

YOUR STAKE IN THE AUTO STRIKE

by **THE EDITORS**

NEW

MASSES

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DEMOCRACY:

EAST AND WEST

A Soviet writer talks back by A. SOKOLOV

ENGELS AND SCIENCE by DIRK J. STRUIK

THE RIGHT TO THE 3 R'S

An open letter to American educators by JULES KOSLOW

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: *"Youth for Christ," by Virginia Gardner; De Gaulle and Duclos, by John Stuart; The Atom in Industry, by Maurice Dobb; A Critical Appraisal of F. Scott Fitzgerald, by Isidor Schneider; Harry Martel discusses "Human Nature: The Marxist View," by Vernon Venable.*

BETWEEN OURSELVES

PERHAPS it isn't the height of discretion to indicate favorites among one's colleagues, but we would like to break a rule this once and do so. To our mind, Richard O. Boyer's column last week said in the right way what has needed to be put forth for some time. When we say it was said as it should be, we mean that Boyer has long been one of our favorite writers and people. To us he best illustrates something Joe North once said: "You can't separate the personal from the political." He said it and Dick Boyer proved it in his recent "Stand-up Fighters." Read it, and believe the words. Do more than that—act on them.

OUR recent questionnaire, of which you heard first in last week's issue, has everybody around here fascinated. Each editor and almost every contributor managed to mess up the manila folders which hold the answers, and it is our secret thought that it may even have been an un-subconscious desire to find out what readers thought of them and their department. Be that as is, there were many interesting things about the answers. One fact that concerns us was the checked section on how people were first introduced to the magazine. Almost everybody replied, "Through a friend." Now we would like to say this to all of you—if you haven't got a friend, be a friend.

Think about that for a minute, because here's a real request. You've been reading our subscription appeals for some weeks. To be honest, they haven't brought in the results they should have. Maybe it's our fault—maybe it's because we haven't told you strongly enough how much we need those subs; with the result that you haven't seen and talked to your neighbor, fellow trade unionist, and the guys who work next to you in the shop. If we haven't been vigorous enough, or our copy hasn't been sufficiently stirring, let it be remarked right now that **NEW MASSES** needs subscriptions. Perhaps our need hasn't taken on the box decorations of a campaign, superficially, but believe us, it is a real campaign sprung from necessity. Many of you who responded last year are not on our list of those who came through this time. Don't wait—and don't let us. You know how easy it is. Find a friend. (We close our ears at this point to any cynical anecdotes, because our moral is a good one.)

And one further word. Do you do your Christmas shopping early? This year you'll be sorry if the answer's yes. Due to pressure, a short staff, and a few other difficulties, NM's Christmas cards and an attractive list of offers won't go out for another week. Hold everything, though, because it's easy to select presents from one

simple brochure, for your husband, wife, Aunt Blanche and the kids. Happy pre-holiday.

GREETINGS to a nice new satire—at least it's new to us. The *Union Voice* has recently reprinted an edition of what's called *Daily Noose*. We liked everything about it. The typography is nicely done up to resemble the tabloid it takes off, and the copy has bite and bilge in the right direction. Everybody is there—Don O'Jonnell, the Capitol Stiff, Gloria Glutton and the Girdle Girl, the Conspiring Photographer, Voice of the Peep-Hole, Awful Nannie, and Your Horrorscope. Complete with cartoons, photos, and an ad for Dr. Killum's Belly Pills. *Union Voice* is at 13 Astor Place. If you're interested, inquire further, there.

WHO'S WHO: A number of the people who wrote for us this week have been identified in introductions to their articles, but there are a few additions. . . . Jules Koslow is twenty-eight

years old, a former teacher in the Philadelphia high schools, and just now a freelance writer in Los Angeles. . . . Harry Martel is educational director of the Fur Workers Union. . . . Dirk Struik, besides what was mentioned in the note preceding his article, is also an editor of *Science and Society*.

M. DE A.



Wilson.

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YOUR STAKE IN THE AUTO STRIKE

By THE EDITORS

THE future of America is marching on the General Motors picketline. Let every American understand this. The slogans scrawled upon the strikers' placards embody the life-and-death interests of every American. Should these demands be defeated by the arrogant royalists ruling the auto empire, then every man, woman and child within our borders is the loser.

A way of life is at stake: sufficient food for a well-nourished generation, democratic institutions, national welfare—everything our troops dreamed of in their foxholes. The du Pont dynasts, the decisive power in the auto empire, are spearheading the drive of our money-mad monopolists to shatter the Wagner act, to destroy the structure of trade unionism, to deny our people that imperative upon which our entire economy hinges—adequate purchasing power to move the wheels of our industrial machine. And in Congress, the pawns of the monopolists are speeding anti-labor legislation to shackle the liberties of our working class.

Since the issues are so momentous and involve everybody without exception, *NEW MASSES* urges its readers to take the initiative within their communities to build a solid, strong coalition behind the strikers—one that includes the professionals, small businessmen, civic organizations, fraternal associations, etc. And inasmuch as most of the commercial press criminally refuses to supply readers with unbiased, accurate information when labor is the subject, our readers should, in their efforts to win their neighbors to the truth, avail themselves of the carefully documented case for substantial wage increases presented by CIO President Philip Murray several days ago. He presents irrefutable evidence that manufacturing industries can raise wages by thirty percent and still enjoy profits double those of pre-war years.

In face of these incontrovertible realities, General Motors has refused to bargain collectively with the UAW; has dictatorially rejected the union's offer of arbitration and has hysterically refused to accept the union proposal to open the

company books to jointly authorized examiners so that the public can see for itself whether wage increases can be paid without raising prices. (For the UAW, operating out of a concern for the nation's welfare, has demanded that the wage raises be made without a rise in prices. That has been Philip Murray's stand at the labor-industry conference in Washington, a stand shamefully betrayed by John L. Lewis and the AFL representatives there.) Because the UAW has insisted upon this position, the corporation has hypocritically retorted that its offer "was not an offer of arbitration but a demand for abdication." Thereupon the strike was forced upon the union and the picketlines began the march in the biggest labor conflict in seven years. One hundred and two plants in twenty states closed down after the company had dragged out negotiations for ninety-seven days.

Actually this is the first round in a wage fight that is expected to involve the 600,000 workers in the Big Three of the automotive industry: GM, Chrysler, Ford. It should also be noted that about a million workers in steel and electric are also due to take a strike vote shortly. This alternative has been imposed upon labor because industry has blatantly refused to submit to the following facts, irrefutably proved by labor and government statisticians: that big business can raise the basic wage rates by thirty-eight percent and still retain double pre-war profits without raising prices; that this can be done because of gigantic wartime profits, reduction in tax rates and increased labor productivity; that 1946 corporate profits before taxes, will total about \$20,000,000,000; that during the six war years from 1940, forty-five corporations made profits after taxes of \$52,000,000,000. As a result industry is in an unparalleled favorable financial position with tremendous reserves. The Security Exchange Corporation estimates that the net working capital of all corporations will total about \$50,000,000,000 at the end of this year—more than double the liquid reserves in 1939.

The other side of the economic medal today reveals that at present rates the average industrial worker is more than twenty dollars a week short of the necessary income to provide a decent health standard. He has lost about a quarter of his average wartime take-home as a result of cuts in overtime pay—a drop from \$43.65 to \$35.60. The Heller Committee proved that a minimum health budget required a weekly paycheck of \$57.97 a week for the average family. The cut of \$10.75 the worker has sustained isn't the end of the story. As controls are being abandoned, prices of food and other essentials are rising steeply.

ABOVE everything, America must realize that with the end of war expenditures, the national income will drop to about \$130,000,000,000 annually, which means at least a decline of \$20,000,000,000 in the country's pay envelope. A national income of that size would spell disaster to thousands of small business concerns, would ruin many farmers, and catapult our nation down the abyss of depression.

For these reasons, the CIO study declares, "a substantial pay increase is therefore a basic necessity to compensate in part for the shrinkage in the national pay envelope, and to lay the basis for the level of consumer expenditure necessary to replace dwindling government expenditures for war."

Another crucial factor demands consideration: in July of 1945 the average manufacturing worker was able to turn out almost twenty-three percent more products than he could in January 1941. It is elementary economics, the CIO points out, that "if output per man-hour rises while workers get no more than they did at the outset, industry will go into a tailspin. People can only buy industry's products if their incomes rise in proportion to industry's capacity to produce." Mr. Murray made the analogy between this period and that after World War I, when wages were virtually frozen between 1924 and 1929, while productivity rose twenty-four per-

cent and profits rose seventy-two percent. "This great disparity between wages and profits, the failure of industry to raise wages and salaries, the soaking up of excessive profits brought about the devastating depression of the 1930's."

The head of the CIO asks if America will repeat this "horrible mistake" today.

This is the question before our entire people; these are the issues in the General Motors strike and the other indus-

tries. The answer lies in the unity of labor, and the coalition of labor with its allies of the middle classes, all of whom have as much at stake as the men and women marching bravely in front of General Motors these critical days.

"YOUTH FOR CHRIST"

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

Baltimore, Md.

"YOU see this street? This is Hell's Half-acre. This is where I tried to open a Christian servicemen's center last year. I had the money. I almost got that place up there, and I had \$4,000 to pay for rent. But the Jews wouldn't rent it to me."

The Rev. Otis Read, Jr., pastor of the Hamilton Baptist Church, the radio preacher of The Open Bible Broadcasts, Inc., laughed scornfully.

"Yes," he said, as he drove me along Baltimore streets, combining an interview with business errands, "the Jews wouldn't rent me a thing. They were afraid a center where veterans could get some Christian fellowship and recreation would take the youth off the streets. Then all these penny arcades and pool rooms and saloons would lose their patrons.

"But," he added a little grimly, "we got us a center. We're opening it shortly. Yes," he went on in reply to my question whether this were the Christian Businessmen's Committee Center. "Of course I'm not on the committee, because it's for businessmen. But one of my principal trustees, Mr. DeVos, is active."

Auguste H. DeVos was, I knew, one of the incorporators of the Christian Businessmen's Committee. This is the group behind the Youth for Christ movement in Baltimore. And the Reverend Mr. Read is one of the ministers whose names were given me as those cooperating with the Youth for Christ movement.

The principal initiator of the Youth for Christ movement in Baltimore, however, has been William Randolph Hearst, who personally has sparked his newspapers throughout the country in promotion of the organization, and in Baltimore, after months of mediocre success, finally managed to give an incipient Youth for Christ movement some impetus. With the organization last April of the Christian Businessmen's Committee, affiliated with the interna-

tional organization of that name headed by the industrialist, R. J. La Tourneau of Vicksburg, Miss., maker of bulldozers, the movement became a little brisker.

But not until last Saturday night did Youth for Christ really pick up steam in Baltimore. With members of the Christian Businessmen's Committee planning to usher "officially" and "work" in the audience, as President Robert Smoot told me, they held a rally in the Lyric Theater on the order of the large rallies held in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles and elsewhere.

Significantly, the rally and the formal dedication of the Servicemen's Center were planned for about the same time. The center, a large loft floor at 139 North Fallsway, will hold 150 comfortably, "or 200 for meetings," Smoot said rather absently. He did not explain what sort of meetings. When I asked why it was being opened after the war was over, he said that it "will not discriminate against veterans, as the USO does."

And do they discriminate against Jews? Well, no more than against Catholics. Or, in the words of Mr. Smoot, which he made most emphatic, as I interviewed him at the Baxter Paper Co., of which he is president:

"We have no animus against the Jewish people," and Mr. Smoot's jaw snapped shut. "We recognize we got the Bible from them. We recognize that Christ was a Jew. We know they were the chosen people. We will welcome them into Christian fellowship—if they come to Christ. We have no hatred for the Jew. We are anxious to reach the Jew for Christ."

I knew they were supposed to follow the same line as the Youth for Christ movement, and I already had talked to Rev. Leymon Ketcham, director of Youth for Christ in Baltimore. So I asked, what about Catholics?

"We have fundamentally little affinity with Catholicism," said Mr.

Smoot. "We don't agree on some things, and we can't get together."

They did not invite any Catholics on their committee, he said primly. "They have their own groups," he said, and when I asked what they were, he said, "Oh, the K. of C. [Knights of Columbus]."

What about Negroes? "We are not interested in interracial relations," he said. "All our work is for the honor of Christ alone and the salvation of souls."

Whether or not in Mr. Smoot's opinion Negroes are possessed of souls, the Lyric theater—a quasi-public theater where Baltimore symphony concerts are held—bars meetings which will attract more than a token showing of Negroes. But this is where the Youth for Christ rally was held.

Outside the doors, bands of Negro, Jewish and white youth planned to distribute pamphlets issued by the Institute of Applied Religion, headed "Greetings to Youth for Christ," and warning against agents who "are using religion" to divide the world again into opposing camps of race and color and creed, just as our young men return from a war "fought for world peace." Isolationist publishers and rabble-rousers, the pamphlet said, would mobilize American youth "on the ensnaring basis of Christian Nationalism."

THE Rev. Mr. Ketcham, whose local group is affiliated with the international organization, denies that it has any connection with Gerald L. K. Smith, fascist rabble-rouser. The Baltimore *News-Post*, Hearst-owned, has a Youth for Christ editor, Aldine R. Bird, and readers are urged to attend meetings. But the Reverend Mr. Ketcham says that so far as he knows Mr. Hearst has not given money directly—"only promotion, but of course it is worth a lot."

"The paper here misunderstood Hearst's orders at first," Ketcham told

me, "and the Youth for Christ editor urged people to form their own groups and get in touch with him. I had to go down and give him my credentials showing ours was the only officially connected Youth for Christ group here. That was after our international conference at Winona Lake [Ind.] when we were formally affiliated."

Everything is now hunky-dory between Ketcham and the Hearst press. The Baltimore *American* (Hearst) of September 30 made this plain. "Telephone the Rev. Ketcham, Arbutus 30," it said, "or notify the Youth for Christ Editor of the Baltimore *Sunday American* . . ."

So valuable did the Youth for Christ conference deem Mr. Hearst's help that it passed a resolution on July 28 expressing its "sincere appreciation for the nationwide coverage and promotion given by you and your organization to all Youth for Christ activities." This was addressed to "W. R. Hearst, San Simeon, Cal." and the text played up in a box in the *News-Post* of August 3, under the head, "YOUTH FOR CHRIST EXPRESSES THANKS."

This attempt on the part of the publisher of America's leading fascist newspaper chain to get in on the ground floor of a religious movement involving youth is not surprising to Baltimoreans. Mr. Hearst has made other attempts to organize youth in Baltimore, singularly unsuccessful ones. His more successful feat, it has been charged by students, came in making ideological inroads at the University of Maryland, where a sizable donation from the Hearst newspaper was protested, and defended by the college president, the reactionary Dr. H. C. Byrd. (This will be discussed in a later article.) Dr. Byrd at the same time denied "the general statement that there is anti-Semitic bias at the school."

MR. KETCHAM is a young, good-looking, football-player type of man, the kind of product of an evangelist seminary that Youth for Christ apparently specializes in throughout the country. I interviewed him in the parlor of his apartment overlooking a sweeping lawn in a Baltimore suburb. At his elbow were copies of *News-Week*, *Collier's* and other leading periodicals which had contained stories about Youth for Christ, its feature of hot music and its gigantic meetings in Soldier Field, Chicago, Manhattan Center and Madison Square Garden in New York and elsewhere. Tapping the magazines,

he told me how they were all wrong.

"They quote different Youth for Christ directors in Chicago and other places as saying that the purpose of Youth for Christ is to intensify religious feeling," he said. "I know all those men. I know they never said that. Why? Because that would include everything. That would be the same for Jewish, or Mohammedan, or anything—if our purpose was just to intensify their feeling. No, our purpose is entirely different from that—it is to win youth for Christ. They must believe in Christ as their personal savior. Not just joining a church—though that will follow." Did they encourage the people who came to their Saturday night rallies in the Northminster church, where they have space, to go to their own churches next day? Oh, yes, said Mr. Ketcham—except with Catholics. He pursed his lips, said, "We do have an occasional Catholic come to our meetings." And did they encourage them to go to their own churches? "No, frankly, we don't," he said. "But I wouldn't dare say it as a public thing, of course."

"But the Catholics believe in Christ," I said.

"Yes, but there are differences between us. You can't mix black and white." And then he said, with a touch of exasperation, "We are not cooperating with the Catholics."

I asked him if he had been accused of anti-Semitism in the Baltimore Youth

for Christ movement. This apparently was a touchy point. "We were criticized by the labor movement here, for our accent on the Christo-centric. We are Christo-centric, therefore anti-Semitic, as they see it. They had a meeting in the Unitarian church here and spoke against us. Of course this anti-Semitic charge is unfounded. We are interested in Jewish youth—if they can be won to Christ. Of course," he added nonchalantly, "the very name, Youth for Christ, would be a signal to the average Jew to stay away from us."

Mr. Ketcham, who is thirty, is not only personable; he is fluent, he is smooth, he speaks of Christ with the easy familiarity of a vacuum cleaner salesman discussing his product. He discusses opening up your heart to Christ in the same casual manner I recognized later in the Rev. Otis Read. Unlike Read, however, he refrained from asking me to search my heart, and unlike Read, he did not indulge in violent Jew-baiting of a coarse and sickening character.

HE AND Read have their little differences in ideology, but they get together on the fundamentals of fundamentalism. In neither case, however, is the bare exhortation to come to Christ all there is to their preachments. I asked Mr. Ketcham to explain his theory of the second coming of Christ, which apparently is a central part of the Youth

For a Jewish History Week

MISS GARDNER's article on the un-Christian Youth for Christ movement points up the fact that systematic efforts are being made to Nazify a large section of American youth. With the return of hundreds of thousands from the armed forces to face an uncertain and often discouraging future, the appeal to hate and prejudice acquires potentialities that no democratic American can afford to blink. In our schools today there are teachers who, instead of inculcating in their pupils enlightened attitudes and an anti-fascist spirit, are themselves sources of anti-Semitic infection. Such instances as that of May Quinn and Gladys Laubenheimer in New York City are unfortunately not isolated, and the deliberate indifference of the authorities is merely another form of appeasement.

It is with the idea of countering these dangerous currents in our national life that *NEW MASSES* last week proposed the launching of a campaign for an annual Jewish History Week. Such a week, analogous to Negro History Week, which is already widely observed, would by providing positive information about the role and contributions of the Jewish people, particularly in this country, help combat the lies and innuendoes of the Jew-baiters. We invite our readers to give us their thoughts on this proposal.

for Christ doctrine and is supposed to be taught in the 650 centers which Mr. Ketcham says are scattered over the country.

It was a very long and involved theory; as Mr. Ketcham says, "God has quite a complicated program and it is difficult to prove all of it from the scripture." But he made an effort. Afterwards I asked him if, when he said anti-Semitism was growing in this country, he took into account his own preachments. With complete blandness and the frank, clear-eyed glance which must be such a valuable asset in his work, he said he had no use for any man "spewing out hatred for Jews from a pulpit."

"But don't you think that any talk which constantly is differentiating the Jews from others increases anti-Semitism?"

"Yes, I do," he replied. "I don't feel any difference myself between a Jew and a Catholic."

Throughout his long and fascinating account of the second coming of Christ there were occasional statements such as, "And if anyone can develop Palestine it is the Jews."

"Why?" I asked.

"Because they're wizards at that sort of thing," he replied.

"At what sort of thing?" I asked.

By this time he was apparently a little annoyed. He was anxious to get back to his scripture quoting. He waved an arm and said something about their being good at developing anything, and pointed out that there were valuable chemical deposits in the Red Sea.

Here is his theory: At His second coming, Christ will be the King of the Jews. "That is what we want the Jews to believe, too. That this man they rejected will be the true Messiah, and when they do believe it, the Jews will no longer be a curse to the nations as they are now. Though a lot is imaginary. They don't control all the wealth."

"But you do consider them a curse to the nations?" I said.

"Well, maybe I should not say that. Instead of being a curse to the nations

I should have said a trial to the nations."

At another point he said the Jews "were the biggest stumbling-block among the nations." When I asked just how, he went on: "All you need to know to see the truth of that is to see what happened in Germany, and the strong feeling that is being increasingly aroused here. You see, I think Hitler was responsible, all right—he was the devil. But the Lord let him come to power to work out His will in bringing the Jews back to Palestine."

"I DON'T get it. It seems a pretty round-about way of—" I began.

"Oh, no, the Bible says just what will happen." And he quoted something about how the Lord said he would send "the fishers and the hunters after you." You see, he said, it was simple—the Jews were hunted and driven from country to country. The Jews were the fishers—they could develop Palestine—and "of course the British Labor government went back on its promise to open up Palestine, because the British Labor government is too friendly with Russia." By this time I was reeling.

"Is it in the Bible—that the Jews are to return to Palestine?" I asked. Oh, yes, I was assured. And Mr. Ketcham felt that the Soviet Union did not want the Jews in Palestine? That

was right, he said, because they wanted to take it over. The Russians thought the Arabs were weaker than the Jews would be. The Jews, however, would win out in the end.

There was a lot about the Battle of Armageddon—"the battle General MacArthur talks about," he said. He quoted from the Book of Revelations and the Book of Daniel and from Ezekiel. The Russians would be the Kings of the North, he said. And ten nations in a Mediterranean federation (he had a Biblical allusion for this, too) would be locked in battle against the Kings of the North. It would be Communism, he said, "against democracy and imperialism." Strangely enough, he did not identify Communism with the anti-Christ, either. "There will be no victory," he said. "The Lord's coming will of course destroy the anti-Christ."

Mr. Ketcham thinks the second coming of Christ may be at almost any time, and believes in being prepared.

Getting back to 1945 and Baltimore, Md., he said with some slight chagrin that it was "the aim" to appeal to high-school kids, the bobby soxers wooed by the Hearst Youth for Christ editor. But to date the movement in Baltimore has not developed in just that way. There are old and young at the rallies. The weekly radio broadcasts, now temporarily discontinued because someone else got their spot on the radio, do not feature hot music, but ordinary hymns, not swung or jazzed up.

"And do you allow Negroes at your meetings?"

"Oh, yes, we had one Negro who came several times," he said. "Of course if they came in such numbers that it would—well, this is the South, and we would not want people to get upset about it. I myself am from the North," he went on, "and have no prejudices—oh, of course, I don't believe in intermarriage or social equality, but that's the only place I draw the line." Then he went on to tell about the system of Jim Crow locals the Youth for Christ movement decided on at its Winona Lake convention—without alluding to them as such. He said that after a rather gingerly discussion of the Negro question they "decided to handle it that way, encourage them [the Negroes] to form their own groups."

In a second article Miss Gardner will tell you more about the Youth for Christ movement.



Woodcut by Leon Miller.

DEMOCRACY: EAST AND WEST

By A. SOKOLOV

Moscow.

IN ANOTHER issue of *War and the Working Class* (Number 8, 1945) I called attention to the rather peculiar idea promulgated in the press abroad that there are two conceptions of democracy: the Anglo-Saxon and the Soviet, or the Western and Eastern. For that section of the press which had formerly stubbornly denied the existence of democracy in countries where the political and social system substantially differed from the west European and American brands, the discovery of these two conceptions of democracy was, in a manner of speaking, a distinct advance. Evidently the old point of view was no longer tenable. It was in too glaring contradiction to the facts which have left an indelible impression on the minds of men. Chief among them is the fact that in the defeat and destruction of Hitlerism—that bitter and mortal enemy of democracy—a decisive role was played by the Soviet Union. The epochal feat of the Soviet Union in saving the world from fascist barbarism dispelled not a few prejudices and misconceptions. It simply became impossible to go on repeating the old hackneyed phrases and catchwords now that they had been shot to pieces by hard fact. A change of front was needed and the upshot was the theory of the existence of two conceptions of democracy.

This theory, which was first advanced in the concluding stages of the war, is attaining wide currency in the period following the termination of the war. But while it was an advance over what the press abroad had been writing before, it very soon became evident that this advance was of a very limited character. "East is East and West is West and never the twain shall meet." The philosophy contained in these words of Rudyard Kipling was at one time designed to justify relations between the colonial East and the colony-owning West. It is being pointed out again today with no less transparent practical purpose. The doctrine that there are two conceptions of democracy—Western and Eastern—is being formulated to provide a criterion by which to judge the political situation which has arisen in various European countries liberated from Hitler rule. The question is how to assess the present governments of Eastern Europe liberated by the Red

Army and how, on the other hand, to assess the regimes established in other European countries where British and American military authorities are installed.

The suggestion that democratic ideas differ according to geographic longitude is intended to explain and to justify criteria applied by Western politicians. The point at issue, therefore, is one which concerns matters that demand a common point of view and concerted action on the part of Allied powers. And the theory of two different conceptions of democracy is intended to explain numerous difficulties which arise in the field of international policy. The practical purpose of this theory is obvious. It is to bolster the assertion that there is no real democracy in the liberated countries of eastern Europe; that judged by the standards of the West the regimes existing in these countries cannot be considered democratic.

How is this thesis supported? The meagerness of the arguments is only too apparent. Notwithstanding the freedom of the press which under "Western democracy" allegedly implies opportunity to express the most diverse opinions, you will find in all the press abroad discussing the question of democracy not more than three or four arguments served up in different variations.

First it is asserted that the governments in the liberated Eastern European countries—in Rumania, Bulgaria and Hungary and also in Yugoslavia—are "not representative." These governments allegedly do not enjoy the support of the majority of the population but express the will of only an insignificant minority. Strictly speaking this is not an argument at all but only a naked assertion, not supported by any factual evidence. What is more, it not only ignores the facts but is a complete distortion of the truth. Here is a characteristic example. Not long ago an American radio station broadcast a statement by the United Press to the effect that the Rumanian government of Premier Petru Groza is supported by only five percent of the population. But one has only to count the membership of the popular organizations which openly and unreservedly support the present Rumanian government and the absurdity of this figure becomes only too obvious.

The trade unions affiliated to the General Confederation of Labor, which unequivocally supports the Rumanian government, have 1,300,000 members. The Farmers Front, of which Premier Groza is the leader, has a membership of 1,500,000. The political parties belonging to the National Democratic Front—the Communist Party, the Social Democratic Party, and that part of the National Tsaranist Party which has joined the Front—have a total of no less than 340,000 members. Add to this the number of other public and political organizations which support the government and we get a total of not less than four or five million persons. Yet in the last parliamentary elections in Rumania in 1933 there were 4,380,000 voters. How from a comparison of these two figures five percent can be derived remains the secret of the United Press and of all who keep harping on the "non-representative" character of the governments of Eastern European countries.

IN GENERAL it should be remarked that regrettable as it is to all who are not disposed to regard the truth as outworn prejudice certain official and unofficial champions of "Western democracy" are extremely loose in their handling of facts and figures. Here is another example. Some time ago a statement was made in newspapers around the world that in the Yugoslav elections sixty percent of the population would be disfranchised. In refutation of this malicious slander the representatives of the Yugoslav government cited facts to show that in reality a number of persons deprived of the franchise (for collaborating with the alien invader) represented no more than two to three percent of the electorate. Why, it may be asked, does the press circulate such falsehoods and, what is more, falsehoods regarding an allied country like Yugoslavia when sooner or later the truth must come out? But the lie about sixty percent was widely circulated by the press in all its countless ramifications, and by the radio, while the truth about the two to three percent forced its way only with difficulty into a handful of newspapers.

The agitation over the alleged non-representative character of the demo-

cratic governments of a number of Eastern European countries is indicative of the haughty contempt for the policy which, amid the arduous conditions of postwar dislocation, these governments are pursuing in accordance with the will of the people and in the interests of the people. After all, the best criterion of the democracy of a government is its policy. One cannot seriously discuss the democracy of a regime and at the same time close one's eyes to the main thing, namely: whom does it serve? for whose benefit does it exist? for the benefit of the people or for their most bitter enemies? If this criterion is applied to the governments of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Hungary, all grounds for calling them non-representative simply fall away.

How can the democratic character of governments which have carried out such radical, profound and unquestionably democratic reforms be doubted? Agrarian reform implies destruction of the former omnipotence of the feudal landlords. Renunciation of the oppression of minorities and proclamation of the equality of nations make it possible for people who were formerly torn by dissension and bickering, provoked by enemies of democracy, to live together in peace. The nationalization of a number of vital branches of heavy industry undermines the foundations of the anti-popular dictatorship of rapacious trust and bank magnates, the agents of foreign capital who grovelled at the feet of the Nazi invaders. The fact that the mass of people, who before had virtually no say in the direction of their destinies, are now taking active part in political life is an undeniable democratic achievement. The renunciation of the former adventurist foreign policy which made these countries pawns in the hands of imperialist cliques signifies a switch to the democratic foreign policy of good neighborly relations, of peace and cooperation with other countries. This popular policy of the democratic governments of Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Rumania and Hungary has only to be contrasted with the anti-popular home and foreign policy of the fascist monarchist cliques which are setting the tone in Greece to make it clear which of the countries has representative and which non-representative government.

It should be borne in mind that profound democratic reforms could not but change the balance of forces in the social, political and economic life of the Eastern European countries. The excessive

influence of the feudal landlords and of the agents of foreign capital has been undermined. The strength of the masses, on the other hand, has grown. But is this change in the balance of forces contrary to the principles of democracy? Is it not rather the surest guarantee of the consolidation of democracy and of the discomfiture of its enemies?

The second argument is that democracy is not purely and simply majority rule but only such majority rule as fully respects the rights and views and opinions of the minority. For where minority opinion is repressed, the argument runs, there can be no real democracy. And such it is alleged is the case in liberated Eastern European countries. The contradiction between the first and second argument is at once apparent. Either in Rumania, Bulgaria, etc., a majority is governed by a minority; and in that case there can be no question of opinion of the minority being repressed. Or the ruling majority in those countries is treating a minority unfairly. But if that is so what justification is there for asserting that a regime which expresses the will of the majority of the people is "non-representative"?

Let us, however, examine argument number two on its merits. In the first place, a democrat cannot plead for respect for minority rights and abstract himself from consideration of the character of that minority and from the way it gives expression to its views and opinions. For, indeed, whoever demands full freedom of action for minorities and ignores these paramount aspects of the question is either futilely beating the air or is allowing himself to fall victim to those dangerous sophistries which were in no small degree instrumental in helping the fascists in a number of countries to come to power by taking advantage of the feebleness, the irresoluteness, and flabbiness which then characterized democracy in these countries.

This lesson of history is too fresh in our memories to be lightly forgotten. Didn't Hitler march unhindered to power with the criminal connivance of the notorious Weimar democracy? Hitler's gangsters were at that time in a minority but they demanded respect for their "rights" and "opinions" in accordance with the principles of democracy over whose head they had raised an axe.

SO MUCH for history. But what of today? It would be simply a miracle if in countries where fascist and pro-fascist regimes have dominated for years

and even decades all fascist elements were to vanish completely the day after the collapse of these regimes. Such miracles of course do not happen. It was with full consciousness of realities that the leaders of the three powers at the Crimea conference provided in their decisions for the important and difficult task of destroying the vestiges of fascism and Nazism in liberated Europe. The fascist rump in any country represents, of course, only an insignificant minority. But would anybody seriously suggest "respecting the rights" of this minority, which considers the sole purpose of its being forcibly to seize power and to establish its bloody tyranny over the overwhelming majority of the population?

There is such a minority in Poland, for example, which calls itself *Naradowe Sily Zbrojne*. This "minority" expresses its opinion with the help of grenades, tommyguns and machine-guns directed against peaceful rural inhabitants, active members of the democratic parties, and representatives of the Polish Peoples Government. How would the advocates of the Western conception of democracy have such a "minority" treated? Or take an analogous minority in another country—in Rumania. Fascist terrorist bands were recently discovered which in deep conspiratorial secrecy plotted the assassination of prominent political and public leaders of the new democratic Rumania. Naturally these people were isolated from society, tried as criminal offenders, and condemned to various penalties. Is it not obvious that this is the only way to defend democracy against its bitterest enemies?

Of course when the will of the overwhelming majority of the people is being carried out in liberated countries, a numerically small but extremely vociferous and active minority is bound to be disgruntled. The war criminals, fascists and their accomplices are disgruntled at being called to account, at being put in prison instead of elevated to cabinet posts, as happens in certain other countries. The diehard landlords are disgruntled with agrarian reform, and profiteers with measures taken against the black market. The agents of foreign imperialism are disgruntled with independent foreign policy. But such disgruntlement on the part of such a minority, far from casting doubt on the democratic character of the government, only serves as added proof that it is a government of, for and by the people.

The advocates of the Western conception of democracy have a third argument: they assert that in liberated East-

ern countries a "single-party system" exists.

But they close their eyes to the fact that what each of these countries really has is a government coalition consisting of representatives of several democratic parties, organizations and groups which had already joined forces in the course of a heroic struggle for liberation from the Nazi invaders. Is it surprising that these parties and groups set such store by the unity won at the cost of such heavy sacrifice on the altar of the joint struggle against fascism? The whole experience of the past teaches the democrats of liberated countries of Europe that nothing would benefit the reactionaries so much as disunity in the democratic camp and that, on the contrary, unity of the democratic forces is

a sure guarantee of victory over the machinations of reactionaries.

But what do the apologists of the western conception of democracy care about that? With zeal worthy of a better cause, they keep harping: yours is a single-party system. They make assertions which can only amaze the sincere democrats. They claim, for instance, that in the liberated countries of Eastern Europe "one totalitarian regime has been replaced by another." This juggling with the word "totalitarian"—what has it got to do with the truth? It is one of those typical catchwords which are invented not to explain things but to obscure them. The anti-Communist champions, with their characteristic unscrupulousness, use this catchword to put fascist states and the Soviet Union—the most

consistently democratic country and the most irreconcilable enemy of fascism—on a par. Their purpose is obvious. It is, on the one hand, to defame the Soviet Union and, on the other, to divert attention from the fact that the social and economic systems both of fascist countries and of "western democracies" have many things in common. We are referring to the activities of the capitalist monopolies, trusts, cartels and banks with their expansionist proclivities, and the social gulf between the small minority of the rich and the great majority of the poor and near-poor. It goes without saying that the existence of these common social and economic features doesn't mean that fascist countries and "Western democracies" can be bracketed together. But this fact must be borne in mind if we want to uncover the roots of subversive activities which pro-fascist elements are conducting in "Western democracies."

The countries of liberated Europe are confronted with big and complex political, economic, social and cultural problems. They can be solved only if all genuinely democratic forces of people are solidly united. That is why in these countries the really democratic parties, for which the interests of people are not empty words, prefer to act in concert. The fragmentation of democratic forces in many of the European countries before the war cost the people dear. Taking advantage of the disunion in the democratic camp, small but politically experienced and solidly united reactionary cliques were able in many cases to gain the upper hand over democracy. Such was the case in France, where the reactionaries, acting in behalf of the "two hundred families," succeeded in splitting the Popular Front and paving the way for the disastrous home and foreign policy which in the end led to the disgrace of Compiègne and four years of Nazi nightmare.

In Czechoslovakia the democratic forces on the eve of war were divided into a score of different parties; the trade union movement was similarly split. The democratic disunity was effectively exploited by Czechoslovak reactionaries, who did no little to facilitate Hitler's aggression against that country. Is it then surprising that four parties in Czechoslovakia—the People's Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Party, the Communist Party, and the People's Party—have now united in a national front? There are analogous organizations in Bulgaria, there is the Patriotic Front in Rumania, the National Demo-



"The New Europe," by Eugene Karlin.

FRIEDRICH ENGELS AND SCIENCE

By DIRK J. STRUIK

cratic Front in Hungary, there is the bloc of all the anti-fascist parties which have formed a coalition government in Yugoslavia; and in Poland a coalition of four parties is represented in a Provisional Government of National Unity.

This does not imply that there are not opposition parties and groups in these countries. There are and they enjoy freedom of speech, publish newspapers, and take part in the election campaigns. But who is to blame if the masses, made wise by experience, refuse to follow these groups and their leaders?

This talk of a single-party system is all the more unwarranted when it is remembered that the Anglo-Saxon countries are not particularly distinguished by a superabundance of political parties. In Great Britain as in the United States what we virtually have is a two-party system. During the war Great Britain had a coalition government supported by all parties. But nobody thought of calling this a single-party system. Just before the termination of the war the coalition fell to pieces and the government was reorganized and became a purely Conservative one. And after elections in July the Conservative cabinet was succeeded by a Labor cabinet.

We know, however, that the government party and the opposition party (which in England, significantly enough, is known as His Majesty's Opposition) hold very kindred views on important national questions and especially on questions of foreign and imperial policy. It will be remembered that the program enunciated in the House of Commons by Ernest Bevin, Labor's Foreign Secretary, was cordially greeted by the Conservatives—in fact far more cordially than by the Laborites. The press, especially the Conservative press, laid great stress on "continuity" of foreign policy displayed by the Labor cabinet. It was remarked that the Conservative leaders were far more gratified by this continuity than the millions of electors who had cast their votes for the Labor Party in the hope that it would pursue a more democratic policy in foreign affairs too. Facts, therefore, show that the two principal parties in Great Britain are linked by a much stronger bond than might at first glance appear. What warrant is there, therefore, for denying the democratic parties in liberated countries of Europe the right to unite their forces in order to tackle difficult problems that confront their respective peoples?

The second half of Mr. Sokolov's article, taken from "New Times," will appear next week.

November 28 marked the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the birth of Friedrich Engels, who was born in Barmen, Rhenish Prussia, in 1820. The year 1945 also marks fifty years since Engels' death and the hundredth anniversary of the publication of his first book, "Condition of the Working Class in England, 1844," which was translated into English by an American, the late Florence Kelley Wishnewetsky, for many years head of the National Consumers League.

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OUTSTANDING among the thinkers of past generations are a few whose thought was so penetrating, whose vision so clear, that study of their works gives guidance to those who try to understand the principles underlying contemporary science. Leibnitz was one of them, and Hegel, despite all his vagaries, was another. Friedrich Engels belongs to this group of brilliant men.

Engels is always remembered, in the first instance, as the collaborator of Marx, and it is true that he had the advantage of constant stimulation by the greatest thinker of the nineteenth century. It is also true that Engels always considered himself the Number Two of the team. This tends to obscure the great merits of Engels himself as a thinker as well as a man of action. It is still necessary to stress the fact that Engels, in his own name, was a thinker of the very first rank, whose ideas are bound to influence not only world politics, but also the philosophy of science for many generations to come.

It is perhaps unfortunate that Engels

never presented the world with a magnum opus, a fundamental treatise like Marx's *Capital* or Spinoza's *Ethics*. His ideas, even more than those of Leibnitz, were scattered in polemical books, in essays, in letters and in epigrammatical notes. Much of his fundamental work was only published in recent years, in his *Dialectics of Nature*. Many scientists and philosophers, caught in the common prejudice against working class materialism, have not yet taken notice of Engels' contributions, despite the appeals of scientists like Bernal, Haldane, Vavilov or Komazov.

How can we characterize Engels' work on the understanding of modern and past scientific trends? We can repeat Engels himself and explain that it consists in the search for the fundamental dialectical laws which govern the universe as well as the inquiring mind. Many people are suspicious of such explanation, since they are told that dialectics is a form of sophistry and that, after all, Engels took some laws of nature and squeezed them into a strait-jacket of antiquated Hegelian formalism. It requires little study to see how ill this formulation fits the lively, alert and penetrating analysis to which Engels subjected the results of past and contemporary science. Let any one interested in understanding Engels read only the thirty-four pages of his *Introduction to the Dialectics of Nature*, and he will see how far Engels was from squeezing any facts into straitjackets. His efforts were rather concentrated on rescuing many a petrified notion from the straitjacket into which academic pedantry was wont to squeeze it. Dialectics, as Engels understood it, was liberation, not enslavement.

As a matter of fact, what else can be expected from such a humane being as Friedrich Engels was, alive to all important events in the world from England to China, a leader of the labor movement, a political analyst of the very first order, an economist with considerable business experience, a former



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soldier who kept abreast of all new military developments, a linguist who read Russian to understand agrarian conditions and Persian to enjoy the luxurious poetry of Hafiz? Marx used to worry about Engels' adventurous escapades on fox-hunts. When Engels, during the last years of his life, took to the study of natural science, he tackled this field not only in the best traditions of German scholarship, but also with the background of a man of the world in the best and noblest sense.

WHEN, therefore, Engels undertook to formulate the general laws of nature and society as well as those of thought, and selected for this purpose the language of Hegel, he had good reason for it. The reason was that no better terminology had been invented, and, as far as I know, there is no substitute even now. Rather than reformulate these laws, we had better try to understand their meaning. Then we have treasure trove indeed.

The first law is that of the transformation of quantity into quality and vice versa. This means essentially that in nature as well as in society, in a manner fixed for each individual case, qualitative changes occur by the quantitative addition or subtraction of matter or energy, or both. What appears to one man as a change in quality, as for instance the difference in the properties of chloride and bromide, appears to the other as the difference of electrons in their atoms, in this case seventeen and thirty-five respectively. And where another man may see only a difference in number, as in the pounds of weight on the camel's back, for the camel it may mean the difference between a healthy or an injured spine. Engels, who liked to trace the pertinence of the fundamental laws in all directions, quoted Napoleon as one of his authorities:

"Two Mamelukes were undoubtedly more than a match for three Frenchmen, 300 Frenchmen could generally beat 300 Mamelukes, and 1,000 Frenchmen invariably defeated 1,500 Mamelukes."

Engels often illustrated the meaning of the fundamental laws of extremely simple examples, especially in his *Anti-Duehring*, which was written for the general public. This has occasionally disappointed sophisticated readers. Such an abstract and far-fetched way of saying that ten bushes make a copse, and 5,000 make a jungle! What escaped these good people is the universality of the law, which holds for bushes and beans and Mamelukes as well as for electrons and fibres and solar systems.

Nobody who reads the recently published report on atomic energy by Prof. Henry D. Smyth can fail to see how profoundly quantitative difference, and very simple quantitative difference at that, affect the qualitative differentiation of matter. This fundamental character of Engels' law gives us the general confidence that quantitative analysis and synthesis may also bring the solution to riddles still unsolved, such as the further development of nuclear physics and the transformation of elements, the creation of new biological species, or the synthesis of living matter itself.*

But even if we grant all this, some critics have said, what is the use of this law anyhow? Does it teach us how a new biological or chemical process can be performed in a specific case? The answer, of course, is a decided no. No general principle can replace the patient work at desk or in laboratory. The more general the principle, the less it proclaims about a concrete application. The principles of evolution, or of transformation of energy, also establish guidance in research without prescribing the precise course of events. Yet there are few persons who deny their fundamental importance. Engels' fundamental principle is even more general than the principles of evolution or energy. It deserves to be tested, to be analyzed, rather than rejected. The present generation of scientists is, as a matter of fact, no longer in the mood of some of the old time positivists, who rejected the value of philosophical guidance for the benefit of science. Engels' formulation deserves serious study, and is beginning to get it.

SIMILAR considerations can be applied to Engels' two other fundamental laws. The second of them is known as the interpenetration of opposites. Though Engels did not explain its meaning as carefully as he did with the first law, the principle is sufficiently clear. In the first place it expresses the fact that every thing or conception is meaningless without its opposite. This is sometimes trivial, as in man—no man, or warm—cold, but there are many cases where the study of opposites and their relation gives fundamental results, as in the case of positive and negative electricity, attrac-

* Quantitative differences need not always be expressible in their simplest form, that is, in integer numbers. The difference between electricity and magnetism, for example, is reflected in a more complicated quantitative relationship. The late Prof. G. D. Birkhoff, however, has shown how subtle esthetic differences can already be based on very simple quantitative differences.

tion and repulsion, or the two magnetic poles. Engels' treatment of the relation of force and its manifestation, one as the active, the other as the passive side of motion, is quite modern, and in sharp contrast to the metaphysical approach common in his day, which treated force as having independent existence. This last example illustrates, moreover, that there is more to the law than mere relation of opposites. It establishes the fact that there are no rigid lines of separation in nature or society, that things that seem to be opposites will turn out to be different aspects of the same thing. The term "opposites" has to be understood in a broader sense than in classical logic, so that heredity and adaptation appear in their mutual relation, dominating in endless variety the development of living matter from protozoa to human beings. The main advances in scientific work have always been in the discovery of relations between categories which seem contrasted at the time of their discovery, between such categories as immutability and change, causality and statistics, life and death. Engels' analysis of the deep connections between casual and statistical relations, based on a materialist interpretation of certain places of Hegel's logic, belongs to the best work written on the subject.

The third law of dialectics is the negation of the negation, which in its abstract formulation seems to be one of the most sterile *dicta* concerning nature and society. What does it help us when we pass from plus *a* to minus *a*, and from minus *a* back to plus *a*, or when we change water into ice and ice back to water? The word negation, moreover, seems something only applicable to specific human statements. Yet Hegel claimed this principle as the cornerstone of his whole system and Engels' formulation seems to bear it out. It is necessary to understand this conception of "negation" in a new and wider, objective sense, for which another term is difficult to find. Engels illustrated his interpretation by his famous example of the barley seed "negating" itself into a plant, and the plant "negating" itself into many seeds. In this way we find in the law of the negation of negation an outline of the process of creation, describing how new processes arise from previous ones. Almost every process in nature has the tendency to develop opposite processes to stop it, and in this process of stopping new and often more comprehensive processes develop. The evolution of living matter from elementary organisms to mammals follows such



"And I'll be damned, I said to Postlebottom, if I'll go on being a member of a thing called the Union Club."

a route, and so does the formation of mountain ranges as well as the growth of an individual being. Even the evolution of matter itself, as we now begin to understand it, follows similar dialectical processes. Modern physics and chemistry has grown strong in the discovery of such chains of "contradictions" negating each other, as in the contrast of Newton's corpuscular theory of light versus Huygens' undulatory theory, at present "negated" in the quantum theory of light.

LET us allow ourselves another quotation.

"There are two principles that have been the cornerstone of modern physics. The first, that matter can be neither created nor destroyed but only altered in form, has led to the principal known as the law of conservation of matter. The second, that energy can be neither created nor destroyed but only altered

in form, has ever since been the plague of inventors of perpetual-motion machines; it is known as the law of conservation of energy."

"These two principles have constantly guided and disciplined the development and application of science. For all purposes they were unaltered and separate until some five years ago. For most practical purposes they still are so, but it is known that they are, in fact, two phases of a single principle, for we have discovered that energy may sometimes be converted into matter and matter into energy."

This sounds like a typical quotation from Engels' *Dialectics of Nature* till we realize that "some five years ago" must be 1940. The quotation is taken from Professor Smyth's new book on atomic energy. The conversion of matter into energy has been observed in the nuclear fission of uranium, which releases an enormous amount of energy.

This release of nuclear energy is dialectics of nature with a vengeance. In such events Engels used to speak of "cases which would have pleased old Hegel." Modern science follows a direction which would have pleased "old" Engels.

By means of these detailed investigations of the science of his time and their interpretation as aspects of three general laws, Engels helped to accomplish still another task, the modernization of materialism. Every generation, from the Greeks till the present, has had its own interpretation of materialism and its principal tenets that ultimate reality is matter in motion and that both are uncreateable, that is, are their own final cause. Engels saw clearly that materialism on the basis of the old mechanics of Newton and Laplace was constantly becoming more untenable; and that the nineteenth-century materialists in their attempts to defend it only succeeded in crude vulgarization. He showed the way in which the ancient principles of the Ionian philosophers had to be elaborated in order to account for the revolutionary scientific discoveries of a new age. This enabled him, not only to sketch a unified presentation of the modern scientific method, but to look deeper into the nature of things than even many contemporary scientists.

Every reader of Engels' essays on the dialectics of nature must be struck by the masterful way in which he applied his method to the understanding of the past. The historian of science can find instruction and inspiration, and doubtless often challenge, in every page which Engels devoted to a discussion of men and systems of former days. This modern outlook is the more striking if we compare his writings to those of some outstanding historians of science of the middle of the nineteenth century, with a Whewell, a Libri, a De Morgan. Even compared with a modern author like Dampier his vision is remarkably fresh. Our young and exciting history of technology seems to move along the trails which Engels blazed, even without conscious reference to him. Both history of science and of technology can only profit by a serious study of the "Old General" of the labor movement.

We can therefore recommend the study of Engels' essays to philosophers, scientists and historians alike. The man whose work in the social field has contributed so much to the successes of the Soviet Union and with this to the one of the most fundamental phenomena of modern times deserves the full attention of all thinking men, indeed.

THE ATOM IN INDUSTRY

By MAURICE DOBB

Mr. Dobb teaches at Cambridge University and is one of the best known of British Marxist economists.

I HAVE been asked to state my views on the economic implications of atomic fission. Actually, an economist is no better qualified than any newspaper reader to make guesses about this matter; and he can do little more than collate the hints that scientists, possessed of the requisite technical knowledge, have so far let drop, and to deduce certain possibilities from what has been published (e.g., the English official *White Paper* and the American official report by Professor Smyth, with its copious references to the limitations of "official secrecy") about research on the question to date.

The economic possibilities opened up by the new discoveries are, of course, enormous: as great as, or greater than, the invention of steam power. They require a Wellsian imaginative skill to depict. They can be regarded as developing that contradiction of which Engels spoke between the social character of production and the individual ownership of the productive forces under capitalism to such a point that the continuance of that contradiction becomes quite unthinkable.

The probabilities for the near future, so far as one can estimate them from present evidence, seem to be confined to the provision of an extraordinarily cheap form of power, capable of transmission over the existing network of electrical power supply. Because of its epoch-making character and key importance for all productive processes, as well as by reason of its military potential, to leave it in the hands of private corporations to monopolize and to restrict, to sabotage and misuse, must appear to any person with a grain of social conscience as quite inadmissible.

This much has been asserted by most of the leading scientists who have been engaged in research on atomic fission. Its introduction would certainly arouse opposition from a large number of vested interests, whose capital would be depreciated by the new source of power: for example, those with capital sunk in coal-mining, and in electricity generation on its existing basis. It has been suggested that the use of this new and

extraordinarily cheap form of power would bring projects that had never before been on the economic agenda within the range of practical realization: for example, the irrigation of desert and semi-desert areas. It would enormously facilitate the development of all those modern chemical and electrolysis processes which are electricity-consuming in high degree and which are limited today by the availability of electrical power. Probably its capital-saving effects would be most striking in the case of countries of backward industrial development—India, China and the continent of Africa for example—which in the course of their industrialization would be spared the expenditure of vast labor-time and resources on mining or the harnessing of waterpower.

AS FAR as the actual processes of industrial production are concerned (as distinct from the cheapening of power provision) it is not obvious that the new power would produce any crucial change. The mechanism and instruments of production would remain substantially unchanged; and hence the level of labor-productivity in industry itself (as distinct from power-production) and the distribution of labor between the making of the means of production and the operation of these means in the creation of finished products would be unaltered. But if and when the engineering difficulties of making the generation of atomic power in relatively small amounts can be overcome, and there is a possibility of unit atomic motors (in addition to large-scale generation and transmission from a few giant stations) the position may become very different. It may be the case—although at present we can do no more than speculate about this—that it would revolutionize the character of machinery, and hence the nature of the human mechanical team-process of production, as radically as the steam-engine did. Its general effect seems likely then to be very greatly to increase the productivity of labor directly employed in production.

Whether its effect is also likely to be labor-saving in the sense of raising the ration of "stored-up labor" embodied in machine-structures, etc., to direct or "living labor" in production,

or conversely to lower it, is hardly a question that can be answered in advance.

BUT of much greater importance at the moment than the speculation about the ultimate economic significance of atomic power is the fact that today the military and industrial uses of atomic power compete. While it is true that each is the byproduct of research into the other to some extent, each use has such a large number of special problems connected with it as to mean (in view of the huge cost in trained personnel and resources involved in this research) that concentration on the one cramps and limits the other. At any rate, concentration on problems of military use evidently limits the development of its potential industrial use.

One of the great arguments, therefore, for abolishing the atom-monopoly—a monopoly which can only mean imposing the necessity for a high-speed armaments race in atom bomb research on everyone else—is that it will have the effect of starving the development of atomic energy for peaceful, constructive economic purposes. Once again, the imperialist ambition to dominate the world will have fettered economic progress and placed a premium on the use of economic resources for purposes of destruction. That is one reason why the immediate political question of the use and control of this new, epoch-making field of knowledge takes precedence at the moment over everything else, and certainly takes precedence over speculation about its future economic use.

If the unholty wedlock of atom-secrecy with imperialist monopoly is not broken, there may not ever be any economic possibilities of atomic power, since few of us will survive to utilize it. That is the grim fact we all have to face. The scientists realize it. The overwhelming mass of the people are beginning to realize it, and must be shaken into realizing it if they do not already. To isolate and paralyze the dark forces who think to use atom-monopoly as a weapon for world domination—those "hooded men" of 1945, who, though powerful, are a dwindling minority—is the outstanding task of the hour, beside which other considerations pale into insignificance.

THE RIGHT TO THE THREE R'S

An Open Letter to American Educators, by JULES KOSLOW

THIS letter to you is long overdue. It should have been written immediately after the attack on Pearl Harbor; it should have been written in 1933 after the rise to power of Hitler and his gang; it should have been written after the regrettable massacre in Elaine, Ark., in 1919; or perhaps, it should have been written after the legal emancipation of the American Negro in 1862.

Regardless of when it should have been written, there is little doubt that the past eighty years have increased the need for a complete reevaluation on the part of American educators toward the problem of the young Negro pupil in our democratic system of education. It will do little good to list the numerous instances of incalculable damage that the backward and undemocratic practices in regard to the Negro child in our schools has done. The numerous instances of friction between white and Negro soldiers in our armed forces, the school disturbances in Harlem, N. Y., Gary, Ind. and elsewhere, must force all thinking and sincere American educators, as well as the people generally, to reexamine the schooling of the Negro boy and girl as one of the sources for these regrettable occurrences.

I have just finished reading more than a dozen articles that have appeared in various newspapers and magazines, written by some of the outstanding American educators, on the question of reeducating the misled and misinformed youth of Nazi Germany and the occupied countries of Europe. Their erudite articles expressed many viewpoints on the methods to be used to achieve the redemocratization of the young Nazi fanatics that the German schools have been turning out for the past decade. The methods they suggest range from the importation into Germany of thousands of American and Allied teachers and educators to the supervision of German schools by an army of Allied educational administrators, who would check and double-check the existing courses of study, teacher qualifications in respect to eliminating Nazi teachers, introduction into the curriculum of courses on race equality, methods of democracy, etc.

In the course of studying these various learned articles, I was amazed by the indecent smugness that most of the

writers expressed or implied regarding the success of American educational methods and results. Wrapping themselves in a cloak of complete complacency and self-righteousness, they wrote with assurance and conviction of the educational job to be done by American educators in relearning and unlearning the youth of Germany, using American methods and achievements as their yardstick. Only a few of them expressed even the slightest concern that perhaps here, in the United States, all was not so well with the state of the union's educational system.

YES, gentlemen, it will be necessary for America, in cooperation with our allies, to make sure that the vicious and unscientific teachings of the Nazis be terminated; that democratic and scientific truths be reintroduced into Germany and her satellites. But let us now, without further delay, examine and reevaluate our own deplorable educational situation in respect to our own

minorities before we set up ourselves as a model to be followed by the Axis-dominated world. Unfortunately at the present time we are not that model. Our school system has the outward brilliance of democratic achievement; but, at the same time, it has a cancerous core of undemocratic, prejudiced, and unjust theories and practices toward a large section of our population—the Negro people.

I am not at this point going to go into the innumerable statistics about the underpaid Southern Negro teacher, the ridiculously short school year in the South, the disgraceful disproportion between Southern and Northern educational expenditures per pupil, the abundance of one-room school houses in the Southern states, low teacher qualifications, etc. Facts and figures about the primitive and backward school systems of the South are well known; they have appeared innumerable times in all kinds of scholastic and even popular journals. Although little has been done to correct these evils, at least many learned educators have written erudite articles in numerous journals explaining the historical, political, social and economic causes and results of this sectional difference. I will not attempt to write about these only too well known Southern conditions, but about the Northern Negro in our large Northern cities. Let us take the best situation, not the worst, and see if the best is any too good.

Northern cities such as New York, Chicago, Detroit and Philadelphia have Negro populations larger than many of the capital cities of our various states. The schools, almost everywhere in the North, are mixed schools—white and Negro students are both admitted. This fact has been heralded by many apologists for the present setup as proof that equal opportunity exists for white and Negro in the schools of the North; that the same amount of money is spent for the Negro child as the white; that it is up to the Negro himself to take advantage of the equality of opportunity, and his children will receive as good an education as other children. On the surface, this is true. But scratching the surface, we find a situation which is, unfortunately, not as rosy as the cold and dry statistics show. Just what, exactly, is the condition of the young



B. Golden

Negro high school pupil in a large Northern city?

1. *Equipment.* Do you know that with few noteworthy exceptions, the high schools which have the largest number of Negroes are the oldest, most dilapidated buildings in the school system? New high school buildings are built in predominantly white neighborhoods, causing the white students, who formerly attended the old schools, to shift to the new schools. As a result, the old schools, usually situated in the heavily populated poorer neighborhoods, become inhabited more and more by Negro students. The newer schools have modern gyms, sport fields, libraries, play rooms, and even in some cases, swimming pools. In some instances, pleasant and congenial campuses surround the schools. The old schools, as much as 100 years old in some cases, lack modern gyms, sport fields, etc. The sanitary facilities are of the most primitive type and are often breeding grounds for disease. Drab, grey, granite walls, typical of school buildings many years ago, give the outside structure the appearance of a prison. The inside of the building is usually dark, requiring constant illumination. The lunchroom facilities are more often than not in the basement close to the engine room. The chairs, desks, and equipment of all kinds is old and of the gay nineties vintage. The lack of sport fields near the school prevent the child from indulging in games after school hours and instead force him to fill up the nearby street corners.

2. *Teacher Qualifications:* You know that in practically all large cities there are established state and local qualifications that teachers must meet before they are eligible for an appointment. In the teaching field, as in any field, there are good, mediocre, and poor teachers. But do you know that in most cases, the greater the influx of Negro pupils into a school, the greater the exodus of the more experienced teachers from that school to the predominantly white high schools? By means of official transfers, personal connections, etc., the better teachers transfer to the newer schools. On the other hand, the greater the influx of Negro pupils into the old schools, the greater number of poor teachers shifted to them from the predominantly white schools by the school administrators. These schools become the dumping grounds for teachers who, although qualified and licensed, would have made better clerks, mechanics or store keepers than educators of the young. Also, teachers who get in wrong with the

powers that be are "exiled" to these schools. It is a common thing for a teacher to be disciplined by sending him not out of the profession, but to a Negro high school.

You know that everyone, except those who consciously try to cover their eyes to the truth, realizes that prejudice, ranging from a callous disregard to a blind hatred toward the Negro people, exists among a number of Northern as well as Southern people. Teachers are not exempt from this prejudice. But do you know it is more often the rule than the exception that teachers who are viciously prejudiced toward the Negro are appointed or transferred to schools with large Negro student bodies?

A canvass of faculties in Negro high schools will more often than not show that more than half of the teachers consider themselves superior racially and socially to their Negro pupils. It is the exception, not the rule, when a school administrator will take the time and the effort to determine whether or not a teacher has a democratic outlook regarding Negroes; whether, because of his prejudice, he is unfit to teach in our democracy where every student takes the oath of allegiance to his flag, concluding with the words—"with liberty and justice for all."

3. *Lack of Negro teachers in proportion to the Negro student body:* On occasion, a Negro teacher is tentatively appointed to a faculty which consists entirely of white teachers. But do you know that more often than not, he does not last very long? An intolerable situation is usually created for him either by the administration or by some members of the faculty, which forces the new teacher to resign. Boycott, slurs, even petitions are used to get rid of the Negro teacher who dares to exercise his constitutional right to enter a profession in which he has successfully passed the necessary qualifying procedure. It is the exception, not the rule, when any action is taken by high administrative school officials against the "superior race" advocates. As a result, the few Negro teachers who have been able to stand the gaff are conspicuous by their presence on Jim Crow faculties that exist in practically every high school in the North. It is not only that this unfair practice is harmful to the Negro teacher, but the thousands of Negro pupils react accordingly. School, to a child, be he white or black, is an integral part of his life. Many of his attitudes and beliefs, which remain with him during his adult life, are formed during

his school days. Yet, the Negro child discovers early in his school life that his teachers are, in the main, always of the white race. More often than not, this gives him a feeling that his race is not capable of producing intelligent enough men and women who can lead and teach him. A lack of respect and dignity in his own race and people often results.

Many of these boys and girls, delving further into the problem, come to the conclusion that the very democracy that is heralded from the classrooms and school auditoriums by various white teachers and speakers is really a "white" democracy applying only to the white boys and girls, and that he is a second class citizen in a first class democracy.

4. *The Negro student's apathy:* You know that there are frequent and loud wails from white teachers in Negro high schools about the lack of interest and the frustrating apathy among many Negro students. It is a common thing in faculty lounge rooms to hear bitter protests by teachers against the lack of interest, cooperation and respect on the part of the Negro student. These invectives against the Negro student by teachers range from remarks that "they are only one step away from the African jungle, so what do you expect?" to "I can't understand why they seem so lazy and indifferent, no matter how I try to interest them in their studies." Yet, do you know that more often than not the apathetic attitude expressed by many Negro students is an artificial one assumed in order to express their resentment against a prejudiced teacher? It is a "passive resistance" movement, unorganized and unled, expressed in one way or another, to show their dissatisfaction with teachers, subject matter, or lack of understanding and respect that they feel all around them. It is a common occurrence to walk down the halls of a high school and upon looking into the classrooms to see practically the entire class slumped in their seats, heads resting in arms, simulating sleep, while the teacher drones on monotonously. On the other hand, the difficult discipline problem among Negro pupils, and physical breaches of school rules, are often caused by the same reasons as the above. It is merely a manifestation of protest in violent terms instead of the usual "passive resistance."

5. *Lack of subject matter pertaining to the American Negro:* In spite of the fact that the American Negro comprises ten percent of the population of the United States and has one of the longest periods of residence here among the va-



It has only just become known how one of those died who spoke the language of humanity which the Nazis sought to erase from contemporary history. Kaethe Kollwitz, the great painter and print-maker whose passionate defense of the poor and suffering informed her art so completely that it is hard to think of it simply as "art," was driven from the Prussian Academy of Arts in 1933 into an exile in the Harz mountains and forbidden her craft. There she died this past summer, at the age of seventy-eight. This print is from a retrospective exhibit of her work on view at the Tribune Book and Art Center, 100 W. 42nd St., New York.

rious immigrant groups comprising our population, there is almost no information given in any course in high school on American Negroes. With few noteworthy exceptions, especially the "History of the Negro People" course introduced into the Chicago schools, the only time the American Negro is mentioned in the schools of the nation is during American Negro History Week, celebrated once a year in many schools of the North. It is known that the Negro has a long and interesting role in the development of our nation, from pre-revolutionary war days until the present in the fields of politics, culture, science, people's rights movements, etc.

Yet, except for the slavery issue discussed in American history courses, one would think that nothing of importance or consequence has ever happened to the American Negro. It is the exception rather than the rule that a Negro boy or girl upon graduating from high school will have been introduced to the significant contributions made by such Negroes as Paul Lawrence Dunbar, Countee Cullen, Richard Wright, Frederick Douglass, George Washington Carver, and the host of other outstanding Negroes who have contributed to the development of culture and democracy in the United States. A vicious, conscious, and persistent disregard of the

American Negro has existed in the schools of the nation until this very day. Yet it is by teaching the Negro pupil about the significant and praiseworthy achievements of his people that dignity and pride will be built up in the student for his own race. Is it not a fact that all minorities, not only in Europe but in the United States, have a right under a democratic system of education to have subject matter concerning their own minority a part of the school curriculum, taught in a sympathetic and constructive manner?

YES, there are many other pressing and vital problems that can be mentioned concerning this intolerable condition. But, instead of continuing to list the grievances, let me conclude by listing a few proposed remedies:

1. Equalization of equipment and school plants for the Negro and mixed schools to that of the predominantly white schools.
2. A preliminary examination and constant rechecking by school administrators to make sure that only unprejudiced teachers be allowed to teach in the school systems.
3. The number of Negro teachers on faculties to be in proportion to the Negro student population of the school.
4. Appointment of Negro administrators in high administrative circles who will have the power and authority to correct existing evils in schools as they arise.

5. Adequate courses of study pertaining to the American Negro to include such subject matter as: Negro history, art, literature, science, politics, anthropology, and current issues.

These five points are but a few of the minimum reforms that educators, interested in democracy for a free and better world, should try to introduce, here and now in our own United States. For there is little doubt that if educators, and the people generally, continue to ignore the vital problem of the American Negro, the solution to the problem will come not by peaceful and cooperative means, but through violent and bitter struggle of the Negro people themselves. History does not and cannot stand still. The thousands of Negro veterans, the thousands of Negroes in industry all over the country: millions of Negro citizens will demand and fight for full equality and opportunity in a world that has been bathed in blood for six years, fighting and dying for the very things that are denied to the Negro in the United States.

DE GAULLE AND DUCLOS

By JOHN STUART

THE French political crisis, centering around De Gaulle's effort to make the cabinet his private and exclusive club, has for the time being subsided. But if the fever chart no longer indicates delirium neither does it show that the disease has vanished. It will in time again produce alarming symptoms and there will perhaps once more be emergency treatment, yet it will continue to rack France as it does the whole of the Continent, particularly its western shores.

The disease itself can be defined very simply: it is anti-Communism and anti-Sovietism feeding on the new, democratic organism that is postwar Europe. To see it in the clearest light, to see why France is the tissue chosen by the infectious invader, one should go back and re-read and re-think the document written by Jacques Duclos in criticism of the American Communist Political Association. That article had, of course, as its largest purpose to remind the Communists of the United States of the peril of revising Marxism, of acting as the tail to the kite of American monopoly capitalism. But there was more to it than that did not emerge succinctly in the rich and varied discussions held around the Duclos article. Why did a Frenchman write it? And having written it, was this extraordinary leader of the French Communist Party thinking solely of the American working class, or was he in addition thinking that the Browder concept of the postwar world would injure and stifle the democratic renaissance of every country in the capitalist orbit, especially France?

My own belief is that through his article Duclos was saying that France was the key to the future progress of Europe. A France left unhindered would not for long remain a question mark in continental affairs but could, in fact, as the French progressive forces matured and took hold of the major levers of French state authority, help in the outcome of the crucial political struggle between democracy and the remnants of European fascism. The definitely weakened French ruling class would of itself in the long run be no insurmountable obstacle to the masses of working Frenchmen and their allies. But a French ruling class coalesced with the British and American might perhaps be too much for one party to manage. There was a problem, as I interpreted Duclos, which British and American workers could help their brothers in France solve. And Duclos was to my mind saying that the American Communists would not be aiding European and French democracy if they pursued the Browder policy of cooperation with monopoly, the central enemy of all the democratic movements that were born in the war of resistance and liberation.

I MENTION all this now because I want to emphasize the strong connections between what happened in France immediately after the national elections and the responsibility of American progressives towards her. In the past, over the years, every reactionary tendency in Europe could count on British torydom for support and comfort. That has not changed; it is still a fact. But this time British capitalism cannot of or by itself act as the gendarme of Europe, supply its fascists and quasi-fascists with either money or military

resources without debilitating its own strength accordingly. For that it needs the United States as a partner. The United States holds all the credit chips. It has no peer in financial or industrial power and those who control that power are willing allies to quell and destroy anything and anyone that menaces the position of monopoly capital. The class-consciousness of American monopolists is sensitive enough so that whatever the differences with their brethren in London or Paris, they will unite in temporary marriages to stop Europe's, or for that matter Asia's, revolt against the past.

De Gaulle knows that and for a man whose participation in world politics is so brief, he has mastered all the finer nuances of power politics, the maneuvers that go with a balance of power policy. Notice how De Gaulle in a moment when he jeopardized his own position by attempting to reverse the French electoral mandate, immediately appealed, however tacitly, to the United States to understand what he was doing by his refusal to give the Communists one of the three key cabinet posts to which they were entitled by the ballot returns. When De Gaulle proclaimed that his position on the cabinet portfolios was predicated on France playing a balance-of-power role between the United States and the Soviet Union, he was in De Gaullist terms saying that he had taken upon himself the chief role in Western Europe of halting the most powerful vehicle of democratic progress—the Communist Party. And by that act he was establishing political credit with American imperialists, to be in time converted to financial credit if not direct American assistance when the crisis that has now subsided flares up again.

THE next six months will be critical in French political life. De Gaulle will in those months try to split the Left, to isolate the Communists, to discredit Communist leadership with the Communist electorate. He will try to form a Right-Socialist bloc if he can. He will attempt to restrict the legislative rights of the Assembly and throw France into deeper economic chaos and blame it on the Communists. And he and the forces ruling his Popular Republican Party will come to understandings with American monopoly to assure themselves of foreign intervention—diplomatic, financial and military—to make certain that French monopoly is not voted out of power.

France, therefore, bears the closest watching by American labor. The new, strong and beautifully organized French working class deserves American labor's support and sympathy. No American worker or progressive can afford to forget that when the French working class was hurled back by Munich policies, American workers paid heavily in blood and treasure. The French Communists will be pictured as agents of Moscow. Jacques Duclos has already been charged with being such by the ineffable Dorothy Thompson—the same lady who advised the American Military government in Bavaria to accept fascists in the MG apparatus. France, again, is the key to Europe's future, her peace and prosperity. And it is Americans who can help keep that future rich and scintillant by preventing a union of the French Muniqueers with their counterparts in our own country.

NM SPOTLIGHT

Chungking Underworld

TU YUEH-SHENG is an unsavory character who for years has headed the protection racket, opium smuggling, prostitution and other forms of crime and shake-down in Shanghai. He has now reestablished himself in that city with the aid and blessing of Chiang Kai-shek and his American protectors. Since Tu Yueh-sheng is a leader of the type of Chinese whom the American government favors over the Communists and other democratic elements we may profitably take a closer look at him.

Tu has rarely been interviewed, let alone been seen by foreigners. His "shyness" doubtless broke down during the war because he and his close friend Tai Li, head of the Chinese Gestapo, were extensively used by the OSS and other branches of the United States service to prepare for the civil war which is now in being. Nevertheless, the exclusive interview with him obtained the other day by the New York Times correspondent is noteworthy, particularly when the correspondent says that "Mr. Tu has returned to Shanghai free of the collaborationist taint marking some of his followers."

One important episode in Mr. Tu's war record is described in Philip Jaffe's newly published book *New Frontiers in Asia*. According to this well-authenticated account the illicit trade between "Kuomintang" China and the Japanese grew to such immense and profitable proportions that in January 1944 the Chungking government "decided to control it openly." They accordingly organized a special company named the International Hsing Yeh to conduct this trade with the enemy and placed Tu Yueh-sheng at the head of it. This company, making use of Tu's underworld connections, also sold as much wolfram, tin and quicksilver to the Japanese in Hongkong as transport facilities would bear. It sent copper into occupied Indo-China, sold raw cotton to the Japanese who sold it back at a profit as cloth, furnished the enemy with tobacco and opium, and withdrew rice from the starving Chinese population to fatten the Japanese troops. If as the Times correspondent says Mr. Tu is "free of the collaborationist taint" then

we fail to see what all the fuss over Laval and Quisling was about.

The moral of this story is that as long as the United States intervenes in China on behalf of the most reactionary political and economic clique in the country it will inevitably have to deal through such gang leaders, opium czars, brothel operators, Chinese Capones and leading collaborationists as Tu Yueh-sheng. Chinese reaction feeds on corruption and depends on Mr. Tu's. In supporting Chinese reaction the American government must keep the same company.

World Government?

ON THE eve of the establishment of the United Nations Organization as a functioning entity, the point is being raised in several quarters whether the whole concept should not be discarded for a world government or a world assembly. By themselves both ideas have an honorable and ancient history, but within the present time context, when Allied relations are continually deteriorating, they are being used to make impossible a workable machine to keep the peace through collective security. All sorts of people are mixed up in these projects but it is most inter-

esting that the anti-Sovietees are pressing them hardest. The simple fact is that while the world is predominantly capitalist and a large chunk of it socialist, world government is a fantasy. For one thing the USSR could never submit its socialist sovereignty to the rule of private entrepreneurs and imperialists; for another, the contradictions that reign over the capitalist community would make an international parliament as effective as an umbrella in a hurricane. Only under socialism can the old dream of world government become a reality.

The dangerous feature in all the talk about world government at present is that it diverts attention from the critical state of affairs among the Big Three and leads to thinking that they can be improved by some magic blueprint. If the UNO is to mean something, a dozen unsettled issues, topped by the issue of the atomic bomb, must be settled quickly. No matter how the problem is approached, therefore, the UNO will be no better or worse than the relations among Great Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union. Each of these powers has said in words that it means to make the UNO a success. Nevertheless, Washington and London have in actual deed placed enormous roadblocks in the way. They wield the atomic

Atomic Energy—For War or Peace?

WE CALL the attention of our New York readers to the timely and vital meeting on atomic diplomacy being held at the Madison Square Garden on December 4, called by the Independent Citizen's Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions. The speakers include Secretary of Commerce Henry A. Wallace; the noted English scientist Julian Huxley, who is flying to this country for the occasion; Senator Charles W. Tobey; R. J. Thomas of the Auto Workers Union; Colonel Evans Carlson of Carlson's Raiders; Dr. Harold C. Urey, Jo Davidson, Helen Keller and Dr. Harlow Shapley, who will act as chairman. In addition the program will include a special dramatic presentation by Norman Corwin's *Set Your Clock at U-235*, and appearances by Danny Kaye and Frederic March.

We call attention to our readers in other cities to the vital importance of the issue and the value of organizing similar meetings in their communities.

bomb. They are not exterminating the roots of German imperialism. Their statesmen have adopted a policy of bluster and brawn towards the Russians. And now Anthony Eden calls for a revision of the San Francisco Charter with respect to the veto power while Ernest Bevin pays lip service to the UNO in the same breath that he suggests the establishment of a world assembly. How will the Soviet leaders take all this tricky playing with agreements made months ago and how much faith can they put in the intentions of a British Foreign Minister who utters meaningless phrases while not doing a thing to eliminate the sources of friction inherent in British foreign policy? There lies the core of the trouble, and not in what Eden terms old ideas about sovereignty. It was for sovereignty, another word for independence, that a great war was fought and continues to be fought in China, India and Indonesia. Apparently, Eden's new idea about sovereignty is not to give these countries any at all.

Indonesian Shame

THE remarks recently attributed to "a British spokesman" in Indonesia reveal the policy of the imperialist invaders and the political mentality of their leaders as clearly as anything that has come to our attention. An Associated Press dispatch informed the world last week that Japanese troops under British command were battling the Indonesians near the Javanese city of Semarang. "Japanese troops," according to the dispatch, "directed to clear kampongs (suburban areas) on the eastern side of Semarang, were meeting resistance, and they attacked briskly during the morning. A British spokesman said that the Japanese, like the British forces, were permitted to shoot anyone bearing arms, but they had been 'very good' about taking Indonesian prisoners rather than killing them." At another point in his conversation the British spokesman said the Japanese were "good troops" who fought very well.

It is not simply that the imperialists have become so arrogant that they now speak openly in praise of their Japanese allies in the massacre of Indonesians. The British spokesman's statements also reveal the type of political and military leadership which today carries out the policies of the imperial countries in the Far East. These are men—and MacArthur, Hurley and Wedemeyer belong in the same category—who have never sympathized with the war against fas-

cism. They are men who saw Japanese imperialism as a dangerous rival which had to be put in its proper subservient place, and once put there they are making use of the Japanese military against the democratic upsurge of the people of eastern Asia.

In Indonesia, Indo-China and China itself they continue their betrayal of the war virtually unchecked. The shame of history lies upon their heads. No less does it lie upon the British and American governments which not only tolerate but originate the policies which these pro-consuls in the colonies so brazenly carry out.

Traitor Poet

AMONG its multitude of other evils fascism proved to be an internationalism of treason, corrupting even the basic love of one's people and one's country. In the wave of treachery a number of writers belonging to different schools have been involved, among them the traditional Norwegian realist Knut Hamsun, living snugly on his Norwegian farm, and Ezra Pound, the ultra-modernist American expatriate poet living snugly in Mussolini's Italy.

Pound is now being brought to trial and has already frankly laid bare his defense tactic. It is to fall back on his prestige as a poet and on something more basic, the hoary bourgeois notion of the irresponsibility of the artist. So far the newspapermen have been playing right into his hands by treating him as colorful personality copy instead of dealing with the charges against him.

The traitor must not be allowed to get away with this trick. One of the chief issues of contemporary literature has been the responsibility of the writer as citizen that Pound is now trying to evade. But Pound himself voluntarily assumed that responsibility as well as dishonored it. He was never the political wallflower he is now trying to shrink into. Long before he became one of Mussolini's American mouthpieces he

was vigorously propagandizing for "Social Credit."

There is one issue for the courtroom to deal with: treachery. That Pound was a poet is irrelevant.

Where's That Apartment?

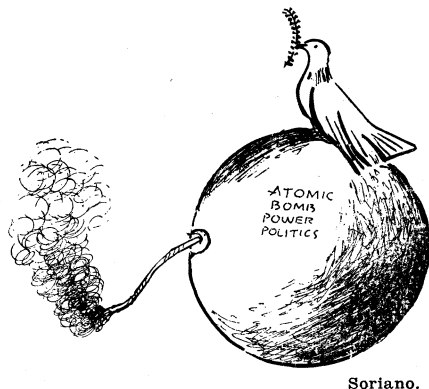
PRICE controls in a capitalist society are an effort at social regulation of profit-making and even in a war emergency they meet bitter resistance from people who live by the labor of others. Our Congress and some people in the administration are more concerned with the unfettered right of profit-making than with the people's welfare. The acute housing shortage, which calls for speedy emergency measures to house the returning veterans, the former war workers and the newly married generation, is receiving scant and leisurely attention in Washington. There is more concern for stripping the OPA of its powers to control prices and rents than for avoiding the disastrous inflationary rent rises and building costs such as occurred in 1920, and threaten to engulf us once again.

Reconversion Director Snyder's recent lifting of priority controls over building materials diverted these inadequate supplies to large contractors and black marketeers for speculative purposes and the building of expensive homes with large profit margins. Snyder's measure was not supplemented with price controls over new homes or the resale of reconstructed dwellings, which would have mitigated its ill effects. And now large-scale building of apartment houses in big cities like New York is being held back in anticipation of the elimination of the OPA or at least the reducing of its powers. Real estate interests are devising new schemes for raising rents, particularly through evictions, which are mounting near the unprecedented level of 100,000 per month.

The people and their organizations must defend and support the OPA; it is the chief obstacle to the real estate inflation sharks. The administration should be urged to reestablish priority control over building materials and allocate them to most urgent localities and housing projects.

Wide and popular support must be generated for the speedy enactment of the Wagner-Ellender bill, containing the only adequate long-term solution. This bill calls for a government-regulated plan to build 1,200,000 new houses annually for at least five years.

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READERS' FORUM

The Garden Hears Acheson

TO NEW MASSES: The following is a letter I have written to Under Secretary of State Dean Acheson.

Dear Mr. Acheson: On the night of Wednesday, November 14, more than 20,000 people gathered in Madison Square Garden to do honor to the Soviet Union on the anniversary of its founding, and to the United States on the anniversary of the formal establishment of their mutual friendship.

It was mainly an informed public that was assembled there—a public fully aware of our national greatness, needs and desires, and respectful of the greatness, needs and desires of the people of the Soviet Union. They were believers in America, in American ideals, and in American honor in the observance of them. They were believers in the Atlantic Charter, in the agreements of Yalta, Teheran and Potsdam. They were, as all Americans should be, fervent anti-fascists, fervent anti-imperialists; and they were above all, as their attendance at that great meeting testified, believers that in the closest ties of friendship between the Soviet Union and the United States lay the assurance of lasting peace.

There were many speakers that night at Madison Square Garden. Most of them were representative Americans from various walks of life; and, expressive of the international significance of the meeting, there were an Englishman and a Russian. As successive speakers touched upon our debt to the people of the Soviet Union and the Red Army, as they spoke of the gratitude of the American people and of their deep desire for everlasting friendship, as they spoke of the good will of the people of the Soviet Union toward ourselves, of their determined and relentless anti-fascism; when they touched upon foreign intervention in Indonesia and China; whenever, in short, anything relating to international good will, as that was outlined for the world in the Atlantic Charter, was said, the Garden echoed with prolonged applause. Then to the rostrum came the United States' Under Secretary of State, a representative who was to speak with authority for a government that should be of the people, by the people, for the people. The people greeted him with loud applause. And then he spoke.

He spoke at length, reading his address from a manuscript that had no doubt been carefully prepared. We may not question that his words expressed the considered contribution of our State Department to the cause of Soviet-American friendship and an earnest effort to win people to accept it as expressive of their hopes. As the address proceeded, a

chill came over the great audience, the applause that had at times been so fervent and sustained became increasingly peremptory and brief. They did applaud, for the American people are respectful. But of the nature of that applause the speaker himself must have been painfully aware. He may have fortified himself by the thought that by means of broadcast he was addressing a far larger audience than that assembled in the Garden. He was addressing the people of all America and of all the world. Could it be possible that all those countless millions everywhere—people weary of war, people who fought and suffered to put an end forever to the selfishness and greed, the exploitation and enslavement of peoples, the commercial intrigue, the injustice and intolerance—could be so utterly different from the thousands assembled in the Garden as to take heart from anything he said; or to have confidence that a government so thoroughly evasive of commitment on the people's hopes should be allowed to lead them in this crisis in the world's affairs?

That death-like mood that fell upon the people who listened to that address in Madison Square Garden must have fallen on all the people of the world had they tuned in that night. And yet—and herein lies its tragedy—the millions, had they listened in, would have received that voice as the voice of America. On the authority of an official spokesman for the State Department they are learning, bitterly, how we are failing them.

Ausable Forks, N. Y. ROCKWELL KENT.

Psychology in the CP

TO NEW MASSES: Your valuable and timely articles on psychotherapy will be a welcome stimulus to all your readers who have enough "sense for the new" to see the importance of using psychological insights and criteria as aids to personal adequacy and political efficiency. Don't be discouraged by the negative reactions of a few of your correspondents who may reject psychotherapy as wholly unscientific and reactionary or may accept Freudianism uncritically and so try to make you ashamed of allowing your writers to question their dogmas.

The timeliness of your articles is shown by a psychological study of recent events in the Communist Party of the USA. The published discussion on the political deviation showed also a serious psychological imbalance. Most of the published self-criticism one-sidedly stressed the defective knowledge and application of Marxian theory to the current

situation. What distinguished Gurley Flynn's constructive contribution was her penetrating self-analysis and analysis of her fellow members' and Browder's psychology. She saw both aspects of the trouble: the political and the psychological imbalance.

To the capitalists Browder gave too much trust in their ability to work with his plan and collaborate with labor. From his own Party leaders and members Browder took too much power by his self-willed, individualist methods of leadership. This excessive self-assertiveness in the leader would have produced disruptive, factional strife in a membership less disciplined to an ideal of monolithic loyalty. Actually his over-assertiveness (as Gurley Flynn admits) produced over-submissiveness in the majority, resentment in some and open rebellion in one. Since Browder was so sure he was right and showed no sign of self-criticism, the National Committee could hardly expect him to repudiate his errors without psychotherapeutic help. If the Committee had been psychologically on its toes when it first saw the signs of his imbalance, it would have brought pressure on him to get expert help as a condition for continuing to hold his job. Since no adequate initiative from within the Party was possible, matters grew so bad that finally the letter written by the French leader Duclos, who could not be accused of having a personal axe to grind, had a spectacular effect in releasing the healthy trends towards democracy.

Similar evidence could be found in all the anti-fascist parties, showing that the leaders could profit by some study of the psychological science and art of human relations; and, in cases where this fails to curb autocratic assertiveness, constructive psychotherapy should be used. CAVENDISH MOXON. San Francisco.

Billion-Dollar Secret

ANOTHER OPEN LETTER TO THE MAN-IN-THE-MIDDLE-OF-THE-MUDDLE.

TO NEW MASSES: When is a secret not a secret? You guessed it. When it's a belly-laugh straight out of Hell, an atomic bomb with billions in it!

Billions of killer-atoms, sure. But a billion times uglier for you MMM's, billions of slick money for the *Fat Boys* who pull the trigger on all wars. Billions for that Gestapological super-government they are barreling through Congress. That subsidized super-monopoly of atomic energy, monopolistic capitalism's perfect weapon for exploitation, forever and ever, amen.

Billions, remember, started this fire-ball rolling. Billions earmarked by President Roosevelt for Du Pont Chemical and its associates. None of you MMM's sat in on this transaction. Not one of you was consulted as to the wisdom of dragging in this Chemical Mammoth. You were outside that sacred inner circle of secrecy where absolute political authority and titanic monopolistic industrial power arrive at these world-shattering secrets.

Secrets? Secrets from whom? England has it. Canada has it. France has it. Sweden has

it. Billion-dollar secret? Hell! You know how a private group of investors sixty days before Hiroshima are now reported to have bought up valuable uranium deposits essential to atomic power. Coincidence? Hell!

Billion-dollar-secret? Remember past references in liberal papers to obscure transactions between Du Pont Chemical and I. G. Farben Industries? Remember that cartel-stench? Do you suppose billion-dollar-monopolies, like dollar-diplomacy, follow deviant codes of morality and of speech? Can it be these former cronies are still on speaking terms?

And that Gestapolitical Atomic Secrecy Committee of Nine? Do you suppose Du Pont Chemical will have a stooge or two in that line-up? A couple of social-register stockholders, say, from one of the Du Pont lists of interlocking directorates?

If the Fat Boys run true to form, what will their program be, once their Gestapolitical Monopoly is put across? Billions for hoarded horror, but not one cent to unite world-mankind behind an order where grinding poverty need be no more. Billions of cost-plus contracts in armament against still-to-be-created enemies, but not one cent for boundless universal energy—atomic energy—to lift the weariness from the shoulders of burden-bowed world humanity.

Secrets! Except from you MMM's, whose credit the Fat Boys bank on to produce the coin to pay for their cost-plus war contracts, except from you MMM's and your counterparts throughout the world, except from you, and non-capitalistic Russia, there is no billion-dollar atomic secret! You, the cream-of-the-crop for exploitation, must be kept in ignorance until this Secret-monopoly is legalized, sealed and delivered.

And Russia? Non-capitalistic Russia, committed to unlimited production, non-profit, and for the good of her people, she, too, must be blacked-out from this discovery, while in Switzerland, behind the white facade of a dead League of Nations, the Fat Boys as they clear their embossed, war-bloodied evidences of usury, may well be clearing now their deals in this latest device, this *Secrété*, already accepted by them as an instrument of desolation far beyond the wailing walls of despoiled and ravaged Europe.

Think it over, MMM's. *When is a secret not a secret?* ROBERT A. PERKINS.
Los Angeles.

Wanted: Citizens

TO NEW MASSES: In re compulsory military training projected by President Truman and consistently opposed by peace-loving, democratically-minded people, I wish to suggest that our youth in both high schools and colleges be required to take a course in social relations. Under that heading might come every branch of human welfare, as follows:

1. Studies in minority groups and their treatment.
2. Religious tolerance and understanding.
3. The appreciation of the cultural and

artistic contributions made by emigrants from various nations who have come to our shores and by their work and talents helped to make our country what it is today.

4. Economic conditions which affect the health and determine the educational advantages in the various social strata of our country.

5. The types and conditions of schools in the different parts of the US.

6. Infant mortality in the various parts of our country and the various economic social levels.

7. What kind of men come to our Senate and House of Representatives as influenced by the poll tax.

These are living subjects to awaken a keen interest in the young, so when they grow to manhood and voting age, they might cast their votes for socially-minded men and women. To such young people there would be a real comprehension of the meaning of un-Americanism and democracy. And a Bilbo and a Rankin, with their Hitlerite outlooks on life, could not hold seats in our government.

No, not compulsory military training, but training for citizenship would be my hearty recommendation. Our last two bloody global wars have been fought in vain, if at this late hour in history, we are still thinking of might in arms rather than understanding for human welfare.

EVA ROBIN.

New York.

NM Spotlight

(Continued from page 20)

This is five times the pre-war rate of construction. It outlines an annual private expenditure of over \$5,000,000,000. The government would regulate and stimulate this building through the National Housing Administration and would make direct contributions to communities for slum clearance of from \$4,000,000 to \$20,000,000 annually. Communities would be further aided by long-term federal loans.

Equal support is merited by the new Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill, designed to promote and accelerate low-priced homes (under \$5,300) and low-rent (twenty dollars to forty dollars per month) apartment buildings. This bill would reduce down payments on FHA insured financing to five percent, extend time to pay off the mortgage to

forty-two years and reduce the interest rate to four percent on low-priced homes. Similar inducements are provided for low-rent apartment buildings and \$1,000,000,000 is authorized in federal loans for slum clearance projects. No family is safe from eviction or exorbitant rent rises until these bills are passed and their objectives realized.

To Your Health

PRESIDENT TRUMAN has presented an excellent health program for action by Congress. It consists of five points: construction of hospitals and related facilities; expansion of public health, maternal and child care services; medical education and research; medical insurance; and insurance against economic loss from sickness and disability. The first three parts provide for increased federal financial and other assistance. The proposal for medical insurance, which is to cover hospital and dental care as well as doctors' fees, calls for premiums of about four percent of earnings up to \$3,600 a year, part of which would be paid by the federal government. The fifth part of the program is to be coordinated with measures for enlarging the present social security system, which will be dealt with in a separate message.

Senator Wagner and Representative Dingell have already embodied this program in bills they have introduced. On the surface all is well. But is it? President Truman has previously made excellent proposals to Congress: the full employment bill, a permanent FEPC, the twenty-five dollars for twenty-six weeks unemployment insurance measure, the lifting of the minimum wage, etc. And then he has sat around, like Mr. Micawber, waiting for something to turn up.

The real question is whether this message is for the record or for action. The new health program hasn't the ghost of a chance of being passed unless the administration and the people fight for it. The American Medical Association has already raised the cry of "politically controlled medicine," and we can be certain that such powerful reactionary groups as Frank Gannett's Committee for Constitutional Government will spare no cash in fighting this program. If, as the President said, "the health of this nation is a national concern," the people of this nation will have to do something about writing the necessary protective measures into the statute books.



Gottcliffe.



A PATTERN OF FAILURE

By ISIDOR SCHNEIDER

Few writers have such an easy and flexible command over their medium as F. Scott Fitzgerald. His characterization is acute; his narration smooth and supple; his description functional, primarily to set atmosphere and prepare an action. Because his description is so functional his writing is without static passages, giving it a remarkably continuous readability. He also has a quick sensitivity to the play of relationships, an awareness of the moments and ways that people unconsciously reveal themselves, that brings him close to James. For the delight to be had in sheer craftsmanship, reread the wonderful observations of facial expression, gesture and tone that add psychological resonances to Fitzgerald's dialogue.

But these great gifts, though manifest in all his writing, have produced only one complete book—*The Great Gatsby*—and that one barely a major work. One is immensely impressed while absorbed in it; but after one has finished it the book strangely diminishes and one is astonished at the meagerness and indecision of its conception.

The little-big hero of *The Great Gatsby* should, but doesn't, have symbolic depth; his mawkish aspiration and melodramatic frustration should, but doesn't, become satire; the disaster which closes his preposterous career could have, but doesn't, become tragedy; and the whole might have been, but is not, significant social commentary. Of all these things the book contains suggestions; and one wonders how Fitzgerald missed them, or why he shrank from them. The book ends as a picture of failure in a double sense, of a failure of the author contained in the failure of his character who is, rather obviously, after one knows something of Fitzgerald, an incarnation of himself.

In the other finished work of his maturity, *Tender Is the Night*, we get the same shrinking of concept and consciousness of failure, but this time within the framework of the book itself. The first part is almost as efficient as *The Great Gatsby*. Its hero is extremely attractive and successful, an admired psychologist making a gracious use of

wealth. But the finishing touches, alas, become the destroying touches. Never did a book so fatally undo itself as in the second and third parts where Fitzgerald yields to his compulsion to depict failure. The shrinkage that in *The Great Gatsby* begins for the reader after the book is finished, begins in *Tender Is the Night* within its own covers. The conception contracts; the characters virtually evaporate; typical episodes are repeated with a touch of desperation—like that of a tired-out vaudeville actor suddenly jerking into his routines to prove that he is still good.

What was implicit in these two novels was suddenly and sensationally made explicit in 1936 in a series of articles written by Fitzgerald for *Esquire* magazine describing a nervous breakdown and consequent literary collapse. These articles are reprinted, together with other magazine pieces, excerpts from Fitzgerald's notebooks, letters to and from Fitzgerald and articles about him, in *The Crack-up*, which takes its title from the first of the *Esquire* articles.

"THE CRACK-UP" series is one of the most touching and candid and revealing confessions I have ever read. It has a sad, unwincing, convalescent serenity before cheerless vistas. It is composed with a modern elegance quite flawless in its way. Yet, *The Crack-up* too suffers from the limitations of conception and understanding that mark his novels.

In *The Crack-up* Fitzgerald describes a recurrent pattern of personal sense of failure, which is written into the pattern of his books. The first crack-up recalled by Fitzgerald was the result of an illness in college, which set him back a term and cost him some coveted college honors. "Since that day," he commented, "I have not been able to fire a bad servant and I am astonished and impressed by people who can. Some old desire for personal dominance was broken and gone."

The second crack-up came after the First World War and was the aftermath of a disappointment in love. The failure, in this instance, was the inability

to offer the girl a secure and easy life which she found elsewhere. It left him, Fitzgerald wrote, unable "to stop wondering where my friends' money came from, nor to stop thinking that at one time a sort of *droit de seigneur* might have been exercised to give one of them my girl." The manner in which Fitzgerald himself spent money and wrote about it indicated an association of power with it, in a physical and even a sexual sense.

These earlier crack-ups were quite directly reproduced in his first novel, *This Side of Paradise*; and they seem to have determined his concept of character in the others. In *The Great Gatsby* the hero is slight and wistful and aspiring and loses his woman, a second time in the course of the narrative, to the crude, muscular, smug and securely wealthy Tom Buchanan. In *Tender Is the Night* the hero is an intellectual besides but, as inexorably, loses his woman to the tough, pugnacious Tommy Barban, a name it becomes rather difficult, after a while, not to read as *Barbarian*. The significant thing is that the wealth and therefore the power of both Gatsby and Dick Diver, in *Tender Is the Night*, is precarious. Gatsby's comes from bootlegging; and Diver's from a rich wife, money which he cannot get himself to feel is legitimately his.

Thus Fitzgerald's work falls into a pattern of failure, a pattern reflecting a personal despair. The sensitive and aspiring, who are by that very fact maladjusted and hostile to our money-power culture, lose out, as he did, even when they manage to get hold of some of the money power. They lose, inevitably, to the earthier, more brutish men who in themselves embody the system. Beside the numerous effective passages bitterly critical of it, there is a resignation to the system and a deferring to its brutal victors. A sense of personal helplessness merges into a sense of hopelessness about life. "This is what I think now," he wrote in *The Crack-up*: "that the natural state of the sentient adult is a qualified unhappiness. I think also that in an adult the desire to

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be finer in grain than you are, 'a constant striving' (as those people say who gain their bread by saying it) only adds to this unhappiness in the end—that end that comes to our youth and hope."

His own helplessness, extending even to what should have been his strength, he also wrote down in *The Crack-up*. "After a long time I came to these conclusions just as I write them here:

"(1) That I had done very little thinking, save within the problems of my craft. For twenty years a certain man had been my intellectual conscience. That man was Edmund Wilson.

"(2) That another man represented my sense of the 'good life' though I saw him once in a decade, and since then he might have been hung. He is in the fur business in the Northwest and wouldn't like his name set down here. But in difficult situations I had tried to think what *he* would have thought, how *he* would have acted.

"(3) That a third contemporary had been an artistic conscience to me—I had not imitated his infectious style, because my own style, such as it is, was formed before he published anything, but there was an awful pull toward him when I was on a spot.

"(4) That a fourth man had come to dictate my relations with other people when these relations were successful: how to do, what to say. How to make people at least momentarily happy (in opposition to Mrs. Post's theories of how to make everyone thoroughly uncomfortable with a sort of systematized vulgarity). This always confused me and made me want to go out and get drunk, but this man, had seen the game, analyzed it and beaten it, and his word was good enough for me.

"(5) That my political conscience had scarcely existed for ten years save as an element of irony in my stuff. When I became again concerned with the system I should function under, it was a man much younger than myself who brought it to me, with a mixture of passion and fresh air."

NOTE that even as an artist Fitzgerald had strangely little assurance in his achievement. He seemed to yearn for dependence there too, virtually apologizing, on the ground that he had already formed his style, for not imitating the younger writer whom other contexts identify as Hemingway.

The inner sources of this strange submission are beyond the reach of a literary critic, but its effects are clear. In 1924, at the height of his success, Fitzgerald wrote in one letter to his friend John Peale Bishop, "No news except I now get \$2,000 a story and they grow worse and worse"; and in another, "I've done about ten pieces of horrible junk last year that I can never republish or bear to look at."

There was nothing in his life then, except psychotic submission to the commands of the capitalist mores, that can reasonably explain such abuse of his talents.

Commercial culture finally reduced Fitzgerald to a mere nostalgic "big name." One of the most tragic of the ironies in *The Crack-up* is a piece printed here for the first time that had been commissioned and paid for, but never run, by *Cosmopolitan* magazine. The "big name" was no longer big enough to carry merely good writing. It would be difficult to devise an apter symbol of the callous and destructive role of our commercial culture.

That the third and conscious crack-up came in the thirties was not mere coincidence. There was a reason for its coming in the general crack-up of capitalism. For, up to the thirties, it had been possible to live without convictions, to leave intellectual or political conscience to others. After the thirties convictions became vital necessities and these had their sources in a social consciousness hard to reach for one living in unstable and sacrificial peace with our commercial culture.

WHAT I have written above was prompted chiefly by the reading of *The Crack-up** and of *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender Is the Night*, and some of Fitzgerald's short stories, collected in a convenient one volume edition.** It is a pity that Dorothy Parker, who made the selection for the one-volume edition, did not write the introduction herself instead of letting the assignment pass on to John O'Hara. His contribution is brightly-written drivel. Desperately and unnecessarily anxious to establish a place for Fitzgerald, he can do so only by a dreary attempt to demolish Sinclair Lewis, and he does so with complete irrelevance and ludicrous fury. His further attempt to help Fitzgerald into immortality by justifying cheap writing for the magazines is nullified by Fitzgerald's own judgments already quoted. O'Hara's attempt merely obscures an important significance of Fitzgerald: the testimony of his work and of his life to the insecurity and corruptions of capitalist culture. It takes from, rather than adds to, the quality and importance of Fitzgerald's work to try to hide that significance.

* THE CRACK-UP, by F. Scott Fitzgerald, Edited by Edmund Wilson. New Directions. \$3.50.

** THE PORTABLE FITZGERALD, selected by Dorothy Parker. Viking. \$2.

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Whence Human Nature?

HUMAN NATURE: *The Marxian View*, by Vernon Venable. Knopf. \$3.

PROFESSOR VENABLE's book is a tantalizing mixture of formal scholarship, expository skill, academic crotchets, fuzziness and strait-jacketed "objectivity."

On the positive side of the ledger, the book has value to students of Marxism in that it binds together Marxian ideas in such fields as the inorganic sciences, biology, anthropology, history and economics in their special bearing upon Venable's theme, human nature and its changes. On the other side of the ledger, however, Venable exhibits pragmatist quirks on such crucial points as the nature of dialectics and the Marxist theory of knowledge.

Venable's announced objective was to examine his topic from scratch by eliminating all hostile, neutral, "and even such sympathetic and presumably competent interpreters as Lenin," in order to avoid adding to existing "controversial confusion." But if one excludes Lenin and Stalin in an examination of Marxism, greater confusion enters. In Venable's case, John Dewey and Sidney Hook stalk in and mess up not a few of his pages with an adulterated product.

Human nature, Venable points out, is a historical product. But he fails to discuss this product historically. Certainly the greatest laboratory of human nature the world has ever known is the Soviet Union. Venable dismisses this laboratory with a few dubious and overtimid expressions which place that socialist land in the realm of "controversial confusion." The Soviet Union, he says, "is not yet full *ex post facto* evidence" that Marx and Engels were more than mere "talented guessers." Let us, he adds, search historical materialist theory for their belief that socialism is the next stage in man's history. This academic separation of theory from the socialist practice of the Soviet Union causes Venable also to refer to Marxism as "a nineteenth-century theory." With this approach it is small wonder that he relegates living, creative Marxism in the epoch of imperialism—Marxism-Leninism—to the realm of mere "interpretation." Venable seems content to see history as Moses saw God—from the rear!

His account of proletarian human nature is based on a one-sided selection of quotations from the writings of Marx and Engels. What we get is an unre-

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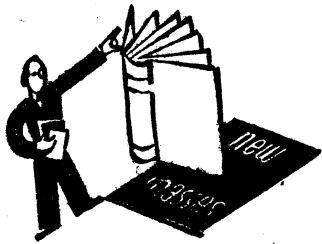
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lied picture of suffering, misery and degradation. Venable should have remembered that the epoch-making discovery of Marx and Engels consisted precisely in their proof that the working class has the capacity for discipline, organization, theory, initiative and the creativeness necessary to put an end to the capitalist mode of production and to build socialism. The working class acquires these qualities, Marx stressed, because of the capitalist production process itself, and develops them through struggle. It is strange that these basic views are ignored in a book about the Marxian theory of human nature.

Behind Venable's abstract "objectivity" lies a fuzzy conception of dialectics. According to Venable, Marx and Engels were "content" if dialectics stressed "change as such, multiple causes, and their interaction." All of which is, of course, true, but not the whole truth. Venable's summary leaves out the foundation of the whole process, namely, the unity and conflict of opposites. This accounts for Venable's pluralist bias which he attributes to Marxism, and his trimming of Marxism to fit the pragmatist theory of knowledge.

Venable asserts that Marx was "unbedevilled by any extant ghosts of the mechanical copy epistemology." Here and elsewhere Venable resorts to a familiar device. He sets up straw men then proceeds lustily to knock the stuffings out of them.

Thus monism is "mechanical," reflection is "mechanical." Even independent existence of the world becomes suspect by Venable's use of the word, "mechanical." Marx and Engels, he says typically, view knowledge as something quite other than "a series of static reflections of a situation whose objective existence is mechanically independent of the knower."

It is, however, a fact that Marx, Engels and the "presumably competent interpreters," Lenin and Stalin, fought for the reflection theory of knowledge because without it dialectical *materialism* is impossible. For Venable, practice merely shows "the competency of man's knowledge." But for Marxism, ideas are competent when they *reflect*, natural and social movement which is independent of man's consciousness. The difference between Marxism and the pragmatist notions entertained by Venable is that, in the former, knowledge reflects an objective world, while in the latter the distinction between consciousness and the world tends to dissolve into a mystical unity.

Venable emphasizes the role of practice in Marxist theory and then has theory and practice interact to the point of identification. But this is superficial, and indeed, a revision of materialist dialectics which holds that in the interaction of theory and practice, practice is the foundation and plays the decisive role in the unity of the two.

There are other weaknesses in Venable's book. He makes a great to-do about Marxism being both an occupational and a class theory of human nature, but forgets that occupations may be the same in opposite modes of production. The human nature that results depends on the conditions under which the occupation is carried on. Monism is Venable's particular bugbear. He tries to illustrate his thesis that Marxism is pluralist by analyzing the mode of production where he finds four factors each of which plays a co-responsible role, and since four is more than one, Marxism is not Monist. His factors are labor, tools, nature and social relations. Now it is perfectly true that all these "factors" interact, but since Venable fails to ask what is the foundation of this interaction, he falls into eclecticism.

Marxism does not deal with "factors." It states that instruments and labor (together with its accumulated experience and skill) jointly constitute the productive forces which are "the most mobile and revolutionary element of production." It further states: "First, the productive forces of society change and develop, and then, *depending* on these changes and in *conformity* with them, men's relations of production, their economic relations, change." (Stalin.) This is the monistic law of historical materialism which Marx formulated.

Venable occasionally indulges in what may be called terminological appeasement. Thus he says Marxism might be called "realism," "naturalism," in "more modern terminology." Curiously enough, Marx rejected this "more modern terminology" exactly one hundred years ago on the ground that materialism was a more precise expression for his world view than was "naturalism." His reason was that advanced recently by Professor Roy Wood Sellers who succinctly stated: "All materialists are naturalists, but not all naturalists are materialists."

And yet, despite all the weaknesses, confusions, and errors in Venable's book—it has the merit of being the first work of its kind in this country. It contains skillful summaries of impor-

tant aspects of Marxism. Some passages, notably those concerning man as an organism, and the relationship of Marxism to Darwinism are compact and illuminating.

The book too has a value, independent of its own intrinsic merit. It can and should provide the impetus to the production of works which go more deeply into the nature of Marxist theory than have, with one or two exceptions, thus far appeared in our country. From this standpoint, Venable's book may be a harbinger of better things to come.

HARRY MARTEL.

Worth Noting

IN ADDITION to huge, new, complete and one-volume editions of the Russian classics Soviet book publication in 1945 has done handsomely for the classics of other countries. They include new, large editions of Shakespeare, Stendhal, Flaubert, Voltaire, Daudet, de Maupassant, Dumas, Whitman, Jack London and Bret Harte. The first Russian translation of Chaucer appeared this year. Among modern foreign writers were Erskine Caldwell, James Aldridge and the Australian writer Lawson. Russian translations of the works of non-Russian Soviet literatures also figure largely, including Ukrainian, Estonian, Kazakh, Turkmen, Azerbaijanian, Byelorussian and Armenian writers.

AN ANTHOLOGY of American short stories is being published in Florence. Among the stories is "She Always Wanted Shoes," by Don Ludlow, first published in *NEW MASSES*.

"CROSS-SECTION, 1945," the annual literary yearbook edited by Edwin Seaver, has been selected as its January choice by the Book Find Club.

THE American Negro Theater, which now has its own playhouse in New York, announces three productions this season. One is a new play, as yet untitled, by Langston Hughes; another is a revival of Abram Hill's *On Strivers Row*, with which the theater started its career in 1940; and the theater is opening its current season with the play *Home Is the Hunter*.

THE New York City Center is showing a revival of the Margaret Webster production of *The Tempest*, which was one of the outstanding successes of last year's season.

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- African Journey, by Eslanda Goode Robeson
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- A Street in Bronzeville, by Gwendolyn Brooks
- Rickshaw Boy, by Lau Shaw



RECENT FILMS

By JOSEPH FOSTER

MOTION picture plays of wartime flyers are invariably turned out in the same design. The emotional flow is induced by the wife sweating it out between missions and the high mortality of confident hero-husbands. Between these prototypes, intense relationships are certainly valid enough, but they are usually reduced to formulae by the utter sameness of behavior, dialogue and story resolution.

Johnny in the Clouds, a British Two Cities film (Winter Garden), has not only the flyer-wife theme, but the equally ancient one about the moral rights of a soldier to get married during war. Yet by the taste and sensitivity of its writing and acting, it invests the formula with an illusion of honesty. Sobered by the enormous odds that they faced in the early part of the war, the British flyers in the film are neither overconfident, nor subtly braggart, nor overly reassuring to their wives. They live by attitudes that are as realistic as they are cinematically unusual. They lean pathetically on portents and superstitions. The first Johnny of the title is a gone goose the moment he finds himself without his favorite cigarette lighter.

Because they know how precarious is their life together, Johnny and his wife develop a sensitive and even lyrical feeling between them. Writing to his wife in poetry better intentioned than expressed, he urges her to "keep your head and see our children fed." With his death a nagging possibility, they both find relief in the contemplation of their child's future.

This mood is kicked to pieces by the Americans who arrive to take over the field. Although the producers retain enough of the original air to keep the film from hitting the stereotype, they make the mistake of handling the American flyers in the Hollywood manner. They are infinitely noisier than the British, they brag about the Flying Fortress, boisterously pursue women and, as in the case of the American Johnny of the title, die in a spectacular, over-dramatized manner.

In an effort to capture the true

atmosphere of the flying field, the picture suffers from a certain formlessness and a concomitant slowness. Reality at any given point is without beginning or end, but it is fatal for its theatrical counterpart to be so presented. The bouncy action of the American flyers, calculated to create change of pace and greater speed, has the opposite effect. It emphasizes the lack of dramatic unity.

IT is a little too late, perhaps, to discuss the merits of *Over Twenty-One*, a movie that has been around now for several months, but it is so superior to the stage play from which it is taken that some notice is in order. To begin with, Sidney Buchman, screenplay author, has thrown out most of the hokum that all but smothered its characters. Not only has he rescued the essential meaning of the play, but has strengthened it with some neatly worked-out additional material. Those staunch props of farce: the kitchen without plumbing, the window that is opened by banging the floor, the refrigerator that rumbles and wheezes, etc., etc., are still around, but more as background than as an end in themselves.

The main characters are attractive because of their democratic sentiments and because they consistently behave in the image of their ideals. When the hero encounters cynicism or an anti-democratic attitude in one of his soldier colleagues, he is worried, as you and I might be. A little poison, he knows,

can go a long way, and this worry dominates his behavior, forces him into certain acts and determines the climax of the picture.

For these reasons as well as for its witty dialogue and sure-footed acting, I hope the film continues its long stay.

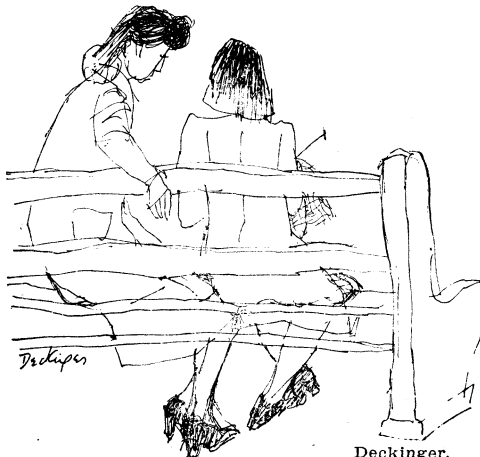
ONE of the most expert transfers of a story from book to screen can be found in *And Then There Were None*. It is directed by Rene Clair and has in its cast a round armful of stars; but the virtue of the film lies in its tight-knit story, taken from the Agatha Christie mystery novel.

Ten people have been invited to a lonely house on an island by a mysterious host who warns them that they must all die in expiation of crimes they had committed earlier in their lives. The host is one of the ten, and the film defies you to identify him. You are given plenty of opportunity as the various possibilities are tossed back and forth.

Although the Rene Clair of this film is a long way from the director of *Sous Les Toits de Paris*, there are a number of reminiscent touches. His handling of characters is more in the old spirit than I have found in his previous Hollywood films. Judith Anderson's tight-lipped, small-minded moralist is like the petty bourgeois women of his French films. And for sheer malevolence, the scene in which Walter Huston and Barry Fitzgerald leer at each other across the candle-lit billiard table has few equals.

Unless you have some foreknowledge of the plot, either through the stage play or the novel, you will be in for surprises—except the love clinch, of course. You cannot throw a glamor girl and a handsome profile together for more than an hour of screen life, and expect anything else.

A "SLEEPER" is a film that, by its qualities of acting, writing or photography, manages to escape from the anonymous mass of B productions into the area of critical approval. Usually it arrives without tub thumping, because it is a low-budget picture, intended



to live profitably but obscurely in the small towns and in the less fashionable movie-houses of the large towns. Such a film is *My Name Is Julia Ross*, a sleeper-creeper with an improbable story, but well enough done to keep your hackles at attention to the very end. At last reports it was at the Ambassador Theater.

On Broadway

"STATE OF THE UNION," the new comedy by Howard Lindsay and Russel Crouse, is the most successful political play to hit Broadway in many an age. It is so successful, in fact, that had a Russian written and produced it in the Russian occupation zone I am sure Mr. Byrnes of our State Department would make a demarche to the Soviets, complaining that it was a libel upon the American democratic way of life.

That is because—with the exception of some relatively minor misinterpretations of political fact—the play is largely the truth, and that is why it is so good. A well-to-do plane manufacturer, played by Ralph Bellamy, is being groomed for the Republican presidential nomination. He has been carrying on with a Claire Luce-like female who is a power in the party. So to clear his moral skirts he resumes married life with his lovely and liberal wife, excellently characterized by Ruth Hussey, and with her goes off on a national speaking tour.

In true "liberal" style he strikes out against labor in one speech, management in the next. And all quite honestly, excepting that terrific pressure from big capitalists is forcing him to leaven his blasts at *them* with some old-fashioned, yellow-bellied equivocation. Which strains his relations with his wife, whom he really loves but whose standards of honesty have become too stringent for him.

Such are the poles of the conflict, and while it is unfolded the authors manage to provide some of the sharpest insights into the "patriotism" of big capital I have ever seen on a stage. True, labor is sometimes idiotically lumped in with capital as the brunt of satire, but the weight of derision is laid on the right shoulders, and no audience can leave the theater with any doubt as to what class is the corrupting one in American politics, nor what point of view the American people must combat.

The play shows clearly how presidents are made and whom they are

selected to represent. The arrogant, monopolistic mind of big business is quite aptly described, and its contempt for democracy is shown in many of its manifestations. And in the final scene, a wonderful scene, when the Willkie-like Bellamy calls a halt to his compromising with reaction, and decides to fight for his liberal program though it means the end of his chances for nomination, we are treated to a conversion ending which truly convinces, and the completion of a love story which is perfectly integrated with the rest of the play.

And the acting and direction meets every requirement of the script—a rare phenomenon on Broadway. Although Ruth Hussey's part is by no means difficult it could easily have been made to seem colorless, a condition she never once allows to materialize. Ralph Bellamy as the candidate is a thoroughly believable liberal trying to be President. Myron McCormick, his manager-news-paperman, shows a talent for tough, sophisticated comedy I had not noticed in him before, chiefly, I suppose, because he has had nothing very good to say these many years. Minor Watson, Kay Johnson and the rest of the cast seem, as actors always do in good shows, to be right where they belong. And the sets by Raymond Sovey provide that nearly pastel air with which the play seems to have been conceived. Bretteville Windust's direction is simple, smooth and honest.

State of the Union is a very funny play and an incisive sketch of the worst cancer of our time—the greed and moral bankruptcy of big business. Whatever minor pinpricks labor comes in for in the telling, the play stands as a progressive note in the theater, with a message worth telling in a manner worth listening to.

AS FOR Harry Kleiner's play, *Skydrift*, NEW MASSES was not invited to see it. It folded anyway. We did, however, see *Are You With It*, the new musical at the Century and came away baffled. All signs point to its being a hit, for what reasons we cannot imagine. The orchestra blows and blows but no music comes out; the suddenly popular Dan Parker makes many jokes and no laughter; the dancers tap and the clowns clown; and it is all fine excepting that you will remember the routines from thousands of vaudeville acts. It is appallingly long, and the "story" races from one standstill to the next. All in all, one of those transparently cute entertain-

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MATT WAYNE.

Notes on Music

IT is a memorable experience to be able, within the space of a single week, to hear two new and exceptional orchestral compositions by contemporary composers, such as Walter Piston's *Second Symphony* and Prokofieff's *Fifth*. Piston's work, though more than a year old, did not get to New York till the spring of this year, when it was performed at Columbia University. I heard it for the first time at the Philharmonic concert of November 15. Here is the kind of craftsmanship we have come to expect of our modern composers combined with an original musical content and rich thematic development. Here expert orchestration is not merely a deceptive facade intended to conceal the bareness of the interior. Piston knows what he is after; he proceeds to achieve it with assurance and economy. The first and third movements combine structural brilliance with forcefulness of expression and powerful thematic materials. The slow movement, it seemed to me, was less spontaneous and original. But aside from this, the symphony manifests a distinctive talent of a very high order, mature and sure of itself.

I listened to Prokofieff's *Fifth Symphony* in the Hunter College Auditorium, from which the Boston Symphony was broadcasting it on the Allis-Chalmers program. It is not too much to say that this is an extraordinary creation—heroic in content, conception and execution. Let those who will (like the very smart though not uninformed writer in a recent issue of *Time* magazine) prate of the "Marxian metronome." Prokofieff's new symphony will survive that kind of talk. It is another example of the fruitful and deepening effect which the late war has had on the Soviet composer. It is a unified piece of work—a glorious tribute to a heroic people. I don't think I am reading too much of a "program" into the symphony when I say that the first movement (*Andante*) proclaims the invincibility of the Russian people; the second (*Allegro marcato*) reflects mockery and defiance of the enemy; the third, a magnificent *Adagio*, is a requiem for the dead; and the fourth (*Allegro giocoso*) expresses the joyous sense of relief, underlined by seriousness. Passion, lyricism, humor—are all there; but not levity.

Of the four movements, I think the first three are unquestionably great music. I found the fourth somewhat more confusing and less substantial than the others. But there can be no question that this work opens a fresh, new world of musical experience—both for the composer and the listener. Dr. Koussevitzky and the orchestra gave it an interpretation in every way worthy of the great subject.

THE panel on music at the first conference on American-Soviet Cultural Cooperation, sponsored by the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship on November 18, was something less than satisfactory. Olin Downes, one of the scheduled speakers, could not be present. Leonard Bernstein, who was to discuss "Soviet influence in American Music," was obviously unprepared, and delivered himself of the now famous remarks on the City Center, pointing out that the city was actually not supporting the orchestra. Dean Dixon, a last-minute replacement, did as well as he could on the subject of "Friendship Through Music." Elie Siegmeister took his job seriously, and presented a well-prepared and witty report on the "Life and Work of the Soviet Composer." Dr. Koussevitzky's opening remarks were eloquent and brief. Better program planning would have made room for some consideration of the music of the various national groups, of children's musical training, of folk music. Additionally, there should have been more on the subject of cooperation. And a little more of it.

ONE doesn't often get the chance to hear all of the Beethoven trios played by an expert group like the Alberini Trio, who gave the first of three programs at the Kaufman Auditorium of the YMHA in New York last week. The four works on this program included the *Op. 1, No. 1* as well as the beautifully performed *Op. 70, No. 1*, certainly the greatest of those performed that evening. If, like myself, you want to hear the other two programs, the dates are December 5 and 19.

WHAT to hear in New York: New York City Symphony, City Center, Monday Evenings. . . American Youth Orchestra, Hunter College, December 8. . . Maggie Teyte, soprano, Town Hall, December 19. . . Marian Anderson, Carnegie Hall, December 30.
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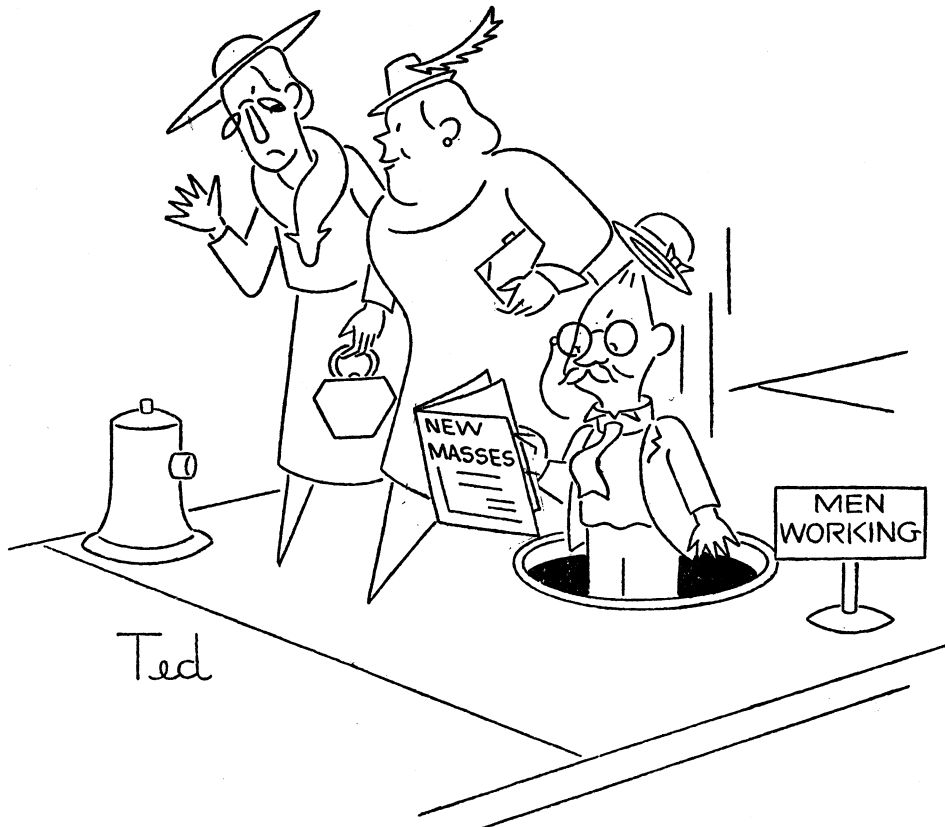
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