE SUEUR

MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

"On these rich plains there is enough stag, fish, and fowl and thick and lush grasses and rich prairie to feed a merrie populace, without heavie labors for many an age."—Father Hennepin on the first voyage with La Salle down the Mississippi River.

FOR the last three days the temperature has swung at 103, 104 and 105 degrees. Weather bureau heat maps show this to be a prevailing temperature from the Central Mississippi river valley northwestward into central Montana, and stretching into the southwestern wheat and range territory and into the southeastern cotton belt. Already little pasturage is left between the Rockies and the Appalachian mountains, and water for stock and fowl and human is drying up hourly. The burning winds and high temperatures have left the ground as dry as powder; truck crops are burning up, small grains and wheat are gone, and if it had rained even two days ago the corn in Iowa might have been saved but it is too late now. Wide areas of the great plains are burning black. The drought is spreading rapidly to Wisconsin and northern Minnesota.

The air is bright and red hot, pressing on the middle states. You can hardly breathe; houses are shut tight and the hot wind of today blows up the dry unturfed dust and threatens a repetition of the terrific dust storms of two years ago which blew half of North Dakota into Ohio. Grasshoppers are so thick in some parts they frighten the horses. Aside from being burned by this strong sun, which is like a scorching touch on your skin, the fertile fields are being stripped, the standing crops mowed down by chinch bugs. Walking through the parched fields on one of their endless "surveys," the agricultural committees and officials kick up hundreds of insects with every step. Flying beetles are eating up potato plants and in the Dakotas the tent caterpillars are so thick that trenches have to be dug to keep them out of the houses. Where the trenches weren't dug soon enough, you can sweep them down from the walls.

The pasturage gone, cattle are being moved. In South Dakota alone 700,000 head of cattle and 100,000 head of horses must be shipped some place where there is pasturage. Wyoming is shipping 400 to 500 carloads of stock a day. From Fargo come reports that 85 percent of the cattle in that state has reached the starvation point and must be shipped immediately to other pasturage or sold for beef. Feed is exhausted and pedigreed cattle are nibbling the last of the grass stubble around rapidly drying sloughs. Stockmen are wiring county agents for immediate transportation for cattle, warning that a delay of even one day might prove fatal. Humans too are being shipped like cattle. The Resettlement officials prepared to move at least 200 families out of North Dakota. Don't ask them where to. Ducks are invading the towns in North Dakota looking for water after leaving the dried-up lake bottoms.

TO understand the impact of this heat wave upon national and international affairs you must keep in mind that the Middle West has never recovered from the A.A.A. program and the drought of 1934, when hundreds of heads of pedigreed cattle were buried in lime pits or sold to the Federal government at low prices to keep the price of meat up; that previous to this the rich land of the Middle West has been cruelly and shamelessly used by the wheat speculators. "Wheat to win the war" forced settlers of range land to break the buffalo-grass stands that could survive any drought, growing thick and close and intermingled, holding down the soil. The plowing up of this native grass pulverized the ground so that now it dries quickly and blows and piles to the roofs of barns and drifts off to the mountains with the prairie winds, leaving hardpan that won't be fertile again for a thousand years.

Conservatively, 50,000,000 acres have been destroyed by water erosion and the result of too intensive cultivation, 150,000,000 seriously damaged by other neglect and carelessness, and the present drought will add thousands of acres more to the wastage of our rich middle-western homelands. Since 1930, 1,400,000 farms have been lost and more will be lost now. The 1934 drought prevented any surplusage of feed, and the 1935 crop was gobbled up by creditors, so the farmer was on the bare ledge before the thermometer went up last week and killed what small hope he's ever had.

Before this heat wave 46,000 families in North Dakota were in dire need of aid because of the drought—and 45,000 more in South Dakota. North Dakota scarcely exists as an economic state; in some counties over 90 percent of the farmers are on relief. This condition is tragically repeated everywhere in the spring wheat areas, the southwestern great plains.

In Iowa they are appealing to officials for poisoned bait for grasshoppers and to God

for rain and day after day the sun strikes hot on the fields and you can see the corn curl on itself and hear the ground blister and crack and night after night the moon hangs pale in the scorched air and you seem to smell flesh scorching; and from the unpainted mortgaged precarious farmhouses look out the eyes of hungry children and of men and women, their faces burned from the spring labors, which now will come to less than nothing.

AND the federal, state, and county officials make reports, plan surveys, make speeches, belittle the fatality of what has happened—as if words could cover the perfidy of that wolfish speculation which is responsible for this.

Before making a "survey" of the drought area, Secretary Wallace also addressed a class in Contemporary Thought at Northwestern University, saying delicately: "Of course it is premature to say that our weather has definitely changed, but if we had during the next seven years weather as freakish as that which we have had during the last seven it may well be that the people of the United States will call on the Federal government in no unmistakable terms to aid them in making certain profound adjustments." Certainly a subtle and beautiful use of dangerous language. Tell that to a farm woman in North Dakota who knows that at this pace her children will be dead not in seven years, but seven months.

And now the U. S. Commodity Credit Corporation calls its loans on corn which expired July 1 and which, according to present reports, will not be extended. Loans on corn sealed in the cribs were made between December 1, 1935, and March 31, 1936, maturing on July 1, 1936, at 4 percent. Farmers borrowed 45 cents a bushel, and at the peak the loans totaled approximately $14,000,000 on about 31,000,000 bushels. These loans on corn were advanced by the local banks and the Commodity Credit Corporation. The purpose was to prevent heavy offerings on a feeble market.

The ability to pay diminishes every hour as the season's corn withers this afternoon on its stalk. Government officials said they would not force sales for the purpose of collecting loans for some time.

The thousands of farmers this afternoon are looking at their many mortgage papers with fear. My great-grandfather surveyed most of Illinois, and now the land is mortgaged to the bankers to the tune of ninety-four dollars for every tillable acre.

I SAW carloads of cattle coming into the yards in South St. Paul. Railroads are making rates for shipment of cattle from as far west as Big Horn and Yellowstone counties on the Burlington, from Dodge Round up on the St. Paul. I saw the beasts looking out of the cars, already lean.

Don't be surprised at the price of pork chops and lamb chops now. Losses of early lambs were heavy this year; weather and feed conditions were unfavorable. Even before this drought in Kansas and Oklahoma, the supply at the end of April had become seriously short, the old feed was exhausted due to the month of thirty-below-zero weather in the Mississippi Valley making heavy feeding necessary. Bad weather came in March and April, the farrowing season in the corn belt, so early pigs were lost with the result that the number of hogs was one-third less than in 1933. Sheep have been rapidly decreasing for two years and the price per head, of course, has jumped from $2.91 two years ago to $4.31 last year and $6.38 in January. It is frightening to anticipate what prices it can leap to now.

The bankers call for a support of the price structure of live stocks. Asked if the Surplus Commodity Corporation (a "surplus" when half the farmers and their families haven't tasted meat since they reduced the cattle in the last drought) would buy up the cattle if they moved into market too fast, Secretary Wallace said he didn't know that either, but that it would take thirty or forty millions to handle the cattle situation alone in the corn belt if the drought continues. That was two weeks ago. The drought has continued. Asked about buying feed for farmers, fattening and preserving the cattle, he said it was no use to buy hay to feed the cattle to save the meat because then the government becomes a purchaser and puts up the price for private buyers so they can't buy the feed to feed the cattle to get the meat, to get the price to get more meat. The President, however, said that if there was a sharp drop in prices as a result of dumping on the market due to the drought, the government would probably take the "surplus" livestock off the market.

The idiocy and contradictions of a decaying system can hardly be more tragically and ironically expressed than by these awful and pompous imbecilities, with the workers and farmers as "capital" and the great rich fertile valley of the Mississippi, once the fertile bread basket of the world, lying in the heart of America in its thick, lush buffalo-grass prairies, the pawn of mad men.

HARRY HOPKINS, Federal Works Progress Administration chief, after a day of conferences with governors, staff members, and members of farm organizations including the Holiday, cut through W.P.A. red tape, promising 25,000 work in ten days or less. He said, "There is no need for any surveys. I have complete authority to move today. Our organization is ready to function. There is no need for surveys. We will do whatever needs to be done to take care of the people whose incomes have been destroyed by the drought. We know where the needy families are. That's no problem. All we have to do is say the word and they can go to work. And that word has gone forth. We haven't any limit to the amount of money which will be spent. We will spend the amount which will be necessary to take care of the people." And to the Liberty League and Republican cry of waste he answered: "Nonsense. I take the position that the drought is a national responsibility. People of the Northwest helped create the wealth of the nation and when disaster such as the present drought strikes, I believe they are entitled to a return of some of that wealth."

IN the meantime farmers are not mistaking words for action, or promises in a campaign year for acts. The Farm Holiday Association, fresh from its national convention in St. Paul, announces a series of mass meetings in Minnesota to discuss with the farmers possibilities of withholding seed and feed loan payments to government until the end of the drought emergency. The newly elected national president, John Bosch, wired Roosevelt to stop crop reduction. "The nation's welfare is seriously jeopardized," said Bosch, "prices are skyrocketing. Producers and consumers must pay the bill. Crop reduction should be abandoned."

At this writing farmers are at work already under the still scorching sun on P.W.A. work assigned principally to water conservation projects. Twenty-five thousand were expected to be on the payrolls by this week.

But these men are farmers and proud of it, and they want to farm. They are not builders of roads or dams. They are skilled workmen and are demanding they be taken care of as farmers and protected by the government as such.

Said one farmer from North Dakota at the Holiday convention: "We're at the crossroads of history. We don't want to be railroaded through. We don't want to fold up like a jackknife. There are some things solemn and dear to us. This is a grave situation. Where are we to stand upon the future?"

The farmers are in no mood for dilly-dallying. Up here they say, when the Holiday gets ready to do something, "The farmers are on the march."

AS I type this, the following comes over the radio: "Grain prices hot in wild trading today on the grain markets. Prices on wheat shot up to the pegged limits at the opening today. Rye prices shot up and barley and oats were up the pegged limit, flax jumped the full limit also. Butter prices went up today $264 a car, marking a gain of $1,650 a car from the season's low in April.

"It is 3:30 Central Standard Time by courtesy of the Bulova watch company and the temperature is 102 degrees in the shade, hot winds increasing.

"No one selling wheat this afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, since the heat grip still holds and greater profits are expected."

This speculation in suffering and death can't go on always.

# Steel Gets Hot

MARGUERITE YOUNG

PITTSBURGH, PA.

ONE week in this iron city and in the torrid valleys of steel along the Monongahela, and you know one thing for certain. Workers, bosses from top to bottom, and the politicians look upon the union drive in the mills as the event of their lifetime. There is the usual outward quiet under the smoked skies, in the ugly sprawling mill centers. But talk to any burgess, stop any merchant on his way to the bank, whisper with any blue-shirted man on the bus, and you feel the all-pervading suspense.

The other day Ernest T. Weir and another Weirton steelmaster walked out of their offices on the twenty-eighth floor of the Grant Building and stepped into an elevator. They were talking shop. Without one glance at the other passengers, Weir continued while the blue enameled cage dropped smoothly. He confided grimly, "There's no doubt about it. They'll call a strike about September first."

"It's nice to know what they're expecting," one of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (S.W.O.C.) men told me. He, too, had been in the elevator. He chuckled to think how Weir, in the arrogance of his power, gave away his estimate. Apparently he forgot that the center of the gathering army of steel workers is not an out-of-the-way room with six hundred dollars and six organizers, as in 1919, but the entire thirty-sixth floor of the haughty skyscraper where Weir and nine other steel giants themselves have suites. In and out of the S.W.O.C.'s green-carpeted stronghold all day the workers' forces stream. Philip Murray, the laconic miner chairman, sits there conferring with Clinton Golden, the suave veteran of 1919 in charge of all the Pennsylvania-Ohio-West Virginia-New England area, with its 47 percent of total production. Other field marshals of John L. Lewis's Committee for Industrial Organization turn up; also organizers, and a good many men from the surrounding mills—union and company-union men enrolled with nearly two thousand other volunteers for work in their home towns to build what the trust calls the "outside" union.

The S.W.O.C. man chuckled again. Weir was dead wrong. The whole strategy of the drive is to prevent the precipitation of a premature strike. They know that the steel workers, with their average $950 wage in the year 1935, when the industry took a $46,800,000 profit, are ready to organize. Clamorous calls for aid in such a move actually started in the mills before the Canonsburg convention of the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel and Tin Workers hurried the C.I.O. and persuaded the steel union chiefs to act. The S.W.O.C. is devoting itself to one matter only: the groundwork. The closest they will come to predicting the tempo is, "We should know where we stand by the first of November."

The date reflects their awareness of the important political factor. From it they intend to squeeze every ounce of advantage: they think they can push the Democratic machine of Pennsylvania and even Roosevelt into backing up civil rights during the election campaign. They treasure the promise of Governor Earle and Lieutenant-Governor Tom Kennedy to guard those rights and furnish relief in case of local strikes—on this they depend to avoid disastrous sporadic conflict. There is another political force in their favor; growing local Farmer-Labor and other independent people's groups who put no faith in the Democrats.

CARNEGIE-ILLINOIS, which is United States Steel, which is Morgan, is already employing the classic tactics. They have posted the Iron and Steel Institute's declaration of war all over the mills, and bosses are plying the demagogy of "protecting" the workers from the dues-collecting union. The week's vacation concession drew a horselaugh from a Negro millhand in Homestead. He exclaimed, "If we can gain that by getting ready to organize, what can we get *with* the union?" However, among many of the "American class," it may be worth something. Intimidation is increasing, merging with threats of the owners' last weapon, open terrorism. They told me in Clairton how bosses came around and asked them individually, "Are you for the outside union or for our plan?" The management got out the gunshields in Homestead, and painted them brightly with battle gray—the sort of thing that strikes deeper terror because word of it passes only over the grapevine.

Another array of tactics is emerging on the workers' side. Their line of attack is twofold. Wherever possible, the boldest open drive, union headquarters on the main stem, mass meetings not up narrow alleys where a thug can pick off one or two, but on public ground with hundreds participating and with prominent speakers, including politicians. And, where necessary, quiet one-by-one signing up through house-to-house canvassing, small local committees linking the most influential workers with outside organized forces including labor, professional, fraternal, civic, church groups. Eventually the C.I.O. expects to have a local committee of such breadth in every center: it will be literally the people against the dictator.

Fourteen miles from Pittsburgh I saw the latter policy functioning. McKeesport is dotted and surrounded by the plants of U. S. Steel and its independent allies. There the *Fortune* and *Time* magazines photographer and writer, snapping mill guards recently equipped with pistols, were nabbed and taken to the local police, who fished out an ordinance preventing strangers running around clicking cameras. McKeesport is the town where sentences of $25 fines or 30 days in jail were meted out for tacking up a notice of a mass meeting which was to be addressed by Patrick Fagan, the miners' district president, a delegate to the Democratic convention in Philadelphia.

Yet there, the other night, in one of the central hotels, they held a meeting to organize volunteer organizers. And they stood up and talked! Steel workers, company union representatives. Men from the Clairton coke works, key to the whole valley because it supplies the other plants' gas, and from the Duquesne rolling mills, and the tin mills where Steel's profits are fattest.

Up front, presiding in the hot little room, sat "Chuck" Davis, a husky young miner, president of the Central Trades Council, symbol of the natural alliance of the steel and mine unions. That had additional importance in this territory where, as the mines were worked out with the characteristic abandon of American overlords, their dispos-

**STEEL WORKERS JOIN THE UNION!**

**MASS MEETING**

**Sun., May 24th**

2:00 P. M.
A. O. H. HALL
411 Sixth Street

Chairman

**CHARLES B. DAVIS**
President McKeesport Central Labor Union

Speakers

**ED. MILLER**
Vice President of The A. A. I. S. & T. W.

**PATRICK FAGAN**
President Dist. 5 United Mine Workers

Hear the report of the Sixty-first Convention of the A. A. I. S. & T. W. on the organization campaign in the Steel Industry.

**EVERYBODY WELCOME!**

CALLED BY UNITY LODGE, No. 204
AND UNITED LODGE, No. 207
McKEESPORT, PA.

INDORSED BY McKEESPORT CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL

14

The above is the "criminal" leaflet for the posting of which three youngsters were imprisoned and fined in McKeesport.

sessed coal diggers went into the mills, and are there today, born and bred in the tradition of militant unionism, ready to welcome the miners now engaged in organizing steel.

Davis introduced S.W.O.C. Organizer George Powers. He glanced over the thirty or so participants and cut his speech short. "One trouble in the past was that a few had the union in their pocket. We know today that organizing steel is no one-man job. We know the steel workers themselves and their local brothers outside have got to do this job. We want those who know the labor movement to take the lead. We want to see them backed up by the whole community."

Powers, in charge of this district, himself an Amalgamated delegate to the last Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor Convention, called for discussion.

"I'll start right out by introducing myself as a company-union representative," said a young fellow from Duquesne, "and by saying that if you hear anyone say we can get anything from the plan, tell 'em to get it out of their heads. I thought there wasn't anything to the plan, but then I decided to try it. I thought maybe I was mistaken. Well, I wasn't. Right now they've called a moratorium on petitions from us. I wasn't even going to run again. But then they offered me *another* job. I was to get $42 a month more if I would keep the job I have, take the *other* job—you know the kind of job, spying—and not run for company-union representative. I didn't take the job, and I came right out and ran again for representative. And I want to say we'll organize with the C.I.O."

Clairton spoke next. Things were quiet, the workers timid, "but there's sentiment for the union there, down deep."

The McKeesport barbers' union spoke up: "Brother Powers has given us the message. Let's take it home to the wife, the neighbor. I'm with you fellows."

"It's an awful big job," put in a lean, hard worker from the tube mills. "We can do it, but it'll take a lot of help. And while I think of it"—he cast a compelling glance at the barber—"don't forget how many of us steel workers go in to have our hair cut. We need everybody, the ladies, the young people, everybody."

"Glad to hear you mention the ladies," put in a bright young woman. "The Ladies Auxiliary of the A.A. is giving a supper for everybody who'll come, Saturday night. You can look for lots of help from us."

SO they went down the line: one after another spokesman for organized labor outside and for the men inside the mills, the strategic, influential figures of the whole district joining hands for active work. One miner made them sit up straighter. He knew a straw boss in a certain mill, he said, and thus he learned the management called all the bosses together and read them a letter from the company's headquarters: they were to keep their mouths shut and their eyes and ears open, report anyone heard talking union, and remember the company would spend millions to keep the union out. "That mill," the miner remarked cryptically, "is the one I've set my cap for."

A Negro steel worker, head of the local N.A.A.C.P., warned sharply: "Now, when I go out to work, I *work,* and there's no doubt we can get all the 400 branches of my outfit behind us nationally—but I want to know what we're working for. I'll tell you frankly I'm not for the union if it permits discrimination." Chairman Davis gave an answer: rooting out discrimination is what the union is for. Organizer Powers called upon the white workers to take the initiative in acknowledging inner-union discrimination in the past, and in establishing equal rights now.

They heard from the head of the local W.P.A. workers, assuring cooperation from the unemployed. An International Workers Order organizer urged mobilization of their lodges. Then a plumbers' union officer, once a diehard Red-baiter, snapped his black suspenders upon his barrel chest and pronounced his pride in active association with this all-inclusive movement against the ramparts of Steel.

THEY divided into groups to form cores for functioning committees in every big mill in the vicinity. Thus the link with the mass in the mill, and the mass solidarity outside, to buttress the S.W.O.C. In the same town they held their mass meeting despite the arrests for posting notices. It was attended by three men from the Coshocton Iron Works, a few miles away. With that plant the union hadn't a contact. The workers sought the C.I.O. organizer and returned to work among their shopmates. Within a week they were ready for a mass meeting in their town. It drew exactly 100 percent attendance and every last one asked to sign up. Mostly followers of Father Coughlin, previously, they opened the meeting by chanting the Coughlin creed en masse—adding, to the line pledging them to God and country, another swearing loyalty "to industrial unionism."

There is just one vital element missing—the railroaders. The C.I.O. leaders have taken no particular pains to draw them into the picture nationally, to form the triple alliance William Z. Foster knew would have won the 1919 strike by tying up the private roads with which steel, the integrated moloch, has judiciously supplied itself. All through the valleys you see the point: millstacks reflected in the stream, and, on the other side, the company railroad. Once, a little over twenty years ago, a few hundred railroaders struck on their own grievances, and every steel works along the line went down. The companies have taken precautions. Open shop is the rule, and wages generally are higher than on the standard roads. And yet, such is the sweep of mass sentiment for industrial unionism and for the progressive policies they look for in the C.I.O., the S.W.O.C. has received unsolicited overtures from workers who tie into both industries. This whole question is still to be considered by the S.W.O.C. One thing is settled: they are not missing any bets. The campaign may be launched by surprise moves. The S.W.O.C. has access to expert knowledge of the industry, and means to use it, concentrating upon vital links.

"We know it will take patience and resourcefulness," Chairman Murray said. "There is no other industry where the ratio of bosses runs so high, about one to every twenty men. We know the companies not only have retained the arsenal they obtained in 1933, but have added to it lately. This is augmented by their system of spies, and we have information to show these have been increased to unprecedented numbers. We know the power of the mill runs right into the political control of the community. I myself know a town where the mayor is secretly on the payroll of the mill.

"Well, there is the wall. It will take bold strokes to break it down, but I am optimistic. I believe we will succeed. This is just the first phase."

It involves employing the same forces the mills use—countering the metropolitan press and the conspiracy of silence and intimidation in the milltown local papers with the S.W.O.C.'s own newspaper; meeting radio discussions with a series of national and local broadcasts by the workers' leaders; creating a research department to answer spying with a drumfire of facts exposing it. Finally, they have a national legal committee, headed by a former New Deal lawyer, organizing a volunteer lawyers' committee in every community.

The Red scare worries the S.W.O.C. not at all. As Murray put it, commenting upon the Aliquippa scarehead: COMMUNISTS TO ORGANIZE STEEL WORKERS, "Of course the Institute has attempted to drag out the Red herring. We reply, in the press and otherwise, this is a trade-union campaign and not a political movement. We welcome anybody who will help—I don't give a damn what their politics is."

ACTUALLY the Communists are part and parcel of the movement. They are too well known, here in many western Pennsylvania towns, for the Red scare to work. They are natives of these hills. Their support of labor struggles, such as the Ambridge steel strike, is a fresh memory; their influence has gained rapidly since they led a flood-control conference representing a round quarter-million Pennsylvanians. In some of the toughest territory, their little band constituted the only workers' force that could function at all through the years of union dispersion. Now you find them mobilizing the people's organizations beyond the breadth the S.W.O.C. alone could achieve. Upon the experience of the left-wingers, Socialist and Communist, the steel drive must draw: there are vital spots in Pennsylvania where organ-

izing steel workers requires the daring and the discipline of the sharecropper movement in the Deep South.

This is why the S.W.O.C. is handing out no charters, and there will be no local union meetings, no local records, until the membership is too big to invite wholesale dismissals. Signed cards are bundled off quickly to Clinton Golden, who smiles, "Company stooges will find no records in the field; they'll have to try and get them here." It seems to work. At Aliquippa, where seventeen old A.A. members were fired as soon as the drive began, the S.W.O.C. has signed up several hundred *new* members, without a single dismissal.

The Communists share the optimism of the S.W.O.C. leaders. They welcome the participation of every politician who will commit himself to the workers' side; but they put precious little dependence upon them, looking rather to the masses. They want the LaFollette committee to come into the field *now,* while the invasion of civil rights is sporadic and can be countered. They agree with Lieutenant-Governor Kennedy that the steel drive is a movement "to prevent the possibility of Fascism," but they ask why, if violence is to be avoided, the steel trust shouldn't be *disarmed,* now, while truck loads of cots are rolling into the mills and new barbed wire fences are going up.

HOMESTEAD is in the tough territory. Around the school playground where the July 5 meeting took place, hundreds stood on the opposite sidewalk, afraid to cross over. The wonder was that thousands stood upon the yellow ground, under the punishing sun, joining in the formal launching of the steel drive. It was a scene to remember. Just the mass of people in front of a square, open platform with bunting draped along its railing and two flags flying from the front corners; and, standing up in full view, wreaths to honor the martyrs shot down in the Battle of the Barges forty-four years ago. There were veterans of that day-long struggle with the Pinkertons in Homestead who sat in their front yards listening to the loud-speakers, fearing that to come to the meeting might endanger their meager pensions or their relatives' jobs. A shiny black patrol wagon was drawn up under the trees across the street. From the windows of the decaying wooden shacks that serve as steel workers' homes, many others silently watched.

Thomas Shane, the Homestead organizer, stepped forward and opened the meeting. He introduced the C.I.O.'s representative, Powers Hapgood.

"You steel workers have just as much courage and are going to be just as successful as the miners. And you do not have to organize unaided as we did in the mines." He mentioned the half-million-dollar C.I.O. steel fund, and finished, "Never in all history has any group of workers received the support that the steel workers are going to receive. That's why I say the drive is going to be successful."


"Ladies, this is 'Pigeon' McCarthy, who resigned from the steel union last night." *Colin*

Flanked by trim Pennsylvania highway police, Lieutenant-Governor Kennedy arrived, amidst applause. Secretary Leonard, of the Amalgamated Association, made a little speech. A rambling dissertation, spiked with trivial jokes, followed, with applause—the speaker was a judge of the Allegheny County Common Court. He doted upon the "work-stained faces" out front, reciting: "Eat union, drink union, think union. Have union in your heart. United we stand, divided we fall apart."

Kennedy reached his climax with the promise to guarantee civil rights and relief.

At last a worker appeared before the microphone, his blue shirt wringing wet as he came from his Sunday turn in the Rankin works. Haltingly he read a new steel workers' declaration of independence. The men and women out front faced grimly forward, intent upon him. At the edge of the crowd, W. S. Unger, Assistant Superintendent of the Homestead unit, turned sharply at the announcement of a worker.

"Oh"—the super faced back—"Scarbo."

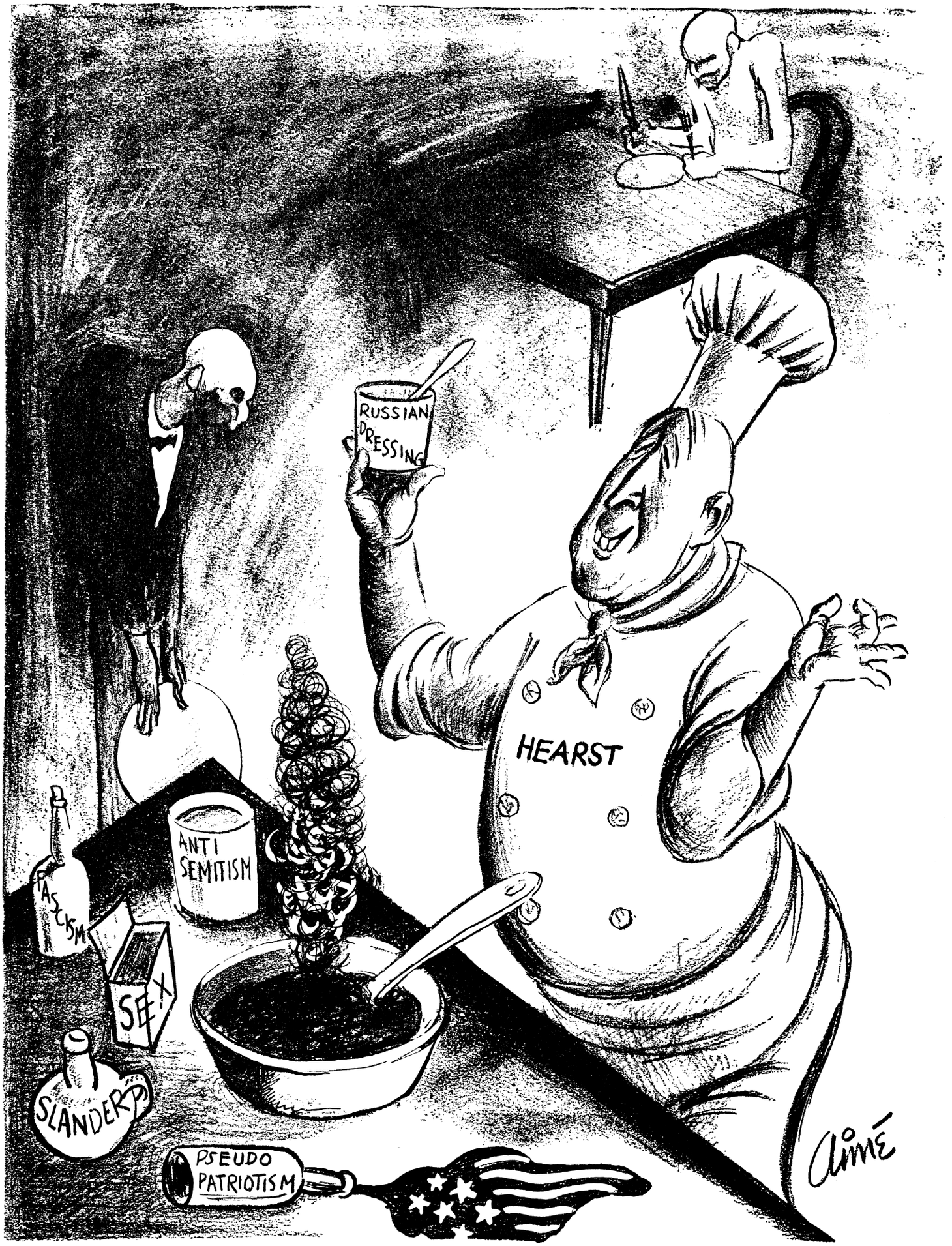
"Who is Scarbo?" a reporter asked. The super's face hardened as he insisted, "Never heard of him, never heard of him."

Charles Scarbo is a company-union representative, just turned twenty-five years' service in the mills. His wife and five little girls depend upon his job. He accepted the speaking assignment, saying, "I ain't never been in the worried department before; I'm not getting scared now."

They marched to the cemetery, five blocks away, and stood around the unmarked graves of the Homestead heroes. At each one Fagan intoned, "In the name of the C.I.O. and the Amalgamated Association, I place this wreath upon your grave, hoping you are happy in Heaven, in token of the great movement you were martyred for. We here will do our part."

They were starting to leave. Suddenly a white-haired man stepped forward and stopped them, saying, "Friends, as one personally acquainted with these martyrs, I call attention to the condition of these graves. We must build them two monuments now, one of steel and stone and the other a living one, a great steel union."

It was Patrick Cush, the Communist, the president of the Homestead Lodge of the Amalgamated in the days before the great strike. It was Cush who found the graves long ago. He stood there a moment, gazing at the gold letters on the wreaths: "The spirit of 1892 lives on."


RUSSIAN DRESSING
HEARST
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SEX
SLANDER
PSEUDO PATRIOTISM
Aimé

# I Work for Hearst

## A HEARST SUB-EDITOR

"PAY your three cents for this paper and get robbed." Dave, the news editor, tosses over to me the "recap" sheet. I see a total of 170 news columns and more than 50 percent of our space shot with features and "musts" before we ever set a line of type.

Dave is particularly irascible today. The "chief" and the "front office" have already ruined his paper. "How long can we fool the people hijacking them this way?"

Jim is in the "slot," straightening out the desk for the early copy load. "Two big local stories and a flood of telegraph including the convention. If any of our readers want the news today, they'd better buy a Daily Bugle. There's no space in this paper."

On the wall over my desk hangs printed and framed the ironical, "What Makes a Newspaper is NEWS," signed William Randolph Hearst. I smile and look over my list. Instead of news, here are the worries:

Brisbane, Elsie Robinson, Donna Grace "beauty" column, Ida Jean Kain, Louella Parsons drivel, Walter Winchell, O. O. McIntyre, Anne Adams, Prudence Penny, Frank Kent, Winston Norman, Bugs Baer, Damon Runyon, Dr. Copeland, Edwin C. Hill, Ripley, not to mention the Junior Birdmen, the Daily Boondoggle, the "charity" racket, and the latest anti-Communist series. There are already five "musts" from the business office, inane stories of a thinly disguised advertising nature. This is what our Hearst readers are having dished out to them in place of news.

The professor at the school of journalism gave a lecture yesterday on which we quote him: "The purpose of a newspaper is to give a thorough, comprehensive account of world happenings, and to present that report as a factual, objective piece of reporting and editing." I smile again. We try to take pride in our work. We work like hell at the peak hours to do a good job for that mythical, ubiquitous person—the "reader."

"But what can we do when we are so hamstrung before we even cut a piece of copy or look at the first dummy?" Dave asks in discouragement.

We peer at the opposition's first edition. Twenty columns more than we have to begin with, and not burdened with the propaganda and "musts" we are forced to hand out.

"Damn Hearst!" Dave breathes.

Fred, the telegraph editor, drawls, "Well, I hope to get a newspaper job some day."

Our "dead hook" will mount high today, spiked with the usual fifty or sixty stories for which we have no room, but which the opposition will cover. These "dead hook" stories are chiefly telegraph reports which lack a sex, crime, or other sensational feature. "If you want the news read the Daily Bugle!"

I glance at the "lead" local story, a trivial suicide thing, "blown up" for our first street edition. We try to put on our circulation with these street editions; it's easier to fool the people by using screaming newsboys, or by using an eight-column 96-point banner headline on the newsstands. That is why, of course, one of the largest publications on the Hearst twenty-six-paper chain has a 20 percent turnover in carrier circulation every month. We are always engaged in a game of wits with our readers to keep up circulation.

WE ARE "playing" the French political situation now, you know. Of course it is big news and legitimate news. But do you think that is why it is Page One with us now? Let me tell you.

On June 23 we received on International News Service (Hearst) this message from E. D. Coblentz, publisher of The New York American:

"Chief instructs you are to emphasize in every way possible stories coming from France telling of the riots, the unreasonable demands, and the destructive confusion in France as the result of Blum's election and the encouragement given Communism."

So instead of the usual suppression of liberal gains, we take a new tack. We spread over Page One those warped and enfeebled accounts coming from Paris by the Hearst correspondent, H. R. Knickerbocker, seeking to propagandize in our very news columns the French People's Front program as "unreasonable demands" of the Communists. Our headline says, "Reds Wreak Havoc in France."

Of course you don't know the ridiculous extent to which Hearst distortion is often carried. One of the best examples of this was the order received just before the opening of the Republican National Convention to delete from the news all mention of the name of William Allen White. So we were forced to resort to such fantastic circumlocutions as "a prominent publisher from Kansas," etc. But the height was reached in a message transmitted June 24 to the editors of all Hearst newspapers and Universal Service bureaus, relating to the Democratic Convention speech of Senator Joseph T. Robinson:

"New York American will run three columns of Robinson speech eliminating references to William Allen White. J. J. Karpf."

J. J. Karpf is managing editor of Hearst's New York American.

Many Hearst readers would be surprised if they knew the list of Hearst "blackballs" in the news. The Court of International Relations at the Hague can never be referred to as the World Court, but only as the League Court. Mae West falls out of grace with the "chief" due to policy and advertising reasons and we get an order to strike her name from the news. So at the present time poor Mae's name is never seen in any Hearst newspaper! The latest taboo was the order of July 2 that no Hearst newspaper may print the names of the Earl and Countess of Warwick while the English couple are on their American visit. One of the most grotesque distortions was ordered in connection with the Black Lobby Investigating Committee in the Senate, when Hearst personally ordered that in all mention of the committee it must be referred to as the "Blackguard" committee. In an effort to avoid such a monstrosity as this, our news editor threw out of the paper every piece of news which he possibly could which related to the committee's hearings.

"I'll be damned if I'll let Hearst wreck the paper I'm working on like this!" Dave stormed at the managing editor one day.

The m.e. smiled wanly. "The Old Man's just senile."

"Senile, hell; he's a plain fool!"

So we have to garble it all up and pretend it's a newspaper!

"SAY, did you see this crack at Hearst in the Guild Striker? Listen to what Broun says." And we all read it and chuckle. With forbearance, the managing editor eyes it over his shoulder and turns away with a little smile on his lips.

Perhaps we who work for Hearst do not truly appreciate the full extent of the man's menace to American life. In our American Newspaper Guild chapter meetings we call him "fascist" and "Public Enemy No. 1." We recite the most recent threats he has hurled at civil liberty and common decency. But, in a way, we have come to consider him more of a "plain damn fool" than a really significant arch-enemy of American institutions and American liberty. That, I believe, may even be dangerous if we lose sight of the bitter fight we are all waging against him, from the Milwaukee picket-line to the smallest editorial office. But we who feel his vicious influence most immediately have come to believe he is not invincible. We see a thousand ways in which he is vulnerable. A handful of men are beating him to a standstill in Wisconsin. That is why we are optimistic—at times too optimistic—that when the fight is widened to the national front all his vaunted power will be found honeycombed with weaknesses that will spell his doom. We don't want to mistake him for a bogy man, but we are not making the other mistake of fearing his intrenchment as impregnable. Hearst can be uprooted and swept from the American scene.

# These Shall Survive

**CAROLINE SLADE**

MY MOTHER said oh, for God's sakes stop talking about it so much, you shut up or I'll wallop you good, when I asked her if what that minister said was true. He said Ye will be burned forever and ever, if we was sinners and did not repent. My mother told me to shut up, so then I asked my sister. I said are you repented?—because she was going to get a baby pretty soon and it was a sin to do that. But she just grinned. Once when I was little she tipped over the boiling kettle on her foot. When they took off her shoe all her skin came off too, she yelled like a stuck pig till the doctor put a needle in her arm, then she went to sleep. I asked my mother if that was the way hell-fire burnt. She said that's nothing, in hell it's real fire, didn't you hear that minister tell you, it never stops. Now you quit asking me things; if you don't shut up you don't go to no more meetings. So then I stopped because I liked to go to the meetings. I tried to tell my sister she better repent, but she just grinned. The Rev. Jones was swell, he sweat so much he used eight handkerchiefs to wipe off his face. You could see them, white as snow. He made prickles all down my back when he preached, he knew all about God and sinners, he'd tell about hell so plain I would be scared when I went to sleep. My sister would never sit still long enough, so she did not go to the meetings, but when I got home I would tell her all about them. I wanted my sister to repent, I said to her do you want to burn worse than that boiling water? But she just grinned. She was a year older than me, she never did go to school. I was in school a lot, the teachers liked me, they would let me sing and draw, but my sister could not go to school, she would eat newspaper if we did not watch her, it made her sick a lot of times doing that, but I thought she has got to repent, she might die having that baby then she would go to hell-fire. The man she got the baby from gave us lots of rides, he was at me but my father said if he ever caught me doing tricks he would break my neck, so I did not let the man so then he did it to my sister. He said to me, look here, if you ever dare tell, what I will do to you is plenty, so I never did tell. I was scared of him. My sister did not tell, she could not talk, she could grunt but she could not talk, so my mother did not know about who the man was. She was good and mad, she said this is a nice thing, here I got to have another kid to take care of. My father was good and mad, too, he walloped my sister awful, only my mother said well, what is the use beating her up now, it's done isn't it? But my father said to me you better watch out, you better watch your step, one bastard is all we need, see? So I said I did, my mother hit me on the head good and said so too, she said you get like that and you get plenty. My father worked for the coal-pocket, he said your mother can't stand more'n one at a time. He was proud of my mother, he had steady work all the time; even when he got cut in his pay he had work just the same. At first when he was working they had horses, then they got trucks. My father liked that, he liked to sit up front with the drivers, he said that was swell. Some of the men in the office got fired, so that made him laugh good. He said the stinking pansies, they got hands like ladies, they got clean shirts on all the time. He was glad they got fired. He said you see, they got to keep men with big hands and dirty shirts on, like me. My mother said she would wash his shirt, only my father did not want it washed; when it was full of holes, he said, he would throw it away and get a new one. He said Jesus Christ, why do you want to wash it, won't it get dirty right off again?—so then my mother knew that was right. She cut his hair for him. He said that woman is smart, she can beat any woman I ever saw. The easy way she did, she could have a kid right on the floor. My father would say hear that woman yell, will you, that's lungs. Then she would get up and get some supper. The last baby died on her, like the twins went and died; my mother felt bad about it, she said she would like to get twins, she always liked to see twins, but they only lived a little while. My father got the wop to come in; she stayed all night with my mother but the kids died just the same. I am bigger than my sister but she is older than me. Willie is next to me, he is smart, he is three grades ahead of me, my father says he is the smartest one. Sadie is next to him, only she has got a big head, she can't go to school yet, but she can sing lovely; she has a little rocking chair she can sit in till her head gets tired, then she has to lay down. She rocks and sings so nice, my mother says it is a pleasure the way that child sings. I showed her how to sing three hymns, she can get most all of the words good, she hardly misses any of the words, my mother likes to sit down and hear her sing them a lot. Buster is next to Sadie, he is the best kid my mother ever had, he is as good as a angel, she says when he was a baby he beat all the rest of us put together, no trouble at all, my mother says, just lies there as good as gold. My father says that child is a pleasure too, he is so good.

WHEN the nurse came to our house to see about me having my tonsils out, she could see my sister's stomach. She said to my mother is she going to get a baby? My mother said, well, suppose she is, what of it? She is not the first and the last either, is she? I can take care of my kids, and you can mind your business. The nurse was nice, she was good to the kids in school, but my mother got mad right off. When she went away my mother yelled. She left off listening to Sadie and went to the next house. She said that sonofabitch nurse coming here, I guess we can look after our own kids. My father was mad when he got home, he swore around good. He said he never asked a cent of charity yet, did he, he said he bet over half the neighbors had city help, but never him; he said goddamit, I don't owe no one, do I? My mother was proud about my father being like that. He said to her you tell that nurse to leave my kids alone, see? But the nurse was worried. My mother said well, for Christ's sake, is having a kid something to worry about? That's just natural. But the nurse said she would like to take my sister to a good place so they could take care of her. My mother was mad, but then my sister ate all the fuzz off her sweater so she got sick, she looked like she was going to die all right. My mother got in some of the neighbors, they gave her a whole bottle of castor-oil but she got worse. I never saw anyone who would eat things the way my sister would. I tried to tell her to repent, but I don't know if she made out what I was telling her or not. She was sick all over. My mother said well, that's one kid less, but then she got scared if she was dying, so I had to go after the nurse from the city. The nurse said that girl is dying. She got the doctor there in a hurry. He said we got to get her to the hospital quick. They put her on a stretcher, all the people stood around so they could see her getting carried out to the ambulance. She did not know a thing, but my mother cried and cried. The nurse said now don't take on, we will save her, we will do everything, but my mother felt bad. She said how much is that hospital, but the nurse said don't worry, I will take care about that for you. My father was mad again, but he could not help it, he could not pay so much money, he said now we are charity bums on relief, but he felt better when my sister got well. She got well quick, we went to see her, the ward was swell. My mother said well, I guess I might come here with the next kid, she liked it, she said they told her if she would come and have it there, they bet she would not get so many dying on her.

The nurse got a lady to see my mother, she wanted to take my sister to a school, she said the state had a swell school to take care of my sister, she said I could go with her if I wanted to, she said Sarah could go too, she said why, there is hundreds of boys and girls, you would have a fine time. But my mother said well, for Jesus Christ's sake, why do I have kids, anyway? I like to keep my kids myself; I guess you don't take my kids away from us. The lady talked and talked, and wrote down a lot on a paper; my mother liked to visit with her, she liked to tell her

things, only she got mad if they tried to make us go to that school. The lady said maybe my sister could learn to talk some, but my father said, well, that girl could talk if she wanted to, he said she's just set. He said he had a brother like that, mean and set. He said you leave her alone, don't pay any attention to her, when she wants something bad enough, she'll talk fast, see? My sister was mean, like my father said, she would pinch all the insides out of a kitten, so they hung right out. My mother walloped her good for that, she said she bet that was the last kitten she would get for that girl.

After a while the lady got good and tired talking to my mother and father, so they had to go to court and the judge let the lady take my sister; my mother was going to get another baby, the Rev. Jones said God is giving you another to comfort you. My mother yelled good at that judge, but they took my sister. I was scared they would get me, I said will they take me too, but she gave me a good soak on my ear, she said to shut up, did I want her to go crazy. Sarah cried and cried for my sister, my father said Jesus Christ, she is going to die on us; he did not fight so much when they took her to the school where my sister was in, he said she will feel all right when they can play together some more. My mother and me went with the lady in her car when she took Sarah. It was a swell car, we had a good time, we liked the school, it was as big as the railroad station. My mother said well, I guess I was all wet about things, this is a fine place; my sister was big and fat, she looked swell, she grinned a lot, I said to her did it hurt you when you got sick, but she just grinned. They had so many kids there, it was the biggest school I ever saw. They looked happy, they grinned and laughed, my mother said well, you keep these kids good, this is all right. The woman in the place told my mother about things, she said the state pays a lot of money for this place, we make these children well and happy, my mother said she bet Sarah would get well quick in a place like that. My mother felt good about it. The lady took us back in her car, we had a lot to eat, she was swell to us all right. My father said he was glad if my mother did not cry so much now, he said to me you act good to your mother, she was never with no man but just me, see? He said if I catch you at it I'll knock your block off, so my mother gave me a good hit on my head; she said you hear him. I asked my sister if it hurt her only she could not talk. I was with some boys, but when my mother hit me like that I did not tell her about it. I bet they would give me a good licking if I would get a baby. So I said to my mother where is some castor-oil, but we did not have any castor-oil left.

# To My Students

I teach. I expect two-percent return.
Sow words; show books; plant thought; burst doors, and point:
See world; see men at work; partake!

Students, I shall be content if you learn
By tiresome emphasis from me:
*"The laws of being are the laws of thought."*
*"Thought is conditioned by being, not being by thought."*

I am indulgent and stern.
Be deaf, indifferent. Discount, forget, resist. . . .
But never mistake
This meaning:
*"Freedom is the recognition of necessity."*
*"By acting on nature outside himself, and changing it Man simultaneously changes his own nature."*

GENEVIEVE TAGGARD.

# The Armed Multitude

Too many of the armed
Are not aware
That they bear arms;
And in the quick alarms,
In the first fear,
Strike with a stick and find it had a blade;
Strike, and see death
And are amazed.

Unknowing armed,
Unknowing skilled,
In danger of which they should be afraid,
Too many go.
Oh, man is a quick killer
And quick killed.
Let him know!

MARIE DE L. WELCH.

# At the Open Hearth

In a circle we go—
third helpers and second helpers—
bare to the hips,
carrying our shovels.

A shovel-full of dolomite,
a shovel-full of magnesite,
we pick it up and throw it in
the bubbling hearth furnace.

Naked to the waist we go
in a circle, waiting turn,
shovelling ingredients
for manganese steel—

manganese steel,
shiny and strong,
containing, frozen in it,
the strength of our arms.

STEPHEN STEPANCHEV.

# Democracy

"The flag goes to the impure landscape, and our *patois* smothers the drum.

"In the centers we shall nourish the most cynical prostitution. We shall massacre the logical revolts.

"To the fleeced and enfeebled lands!—to the service of the most monstrous exploitations.

"Au revoir here, or anywhere. Voluntary conscripts, we shall have the fierce philosophy, ignorant of science, cunning for comfort, death for the world which goes. That's the real march. Forward, road!"

ARTHUR RIMBAUD [1870].

# A Viennese Operetta

**ILYA EHRENBOURG**

IN a tourist agency in Paris I saw a poster announcing: "Tourists, visit Vienna, the classical land of the Viennese operetta!"

Yes, if there were no hunger and fresh graves in Vienna, if there were no houses destroyed by General Fey's shells and statistics of mounting child mortality, if there were no heroes confined in jails and if there were not the mute tragedy of the Austrian working class, all that is now taking place there could indeed be regarded as a classical operetta.

Pompous officers whom one could easily mistake for *figurantes* in an operetta decorate the benches of the squares. On an empty street a landau ornamented with artificial roses dashes by majestically; an ancient landowner with the traditional whiskers is carrying his daughter to her first holy communion. In the windows of stationery stores portraits of the Hapsburgs are displayed prominently: Emperor Franz Joseph on his death bed blessing a group of pompous hussars. Monuments on every corner, memories of past glory, gay escapades and grand-ducal brigandage. At the foot of these monuments sleep unemployed and homeless workers.

The cult of cemeteries is the new religion of gay Vienna. No one builds houses any more, but the tombstone industry is working at full speed. With their last pennies retired petty civil servants buy small wreaths, and on Sundays, together with their families, visit the cemetery. The cemeteries are now the liveliest spots in Vienna.

Posters displayed on the walls of houses and public buildings proclaim: "Be proud that you are an Austrian!" To this exhortation, by way of explanation, are added the portraits of great Austrians: Strauss, Metternich, Franz Joseph, and Prince Starhemberg. The posters, however, are more eternal than glory. In the days of Franz Joseph, Vienna ruled Rome; in the epoch of Starhemberg, Rome rules Vienna. But Rome gave and Rome took: in the month of May, 1936, Starhemberg ceased being a great Austrian.

On the walls of workers' houses, traces of the February bombing are still visible. Fate, however, did not spare the victors either. How long is it since the "heroic" Herr Fey bombarded the workers' pots and pans? How long is it since he was referred to as the "saviour of the Fatherland"? Now, instead of ruling the country, he manages a steamship company. And Prince Starhemberg: only recently this "conqueror" of the workers of Styria predicted in angry telegrams the fall of British democracy. Now he, too, indulges in physical culture instead of high politics.

Times are different. Now one has to be able to humor everybody: the Nazis, the Italians, the Jewish bankers and Aryan hooligans, Herr Mandl and the strikebreakers from the "Christian" trade unions. Herr Schuschnigg is, above all, a very cautious man. He knows how to smile and keep silent. Of course, he is intimately acquainted with Rome of Fascist Black Shirts. He also knows, however, Rome of the Vatican. Thus, instead of boisterous Heimwehr men, Austria is now ruled by shrewd Jesuits.

THE inhabitants of Northern Tyrol know well how their brethren of Southern Tyrol live. They have no desire at all to cling to the tough nipples of the Roman wolf. Neither, however, do they dream of becoming soldiers of the Third Reich. It is not the Versailles Treaty that created a gulf between Austria and Germany, but the victory of the Brown Shirts.

Democratic Austria sought to follow her own path. But in February, 1934, the Jesuits, the cops, the bankers, and the generals drenched the city of Vienna with workers' blood, giving birth to a country without pathos, a government without support, a life without hope.

Orders, medals, flags, and ribbons. Thousands of ribbons! Everywhere one encounters the white-red arm ribbon: on the sleeves of miners, on the aprons of dishwashers, and in the lapels of petty officials. The people refer to it as the *"Existenz-band,"* a distinguishing mark which grants you the right to exist.

Not love but fear of others impels the people of Austria to hold on to the present government. It is the fear of Goering's storm troopers, of Mussolini's cannons—the fear of what tomorrow may bring. Austria is not a gambler. She is merely a stake which the gamblers in brown and black are attempting to grab. The white-red journalists still refer to it as the "capital of the world." But this "capital of the world" is now merely a card in a deck lying somewhere between Ethiopia and Memel.

Herr Schuschnigg recently took a trip to Italy. Viareggio has a beautiful beach and Herr Schuschnigg is in love with the Mediterranean Sea. Does one have to mention the fact that after he had his fill of the beauties of the Mediterranean, he went to have a pleasant talk with Signor Mussolini? He found, however, his Roman benefactor conversing with the Germans. Herr Schuschnigg cannot say: "Please talk about something else." He knows well that the two gamblers, smiling cunningly and bluffing each other, repeat in one chorus: "And what about Austria? . . ."

Austria refused to apply sanctions against the aggressor. The sickly offspring of the League of Nations stuck out its tongue at Geneva. Profits are more substantial than international obligations. The Austrian stock exchange was alive with merchants, brokers, and manufacturers. It was late in the fall, but to them it seemed like spring. But alas, Italian cash was not forthcoming and now there is sadness in the hearts of the merchants, brokers, and manufacturers. Instead of money they were given a broad fascist *grazia* and a string of rumors about Italo-German negotiations.

HOW can one inject some new life into this dead world with monuments too pompous for a supernumerary capital whose dignitaries are now pensioners of a pauperized government? The voice from the grave of Prince Eugene of Savoy is today heard more frequently than that of Schuschnigg. The country about which the Austrian "patriots" brag has long ceased to exist. It is no longer to be found in textbooks of geography but in textbooks of history.

The rulers of this tiny country swear by the shadow of a rapacious empire. They never miss an opportunity to rattle their swords at Czechoslovakia and Rumania. They celebrate triumphantly the two-hundredth anniversary of Prince Eugene's "conquest of the Turks," and with simian delicacy invite the Turks to send representatives. Parades. Gaudy uniforms of military attaches: Germans, Italians, Hungarians. The Turks refused to celebrate Prince Eugene's victory. So did the representatives of dozens of other countries. Indeed, why should the Herr Jesuits be friendly to living people when they are so intimate with the most illustrious dead?

Amidst the horrible poverty of Vienna they forever keep on repeating about the "rebirth of a mighty Austria." The factories are closed. Professors go hungry. But the "patriots" have already resurrected the Hapsburg eagle. In 1918 he was degraded by the republicans: He became single-headed. The Jesuits, however, despite the crisis, have supplied him with another head. His claws are not yet sharp enough, but the gouty dignitaries, operatic generals, and Messrs. Rothschild and Mandl are already preparing the somewhat rusty scepter.

"Be proud that you are an Austrian!" It is doubtful whether one can be too proud while performing the functions of a glorified maître-d'hôtel. For, having lost faith in Italian cash, the white-red "patriots" are now basing all their hope upon Anglo-Saxon tourists. The government has forbidden all demonstrations during the summer months. As a matter of fact, anti-government demonstrations are forbidden also during the winter months. But during the summer months

even pro-government demonstrations cannot be held: Herr Schuschnigg promises the foreign tourists not to spoil the Tyrolian landscape with the presence of Austrian "patriots." No, they are not proud either of their white-red ribbons or of the Heimwehr helmets—not even of the double-headed eagle.

The rulers try hard to convince their compatriots to resurrect the "national spirit." One can now see lawyers attired in Tyrolian hats with feathers parading the streets of Vienna. Bankers' kept women have suddenly worked up a passion for pseudo-national embroidery. Political speeches are now frequently interrupted by Tyrolian coloraturas. In other words: long live the "national" dances and the songs of operetta peasants whose current business is in London banks while their strong arm is in the ministries of Rome.

Another major problem of the rulers is renaming the streets of Vienna. The Liberty Square has, of course, been named the Dolfuss Square. Somewhat puzzling is the fate of the Square of Revolution, which one morning suddenly became Albertina Square. Karl Marx Street is now technically called the Street of the Holy City. The streets of Engels, Liebknecht, Rosa Luxemburg, Jaurès, Matteotti have now been rechristened with such world-famous names as Father Abel, Eberhardt, Dominique, Lustig-Preang, and Kernstock.

There is no unemployment among the priests. They baptize, say mass, and consecrate Italian loans and obligations, Bulgarian trucks, and Hungarian pigs. In the schools the Bible has displaced cosmography and even grammar: the immaculate conception is more important to them than literacy. The government tobacco monopoly has recently placed on the market a new cigar called "Pontifex Maximus," with a portrait of the Roman Pope. The white-red brokers, even after they have a heavy meal and are ready to loosen their belts and enjoy a cigar, do not forget the holy Providence.

In the windows of bookstores there are displayed biographies of generals, reminiscences of dignitaries, and dozens of heavy volumes about dogs, cats, tigers, and penguins. With the exception of generals and ex-ministers, the people of Vienna seem to have lost all interest in humanity. To be sure, hidden on the shelves, there are other books: Gorky, Mann, Malraux, and Dos Passos. These books are not displayed, but they are sold.

THE typical Viennese loves to sit in a cafe. He drinks one cup of coffee and about ten glasses of water. In between, he reads about twenty newspapers. Before, he used to read newspapers of various views. Through an old habit, he takes hold of the Neue Freie Presse—"this paper is after all more liberal than the others. . . ." He reads on the mastheads of the papers: "A democratic newspaper," "A workers' newspaper." But all the newspapers contain the same news. I have before me a bulletin which is distributed to various editorial offices: "Print the following without fail. . . ." Next follows a note: "It is forbidden to point out that this communication *must* be printed."

In despair, the Viennese asks the waiter to bring him a Swiss or a Prague newspaper. Late at night, however, a cop comes to the cafe and confiscates the foreign paper which contains something about Austria. But the paper has already been read by everyone. No one hurries in Austria; neither the censors nor the police. They arrest people casually, upon a whim, and when they torture, they do it indolently. No wonder the German hangmen look contemptuously upon their Austrian pupils.

What microscope can determine the shades of difference in the political *Weltanschauung* between Herr Schuschnigg and the now degraded Starhemberg? The prince's followers are now being disarmed. It is done, however, in a friendly spirit. In one city the Heimwehr men are given old rifles instead of new ones, while in another city they are given new rifles in place of the old ones. Signor Mussolini agreed to retire the prince, but at the same time hastened to appease the demoted hero. Mussolini knows well that in the Austrian household everything may be of use: a shrewd Jesuit and a hysterical martinet. Prince Starhemberg's newspaper, Der Heimat Schutzer, continues to sing paeans to the "Knights of the Helmet." He is dissatisfied with the government: it was a grave mistake to permit the "Christian" strikebreakers to celebrate the fourth of May—"the workers' Sunday." Yes, the Heimwehr men are opposed even to the strikebreakers. The word *worker* is to them like red to a bull. Der Heimat Schutzer writes: "We have no workers. We are all Austrians. Heil Starhemberg!"

The German fascists have been for a long time angry with Prince Starhemberg. He was studying too assiduously the regular and irregular verbs of the Italian language. He was, in fact, ready himself to exclaim: *"Eviva Starhemberg!"* But now, the legionnaires of Rome look with much more favor upon the Prussian Valkyrie, so the German minister to Austria, von Papen, invites Prince Starhemberg to take a trip in an aeroplane. Air trips are an aid to better understanding.

ON April 25, Prince Starhemberg made quite a warlike speech. He offered to organize "an anti-Bolshevik united front from the Mediterranean to the Baltic." Berlin liked this clever idea. That, to be sure, did not prevent the Austrian Nazis from raiding Starhemberg's estate, where he kept his ammunition. One should not forget, of course, that we are in the "land of the classical operettas." Some say that the Austrian Nazis were not aware of the wish of their German comrades. Others claim that this was simply a vulgar police raid—the cops decided that the prince had too many machine guns.

The monarchists publish their own newspaper, Oesterreicher. Without a date line on the front page, one could easily think that this sheet was published in the past century. The loyal subjects invite the Austrians to visit the grave of Emperor Karl, who is buried on the Island of Madero (for a few shillings, of course). Those who have no shillings can celebrate in their own home town the maturity of Prince Felix. Oesterreicher informs that 338 cities and villages have elected Emperor Otto as an honorary citizen.

Emperor Otto is waiting abroad. His valises have long been packed. His valet's ears are trained for the steps of the messenger who will bring the joyous news. . . . The Emperor is greatly pleased with the fact that 338 cities and villages appreciate his majestic heart. But among these villages and cities, alas, Rome and Berlin are not yet included. Thus, all that the Emperor can do for the moment is pose for photographers.

The Austrian police force is considered exemplary. Vienna has a large school for policemen where dicks from Portugal, Bulgaria, and Uruguay, are being trained. And yet the Austrian police cannot take care of their own boisterous Nazis. It is rare that Vienna is not supplied with the Kampf, which is the organ of the Austrian Hitler movement. What will the pupils from Uruguay and Bulgaria think of their Austrian teachers? However, many say that the police know very well where this "underground" paper is published. When the Nazis begin to shoot at people, bombard monuments, and set fire to houses they are usually arrested. In jail they are treated with silk gloves. After all, Nazis are not Communists. And then? . . . The Prussian Valkyrie make eyes at the Roman legionnaires and the hooligans are set free.

THE leader of the "Christian" strikebreakers, Herr Kunchak, publishes his own newspaper which he calls The Worker's Free Voice. I do not know whether it pays the Uruguay dicks to study with the Austrian masters, but it certainly doesn't pay to learn from Kunchak. The late Tsarist provocateur, Zubatov, was much more clever. Pitifully, Kunchak keeps on repeating: "Of course we are against the class struggle. The interests of the workers and the employers are essentially the same. However, the press devotes too much space to sensations and politics. Workers' themes are even more interesting than politics."

On the eve of the February struggles, Herr Kunchak ran from the Right Social Democrats to the left Jesuits. Fey was already training the guns while Kunchak was still trying to "conciliate" someone.

In the last issue of the strikebreaking newspaper, Arbeiter Woche, there is a large photograph of a fox with the following inscription: "Even the fox is glad that the spring is here." Vienna is restless. Telegrams fly from Rome to Berlin, from Berlin to Rome,

and from Rome to Vienna. The workers are ominously silent. They have nothing to eat. Western diplomats whisper into Schuschnigg's ears that it wouldn't be a bad idea "to widen the basis of the government." Some of the old trade-union bureaucrats take courage to stick their noses out into the streets: "How is the weather? . . ." And the old fox, Herr Kunchak, is glad that "at last spring has arrived."

In the meantime Vienna is hungry. I saw unemployed who, as though they were hypnotized, gazed at hams displayed in windows. For every operetta uniform there are a hundred people in rags. The government has doubled the rent in the municipal houses. Thousands of families have found themselves in the streets. The price of electricity is prohibitive. At night the houses are dark. Those who have a few pennies go to the cafes. Others sit in the darkness. The number of unemployed does not decrease. The Jesuits baptize free of charge and do not take any money for mass, but one cannot live free of charge.

A French journalist went recently to Floridsdorf. He asked the workers: "Whom are you for: Schuschnigg, Starhemberg, Archduke Otto, or Hitler?"

The workers remained silent. They know the tricks of the Austrian police. Only one old fellow replied: "We are for Weissel."

In the month of February, 1934, the whitered "patriots" hanged the engineer, Weissel. Before his death, Weissel exclaimed: "Long live the revolution!" The revolution did not die. It merely hides in the cracks of workers' houses, in the darkness of the Vienna night. It will again appear one day on the streets of this unhappy city which, at one time, was justly proud of its schools, municipal houses, and workers.

The Jesuits have transformed it into a police monastery, a Balkan wilderness, a breeding-ground for Nazi murderers—into a nightmarish operetta where some people go hungry while others loaf and smoke papal cigars.

# North of the White Mountains

## JACK WILGUS

BERLIN, New Hampshire, a one-family industry town, makes paper. It lies in a rock-strewn gulch. Nobody would care to have taken up life in Berlin, a few years ago. And today a lot has to be done to make Berlin worth living in. It is a sure wager that the family that controls the Brown Paper Company lives in a pleasanter place. Of course you or I might have had to live there. In America of these days we go where we can get work. Aside from all the paper workers and men who cut the trees and float them down, there are the storekeepers. The stores are not of the big display type. And the storekeepers are not on the road to wealth in old Berlin. Somehow, those storekeepers get by, after a fashion, and no more.

I was talking to Arthur Bergeron the other night. He is mayor of Berlin. I was impressed by his keen wit and unafraid attitude in the difficult place he has built for himself. He is a young man, not more than four years out of college. His family came of French stock, as have most men and women in Berlin.

Three years ago conditions got so bad in Berlin that a mass meeting was called by a group of progressive and militant paper workers. They invited all who work for a living in Coos County, New Hampshire, to join them in building the Coos County Workers' Club. Out of this organization, which grew to thousands, was born the successful Berlin Farmer-Labor Party, in no way connected with the western Farmer-Labor Party, but on the road to partisanship with the national Farmer-Labor Party.

Backed to a man by the Coos County Workers' Club, a sort of union unconnected with the A.F. of L., Bergeron and his group won offices. As mayor of Berlin he had a difficult row to hoe. And he is apparently the man for the task.

The Brown Paper Company had previously turned to the town for financial assistance. Berlin had to underwrite the notes. The new Farmer-Labor Party made a condition. The company would either have to stand completely on its own henceforth, or pay the wages demanded by the Coos County Workers' Club. And the absentee-owned Brown Company gave in, and paid the increase. City employes were given shorter hours and more men put on the payroll. Things began to happen in this lonely town, lying north of the White Mountains and on a parallel with that other militant city, Barre, Vermont, to the west.

LAST fall new elections dawned. The Republican and Democratic Parties formed a coalition in an attempt to break the Farmer-Labor Party. Not relying on their combined forces alone, they started an underground campaign against Mayor Bergeron and his associates. The company was determined to regain its control of the town. It made an appeal to the local priests. This city of 20,000 is mainly Catholic. Using this as a wedge, the company stooges started rumors circulating, at considerable cost, to the effect that the "Reds" were going to close the parochial schools if reelected, that the radicals were planning to have a strike which would drive out the town's only company. Even lying whispers against Mayor Bergeron's personal character, which was subsequently proved unimpeachable, were started over the grapevine. There were hints of connections with "Moscow" and such. Friends of a former city official who had embezzled for many years and whom the Farmer-Labor government had sent to jail, were busy on all sides, in consort with bootleggers and company lackeys. But when the elections came about, workers, farmers, and small businessmen put Bergeron and members of the council safely in office for another term. The coalition of Republicans and Democrats was a flop.

Enemies of the Farmer-Labor Party went to work among the farmers. Coos County is large, and is dotted with small, run-down farms. These men and women, who work from before sun-up to after dark, had for years supplied a big milk combine, at below cost, at cost, again below cost, but never at a living profit. They were loyal to their grange. And at one of the regular meetings some friend of the reactionary movement spoke at length, demanding to know what right the Farmer-Labor Party of Berlin had to use the name Farmer, what had they ever done that included the farmer, he would like to know, what could they ever do to benefit the farmers? They were a bunch of radicals and all that.

Hearing of this, the leading committee up in Berlin decided to lose no time in answering the challenge. Going to the next farm meeting, Bergeron and his fellow Farmer-Laborites told the farmers in their stark little hall just what the Farmer-Labor Party of Berlin is ready to do in a concrete way to cooperate with the farmers. With great enthusiasm this meeting of small farmers, following Bergeron's speech, voted to build a milk cooperative, the stock to be sold between the poor farmers and Berlin workers, and to be run by rank and file members.

Today the farmers are making a profit, the milk prices have gone down in Berlin, and the milk trust is numbered among the outsiders looking in and joining the forces counter to progressive movements in Coos County. The cooperative is a fact and a success, and it belongs to the small farmers and workers, and has welded city and country men and women in a common party. Thus the Farmer-Labor Party went out of the town limits and assumed county-wide proportions these late months.

TALKING with Arthur Bergeron, the young man who helped to bring all this about, we found that he is most concerned with unemployment relief. New machinery

and the permanent crisis have placed a huge proportion of Berliners on relief. And this relief is pitifully insignificant. I doubt if any relief is lower in the North. But the progressives are blocked. There is a state law which prohibits taxes except those on land and property. This means that the small homeowners and storekeepers and farmers have to pay the relief doled out to the unemployed, and they are themselves nearly on a starvation basis. The state does nothing to aid unemployment. We asked Bergeron what he could do about it, if his city is divided between workers and farmers on the one hand and large numbers of unemployed workers on the other, with the till low, and the company all but untaxable.

"Change the state constitution," he spoke up with his usual sharpness and economy of words. "Change it so we can tax incomes progressively. That's what."

"But the Concord Monitor, the capital's paper, said you are in favor of a sales tax, in front-page headlines, Saturday," I said.

"That is a cold lie," he replied.

"But how can you change the New Hampshire constitution without a New Hampshire Farmer-Labor Party?" I asked him.

"We must win the small farmers, trade unions, ministers, and people like that."

"With a state party?"

"We have already sent out calls for a state Farmer-Labor conference," the mayor replied.

ARTHUR BERGERON, neither Socialist nor Communist, living, since his graduation from college, in this out-of-the-way city of the north, finds himself suddenly in a key position in state politics, looked to for action by farmers, workers, and unemployed. He has much to learn, and I think we have much to learn from him and the other militant workers of Coos County. A big push for unionization in New Hampshire, the second most industrialized state in the union, for its population, the state with a mill in every hamlet, lies immediately ahead. These are men and women who have put into practice, with no outside guidance or applause, a successful party in one of the most backward areas of New England, and brought to book the big firm that has ground lumbermen and paper workers for generations. Having started in Berlin, and having won so much for the workers and farmers, we are not over-optimistic, in my opinion, when we expect a spread south and east, into a winning New Hampshire Farmer-Labor Party.

# Our Readers' Forum

## Those Things Happen

This really happened. Jim ———, the stalwart proprietor of a hot-dog and nickel-hamburger joint, was denouncing the teachers of a nearby trade school.

"I dunno what the hell they are coming to. Organizing all the time into clans! Red talk—red meetings! They ought to be stopped. No good can come out of it. . . ."

"Here is something for you, Jim," interrupted the letter-carrier.

Jim gingerly opened a circular letter with his clumsy hands. One glance and he turned to me with a broad grin.

"Say, here is a corking good magazine—THE NEW MASSES." He waved the circular in my face. "I'm gonna subscribe to it all right as soon as I come back from my trip. It sure hits straight from the shoulder! You ought to read it."

Jim, of course, did not suspect that I mentioned his name for a sample copy.

MARGARET GLASS.

## For Automatic Civil Service Status

I have read that the Emergency Relief Bureau is going to be put on a Civil Service basis. It seems to me that the present staff has proven very adequately that they can do the job efficiently. I cannot understand the reason for the hesitancy on the part of the Civil Service Commission to transfer them automatically to Civil Service. Is not the only purpose of the Civil Service examination to put persons best fitted on City jobs? Certainly, five years of practical experience in the work of administering relief is a much better yardstick to judge from than a written examination. Let's not waste public funds on a competitive examination. Let's do the same that was done with the hospital and Independent Subway workers. Let's show the present Emergency Relief Bureau staff our appreciation for its five hard years of work under very poor conditions. Let's give them Civil Service automatically!

LILLIAN LASHER.

## Macfadden's Again

In the June 16 issue of THE NEW MASSES an employe of Bernarr Macfadden described working conditions which that "friend of labor" imposes upon his workers.

I, too, am an employe of Macfadden, and wish to add my voice in denouncing my hypocritical, muscle-minded boss.

In order to evade the responsibility which every employer should assume towards workers who become ill in his employ, Bernarr Macfadden "generously" contributed $500 to the creation of the Macfadden Employees Association, a company union. It is mainly the lower-salaried employes who now contribute to the support of this organization. Workers are "persuaded" to join the M.E.A. for their own interests. It is explained to them that in the event of illness, they will receive sick benefit.

During the month of June, members of the M.E.A. were asked to vote themselves a cut in sick benefit from thirteen weeks maximum with full payment (in accordance with dues paid by members) to six weeks benefit with full payment. Out of 437 ballots sent out, 261 were returned. In other words, 41 percent of the members did not vote. The failure of all members to respond may be explained by the fact that ballots were inconspicuously numbered and were addressed to individual members. It would not be hard to discover who was "disloyal" to the firm's interests.

Needless to add, this cut was effected—but with a very small majority of about 30—as were some further measures such as the denial of membership rights to anyone sick over six weeks. This measure was intended to cut down on death benefit payments to beneficiaries, which membership entitles. It is also necessary for members who remain sick for over six weeks to submit to a company doctor's examination before reinstatement in the M.E.A.

By such methods does that great health-builder, that one-time aspirant to Republican and Liberty League nomination for the presidency—cast off his $15-a-week employes if they are unfortunate enough to become ill. These workers who may be broken in the grind, and whom he uses in spewing out doses of filth which contaminate millions of other workers, are denied even the small sick benefits which they have set aside for themselves.

L. L. Y.

## The Richest Country . . .

Drought-ridden, dust-blowing, ill-winded, lynch-loving Arkansas! Not half as thirsty is its arid soil as its parched-throat planters who thirst for more profits! Whether gotten through the theft of milk from starving babies, squeezing the very life blood out of the half-starved and always hungry farmers, or stealing books from children yearning for knowledge, what matter? . . .

You have been reading more than I can tell you of the southern tenant farmers' strike for $1.50 a day instead of 75 cents and for 10 hours instead of from kin to cain't (you know, farmer, sunup to sundown). That may be plenty of suffering for the white family, but how about the Negro who cannot even show his face to the sun in a great part of the state—Joe T. Robinson's state? You may read on and on about the plight of the sharecropper but you cannot visualize until you see, as we have, their homes. You walk into a bare-floored, foul-smelling shack, papered with newspapers pasted on in the beginning of the century so that you can't even be interested in straining your neck to read the news off the walls. A few scattered benches serve both as chairs and in some cases as beds. That and a so-called table made from a few sticks of pine comprise the furnishings. Placing your foot on the first step of the "porch" makes you want to run because the loud squeak of the boards for the moment sounds like the voice of feeble ghosts. You take in at a glance the once-shingled roof, now patched with tin signs to keep the rain out—and you are distracted to read "Coca-Cola." A few moldy boards with foot-size cracks represent the porch and entrance into the house. The windows, or what's left of them, need no longer be cleaned. The cardboard and soda signs can be washed by the rain—when it rains. You hesitate despite the neighbor beckoning you to enter because you still don't believe this is a house where human beings live, breathe, and perform their many functions necessary for living.

I. S.

## Defeat the Brazilian Terror!

July 8, 1936.

Today a cable arrived from Brazil reporting the death of two persons in Camocin, State of Cerea, Brazil, in the course of a raiding party by police. On June 21, President Getulio Vargas appeared before the Brazilian Congress and moved for an extension of the "State of War" for another period of ninety days. In the same period he decreed that all political prisoners—and there are more than 17,000 in Brazil—shall be tried by special tribunals. For many this may mean long prison sentences, death. Already four deputies are being brought to trial. . . .

Of the treatment accorded these prisoners, we quote the description given by Senator Abel Chermont in a speech before the Permanent Session of the Brazilian Senate and published in The Impartial, Brazilian daily, on March 4:

"A suspicion is enough for a citizen to be pitilessly beaten, to confess secrets that the police attribute to his knowledge. But the barbarity used did not end with tortures and beatings. The preventive repression of the police exceeds this. Captain Jose de Madeiros . . . has been found dead. . . . His body was filled with bullet wounds. His hands and feet broken and crushed, with 23 wounds. . . . " Senator Abel Chermont was imprisoned after making this appeal.

In this period of ninety days, each moment may decide the fate of these 17,000. We are writing to ask your readers to help save these lives! Among these are Luis Carlos Prestes, beloved president of the National Liberation Alliance, Dr. Pedro da Cunha, leading Socialist, and a host of workers, professionals, students, writers, artists—the best minds of Brazil!

Readers of THE NEW MASSES! Send your protest letters or wires to Ambassador Oswaldo Aranha, Washington, D. C., or Brazilian Consul, 17 Battery Place, New York. Ask any organization of which you are a member to send communications—a cable if possible—to Chamber of Deputies, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Ask the release of Luis Carlos Prestes, President of the National Liberation Alliance, and amnesty for all political prisoners languishing in the torture chambers of Brazil.

ROSE E. FLANELL.

## The New York Library

Your article of July 7 on libraries is an encouragement to those of us who are working for better things in the library field. However, the glowing colors in which the New York Public Library Staff Association is painted are not yet justified by the facts. It is still a company union, still a craft union. It hopes to be, but is not yet by any means "one of the truly representative and democratic staff organizations in the library world."

Excellent first steps have been taken. For the first time, the association has

1. A constitution guaranteeing that "the will of the membership shall be carried out."
2. Regular meetings.
3. A regular publication.
4. Speakers on vital problems, the most valuable and best received of whom was Mary van Kleeck.
5. No age limit so that all young workers are eligible.

But the following are still needed:

1. An executive board which wants to turn the paper constitution into a live one.
2. A president not to suppress, but to express the will of the membership.
3. A representative, democratically elected editorial board for the paper.
4. Meetings worth while for maintenance and bindery workers, custodians, and pages as well as for professionals.
5. Open hearings to look into arbitrary cuts and dismissals.
6. Democratically elected representatives on the United Council of the three boroughs.

And eventually

7. The exclusion of those in a capacity to hire and fire as persons bound to be more or less inspired by the administration.
8. Affiliation with other professional associations and the American Federation of Labor.

These objectives must be borne in mind while working for better pay, better conditions, bigger book appropriations, tenure of office, and retirement pensions.

A LIBRARIAN.

# REVIEW AND COMMENT

## Samson as Symbol

*EYELESS IN GAZA, by Aldous Huxley. Harper and Brothers.* $2.50.

ALDOUS HUXLEY, despite his reputation for wit and sophistication, has always been as serious a truthseeker as his grandfather and as implacable a moralist as the greater Huxley's contemporaries. Obviously he could not be satisfied forever with brilliant attacks on false values; sooner or later he had to make the enunciation of what he regarded as true values his chief concern. Foreshadowed in *Point Counter Point,* his adoption of the role of preceptor and prophet began with *Brave New World. Eyeless in Gaza* is a further revelation of prophetic doctrine.

*Brave New World* was an irritating book. No one could deny that its picture of a utopia of mechanical perfection, mass thinking, and universal boredom was amusing as well as disgusting. What irritated the reader was that Huxley drew this picture with the express purpose of discouraging attempts at social improvement. On the title page he quoted from Nicholas Berdyaev: "Utopias are realizable. Life marches towards utopias. And perhaps a new age is beginning, an age in which the intellectuals and the cultivated class will dream of ways of avoiding utopias and returning to a non-utopian society, less 'perfect' and more free." The duty of the intellectual, it appeared, is to try to check all efforts at creating an ordered society lest the horrors of *Brave New World* result. Even if the dangers had not been largely imaginary, one would still have objected to Huxley's emphasis: he said nothing about trying to bring the social improvements without incurring the dangers; rather than take any risks, he would simply preserve the *status quo.* More than that, he loudly insisted on the right to suffer. That Aldous Huxley might have his make-believe sufferings, the millions and millions of the exploited were to be kept in the real and indescribable miseries of the capitalist system. The egoism of this thesis could not fail to sicken a sensitive reader.

*Eyeless in Gaza* proceeds a step beyond *Brave New World,* and therefore deserves close scrutiny. Looking at it as a novel, one is strongly reminded that Mr. Huxley is an essayist. One of the favorable things to be said about his novels is that they contain his best essays, but good essays do not make good novels, and perhaps Mr. Huxley's novels, as novels, are not very good. Each has a central figure that is obviously autobiographical and quite persuasive. The other characters, even when they are as memorable as Rampion, Burlap, Illidge, or Spandrell, are close to being caricatures. There is something slightly synthetic about Huxley's novels, and one of the symptoms is the shameless way in which he plagiarizes himself, using again and again types, scenes and situations that please him. Of course he is very skillful in concealing the weaknesses of his creative powers, but one feels that he is a first-rate essayist who has raised himself by his own bootstraps to the level of novelist, and done an extraordinarily good job at it.

Perhaps that is why he is seldom satisfied to tell a straightforward story in a straightforward way, why he resorts to technical ingenuities in construction that distract the reader's attention from lapses in his understanding of character. *Eyeless in Gaza,* for example, moves erratically in time as *Point Counter Point* does in space. One episode is in 1933, the next in 1902, the next in 1934, the next in 1912, and so on throughout the book. The theory of this procedure is suggested when the leading character, Anthony Beavis, is reminded by kissing his mistress of playing in a chalk-pit twenty years before. "Somewhere in the mind," he says to himself, "a lunatic shuffled a pack of snapshots and dealt them out at random, shuffled once more and dealt them out in different order, again and again, indefinitely. There was no chronology. The idiot remembered no distinction between before and after. The pit was as real and vivid as the gallery. That ten years separated flints from Gaugins was a fact, not given, but discoverable only on second thoughts by the calculating intellect. The thirty-five years of his conscious life made themselves immediately known to him as a chaos—a pack of snapshots in the hands of a lunatic."

This is the theory: chronology is unreal, and Huxley will have none of it. I doubt that the theory is sound, and I am sure that his method of presentation does not reflect the movement of the human mind—as, for example, Proust's method of presentation does. All the device does, it seems to me, is to lend to the novel an element of novelty that amuses a lively intellect. It is rather fun because you always know what is going to happen, and you take pleasure in figuring out the course of events. Moreover, the method permits the author to arrive almost simultaneously at a series of climaxes that were considerably separated in time, juxtaposing crucial events in Anthony Beavis's life and enabling you to compare them. But these, after all, are minor advantages, and one wonders why Huxley thought they were worth the effort involved for author and reader.

The method's weakness is suggested by the fact that the reader, in order to think about the book at all, has to stop and make a chronological reconstruction of the events. So reconstructed, this series of episodes in the life of Anthony Beavis is easily summarized. The son of an arid philologist, he lost his mother when he was eleven. In school and college he fell alternately under the influence of his bullying, snobbish, conventional schoolmates and of an idealistic, high-principled boy called Brian Foxe. After graduation, he had an affair with an older woman, Mary Amberley, who encouraged the pose of cynicism. Her influence helped him to hurt Brian Foxe, hurt him to such an extent that his friend committed suicide. Later Anthony dignified his cynicism into a *Weltanschauung,* making it the basis of a career as sociologist. Still later, while carrying on his career and his philandering, he was shocked by a sudden break with his mistress, Helen, the daughter of the now ruined Mary Amberley. This led to his going with a friend to Mexico, where he met Dr. Miller, the man who changed his life.

Though less startling than either *Antic Hay* or *Point Counter Point, Eyeless in Gaza* does portray, and often with stinging sharpness, elements of emptiness and decay in contemporary civilization. We feel the incurable triviality of Anthony's father, the grasping sentimentality of Mrs. Foxe, the gruesome irresponsibility of Mary Amberley, the total impotence of Hugh Ledwidge, the painful pride of Mark Staithes. But the breakdown of capitalist civilization is most clearly reflected, as one would expect, in Anthony Beavis. Three things emphasize Anthony's failure: Brian Foxe's suicide, the collapse of his relationship with Helen, and the futility of his sociology. They are related, for all three grow out of the defects of his character. In condemning these defects of character, Huxley is condemning not only Anthony's past but his own as well. "He himself, Anthony went on to think, he himself had chosen to regard the whole process as either pointless or a practical joke. *Yes,* chosen. For it had been an act of the will. If it were all nonsense or a joke, then he was at liberty to read his books and exercise his talents for sarcastic comment; there was no reason why he shouldn't sleep with any presentable woman who was ready to sleep with him. If it weren't nonsense, if there were some significance, then he could no longer live irresponsibly. There were duties towards himself and others and the nature of things. Duties with whose fulfilment the sleeping and the indiscriminate reading and the habit of detached irony would interfere. He had chosen to think it nonsense, and nonsense for more than twenty years the thing had seemed to be."

Huxley thus clearly recognizes that cyni-

cism is a defense, not merely of a state of mind, but of actual concrete privileges. He sees that, if one believes the future is hopeless, it is because one does not want to do the things and make the sacrifices that would substitute good for evil. So far, he registers a clear intellectual advance. But when he comes to consider how evil can be overcome, he shows how far he still is from clarity of thought. He examines the two traditional methods of overcoming evil, social reconstruction, which means Communism, and individual reconstruction, which means religion. He rejects the former and accepts the latter.

His examination of Communism, at least so far as this novel is concerned, is both superficial and unfair. The statement that Mark Staithes is a Communist is a libel on the Communist Party of Great Britain. Helen is no more representative. Only Giesebrecht, the German refugee, is a conceivable Communist, and he scarcely figures in the story. It is safe to say that Huxley does not know Communists, and it is doubtful if he knows Communism. The converted Anthony makes three points against Communism. First, he raises the usual objection about ends justifying means, as if it were ever possible to judge means apart from ends. Second, he says that Communism rests on hatred, forgetting that it is capitalism that creates hatred, and that Communism, at its worst, harnesses hatred to constructive ends and, at its best, gives men understanding enough to transcend it. Finally, he argues that it is a fallacy to assume that better social conditions make better people.

This last point is vital. Rejecting Communism, Huxley is forced to adopt the position that progress can come only through changes in the individual's heart, soul, mind, personality—whatever you want to call it. How convincing, one first asks, does he make the actual visualization of this process in the novel? In Mexico Anthony meets Dr. Miller. Miller appears on the scene with his mouth full of phrases reminiscent of both Bernarr Macfadden and Frank Buchman. Here, one thinks, is the perfect opportunity for Huxley's satire. But no, to our amazement, Huxley takes Miller perfectly seriously, and asks us to. This blather about constipation and right posture and vegetarianism and love and peace succeeded, we are asked to believe, in changing the life of Anthony Beavis. It might almost be the perfect Huxleyan joke.

And we can say little more for the presentation of Miller's ideas in Anthony's journal, which is scattered through the book. If you love people, they will love you, and, if they love you, they will be better people, and war and exploitation will vanish. All this is justified on the basis of what seems old-fashioned Emersonian transcendentalism, decorated with a few figures of speech from modern science.

Impossible as it is to discuss adequately at this point the relative merits of social and individual reconstruction, it may be pointed out that three thousand years of preaching the latter has accomplished singularly little. Social reconstruction, however, has worked. Huxley pokes fun at the Webbs for believing that more tractors will make better persons, but the Webbs have actually seen, in the U.S.S.R., that social reconstruction does mean individual reconstruction. We have, moreover, far more evidence than the relatively brief experience of the Soviet Union can give. All through history social conditions have changed, and the changes have altered human beings. There are no other terms in which one can understand history. What Communism does is to use the knowledge that comes from history so that man can cooperate with social forces in shaping his own destiny.

It is necessary to deal thus flatly with Huxley's ideas because they are all that matters very much. As a novel, as a picture of human beings and a particular society, *Eyeless in Gaza* is inferior to *Point Counter Point*. As a sample of Huxley's thinking, it marks an advance over the earlier novel because it shows that he is now seriously concerned with the problem of making a better world. But on the other hand, the methods of reconstruction he proposes seem to me quite demonstrably wrong.

His title comes from *Samson Agonistes:*

> Promise was that I
> Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
> Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
> Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,
> Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke;
> Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
> Divine Prediction; what if all foretold
> Had been fulfilled but through mine own default,
> Whom have I to complain of but myself?

Yet Samson, it may be remembered, fulfilled the prophecy and delivered Israel, not by converting the Philistines to some mystical doctrine of love and peace, but by pulling down the temple on their heads. It was a crude method, but it redeemed Samson's self-respect, and it did dispose of the Philistines.

GRANVILLE HICKS.

# *American Oligarchs*

*RULERS OF AMERICA, A study of Finance Capital, by Anna Rochester. International Publishers,* $2.50. (*A Book Union Selection.*)

MORE than a year ago, in the tiny town of Gallup, New Mexico, two coal-miners were murdered by deputy-sheriffs, and 40 other miners and their wives charged with the murder of the local sheriff who was shot by the same deputies. This was part of the basic struggle of the American workers for unionism and the right to live. It was the task of the labor movement to defend those forty miners from the electric chair.

In the course of performing this task it was necessary to find out who was back of this murder; who, through definite policies of cold brutality to protect profits, had ordered it.

At that time there was no such volume as *Rulers of America.* We went to the Labor Research Association, which sponsors this book, for information. It came through, and the answer was, briefly: from the Gallup-American Coal Company to Kennecott Copper, to the House of Morgan. Those were the financial links of the murder. A financial investment by the House of Morgan in Cuba or in China may be the monument erected by finance capital to the murder of Solomon Esquibel and Ignacio Velarde, coal miners, and to three other Gallup union men who are now in the New Mexico penitentiary for a murder committed by a hired man of Gamerco. And the monument to the murder of a half-dozen or a hundred Cuban or Chinese workers is just as likely as not to be a new horse in the private stables of a member of the Morgan or Rockefeller family, or a half-dozen new machine-guns mounted on the walls of the General Electric plant at Schenectady (Morgan-controlled). That is finance capital.

Until now, there has been no single volume which enlarged the spotlight to illuminate Lenin's analysis of imperialism in terms of a study of the structure of United States imperialism, in terms of the cold realities of *who* rules *America,* and *how.* Anna Rochester's *Rulers of America* provides this study, and it is a major contribution to the arsenal of progress.

Supposing that you are not a coal-miner; not even a worker of any kind; supposing you consider yourself (for the sake of argument) purely a consumer, and a small one at that. When you enter your apartment at night and snap the light switch, you pay tribute, in cash, to Mr. Morgan. Even if it so happens that because of non-payment of your bill to the electric light company (the depression has had a definite effect on your consumer's income whatever its source may be) the current (wherever you live Mr. Morgan has an interest in "your" public utility) has been turned off during the day in your absence—Mr. Morgan or one of his lieutenants still draws his profit. You are wearing out the switch itself, turning it on and off a half dozen times to make sure, and the switch will eventually have to be replaced with another, also manufactured by a firm controlled by the House of Morgan.

Then, if you can't pay your electricity bill, you may decide to use kerosene lamps. The profit is merely switched to the House of Rockefeller, which squeezes profit out of the difference between the wages its companies pay and the price you pay for fuel for your oil-lamps, or to one of his cutthroat competitors—who may even perhaps be Mr. Morgan. But Mr. Rockefeller's profits don't depend on that. Don't forget that you use

gasoline, and buy groceries. Chances are you smoke cigarettes, too. And certainly, even if you are a nudist, you wear some kind of clothes in public.

Both Rockefeller and Morgan have interests in all these varieties of enterprises, and many more. It's valuable to know, also, that the titans battle among themselves. As a result, 52 huge corporations, with assets of nearly 25 billion dollars, have interlocking Morgan and Rockefeller direction, with Hearst and other lesser financial powers sticking their fingers in here and there. In some Morgan is dominant, in others Rockefeller, and at all times each struggles with the other to obtain control. On only one thing are all the rulers of America united —in their determination to rule, and of necessity, as this book so clearly shows, at the expense of worker and consumer. You are a worker for one ruling house or another, and a consumer to the same house and to every other house. They get you coming and going, and their front is united on that point.

This complex of relations is hinted on financial pages and occasional scandals in the press. But just how the Rulers of America reign, and what the stakes are, is something you will only find out about in a thousand and one original and frequently unavailable sources—or in this book.

"James W. Gerard, lawyer and former ambassador to Germany, stated in August, 1930, that this country was ruled by 59 financiers and corporation officials. His list was both too long and too short," says the foreword to *Rulers of America.*

Its three hundred and sixty-three pages are packed with more facts to the line than the World Almanac, and they analyze the instruments of these rulers' power. At times it reads like a detective story. All through it makes you gasp. You knew something about it or you knew nothing about it, or you knew a whole lot—but unless you are one of these Rulers, you never knew a tenth what's in this book, because no one ever got this information together before.

Writer, reader, educator, organizer, no one who wants to know what the world about him is doing and how it is built, what his relations are to capital, and why the most astute labor leaders and working-class political thinkers are working so hard for a Farmer-Labor Party, can afford to miss this book.

It's no wonder, then, that in a few weeks *Rulers of America* has gone into a second printing. It is only to be hoped that in the next edition, the 16 pages of index will be expanded to 36, so that the thousands of people who need and must have this book will have an easier time looking up references.

LOUIS COLMAN.

## *Muscular Mysticism*

*LISTEN FOR A LONESOME DRUM, A York State Chronicle, by Carl Carmer. Farrar and Rinehart.* $3.

SINCE he wrote *Stars Fell on Alabama,* Carl Carmer has come north. Yet upstate New York—or as he has it, York State —is not unfamiliar territory to him. He was born there and he has spent more than half his life there, and now he has done for it what he did for that strange southern country where the stars are reputed to have fallen. He has traveled all over his chosen piece of land, watched its people at work, visited with the local "characters," enjoyed the popular legends, ballads, tall stories, studied the old documents. And once again he has woven his gleanings into a pleasing, colorful and often startling book.

York State history goes back to the Indians and beyond. Pretty much all of it is hinted, suggested, or related here. It is done in a tremendously effective, lusty manner. At first glance you have no idea what is true, what Mr. Carmer thinks is true, and what is just plain "colorful." To Mr. Carmer, however, that is quite unimportant. What is important is the total and that total is a "one mystic quality" which is the essence of York State. But Carmer is not a mystic. It is just that he allows mysticism to explain what he doesn't explain any other way. Because it is often profoundly beautiful—as it is, for instance, in the tale of the lonesome drum, which gives the book its name—he lets it assume a greater importance than his facts. This has a great effect on the very material which he selects. He brusquely dismisses the towns. Buffalo is the "first city of the middle west." Rochester is but faintly amusing. New York City is purposely and entirely omitted. Each has a quality of its own which is at odds with what Carmer wishes to convey about York State. But since they are a part of it, this is rather like begging the question. Carmer says that York State is not New York, and vice versa. Yet to a city reader it is quite patent that the reason for the persistent folk atmosphere, which he portrays so skilfully, is the unevenness of development between the towns and the surrounding country.

The most important section of the seven in the book is called "Truth Shall Spring Out of the Earth." It is a series of accounts of the numerous cults which sprang up years ago in York State. The Jemimakins, the Mormons, the Millerites who believed that the end of the world was at hand, are brought before us with skill and sympathy. The contrast between their early beginnings and their present survivals is neatly and subtly brought out. Yet it is in these accounts, and especially in the stories of the Shakers and of the growth of Oneida Ltd., that Carmer's major shortcoming is most evident. The reading matter between the lines is eloquent with neglect. Both Oneida Ltd. and the Shaker colony began as religions with a business. The weird rituals and the strange sex customs were inspiration to the founding religionists for the building of extremely successful, quasi-socialist, commercial communities. Oneida Ltd. has changed with the times. It is a thriving industrial establishment making Community Plate silverware. It is almost a-b-c that protestant individualist revolt and economic individualist practice are one, that both of these made for the hardy Yankee business acumen and strength which Carmer justly makes so much of. The collective farms and colonies which these religious groups created were end products in a long and complicated revolutionary process which had its high points in the Cromwell events and in the American Revolutionary War. Although he has given us little inkling of it, I am sure Mr. Carmer would admit this, but he would also insist, as many people have insisted about Palestine, that there is something in the very air of York State which makes people see visions on its hilltops.

One doesn't request that Mr. Carmer write economic histories. He has chosen his method and he is certainly welcome to it, especially since he has achieved the effect he set out for: ". . . to paint the portrait of a land which . . . has . . . its own integrity of character, its own salty individuality." But one does request that the next time he goes out to explore a state, he prove conclusions in a more tangible manner. He is a very skilled writer and with him it would not be a case of dragging things in by the horns. His legends would be clearer, his characters stronger against their historical backgrounds, his mysteries more believable.

DAVID SHREIBER.

## *The Scapegoat Heritage*

*THE JEWS OF GERMANY, by Marvin Lowenthal. Longmans Green and Company.* $3.

IN a Norwegian book, *A Fugitive Crosses His Tracks,* just published in America, a Scandinavian writer, describing a small factory community in Denmark, manages to convey with remarkable sensitiveness how the oppressions from above set into action other oppressions—the old darkening the lives of the young, neighbors terrorizing each other with gossip, so that what exhaustion and poverty leave undone in the way of inhibiting and devitalizing the human spirit, is completed by this mutual oppression. There no one who is vulnerable can hope to escape the pent-up rage of the oppressed and humiliated. In such a community, the fallen from grace, the nonconformist, and alien are in unending danger, for upon them recoils each shudder of the suffering.

Among the nations Germany comes, next to Poland, closest to this unenviable state; and Poland has dealt similarly with its Jews. German history is fouler with class

oppression and war than most European nations. It achieved national unity later than most, and the oppressions of capitalism, when the belated industrial revolution arrived, overlaid unliquidated sediments of feudal oppression. To this may be added the illiberal state guardianship which Bismarck made into a proud tradition and which the Nazis have brought to a brutal perfection. In such a society, where the oppressions not only began but became unbearable close to the top strata, the presence of the Jew, the perpetual alien, permitted all classes to discharge their anger upon him. Goethe, Wagner, Dühring could also flourish the whip for different reasons along with the jealous small shopkeeper and the peasant. Today in this country we see Dreiser, a saddened and embittered man to whom success came too late, who suffered an impoverished and humiliated childhood and in his artistic maturity found himself vilified as a pornographer, finding it easier to satisfy himself with a kick at the traditional scapegoat than with an honest and open fight with the real oppressors whom he recognizes. In Germany the Dreisers have always been depressingly abundant.

THE story of the Jews in Germany is a record of nearly two thousand years in this scapegoat service. Marvin Lowenthal tells it with a pointed restraint that gives his book a curious, tense power. Jewish settlements in Germany were very ancient; even more ancient was Occidental anti-semitism which, in its best known forms, began almost simultaneously with Christianity. Up to the rise of capitalism, anti-semitism had this peculiar check: there was an economic use for the Jew, he filled despised, difficult, or outlawed functions, especially that of the moneylender. He could become a sort of sponge for bishops and priests, soaking up wealth which could then be squeezed out of him. In the communities where ghettoes existed he was always privileged as a tax-payer. On the tax rolls the Jew was worth from two to twenty Gentiles.

The rise of capitalism in Germany, in the course of which she absorbed some of the humanity and progress which revolutions had brought to the more enlightened western European states, brought a blessed interlude of peace, freedom, and relative good will to German Jews. Aside from other considerations in the early, formative years of German capitalism, money and skill were in such demand that even Jewish money and skill were welcome. In this brief period of sunshine the Jews not only made a payment to civilization by producing great figures in art, science, and industry, but they began to de-Judaize themselves, to show their gratitude to the at last comparatively fatherly fatherland. They disproved the notion that Jews had a stubborn race pride by becoming 100 percent Germans, giving up their traditional culture and religion, intermarrying, seeking to get rid of the disabling Jewish nationality and exchange it for the honor of being Imperial Germans. But the World War and Versailles and the post-Versailles misery required of the Jews the old scapegoat service. Today, the capitalism that once freed the Jews now leaves them without even the protection they had in the Middle Ages. Older economies always left room for the Jews in some specialization. Today there is no Jewish specialization. They are competitors no matter what they do. The present persecutions in Germany are therefore more desperate than ever before in history.

There are few faults to find with Mr. Lowenthal's remarkable book. He recognizes the economic and political causes of what, superficially, would seem to be explosions of emotion. Implicitly it becomes clear that he considers that the Jewish problem must wait in other regions, as in the Soviet Union, for its most hopeful solution in a proletarian revolution. The prospect, however, is not expressed in optimistic terms. He can write: "it was to take revolutions and catastrophes for the world to believe them" (the Jews who cried for identity as human beings). In that phrase, "revolutions and catastrophes," we find a significant hesitation. Furthermore, in spite of Mr. Lowenthal's unusual control and wise understanding of history he sometimes descends into a judgment upon the Germans as a race, as when the frequency with which the German people have submitted to domination is seen as a racial rather than as a historical factor. This, however, occurs so infrequently as to be conspicuous when it appears. It only slightly mars a restrained, scholarly, well-written, and very useful book.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

## *Brief Review*

*AN INTRODUCTION TO DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM, by Edward Conze. London. National Council of Labour Colleges Publishing Society.* 1s. A new "introduction" to dialectical materialism is eagerly seized upon by the novice as possibly offering a new clue to the interpretation of a difficult subject. To those trained in its theory and method the new introduction is searched for its contribution to the technique of presentation. The present book offers little of value in either case.

This book is launched with an attack on Communists and "the communist parties outside Russia." The basis of the attack is that scientific method (and dialectical materialism is nothing more nor less than this for the author) is used by everybody who can control things and events on the basis of insight into their laws. The "communist parties outside Russia" have "obviously lost all touch with reality" and are therefore "regularly defeated in their actions." Ergo: they have little understanding of scientific method and presumably don't know the first thing about dialectical materialism. This is a little too easy. But it befits a work which contends that the dialectical method is "nothing but a codification of commonsense."

Much of the exposition of the basic principles of dialectics is, on the whole, well handled. The author has the scientific virtue of showing that dialectics *explains* nothing but provides the terms in which processes can be explained. He also has the merit of presenting dialectics in terms of modes of approach to any given subject, questions to be asked, rather than as a magical formula that solves problems *a priori*. The book is, to sum up, a suggestion to more thorough Marxists as to how the subject of dialectical materialism can best be presented.

STUART GREENE.

# The Cow-Barn Drama

ACCORDING to Broadway's breezy bible, Variety, the summer-theater epidemic reached an all-time high this season. Judging from past performances, it is no feat of clairvoyance to venture that no artistic good will come from 90 percent of them; that of the 150 new plays usually tested in what George Jean Nathan once called "the dramatic hot dog stands," only a half dozen will reach Broadway; and that of the half dozen, two, at best, will be accorded even semi-serious consideration.

Anyone who has closely followed these strange shenanigans that are carried on each summer is entitled to the foregoing, foregone conclusions. That the cowshed circuit has won such an unsavory reputation is its own fault; it is the reward of ineptitude on a wholesale scale and an abysmal indifference to any dramatic project that smacks of being a shade imaginative and experimental.

Glance casually at the summer fare on the country Broadways and you will see that the cows have been unjustly dispossessed. For, rearing often their sex-ugly heads are *Co-Respondent Unknown* and *Personal Appearance,* which proved to be good box office on Broadway. Two weeks ago, an inspired impresario dragged out for another airing the anciently salacious *It's a Wise Child. Springtime for Henry,* high in the catalogue of Broadway's most trifling trivia, is also popular. And the playbrokers have been besieged for scripts of such high caliber as *One Good Year, No More Ladies,* and *The Pursuit of Happiness.*

Most of the tryouts are nothing but ridiculous. The majority of original manuscripts flow from the pens of Tom, Dick, or Mary, flushed in the first unhappy spasms of dramatic authorship. The Theater Guild, the Messrs. McClintic or Harris, in the hope of whose favor most of these plays are produced, have rarely even bothered to listen.

They have rarely bothered because they have on their strings experienced and reputable authors who would not have their new scripts mutilated by a summer theater under any conditions. Has anyone ever heard of a new play by Robert E. Sherwood, Eugene O'Neill, Sidney Howard, or Maxwell Anderson being tried out in the Old Cowe Barne, Thespis-on-Hudson? Never, of course. (Philip Barry's Play, *Spring Dance,* was done under Jed Harris's personal supervision.) For established authors and young authors of promise have too high a regard for their work to let it out in the pasture-land.

SUCH, however, is not the case with actors, who must depend upon the material at hand for their living. Be it *Getting Gertie's Garter, Pygmalion,* or *Waiting for Lefty,* the actor, good, bad, or indifferent, welcomes employment in anything. And although his work is at least as arduous as in the city, his remuneration is considerably less, with Equity's blessing.

For Actors' Equity, under the lead of its president, Frank Gillmore, benevolently took over the bucolic drama a couple of years ago. The council voted a minimum salary of $40 per week for senior players (those with broad experience) and $25 per week for junior actors. With these extravagant stipends, the junior and senior player must, in most cases, provide his own lodging, arrange for his own meals and for transportation to and from the theater. He or she is generally broke at the end of the week, after the pay envelope has been exhausted on bare living necessities.

These Equity contracts for summer theaters, in fact, have been divided into A, B and C classifications. The A contract is described in the paragraph above. The B form prescribes that the summer-theater manager pay the actor partly in cash and the balance in food and lodging, providing that these do not exceed $3 per day. The C contract, permitted in rare cases, permits the summer-theater manager, under certain circumstances, to increase his number of junior actors at $25 per week, without worrying about their room and board.

So there, if you are looking for it, is the reason summer companies manage to eke out the season without landing on a financial reef. Given a new manuscript which the author is glad to have tried out for nothing, an actors' troupe at absurdly low salaries, and rustic premises at country rentals, the average management can get by with negligible losses.

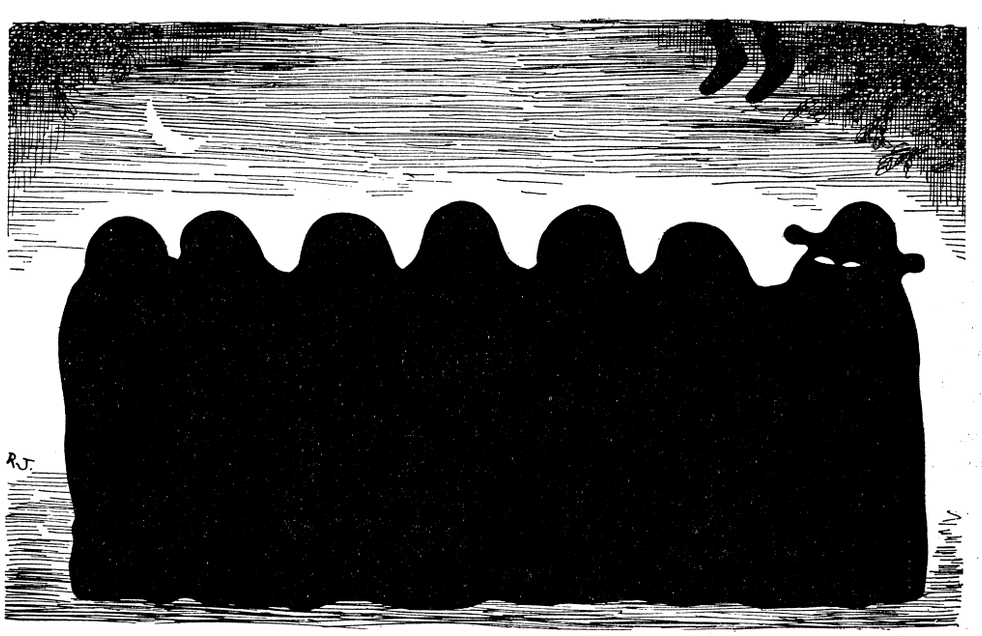
It happens, incidentally, that few summer theaters are run as money-making ventures *per se* or as legitimate business enterprises. For summer theaters are chiefly operated by frustrated wonder boys of Broadway who, having been conspicuously ineffectual on the Rialto, become the Belascos of the suburbs —or by frustrated young men who for an inconsiderable investment hope to uncover next season's million-dollar smash.

WHICH brings us around, by uneasy stages, to the theater of the Left in rural parts. Save for workers' camp stage activities, the theater of the Left represents merely a road direction to the average impresario. He wouldn't know a socially significant play if he read one, should not the talking-picture possibilities be clearly smeared over Act 1, Scene 1. And if the truth be known, there are only two summer playhouses in the country that aspire to the production of plays with important social content. And they are the companies that seek no profit, no subsequent leavings from the Broadway carcass, and no vicarious, stage-struck excitements.

One is the Group Theater, which has settled down on the grounds of the Pine Brook Club at Nichols, Conn., to rehearse Clifford Odets' new drama, *The Silent Drama,* John Howard Lawson's *Marching Song,* and Paul Green's *Enchanted Maze* for next season. The Group earns its bread and keep by offering the Pine Brook patrons bi-weekly dramas it is well trained in, including those enduring favorites, *Awake and Sing* and *Waiting for Lefty.*

The other, Robert Porterfield's Barter Theater at Abingdon, Virginia, is the only non-cash playhouse in the country, accepting anything from a new-born calf to a fattened pig in payment of admission. Mr. Porterfield, a serious-minded and earnest young man, is out on no lark. The actors need what the customers contribute and the customers get their money's worth. *Bury the Dead* was one of the group's recent productions.

Ninety percent of the summer theaters,




"He says he wouldn't have joined if he'd known this was a company union." *R. Joyce.*

this report started out by saying, could be disposed of in the very next hot spell, without a visible loss to the drama. But to be fair about it, the other 10 percent strives valiantly to make the drama reputable. Although the record of achievement at Lawrence Langner's Country Playhouse at Westport, Conn., is not enviable, it must be conceded that Mr. Langner is no piker. He lavishes excellent players and superb settings upon his productions and puts on a show, if not always a play worth the name, in his reconverted barn under the apple trees. D. A. Doran, Jr., and Arthur Hanna are equally conscientious about their enterprise at the Red Barn Theater in Locust Valley, L. I., though with scant results they can boast of. The Lakewood Theater at Skowhegan, Me., and Raymond Moore's Cape Playhouse at Dennis, Mass., also rank with the summer playhouses that are not to be ridiculed.

BLAKE THOMPSON.

## Current Films

*Crime of Dr. Forbes* (20th Century-Fox): Originally called the *Mercy Killer* based on the recent publicity awarded to the discussion of whether or not a doctor has a moral and legal right to put a hopeless case out of misery. However, the present version has been diluted with enough metaphysics and pseudo-philosophy to make it acceptable to the Legion of Decency and the Pope. The production and the story are stereotyped and unimaginative. The interiors of the laboratories look more like (if I may borrow the term of my companion) a perfumery shop than a scientific institution. The important thing about the film should have been J. Edward Bromberg, but it isn't. Bromberg under George Marshall's direction is just another actor. His style is different from the others in the cast only because of his Group Theater training.

*Public Enemy's Wife* (Warner Bros.): The ex-wife of a notorious gangster and a G-man have a romance. In their cute little way neither of them admits to a great love until the very end. Otherwise it's just like other G-man-gangster films.

*The Return of Sophie Lang* (Paramount): This is Paramount's favorite theme this season: In *13 Hours by Air* it was a pretty girl in a plane who was suspected of being a jewel thief and was pursued by detectives and gangsters; in *Florida Special* there was a pretty girl in a similar predicament, only the locale was aboard a train; in *The Princess Comes Across* Carole Lombard was the suspect but the scene was on board an ocean liner. Evidently there wasn't room for such an escapade in a submarine so the present tale also takes place on an ocean liner.

*Earthworm Tractor* (Warner Bros.): Joe E. Brown is really an excellent comedian, but you'd never know it from this standardized success story about the supersalesman with the super ego who makes good and finally "sells" the town's most difficult customer, who also happens to be the heroine's father.

*Forgotten Faces* (Paramount): Possibly you remember this film from 'way back in 1920, when it was called *Heliotrope,* or from its revamped version of 1928. E. A. Dupont, who made *Variety,* took a crack at the present version. The style is now "Germanized," heavy and tragic, but it still is the story of the gambler who wants to bring his daughter up as a respectable girl and who has to get rid of his faithless wife to do it.

PETER ELLIS.

# The Case for Modern Music

## *II. Second Generation*

A MUSICAL revolution, then, during the years 1890-1910.

And at the same time the larger thing was taking place throughout the world. The tangled imperialist forces, the combustible forces of the contest for power, were verging upon one another; at one point in 1914 they burst into a war. We know the outline. Horror, disease, shame, cheapness, massacre. And then the "adjustments": trickery, looting, bargains, mass famine. Everything was settled, the crisis was supposed to be over. It went on, it is steadily more acute.

Capitalism, with hysteria or with hysterical calm, caught in logic, moves towards the brink. It confounds itself at every turn. It takes great masses of workers, it joins them through large-scale industry in a common work, it makes them endure with their families the same privations, the same persecutions. They learn a common lesson.

Then capitalism needs science, the advance of certain aspects of science is unrestrainable. Communication (telephone, telegraph, newspapers); transportation (air, land, water); photography, then the movies, then the radio, then the talkies. It all goes on while the economic evils tighten and intensify.

"Democracy" comes to mean the opportunity for all to find out from many sources what they are missing in the way of comfort and pleasure. The workers are finding out; also they are joined by their common interest. The prerequisite for organization, for collective consciousness, for collective demanding, is there. A great new public is born, it storms the gates. It wants culture, it asks for art. A culture, an art that will bring to it a deeper knowledge of itself and of reality, that will show it a possible new reality.

Capitalism has owned art, as capitalism has owned everything else. I have mentioned some of the works of the lackeys and ornaments. They sing praises, they prop up the obscene old dowager with assuring sonnets and sonatas, they lull her with *Stabat Maters,* they goose her with gaudy ballet music.

But the rot and decay of capitalism is a kind of humus; the crumbling soil is rich with new life. Other artists (artists who are sometimes a vanguard) see the death-march, smell the decay, feel a new strong wind, and are impelled to tell the story. The rift between the lackeys and the bloodhounds becomes wider, reflects the larger schism.

In 1925 there were signs that the new public for art and music was beginning to be a fact. There were signs, too, that composers sensed the fact and were making some attempt to meet it. The first generation of "modern music" had been pioneers, tracking down something unknown, getting tools in order. The new composers were no longer pioneers, they were already answering a felt need. Experimenting died out; not completely, there are still reverberations among the incorrigibly experimental, the new-style academicians. But certain ideas and methods got amalgamated, and were freely used. There was now something more important than means to worry over; there was audience, and communication; not yet content.

Take the *Gebrauchsmusik* movement. It began among bourgeois composers mostly in Central Europe, where the effects of the war were most ruinous; also where news came quickly from the Soviet Union, where music belonged to an entire population. *Gebrauchsmusik* means useful music,[1] functional music, whose purpose is clearly defined. Here was a fresh turn for an art which was still submerged in notions of traditional etiquette, of the right time and the right place. The new composers said that music is still music even when heard outside the consecrated concert-hall and opera-house, even when performed before two in the afternoon or after ten at night. They wanted music to be simple, understandable. They wanted to reach someone they called "the man on the street," they even wanted to know, and to some extent to heed, what *he* wanted and liked to hear. They penetrated to where the "lower classes" were accustomed to get music: the movies, the radio, the phonographs and schools, the beer-gardens and circuses and music-halls and homes.

Paul Hindemith wrote *Frau Musica,* a set of simple studies for voices to be sung by members of the family, in the living-room after dinner; a piece clearly non-professional, non-public. He also wrote *Wir Bauen Eine Stadt,* a group of games for children; *Hin und Zurück,* a music-hall sketch; *Neues vom Tage,* practically a revue; other works. Hindemith's wish to get to the crowd was greater than his capacity. He had developed a complicated yet fluent idiom in a great quantity of instrumental compositions; curiously it sounded stiff, formal, high-brow, over-intellectual when applied to his *Gebrauchsmusik;* and he was apparently unable to modify it.

Kurt Weill wrote the *Dreigroschenoper* with Brecht, a theater sensation all over Europe; *Der Jasager,* a school-opera; *Lindberghflug,* for phonograph and voices; many other theater works. Weill had more courage than Hindemith; he turned his style upside down. He evolved the *"song-typus"* as opposed to the well-known *"lied-typus";* the *"song"* of Weill is relaxed, popular, and ap-

[1] Maurice Ravel, who was once one of the pioneers, was asked lately if he intended to write some of the new "useful music"; he said: "I never write anything else." One must remember the lick-spittling uses of Ravel's recent music to see how a witty statement can boomerang.

pealing, technically very easy yet extremely well-written, regular in rhythm, conventional yet fresh. Sometimes it is pretty banal, some of it is almost super-bourgeois, as though Weill had miscalculated and aimed too low.

Ernst Krenek in Austria fell for American jazz, and wrote the opera *Jonny Spielt Auf,* an indigestible hash of grandiloquence and fox-trots, Gershwin and Richard Strauss, decorated with inept ultra-modern mannerisms. Milhaud, Honegger, and Auric in France confined their *Gebrauchsmusik* to incidental theater-music and films; Milhaud's best film is *La P'tite Lilie,* Honegger's is *Rapt,* Auric's is *Le Sang d'un Poète.*

AS a movement *Gebrauchsmusik* was important; it was also muddle-headed. It had a direction; but it had little content. It aimed at larger audiences than had ever had contact with good music before, it was realistic; but when it was complicated it went over their heads, and when it was familiar you could hardly tell it from commercial music except that it seemed less up to date.

The real lack was that the composers were trying to reach a lot of people, but had as a rule only a very vague idea what they wanted to say to them. They used timely subjects, which was good (the earlier moderns went in for fantastic or ancient or metaphysical or exotic ones); but most of them had little political or social education, they were satisfied with merely risible satire or superficial comment or no comment at all. *Jonny Spielt Auf* is based on the old saw that all European culture is dead, and only America, the "West," and "hot" Harlem can save the world. *Neues vom Tage* recounts with heavy Teuton morality how two people got trapped by their greed for publicity into a permanently spot-lighted life; a silly, false, unsound premise; however, very theatrical.

But one thing leads to another. The *Gebrauchsmusik* movement brought forth men who had political education, who saw the possibilities. Brecht, the German poet, was chief among them. He saw the new great public more clearly, more intensely than anyone else. He saw too that you couldn't just give the new public what it wanted; for what it wanted had been conditioned by generations of capitalist exploitation and treachery. He saw the need for education through poetry, through music. Note that as he became more and more revolutionary in content, Brecht turned more and more to Eisler for musical collaboration. He had made the *Jasager* with Weill, an extraordinary work. Now he became alarmed at certain defeatist interpretations which might be placed on it, and wrote the *Massnahme,* which he called a "concretization" of the same theme; he made this with Eisler. I have written of Eisler and his contribution to the movement in music which belongs not only to the musical revolution but to the world revolution as well. This is the stage at which composers at last feel themselves joined to the proletarian movement, to the struggle of laboring classes everywhere for liberation, self-realization. The composer is now willing, eager, to trade in his sanctified post as Vestal Virgin before the altar of Immutable and Undefilable Art, for the post of an honest workman among workmen, who has a job to do, a job which wonderfully gives other people joy. His music is aimed at the masses; he knows what he wants to say to them. Communication; enjoyment; knowledge; spur.

MARC BLITZSTEIN.

# Between Ourselves

ANY NEW MASSES readers who like to shout from the housetops when they hear good news, had better get in training. For beginning next week we will print a series of two articles by R. Palme Dutt, entitled "British Foreign Policy at the Crossroads." This is a definitive study which is required reading for any serious follower of world affairs. It will appear in English for the first time in these pages.

We have received the following telegram from Heywood Broun: "Colonel Frank Knox's Daily News printed from some plagiarist my story 'Enduring Bronze.' It ran under the title 'Ghost Writer' in the July third issue. It is shorter but word for word a copy. I have wired them asking for acknowledgment of the error and to send a check for whatever they pay for short stories to go to the Newspaper Guild."

Marguerite Young, whose dispatches from the steel towns begin in this issue, has been having her troubles. Not content to cover the S.W.O.C. drive from Pittsburgh, she has been going into the highways and byways where the struggle assumes its most naked form. Getting around isn't as easy as you might think. She writes: "The only means of travel you can use is buses, and they are both expensive and very slow—and they don't go to the right places." Another article by Miss Young will appear next week.

We hereby announce the postponement until the issue of August 11 of our quarterly number. Since the quarterly will deal, in the main, with the election campaign, and the lines of battle and the form of the barrage will be somewhat more clearly defined at that time, we felt we could give fuller coverage by a two-weeks postponement.

The author of "I Work for Hearst," has done just that for three years on various Hearst newspapers.

At the height of bourgeois culture, the best of the poets, especially in their unpoisoned adolescence, were stirred by revolutionary ideas. Arthur Rimbaud, the greatest of the Symbolists, whose poem on democracy appears in this issue, was deeply interested in the Paris Commune. The poem was translated from the French by the well-known American painter Andrée Ruellan in collaboration with Joseph Freeman.

To avoid interruption in the delivery of THE NEW MASSES, subscribers who have changed their address for the summer are requested to notify us again, two weeks before their return, giving their summer as well as their permanent address, and specifying with which issue they want the change effected. All subscribers should note that two weeks' notice is required to put through any change of address.



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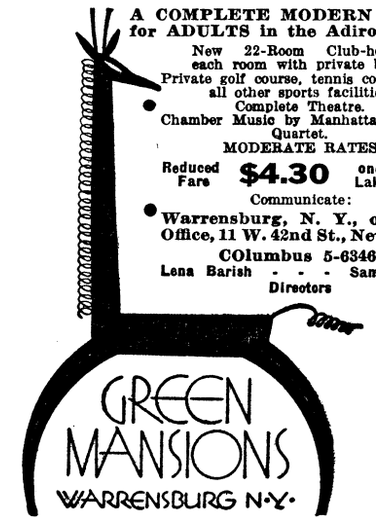


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*—Oswald Garrison Villard*

*(from the index of "Imperial Hearst")*

HEARST, WILLIAM, RANDOLPH, background, schooling; expelled from St. Paul's; expelled from Harvard; joins staff of New York *World;* acquires San Francisco *Examiner;* buys talent; tries to bring Democratic convention of '88 to San Francisco; charged with employing Chinese labor; absents himself in Egypt during Southern Pacific scandal; excoriated by San Francisco *Call;* political influence in San Francisco after 1901; supports Ruef-Schmitz regime; political alliances; turns against union labor; prosecution of McNamara brothers; leads attack on union labor over the country; purchases New York *Journal;* takes staff from Pulitzer; adopts "yellow journalism"; sells out to public utilities; role in Spanish-American War; greets Evangeline Cisneros, "the girl martyr"; arrives in Cuba; plans to sink a vessel in Mediterranean; espouses cause of Bryan; tries to secure Vice-Presidency; foreign policy; tie-ups with German brewers; anti-British bias; opposition to Hay-Pauncefote Treaty; political prospects (1901); assailed after McKinley assassination; charged with being "un-American"; elected to Congress; marriage; change wrought by election explosion; activities in Congress; called Socialistic; aspires to Presidency; favorable publicity in rival press; loses bid for Presidential nomination; asks Charles F. Murphy for Mayoralty; campaigns on street-corners; cheated of Mayoralty by Tammany; Murphy and the Gubernatorial nomination; fights Pure Food and Drug Act; attacked by *Collier's;* makes pretence of suing; nominated for Governor; gets favorable notices again; fakes union labor endorsements; motives for wanting Governorship; charged with tax evasion by Hughes; denounced by Elihu Root; loses Governorship to Hughes; defeated for Mayoralty; attack on Mayor Gaynor; theft of Gaynor-Murphy letters; theft of Standard Oil letters; called before U. S. Senate; defeats Canadian tariff agreement; in Chicago; challenges Chicago *Tribune's* lucrative lease-hold; power over Chicago mayors; tie-ups with Annenbergs; loans from A. F. of L. bank; responsibility for conditions at Cerro de Pasco; responsibility for conditions at Homestake; exploitation of labor in California; transfers stock ownership from M-G-M to Warner; enjoined from stealing AP news; orders editorial attack on Wilson; opposes war policies of Wilson; his downfall predicted; supports Socialists in New York and Milwaukee; prints pacifist editorials; discussed in Senate investigation into German-American activities; German intrigue in U. S.; friend of Bolsheviks; opposes U. S. entry in League of Nations; adopts anti-Soviet policy; begins real estate operations under Hylan; abortive attempt at Gubernatorial nomination (1918); feud with Al Smith; rebuffed in second try for governorship; record in Teapot Dome scandal; defends Harry M. Daugherty; supports Hopson and Associated Gas; buys control of Kansas public utility corporation; another try for Presidency; tax rebates under Mellon regime; attacks Hoover on pro-English bias; deported from France; supports Garner for President (1932); contacts in Roosevelt Administration; connections with Committee for the Nation and Father Coughlin; opposes Tugwell Bill; accepts forged Mexican documents for publication; early interest in motion pictures; participant in race track racket; responsible for Lindbergh leaving U. S.; corporate structure of his enterprises; endorses Hitler regime; raises "red scare" in San Francisco general strike; attacks "intellectuals"; sells news services to Nazis; begins campaign against U.S. S.R.; ties up with opposition to Franklin D. Roosevelt; uses Socialist "Old Guard" against Soviet Union; inspires military units in Hollywood.

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