NEW MASSES

APRIL 1931

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A CHILD IS BORN

By CHARLES YALE HARRISON

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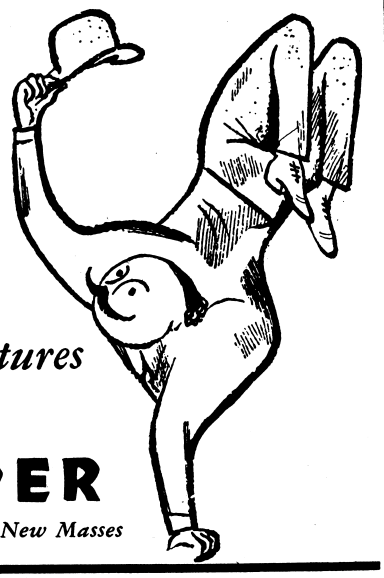

BY GROPPER

Contributing Editor of The New Masses

For years WILLIAM GROPPER has been illustrating the works of other people in *The New Masses* in *Whither, Whither or After Sex What* —Jim Tully's *Circus Parade*—Frank Harris's *Reminiscences of a Cowboy*. In ALAY-OOP, however, he has dispensed with the services of a writer, cast off the shackles of mere words and has expressed in pictures alone a drama which is at once a triumph of low tragedy and high comedy

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NEW MASSES

1910— *Fifth Year of the New Masses* -- **1926** -- *Twenty First Year of the Masses*—**1931**

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MICHAEL GOLD

IN A SOVIET STEEL MILL

I marvel at those American authors who have written a book on the Soviet Union after ten days spent in a Moscow hotel.

Few of the Soviet authors, these young men who led regiments of Red Guards in the Civil War, dare to write books "about Soviet Russia"; they write only about the sector they best know and feel.

It's hard to write now, they say, life is moving too fast. Gogol's great symbolic troika, Russia, is speeding too rapidly over the vast steppes of the world.

This is a real Revolution—it has never stopped in its 13 years. It has made mistakes, it has developed contradictions, but it has ploughed steadily though all the stumps, weeds and flint of the old world. A clean job.

John Reed wrote of the barricades and the machine guns—the ten days that shook the world—the days of military Communism.

The present period is as intense. There's a war feeling in the air again—but it's a new kind of war, a war to build industry, a war not of death, a war for the Five Year Plan—for life, construction, creation, the moral equivalent of military war which William James once projected—the Five Year Plan.

Soviet Russia has a Five Year Plan. The whole world needs a Five Year Plan, but capitalism, which means chaos, competition, anarchy—how can it plan even for a month ahead?

In restaurants, street cars, across the face of buildings, in theatres ,one sees red banners covered with the new Soviet slogan: "The Five Year Plan in Four Years!"

It has a rhythmical lilt in Russian, and the kids in the street shout and sing the slogan at their play.

It creeps into every speech, and into serious state documents, this slogan; I heard it at the trial of the counter-revolutionaries, I heard it in factories, and from the lips of Krupskaya, and at the Congress of Writers in Kharkov.

A Soviet Steel Mill.

When we returned to Moscow from the Congress, Sasha Bubin took us to visit his factory. Sasha is a steel worker; a husky giant of 28 with a cast-iron face and a warm smile. His history is typical; he was drafted into the Czar's army at 16, fought all through the imperialist war, was wounded twice and gassed once. He was a prisoner of war in Germany for several years; then returned and fought in the Red Guards. Seven years of war; then back to the steel mill, where now he works efficiently at a Martin oven.

He is interested in literature. The literary circle at his factory gave him a month's vacation and assigned him to our International Writer's Congress to bring back a report.

He spent most of his time rushing about fixing up details, organizing meals and rooms. We thought he was some kind of guide or official. Only on the last day did we discover he was a steel worker assigned to our congress to bring other steel workers a report on international revolutionary literature.

His factory is called the "Hammer and Sickle Steel Mill", and manufactures steel rope, bolts, rivets and other products. It employs 8,500 workers, and is an old mill, some 35 years old. It was once owned by French capitalists, in those dark days when the Russian masses still believed like our own Americans that steel and other necessities could not be produced without capitalists and a Czar.

It is on the outskirts of Moscow. Acres of wasteland dotted with redbrick mills, yards, magnetic cranes, junkpiles. At the entrance to this industrial hive we were confronted by a futurist structure of wood, red banners and bold lettering:

"THE FIVE YEAR PLAN IN FOUR YEARS"!

On the structure hung a gallery of remarkable photographs—the strong faces of steel workers, about 50 of them.

"These workers made the best records for production this past month", said Sasha.

Several engineers, one an American, had been honoured by having their photographs placed in this industrial hall of fame.

When you say factory in America, you mean a certain thing; and that is why all our sad, sad, SAD intellectuals hate factories. That's why they can't understand Soviet Russia; what, they ask, is it progress to build more Pittsburghs in the world?

Yes, for a factory in Soviet Russia is different.

It produces steel, but it also produces new human beings. It is a great school; eventually, the Russians hope to abolish all universities and have only factory universities, where study and work, theory and practice, will be an indivisible unity.

I will not describe the technical aspects of Sasha Bubin's steel mill. We have seen all this in America; we are even resentful towards these details, because in America industrialism is a monster that devours men and women, and coins human blood into profit. In Soviet Russia it is the national salvation, however, hence fascinating.

The Martin Ovens stood in a row and we gazed into their white-hot core with smoked glasses. In another department long coils of steel ropes twisted like red snakes in death agony. Workers seized them with tongs, and fearlessly controlled those dangerous

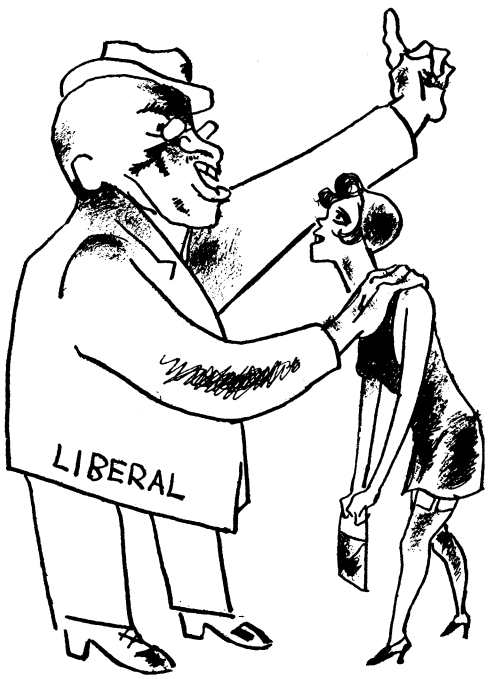
snakes, the slightest touch of which could cut off a hand or a leg.

We saw women at work in every department of the steel mill; there are 1,100 women. A great many do heavy work. One changes all one's American ideas of women after seing a strong, blond, pleasant-faced Russian giantess in blue overalls in blue blouse and red kerchief weilding a 12 pound hammer or handling 10 coils of steel rope per trip.

Eighty percent of the women have enrolled in the shock troops of labor; they have pledged to work over capacity to carry out the 5-Year Plan.

There are many rest periods in all the factories and mills, and to see a group of overalled workers of both sexes smoking and laughing around a samovar in a corner of the mill near the unearthly flare of the Martin Ovens—

Well it has to be seen. Love and courtship in a steel mill. Family life in a steel mill. Here's a setting for a Babbity American capitalist.



Phil Bard

"There little girlie don't you cry, we'll get you a nice new vice-squad bye and bye".

Four thousand workers, almost half in this steel mill go to school. The leader of the Communist Nucleus proudly explained the great blue-print graph on the wall of his office. This traced the different kinds of schooling the men and women are taking.

It begins with the five hundred adults who are learning to read and write. One of the signs of a real revolution in Soviet Russia in this great spread of literacy in a land where 90% of the population was formerly illiterate.

Then the graph mounted up and up, through the elementary schools and the technical schools for apprentices, and the political and scientific anti-religious courses, until it reached an apex in the 150 workers who are about to graduate as Soviet Engineers.

Young Communist workers they are, and they are being trained as rapidly as possible to supplant the old, czarist engineers, those melancholy passive resisters and active saboteurs, whom life has passed by, those dangerous corpses.

This steel mill, like every other factory, has its wall newspapers, its frequent union meetings, Communist meetings, its literary circles, its library, its intellectual life hot as a Martin Oven.

A daily newspaper is also published by and for this steel mill. It is called *Plavka* (Hot Steel). It is full of factory news and workers' poetry and prose. It has correspondents in every branch of the mill. Very often groups of these correspondents are voted trips to different parts of the Soviet Union to report on the life there.

The mill has a literary circle, with about 40 members, who practice literature and are led by Tarass Rodion. He is a famous author in Soviet Russia; one of his novels *Chocolate* appeared in our magazine *Asia*. The better one *February* is not translated. He is also a young general in the Red Army.

We visited the steel mill's library. It was as crowded as a popular New York speakeasy. There are 20,000 volumes in this library, and they are read into shreds. Out of 8,000 workers in the mill, some 4,500 are active members of the library. Four hundred children use it too. Also, there are 300 Tartars working here, there is a section for Tartar books.

The chief librarian, a dark handsome girl crazy about her job, analyzed for us the kind of reading done by these steel workers.

Fifty percent of the books read are fiction and belles lettres; 10% technical subjects connected with industry; 15% politics and economics; 25% general sciences, philosophy, history, geography, etc.

I saw a squat young Tartar receiving two books at the library desk. They were Russian books, so I could decipher the titles and authors. One was *Babbitt* by Sinclair Lewis, the other, *An American Tragedy*, Theodore Dreiser.

"You are interested in America."

He grinned. "Yes, yes, yes," he said, "it is the land of industrial technique!"

These two authors, and Jack London, O. Henry, Walt Whitman, Fenimore Cooper, Frank Norris, John Dos Passos, Upton Sinclair, are the most popular American authors in this steel mill.

A worker showed me a stenogram report of a literary meeting of the workers that had been held a month previously to discuss a book I had written.

America is a Philistine country, the average worker reads nothing except the news of prize fights, and even many Communists there believe literature to be one of the decadent bourgeois activities. I am almost ashamed when I have to explain this viewpoint to Russians. It is one of the most effective ways of organizing the emotions of the masses toward the great Communist goals.

There is literally a book famine here now. I don't remember the figures, but more millions of serious books are printed than in any other land, and even then there aren't enough. First editions of books in America start usually with 2,000. Here they start from 5,000 up to 50,000. Sales are enormous. Panferov's *Brusski* sold about a million copies. Bela Illes' novel of the Hungarian Revolution sold a half-million. Mayakovsky's futurist poetry sold about three million.

The *Pravda* a newspaper as weighty and serious as the *New York Times*, and certainly more scientific, has a paid circulation of over a million. And so on. The figures are astounding.

No one who hasn't been here can guess how *literary* the Soviet workers have become. All over Moscow's main streets today there are great banners stretched. They announce the 100th anniversary of Gogol, and the fact that a complete edition of his works will be ready in January. Imagine banners for Herman Melville, say across Times Square.

One of the young steel mill workers, an active Communist, told me he was reading through the complete works of Marcel Proust, so as to better understand the decadence of French capitalism, and to analyze the conflicts between the proletarian and capitalist literary styles!

There are 26 units in this steel mill. Each has its own reading room, where workers can read, smoke, drink tea while off duty. Each has its wall newspaper that is changed every two days, and is made up of cartoons and essays of the workers.

A few sample cartoons from a wall newspaper:

A worker sticking the nose of an over-theoretical engineer into a steel cauldron to make him realize what's happening around him.

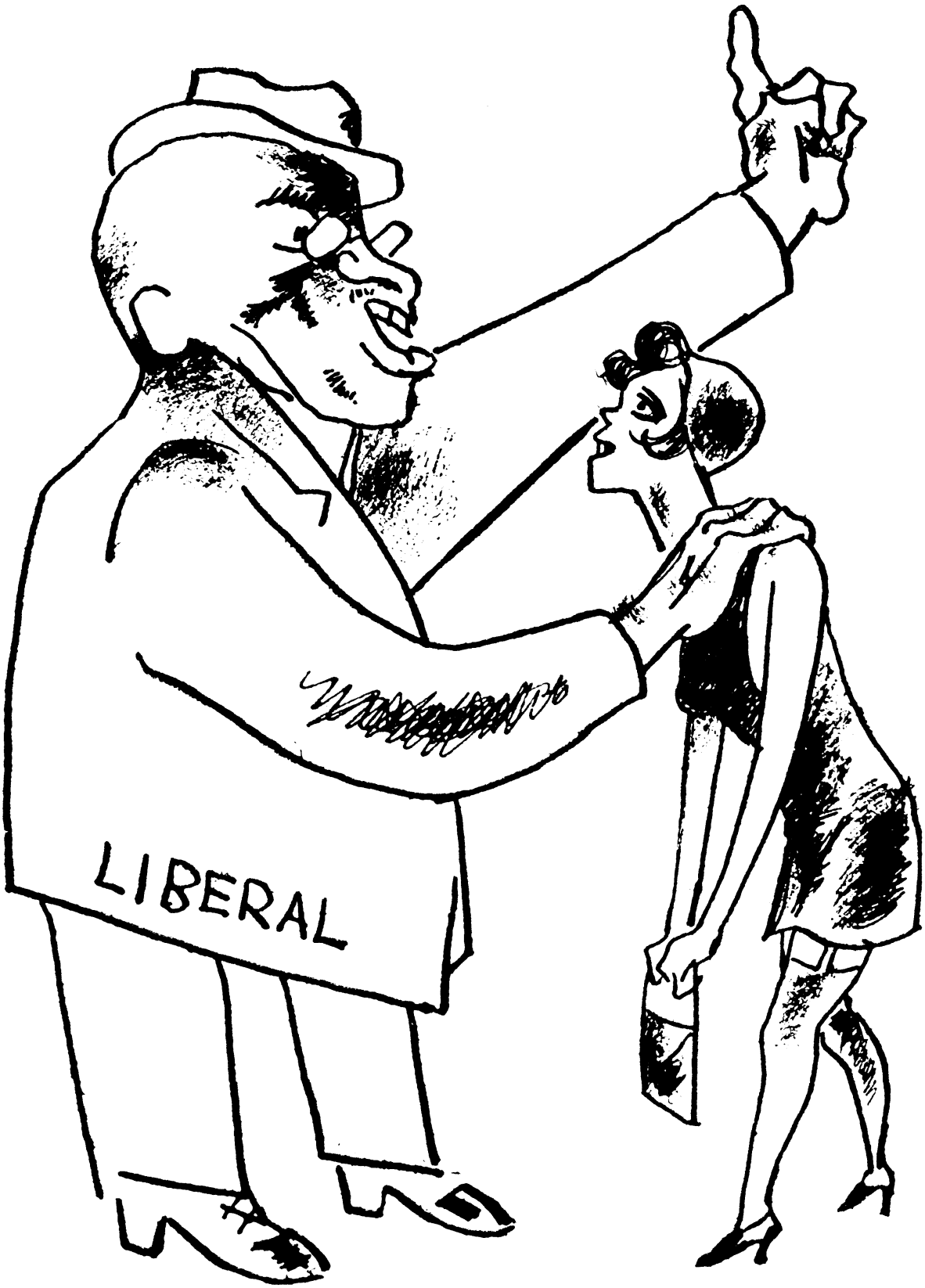
An old worker appealing to a young student-worker to study not only books of theory, but practice of life.

An old worker being rebuked by a young industrial girl-student because he wouldn't instruct her in the living practice of industry.

A virago draving a worker with a pitchfork. This cartoon has reference to one of the men whose wife wouldn't let him join the Communist Party.

All of the cartoons and writing were based on local events in the particular section of the steel mill. They were sharp, witty and blunt self-criticising, one of the new Soviet arts of progress.

We ate in one of the dining rooms, cabbage and soup and meat and potatoes and tea—a good meal for 36 kopeks. In the usual Moscow restaurant it would cost four or five times as much. It is hard to estimate money values nowadays in Russia. There are three or four prices for everything, and you pay according to your special category and wages. Rent, food, clothing, books, wine—everything is sold that way. The worker pays the least, and gets the best of everything. It sounds unfair, but in capitalist lands the unfairness is on the other foot—and to what extremes of proletarian hunger and death!



Phil Bard

"There little girlie don't you cry, we'll get you a nice new vice-squad bye and bye".

In 1926 the sabotaging engineers burned down one unit of this steel mill. It has been repaired. The steel mill, like all of Soviet Russia, has gone forward despite the sabotagers.

Its proud boast is that the first year of the 5-Year Plan it went 113.4% over its quota. It will do better this year.

Another boast: the author Shevedov was developed in this mill, and wrote a popular novel out of his experiences here, named, *By the Martin Oven.*

This is only one steel mill. There are thousands of other factories and mills over this enormous and passionate land. And in every industrial unit the same socialized production and the same socialized education is going on. Deny all the Communist theories if you wish; but here are millions of people living in a certain way, and driving to a certain goal. You can try to murder them all off in an imperialist invasion; but no other argument will convince them that they have not entered a new wonderful life with the Revolution.

They will fight for their new life; they once were illiterate serfs in this steel mill, working to sixteen hours a day, and living like swine; now they read Proust and Upton Sinclair and tell the engineers to do good work or go to hell; you will not change such mass habits except by mass murder.

But nobody has yet murdered successfully a great passionate nation, an armed nation of 150 millions. Napoleon conquered the world, but went to pieces in Russia. And this nation is stronger now, and can take on several bourgeois Napoleons and break them too.

But it wants peace. Soviet Russia is the ONLY pacific nation in the world today, because peace is in the interests of her national economy. And because the passion for new construction has seized the nation and any interruption of the great 5-Year Plan will be calamity.

The old Bolshevik, Felix Kon, made a speech the other night before a great audience in the Opera House. He is a witty, beloved and exuberant old grey beard, the veteran of a hundred fights and Czarist prisons and one of Lenin's first teachers and friends.

"We are making every sacrifice for peace," he said. "We need peace as we need air. We need peace. But," he added slowly, "if the capitalist nations attack us we are ready for them. We do not fear the next world war. It will be turned into a world revolution. We are ready."

William Gropper

"EXTRY! CORRUPT JUDGE IN HIDING!"

Soviet Russia is ready. Anyone who has seen these new masses at work in factories and collective farms, or marching in the streets knows that a force has been released whose trajectories are not to be calculated by the ordinary capitalist mathematics.

With the Five Year Plan an idea was born into the world that nothing can kill. It is being talked about everywhere from China to Peru, because it is so obvious a solution of the world's economic problems. This great and profoundly simple idea affects all the philosophies too. Men have puzzled over God, nature, freedom, fatalism and other concepts. The economic chaos in which man has lived hitherto has created in him these feelings of bewilderment and religious fatalism before the natural forces of the universe.

But the Five Year Plan is the first assertion made by collective man. It affirms the possibility of creating an organized humanized universe in which primeval chaos and accidentalism will have no place. The very concept of a planned society leads to the concept of a planned universe. Man has been called the measure of all things. But this passive role was only the first stage of his growth. He is also destined to be the master of all things. He does not have to search for or create gods, because he himself is the only recognizable god. The Five Year Plan contains all these vast implications.

Soviet Russia strains every nerve to put across the great Plan. There is Socialist competition in the factories, and the Red Army keeps its bayonets sharp, and studies political economy and world history. A Soviet steel mill does not remind one of Pittsburgh, but of the rennaisance in Europe after the dark ages, and the first universities. Or it does not remind one of anything at all in the past, but fills one with strange inexpressible visions of the future.

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William Gropper

"EXTRY! CORRUPT JUDGE IN HIDING!"

William Gropper

"EXTRY! CORRUPT JUDGE IN HIDING!"

LAWRENCE GELLERT

NEGRO SONGS OF PROTEST*

Chain gangs get no compensation. They're what you might call "free" labor. One day I encountered a ragged, hungry Negro plodding along the highway. He had been released from jail that morning. Served eighteen months. And didn't even have the price of a railroad ticket back to his home.

The song below I heard a gang sing on a county road outside Greenville, S. C. The tune is simple enough although varying in pitch with a range through an entire interval at times. But thirty or more voices spinning and weaving filagrees of tone into intricate variations of the simple theme created a symphony miserere. And a more interesting one was never heard on any concert stage in New York.

Lay down late, getting up soon
Twelve o'clock an' has no noon
All ah wan's dese col' iron shackles off mah leg

Diggin' in de road bank, diggin in de ditch
Chain gang got me boss got de switch
All ah wan's dese col' iron shackles off mah leg

Golly jedge you done me wrong
ninety-nine years in jail's too long
All ah wan's dese col' iron shackles off mah leg

Freedom far, Lawd Guard so near
Don' know ef ah cain eber git clear
All ah wan's dese col' iron shackles off mah leg

Mah gals sweetie hangin' roun'
'nother gwine git her while ahm gone
All ah wan's dese col' iron shackles off mah leg

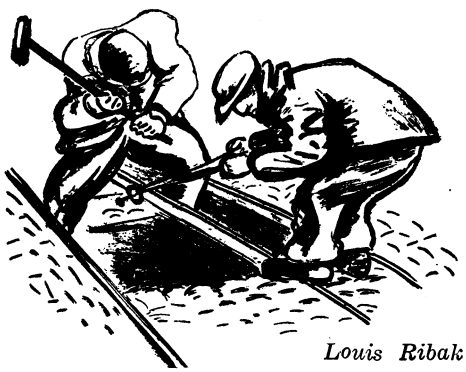
The Negro preacher differs little from the white one. He is a pompous, fat-headed, blow-hard parasite, prating meaningless platitudes about "de Lawd an' his By an' By Kingdom." But for himself on Earth in the meanwhile he reserves the best house in the community. In addition to as much salary as he can bamboozle out of the meagre, hard earned funds of his flock, the best chicken, pig or other choice delicacy gleaned on his rounds in the "interest" of "de Lawd".

One preacher in Gaffney, S. C. deemed slavery and the Negroes present status, but little better, a fine thing. "De Lawds trial by ordeal". Everything would be made right in the hereafter. But there was something more urgent he wanted rectified right here on Earth. The white folks weren't showing him the respect his title and calling entitled him to. They treated him just as if he were an ordinary, ignorant "nigger". "When I send a notice of affairs to the local newspaper they never refer to me as 'Reverend'. Just 'negro preacher'.

The lines below are sung to what may have been an early spiritual. Anyway here's the Negro's version of Joe Hill's "Pie in the Sky".

Religion is somethin'
Fo' yo' soul
But de preacher's belly
Done git it all
I know

Trust de Lawd
Go de Bible way
You git yo' due
On jedgemen' day
I heard



Louis Ribak

De Lawd make preacher
big an' fat
Sleek an' shiny
Lak a beaver hat
dat's so

He eats yo' dinner
An' take yo' lam'
Gwine give you pay
In de promise lan'
Oh yes

Two prayin' niggers
ninety-nine years in jail
Waitin' fo' Jesus
To pay dere bail
dat's a fac'

De Lawd make yo'
pore an' lean
de sorries' sight
Ah eber seen
fo' sho'

This comes from Bethune, S. C. But a thousand other places about the South may well have furnished one just like it. A Negro asked the best town for Negroes in the South, answered "Dey ain' none ob 'em". The tune is lively—probably taken from some old English jig or reel perpetuated by the Mountaineers.

Goin' to mah boss
To draw mah pay-roll
Don' wan' moah his mud
On mah feet 'tall
Oh mah kitty, co co

Goin' fin' me a place
It cuts no figger
You git yo' due
Eben if yo' a nigger
Oh mah Kitty, co co

Goin' fin' me a place
white folks ain' inchin
An' nigger's belly
Ain' always pinchin'
Oh mah Kitty, co co

Goin' far 'way
Be mah own Master
Feet yo' too slow
Train take me faster
Oh mah Kitty, co co

Goin' somewhere
Dey knows nothin' 'bout Jim Crow
An ah cain' walk
Right through de front do'
Oh mah Kitty, co co

Goin' to set right down
At de welcome table
Some o' dese days
I'll sho' be able
Oh mah Kitty, co co

Always the Negro has been the first fired and the last hired. This is particularly true now. The whites compete now for the most menial jobs previously only "a nigger" would take. If South Carolina may be taken as fair indication of the general trend fully 75% of all Southern Negro workers are unemployed.

The Negro is clannish. Like all suppressed minorities in history, they cling together for mutual protection. The last nickel is divided into five parts if necessary.

The singer of the following song ingeniously dissects a chicken in verse to broadcast to his friends his hunger. I heard it in Charlotte, N. C.

If you kill a chicken, save me de head
Seem lak money sho' thinkin' ahm dead

If you kill a chicken , save me de breast
Lawd body so pore, fallin' right through mah v

If you kill a chicken, save me de breast
When you think ahm workin', ain' doin' a thing

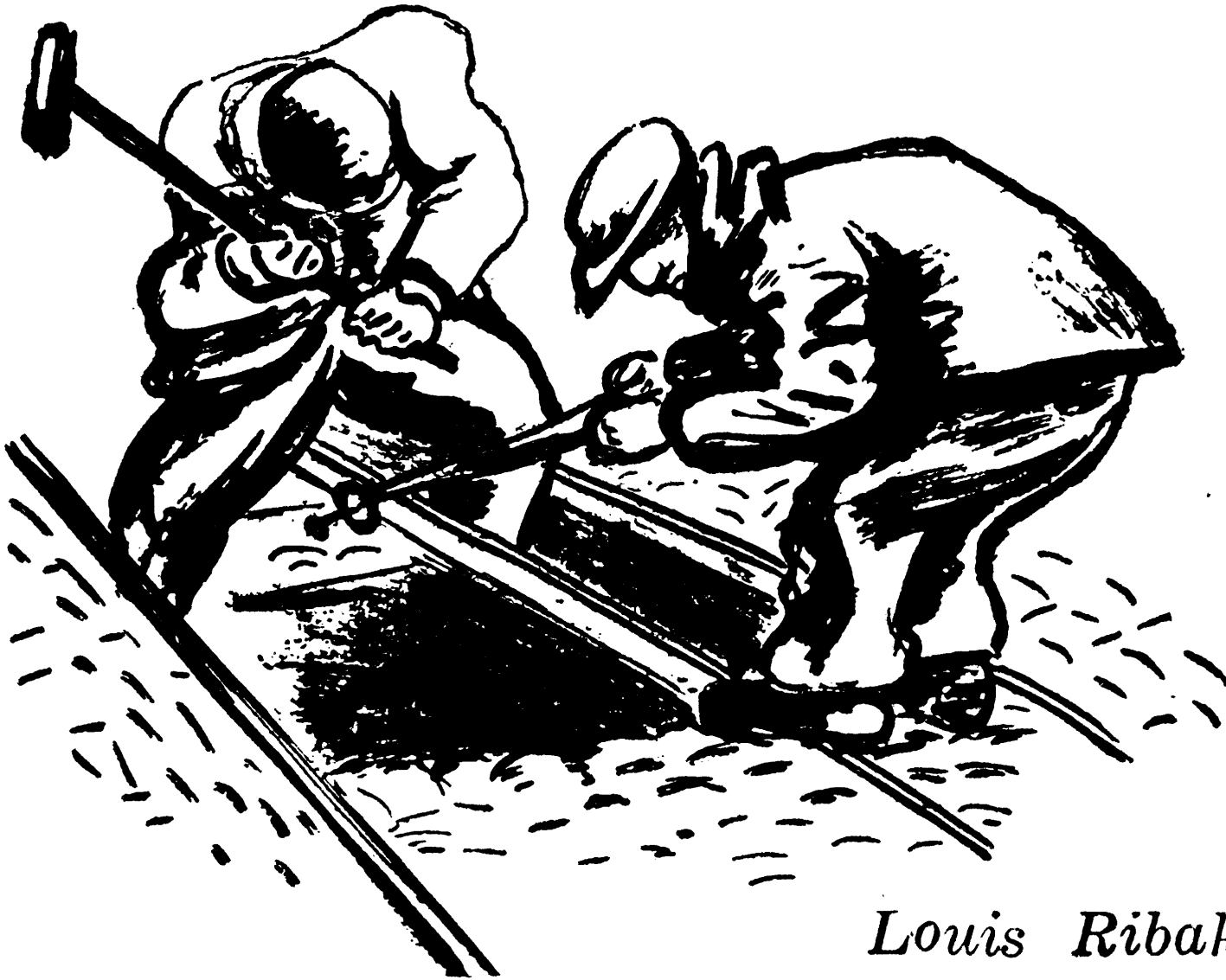
If you kill a chicken, save me de feet
When you think ahm earnin' jes' walkin' de street

If you kill a chicken, save me de feather
Git suckin dat, if ah find nothin' better

If you kill a chicken, save me de heart
Lawd belly so empty, ain' got 'nuf fo' f——

Western Southern Pines is an all Negro community. It had for years it's own town officials—Mayor, Judge, Policemen—a Negro staff from top to bottom. The only one in North Carolina. They

*Two other groups of Negro Songs collected by the author, appeared, under the same title, in the November, 1930 and January, 1931 issues of New Masses.



Louis Ribak

THE COP IS WELL FED *William Hernandez*

got along nicely. Practically self-supporting. Didn't need to hire out to white bosses. "A dangerous precedent". The idea might spread and then who would do the white man's dirty work?

Last month the State Legislative Body unanimously voted to abolish the township. Revoked the charter. And incorporated it with a near-by white one. Of course the Negro officials were retired to "private citizenships".

This song comes from there. The sulky, defiant manner in which the boy sang it convinced me his verses were not just "talkin' big". Not that it mattered. "Sassin' white folks" is as big a crime as killing one in a fight. "An' ah hauls in whackin' all ah cain, 'cause ah knows in de en' ahs gwine git de worse of it anyhow".

Ah's alookin' fo' no trouble, let me be
Set down white folks, stop aworryin' me
Set down white folks
Set down white folks
White folks you set down
Ah wants no ruckus, but ah ain' dat kin'
What lets you all shoe-shine on mah behin'
Set down (etc.)
Ah tells you once ah tells you 'nuf
De nex' time ah tells you ahm gwine git rough
Set down (etc.)
Come 'way f'om Georgia to git on a hog
But ah didn't come to be nobody's dog
Set down (etc.)
Cat got nine lives, use 'em all fo' he go
Nigger die on'y one time, he cain' die no' mo'
Set down (etc.)

Peonage is still practised in the South. There are various legal methods. White and Negroes suffer alike. The boss encourages his workers to draw "advance money". Or run into debt at the company store. A shrewd boss can juggle the account of an illiterate worker to keep him behind. A law makes it a criminal offense to draw advance money under false pretenses. Thus if a worker quits a job before completion and the Boss claims but refuses to accept whatever balance is still owing, the worker can be arrested for stealing money. If found guilty—and he usually is, a fine and suspended sentence is imposed. The general procedure is for the boss to pay the fine and have the court parole the worker in his custody to work out the fine money. Backed by authority of State a man can be compelled to work for a Boss indefinitely.

Another way is via the vagrancy laws. If a worker cannot prove he is already employed, he can be picked up on the street and compelled to accept a job at whatever wages the Boss is willing to pay.

But a variety of illegal methods are for the enslavement of the Negro alone. I've heard numerous complaints from them of threats with "running into the river" if they refused to postpone planting or harvesting on their own tenant farms and go to work on white plantations. A particularly vicious Boss runs the McCawley farm near Sumter, S. C. He has a widespread reputation as a "nigger killer". The neighboring Negroes are terrorized by him. But his plantation is never short-handed. Several workers' deaths on the place have been "investigated" in recent years. But Mr. McCawley is a brother-in-law of a former Governor of South Carolina. And practically runs local politics. Inspection is not invited. I naturally couldn't get in. A Negro working about the entrance to the vast estate wouldn't tell me "nothin' 'bout nothin' ". He probably knew about the Negro who had filed complaint with the town sheriff for being detained a week on the place and was whipped by Baron McCawley in sight of the convening court during the proceedings and driven out of town. But the Negro did sing:

Mammy dead, and pappy gone
Dey lef' me 'lone in dis Worl'
Nothin' but a slave
Mammy tol' me, mammy tol' me
when she were on her bed adyin'
De hahd luck Debil driver
Will sho'lly keep you down
Well, ahm leavin' town one mawnin'
Whackin stick won' make me stay
De mo' he agougin' an' squatch me
De further he drive me 'way

Here's another chain gang number. Plaintive mournful—in theme similar to the one from which the St. Louis Blues was evidently evolved:

Cawn pone, fat meat
All ah eber git to eat
Better'n ah gits at home
Better'n ah gits at home

Cotton socks, striped clo's
No Sunday rags at all
Better'n ah gits at home
Better'n ah gits at home

Bunk fo' mah head
Straw under mah head
Better'n ah gits at home

Ring on mah ahm
Bracelets on mah feet
Better'n ah gits at home
Better'n ah gits at home

Baby baby let me be
Chain gang's good 'nuf fo' me
Better'n ah gits at home
Better'n ah gits at home

The company store again. Generally on railroad jobs an extra inducement to stick till the end is the return ticket back to the point where the worker was hired. But below is the mournful picture of a worker compelled to walk home. An extreme case no doubt. But that he's kept constantly broke on the job—paying 30c for a 10c can of tobacco and other items priced proportionately at camp stores is a well known fact—attested to by workers everywhere. "Keep 'em broke all the time, that's my motto", said a gang foreman, "I never have a nigger quit me, 'cause he hasn't the money."

The song I heard in a mountain camp near Melrose, N. C. an exceptionally lugubrious lament even as Negro songs go:

Trouble neber lyin' dead on de bottom, dis heah Worl'
Ev'ythin' you cain' see shinin, ain' no gol'

APRIL, 1931

THE COP IS WELL FED — *William Hernandez*

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William Siegel

THE NEW YORK TIMES PRINTS AN ITEM OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE UNEMPLOYED.

Workin' on de railroad, dollar dime a day
Boss at de camp store, signin' all ah makes 'way

Mammy write sho porely, please sen' some money son
But ah ain' got no ready-made money, Lawd ah cain sen' her none

Well, railroad is completed, cars arunnin' on de track
No moah work heah 'bouts time fo' gettin' out de ol' grip sack

Help to buil' dat railroad, cain' 'ford ridin' tag
Money talks but mah bits ain' bits 'nuf to brag

Walkin' 'longside de track, hungry an' wantin' to eat
Dog dead tired, shoes wore out, burnin' blisters on mah feet

Don' care when to-morrow come, won' has a lovin' dime
Feet fin' me a place to grub, an' sof' bed jes' one moah time

Another lonesome-road song. Homeless, hungry, the singer's recital is replete with the injustices of hostile World. I've heard the same last verse on numerous songs—the bard identifying himself with his signature portrait.

Forty-leben days gone by
Sence last time ah slept in bed
Ah ain' had three squares sence ah was bawn
Money thinks ahm dead
Money thinks ahm dead

Chain gang link is waitin'
Ah ain' done nothin' 'tall
A place to sleep, somethin' to eat
Ah don' ast fo' chain an' ball
Ah don' ast fo' chain an' ball

Clothes am torn to pieces
Shoes am all worn out
Ahm rollin' through an unfrien'ly Worl'
Always wanderin' 'bout
Lawd always wanderin' 'bout

Ain' got no one to lub me
Jes' stone slab fo' mah head
A po' niggers life is mis'ry
Lawd ah wish ah were dead
Yes Lawd ah wish ah were dead

An ef anyone come ast you
Who were it wrote dis heah song
Ah's a pore nigger in worn out duckins
Alookin' fo' a home,
Jes' alookin' fo' a home

Beaufort is an American "Rotten-borough", if there ever was one. About 80% of the population are Negroes. Some eight hundred white votes do the legislating for a population in excess of 25,000.

It seems the greater the proportion of Negro population the more check to their individual rights. Of course "a nigger is a nigger" from one end of Dixie to the other. Just an element of production—like the mule or rain. If he's lucky he'll have a house to live in almost as good as the one houses the other stock. Enough rest and food to keep going on the job. Beyond that he expects little. Gets less. And he changes his job just as often as opportunity presents itself. Even though he's learned that one place is about as bad as another.

This Beaufort singer however is not thinking of another "slavin'" job when he sings:

Ef you don' lak de way ah works
Jes pay me off
Ah ain' had three squares sence ah was bawn
Befo' ah go
Ah knows ahs pow'fully easy
But ah ain' sof'
Ah cain git another job
An' be mah own boss

Fo' dey ain' gwine be no rine
Ah explains to you what ah mean
Some other time
Watermelon is good an' sweet
Seeds 'bout de only thing
Dat ah cain' eat
Dere ain' gwine to be no rine

A BARREN LAND

the cement mills are sleeping
as curled dogs in the cold sun
and under their damp shadows
are the cars in a blanket of grey . . .
only sand moves down long shutes
like the dried waves of a sea
through the fingers of tired men
under the lacework of steel.
it is a barren land of slaves
digging for coal on the dumps
under the steelgut of a gashouse . . .
let the children laugh and play
at foolish games on a coaldump
to-morrow will find them old
with tears dusty as coke
only poverty breeds in this land
only death walks surefooted
on the playground of the poor . . .
this is hooverland rich with murder
barren and dead to the core of its
ticker-tape heart

JOHN C. ROGERS

William Siegel

THE NEW YORK TIMES PRINTS AN ITEM OF SPECIAL INTEREST TO THE UNEMPLOYED.

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SOUTHERN HOLIDAY — *Mitchel Siporin*

SOUTHERN HOLIDAY — *Mitchel Siporin*

ROBERT CRUDEN

MEN WANTED

A Story of Detroit

Two lines of men were to be seen on Mill Road that January night. One, a ceaseless, hurrying stream which poured from autos, street-cars, busses on to the road, from the road to the bridge which spans it and thence into the plant of the Rivers Motor Company. This was the midnight shift going on. The other line, a little further down, was stationary, a long, irregular line of men who eyed enviously the hurrying, nervous workers—these were the unemployed. When the day shift had come off at four they had already begun gathering—a few gaunt individuals clustered around the wooden shack which served as a hiring office. Now it was after eleven and hundreds were in line. Before morning thousands would be there.

They were a motley crowd which greeted the workers so silently each morning. Clad only in suit and work-shirt they cowered and shivered in the wind. Their faces were blue with cold; their eyes keen with hunger. Only the Negroes looked warm—they had ragged sweaters on their heads, sacking on their feet and pieces of old quilt wrapped around their shoulders.

But now it was dark. The men could be seen only when the wind blew the flames from the coke-ovens across the road. Now they were in darkness; now they were tossed into red relief. It was cold on the line, but further on the men could see where the blast furnaces burned the sky, coloring it to a misty red glow, a glow which never changed, never faded. At times, through the wind and the hollow clanking of train bells they could hear the steady hum of the machine shop and the motor building. Away in the distance they could discern the faint aura of light which marked the gigantic sign, *Rivers Motor Company.*

Eighth in line was Jim Brogan. Jim had come out at six the same morning but had found thousands ahead of him—he would not have been able to get near the office. He turned back to snatch a few hours' sleep in preparation for his all-night vigil. But he couldn't sleep. While he lay in bed his head felt as though hammers were pounding his brain. What if he should get a job? He dared not hope. Yet the tumult in him would not down—all the frozen hope of eight months' idleness was breaking up, surging and cracking through his body. Would he be hired? Again he would reach over and read the headline, "Rivers to Hire 30,000 Men." Thirty thousand! Why, there could not be that many unemployed in the whole country! He laughed and cried alternately.

In the living room Marie was putting little James to sleep—but even the youngster was affected by hope. He howled and gurgled at intervals—but sleep he would not! And Marie! No sharp words today! No slapping of the child! She was singing today, singing as she had sung in those first few months of their marriage, singing as she had sung before unemployment had crept like a cold gray sea between them. Jim laughed and stretched himself, feeling his muscles in an ecstasy of joy . . . . he would be hired!

But what if you don't get hired? a sinister suggestion whispered to him. He drove it from him, saying to himself with gritted teeth, "I will be hired! I will be hired!" Things could not get worse. Good God! He had to get hired! He must be hired! Then he scanned the headline, "Rivers to Hire 30,000 Men." Of course he would be hired!

But out on the line, with a thousand jobless behind him and a black, cold sky above him, Jim lost confidence. He was eighth in line, sure, but didn't the men say that just that morning the clerks had picked out every twentieth man, regardless of how long he had been in line? What if that should happen today? The thought clutched him so that he gasped for breath. His legs felt weak. He was cold and hungry and tired. He clutched tightly at the nickel in his pocket. Should he go and get coffee? But that would mean giving up his place in line. No; he would stay the night through with his sandwiches of bread and corned beef. Where did Marie get the money for the corned beef? What did Marie have to eat that night? Jim wondered.

A voice broke in on his thought, "Got a match, bud?" He shook his head.

"Don'cha smoke?" the man asked when he got a match.

"Sure."

"Then have one on me."

Jim took the cigarette gratefully. He had not smoked since the baby had fallen sick six months previously. The doctor had recommended oranges! Jim laughed bitterly as he remembered it. He puffed at the cigarette, feeling better as it warmed his mouth. He noticed his companion. The latter was a small man who had once been fat. His face was unshaven and blue with cold. His eyes seemed to glitter in the darkness. His suit, old and frayed at the edges, and his blue cotton shirt were little protection against the wind.

"Gawd, I wisht I had a coat," he said. He took a last puff at his cigarette and flung the glowing stub away. "'I pawned my coat," he continued as he met Jim's questioning glance. "I had to Damn it, I didn't have a penny left when I was outa work four months an' I hadda hock everythin' ".

He paused, took another cigarette from his pocket and lit it from Jim's stub, "I use't t' work here" he remarked, nodding in the direction of the motor building.

"Yeah?" asked Jim, interested.

"Sure. I worked over there in the motor building on a drill press. They raised production three days runnin' an' I said, 'Steve Miller ain't no slave, whatever else he may be' an' I quit. That was three years ago."

"It ain't no use quittin' no more," Jim said, "They're all the same now. Fellows that I know say this plant ain't no worse than the rest now."

"Yeah, things ain't never goin' t' be as good as they use't' be. I remember when the guys in Lawrence Body made fifteen bucks a day and didn't have to tear their head off to get it. Well, I was workin' there before I was laid off. Do you know how much I was makin'? Five bucks a day, an' I had to go like hell to get that."

"I know. I worked on the trim line there. You ain't married, are you?" Jim asked as he took another cigarette.

"Naw," Steve replied, "An' it's damn good thing I ain't. God knows when I'll get a job again. I don't."

By this time the midnight shift had gone on. The last remnants of the afternoon shift were going home, a straggling procession which trudged stolidly past, bent before the wind. Now and then their faces could be seen in the blaze of the coke-ovens—theirs were faces lined and dirty and tired, masks of utter weariness. Jim sighed. Down the line a man was saying, "An' then she came down to the employment office an' gave 'em hell because her man was 'too tired to make babies.' What do you think o' that-"

Silence on the line. The only sound was that of the wind, growing sharper as the night went on. At intervals, out of the darkess, came the clangor of train bells. That was all. The last worker had gone home; the last street car had already rumbled into the night. The only humans left were those huddled together along the great storm fence and 30,000 who toiled feverishly in the plant.

Who on the line did not envy the toilers? Workers from Tennessee, Arkansas, Missouri; from Dakota, Iowa, Idaho; workers from Texas, Arizona, New Mexico; men from the Mesaba Range and miners from Ohio and Pennsylvania; Negroes from Alabama, Georgia, Carolina; workers from Poland and Russia; ship workers from the Clyde and diggers of coal from the Ruhr—they were all there in their motley thousands, drawn by the headline, "Rivers to Hire 30,000 Men."

One o'clock. Steve had fallen silent. Jim was left to himself. 420 minutes to think before the office opened. . . .

Two o'clock. Jim was half-asleep, slouched against the fence. Pictures, memories flitted through his brain—a grotesque pageant. The layoff eight months ago. Its laughing acceptance by Marie—it was the first layoff in their marriage. Little James had been ten months old then. How happy Marie and he had been in their

happiness! How sweet it had been! It could not have been *real*—this was reality, this cold, dragging unemployment which fastened on your happiness until it fell in the embers of its own fire. Jim's heart pounded as he felt this, pounded a mad, insurgent beat of revolt. . . . 360 minutes in which to think. . . .

How happy they had been when James was born! With what pride and love had Jim planned the future of his son—he would go to high school, to college, even; he would make the name of Brogan famous in the world. And the tenderness of Marie; her loving caresses; the peal of her laughter—and then the layoff . . . and Marie had laughed no more . . . 300 minutes . . .

For eight months now, day after day, he had gone from plant to plant in an unending quest of work. The answer was always the same—a shake of the head. What money they had, went. He had had to cut out car-fare—it cost at least 12 cents a day. Now he walked. He had walked six miles to the Rivers plant that afternoon.

Then James had fallen sick. The doctor would not come when he heard that Jim was out of work. Jim burned again as he remembered his passionate anger when he heard of it—how he ran to the doctor's house and hammered on the door, shouting until the place was in an uproar. Meanwhile, Marie had scraped money together from the neighbors and they got another doctor. He said the child was undernourished and had a "touch of TB". He recommended a diet of oranges for the child! James had never gotten well again. How could they give him oranges?

William Siegel

GIVING HIM THE WORKS

It was after four when Jim came to with a start. His feet were numb, so cold that he did not feel their coldness. He shivered and stretched his aching arms. As he opened his lunch Steve looked around but said nothing. He looked worn out and hungry.

"Here," said Jim as he forced a sandwich on him.

"Well, ... I guess I will. It's a goddam shame, though."

They bit into the bread, chewing it voraciously, feeling better for the bread and companioship. Men on either side of them looked longingly, but said nothing.

Out from the line, in the road, some Negroes who had just rolled up in an old, battered Rivers, started a fire. Soon it was blazing merrily, shooting up myriad sparks in the winter morning. The Negroes surrounding it were happy, laughing and shouting for the men in line to join them. A few of the men stepped out, hardly able to walk, so cold were they. They stood around the fire with outstretched hands, silent. Then one of the Negroes pulled out a big lunch and began to eat. He saw the eyes of the men on him and passed it around. It looked like a picnic there in the snow, with the fire crackling and blazing and the men eating, but only the Negroes laughed. They had arrived from Alabama the day before and expected to get hired at eight o'clock!

"Dis fact'ry done treat us jes' lak white men," one of them rejoiced.

"You're damned right it does," rejoined a worker with meaningful sarcasm.

This fire was the signal for others. Up and down the line fires were lit; bands of young workers searched for wood to keep them going. The men became more cheerful. They began to talk. Now and then a ripple of laughter passed along the line. The depression was gone; the helplessness of the individual vanished. The men felt stronger, powerful. Surely the day would bring them a job—!

It still lacked an hour of opening time when the police arrived. All night long the men had endured the snow and the wind; for months they had suffered in silence; in these last few precious hours they had hoped . . . and now, like a blight, came the police. A murmur swept among the men, a murmur which rolled in suppressed undertones like the wind in trees before a storm.

Down came the motor-cycle police, sounding their sirens, straight into the fires. The men scattered; the police stamped out the dying embers. Yells, catcalls, oaths, derision greeted them as they did the work. With clubs drawn the foot police marched up and down the line, forcing the men into single file—when they were slow to move a whack with a club made them hasten.

A cop passed passed where Jim was talking to Steve. He looked at Steve, who was slightly out of line, and then jerked him out. Steve yelled.

"Get to the end of the line, you wop!" the cop shouted.

"I won't. I been here since five last night. I won't!" Steve wrenched himself free and rushed into line before Jim. "Ain't I been here all night?" he cried.

"Sure, he's been here right along," Jim spoke up.

"Oh, yeah!" the cop snarled, "An' who the hell ast you?" He grabbed his club more firmly and pulled Steve out of line again. Steve screamed as the club crashed on his head. Before Jim knew it his companion was on the ground, blood trickling from behind his ear.

Jim was enveloped in a terrible silence. He could hear nothing; he saw nothing save the face of the cop which loomed up out of a haze. He trembled. His hands were hot as he clenched them. It seemed to him that years passed while he stood there in that silence face to face with the policeman. Then anger swept over him in a sudden flood. He stepped forward—and as he did so the whole line moved forward, a mass that burst like an avalanche. The police fled, blasting their whistles. Service men of the plant ran to the gates with drawn revolvers—but the men rushed on. They were bound for the main gate.

Down went the storm-fence; the hiring office was crushed to matchwood as the thousands charged on. The road was packed with running men whose shouts and cries penetrated even the factory, scaring superintendents, filling the workers with wonder.

Jim was in the vanguard. Like the others he just sped on, bent on vengeance, knowing not where he was bound, knowing not what he would do. All that he saw as he ran was Steve, prostrate on the ground, blood streaming from his battered head.

And then the rush stopped. In a moment the men stopped, quivered, and then turned to press back against the thousands behind them. From a dozen different places fire hoses opened their icy blows on the men. Jim went down, hit in the face. He lay there, stunned, while his nose spurted blood. He was drenched. Then, through the shouting he heard the howl of a police wagon. He jumped to his feet and ran.

From behind him he heard cries and screams as the police attacked. Fear possessed him. By now he had caught up with the men but now they were turning and fleeing in all directions in a frenzy of fear. He fought his way through them to the main body still running down the Mill Road. He stumbled and cut his face on the storm fence. He looked and saw that he had fallen over a man impaled on the spikes of the fallen fence. Jim felt sick—his breath came in short, stabbing gasps; his heart beat like the rattle of an automatic press. He thought he would collapse under the weight of his drenched overcoat.

Now the crowd burst out again in a mad rush forward when screams from the rear told of the arrival of the police reserves. Jim tore off his coat as he ran, knocking down men who got in his way, falling over men who had collapsed in the excitement, himself bruised as he ran on with the men, ploughing forward in his mad desire to escape. On sped the men, past the power house, past the last gate, over the railroad into the town. . . . They were safe. . .

A long thin line of twos and threes trudged along the road to Detroit. Jim was walking with a man who was still wet with the water. The man's face was scarlet; his eyes bloodshot. He kept whispering to himself as he marched nervously on. Then he spoke to Jim, and in his voice was the misery of months of hunger.

"I wisht I had a gun!"

Jim set his teeth and kept silence.

William Siegel

GIVING HIM THE WORKS

JACK CONROY

HIGH BRIDGE

Indiana was a blur of green fields and sudden filling stations set in tree-arched villages, white houses and careful picket fences. Fleeing from a New Sodom, crammed with closed factories and desperate jobless workers, we never looked behind.

Finally Ed said: "Christ! It's no use tryin' to run on the rim without any gas and without money to buy any; it's no use trying to patch tires that look like a crazy quilt already and as holy as a swiss cheese. We simply gotta mooch, steal, get a job or something before we can go any further," so we pushed the lifeless Chevrolet from the slab, and started to hoof back to a little place we just passed through.

"Any work around here?" we asked a residenter dozing beside a greasing-rack.

"Hell, no! I never *did* see things so tight. This place is dead, stranger, and you better not stop here for work. Dozen men for every job—You can't buy a job. . . I ain't had a day since . . . . "

We left him muttering. A fellow with an Illinois license drove up to the pump just as we repeated the question to the servant of Standard Oil (Indiana).

"I need a couple experienced steel men—riveter and bucker-up," the motorist said, sizing us up. "I'm on a bridge job fifty miles west."

"Why, that's lucky!" I said. "I was born with a rivet hammer in my hand and my partner's a bucker."

"Where *did* you ever handle a rivet hammer?" His blustering tone was a belligerent challenge.

"In Pittsburgh. Pittsburgh-Des Moines Steel." I had actually piloted a screaming steel saw there at one time, and my ears ring yet.

"Well, I'll give you a trial, anyway."

With gas and re-patched tires we limped along and came to the high bridge etched against the sunset, spanning a muddy river. We slept jack-knifed in the car as usual, and in the morning reported stiffly for work.

"You've worked high, of course," the boss answered himself. "Don't get dizzy."

"Sure!" I was lying. Height terrifies me; I'm a fellow that was born to have one leg on the ground all the time; but how we needed that job! Oh, how we needed it!

I lifted the air hammer, assuming an air of familiarity, and

TEAMSTER — *Philip Reisman*

cautiously pressed the trigger. The plunger shot out and banged a laborer on the shin. He cursed me fervently.

"Hey, be careful, you!" bawled the boss. "Is that the way you handled a hammer in Pittsburgh? Want to break a leg for somebody?"

I learned to stand the hammer loosely on a plank and tap away like an energetic woodpecker beside my foot. Some men never get used to climbing, never learn to forget the ground and remember not to look down. I'm one of them. The river spun like a pin-wheel with the bridge in the center, fields swung madly in a blur of color. I felt myself slipping but my head cleared just in time. I pulled the heavy hose and hammer along; scooted fearfully along the eye-beams. The old hands were scornfully nonchalant; walked cat-like across narrow girders without holding.

Try it if you think it's easy, you who have been thrilled by the shoot-the-chutes at Coney. Wind plays a high bridge like a harp; the structure sways to a weird rhythm. To nervous feet a hundred feet in the air, steel is like the glass mountain in the fairy tale.

From a platform far below a bored rivet heater tossed fiery rivets to Ed, who was supposed to catch them in a large cone with handle attached, but more often he missed and they fell hissing in the river, followed by a shower of sparks like the tail of a comet. Ed clung affectionately to a girder, and would not sway to and fro to stop the rivets.

"Not so hot, kid," I encouraged, but he finally caught one, only to find the holes out of alignment. It was necessary to punch them into line, and by that time the rivet was changing from red to purplish, and grey scales were flaking off. It's hard enough to buck a hot rivet but a beginner is out of luck trying to buck a half-cold one. It backed up, though Ed jammed the bucking bar against his chest and hung on bravely with elbows and knees. You can't hold a rivet hammer straight, I found. You must weave it in a circular fashion to make a good head. The vibration shook Ed like an ague, but still there was half an inch play and the head was a misshapen blob.

"That won't do," the foreman reproved, passing us on his way down. "You got to have a snug fit and a perfect head. Get your crack chisel and cut that out."

About an hour of this, and a stiff breeze rose off the river. My cap blew off, and instinctively I wheeled to grabbed it, slipped and fell. I clutched wildly but only tore off my two finger nails to the quick as my hands slipped off. Nothing could stop me. It seemed like the bottom dropped out of my belly. But a girder caught me and I hung limply balanced like a bag of bran, my breath forced out in an explosive yell. The pneumatic hammer had plunged to the end of the hose, snapped the coupling, and disappeared in the river. Among the gusset-rods, the hose writhed and hissed like an angry snake. Weakly I clung, and Ed, his face blanched, began to climb gingerly down toward the good old solid ground.

"Come down, you farmer! O you awkward son of a bitch!" the boss roared from below. One of the old hands helped me down.

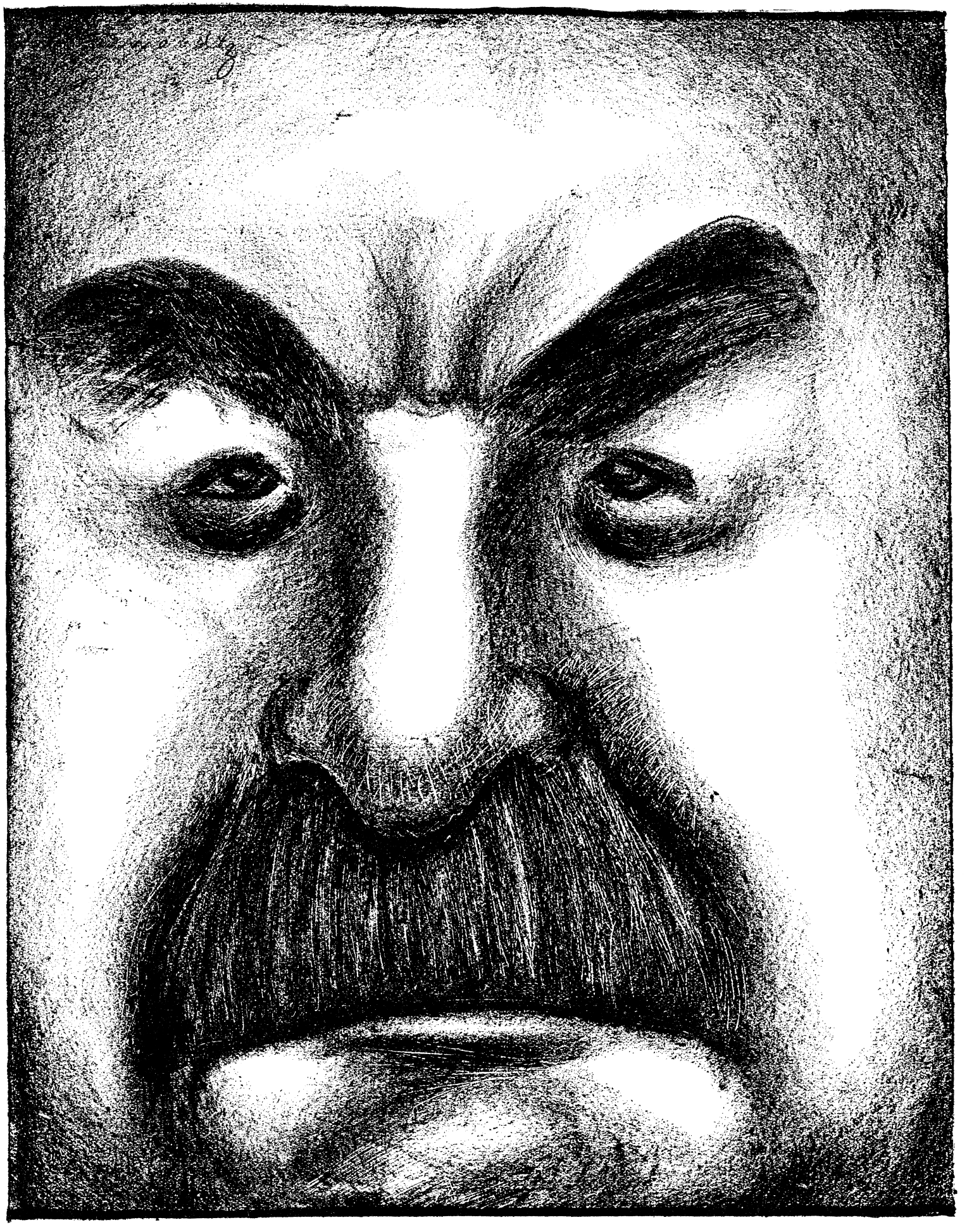
"Steel men! Steel men, hah?" the boss sputtered, "A hammer lost! Get out of here! Don't *ever* say you can work high again, you dumb bastards . . . you! . . . you! . . . . "

Ed clipped him neatly on the chin and he went down like the Titanic. We left him sprawling on the bridge floor and started to run for the car. Nobody offered to follow us.

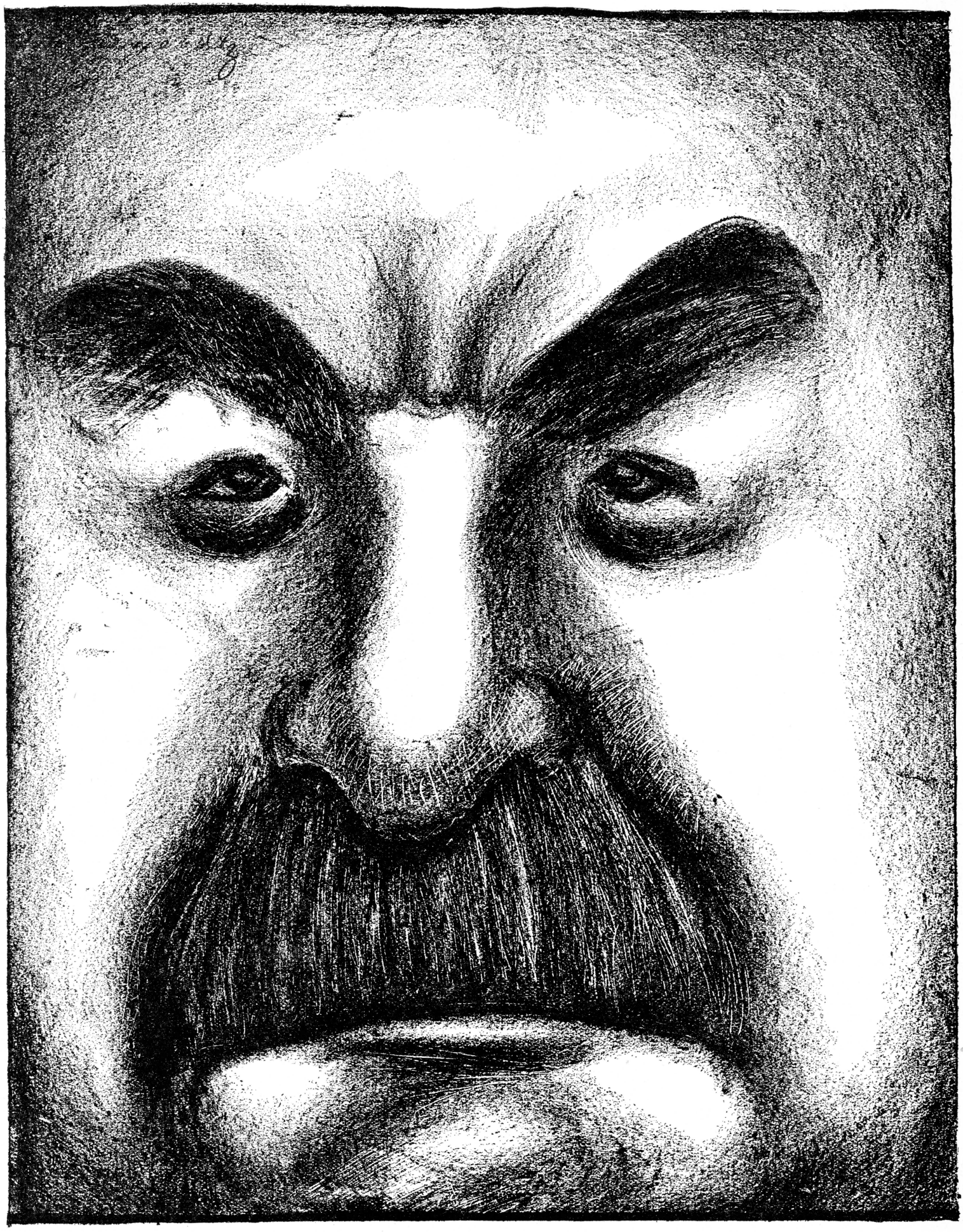
"He needn't worry," I rasped painfully, my windpipe yet in a knot. My guts still hurt, and the blue ridge has never faded away altogether. "He needn't worry. Catch me off the ground working again! . . . "

"Well," Ed cheered philosophically," we got five gallons of gas, and the tires may hold up fifty more miles. I was afraid he'd make us work out the price of the hammer."

TEAMSTER *Philip Reisman*



MORGAN THE MAGNIFICENT — *William Hernandez*



MORGAN THE MAGNIFICENT — *William Hernandez*

WHITTAKER CHAMBERS

YOU HAVE SEEN THE HEADS

(To Lu ko tung, and the terrorist, Li kiang jo) "Lu ko tung was courageous: Li kiang jo fearless."—*SUN YAT SEN*

Our people—poor people, and the land bare.

We live between mountains.

The pine on the lower slopes of the North Hills is green, that on the summits black. The three dark pines, standing together in the center of our village, were brought by the wind from the summits of the North Hills. In our village it took them centuries to bloom.

But you have seen the heads!

The slow river that watered our rice fields is called the Peace River. In my childhood I knew why. Now I do not.

Similarly, the friend of my boyhood was Wan gan chi, that of my manhood, Tai i kai. The green pine and the black. At different stages, on the hills of our life, our friends have different reasons.

When I was seventeen I was strong, but that year the harvest was bad. The collectors left us nothing.

"What are we going to eat?" my father cried.

The official smiled. "I do not know," he said.

"You are tigers," screamed my father as they left our house and entered our neighbor's. Their leader paused in the door and glanced back.

But Fu fu ma plucked my father's sleeve. "Actions," he said, "are difficult, but understanding is easy." He quieted my father and led him into our house. I could not offer Fu fu ma a little wine, for he was the elder of our village, a wise man, and drank only water. Otherwise he fasted and meditated. My father told me, early in my boyhood, that we owed it to his wise gentleness that so seldom were our people killed when the tax collectors came among us. I reverenced Fu fu ma.

That year the collections were heavier than ever because the governor of our province was fighting and needed rice. Between the yellow and the green, the old harvest and the new, our village was starving. I, too, starved. Though I was strong, I became sick and weak. First there was hunger, then cold and a deep snow.

At night we lay on straw on the floor, but did not sleep. As if light and darkness were one, we seldom rose during the day, but lay silent. After his father died, Wan gan chi, who was my friend, often lay among us.

Despite the cold, Fu fu ma went from house to house, and comforted our people, or talked to those who were dying.

Sitting at our feet, he once said: "Snow and floods, great heat and hunger are evils. We sow and reap, water our fields and build houses, to keep them from us. But still they are stronger. Only spirit is stronger than snow or flood or hunger. Spirit is stronger than our bodies. Spirit is stronger than death."

"Go away," said Wan gan chi.

I was shocked, first because of his disrespect, and second, because he had not uttered a sound for three nights and days.

"He is sick," said Fu fu ma, and rose and went away.

At this time, Tai i kai, a boy of our village, was attacked, on the outskirts, by a flock of ravens. He was of the poorest peasants. He screamed while he fought the birds, and many men hurried, partly to help him, partly to kill food. Frightened by our people, the ravens flew away.

Tai i kai was lying on the snow. His left eye had been picked out by the birds, and their talons had torn gashes in his cheeks. But he caught one bird and held it by its leg while he fought. It was found under him when he was lifted, for he fainted from weakness and pain.

Our people snapped the bird's neck, and each sought to tear off and eat something. The food was eaten before Tai i kai revived.

The hole where his left eye had been did not heal quickly. Though his house was near my father's, I never heard him groan.

When the snow began to thaw, it was decided to send a group of our people to beg rice from the landowner beyond the first hills to the east. This was Tseng hsi chow.

All our strongest people, about twenty, set out. At the entreaty of my father, who was very weak, I was allowed to go with them, and Wan gan chi. Each of us carried a wooden bowl on a thong.

The snow in the hills was wet and very deep, so that sometimes I disappeared up to my shoulders.

Our people moved along slowly, humped over, like plague rats.

With us was Lu chao bo, an old man who was quite weak from hunger. When he lagged behind, from time to time our people urged him forward, keeping close watch on him.

We reached the house of Tseng hsi chow about mid-day.

"Have pity on us and give us rice," said our people. "We are hungry."

"The *de-sheng* has no rice," said his steward, who spoke to us in front of the house. "The *de-sheng* is not here. The countryside is full of beggars. All the *de-sheng's* rice has been given away."

"Rice," droned our people. "We are hungry."

"The *de-sheng* is not here," he repeated. "There is no rice. Go away before I have you driven away."

Our people slunk away, and no one said a word to anyone.

But Wan gan chi glanced behind and saw the steward staring after us.

"Perhaps he will give us something," he whispered, "because we are boys."

He began to loiter and at length pulled me into a clump of tall dry grasses. Then we went back.

"Rice for a beggar," called the steward. Wan gan chi raised his bowl, and the servant filled it. There was no more.

The sight of the brown rice made me frantic. "Where is my rice?" I shouted.

The steward laughed. "You take your rice from him." I was hungry. I obeyed. Like a wolf, I sprang at Wan gan chi. His bowl fell to the ground, and the rice was spilled. The steward laughed again as he re-entered the house.

I had always been stronger than Wan gan chi, but, though surprised, he was angry and held me off. In struggling I slipped on ice, and he fell upon me as my head struck the earth, and I became unconscious.

When I came to, we were alone in front of the house. Wan gan chi was standing with a bowl in either hand. Into each he had scooped up the spilled rice and some snow.

"This is your share," he said. "We will take some to your father."

I was ashamed, and walked behind him, and did not speak.

As we were crossing the hills, it began to grow dark. Then we came upon a place where the snow had been trampled. There was blood on the snow, and a body lying naked. It was Lu chao bo's, and pieces of flesh had been cut from the legs and thighs.

A few days later, my father died, leaving me his leased field, and many harvests owed to the money lenders.

Yet the next harvest was good. All our people worked daily in the fields, except Tai i kai, who went to join the army, and Wan gan chi, who went no one knew where.

Though the collectors took three years' taxes from our harvest, as always in good years, I married Ah jui, whom I had loved from childhood, and who loved me. In this Fu fu ma was of help to me with her parents.

Ah jui worked beside me in the field until our first born. That harvest, however, was poor, and the next, and the next. This time the money lenders took nearly all.

Another son was born to us, and another.

Yet we lived between harvests.

The day was hot. Ah jui was again with child, and I was weeding in the field when the soldiers reached our village.

A corporal ran a little way along the top of the dike, but stopped

Maurice Becker

"These really are good times, only a few know it"—HENRY FORD

at the edge of the water.

"Come here," he said. "Come with me."

"Where to?" I asked.

"To the village."

I was suspicious but I accompanied him. At a distance I heard shouting.

Ten young men of our village were standing in a row beneath the black pine trees, soldiers before and behind them. I saw Ah jui, my children, Fu fu ma.

"Eleven!" said the officer, and, with a push, tried to add me to the line.

"What is it for?" I asked and resisted. I am strong.

"Coolie for the army."

A woman screamed.

"I won't go," I said. I struggled to break free, but a soldier twisted my arm in a strange grip while the officer pushed me.

"No," I screamed. "No! No! No!"

But Fu fu ma plucked my jacket. "Actions," he said, "are difficult, but understanding is easy."

There passed through my memory a picture of my father's face as Fu fu ma led him into our house, away from quarreling with the tax collectors. Honoring my father, I resigned myself and allowed them to push me into my place at the end of the line.

Ah jui was kneeling with one arm around our eldest son, so that her face was on a level with his head. Her eyes were fastened on me, but she did not utter a sound.

I saw Fu fu ma talking with the officer.

Because of the heat of the day, the pines smelt of resin, and, as I glanced up, for the first time in my life, I noticed how, from the rigid dark branches, short dead limbs stuck down, like blades, at us. Had I been happy, this thought would not have occurred to me.

As soon as we rejoined the main army, they separated the people from our village. I was among men from other provinces with whom it was difficult to speak. But though we were principally silent, I could understand the expression of their faces, for we carried similar burdens, day by day, for great distances.

The first night I thought of Ah jui, but I made no attempt to escape, for I knew that others would, and that our guards would then be most watchful. Five men were killed and wounded, escaping, that night.

It was the same the nights following. Before morning some of us were always killed. There are men who prefer death.

When fighting began, the sound of the machine guns terrified me. I saw hundreds die, but our troops were victorious, and we marched on.

I had been absent from our village a month the night I tried to escape. But a guard, hearing me, wounded me through the hand. When I rolled back, I lay still among the others. I could not sleep.

In the night a man crept beside me.

"You tried to escape,' he said.

I recognized his voice .

"It is very foolish," he continued, "we cannot escape one by one. We must form a big union of all the coolies, then everybody will escape."

"Wan gan chi!" I cried.

His hand held my mouth shut.

"Shsh! You!" He was greatly excited. "Listen," he said, "the Communists formed a Peasant League in our village. They crushed the landlords, the moneylenders. But Tseng hsi chow came with the *ming-tuan*, and burned our village."

"Ah jui!" I sat erect. "My sons!"

"I do not know," said Wan gan chi quietly. "It is useless to fear and useless to hope. There are no more wives and sons until we can crush such as Tseng hsi chow."

"Ah jui," I said, and put my arms over my head. My wounded hand burned.

"Tai i kai returned," Wan gan chi continued more gently. "He took many of our people into the mountains. They attacked the house of Tseng hsi chow, and burned it. They also found guns. Tai i kai is leading our people in the mountains."

"Do not despair," said Wan gan chi after a silence. He took my hand, but, as it hurt, I winced.

"You are wounded!" Quickly he tore his shirt and bandaged my hand. Then he left me.

During the night, I saw him go from man to man, talking to those who could not sleep.

Because Wan gan chi said nothing certain, I knew that Ah jui was dead.

From that time I was hopeless. My hand did not heal quickly: it drew together, like a talon, and became rigid. I carried my burden and thought no more of escaping.

Shortly afterwards, our troops were defeated. I fled with others. As we ran, an officer tried to stop us. I was blind with anger. The others fled past. Then I saw that I was holding his knife and that he was dead. I kept his knife and a flask of water.

Two months later, I again looked from the east hills upon our village. Around the three dark pines some houses were still standing or had been re-built. There were also burned walls.

From Fu fu ma I learned that the *ming-tuan* had killed Ah jui and my sons.

All winter we lived like wolves. Only those who went into the hills, to Tai i kai, sometimes brought back a little food.

I did not go to Tai i kai. I wished to sow my field again in the spring, and Fu fu ma, the friend of my father, urged me to remain.

"The soldier's trade is the lowest," he said. "The *ming-tuan* are tigers. But the Communists and Tai i kai are devils. That is why Ah jui was killed; she became a Communist. It is bad."

As it was night I left Fu fu ma, and walked along the top of the dike, to the middle of my field. Here Ah jui had worked beside me, I stopped. For this reason, too, I did not go to Tai i kai.

But with spring, the soldiers came to crush Tai i kai in the hills. They filled our village. The officers sat at a little table, under the black pines, and called each of our people to be questioned. Even those unfriendly to Tai i kai said they knew nothing,

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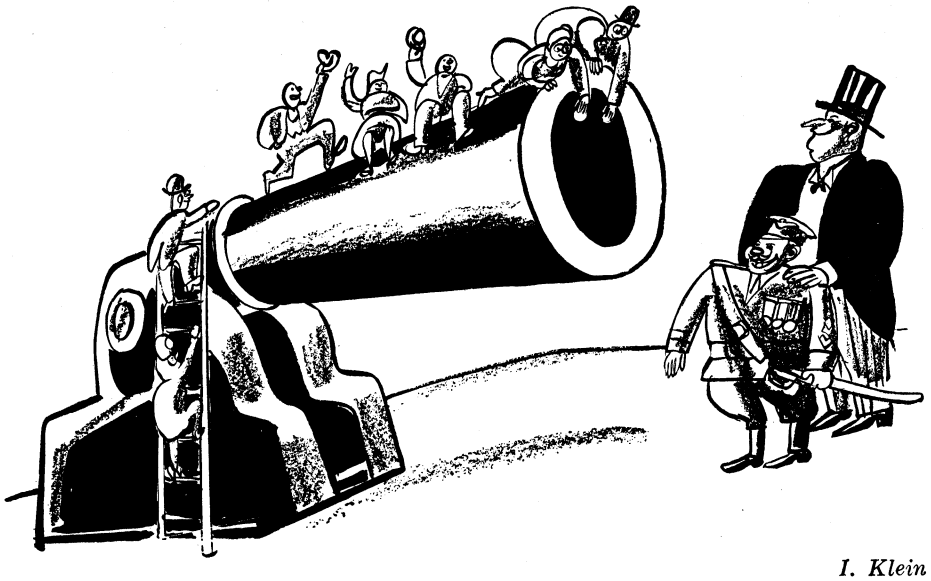


I. Klein

THE PACIFISTS WRITE TWO MORE RESOLUTIONS TO STOP WAR

out of fear that the soldiers would go away and leave them at the peasants' mercy.

But I was afraid.

"You have nothing to fear," Fu fu ma comforted me. "They know you are not a Communist."

"How can they know?" I asked.

Among our people was a young man named Lu yin tin. He had been with Tai i kai in the hills, and, on his return, had once brought us food.

They asked him if he had been with Tai i kai.

"No," he said.

"You never brought back food from the hills?" asked the officer with a smile.

"No," said Lu yin tin.

"You are a Communist," said the officer. He clapped his hands. Behind Lu yin tin, a soldier with a sword stepped out. Another assisted him. Lu yin tin did not see them.

"Kneel," said the officer.

Lu yin tin knelt.

Smiling, the officer nodded. The soldier forced Lu yin tin's wrists behind his back. The sword flashed.

The soldier picked up the head of Lu yin tin, holding it by the hair.

"Up there," The officer pointed as he rose from the table.

By stretching, the soldier forced one of the short dead pine limbs into the neck of Lu yin tin. His head was impaled upon the overhanging branch.

The soldier removed the table from the falling drops.

At dusk two days later, Wan gan chi walked into my house. Fu fu ma was with me. I was terrified.

"As boys we were always friends, let me stay with you tonight," said Wan gan chi. "If you do not, I will be killed."

"If you stay, we shall all be killed. Wolves run in the mountains. Why do you not go back to that one-eyed wolf in the hills? I will not stay where you are." Fu fu ma left us.

"Listen," said Wan gan chi, "he has gone to betray me. He betrayed Lu yin tin."

"No," I said.

"Yes! He did! Now I will not ask you to hide me. I do not want you to be killed. I came to win the soldiers to Tai i kai. I will now go about my work." He went out.

I was afraid and waited. Then, I, too, ran out.

Wan gan chi was already talking to the first soldier on guard.

"No," the soldier was saying. "No! No!" Then he began to tremble. I trembled, too, for I, too, saw the officer coming. Behind him, at a little distance, was Fu fu ma.

They seized Wan gan chi at our end of the village. They marched him through the street with his wrists tied behind his back. All our men and their wives and children ran out, in the twilight, and followed. There was talking and questioning.

"Land and rice for the peasants!" Wan gan chi suddenly shouted. Everything grew silent.

"Land and rice for the peasants!" he shouted again with all his might as he marched along.

They led him among the dark pines. We all gathered around, at a distance. They told him to kneel. But he stood erect.

"Listen, people," he shouted, "I am dying for Communism!"

They forced him to the ground. A soldier pressed his knee into Wan gan chi's back.

"People, I am dying for Commun—" It was darkening, but I saw the sword flash, and heard the click and the thud.

They stuck the head of Wan gan chi beside that of Lu yin tin upon the bough.

I did not make a light in the dark house. I knew in what corner I had buried the officer's knife. I dug it up with my fingers.

The lamps in the other houses were put out one by one as I lay in the darkness with the weapon in my hand. Fu fu ha's was one of the first to go out, but I waited until all were extinguished before I crept to his door.

He breathed more quietly than many old men, yet, as I crept, I could guide myself to his position on the floor, by his breathing.

The sound he made in dying was no more than a sigh.

With the same stealth, I left the house, and crept toward the black pines. I stood rigid beneath them, and warm drops fell slowly into my hair.

At that moment, a sentry passed. It had not been my intention to kill a soldier. But I sprang upon his back. My deformed hand I thrust into his mouth. With the knife in the other I stabbed his neck four times. We fell softly together.

I seized his gun. I ran in the dark toward the north.

Along the edge of the rice field that had been my father's. Toward the hills. I reached the uneven ground.

"Tai i kai!" I cried. "Tai i kai! Tai i kai! Tai i kai!"

I knew I tripped, but nothing more until I saw men's faces looking down at me. With his right eye Tai i kai stared at me.

"They executed Wan gan chi," I said. "Fu fu ma betrayed him. They stuck his head on the pine beside Lu yin tin's. His blood is in my hair. I have killed Fu fu ma and a soldier. Here is his gun."

"Keep it—among us," said Tai i kai.

We were defeated at Chun hua, we were defeated at Chen chow. The last was our eleventh defeat without a victory.

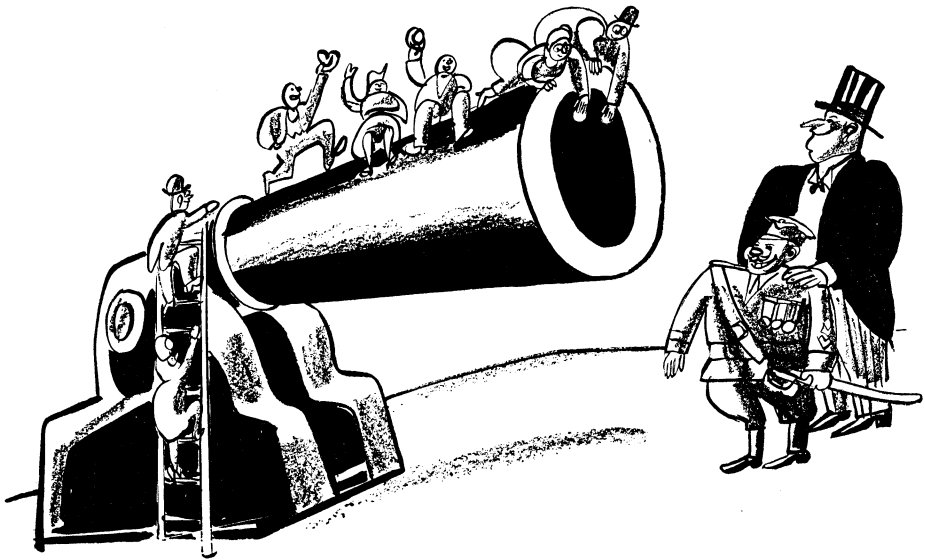
Fu fu ma was right: the spirit is stronger than the body. But not the spirit of Fu fu ma. The spirit of Tai i kai. Not the blood of Fu fu ma upon his floor. The blood of Wan gan chi, falling from the pine in darkness. A pool—and a cataract.

We are harried among mountains. The march to victory is up the sharp sides of mountains.

DEARIE SONG: Las Cruces

nothing to get excited over (keep your pants on):
Only a lambent moon within a plangent sky,
Lighting up topography of heaven
And Mexican women saying
Indiscriminate dearies to the passersby
(The sound of poverty).
The night to cover romance like a shroud.
And sagging doorways of the earth adobes
Calling emptiness unto the stars,
Bodies of the proletariat
Outlined with darkness.
Only a concertina to burlesque
Somewhat happiness.
The night envelops sound (and poverty)
Good nights for dearie.

NORMAN MACLEOD



I. Klein

THE PACIFISTS WRITE TWO MORE RESOLUTIONS TO STOP WAR

Comrade

By M. Shulimson

I sat on a park bench and looked at the water. A couple of boats went by. The water was oily and there was a lot of junk in it. The guy sitting next to me was reading the paper. He began laughing. I looked at him. He said, "Listen to this, kid, listen to this—'The president of the Consolidated Casket Company, in his report to the stockholders, states that the death rate for the past ten months is over 8% less than the similar period a year ago. A figure which has been sustained by reports from various insurance companies. It seems that in periods of depressions the death rate decreases. What do ya think of that," he said, "what do ya think of that!"

There was a bunch of guys in the room when I came in. After a while the manager came in. He looked us over. There was one guy there who was pretty heavily built. He had a red complexion. A bunch of little red veins criss-crossed his face. The manager pointed to him and said, "You'll do, the rest of you are too skinny." The job was for a santa claus.

They collected our tickets as we walked in. A guy tried to get in without a ticket and the cop shoved him away. There were benches, bare tables and tin dishes. As soon as a guy got his plate of soup or stew or what ever it was, he started right in. Nobody talked. The boss himself dished out the stuff. It tasted pretty lousy. One guy had been sitting sort of muttering to himself. The boss handed him a plate of the stuff. He looked at it and got up and threw it on the floor.

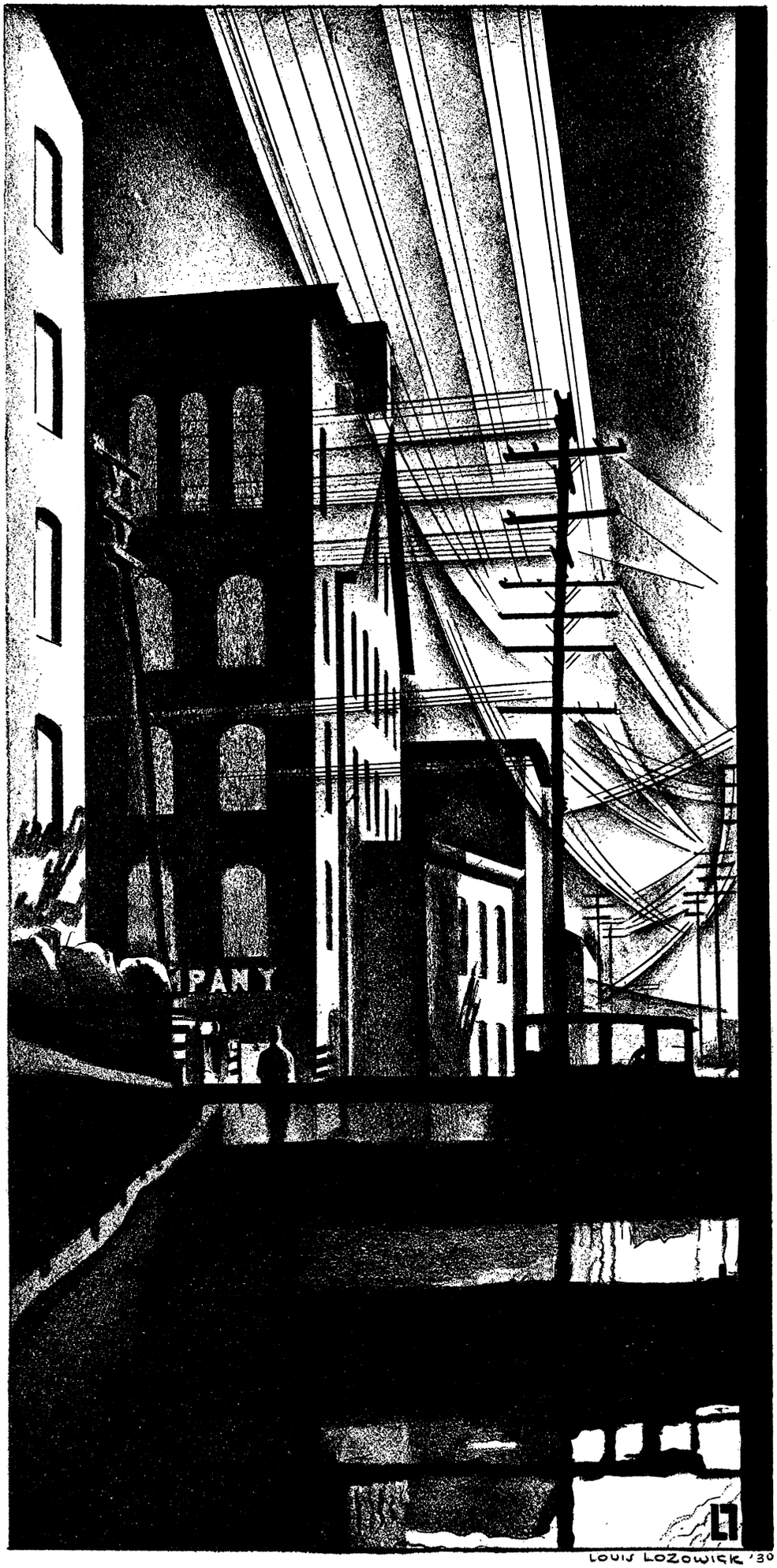
He said to the boss, "You sonofabitch, the city is paying you twenty cents a piece to feed us. You can't hand us this damn crap."

The cop came over and grabbed him.

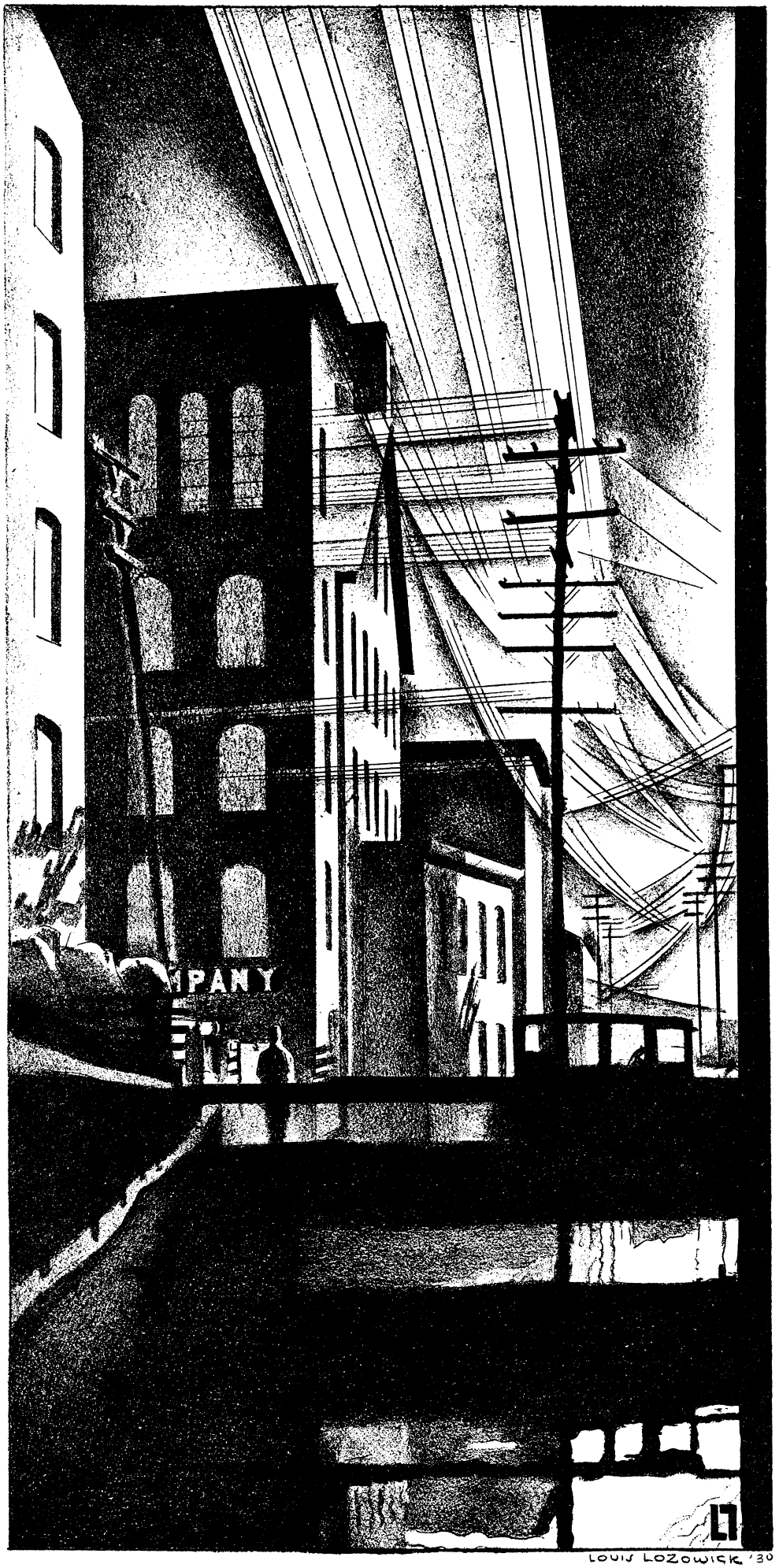
He hollered, "The sonofabitch is making fifty dollars a day out of us." Another cop came in and the two of them shoved him out. He kept hollering, "The dirty rat, the filthy bloodsucker."

The rest of us kept on eating.

I was watching 'em. A cop knocked a sign out of a guys hand. I picked it up. It said, "Work or Wages." When I lifted it up some guy in plain clothes hit me on the head with a blackjack and I went down. It felt funny because I saw stars just like they have in the funny pictures. Then somebody kicked me. I started to get up and some girl helped me. The crowd had moved over a little. I got up and felt weak. We walked over a couple of blocks and I said, "I got to sit down." I sat down on a door step. My head felt swollen. I tried to vomit but nothing came up. She tried to get my cap off and I hollered. The cap was stuck to my head by the blood. She said, "You shouldn't wear anything on your head, Comrade, it always gets stuck." I said, "I guess you're right, Comrade." And the sound of the word, "Comrade", felt swell against my teeth.



CANAL BRIDGE — *Louis Lozowick*



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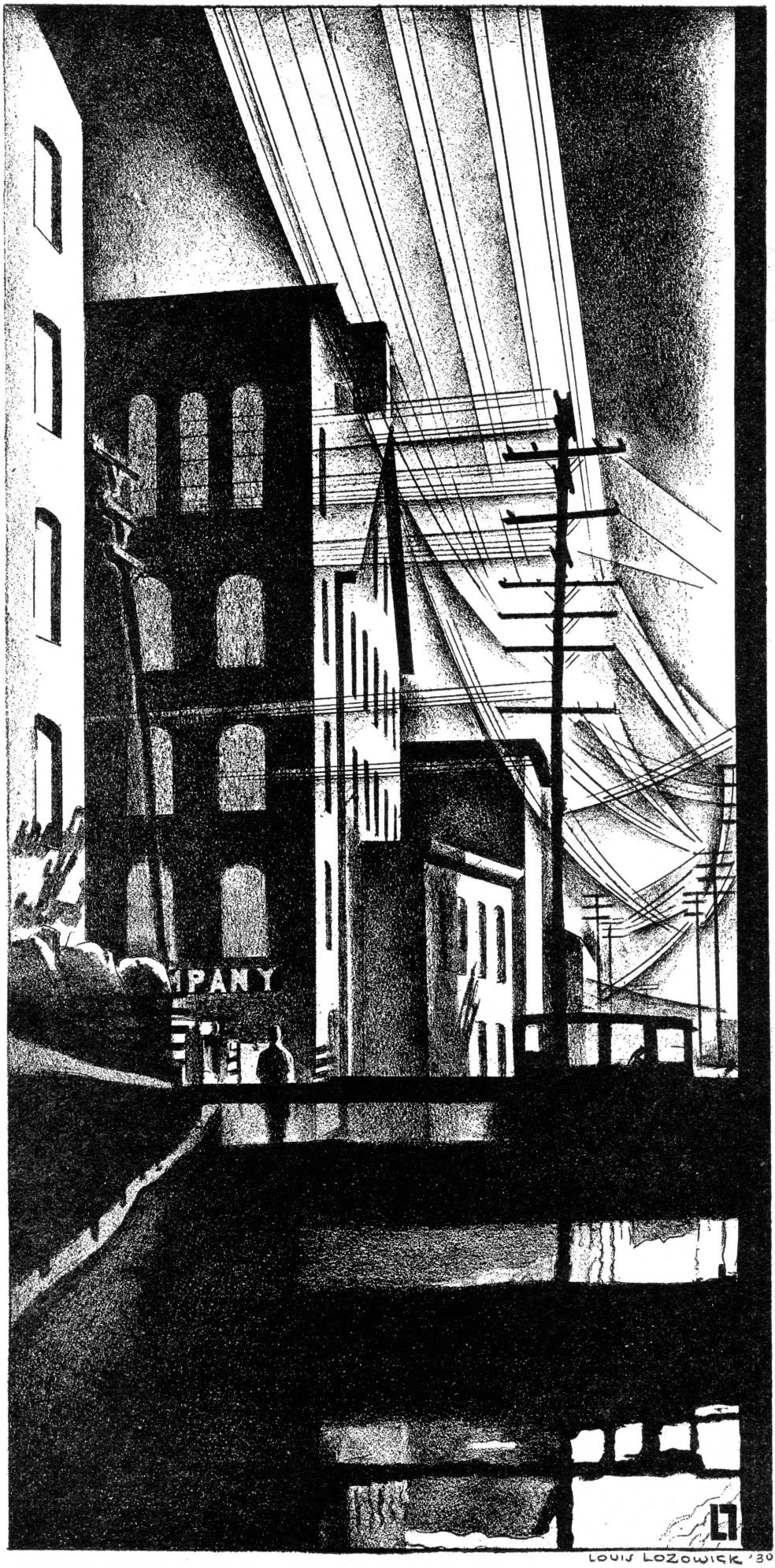


CANAL BRIDGE — *Louis Lozowick*

BOOKS

Reviewed by Anna Rochester, Robert Dunn, Jack Hardy, Bennett Stevens.

The Challenge of Russia, by Sherwood Eddy. Farrar and Rinehart, $2.50.

The Russian Experiment, by Arthur Feiler. Translated by H. J. Stenning. Harcourt, Brace and Co. $2.00.

The Economic Life of Soviet Russia, by Calvin B. Hoover. The Macmillan Co., $3.00.

The Red Trade Menace, by H. R. Knickerbocker. Dodd, Mead and Co., $2.50.

These Russians, by William C. White. Charles Scribner's Sons, $3.00.

The latest crop of bourgeois books on the Soviet Union cannot be dismissed as ignorant slanders. But the rising standard of factual accuracy does not mean any greater friendliness to the Soviet Union and Communism. Quite the reverse. The hostility is only more subtle, more insidious, for facts accurate enough in themselves are only a small part of any story. Which facts are selected? What standards are applied in interpreting them?

These five writers (and they are typical of a larger group) come to the subject with various temperaments and degrees of understanding. For each of them the fate of the bourgeoisie, the loss of bourgeois comforts, the passing of bourgeois culture, are more important than the workers' building of a new economic and social order. Apparently non-political, they nobly make their contributions to capitalist propaganda.

Arthur Feiler, in *The Russian Experiment,* is the only one of the five who approaches an understanding of the desperate situation of workers under capitalism. He even writes movingly of the function and inevitability of revolutions. He is too wise to chatter about a peaceful development from capitalism to socialism. He knows the basis of class struggle. He recognizes the kulak as the most serious internal enemy of socialism in the Soviet Union. He weighs difficulties and achievements. He pays tribute to the devotion and intelligence of the Communists, but he is appalled by the vastness of the problem. He fears a profound conflict between centralized control of industry and the surging life of the masses. He sees the release of creative forces and yet dreads regimentation and stifling of thought. He is typical of futile liberalism: too intelligent to be satisfied with capitalism or to believe that it will endure, but spoiled by the privileges it has given him. Proletarian existence looks bleak and exacting by comparison. All this weighing and questioning leaves him in impotent pessimism.

Calvin B. Hoover, on the other hand, writes of *The Economic Life of Soviet Russia* with a meticulously detailed superficiality, as befits a professor from Duke University, North Carolina. Absolutely faithful to his class, he never wavers in allegiance to capitalism. He acknowledges gratefully that the foreign journalists and other members of the "small foreign colony in Moscow" helped him greatly in forming his conclusions! He used (of course) Soviet statistics, but with some reservations since he believes that Communists "are unwilling to face unpleasant facts." He found annoying that the "key-note of life is struggle" and left the Soviet Union with intense relief.

A few things he is obliged to admit: Socialist industry *does* function. Unemployment can be permanently eliminated to a degree impossible under "unmodified capitalism." He finds it interesting that manager and specialist and trade union official can be hauled over the coals by the rank and file. Workers have various material advantages and cultural opportunities,—but here he balks: "These advantages or others are also part of the compensation of workers in capitalistic countries." (What about textile workers and Negroes in North Carolina, Professor?)

As a detailed reference source on the technical structure of Soviet industry in 1930, the book can be a useful supplement to the far more interesting and important *Russian Economic Development Since the Revolution,* written by Maurice Dobb in 1927. But Hoover's writing is dull and static. He seems to name the bones and rattle the joints of a monster skeleton. The living, creative forces have passed him by. The total impression is dreary and abhorrent. It could not be true or the vast machine could not function. The miracles of industrial growth and rebuilding of agriculture simply could not occur.

Sherwood Eddy is a voluble enthusiast, emotional, illogical, dangerous. In *The Challenge of Russia* he paints glowing pictures of workers' life in the Soviet Union and then suddenly launches into a sermon on Christianity, with unmeasured denunciation of Communism because it opposes religion, sets up a dictatorship, preaches world revolution, and "has no respect for the individual." "Our civil liberties, our religious freedom, our tolerance, our liberalism, our whole complex of priceless values, which the coarse thumb and finger of materialistic dogmatism fail to feel—nearly all we most value in life is at stake." Not, dear Reader, in U. S. A., as you might suppose, but in the U. S. S. R.!

Later Eddy admits that conditions are not quite up to standard in the United States, but these pages are chilly and pale. For improvement he looks to the small group of progressives and summons them to set things straight for the workers,—to trim the claws of the capitalists but not, be it noted, to dethrone the capitalist class. For capitalism (with all its errors) is friendly to religion and Communism is hostile to religion. "Here are two great social orders, the capitalistic and the communistic, in conflict. The conflict is economic, political, social and religious. At no point do the systems come into more stark antagonism than upon the subject of religion, and at no point is it more difficult for them to understand each other."

So the really fervid indictment is reserved for Communism. And in the eyes of bourgeois idealists as ignorant of the underlying basis of class struggle as Sherwood Eddy shows himself to be, these two superheated chapters on religion and Communism will outweigh everything else in the book. They will be nuts to the patriots. Workers will know better. Most of them will not bother with the book at all. If they do, their experience with Christian employers, stool pigeons, courts, bread lines, deportation agents and other "priceless values" of the capitalist Christian order will make them fool-proof against the Eddy eloquence.

H. R. Knickerbocker, whose *Evening Post* articles are assembled under the title, *The Red Trade Menace,* is first and always a capitalist newspaper man reporting on a two-months' trip in the Soviet Union. With an assignment to find out the truth about convict labor and dumping, he was not able to bring back such lurid facts as were desired. The headlines in the *Evening Post* did their best to cover the deficiency. Now the publisher carries on with a jacket that makes the worst of the situation. Still, Knickerbocker manages to do his bit for the enemies of the Soviet Union. Present facts being inadequate for his argument, he plays up the successes of the 5-Year-Plan and assumes that the Soviet Union will become increasingly and dangerously aggressive. The temporary shortage of consumers' goods he pictures as a permanent, deliberate policy. He simply cannot imagine a society in which a steadily rising level of well-being for the whole population will take precedence over the competitive commercial struggle for world markets.

While Knickerbocker compiles a journalistic business forecast, Feiler and Eddy attempt to interpret social forces, and Hoover draws a blueprint of the industrial machine, William C. White, in *These Russians,* provides a sort of tabloid supplement. With slender literary gifts, he roams about in the titanic revolutionary struggle and finds abundant material for human interest sketches. He tells of suffering intellectuals and devoted Communists, housing

shortage and the G. P. U. Doubtless his portraits are more accurate than his incidental mis-statements about workers' advantages in the United States. But with the "former people" totaling less than 5% of the population he gives more than half the book to picturing their hunger, their fears, their snobbishness, their personal tragedies.

Workers who chance to read these books will find fresh evidence that the Soviet Union is the only country where the working class is free. But the machine-fed minds of middle-class robots will retain their illusion of freedom and greatness in the United States. For the writers seem to open far horizons of adventure, but mentally they remain in sheltered gardens which capitalism provides for the few and never do they dig deep enough in the rotten soil of exploitation to uncover its maggotty roots. Almost as effectively as plots of engineers and "socialists", such books sharpen the class line-up and increase bourgeois fear and hatred of the Soviet Union.

ANNA ROCHESTER

Dictatorship vs. Democracy

Dictatorship on Trial, Twenty-two Essays by Eminent Leaders of Modern Thought, Harcourt, Brace and Co. $3.75.
Contemporary Social Movements by Jerome Davis. The Century Co. $5.00.

If you don't know what "eminent leadership" in "modern thought" is you can sample one of the feature essays in *Dictatorship on Trial.* It's by a Pole who was once a "member of Kolchak's anti-revolutionary Government." This government, you may remember, was very popular a few years ago with Matt Woll's National Civic Federation. Ossendowski, the Kolchakist ,informs us that American Socialists "in so far as they belong to the Anglo-Saxon race and are not of foreign blood" (sic) have "grasped the fact that "Russian communism has nothing in common with socialism." For Russian Communism, he bleats—reminding one of that well-known Anglo-Saxon socialist, Morris Hillquit—"is the flat negation of every socialistic principle." Following this we read that the Russians "destroyed the family," and that the existence of a Russian is quite "dark, dreary and wretched."

Furthermore, if the peasants "had both leaders and arms, they could shake off the yoke of the dictatorship of the proletariat." But, have cheer, my children. These *mujhiks* are "patiently biding their time to wage a war upon which they would not hesitate to enter, particularly if they were driven to do so." This was written about the time the Mensheviks, the Industrial Party, the Peasant Party, and the other wreckers were planning to overthrow the Soviet power.

The rest of this symposium is devoted chiefly to the business of furthering the liberal democratic calumny that bolshevism and fascism have somehow something in common. All of the writers, including Emil Vandervelde, are stout defenders of the capitalist *status quo* even though they differ as to whether imperialism should rule with a Mussolini or a MacDonald. There is no working class note in the whole volume. All the writers are dead against Communism and would use any kind of terror as a first or last resort to crush the militant workers movement.

None of the writers have the slightest understanding of the difference between a working class dictatorship and a dictatorship of the bankers. Workers can leave this book on the shelf and consult the writings of Lenin when they want to learn the real significance of fascist or working class dictatorships.

Contemporary Social Movements is an enormous selection of "readings" to be used by college professors in their efforts to get sleepy students interested in such subjects as utopia, socialism, communism, fascism, cooperation, British Labor movement and the peace movement. The author is a kind of American Christian Menshevik. He gives generous space to assorted articles on the British Labor movement without any suggestion that it is an imperialist administration fast merging into fascism.

On Communism some of the writing is pretty good pro and pretty terrible con. Davis quotes parts of the *State and Revolution* and advises the students correctly for an exhaustive study "to turn to the complete writings of Lenin." Like all editors of "readings" textbooks he tends to include quite a lot from his own pen. Like Sherwood Eddy and other well-fixed Christian souls he patronizingly finds some of the methods of communism to be "questionable." He doesn't like violence at all. Even when used to put the workers in power it may destroy "trust, beauty and

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN BOOTS *Maurice Becker*

happiness" whatever they may mean to the 25,000,000 unemployed in capitalist countries today.

Like Hamilton Fish and Father Walsh he objects to the Red Terror, but generously admits it was "no worse" than White. "But two wrongs do not make a right," says this professional Sunday School teacher from his ethical elevation quite firmly supported by the millionaires who endow the Yale Divinity School. Like so many of his kind he has a sneaking admiration for Communists in Russia. In America they are, of course, no good, and not at all tolerant of professors of practical philantrophy and what not who try to lecture them on their tactics.

But then the reader can pass up this drivel and tackle the reprints of writings by Jessica Smith, Parge Arnot and others, or even the excerpts from Stalin on the *Theory and Practice of Leninism.* They are all included in the 900 pages. As a source book this volume is a storehouse and its bibliography is adequate for any student.

ROBERT DUNN

The Governmental Machine

The American Leviathan, The Republic in the Machine Age. By Charles A. Beard and William Beard. Macmillan. $5.00.

Charles A. Beard has published another erudite volume, this time with his son. It is by far the best capitalist text book on Civics yet to see the light of day.

When the "founding fathers" of the U. S. Government met at Philadelphia in 1788 and formulated the Constitution they had as their one aim and object to make the country safe for business and finance. State legislatures, under the influence of the agrarian and debtor classes, had flooded the country with worthless paper money to the detriment of business. Business men could not collect their debts in good sound cash, manufacturers could get no protection against foreign competition and some of the basic principles of private property were being attacked throughout the various states.

To overcome these obstacles, the leading business men, financiers and other interested parties met and formulated the instrument of government under which the American Empire has functioned in the interests of American Capitalism ever since. To be true the majority of people of the country opposed the results of their labors. But by disfranchising all save between 5 and 10 percent of the adult males, by intimidation and fraud and by other devious methods well described in some of Mr. Beard's earlier works the "fathers" put across their little *coup d'etat* anyway. The American government has been functioning as a dictatorship of business and finance ever since.

Since 1788 the child has grown up. The pigmy has developed into a giant octopus—with far-flung colonies and the remainder of the capitalist world in its control through debts and other economic mediums. This is "The Republic in The Machine Age" whose functioning apparatus the Beards describe with a thoroughness not to be found elsewhere.

The volume describes the entire governmental machine as it functions in the machine age. The parliamentary structure; the hierachy of officials; the structure of the various departments of the government and the manner in which they aid transportation, business and finance are all thoroughly described. So is the manner in which the government provides the other requisites of sound business such as weights and measures; surveying and mapping; trade-marks, copyrights and patents; research and statistics and countless other indespensible services which business men and financiers organize governments to provide.

All of these—and many others like—are competently described but not analyzed. Nowhere do we find any hint of what the state really is—the instrument of a ruling class for the purpose of promoting the interests of that class and protecting it from its competitors without and its class enemy within.

Treated from the latter point of view, Mr. Beard's book could be made into a strikingly valuable social document. As it is, it is just another capitalist text book. A more thorough job than usual, to be true. But the same old stuff just the same.

All of which is too bad. The earlier writings of Charles Beard stirred the country by their social content. Where he was formerly critical, analytical and dialectic he has now become merely descriptive. His book will, no doubt, sell by the tens of thousands as a college text book. This may serve as a key to the cause of things. Or maybe its merely senile decay.

JACK HARDY

Scholarship & Brisbanalities

Rational Evolution (The Making of Humanity). By Robert Briffault. Macmillan. $3.50.

This Human Nature. By Charles Duff. Cosmopolitan. $4.00

Briffault's book *Rational Evolution* which deals with the dramatic tale of man's struggle to free himself from the myths and superstitions that keep him enslaved to the priesthoods and rulers that derive power and profits through man's ignorance, represents a prodigious advance over the writings of the traditional rationalists. The pages of the book are rich with erudition displayed in an eloquent manner that rings with passionate conviction. The intellectual history of Europe is here rewritten; the official mythology passing as history is blasted. The falsehoods perpetrated by Christian historians to hide the shameful career of the church as an agent of reaction responsible for the brutal slaughter of millions and the degradation of all of Europe, are exposed with critical discernment; the legal fictions and sophistries of the ruling classes confuted with lucid and penetrating scholarship. The book is seriously defective, however, in the failure of the author to add a chapter in this American edition of the work showing what the Soviet Union has done since the the book was first published in 1919, to realize the program of dispelling irrational sanctions and taboos by a rational scientific morality and in making culture in its most developed forms available to the masses. There is no more striking evidence in history than the Soviet achievement to prove the fundamental fact that the fight for the intellecual emancipaion of the masses is intimately tied up with the class struggle for political and economic emancipation and that only when the latter is achieved is the former fully realized.

Duff's book *This Human Nature* is a monument of intellectual incompetence and sham scholarship—it is ignorance flowering in verbiage. A mess of brisbanalities are thrown together without rhyme, reason or good common sense reflecting what a shallow Babbitt believes his readers will accept as the low-down on the latest wisdom.

BENNETT STEVENS

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN BOOTS — *Maurice Becker*

To All American Revolutionary Writers

To all Sections of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers:

For the purpose of carrying out the practical decisions of the World Conference of Revolutionary Writers the following measures are being undertaken by the Secretariat of the IURW.

1. The complete stenographic account of the Conference, in Russian, English, French and German, is now being published as a special number of the *Literature of the World Revolution,* which is the central organ of the IURW. The number will come out no later than the 15th of March and will be immediately sent to all the organizations of the IURW and to all the delegates of the Conference.

2. The first two numbers of the *Literature of the World Revolution,* a magazine appearing in four languages, are already prepared for publication. According to the decisions of the Conference the task of the new organ of the IURW will be not to supply information about international literary problems, but also to guide the world revolutionary literary movement. The magazine will include international literary and critical material, current literary events, fragments from the works of Marxist classics (Lenin, Plekhanov) and leading theoretical articles on fundamental literary problems. It is necessary that all the sections of the IURW should assist the magazine in its activities by providing it with material (literary works, worker correspondence, literary and cultural news, and so on). Exhaustive materials should be sent about all kinds of literary discussions taking place in different countries, and about activities directed against revolutionary literature, for this will enable the organ of the IURW to take a definite stand in the first and to give a due rebuff to the second. The first number of the magazine should be thoroughly discussed in order to find out, whether the magazine answers its purpose and also to indicate shortcomings which have to be eliminated. The secretariat of the IURW should be informed of all the criticisms.

3. The Secretariat invites all the sections of the IURW to send in works of proletarian and revolutionary writers, especially such as cannot be published in their own countries, for publication in the *Literature of World Revolution* (in Russian, English, French and German) as well as for translation and publication in Russian, Ukrainian etc. magazines and other editions in the USSR. A special Press-Commission has been formed under the IURW for the purpose of considering and distributing such manuscripts.

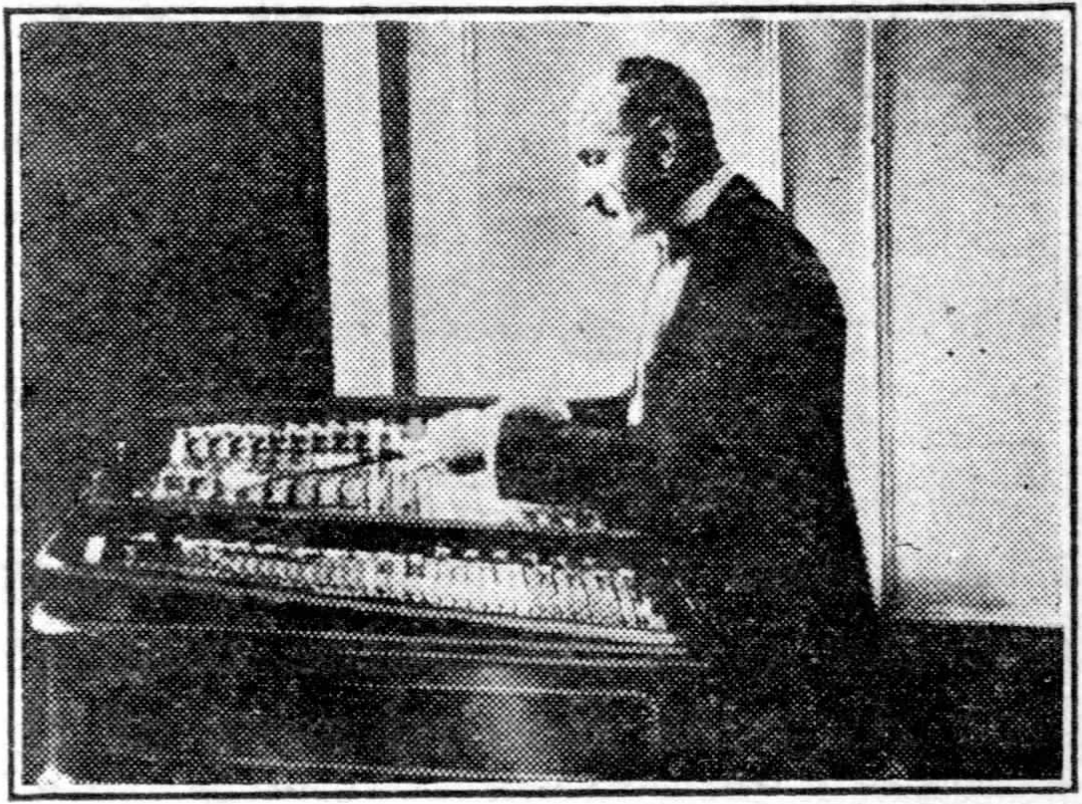
4. Some delegates expressed at the Conference their discontent with the fact that different sections of the IURW lack sufficient information about each others work and also the work of the Secretariat. In order to organize an exchange of experience between the sections and to consolidate their connection with the Secretariat, the latter will issue a *monthly letter of information* dealing with the principal facts of the work carried out by the IURW and its sections. For the first letter, which will be issued on the first of April material is necessary. The Secretariat invites all the sections to provide it with regular information about the chief events of their life, work and struggle, also about the changes occurring amongst the fellow-travellers and in the bourgeois literary camp. Information should be given in form of special monthly letters to the Secretariat, the first of which must be sent by each Section as soon as possible.

In view of the special attention paid by all the members of the IURW to the literary life of the USSR, it will be largely dealt with both in the chronicle of the *Literature of the World Revolution* and in the letters of information. The Secretariat asks all the Sections to state which facts of Soviet literary and cultural life are particularly interesting to them and require a most detailed treatment.

The Secretariat finds it necessary to emphasize that the decisions of the Conference with regard to the improvement of mutual information and connection as well as to the creation of a militant printed organ, can be carried out only with the active participant of all the members of the IURW.

Moscow, U.S.S.R.

SECRETARIAT OF THE IURW



WORKERS' ART

A monthly department for reports and discussion of Workers' Cultural Activities.

Chicago

On February 28, at the People's Auditorium, the former Palm Club, now the John Reed Club of Chicago, gave its first exhibit of revolutionary drawings, cartoons, paintings and sculpture in a joint exhibit of the Chicago John Reed Club, the John Reed Club of New York and the *New Masses*. Over 43 artists, painters and sculptors were included. The evening of the exhibit was also given to a program of song, dance and music. The Chicago artists, some of whom are already known to *New Masses* readers included Jan Wittenber, Burr, Lebedinsky, Rose, Barton, Mishell, Weiner, Torres, Van Young, Weisenborn and others.

The worker audience, asked to vote on their choice of the best work in the exhibit, voted for the work of Ivors Rose, a new member of the John Reed Club. The vote was taken through a space allotted for it in the program.

Painting No. 209 in the exhibit, to be awarded, was by vote of the audience, given to the *Daily Worker*, since the worker chosen was not present.

The program of the evening presided over by the artist, Jan Wittenber, who made the opening address, included the Artes Orchestra, led by G. Hairtowich, the Scandinavian Workers Sextet, coached by Harry Anderson, the Artes Ballet led by Wozansky, a vocal solo by R. Rubin, the Blue Blouse Dancers, directed by Lydia Esaeva, and *Build Blues* staged by the Blue Blouses. Max Appleman gave a reading.

The program and exhibit took on an international aspect with the inclusion of Negro ,Japanese and Chinese workers. The evening the first of its kind presented in Chicago, was voted by the audience unanimously as a huge success and the John Reed Club of Chicago is now making preparations for another affair in the near future.

JOHN REED CLUB OF CHICAGO

Los Angeles

On Friday, March 6, the Rebel Players of Los Angeles presented Paul Sifton's drama of the Ford factory, *The Belt*. The presentation given was not only received enthusiastically by the workers, but received favorable comment even by the Daily Press. The *Los Angeles Record* says of the presentation "its was a thrilling inauguration of a most promising group of worker-players. One knew that they were young. That they were on tiptoe with the zest of doing new things in a new project."

Arrangements are being made to present *The Belt* for a local union and other working class organizations. Meanwhile a number of the members of the Rebel Players are being kept busy with recitations and readings for various affairs sponsored by working class organizations.

On May 3, Harbor Allen's one-act play *Mr. God Is Not In* will be given at the Freiheit Jubilee at the T. V. G. Auditorium.

On Saturday April 18, a "Casting Night" will be arranged at 2114½ East First Street. All talent is invited. There will be entertainment and no admission charged.—*Victor Cutler, Secy*, 529 *N. Cummings St., Los Angeles, Calif.*

A group of the Hungarian Elore Dramatic Club which recently presented the new Soviet one-act play, *The New Way of Life*. The same club with a cast of 35, recently gave 2 presentations of Jack Reeds *Ten Days That Shook The World* a pretentious dramatization requiring 28 scenes. The group above, standing left to right: Briggita Molnar, Kohn, Anna Mesich, William Weinberg. Seated: Olga Kossa, John Barna, Ruth Weinberg.

New York

On Friday March 10 the Japanese Workers Club of New York presented *Somebody Nothing*, a one-act farce, at the Finnish Workers Club, 15 West 126 Street.

The farce, written by K. Nishino of the Japanese Workers Club and presented in the style of the *No* dramas, using screens only and no scenery, and done with the aid of pantomime, was written and acted in English by a cast of 3 Japanese and 1 Negro actor.

A dance followed the stage novelty and the proceeds went to the Japanese semi-monthly *Lodo* (Labor), which is now in a campaign to become a weekly.

John Reed Club—Proletpen Exhibit—

A joint exhibit containing nearly 100 paintings, drawings and cartoons, given by the artists of the John Reed Club of New York and the Proletpen Group, is being held during the month of April at the Proletpen headquarters, 106 East 14 Street. Exhibit open every evening. Admission 15c weekdays, 25c Saturdays and Sundays.

John Reed Club Party—

The John Reed Club of New York is giving a farewell party on Saturday, April 11 at its clubrooms, 102 West 14 Street, for its members, Louis Lozowick, Sender Garlin and Maurice Becker, all of whom are leaving for a visit to the Soviet Union. All readers of *New Masses* are invited to tchai, dancing and a comradely evening. Admission 25c.

A Little Letter

The next issue is our MAY DAY NUMBER. We plan to make this the best issue of *New Masses*. Articles, stories, poems, drawings, reviews, etc.

A *suggestion*: choose this number to begin a subscription for your friends. A good, proletarian May Day Greeting.

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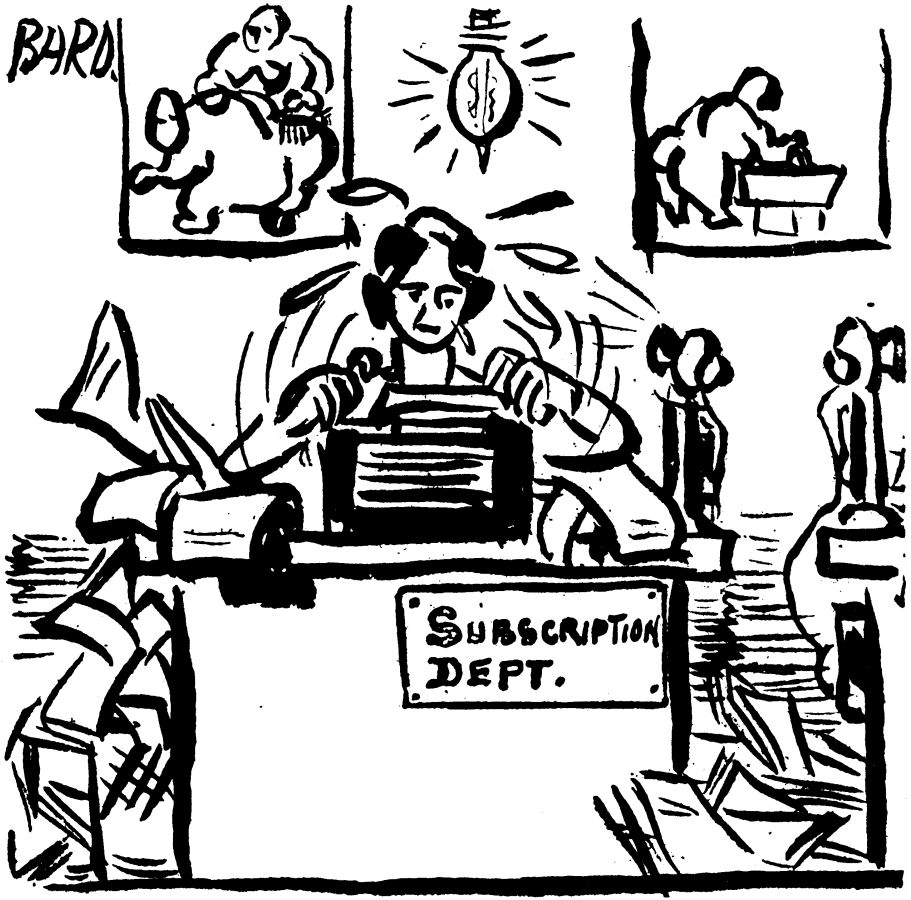

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From a Working Woman

After my husband was killed while carrying out a dangerous tho money saving venture at the order of a stingy capitalist boss, I suddenly awoke to the realization that I must get a job or starve.

A friend told me of a transit company that needed ticket agents.

I applied for the position, was sent for an examination, was passed by the company doctor, bonded, and hired as an extra for a period of eighteen months. I paid one dollar for a badge at the same time being warned that in case of loss I must pay five dollars for a duplicate.

My first assignment was to report at the dispatchers office. Well I sat in that office for two hours waiting for a call to come in. None came so I was dismissed for the day with my salary for that being sixty-four cents, thirty two cents an hour.

The second day I again reported. I arrived at eleven P. M. and sat waiting. At five minutes to one A. M. a call came thru for an agent to relieve a sick agent. I was assigned to that job. I set out immediately and arrived at the station shortly before two A. M. I worked the night thru until six A. M. when another agent relieved me.

My salary for that day was $1.28. I was paid only from the time that I arrived at the station until I was relieved. The time spent waiting and travelling tho in the interest of the company was at my own expense.

At another time I was assigned to an eight hour run. At the end of the eighth hour no one came to relieve me. I was notified by the office to stay on duty until I was relieved. Nine hours later relief came. For these seventeen hours I was paid the straight salary of thirty two cents an hour.

The conditions were sickening. One day I spoke to another agent.

"Mrs. Jones", I said, "Have the employes never asked for a change in conditions? Why don't they form a union?"

"We have a representative to whom we appealed at one time," she replied. "She told us it was of no use to appeal to the ones higher up. At a meeting several years ago a representative did speak up. She was dismissed. Later we made plans for a union, but the company with the aid of their stool pigeons soon nipped that in the bud. Every employee who was in any way connected was immediately dismissed."

And so we slave away hoping for a change to come, enduring the insults of passengers who become angry when we attempt to carry out orders and thereby hold a much needed job, occasionally paying the fare of those less fortunate than ourselves, in constant fear of being framed by the company's "dicks", slaves like ourselves, who are made heartless by a bit of authority that they hold. Poor saps working against our cause and cutting their own throats at the same time. Poor twenty five dollar a week spies, you too will awaken some day.

Yet maltreated workers tho we are, underpaid as we are, there are those who come to us and ask for our hard earned pennies in the name of Charity. It is a joke, a horrid joke to see these people with their baskets, coin boxes, and tambourines shamelessly held out to each worker. They ask us for the thing we need most, that we like least of all things. The thing that need not be—Charity.

AGNES WELLS

New York, N. Y.

Jack Hardy and *Robert Dunn*—co-authors of the newly published *Labor And Textiles* are both members of the Labor Research Association.

Louis Lozowick—has just won the leading prize in an international competition sponsored by the Print Club of Cleveland. This follows awards won in recent months in exhibits held by the Print Club in Philadelphia and the Art Institute in Chicago.

Norman Macleod—editor, contributor to the magazines, is now in Albuquerque, N.M.

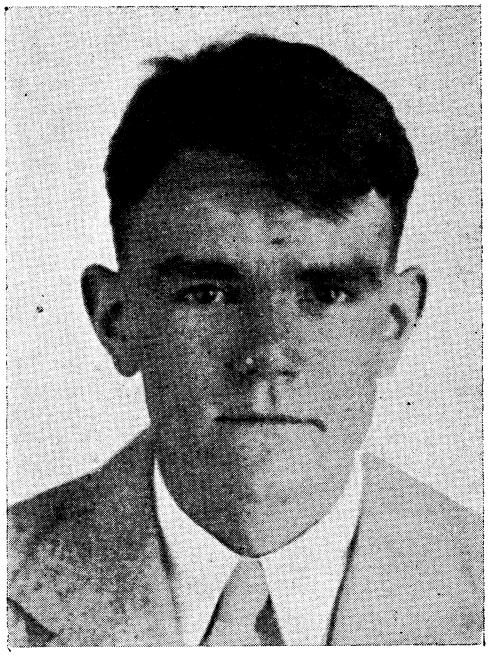
Louis Ribak—New York painter is an exhibitor in leading galleries.

John C. Rogers—young poet of Virginia, contributes to *Left, Morada* and other publications.

I. Klein—contributor to the magazines is also at work on a series of paintings.

Jack Conroy—of Moberly, Missouri, is a contributor to the *American Mercury, Left* and other publications. His story in this issue is part of a first novel to appear soon.

Philip Reisman—is a young New York artist and illustrator.



Robert Cruden—was born in Scotland. Came to U. S. A. in 1923. Attempted to get a college "education" but gave it up as a bad job. Worked on production in Packard and Ford factories. At present a member of the unemployed. Married. Working on a series of stories of auto workers, of which *Men Wanted* is the first. Contributed to *The Labor Defender, Solidarity, The Daily Worker, The Nation, New Republic,* and *New Freeman.* Planning to get to the Soviet Union to work in auto plants there.

IN THIS ISSUE

William Gropper—is author of *Alay Oop!*, a story in pictures recently published

Lawrence Gellert—now in Tryon, N. C. is at work on his collection of Negro songs for early publication.

Phil Bard—has just completed a story in pictures dealing with unemployment and militarism to be issued as a pamphlet by the Young Communist League, with a forward by Robert Minor.

A. Shulimson—young writer of Albany, N. Y. makes his first *New Masses* appearance.

William Hernandez—John Reed Club member, is one of the younger group of New York artists whose work has appeared in the *New Masses* in the past year.

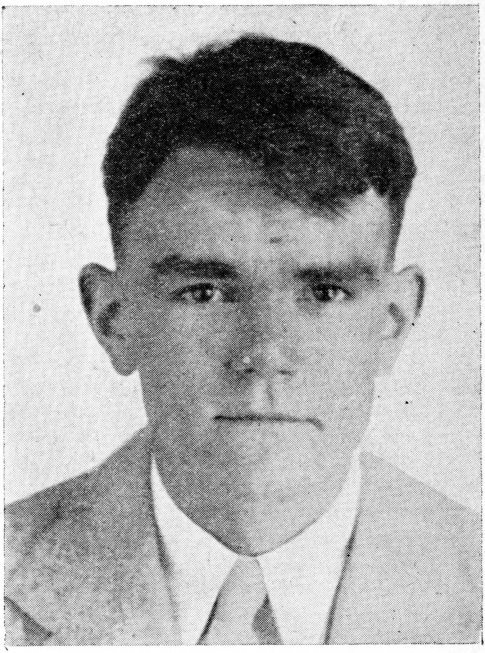
Whittaker Chambers—now at work on a novel, was former staff member of the *Daily Worker.*

William Siegel—is author of the pamphlet *The Paris Commune* a story in pictures, just published.

Mitchel Siporin—of the Chicago John Reed Club, 19 years old, makes his first appearance in *New Masses.*

Anna Rochester—is author of *Labor And Coal* just off the press.

Maurice Becker—painter, contributor to various publications is on his way to the Soviet Union.



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