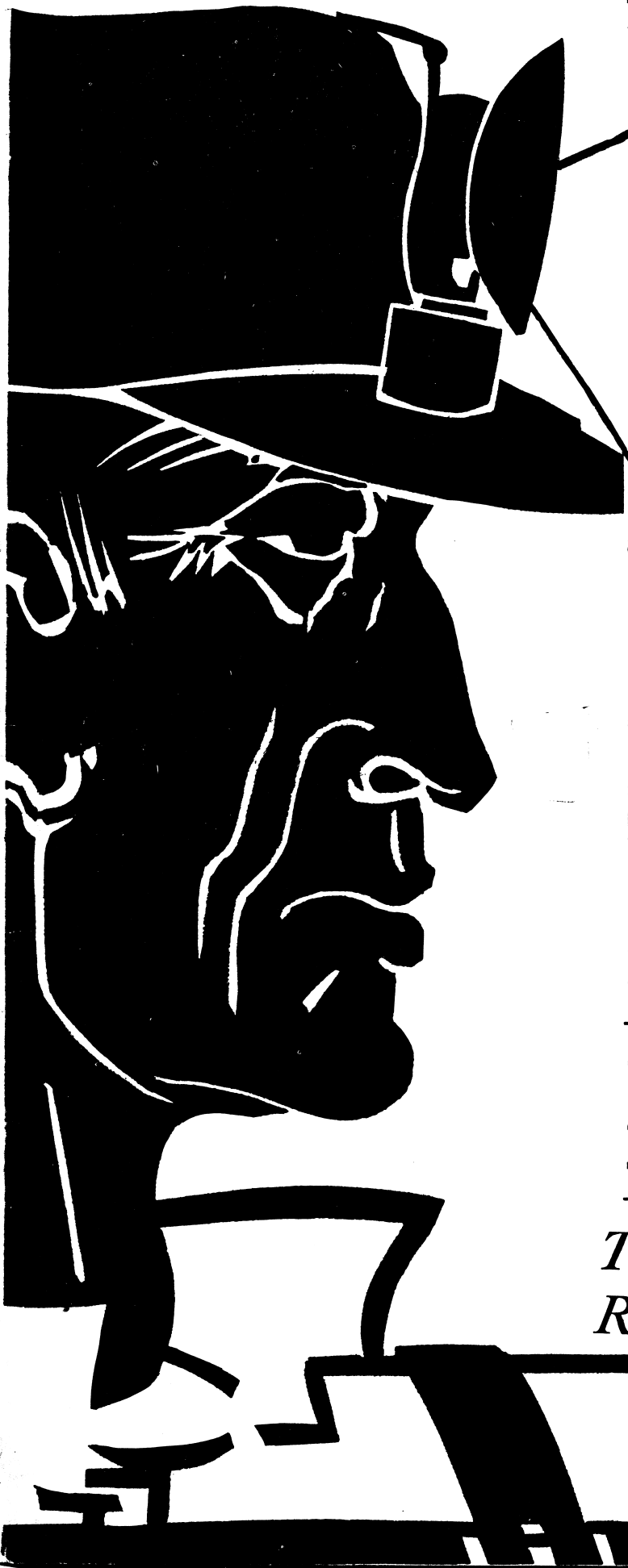


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## SHERWOOD ANDERSON

# LET'S HAVE MORE CRIMINAL SYNDICALISM\*

First of all I have a simple desire to stand up and be counted on the side of Theodore Dreiser, John Dos Passos and the other men and women, mostly I think writers, thinkers, perhaps poets and dreamers, who had the guts to go on this trip down into a little Kentucky mining town. I have been in mining towns myself, I know what most of them are like.

In the mining town in question there had been an attempt to organize a union. The workers are, I dare say, quite miserable. I do not need to go to Harlan, Kentucky. I can believe that. I have been in coal mining towns myself, in England, in France, in America, in the North and in the South. I was myself from a small town of the middle-west, a farming town. I remember when, as a boy, I first saw, from a train window, a coal mining town of that country. I remember the shudder that ran through me. There were men and women living like rabbits in dirty holes. I remember how the sight frightened and startled me.

So nowadays everywhere workers are out of work. They are poorly paid.

It is so with all workers in all trades now. With the industrial workers it is worse than with any other sort of workers.

Why? It seems to me very simple. Nowadays, because of our human mechanical genius, the building up of the modern machine, you can manufacture five times, ten times, in some fields perhaps 100 times as many goods per man employed as you could 25 or 50 years ago.

So nowadays, if you want to cut wages in any plant, any industry, if you want to lengthen hours to speed up the work, keeping the workers always keyed up to an intense pitch, breaking down the nerve force, breaking by persistent speeding the spirits of men and women, it is easy. Are there not thousands of men waiting for jobs outside the factory gates?

I am a worker in a factory, you come to me. Being my boss, you tell me. "You will have to take another cut. Your hours will have to be lengthened, etc." There I stand by my machine. I turn my head and look out a window into the street. There are all of those other men and women standing down there in the street by the factory gate, unemployed men with families. Do I take what you, my boss, choose to give me? I usually do.

This happens not only in industry. In my own country, in the

South, in Virginia, I am told there are farm laborers now glad to get work at 50 cents a day.

I remember what a man said to me a short time ago. I was on a train and talking to this man. I knew him. He was a large manufacturer. "You are a writer Anderson," he said. "You write stories and novels, books, eh?"

"Yes."

"Well," he said, "I could not do that. I could not write any books. Do you want to know why?"

"Yes, I would like to know."

"Because," he said, "I could not go on talking like that—what it would take you a whole book to say I could say in two words."

I was telling a friend about this. "Sure, he could," my friend said. He could say, "You're fired."

Occasionally something breaks out—a strike. Were you ever in one? The experience is something never to be forgotten.

A kind of tremor, runs through a plant, or mine. There are cries and shouts. The workers pour out. Meetings are held. Something happens. These little individual units the individual workers, lost down there in that amazingly beautiful and terrible thing—the modern world of the machine—these units, so tied, so bound to the machines, suddenly fly off the machines.

Why, it is something uncanny, something to the onlooker a little strange.

It is, I say, strange to see them fly off thus, separate themselves even temporarily from the machines. It is even pathetic this little struggle of individual men and women to free themselves a little, go again toward one another, touch, feel for each other, in this strange new machine world we have made.

Men come out into the light, into the open. Words long suppressed come to the lips, hand touches hand.

"You here Jim, and you Fred, and you Joe? You are going to stick, to fight?"

"Yes, by God."

"And you—Maude and Helen and Kate."

A strange new sense of brotherhood, of sisterhood.

"Do you think we have a chance?"

"Yes. Yes."

"What the hell can we lose? Our lives? Hell, they've got our lives."

Light coming into dull eyes, hope into brains dulled by long

\*Part of a speech delivered in New York City, at a meeting of the National Committee For The Defense Of Political Prisoners.

years of toil. Men are marching now. They are singing. The strike is a marvelous thing. Win or lose it is a marvelous thing.

There is this sense of brotherhood come back, shoulder touching shoulder, at last in these lives a period of aliveness and of hope, of warmth, of brotherhood in struggle.

Ask any man who has been to war. Did he get anything out of it? Ask him. Did he get new hatred of his so called enemy?

Never. I'll tell you what he got, if he got anything. He got flashes of a new sense in men—the sense of brotherhood. He got that or he got nothing.

Why the strike is like that to workers. In these days usually it doesn't last long. The same brains that have organized all of this big strange new thing in our world, modern industry, have also organized the means of crushing these outbreaks.

That is a machine too. The machine that crushes these new hopes. How deftly, how powerfully, it is organized. It has organized the press, the schools, the churches, the preachers, pretty much the whole middle and professional classes of lawyers, doctors, merchants, salesmen, newspapers, newspaper reporters, editors of newspapers. It has pretty much got them all.

As for the politicians. It is shameful to mention it to a crowd of intelligent people, it is so obvious—I mean the organization, the control of our modern so-called public men, by the machine, by money, by the money brains that control the western world now.

And all of this for what?

Who is served by it? I mean by this modern crushing organization of modern society?

Who is served?

A refiner of oil.

A maker of steel.

A soap maker.

A hog killer, out in Chicago.

A weaver.

A money changer.

What, all of this for these men?

Money brains.

Soap brains.

Wheat brains.

Shoe brains.

Clothing brains.

Is that what our people came to America for? Was it for this we built all our railroads, cut down the forests, opened up the land, conquered the sea, conquered the air—that these men, with specialized kinds of brains . . . was it all only to set up a new kingdom for these?

So there was all this ugliness down there in Harlan, Kentucky. Newspaper reporters going down there, to find out if all the stories told were true, were beaten and driven out of town. The mine owners had got their hired gunmen in there. You ought to know about that in New York. Chicago knows about it. There was apparently a reign of terror.

Well, what about it? Were the working people of that community being terrorized, thrown into ugly little jails, beaten, was Harlan, Kentucky really being made into a kind of Siberian penal camp, under the old Tzars?

It was a fine question. Would someone go out there and find out? Mr. Dreiser did not want to go. Mr. Dos Passos did not want to go. Why I know this type of man. I'm one of them myself.

I know what these men want. Mr. Dreiser is a story teller. He is a man who had never sought and does not want the limelight. He wants to wander about talking to people, to workers, to millionaires, to merchants. He wants to go to talk with women. He is a story teller.

He has a tremendous searching constant hunger in him to find out about lives.

It gnaws at him, bites at him, will not let him alone.

Dreiser has been that way all of his life. He wants the truth about people. He is tender about people. When something hurts someone it hurts him too. He doesn't want to be that way. It would be much more comfortable for him if he was indifferent, self-satisfied, could take life merely as a game, play to win.

Why this is a grand chance for me, as another American writer, to say something about my friend Theodore Dreiser. I myself began writing after Theodore Dreiser did. I guess you all here know what has happened to American writing.

It is like this. As soon as a man here, in America, shows some talent as a writer they pounce down on him. They want to buy his talent.

They usually do too, I'll tell you that.

So they offer him money, position, security.

All he has to do you see is to corrupt slightly everything he does.

They want to make a clever man of him, a cunning little twister of words and ideas, spoiling his own tools, going crooked you see, selling the people out.

O, its nice, some of the implications of being a successful writer in this country.

You don't even have to lie. You can just keep still. Shut your eyes.

So Dreiser wouldn't do that. He had a curious hunger for truth. He was in love with truth. They say he is an immoral man. By the gods, it's true. He has been blatantly, openly, immorally in love with truth all of his life. He has fought for her, coaxed her, put his hands on her, raped her.

He hasn't let the magazine editors run him, the publishers tell him how and what to write. He hasn't written any leg shows for the movies. Most of his life he has been poor. Long after he was famous he was poor.

And what did that mean? Let me tell you what it means to American writers. I know.

Let us say that the average young American writer comes from a poor family. Most of them do. I don't know why. They are lucky if they do. They may get a little real education that way. My Heavens, if the average American millionaire knew what, in accumulating his millions, sweating it out of working people,

scheming and lying and cheating often enough, to get it, if he knew what he was doing to his own children, to his own sons and daughters, how he is cutting them off from real contact with life, from real education, dwarfing them (the daily newspapers ought to tell him that story but he won't see it) if he knew he would be the first man to throw his millions into the river and go Bolshevik . . .

Why there is something in being of the proletariat too. I was one once. I was a common laborer until I was 24 or 25 years old. I swear I would have been a better artist, a better story-teller now if I had stayed there. I might then have had something to say here as coming up out of the mass of people, out of the hearts of common every day people, out of poor farmers and poor factory hands, always growing in numbers in this country. I say that if I had stayed down there, never tried to rise, had earned my bread and butter always with the same hands with which I wrote words I might have had something to say with the words I wrote.

Mr. Dreiser has stood out against this, against the corruption of American writers with money, with promises of social distinction, with all the subtle promises that can be given such men. He was the first down-right honest American prose writer.

Do you think that has not meant a lot to all of us? It has meant everything.

## February 4

*Crisis. Unemployment. Hunger. Workers in breadlines. Workers in flop houses. Workers evicted. Workers committing suicide in the grip of starvation.*

*Riches. Ware-houses bursting with grain. Stores overflowing with clothing. Apartments full of lovely well-heated rooms. Hundreds of thousands of apartments. Hundreds of thousands of homeless. Winter blizzards consuming the life of workingmen's children.*

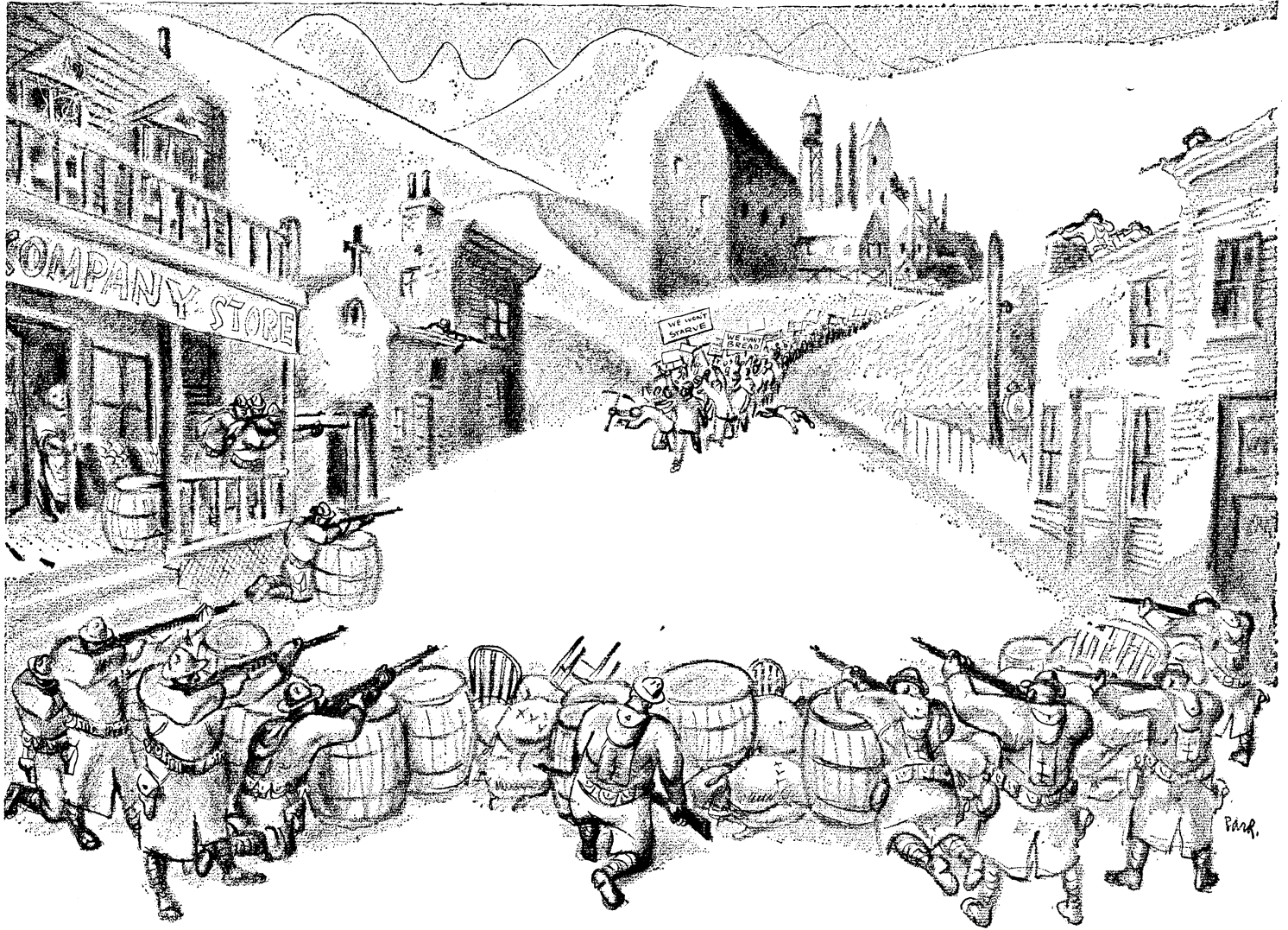
*Money. Thousands of millionaires. Thousands of millions for the idle. Hoover gives a two-billion gift to bankrupt bankers. Tammany cutting to half a miserable appropriation for "relief". Roosevelt promising more misery coming winter. Unemployed left without aid.*

*Terror. Kentucky miners shot and killed for attempt to fight against starvation. Strikers slugged everywhere. Organizers kidnapped, beaten, jailed.*

*War. Attack on the Chinese masses. Attacks on Chinese Soviets of workers and peasants. U. S. Marines in Shanghai. War plots against the U.S.S.R. Billions for war, not a cent for the workers.*

*On February 4th the workers give their reply! February 4th—mass mobilization to fight against hunger, for unemployment insurance, for immediate relief, against the war, for the Workers Republic!*

*February 4th—a red letter day of the American working class.*



PEACE MANEUVERS

Phil Bard

been called naive myself. I remember coming to New York once, some years ago. It was after prohibition so I was invited to a cocktail party. I went.

A certain well-known American critic came up to me. He staggered up. Well, he was drunk. "I don't like your work," he said.

"You're too naive," he said.

"O yes? You think?"

"You are naive. You believe human life amounts to a damn. It don't amount to a damn," he said.

And so there was this Harlan, Kentucky situation. The eyes of the whole country had become focused on that little spot. It had become a little ugly running sore, workers being beaten, women thrown into jail, American citizens being terrorized, newspaper men trying to investigate, being shot and terrorized. When you have got a disease inside the body it has a nasty little trick of breaking out in little sores of that sort.

So, someone thought—a body of men and women of more or less authority should go down there to investigate, to find out the truth, if possible. Mr. Dreiser did not want to go.

And here let me step aside a moment to say something. I was recently, since this Dreiser thing came up, at a certain American College. I had gone there to talk about country newspapers.

So I was in a room afterwards with a half a dozen young American men—fine young fellows too, two or three of them on the college football team, one of the famous teams of the country, and we were talking. The boys spoke of Mr. Dreiser.

"Why did he go down there?" one of them asked, and another answered. "Oh, I guess he wanted some publicity."

Ye Gods. Even in the young. Refusal to believe any man can do anything for clean reasons. Taking it for granted that men

of the artist class are also business men, thinking always and only of money, publicity, what is called fame. A man of Mr. Dreiser's world reputation as an honest artist being put instinctively on a footing with some little publicity grubbing movie actor. It makes your flesh creep to think of it. We pay through the nose for our glorious American money civilization, now don't we?

When it comes to Harlan, Kentucky, Mr. Dreiser and the others who went down there with him went as a last resort.

Others were publicly asked to go. There was a call sent out. Men of prominence in the educational world, college heads, statesmen, so-called, humanitarians. There was a long list of big names.

Not a man would go.

They all got sick suddenly, or they had appointments, or their sisters got sick, or they had a cousin coming to visit.

It was a hot spot, you see. They all wanted to keep nice and cool.

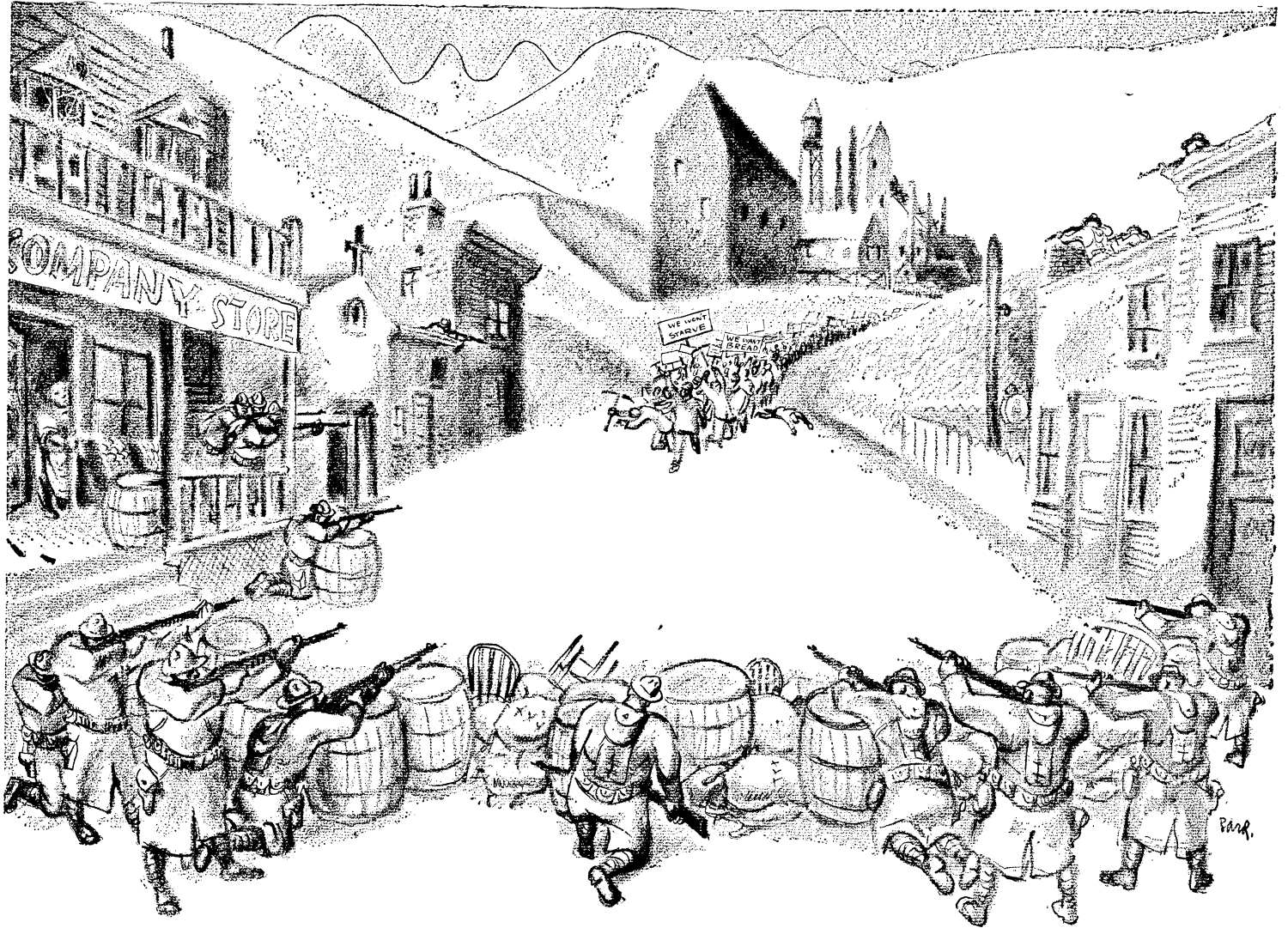
And then too, the word had gone out that someone might get hurt.

But there is something more than this. We, in America, are in a queer time. It is a speak-easy generation.

You will find this sort of thing everywhere now. They will talk to you in private.

Why, there are some men like that judge down in Kentucky, that prosecuting attorney down there. I know a lot of such men.

Sometime ago I was in the South, in another town when a strike was going on. It is always the same story. The company whose plant is being struck employs what they call a detective agency, to guard the property. I'll tell you they do a lot more than to guard it. They are strong arm-men, thugs, racketeers. It is the business of these men to make trouble.



PEACE MANEUVERS

Why? I'll tell you why. Once you have made trouble, set off a few sticks of dynamite, the soldier may be brought in.

It's easy after that. Now you get an injunction against picketing, against parading, against what they call, "unlawful assembly." It's a line-up isn't it? The United States Government, the Courts, the whole middle-class, the newspapers, the churches, the State Governments, County Governments and to round it off these hired gunmen—all of these against what, against a few miners with their blackened eyes or a few pale consumptive cotton mill workers.

In this court to which I went a few tired men and women, confused as such people always are when confronted with what we call "the majesty of the law," in that big strange room—I'll never forget their confused faces—so they were being tried for what was called, "unlawful assembly." They had gone into a vacant lot. Soldiers swarming about a mill. Heavily armed deputy sheriffs were there. They hadn't any permission to go into this vacant lot. They were gathered together there, huddled together, talking.

If I remember correctly they had even resisted arrest. A woman had, I believe, scratched a deputy sheriff's or a soldier's cheek. Some frightened mill hand had cursed. So they had been dragged into court. A jury had tried them.

While the jury was out in that case the Judge went into his chamber. I followed him in there. I have been curious about this thing. I introduced myself. We had cigarettes. We talked. Why I believe Theodore Dreiser, who is accused of what it called criminal syndicalism, is also accused of being a communist. He isn't, any more than I am. He couldn't be if he wanted to be. They wouldn't have him. As I understand it the Communist Party is a working-class party. Mr. Dreiser belongs to another class, the class to which I have the honor of belonging—the artist class. Why, I do not know nowadays whether it is or is not an honor to belong among us. As a class nowadays we have become as weak-kneed, as money-hungry, as afraid to speak out as most of the men of the press, the church, the courts and the schools.

If you think Mr. Dreiser a communist you should have heard the conversation in that Judge's chamber that day. You see the door was closed. We were alone in there. That Judge thought the coming of communism absolutely inevitable. He said so.

Then he went right out and sent those men and women to jail for unlawful assembly. There you are.

You find it among college professors, preachers, school teachers, men in the offices of big companies, you find it everywhere.

I do not know how many newspaper men and women I know personally. A good many. Perhaps fifty, perhaps a hundred, perhaps two hundred but this I do know. In private conversation, over a drink, in a speak-easy almost to a man they are what is called radical. The profession, everything considered is miserably paid. A clever advertising writer will make four times what even a first rate reporter makes.

But the radicalism is usually all private. It is private almost everywhere. It is under the rose. In public—in the public prints—well you know what happens.

It is characteristic of our whole American attitude just now—that is what I am trying to say. We are a speak-easy country. That is what makes me glad for Theodore Dreiser. That is what makes me glad for these young communists. Why a friend of mine down south asked me recently—"what is the difference between a communist and a socialist?" I couldn't tell him the technical difference. I didn't know. I am myself a story teller, not a political economist. "I don't quite know," I said. "I guess the communists mean it."

So there you are. Mr. Dreiser and these other people have had the nerve and the manhood to go down there into Kentucky, when there is apparently this reign of terror. They went openly and only after other men and women had refused to go. What they found there I will naturally leave for them to tell. They went there and asked questions. Mr. Dreiser made no speeches. He wanted, the others wanted, to call public attention to what was going on. He wanted truth. And then too he spoke out loud in a speak-easy country. He said in public what millions of Americans are thinking in private.

For that he is accused of criminal syndicalism.

So that's what criminal syndicalism is? I am glad to know. Now I know at last what is the matter with this country. We need less speak-easy citizens and more criminal syndicalists.

## Worker Uprooted

*The slow sleepy curl of cigaret smoke and butts glowing redly out of moving smiling mouths; now a whisper in the house, laughter muted, and warm words spoken no more to me. An alien, I move forlorn among curses, laughing falsely, joking with tears aching at my eyes, now surely alien and lonely. Once I rubbed shoulders with sweating men, pulled when they pulled, strained, cursed, comrade in their laughter, comrade in their pain, knowing fellowship of sudden smiles and the press of hands in silent speech. At noon hour, sprawled in the shade, opening our lunches, chewing our sandwiches, laughing and spitting, We talked of the days and found joy in our anger, balm in our common contempt; thought of lumber falling with thump of lead on piles geometrically exact; of horses sweating, puffing, bulging their terrible muscles; of wagons creaking; of sawdust pouring from the guts of the mill. Now alien, I move forlorn, an uprooted tree, feel the pain of hostile eyes lighting up no more for me; the forced silence, the awkward laugh, comrade no more in laughter and pain. And at the dawn, irresolutely, into the void. . . .*

JOSEPH KALAR

## 100%

*When he was a kid,  
He milked six cows in the morning,  
Shook hay all day,  
And milked six cows at night—  
Six days a week.*

*On Sunday—*

*He hooked-up the gray mare to a buggy,  
Took Emma Bangs to church  
And sang: "Lead Kindly Light;"  
On the way home, Emma said: NO!"*

*Next morning,*

*He milked six cows  
And shook hay all day.*

*When he was twenty-one  
He joined the navy to see the world.  
He learned the manual of arms by heart,  
Got "606" in Shanghai,  
Shot a Greaser in Vera Cruz,  
Stabbed a striker in the guts in Hawaii,  
Raped a High-Yellow in Galveston,  
And after four years of distinguished service,  
Received an honorable discharge.*

*Then—*

*For five years he lived in Hook-Shops,  
Sold hooch to the customers,  
Did a stick-up job now and then,  
And answered to the name of Three-Finger Charlie.*

*When he was thirty-six he went back home,  
Married Emma Bangs and joined the Klan.*

*On Sunday—*

*He hooked-up the gray mare to a buggy,  
Took Emma and the kids to church  
And sang: "Lead Kindly Light."*

*On the way home*

*He cursed the niggers and foreigners.*

*Next morning,*

*He milked six cows  
And shook hay all day.*

JIM WATERS





Thomas

D. A. R.

Woll

Hoover

Burck  
Doak

THE CRISIS—by Jacob Burck

**ROBERT EVANS**

# PILGRIMS OF CONFUSION

*Two worlds alternate shall be his, and he  
Shall be at home in neither . . . .  
A pilgrim of confusion shall he be.*

JOHN ERSKINE —

During the past year American liberal literati have rapidly shifted their interest from poetry to politics, and liberal publicists from politics to economics. The weeklies and reviews which once devoted so much space to Joyce, Proust, Valery and the new psychology, now discuss currency problems, the Five-Year Plan, revolution and counter-revolution; and it is worth noting that often the authors of these political and economic articles are men who recently wrote lyrics in the new manner of the post-war decade and swam, with or without lifebelts, up and down the wild currents of the stream of consciousness.

The first to forecast this politicalization of literature in America were leftwing critics who in the midst of the "new era" based their analysis on communist predictions of the depression, from which they deduced radical changes in the thought of the intelligentsia. Then followed the Humanists, who in literary, moral, and pseudo-philosophic language urged the fascination of American culture. And now, in the third year of the depression, the "thirties" scoff at the "twenties" as the "twenties" scoffed at the mid-victorians, and poets, philosophers and publicists rush forward daily with plans and panaceas for saving "civilization".

But the liberal intellectual is a creature caught between two worlds, an old one, which his recent experience has taught him to distrust and a new one, which his class training prevents him from fully understanding. Consequently, he fears the one and despises the other, and is "at home in neither". At best he seeks, in the realm of "pure reason", to effect a merger of the two worlds, retaining the best features of both. As a devotee of "social science" and "detached information", he reads economic reports and sees the economic crisis growing more acute from week to week. The official and unofficial surveys for the past year are enough to shoot anybody out of the stream of consciousness on to terra ferma. In this country—as in other capitalist countries—all branches of industry, agriculture and trade continue to decline, despite the cheerful predictions of businessmen and politicians. Production and prices have been steadily sliding down, a financial crisis has set in. Twelve million workers are unemployed, and capitalist society does nothing, *can* do nothing about it. The agrarian crisis has reduced the net farm income more than 70 percent as compared with 1929 and the rural areas of this country face destitution.

America, once envied by Europe as the "land of unbounded possibilities" is passing through the severest crisis in its history, a crisis that speaks loudly and plainly in the language of economics. Consider these figures: During 1931 production in the most important basic industries declined at least fifty percent below the 1929 level. Automobile production in 1931 was estimated at 2,450,000 cars as compared with 5,358,000 in 1929. Steel ingot production during the first 11 months of 1931 was 23,000,000 tons as compared with 51,000,000 during the corresponding period of 1929. Pig iron production declined steadily during the year, and construction was only 52 percent of the 1928 level. The national income for 1931 was 32 percent below that of 1929, wage payments were 22 billion dollars below 1929. During the year 17,000 retail stores went bankrupt because in this acute crisis the masses of the American people have had to cut down their purchases.

These are normal results of capitalism, planless in production, chaotic in distribution, corrupt with social oppression, rent by violent class conflicts. Nor is the crisis confined to one country. It weighs heavily upon the entire capitalist world, intensifying the consciousness of all classes, and centering all eyes upon that other world whose economic and social progress contrasts sharply with the surrounding decay. Where the lines on the capitalist charts and graphs run steadily downward, those of the Soviet Union run steadily upward. Soviet industrial production in 1930 increased 24 percent over that of 1929; in 1931 it increased 21 percent over 1930. The Soviet Union is the one country in the world which is

free of the curse of unemployment. In marked contrast with other countries, the number of persons employed is rising from year to year.

This growth in a world of stagnation and decline is no accident. The steady rise in production, labor productivity, wages, consumption, living standards, and education, the improved working conditions, the shorter hours, the elaborate system of labor protection, the profound social and cultural revolution which affects 160,000,000 people are the direct result of an organized society in which private ownership has been abolished, and power is vested in the hands of the workers in alliance with the peasants.

Intellectuals in other countries, impressed by the successes of the Soviet Union, grasp at every possible straw. Only a few years ago the Soviet "experiment" was a wild dream, the slogan "to overtake and surpass the advanced capitalist countries" a joke among bourgeois savants; now they are seeking to "learn"; their slogan is "to overtake and surpass" the Soviet Union. But caught in the trap of bourgeois prejudices they can think of nothing better than "planning" as the solution for the capitalist crisis. There is hardly a publicist who has not produced a "plan" for salvaging capitalism. But the very purpose of these plans dooms them to sterility. They propose superficial reforms while retaining the basic productive relations of capitalism. Yet if these basic relations exist they inevitably carry with them crises, unemployment and wars, they intensify the class antagonisms that rend capitalist society asunder; they inevitably retain exploitation for profit, wage-slavery and poverty, the oppressive power of the capitalist state and the revolutionary struggle of the workers.

The liberal mind, caught between big business and the proletariat, flounders in the face of the crucial problems which confront our epoch. The same naive faith which appealed to the "honor" of Massachusetts in the Sacco-Vanzetti case and the "law" of Alabama in the Scottsboro case, now appeals to the "intelligence" and "experience" of big business to save the capitalist system by "planning" and by "foresight". That is the universal prayer of the intelligentsia in which are comingled the voices of its abstract philosophers, popular economists and lyric poets. The philosopher Alfred North Whitehead pleads for "foresight" as the only hope for (capitalist) civilization; Stuart Chase is ready with blue-prints which will guarantee eight percent to suburban investors; the poet Allan Tate issues a manifesto declaring that "so long as we lack political leadership in its proper place, we must take it where it can be found, and the men of letters are alone sufficiently disinterested, if they were only prepared, to undertake the task." Apart from the "disinterestedness" and "preparation" of the men of letters, it may safely be said that they are a group which creates little anxiety for the class that murders miners in Kentucky and lynches Negroes in Alabama. Nor is this class likely to listen to the advice of the authors of the report on Long Range Planning published by the *New Republic* in its issue of January 13, although this advice by no means threatens the basis of capitalism, but, on the contrary, seeks to strengthen it.

What is noteworthy in these "plans", however, and in the liberal discussions about them is the frantic desire of the intelligentsia to effect reforms within the framework of the capitalist system. For this purpose, they do not even hesitate to drag in "Marxian" theories. Of course, they are too discreet as a rule to state their purpose frankly; it is masked in the barbarous jargon of the bourgeois academy; but sometimes a less discreet intellectual lets the cat out of the bag. Thus a critic of the Long Range Planning pamphlet, writing in the *New Republic* of January 27, says:

"If the writers of the plan accept the Marxian diagnosis of overproduction, then it is obvious that the measures they have proposed and the spirit in which they are asking businessmen to enter the planning organization are not calculated to make any appreciable headway against present evils . . . . If the problem is one that arises from a conflict of interests, as for example, international war, or the chaos of economic production according to the Marxian view, then fact-finding science is a snare and a delusion, for it tries to solve the problem of the conflict of interests by assuring us that

the interests of all are identical. Whether or not the authors of the report accept the view that the conflict of individual interests is the principal cause of overproduction and unemployment, no other thesis is tenable: for not only has the Marxian analysis never been refuted, but it stands to reason that if the cause were less deep rooted than the wills of men, the remedy would long ago have been found."

The critic has obviously failed to analyse the Marxian analysis. Overproduction and unemployment are not due to the conflict of individual interests, but to the operations of a specific productive system, capitalism, marked by the conflict of class interests. The evolution of that system and the intensification of class conflict are not produced by individual wills, hence the remedy could not "long ago have been found," in the sense of being applied. The remedy was indeed found by Marx and Engels some eighty years ago, but its effective application is dependent on objective conditions, although will and conscious purpose play an important role. This is the remedy which has been applied in Russia since 1917, a remedy from which the critic in the *New Republic* seems to have learned very little. For his own "remedy" is that what "we need is not science but social statesmanship, a statesmanship which appeals to the unifying power of reason among men and which creates, on the basis of the disinterested sentiments which we all share at some moments, a physical mechanism designed to guide and restrain our ordinary interested appetites. It is obvious that such mechanism must be incorporated into the State, which is after all nothing but the developing system of the coercive guidance of individuals by society and for society". For this, it is merely necessary that the "present holders of economic privileges" shall make "sacrifices" in a "rational social manner."

It is only natural that a writer who bases himself on the "Marxian analysis" which "has never been refuted" without understanding that analysis should fall into idealism of the shallowest kind. "Social statesmanship" is a meaningless term that would not be disdained by Mussolini. The appeal to the "unifying power of reason" among the bankers and industrialists is about as effective as the appeal to the "honor" of Massachusetts or the "law" of Alabama. And there is not a racketeer, gunman, crook, businessman, general, or coal operator in the world who would deny he had "disinterested sentiments", without in the least changing his activities which are the inevitable results of his position in capitalist society. For a writer who lives in the land of Hoover and Morgan, Tom Mooney and the Scottsboro defendants to define the state as "the developing system of the coercive guidance of individuals by society and for society" would appear incredible, if we did not know that the liberal mind, steeped in idealistic prejudices, still clings to an illusion which both the bourgeoisie and the proletariat have abandoned. The two main warring social classes know that every state is a class state, and that except under communism, every society is a class society. The state is the political instrument of that class which is economically dominant. Hence it is childish, when it is not a piece of deliberate political trickery, to appeal to the capitalist state to be "just", or to modify the privileges of bankers, or in any way to act against the interests of the capitalist class.

Yet that is precisely the kind of appeal the muddled intellectual makes, and for reasons which the critic writing in the columns of the *New Republic* states frankly. "I share," he says, "with the authors of the report the concern for a peaceful solution of the social problem and the fear of revolutions to come. And I also believe with them that the best way of running industry is by utilizing the knowledge and experience of the present directors. But, unless our captains of industry are ready for a 'Fourth of September', unless they are ready to make the necessary renunciation of their privileges and pledge their services to the nation, there is

nothing to do but wait and prepare on the side of labor for the readjustment of social forces. In the French Revolution the 'Fourth of September' came too late to stem the cataclysm of blood which drenched Europe for twenty-five years. Will our 'Fourth of September' also come too late? The answer lies with the captains of industry."

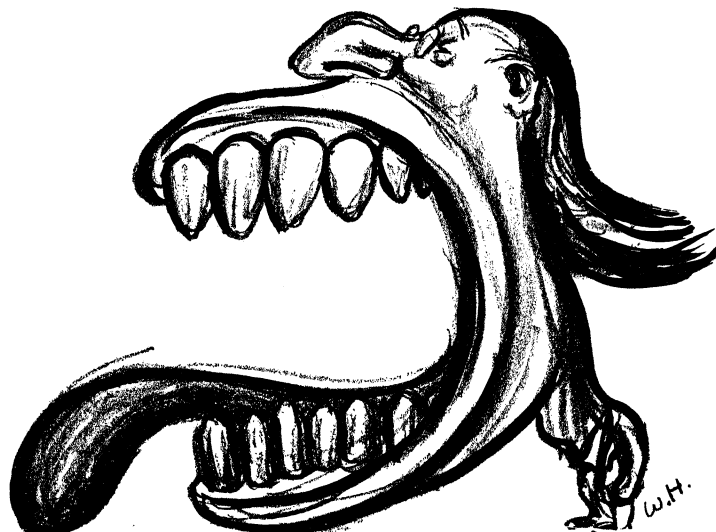
The lesson of the 'Fourth of September' is precisely that it is impossible to change economic and social relationships by appealing to the "unifying reason" of a ruling class, that it grants concessions *only* under pressure from the revolutionary classes, and when it learns it does so, as the critic aptly observes, "too late." The lesson of every revolution in history is that no ruling class is moved by "disinterested sentiments" to commit suicide; it does not surrender its privileges except when it is compelled to surrender its power. No governing class in history has ever abdicated until it was overthrown.

Despite the critic's "Marxian" analysis, the answer to the crisis of capitalism does *not* lie with the captains of industry. If his "analysis" has any value at all it is that of revealing with extraordinary naivete the vacillating position of the petit-bourgeoisie between fascism and the revolution. If the captains of industry will apply a mythical "unifying power of reason", if they will surrender to their "disinterested" sentiments, if they will "sacrifice" a few of their privileges without altering the system of exploitation for profit, then the critic and those who share his views will support them. And since fascism and social-fascism have a remarkable way of looking like "social statesmanship", this type of intellectual is capable of supporting a fascist or social-fascist State which coerces individuals "for society", as has been the case in Italy, Germany, Great Britain, Mexico and elsewhere. But if the captains of industry will not listen to this "appeal to reason?" Then they had better beware; for although the critic "fears revolutions to come" he will "wait and prepare" on the side of labor. Is it possible, after all, that if the men of letters and the critics of planning pamphlets "prepare", that capital and labor will be able to "prepare", that capital and labor will be able to avoid the "final conflict"? Hardly. While a certain type of intellectual prays for a September 4th, the revolutionary working class prepares for a November 7th.

There are, however, more clear-headed intellectuals. Edmund Wilson for instance has apparently changed his views since he urged the intelligentsia to "take communism away from the communists." His essay in the January 27 *Nation* is a statement of beliefs which everyone ought to read.

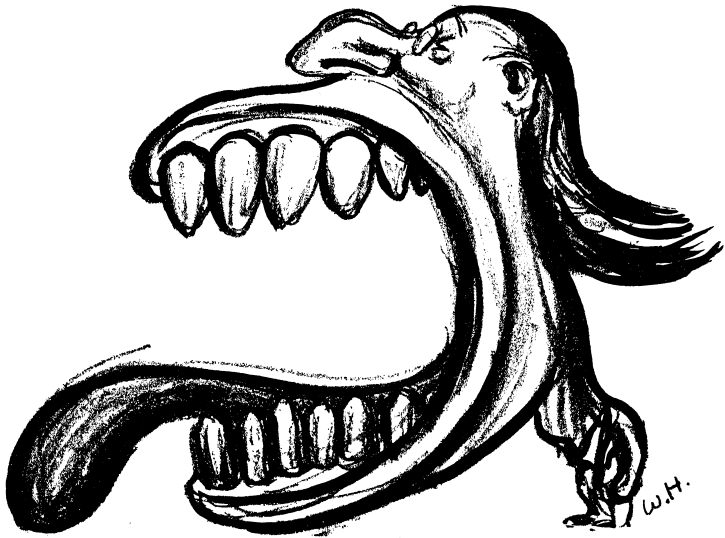
"So far as I can see," Wilson says, "Karl Marx's predictions are in the process of coming true." And since he has understood Marx better than the *New Republic* critic, he does not appeal to the captains of industry but knows that "there is no hope for general decency and fair play except from a society where classes are abolished." Hence, when he hears the Communists today "rousing the working class on the basis of assumptions of Marx's" he says, "I pay a good deal more serious attention to them than most of my bourgeois confreres do." He places such hope as he has not in the captains of industry, for he knows that economic relations are not based on sentiments but quite the reverse. He looks to a new type in American labor.

"One finds, Wilson says, "a new kind of man today in the radical labor movements—he belongs to the younger generation and he differs perhaps from any of the young American radicals we have ever had in the past. The older men who have gravitated to the left after long experience with American labor, and who have kept the radical movements alive through the post-war period when most people deserted them are today being reinforced by young men who start their career as convinced and cool-headed



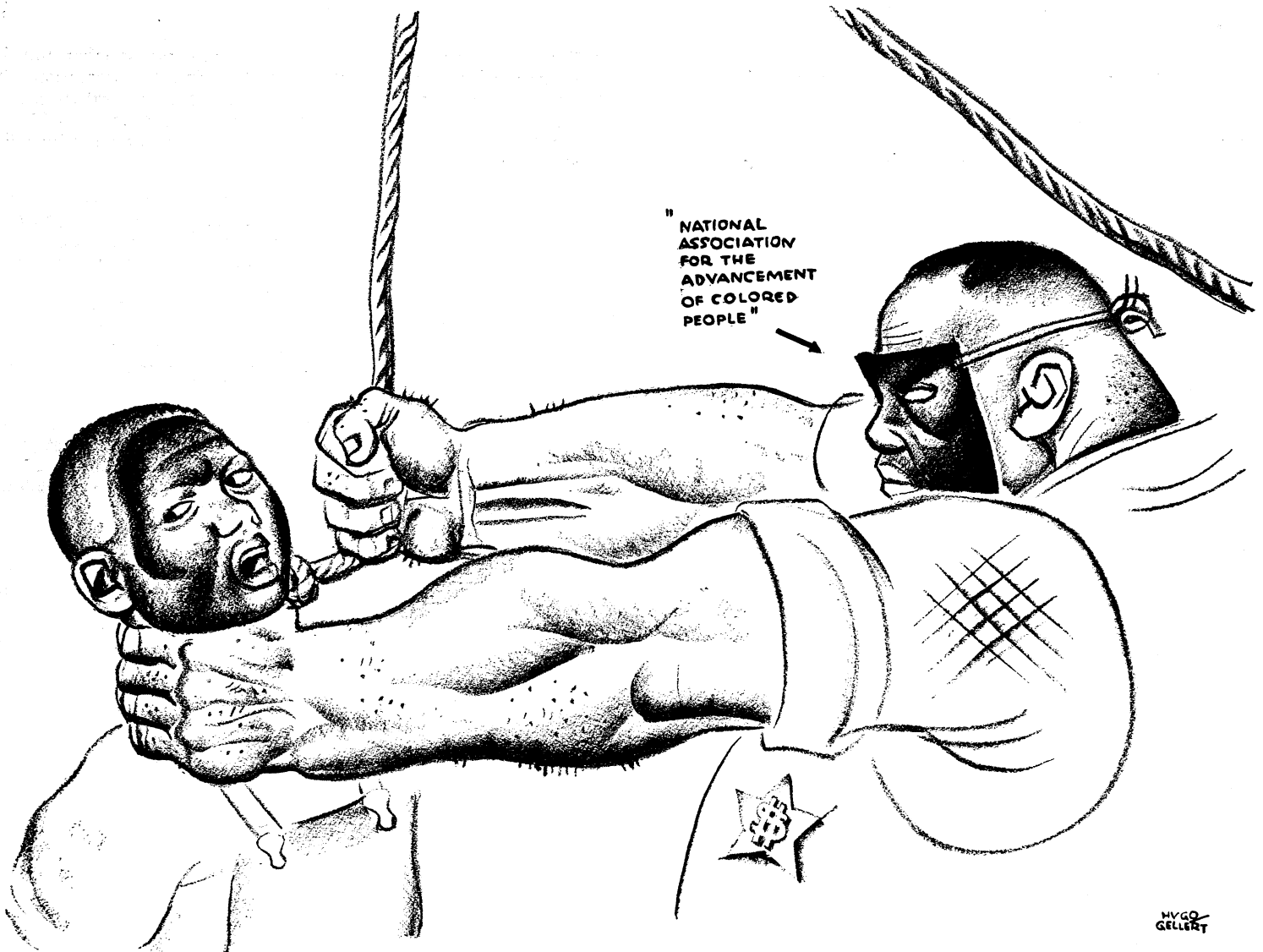
LIBERAL EXPRESSION

William Hernandez



*LIBERAL EXPRESSION*

*William Hernandez*



THE SCOTTSBORO LEGAL LYNCHING—The face of the NAACP, with the arms of the bosses.

Hugo Gellert

revolutionists with a clear idea of their relation to American society and of America's relation to the world. There are not many of them but they are important. They have no illusions about general prosperity based on the present economic system . . . . It is hard to imagine them abandoning their present principles. And as a matter of fact they are not likely to be tempted to. The longer hard times will continue, the more convinced of their position they will be, and the more young men of integrity and intelligence who come to maturity in the working-class world will take the same road as they. Such men are not democratic in the old American sense . . . . They look to Russia, in spite of all the differences between Russian and American conditions, as a model of what a state should be . . . . because it is as yet the only example of the communistic society they desire. They want, in fact, a working class dictatorship. . . .

"And I, although I am a bourgeois myself and still live in and depend on the bourgeois world, have certain interests in common with these proletarians. I, too, admire the Russian Communist leaders, because they are men of superior brains who have triumphed over the ignorance, the stupidity and the shortsighted selfishness of the mass, who have imposed on them better methods and ideas than they could ever have arrived at by themselves. As a writer, I have a special interest in the success of the 'intellectual' kind of brains as opposed to the acquisitive kind, and my present feeling is that my satisfaction in the spectacle of the whole world fairly and sensibly run as Russia is now run, instead of by the acquisitive bankers and businessmen and the shabby politicians who now run the greater part of it, would more than compensate me for any losses that I might incur in the process. And I appeal to other theorists and artists to be careful how they play the game of the capitalists. It is bad for their theory and their art to try to adapt themselves to a system which is the enemy of

theory and art. Their true solidarity lies with those elements who will remodel society by the power of imagination and thought."

There are, in this piece, many echoes of Wilson's early training. He underestimates the creative power of the masses, and conceives of the Soviet system as something "imposed" on selfish, ignorant louts by a few superior "intellectual" brains. He forgets that while the bolsheviks have led and directed the revolution, they have done so as the advance guard of the working class. If he would acquaint himself more closely with Soviet life, he would realize to what an extent its great cultural contributions are due to the creative activities of the masses, to the fruitful influence of worker and peasant correspondents, worker-inventors, and other proletarian and peasant organizations; he would know how much the scientist gains by quitting the solitude of his laboratory, the artist the isolation of his studio, the writer his lonely desk to mingle and work with the mass of the population in factory and field.

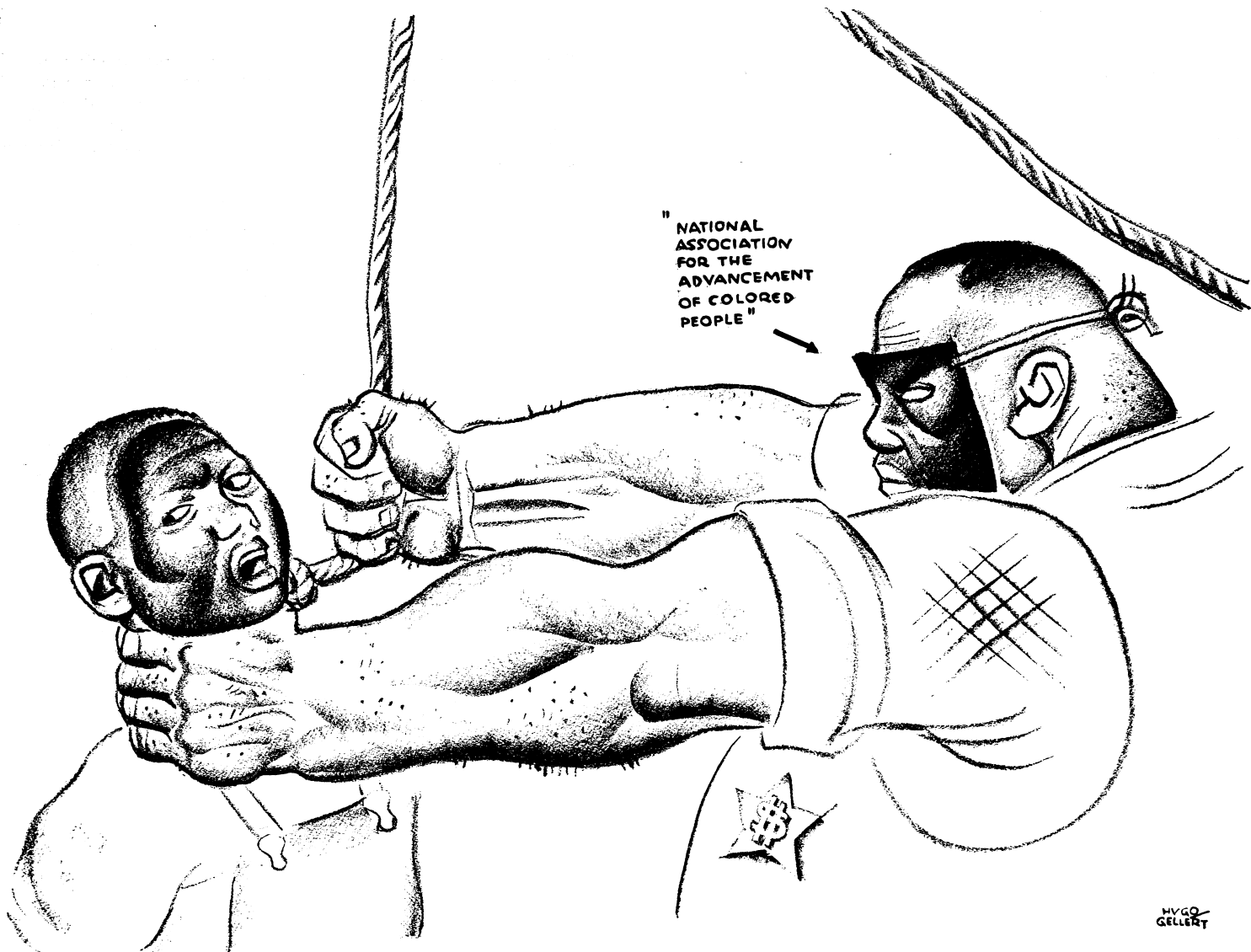
But what is most important at present in Wilson's essay is its positive element, which reveals that under the pressure of the economic crisis certain honest intellectuals have begun to see the true relationships of capitalist society, and the correct way out. It now remains for them to translate their faith into works.

### The Town of Scottsboro

*Scottsboro's just a little place:  
No shame is writ across its face—  
Its court, too weak to stand against a mob,  
Its people's heart, too small to hold a sob.*

Scottsboro, January, 1932.

LANGSTON HUGHES



THE SCOTTSBORO LEGAL LYNCHING—The face of the NAACP, with the arms of the bosses.

HUGO  
GELLERT  
*Hugo Gellert*

**MICHAEL GOLD****KINO OF A FACTORY TOWN**

Danford was at the second summer of the crisis. It had been promised a great change, but the leaves came out, the plump robins arrived, and everything grew worse.

There were many suicides. Babies were abandoned in ashcans, with notes pinned to their clothes. The streets and parks were crowded with men in daylight, strange in a factory town. There were rent evictions. The charity people quit trying to help anyone. A colony of 400 homeless workers lived in improvised tincan shacks on the dumps along the river. All this, and more, came to be ordinary in those days. There was peace—the shameful peace of the free, starving American individualist.

2. *All's Fair in Love and War*

One morning in July, with a strong sun flooding the windows, Arthur Park Jessup sat in his office and meditated. He was the wealthiest man in Danford, President of the Columbia Bentite Mills, and a gray, kindly little Yankee who suffered from sour stomach.

His office was a temple, with a thick carpet that subdued every profane sound, and a great mahogany desk set like an altar. Mr. Jessup chewed some sodamint tablets, tapped with his fingers on the desk and worried. Then he pressed a button.

His secretary tip-toed in, a business priest dressed in blue serge.

"Yes, Mr. Jessup."

"Henry," said the president, "I'm worried about the Clifton people. Are you going to dump that stock? Fact is, we ought to do something. They'll ruin us!"

"Yes, sir," said the secretary quietly. "Martins has thought of an interesting idea. The Clifton group must dump in the next three days or not at all. Martins wants us to announce we've just closed a big contract with a foreign nation, and are hiring 2000 men and going into production at once."

"Which foreign nation?"

"Well, Germany, perhaps."

"T'won't do, Henry. Bankrupt."

"Russia, then—"

Mr. Jessup chewed another sodamint and gulped his adam's apple.

"But does it matter which country, Mr. Jessup? It's just a question of standing off the Clifton people for the next few days. We must kill the raid."

"Do you think it's safe, Henry? There won't be any come-back?"

"It's safe, Mr. Jessup. I'll arrange it all with the local editor."

"Well," drawled the President, puckering the corners of his mouth as though he were sucking lemons, "I don't quite approve of it, Henry. It don't sound fair to me somehow."

At this the secretary bowed. The sunlight gleamed from his spectacles, and from the vaseline on his gray priestly head. The matter was finished. When Mr. Jessup fell into a Yankee twang to say of any project that it was not quite "fair", it meant that he was for it, but wanted the secretary to assume the moral load.

Thus was it decided to affect a certain stockmarket situation by promoting the rumor that 2000 workers were to be hired that afternoon. Henry called up the local editor, and the deed was done. It was all in the day's strategy, quite shrewd, business-like and legal.

3. *"For He Doth Mark The Sparrows' Fall"*

Matt Burke, a young machinist, lived in Emerson Park, one of the better sections of Danford, where the skilled workers and clerical folk are found. He had been out of a job for seven months.

He was sitting that morning in the kitchen at a late breakfast with his wife Edith and the kid when the thing happened.

They heard a big truck come banging up to their door. Matt looked out and saw the truck. It was decorated in the moving van period of American art, with an enormous chromo painting of Washington Praying at Valley Forge. When Matt saw Washington his heart sank.

"Edith, they've come for the furniture at last."

The girl went pale, and dropped the double-boiler she had just taken off the gas range, the cereal spattering the neat floor. She sat down and cried. Matt kissed her and said:

"Listen, baby, you take Junior out for a walk in the park. I don't want you around while this is happening."

She was a little woman, and had lost ten pounds worrying since he'd lost his job at Mr. Jessup's mill. She threw her thin childish arms about his neck, and pressed him to her trembling body. She hung to him as though drowning.

"Go on now, beat it," Matt said harshly, for it was too much to bear.

She snatched some clothes for the kid, and escaped out the back way. Matt watched her go through the garden, his lips moving, a bitter twist to his freckled young homely face. Then he opened the front door to the truckman.

"I'm from the credit house in Indian City. There's a load of furniture to go back."

"Right. We didn't expect you so early, but everything's packed. Go to it."

The truckman, a swarthy young bear in overalls, whistled to his helper, and the two pitched in with gusto. Grunting, sweating, and whistling, they carted off beds, chairs, rugs and electric lamps.

Matt flopped into an old kitchen chair, and burned up cigarettes while he thought about it all.

"Installment plan! The shysters! They bothered you crazy until you bought a lot of things! Now they're carting it off! After they got a thousand dollars out of my forty a week. It was all a goddamned swindle, a lie! Life on the installment plan! Why didn't I chuck my job and buy an old Ford and go bumming with Edith and the kid? We'd have been just as well off."

"Say, Buddy," said the truckman, "I feel lousy askin', but kin I have that table you're sittin' at? It's in the inventory."

"Go to it," said Matt bitterly. "It's yours."

The truckman nested the table and four chairs, carted them off on his back, whistling Rigoletto. The helper staggered out of the front room, all tangled up with the electric clock, the radio, and the imitation Persian rug Edith had liked so much. Matt couldn't watch the wreckers any longer. He went out to the back porch, and sat on the steps, looking at the garden.

On this clear summer morning the bees were humming in the sweet peas and zinnias, the larkspur and love-in-a-mist. A patch of tall sunflowers stood by the fence. Matt could smell the sweet herbs, the mint and pennyroyal. Then he saw a hummingbird walk the air by the vines; Matt was close enough to touch the tiny piece of fire but it showed no fear.

The garden, the little garden! Edith loved it, but they'd lost the furniture, and now they'd lose the house and the garden. They'd move into some lousy two-room flat in Hog Bottom by the river, and Edith would miss her garden, and the kid would have no place in which to play, and—

Matt jumped to his feet and went back into the house. The truckmen had gone, leaving the house a wreck. Little Matt's toys were still scattered in the living room, and Edith's gay blue curtains hung at the windows, but the carpets, lamps, tables, radio, couch, everything was gone. It was a graveyard, and Matt felt like a ghost haunting the spot where he'd once been so happy.

He decided to get out, to go downtown, any place to be out of here. He wrote Edith a note and pinned it above the kitchen sink:

*"Babe, it all looks hellish, but we'll win out yet. Remember, Babe, we love each other, and have the finest kid in the U. S. A. I've gone downtown, there's a job at the clock factory. Lots of love, my game little sweetheart. Matt."*

It was a lie about the clock factory, but Edith would need something cheerful when she got back and saw this miserable wreck of her home.

4. *Art for Art's Sake: An Interlude.*

This Thursday morning the weekend was beginning at the Jes-

sup estate in the hills above Danford, and would last till Tuesday, because there was so much time to be killed.

Mrs. Jessup was a foggy, chronic cultist, and her weekend guests reflected like a prism the changing colors of her faiths. This month, a fat Diana on the chase, she was pursuing the mysterious lions and rabbits of Art. At a literary tea she had captured a "modern" poet. He sat with her on a plush divan in the living room, a babyface with a beard, a pale fat youth bursting through British tweeds. He was nervous, and mopped his forehead, round and bald as a melon.

Three stiff cocktails had not yet relaxed Hart Pringle, poet of France and Metuchen, N. J. He always suffered in the presence of the rich, for he wanted the rich to like him, and "lend" him money. He had already had three patrons, but they were fickle as cats, and he needed one badly now, he must get back to Paris, or die.

Art flourished only under the patronage of the rich, but how could one blurt out, "For Art's sake, lend me a thousand dollars, Mrs. Jessup!" One must first charm, orate, hypnotize, one must spin the literarious hoopla. But it made the poet nervous.

His hands twitched, he fixed his necktie and belt, and his bulging blue eyes roved the enormous room.

"I like your place, Mrs. Jessup," he pronounced with a slight foreign drawl. "It has majesty."

This was a lie. The living room was an esthetic atrocity. More than \$100,000 had been spent on its furnishings, but it was an architect's nightmare, a bad disease, the gaudy urinal of an assignation house for emperor's wives. But Mr. Pringle did not say so; the bourgeois poet is possessed of his own wisdom.

"It has majesty, and the magic of the material object. I belong to a new esthetic school in Paris, Mrs. Jessup, and we are exploring the inwardness of the object. We no longer scoff at the Babbitts, the businessmen. That was the shallow mood of the twenties. We recognize them as fellow-creators working with the magic of the object. Jean Cocteau, and so on," he ended rather feebly.

"Really!" Mrs. Jessup murmured, heaving her breasts. "I'm so glad to hear it. I wish you would read me one of your poems."

This was the cue he had been waiting for. He fished some manuscript from his breast pocket, blushed slightly like a fat virgin in a hayloft, coughed, blew his nose, then commenced to read:

#### O DAY OF CONCRETE PEACE

*It is your dead mouth singing  
With an open gas range  
Beneath for a pillow.*

*Puss—puss—she doesn't know  
Her seat from her elbow.*

*Search, search for them  
In the insomnia of forgotten gutters  
In the river beds interrupted by the silent rubbish heaps.*

*Sell that fabulous tool.  
Bestial boy, flower of tall stature.  
He falls upon me with unbelievable brutality.  
Angel, do not fall so hard  
Upon me.*

*And you, Lord Jesus, afford me grace  
You hoist me, draw me to the right  
Angle of your pointed knees,  
O day of concrete peace.*

The poet trailed off in the pathos of diminuendo, and mopped his pale, melon forehead. Mrs. Jessup had been listening with half-shut eyes, in a sort of trance, and now she whispered:

"It's beautiful! I love symbolism, don't you? It all reminds me of a Yogi prayer. Please read me another poem, Mr. Pringle."

The poet jittered, he twitched with the impulse to blurt out, "lend me a thousand dollars," but restrained himself. He read the poem that had won a prix in the "important" Paris magazine, *New Review*, the opus named "Static and 5 Bananas." Hurrah! he was progressing toward a "loan."

#### 5. They Seem To Be Everywhere!

A young couple had wandered into Olneyville, the workers' quarter of Danford. The girl wore a dusty khaki blouse knotted with a flaming red kerchief, and had bare legs and wild bobbed hair. The youth was tall and sunburned, and wore a red sweater and

khaki breeches. They were obviously hitch-hikers just off the road. They explored Elm Street, and found a little frame house painted a battleship gray. A store occupied the ground floor. On its window was pasted in gold letters:

ANTON JUSAITIS  
Merchant Tailor For Ladies and Gents  
Cleaning and Repairing  
A Specialty

They entered and blinked in the dark. "Hello," said a pleasant voice, and the tailor rose from his sewing machine, and leaned over the counter on his elbows. He was a hunchback in a greasy old vest and tailor's apron, with a pale, strong face, high cheekbones and widest eyes. "What can I do for you?" he asked.

"Comrade Jusaitis?"

"Yes."

"Glad to meet you," said the youth in khaki. "My name is Leo Bloom. This is Comrade Ray Miller. We're from the Young Communist League in New York, and we've been assigned to do unemployment work here."

"Vell, vell," said the tailor, his eyes flashing with a remarkable gleam of interest. "Come sit down." He admitted them back of the counter, brought chairs and cigarettes.

He studied the couple, and they studied him. Then he said: "But you are so young! The bureau said they would send an experienced organizer." The girl sprang up and said belligerently: "You ought to be ashamed of yourself, comrade. Since when is youth a handicap in the movement?"

The tailor patted her knee apologetically. "Don't yump down my throat, comrade. You vill find I am no enemy of youth. In fact, I am glad they sent youth representatives from New York. Ve are mouldy here, our party, ve need young blood."

"What's been done so far in the unemployed work?" asked Leo, in a harsh, business-like voice.

The tailor's face grew mournful, his fine eyes darkened.

"Nothing," he confessed. "Ve must build from the beginning. It is a factory city of 100,000, and there are about 30 communists. I am the most active. If I were not physically handicapped, I would do more but as it is, I try to drive the others. It is almost hopeless. Less than 20 come to the meetings, and of them less than 10 speak English. This is the tragedy of our movement today; so few speak or think in English."

"It will change," said Leo.

"Yes, it vill change," said the tailor. "But there are twenty-thousand unemployed, and nothing happens. There is the peace of a slaughterhouse, where no animal revolts. It is disgraceful."

"It will change," said Leo.

"Yes," said the tailor. "But I have become a pessimist. Vot great times ve are living in! The whole world is rushing like an express train to a new land. The Revolution is here! If I died tomorrow, I would be still be glad to see vot I have seen. Ve are living in a vunderful century of beginnings. I, a little tailor, am the comrade of Lenin, Stalin and Gorky! I know all this, yet I am a pessimist. Because I am living in this dead city of Danford where the express train of revolution never stops! It is a local station!"

"Piffle!" said the boy severely. "You talk like an intellectual! There are no local stations in the revolution. Listen, Comrade, I'd like to get started in the work. I think I'll take a walk about the town, and look things over. Where can we sleep tonight? We have four dollars."

"Vell," said the tailor, stroking his chin, "you could stay here, ve have an extra bed. But I must varn you, my wife is good voman, but bourgeois. It vill be necessary to lie to her. You are Chevs, yes?"

"Yes."

"I am Lithuanian, and I vill tell her you are my cousin's children from Detroit. My wife is Polish, so she vill not know the difference. You do not mind, hey? It is all for the cause, yes, Comrades?"

"Yes," they grinned, following him up the stairs to his flat above the store.

"Remember! you are Lithuanians!"

#### 6. Mr. Jessup's Little Coup.

Matt Burke had been moping for hours in the Thompson cafeteria. He had loafed on the street corners with other idle men; he had gloomed in the park. There was nothing to do; he had no plans; he sat in the cafeteria with a hundred other melancholy



job hunters, heard cups and saucers rattle, dishwashers bang and steam, cash registers ring, the counterman bawl to the cook.

Misery in a bright modern cafeteria. Then Matt saw a familiar figure shuffle in from the street. It was Johnny Potts, who had worked a punch press in the mill where Matt had been a machinist.

Johnny was a sort of good natured clown; everyone used to kid him around the mill. Rawboned as an ox, he blundered between the chairs toward Matt, waving a newspaper.

"Hi, Red, did you hear the great news?"

"What news?"

A fat elated grin spread on Johnny's face.

"Jessup Mill to hire 2,000 men," he chanted like a newsboy.

Matt's heart beat fast.

"Let's see that paper! Jesus! Let's go!"

"Like hell!" Johnny grinned. "I want a cup of chicory first."

6 *Poverty is a Crime.*

The mills lay along the river, in a dike of red buildings glowing in the sun. Smokestacks pointed like tall cannon at the sky. Cranes, locomotives, bridges sprouted; nature had taken new powerful forms. Against this backdrop extended an enormous stage of swamp acres and rubbishy lots.

Matt Burke and Johnny Potts jumped off the streetcar and raced with fifty other men down the block to the mills. They could see that something was wrong. When a mill was hiring, everything was orderly at the gates.

But now there was a stampede. Yellow straw hats bobbed up and down on a dark crazy sea of men, a low rumble of voices rose and fell. There was a sinister confusion.

"What's wrong here, Buddy?" Matt asked a glum young giant on the fringes of the mass.

"They ain't hiring," said the youth in overalls, spitting a load of disgust and tobacco juice. "I hiked thirty miles from Walden, and it's all crap."

Johnny waved his arms. "It's in the paper," he said, importantly, "and it must be true."

"Nuts!" the other sneered. "It was in our lousy sheet, too."

"Come on, Matt," rumbled the big redfaced ox. "Let's get up to the gate, and find out for ourselves."

He plowed with his ox shoulders through the heaving human ocean. Matt followed his trail. Back and forth, like blood to a mighty heart, pumped two streams of men, one flowing toward the gate, the other returning. "No jobs today! no job!" voices muttered, but each newcomer, like Johnny wanted to see for himself.

In the roar, men were planted stolidly, and smoked pipes, spat and talked. Matt heard snatches of conversation.

"I been out a year! Russia! Wisht I was single! They took my Ford! What this country needs! The kids died! A million dollars! Never saw the like! Capone! Hoover!"

Old Larkin was in the crowd, staring like a blind man, and Ed Adams who used to play on the factory baseball team with Matt.

He heard a tall plumbblue Negro in overalls say mournfully to a Swede: "It ain't Christian, and something's bound to happen."

Matt and Johnny waded through the sticky gumbo of humanity and at last reached the barbed wire fence surrounding the mill. Here a surprise met them. Sam Coffee, the pegleg old guard of many years, was not at the gate. Instead, there was a squad of state troopers, bulking young athletes in battle uniform of khaki, with big automatics strapped to their hips.

Johnny pushed his way up to the barbed wire fence, waved his hands, and shouted importantly, "Hey there!"

The file of cops looked at him coldly. They said nothing. One redheaded trooper fidgeted with his gun, another spat, another pushed back his sombrero and wiped his sweaty face.

"Hey there!" Johnny yelled, "why don't you guys answer a man? Let us in the hiring offices! What's the matter here, anyway?"

Someone yanked Johnny by the sleeve, and whispered, "for cripe's sake, don't get 'em mad, or they'll sap yuh. They beat up a bunch of guys already." But Johnny felt virtuous and indignant and bawled, "Hey there, hey there!"

Then the sandy haired trooper, muscled like a tiger under his uniform, detached himself from the squad and came softly through the gate. He shouldered through the mob to Johnny, and regarded him for a moment. Then without haste or apparent bitterness, he knocked Johnny down with an expert's left jab and right swing to the jaw. Johnny was dazed, but scrambled to his feet, a comical grimace of fear and astonishment on his honest face. "Hey," he bawled, holding his jaw. The crowd muttered as the trooper lifted his fist for another sock at Johnny. An old man took the corncob from his face and said mildly and clearly: "That ain't fair, officer." The cop whirled and grabbed this old man and shook him by the collar so that his glasses fell from his nose. "Don't hit that old man," yelled a stumpy Italian in overalls. This seemed to release the crowd, for everyone in the vicinity growled and muttered: "Hey, don't hit that old man!"

Suddenly the other cops swarmed out, punching, slapping, pushing, kicking, worrying like terriers in a ratpit the panicky flesh nearest them. The crowd tried to retreat, but there was pushing from the rear, everyone in back wanted to come closer to see what the excitement was about. And so the "Riot" began.

The cops swung their blackjacks at every skull. Men fell into the weeds of the mucky plain. Men howled like trapped lions. Men tripped on old auto tires and rusty flywheels.

From behind a toolhouse a cop dragged a firehose and aimed it at the crowd. Bang! the iron water exploded, knocking men down like nine-pins. The crowd boomed and retreated, but the water followed them relentlessly, until someone threw a brick at the cop, and struck his cheek. He dropped the hose and tried to staunch his blood with a handkerchief. Then he came cursing through the gate swinging his blackjack like a maniac.

He chased a skinny boy in overalls into the barbed wire fence, and socked him there. The boy was caught in the wire and could not release himself. Someone punched the cop and he whipped out his automatic and chased the man. The boy was left hanging on the fence, tearing at the wire with bloody hands, and whimpering hysterically.

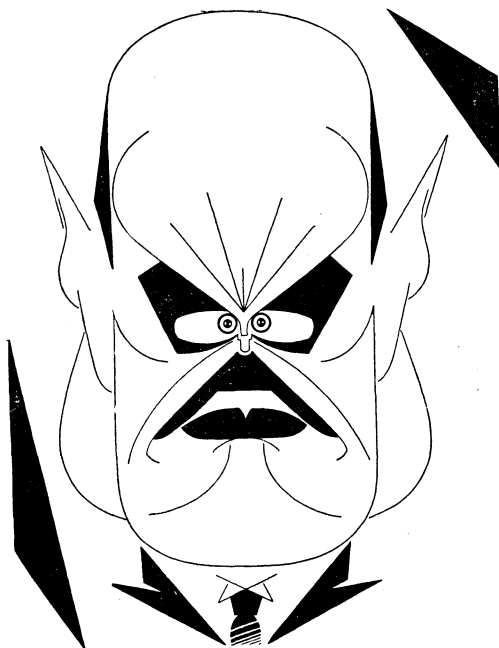
Matt started to push out of the whole sickening mess, he wanted to go home. But then he saw Johnny being chased by two sweaty pop-eyed cops. Johnny tripped and fell, and the cops battered his face and skull with blackjacks as he lay helpless. They kicked his ribs and trampled his face.

It was too much. Matt forgot everything, went completely insane. He tore into the cops with both fists swinging like hammers. And then the blackjacks rose and fell on his face and skull, but he felt no pain, and went on fighting until he was down.

A cop fired three shots, the crowd scattered like deer, everything was suddenly still. Matt and Johnny were dragged inside the fence as prisoners. It was a dream.

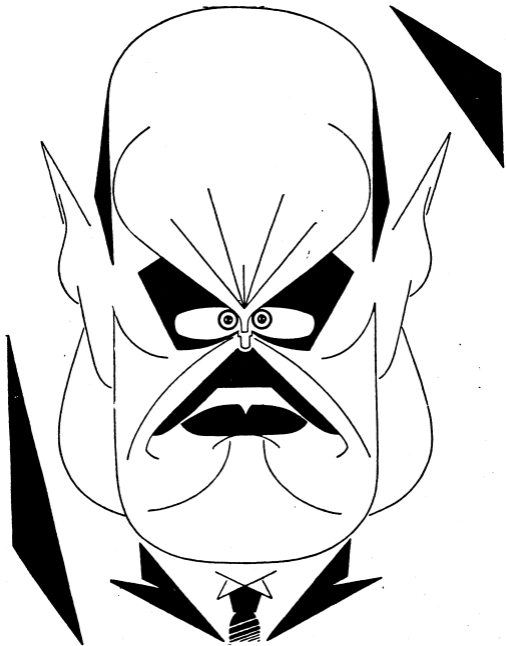
Johnny held a handkerchief to his gored face, and was moaning, "Look, Matt, what they done to me: I sweated twenty years in that mill, and this is what I get!"

The gates were shut, but the crowd came swarming back. Why? They knew it was all a lie, there were no jobs today, but they were held by a magnet. Ten more arrests were made before sunset. Ambulances were called; lacerated heads were sewed up, the boy on the barbwire was bandaged. But the crowd would not leave.



MUSSOLINI—FASCIST

Theodore Scheel



*Theodore Scheel*

**MUSSOLINI—FASCIST**



Herb Kruckman

"GET THAT GODAMNED CAMERA OUTA HERE!"

And nobody in authority could explain. Nor could anyone in the crowd have explained why he persisted on this dangerous battlefield. Crowds are ruled by instincts surely as mysterious as those of the bees. This crowd knew it had been cheated.

No, Mr. Jessup's stock market coup had not gone off too smoothly.

#### 8. All Rivers Pour Into The Sea.

Then nightbirds sang, and moon and stars glittered. The dark old American hills looked down at the factories, and crickets buzzed. Dew fell on the fields of freshly reaped timothy and clover. This fragrance moved on a southwest wind among the Fords on Main Street. A lonely seaman trying to sleep in Pershing Park felt his guts rumble with hunger, and sniffed the dewy clover and wished he could die.

A group of drunken salesmen mourned in a speakeasy over the death of business. Not even the wise bartender could understand what had happened to America, but one of the salesmen blamed it all on prohibition.

On that street an old coal miner begged for a nickel from a young garage mechanic walking with his girl, and was given it. Panhandlers always approached men with girls, the beaux were ashamed not to seem generous.

A churchbell rang. A mother sliced a loaf of bread and gave each of her children two slices. Out near the old Fort a young iceman was making love in the grass to one of the mill girls. This July night was spacious and wonderful with all its stars.

Mr. Jessup sat in his living room in a great Morris chair. His heart was heavy, the "riot" had upset him. He wished it had not happened. He looked out and saw the moonlight play in his elms and willows, he smelled the far-flung perfume of clover. Why was there so much strife and misunderstanding in the world? He wiped his glasses carefully and picked up his book again, and began to read. Mr. Jessup was an old-fashioned lover of Marcus Aurelius and turned to him for comfort in the troubled hours of his own life.

Night. In the cellar of the Danford police station the worn-out bulbs cast a morbid light. The fifteen jobless men arrested in the "riot" were locked up in adjoining cages. A man snored. A drunken window smasher screamed down the concrete tier: "Gimme a drink, for Christ's sake, somebody!" A boy of seventeen, a petty thief, quietly sobbed for his mother, and the usual maniac sang hymns to the hellfire god. And the open buckets of ordure and piss stank, and the air was a month old. There are many prisons in America, this was only one of the insignificant hells.

Matt Burke and Johnny Potts were in the same cell. Johnny monotonously groaned: "After twenty years in their goddamned mill—" but Matt turned on him at last, irritated, and said: "Christ sake, Johnny, I want to hear what that Jew is saying."

Leo Bloom the young Communist had stumbled into the "riot"

in his ramble around the city. He had been arrested, too. Now he was bottled up with five other men, and was busy, arguing, agitating. The men in the other cells clutched at the bars and listened, their bandaged heads and pale faces gleaming like gardenias in Mr. Jessup's conservatory.

The cops had given Leo a black eye. It beat like a watch with pain, but he held a wet handkerchief to the lumps, and talked. The boy was really happy. Six hours in Danford and his work already begun.

"Form an unemployment council! Get together! Organize for power!"

He lectured to them like an earnest pedant, he pronounced for them the magic Communist words that will unlock the prison doors of the world.

"One jobless man is nobody; he's a bum, they beat him up, they throw him in jail, and he can do nothing. See what happened today; they lied to us, they printed a deliberate lie, and then beat us up and arrested us, and we've got no comeback. Why? Because we're not organized. We are individuals. But a million jobless men organized into a big union could ask for their rights, and get them, too. Organization is the way out."

"Razzberries!" sneered a pickpocket three cells down.

"Shut up!" yelled the other jobless prisoners, "we want to hear him." Leo was the youngest there, but had established a curious authority. The men were confused and depressed by their misfortune. None of them had ever been arrested before, and suffered from the pitiful respectability that afflicts the American worker. But Leo seemed so confident, and energetic and knew exactly what to do. He persuaded the warden to let the men telephone their wives; he gave the men courage and outlined their defense for the trial.

In the morning they were fetched before a sleepy old baldheaded real estate man smelling of gin. He was the justice of the peace. Leo made a speech for all the defendants. It irritated the judge, but he fined the men only \$2.00 each, and lectured them pompously in bad grammar on the familiar theme of morality and patriotism.

The Lithuanian tailor appeared to pay Leo's fine. He and Leo's girl had wandered half the night looking for him. Leo kissed his sweetheart gayly when they came down the courthouse steps.

"I made twelve good contacts in there," he boasted like a happy pup. "I got their names, addresses, everything, Anton. They promised to help organize a council. This town is ripe for organization, Anton, everyone is sore. This Jessup trick was the last straw. I made a fine beginning in there. I'm going to pull a protest meeting tonight in Pershing Park."

"Yes, yes," the tailor smiled, affectionately, "it's a fine beginning. Mr. Jessup has given us a fine start. But tell me, how in the world did you manage to get yourself arrested so soon? Vot enterprise, vot strategy! I had to live here five years before I vuz arrested!"

The sky was blue, the Fords rushed down Main Street. The jobless men sat in Pershing Park and envied the pigeons. Another day began, full of space and sun, the cornfields growing, the world moving through tragedy, error and blood to its wonderful fate, to Communism.

## FRONT PAGE

*A pair of steel gray eyes  
With the hate of hell in them  
Directed the fire of an automatic:  
Six shots barked, six shots sunk  
Into the back, the heart of a striker.*

*A pair of blue myopic eyes  
With the fear of hell in them  
Directed an odorous pen that wrote:  
"Plot to overthrow government frustrated"—  
For the front page of a daily newspaper.*

JIM WATERS



*Herb Kruckman*

*Herb Kruckman*

*"GET THAT GODAMNED CAMERA OUTA HERE!"*



INVADING GRAFTERS' PARADISE

William Gropper

Gropper

**MOE BRAGIN****FARM SKETCHES — From Kansas to Oregon***Kansas—*

Sunday, and the various wooden churches that resemble farm buildings are full of the lowing sounds of rain prayers. This town is in the northern fringe of the Bible belt. Evidences everywhere: "Read Acts 2:38" splashed like white dung on the wayside stones; posters announcing apostolic meetings like caterpillar traps on trees; fiery signs, "Where are you going to spend Eternity?" planted appropriately at dangerous turns and crossings. Worshipers file into the streets. Most of them are farm folk, humped like cows just served, full of God, exhortations, explanations. "Man's extremity is God's opportunity."

The chief topic of conversation under the blazing sky in dust rising like hellsmoke is the drouth. One old farmer, unable to sleep nights, stays out in the coveyard with his hands raised like a beggar's for the first drop of rain. A hundred miles south they've been having 1.9 inches of rain: east 1.2 inches. The grasshoppers are heading toward this valley. Nothing can stop them but a wet spell. They ate up the oak pole and whiffletrees of a wagon in one place, in another harness off horses, the feathers off flocks of turkeys. You got to put chains on your car to keep from skidding into a ditch as you crush these devil's legions on the roads. All they leave is stones and stubble. Farmers were seen going out to the burnt pastures with shotguns to put their starving stock out of misery; others were selling teams they could no longer afford to grain at five dollars a pair. On the sharp rock of fact rise spires of fancy consecrated to these overworked people's self-pity and human desire at unbearable moments for martyrdom. Evening along the horizon swollen clouds with a rod of lightning playing in them.

Prayers are finally answered. A terrific storm, deafening bellows of wind, big balls of hail. When the anxious farmers rise in the morning, they find crops crushed, fields as if a giant bull had been on a rampage. Sunday, and again these hollow folks clamorous in their holy sheds.

*Louisiana—*

We are down "in the everglades, bayous and cooling shades, flowers and sweet maids all so divine" as the song goes distributed by the New Orleans Association of Commerce. It fails to mention the unprofitable crops, the endless miles of deserted plantations, the stinking shacks of Negroes like mussel shells along the roads, laborers creeping early mornings to work in the fields fourteen hours a day for eighty five cents, farmers flocking to jobs on the roads for a dollar and a half in the broiling sun. We learn this from storekeeper Barras, formerly farmer, in the parish of Terrebone.

Potatoes are good but farmers are letting anybody dig them for next to nothing. Even Red Creole, a fine onion, never affected by the heat, sells for so little it's hardly worth picking. Corn is good but can't be sold. All they do is feed it chickens and mules. Niggers and whites been keeping their heads above water by gathering moss off the oaks. Manufacturers use it for stuffing autoseats, couches, chairs. Three cents a bag for the gray and four cents for the black in the old days. Now there's only one grade; you got to buy your own bag and all for one cent. Two farmers worked two weeks and made four dollars forty cents.

"I read in the paper times is bad up north but it can't be so bad. It can't be so bad as in Louisiana."

In a parish further west old man Chauvin keeps a refreshment stand at a bend in the road. Born in Louisiana. Started working on his own hook when he was thirteen with a capital of five dollars. During the war when sugar was as high as twenty five cents a pound, he was the owner of several plantations. After the war sugar fell: he lost everything. Just a week ago a daughter with her husband and two children went off with a suitcase. God knows where, but not here in Louisiana anymore to slave. If he was young, he'd get out quicker than it takes to snap a finger. In the middle of his puff of helplessness in walks a sturdy youngster, the Benjamin of his old age, hams tight as a small drum, pompons of fists, and squats to listen.

Says Chauvin wiping sweat, "I'm going to bring him up to a business. No farming, God, no. If you work for a day's wages, you'll die with a day's wages. It's only by business you get anywhere. But not here for him, not in Louisiana."

*Arizona—*

Only the sheepman keeps his peace. He smokes a pipe with a bowl like a hazel nut and listens to the four excited talkers. The most formidable the ruptured German in the carpet slippers who owns a filling station in this Arizona mesa town. He speaks with the authority of one who's seen men and cities: Berlin, Valparaiso, Hongkong, New York: who's tried his hand at farming, managing a Woolworth store, prospecting for gold, etc. He quotes Dunn and Bradstreet, scoffs at Hoover and the moratorium, shows why the Hearst and the communist analyses of the situation in his old home are almost identical. He tells of a town further north where lots of gas is used for irrigation and tractor farming. "The farmers owe White Eagle, Conoco, and Standard Oil one hundred fifty thousand dollars. They may pay it when prosperity comes back. Prosperity! Was there ever much prosperity for the farmers and workers here? Maybe a benevolent despot would make things better in this wild ox of a country. Well, I'm sixty five, worked hard all my life, got a few cents. Let the windt blow."

The politician in white, full blooded, so that he resembles a showy Wyandotte rooster is convinced that the democrats in power would help the country out of the chuck hole. He's been county recorder, also accountant in the revenue department during Cleveland's and Wilson's administrations. He owns a number of farms in the Salt River valley where the renters are having a tough time with cotton. His size up of the situation shows that the three chief factors responsible for the depression are the republicans, woman suffrage and the railroads. The republicans with their farm board haven't enough sense to carry guts to a bear, the women have been influenced by the preachers. Once he asked a preacher, "What would you rather be—a studhorse or a preacher?" "Preacher, of course." "Yes, because the season's longer." And the railroads are just skinning knives on the farmer. It costs twelve dollars a bale to freight cotton to New Bedford by rail. From Alexandria, Egypt, it costs only a dollar. Those damn skimmers! And if you try sending it to the west coast and then by boat, the railroads'll manage to jack it up high enough it ain't worth turning that way. Let the younger generation worry. I've done my share."

The crumpled up old man whose sons raise Herfords on a desert ranch nearby, fidgets for his chance. "At least this depression has set us thinking."

"Thinking!" snorts the impetuous eastern lad, once a farmhand. "That's just the damn trouble. Two of you shrugging your shoulders, 'The hell with it, I've done all I can.' You haven't. The other consoling himself with 'thinking'. Next election the silly rubes will flock the same way. What we need is action, not the action of the Nebraska farmers who rushed with clubs in their rage against the grasshoppers. We need clubs against a two-legged plague."

"There's truth in what you say, my boy: when they go out with drum and fife, the rest of us most often tail behind. But we're doing something we never done before. We're thinking."

The sheepman listens, perhaps the most American of them all, his arms dangling with their fine harness of veins. He smokes his drowsy pipe and says nothing.

*Oregon—*

About a day's ride east of Portland the hills round the old Oregon Trail are burly, covered with yellow blouses of wheat. Further on, hands and horses busy about smoking threshers. Straw stacks assume the appearance of loaves of torn bread.

The shabby farmhouses are lost among the hills, many of them like worn dice flung carelessly, fiercely into the dust, tilted so one

is uncertain in which direction they will finally fall. We stop for a drink of water. Children in tattered clothing, barefooted, pop like pocket gophers thru the hole of a door. The thin mother is going to have another child; her belly sticks out like a beak. The farmer obligingly limps to the rusty pump. The well is low. The sweaty man heaves hard.

Most of the wheat here is the western variety, soft. Thirty cents a bushel for it. Yessir, it costs a mile more than fifty to grow and harvest it. None of them is getting rich or been long's he can remember. No rain to speak of for weeks. Lucky anyway. Lots of places it's far worse. Up near the Columbia River they ain't had a good salmon catch for two years. Thousands of men without work. In the fruit region cherries was fine, then along came a rain and split them all. Heard that in Idaho the beans is big pods with nothing in them and the potatoes is beginning to sprout because of no let up in the heat. We're lucky, Christ Almighty. In the middle west plagues of grasshoppers. Sure, we got them but they bother potatoes a bit once in a while when your patch is near grassland.

"No bread lines here like up north. Considerin' things we're lucky." The gaunt farmer stands with one paw on the sick pump from which wriggles a worm of bitter water.

Wyoming—

Casper, Wyoming. Also waiting to use the toilet in this cheap boarding house is Edward Smith, a big farm lad from the western part of the state. Talk over a couple of bottles of homebrewed beer that tastes like sour dough.

Ten years ago the Smiths left Indiana. They bought a ranch, Edward found work as a hand at seventy five a month, they picked up a few holsteins and shorthorns. Six years they worked damned hard, paid off on their mortgage, bred horses, separated cream, raised hogs and steers, grew wheat and alfalfa.

"Pa becomes sick from working. Wheat slides down to thirty seven a bushel. Cream drops from fifty three to eighteen cents. Boars two cents a pound, sows maybe a half cent more, feeder pigs six when they was two and three times that much. Steers six cents. You go to the butcher and he soaks you twenty. The drouth sails along. We used to raise from forty to fifty bushel the acre wheat; now we're lucky to get five. Even that ain't hardly fit to cut for hay 'cause it's short as doghair. Alfalfa's so dry you can't get a shirttail full. Horses, broomtails, used to sell for fifty, is now two or three dollars a piece; good milkers dropped to from thirty to fifty; they run in the good days from ninety to about a hundred fifty. I don't know what the country's coming to. She's an awful fright. We got to sell out, I'm thinking."

He makes a face. It's not the beer this time.

"Pasture's burnt. Nothing to feed the stock. The rich ranchers send their herds by freight to Kansas and Nebraska for grass. Some suckers is buying straw stacks that was worth five dollars a while ago and paying seventy five. They sell like hot cakes. Least the cattle won't starve. Hands is working around only for board and after haying told to git the hell out. Uncle, Cousin, and me's been looking for work anywhere anysides the Mississippi. Left my kid brother to tend the chores . . ."

He breathes heavily and moves his massive shoulders.

"I ain't had much education but there's my sister finishing up her high school and I thought of sending her to summer school for to study for a teacher. Board in town costs money. Don't know what to do."

He mumbles, "She's a fright. The country, she's an awful fright," and stares blankly at the helpless hawks of his hands.

Iowa—

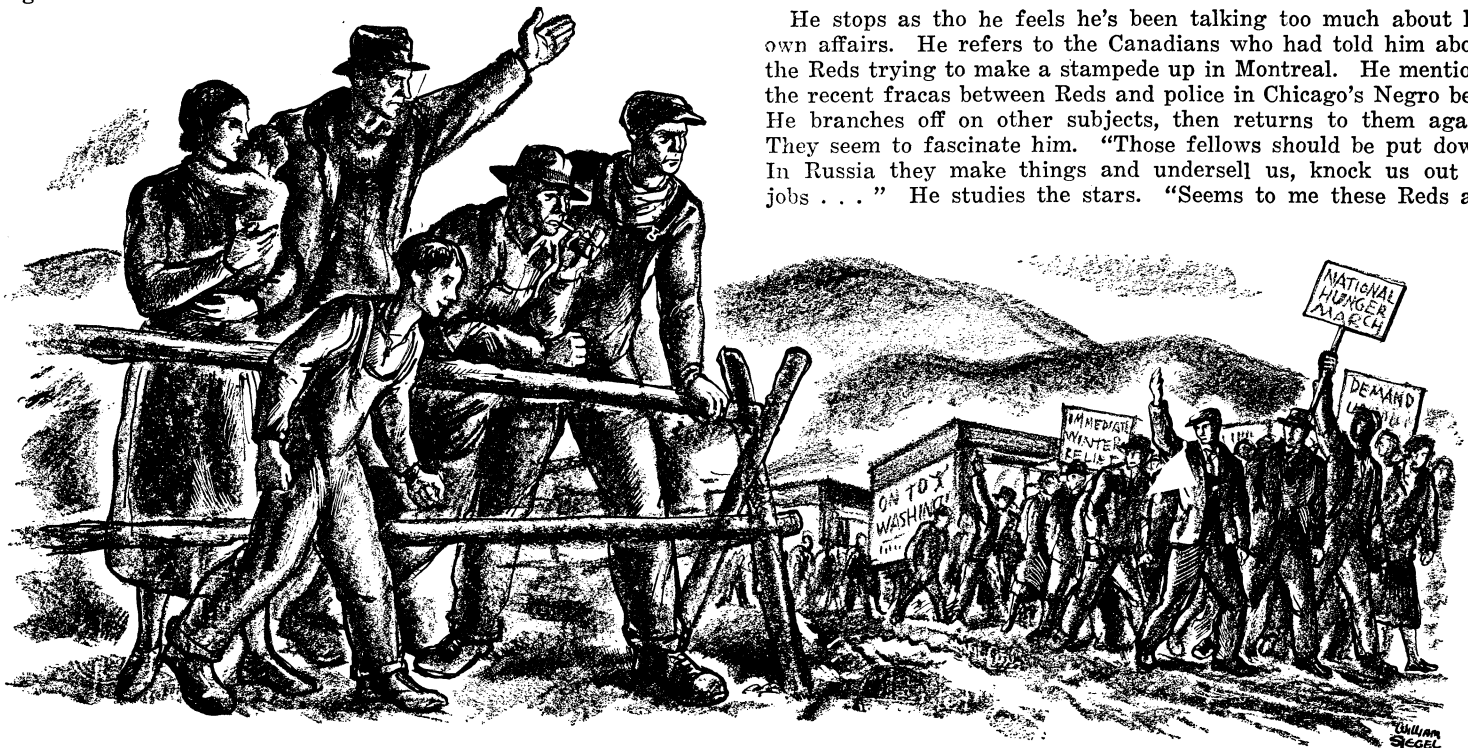
He's a watchman in the tourist camp of a midwestern city. A slight, soft-spoken, middle-aged fellow with uneasy downy hands like mullein leaves. As the lights go out in the stalls occupied by the tourists, he repeats he's darn sorry he had not listened to his old father, a South Dakota homesteader. His customary mildness seems to have vanished tonight.

"So I had to run to the city and get myself a hundred odd jobs. Last in the hogkill in a packing house. A while it wasn't bad. Then the efficiency experts come in; soon you was working three times as hard, and no more money. A young snot, the new boss, had it in for all of us. They owed me fifty dollars overtime when they sacked me; they'll never pay me that. I'm over forty. The insurance companies makes the packing houses fire the older fellows. There's more risk with them. Just a month before my eight years was up and I was to get my two weeks' vacation with pay, they give me my walking papers . . ."

The organ tuner and exserviceman, who had taught in a Methodist college right after the war, puffs at his cigar. He looks at him, lying in the grass, and says: "You got to take it as it comes." The lad from out New York leans against the bench and spits. "Bastards."

"It's tough with a wife and two children. I was out of work six months until I found this. It's going to be bearcat for many this winter. On the farm there's drouth and grasshoppers: hogs and corn is cheap as dirt. But brother he's made a few cents with his coffee mill of the old thresher. And this winter they got at least the house against the cold, they got their potatoes, their flour and pork, they got their milk."

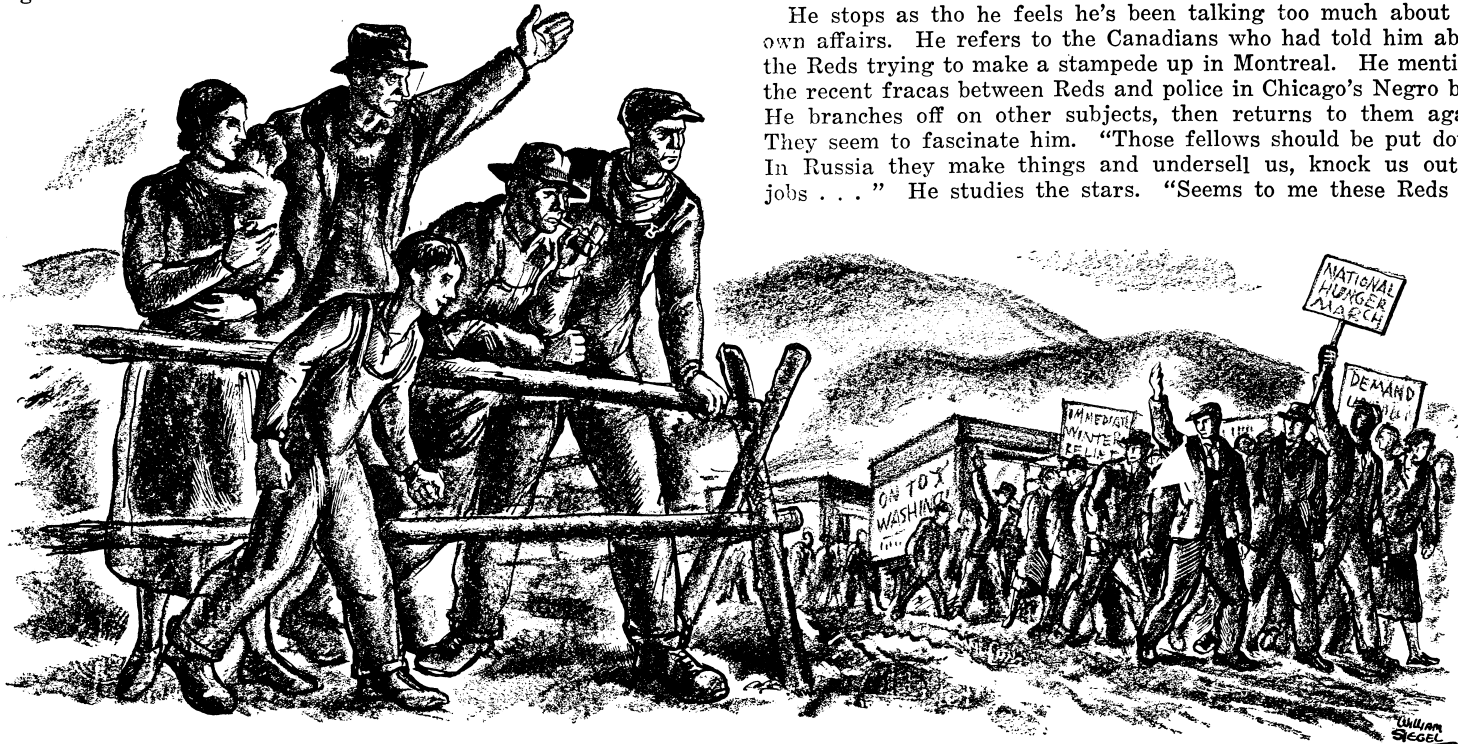
He stops as tho he feels he's been talking too much about his own affairs. He refers to the Canadians who had told him about the Reds trying to make a stampede up in Montreal. He mentions the recent fracas between Reds and police in Chicago's Negro belt. He branches off on other subjects, then returns to them again. They seem to fascinate him. "Those fellows should be put down. In Russia they make things and undersell us, knock us out of jobs . . ." He studies the stars. "Seems to me these Reds are



"TELL 'EM ABOUT US FARMERS . . . !"

William Siegel

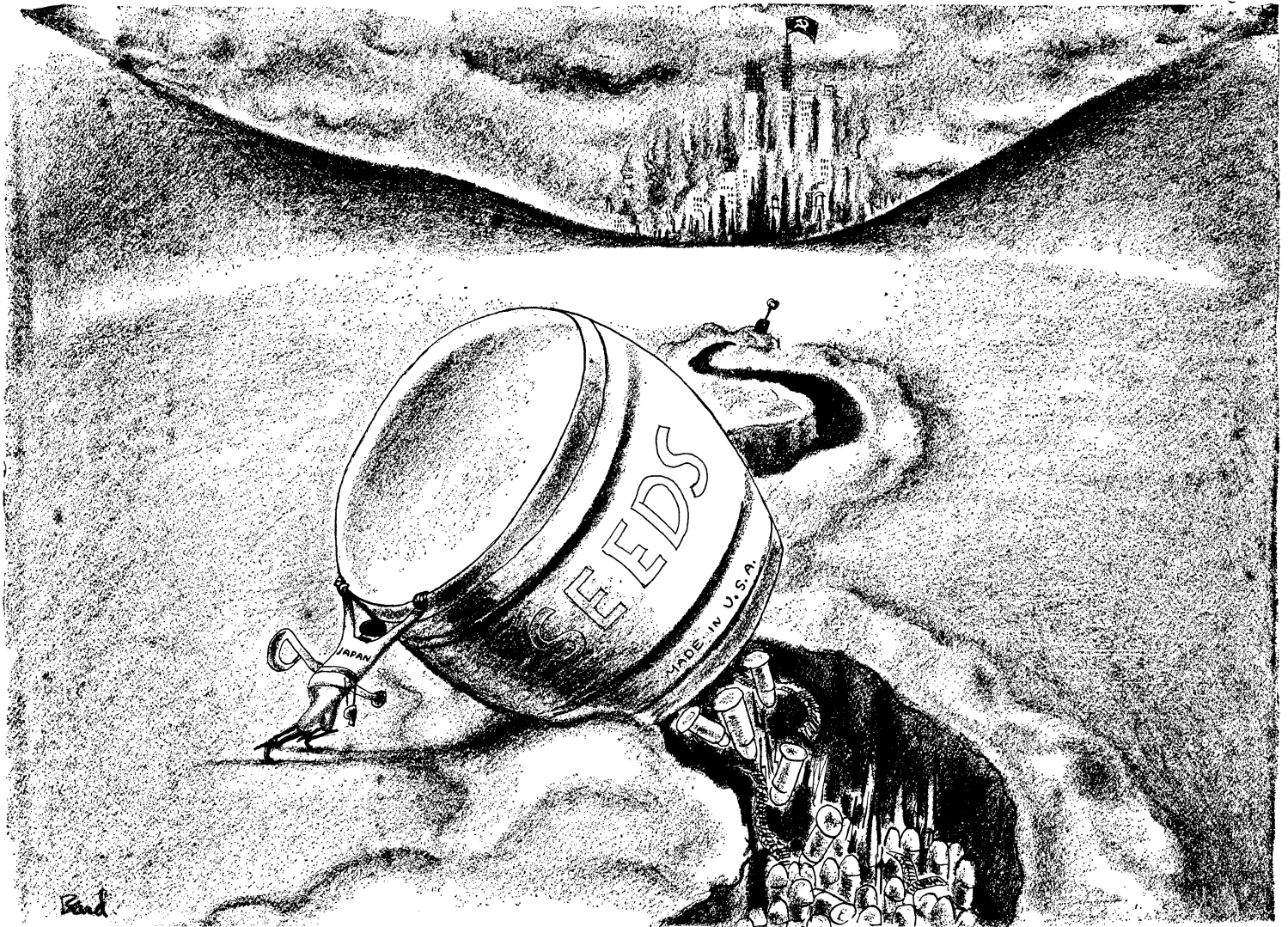
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"TELL 'EM ABOUT US FARMERS . . . !"

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TO MAKE THE FLOWERS BLOOM IN THE SPRING

Phil Bard

News Item: "Japan's present actions are explained as preparations for an attack on Soviet Russia in the Spring."

kind of like weeds. If none is around, you don't do much cultivating. Makes the corn grow better."

Midnight. The organ tuner follows his lighted cigar like another Star of Bethlehem to his stall.

The watchman sits up now and glances at the sole occupant of the bench. He has sensed all evening in that hotheaded lad a more than sympathetic listener. He blurts out furiously, "My wife and kids won't starve. In October this job's finished. If I don't get work, I'll beg. If I can't beg, I'll steal."

Thru the other's mind flashes what old John Healy, New York farmhand and toper, once told him. "In this country we're mostly rubes. City and farm rubes. Us rubes is like some mares. You can knock the devil out of us with a whip and we'll follow the lines. Start fooling round with our bellies and it'll come we'll kick God and the stars out of the sky." Unspeakable rubes, a spoiled, childish, overearnest people which flocks to schoolhouses that look like churches, churches barns where husky preachers in trying times turn to the mow of heaven.

The pod of silence is broken. The watchman cries, "A fellow gets hungry. Can you blame them, those Reds? Even an American fellow gets desperate."

"Who blames him? If you're not boiling mad these days, you're not true American." Then later, stumbling in the dawn towards bed, the anxious question: When, oh when, will us rubes strike out?

## OUR MARCH

by Vladimir Mayakovsky

English verse by Joseph Freeman

*Beat on the street the march of rebellion,  
Sweeping over the heads of the proud;  
We, the flood of a second deluge,  
Shall wash the world like a bursting cloud.*

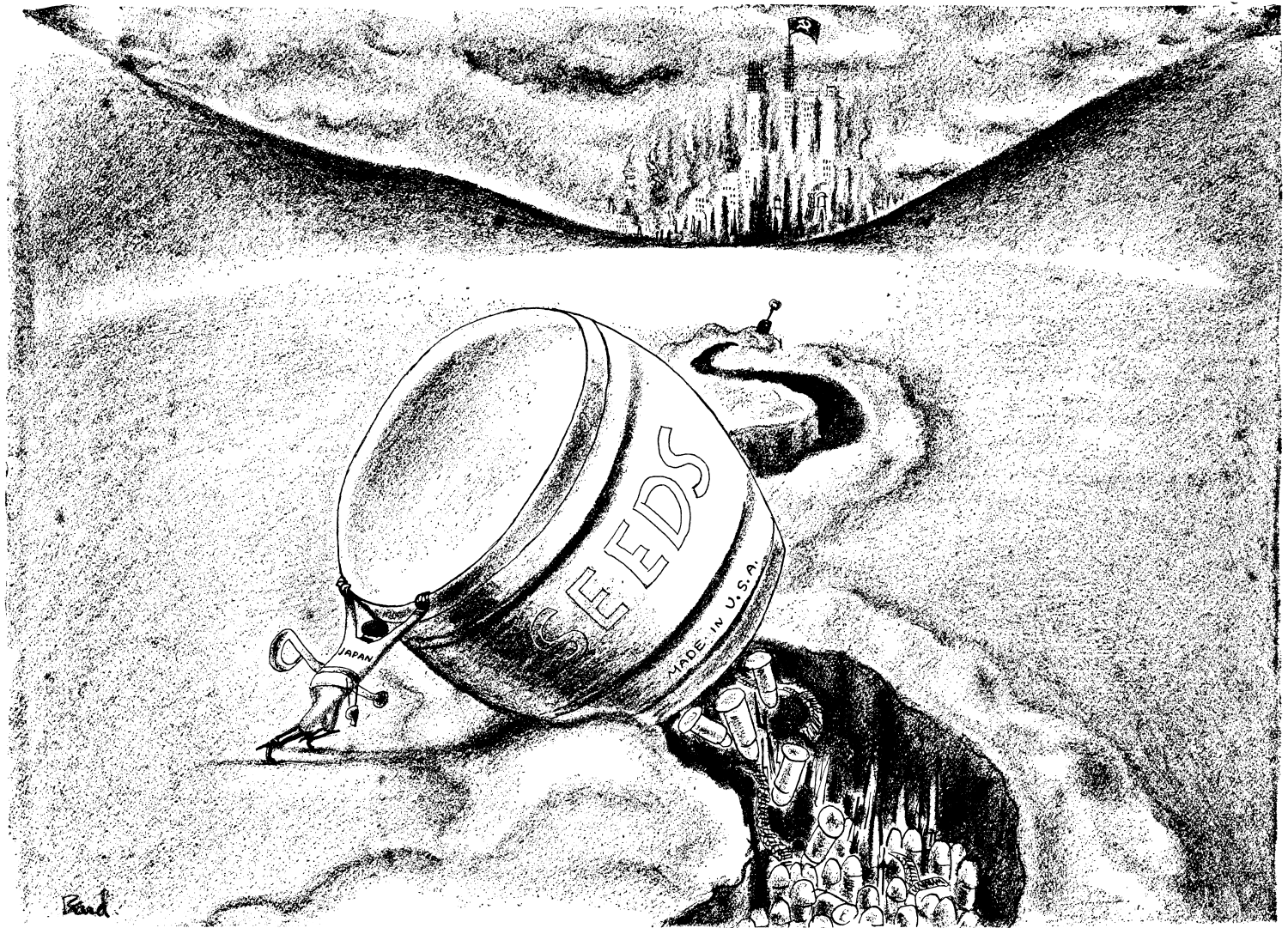
*Days are a bright steed;  
Years drag glum;  
Our great god is Speed,  
Our heart a bellowing drum!*

*What is richer than our colors?  
Can we be caught by the bullet's sting?  
For rifles and bayonets we have ballads;  
Our gold is our voices' ring!*

*Green meadows grow,  
Days burst by—  
Rainbow, curve your bow!  
Hurrying horses, fly!*

*See the stars in heaven above us,  
Without their help our songs will thrive:  
Ho! the Great Bear is demanding  
We be lifted to heaven alive!*

*Sing! Drink sweet!  
Our veins throb with Spring!  
Beat, heart, beat!  
Breast of brass, ring!*



TO MAKE THE FLOWERS BLOOM IN THE SPRING

Phil Bard

News Item: "Japan's present actions are explained as preparations for an attack on Soviet Russia in the Spring."

## JOE HILL and other Sketches of 1919

A young Swede named Hillstrom went to sea, got himself calloused hands on sailingships and tramps, learned English in the focastle of the steamers that make the run from Stockholm to Hull, dreamed the Swede's dream of the west;

When he got to America they gave him a job polishing cuspidors in a Bowery saloon.

He moved west to Chicago and worked in a machinshop.

He moved west and followed the harvest, hung around employment agencies, paid out many a dollar for a job in a construction camp, walked out many a mile when the grub was too bum, or the boss too tough, or too many bugs in the bunkhouse;

read Marx and the I.W.W. preamble and dreamed about forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

He was in California for the S.P. strike (*Casey Jones, two locomotives, Casey Jones*), used to play the concertina outside the bunkhouse door, after supper, evenings, (*Longhaired preachers come out every night*), had a knack for setting rebel words to tunes, (*And the union makes us strong*).

Along the coast in cookshacks, flophouses, jungles, wobblies, hoboos, bindlestiffs began singing Joe Hill's songs. They sang 'em in the county jails of the State of Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, Idaho, in the bullpens in Montana and Arizona, sang 'em in Walla Walla, San Quentin and Leavenworth,

forming the structure of the new society within the jails of the old.

At Bingham, Utah, Joe Hill organized the workers of the Utah Construction Company in the One Big Union, won a new wagescale, shorter hours, better grub. (The angel Moroni didn't like labororganizers any better than the Southern Pacific did.)

The angel Moroni moved the hearts of the Mormons to decide it was Joe Hill shot a grocer named Morrison. The Swedish consul and President Wilson tried to get him a new trial but the angel Moroni moved the hearts of the supreme court of the State of Utah to sustain the verdict of guilty. He was in jail a year, went on making up songs. In November 1915 he was stood up against the wall in the jail yard in Salt Lake City.

"Don't mourne for me organize," was the last word he sent out to the workingclass of the I. W. W. Joe Hill stood up against the wall of the jail yard, looked into the muzzles of the guns and gave the word to fire.

They put him in a black suit, put a stiff collar around his neck and a bow tie, shipped him to Chicago for a bangup funeral, and photographed his handsome stony mask staring into the future.

The first of May they scattered his ashes to the wind.

aren't you coming to the anarchist picnic there's going to be an anarchist picnic sure you've got to come to the anarchist picnic this afternoon it was way out at Garches in a kind of park it took a long time to get out there we were late there were youngsters and young girls with glasses and old men with their whiskers and long white zits and everybody wore black ties some had taken off their shoes and stockings and were wandering around in the long grass a young man with a black artist tie was reading a poem. Voila said a voice c'est plutot le geste proletaire it was a nice afternoon we sat on the grass and looked around le geste proletaire

But God damn it they've got all the machineguns in the world all the printingpresses linotypes ticker-ribbon curling irons plushorses Ritz and we you I barehands a few songs not very good songs plutot le geste proletaire

Les bourgeois a la lanterne nom de dieu et l'humanite la futurite la lutte des classes Linepiuable angoisse des foules la misere du travailleur tu sais mon vieux sans blague

it was chilly early summer gloaming among the eighteenth-centuryshaped trees when we started home I sat on the imperiale of the third class car with the daughter of the Libertaine (that's Patrick Henry ours after all give me or death) a fine girl her father she said never let her go out alone never let her see any young men it was like being in a convent she wanted liberty fraternity equality and a young man to take her out in the tunnels the coalgas made us cough and she wanted L'Amerique la vie le theatre le feev o'clock le smoking le foxtrot she was a nice girl we sat side by side on the roof of the car and looked at the banlieue de Paris a desert of little gingerbread brick maisonettes flattening out under the broad gloom of evening she and I tu sais mon ami but what kind of goddam management is this?

four hours we casuals pile up scrapiron in the flatcars and four hours we drag the scrapiron off the flatcars and pile it on the side of the track KEEP THE BOYS FIT TO GO HOME is the slogan of the Y.M.C.A. in the morning the shadows of the poplars point west and in the afternoon they point out east where Persia is the jagged bits of old iron cut into our hands through the canvas gloves a kind of grey slagdust plugs our noses and ears stings eyes four hunkies a couple of wops a bohunk dagoes guineas two little dark guys with blue chins nobody can talk to

spare parts no outfit wanted to use

mashed mudguards busted springs old spades and shovels entrenching tools twisted hospital cots a mountain of nuts and bolts of all sizes four million miles of barbedwire chickenwire rabbitfence acres of tin roofing square miles of parked trucks long parades of locomotives strung along the yellow rails of the sidings

KEEP THE BOYS FIT TO GO up in the office the grumpy sergeants doing the paperwork dont know where home is lost our outfits our service records our aluminum numberplates no spika de Engliss no entiendo comprend pas no capisco nyeh panimayoo

day after day the shadows of the poplars point west northwest north northeast east when they always heads south the corporal said Pretty tough but if he aint got a soivce record how can we make out his discharge KEEP OUR BOYS FIT for whathehell the war's over the peace is over

spare parts no outfit wanted to use.



"ROOSHIAN REDS"—KENTUCKY

Walter Quirt



**"ROOSHIAN REDS"—KENTUCKY**

*Walter Quirt*

**JACK CONROY**

# PAVING GANG — On a Job in Missouri

The paving gang crept along as slow as Time—as a mountain glacier grinding its way toward the sea. The concrete base ahead of us was dotted with piles of sand, the cushion for the bricks. Gangs of workers attacked the sand with shovels and it swished as they spread it fanwise. Two men pulled a template that extended from curb to curb, smoothing the bed to a uniform thickness. Then came the bricksetters, back and forth, swiftly laying the paving blocks in rows across the street. Three Negroes and two white men, bending from the waist, reaching for the bricks carried from the parking on each side. A streak of yellowed grass showed where the bricks had pressed. Plucky weeds rose up slowly, their spirit uncrushed by the bowing down, but they were pale and blanched like a man trying to walk erect after a prison sentence. I felt like the weeds when I straightened my aching back with a quick jerk at the end of my rows. It was monotonous and grueling work—three rows across, an alternate half brick to break the joints. Click! Click! we butted the bricks together. The tongs clanged as they dropped their burden, often enough on our heels. Mostly we were lost in bitter silence, but sometimes the Negroes sang softly.

Heat waves blurred the sand piles ahead; behind us a smoking tar kettle warmed the stifling air. Ed carried coal scuttles full of smoking hot asphalt and poured it in the cracks between the rows. His shoe soles had collected a six inch layer of tar. But his worst job was cutting the stuff in chunks. In winter asphalt splits like stovewood—it “*crriicckks!*” ahead of the ax as a ripe watermelon does before a sharp knife. Now it was like molasses, and cutting it was as exasperating as trying to hew a hole in water and expecting it to stay. Ed pulled on the ax handle and swore weakly. He was drenched with sweat; and in the morning his clothing would be stiff with white salt rings. He started to walk across a pile that had melted and spread out and his feet gummed like those of a fly on Tanglefoot. Some of the bystanders roared when Ed sat down involuntarily and the seat of his pants stuck, too. But it's not so funny when you're hot enough to have a queer ringing in your ears and the core of your head is like fire.

“Steamboat” Mose was our pace setter. The boss paid him five cents an hour extra to speed us up. He was a huge, raw-boned Negro of 60 or so. “More brick!” he'd holler lustily, “Ain't had a brick today!” If the boss happened to stray away, however, he'd soon dry up. He wasn't as anxious as he sounded. He sucked grimly at an empty hickory pipe and emitted a short grunt as he set each brick. Working behind him, I noticed that his shoe soles were worn through and his brown toes were whetted pink on the bottoms by sand and gravel. He wore a heavy winter undershirt. “The sweat wets it and it keeps you cooler than a light one,” he explained to me. That's what he said, but I suspected he wore the heavy one because he had no other.

The houses were set closer together as the blocks unreeled. Yards disappeared, and trim umbrella catalpas and syringa bushes were seen no more. As we entered the district of shops, merchants and idle clerks came forth to watch us. The storekeepers folded arms over bulging paunches beneath white aprons and leaned against door jambs or hung from awning ropes.

We envied the cool looking storekeepers. It would have seemed a luxury to be able to stand erect even in the blazing sun. To sit in the shade for a minute would have been a glorious boon. At the end of our rows we straightened as quickly as we could to ease the sharp pain in our spines. But sometimes we crossed and began the next rows before we could unkink ourselves. Women in crisp frocks trundled pink infants in paramulators. They eyed us curiously and somewhat apprehensively as though they were afraid we'd rape them. Roving dogs came along and sniffed at us interrogatively, wondering what the crazy men were up to—going around like a blind mule on a treadmill. They curled derisive tails and trotted jauntily away in search of amusement or food.

“How do they stand it?” inquired one business man of another

across the street. “I'm all a-lather just settin' under the' electric fan!”

“Aw, they're *used* to it. It don't hurt *them* same as it would you or me. That kind of work is good for a man when you're *used* to it.”

(“I'd like to see *you* stooping over, red in the face, puffing like a steamboat, your belly folding into huge, hairy ridges, bursting the seams in the seat of your pants!” I thought savagely.)

We were a varied lot. Most of us prodigals driven back to the native bailiwick because some Eastern gentlemen had taken a fall on another street, and had decided to let us scratch for ourselves a while. The factories had spewed us out; we had wandered the city over in a daze; haunted breadlines; concrete was our bed and pillow for a time. Police, rounding up “undesirables,” harried us to the city limits, and Ed and I had made it back to the little midwest town where we were born. Those who had never left for the lotus lands of the East resented the invasion of the homing wanderers.

“They'll hire an out of town man every time,” the regulars complained.

I had set brick before, but it had been years ago. The pace of “Steamboat” Mose never slackened.

“For Christ's sake, slow down,” I whispered over his shoulder. I didn't want the boss to hear. “Are we running a race with one another? Job'll be finished soon enough as it is.”

Mose was getting along in years. But brick setting was his job, and it pleased him to know he could still make us young fellows beg for mercy. He remembered when bricks were laid on the sand without concrete underneath. Then nothing heavier than beer wagons drawn by massive-hooved Perchons taxed the paving. Victorias hitched to high-stepping thoroughbreds were the mode of the aristocracy. Proud of his craft, he chuckled, and the bricks clicked faster.

I fancied I could hear the segments of my backbone creaking; my wrists had swollen and my fingers puffed up till my knuckles were dimples. But I had to keep on. I grew conscious of the foreman's accusing eyes. I was fumbling the bricks, finding it hard to lay them straight and true. “You handle them brick like a cub bear does a roastin' ear!” the foreman broke in caustically. “Mose is way ahead of you when you ain't holdin' him back. Shake that thing, and show me what you can do.”

I got to thinking of a cool, dim warehouse where I'd worked, and of a lumber yard fragrant with resin where a man could hide under a pile of pine and blow for a spell. The sun puts funny ideas in a man's head. I thought how if the carrier chanced to drop a load on your outstretched hand, groping while you were keeping your eye on the row, your fingers would blossom on the ends like unfolding roses and the nails turn from white to red to blue. The back of my head ticked like a clock. Cold shivers ran over me and goose pimples sprang out. Spots rose before my eyes, floated languidly away, and burst like pricked bubbles against buildings and sidewalks. I was thirsty but my stomach was sick from drinking so much of the tepid, brackish water. When I bent over I could hear a sloshing inside me. The boss said a man couldn't drink ice water and work in the hot sun, and besides ice cost money. Even a prize fighter has to have a respite now and then. My buckskin mitts were worn out at the thumb, and the crystal sand clinging to the bricks ate into the flesh. I began to tape my thumb and to pull myself together.

“Water!” I hollered in a croaking voice. The cry was caught up and hurled down the line:

*“Water jack! Ought to been here  
And half way back!”*

The water boy came hurrying with a pail of lukewarm water. Two rusty tin cups were wired to the side. I seized one eagerly: even the scalding liquid would assuage thirst a little. The water seemed to boil in my throat as it descended.

“Hey! *That's* the nigger's cup! You got the wrong cup!” shouted the horrified water boy.



Mitchel Siporin '32

*THE MODERN VALKYRIE: Fascism hovers over the field of battle on which are Mussolini, Gandhi, Hitler, Pilsudski, Hoover and others. The unlovely "Socialist" sirens, Kautsky and Hillquit call to the gullible.*

"What of it?" I asked, more fluently now that a furrow had been cut through the sand and dust.

"Damned if I'd drink after one of the black baboons," muttered a proud Nordic clad in a ragged sweater and patched overalls. I noticed that several flakes of smoking tobacco, pinch hitting for "chawin'" adhered to his pendulous lower lip and fluttered into the pail, gyrating to the bottom and staining the water with amber. And often I heard the men before drinking cautiously inquiring which was the "niggers' cup."

Mose began slowing down one afternoon. His motion seemed to be as deliberate as one of the "slow" movies. The boss noticed it and hurled some witticism at him, but it was no use. At the end of the rows, Mose staggered blindly but doggedly to the other side to begin anew. But once he stumbled and struck his head against the curbing. The men gathered about him more in curiosity than sympathy. He lay there, a tired and forlorn figure, a tiny blue vein pulsing rhythmically on his forehead.

"A blue gum nigger," exclaimed one of the workers. "By Jesus, boys, if that bastard was to bite you, it'd be the same as if a rattlesnake had! Poison as hell!" He probed beneath Mose's gaping lips with an inquisitive forefinger, but, evidently fearing the imaginative virus, drew quickly back.

Well, it was only an old nigger played out. That was the way it seemed to the boss and the others. But here was also the death of a life and the setting of a sun.

"He'll be no good at this job no more," grumbled the foreman, "Never no good once they get over het." He gave another Negro, a young one, Mose's mitts, and the crew moved slowly forward.

When scarlet and yellow leaves began drifting down into the sand we could see the end of our job about a half mile ahead. We

had passed through the town and into the open country beyond. Ed's asphalt split readily now, but he had trouble keeping the tar from cooling too quickly in the buckets. Our fingers were frost nipped on the ends, and we had to bundle up so that the free swinging of our bodies burst seams in all our garments. Ours was a cruel and undesirable lot, but the prospect of unemployment was more terrifying still.

Snow spat insolently in our faces the day of the final payoff. Great blobs of it clung to everything. The street was opened for traffic and we couldn't move spry enough with our stiffened muscles and the drivers honked at us indignantly.

"Yeah!" shouted an indignant boomer beside me. "We're no good on this street now. The tough part is done and only the good part left. I've sucked the hind tit all my life, by God, making it light on somebody else. I got a wife and three kids with their butts hangin' out in a bresh arbor out hych in the grove. What the hell'm I gonna do with'm now with winteh comin' on?"

I couldn't tell him. I walked silently beside him, the damp snow beginning to crunch a little underfoot. A squirrel barked defiantly from the fork of one of the giant elms that arched the roadway. The boomer stooped and picked upon a small stone to cast at the saucy animal. It popped back in its hole, but thrust its head out to chatter afresh.

"That critter," mused the rover wistfully, "he has got a warm hole in that air tree, and likely a raft of nuts stashed away fer th' winteh; but look at me . . ."

"The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests . . ." I began oratorically.

But he had read the Scriptures, too. "An' this son of a bitch hath no place to lay his goddamn haid," he added ruefully.



*THE MODERN VALKYRIE: Fascism hovers over the field of battle on which are Mussolini, Gandhi, Hitler, Pilsudski, Hoover and others. The unlovely "Socialist" sirens, Kautsky and Hillquit call to the gullible.*

*Mitchel Siporin*

# PAINTING AND POLITICS

## The Case of Diego Rivera

Removed from the sunlight and altitude of Mexico City, the canvasses and frescoes in Diego Rivera's current exhibition reveal their strength and weakness more clearly than in their native surroundings. The awkwardness of the painter's draughtsmanship and composition stand out; the eternal *bambino* of his canvasses, their monotonous repetition of colors and lack of imagination bore the spectator. From the frescoes alone is it possible to realize the artist's power and to understand why he occupies a unique place among modern painters.

The exhibition contains only a few copies of Rivera's frescos, by no means the best; yet even from these it is obvious that his reputation is due not to his craftsmanship, but to his themes. The frescos live primarily with the mirrored power of the Mexican revolution. His easel-paintings, dull in their imitation of the French moderns or else too small to hold the swollen stereotypes of his Indian children, are interesting chiefly as the gropings of an artist who found his real strength in those vast caricatures in color which reflect the armed struggle of social classes. And though these magnificent cartoons are intellectual, remote and devoid of feeling, the artist's detached serenity cannot diminish the power of the story they tell. In this sense, the Mexican worker and peon have done more for Diego Rivera than he has done for them. They furnished him the content which justifies his crude form; they infused purpose and meaning into the hand that progressed from Picasso to Zapata, from Zapata to Lenin, only to falter at a critical moment, to desert the new-found line, and to plunge back into the sterility of middle-class concepts.

In our day it is no longer necessary to "prove" that art is an integral part of the life of society, hence reflects economic changes, social conflicts and political tendencies. The storms of the epoch of fascism and revolution have blown the ivory tower to pieces. Poets and painters in every country are openly alligning themselves with the various political camps. Under the pressure of the economic crisis, those who yesterday maintained that art was above the battle today scribble on debts and reparations, and those who two years ago barricaded themselves behind their canvasses have switched their talk from El Greco and Paul Klee to their patrons who have been ruined in the stock market.

These things are not new to Diego Rivera. He learned long ago that no artist lives in a vacuum. The Mexican revolution taught him that in the struggle of social classes even to be "impartial" is to take sides. His evolution as a painter has been marked by error and miscalculation; it cannot, however, be said to have been "unconscious"; for here we have an artist who plays politics while he paints, and devises theoretical arguments to explain and justify both activities.

But even without these theories, Rivera's political evolution is recorded in his canvasses and frescos. The selection now on exhibition reveals three distinct stages: the period before the artist was influenced by the revolution, a period in which he lived in Europe and painted in both academic and modernistic manner; the period when he returned to Mexico, entered the revolutionary struggle and drew his inspiration from it; and the present period, when he has abandoned the revolutionary movement and turned to painting for the bourgeoisie. In these changes the artist symbolizes the Mexican middle-class from which he comes and which also moved from revolution to counter-revolution in the past decade. Indeed, it was on the question of middle-class leadership of the Mexican revolution that Rivera was expelled from the Communist Party in which he occupied a unique and anomalous position.

This position was due to a large extent to the unusual place which painting holds in Mexico. In this semi-tropical colony of the American empire, where the bulk of the population is Indian and illiterate, the painters are intellectuals whose role is analogous to that of writers in other countries. The Indian cannot be reached by the printed word; he can be reached by color and design. His daily surroundings are decorated by beautiful objects wrought by his own hands. He may have no land and no shoes, but his miserable hovel has its colored serapes, potteries, tapestries, wood-carvings, lacquered chests and trays, done in the form and

spirit of the days before the Spaniards came. With this cultural basis, not unlike that of Mediaeval Europe, the painter occupies a position less like that of Matisse in Paris and more like that of Giotto in Florence. He is the high-priest of native aesthetics, and in the absence of a literary caste with the power to sway multitudes, becomes a national figure whose opinions on social and political questions carry weight.

Yet this position of the artist is itself a product of the revolution. Under the dictatorship of Porfirio Diaz and the landowners, the upper classes and the artists in their pay completely disregarded the workers and peasants of Mexico. The latter by their toil supplied the money with which the landowners sought pleasure and culture in the capitals of Europe; and their painters reflected this parasitic life by imitating the painters of France and Spain, filling their canvasses with Parisian ballet dancers and Sevillian ladies. It was only when the Mexican workers and peasants entered the political arena, with rifles in their hands, that their images began to fill the canvasses and frescos of Mexican painters.

Rivera was not in Mexico during the armed revolution. He had been sent to study art in Europe on a scholarship granted by the Diaz regime. There he imitated the styles and themes of his French contemporaries. There was nothing to distinguish his work from that of a hundred other talented art students. He had not yet found anything new to say or an original way of saying it, and could not find it until he returned to Mexico. When he did return, he faced a new world. Under the presidency of General Alvaro Obregon, the Mexican bourgeoisie entrenched itself in power. The old landowners had been replaced by a new class of landowners, consisting chiefly of military leaders. But there remained the traditions of the workers and peasants revolution, to which even the military chiefs had to give lip service. There was a rapidly developing national consciousness which in politics expressed itself in a struggle against American imperialism, and in culture in a return to native themes and art-forms; and there was a growing awareness on the part of the workers and peasants that the revolution had transferred power to a class whose interests were inimical to the interests of the masses. This awareness expressed itself in the growth of the trade unions and the peasant organizations and in a swing toward the Communist Party. More nearly related to his own work, Rivera found the Painter's Syndicate which included the finest talents in the country, and which was under the influence of the Communist Party. Eventually, some of its most gifted members, like Siqueiros and Xavier Guerrero, abandoned painting for politics altogether until recently. Under these conditions, it was natural for Rivera to adopt the course he did. On the one hand, the government, which followed a policy of conciliating all classes, and of "safeguarding" the "fruits" of the revolution, engaged Rivera, Orozco, Siqueiros and other painters to do the immense frescos which cover the four walls facing the patio of the Secretariat of Education; on the other, many of these painters, Rivera included, became members of the Communist Party.

Rivera's development as an original painter begins with his revolutionary frescos. The desire to return to this form has been prevalent some time in Europe and the United States, partly due to the desire of painters to play a more important social role, and partly to their search among primitive and mediaeval forms for values which the decay of bourgeois culture is unable to give them. Social and climatic conditions made Mexico the ideal place for a revival of the fresco. Its technical success was assured by semi-tropical sunlight and the clear, dry air of the capital, almost eight thousand feet above sea-level. But more important was the fact that new ideas and concepts filled the Mexican mind, and a new tradition and purpose had been hammered out by the Mexican masses. The revival of this mediaeval form did not depend on imitating the themes of Masaccio and Michelangelo, or attempting to give a spurious grandeur to the sordid pursuit of money by the bourgeoisie. The revolution was genuinely heroic; the surging of the workers and peasants across the plains of Mexico in the struggle for "land and liberty" had an epic quality indispensable to frescos.



Rivera now had both the form and the theme. The stupendous frescos in the Secretariat live with the power of the Mexican masses. Here the brown bodies of Mexican weavers, naked to the waist, bend over primitive looms; the natives of Tehuantepec dye cloth with the purple extracted from Pacific coast shells while the women balance on their heads colored trays heavy with mangoes, bananas and pineapples. An armed mine guard searches a coal miner coming out of the coal pit, his head drooping from exhaustion; peons bend under the weight of grain sacks, carefully watched by the manager of the hacienda who fingers his cartridge belt. On another hacienda they are cutting the cords of a peon who has just been whipped. A peasant and worker embrace under verses by the Mexican poet Gutierrez Cruz: "Disinherited of field and city, united in struggle and pain. . ." The bodies of workers glow red in the glare of molten steel. Other panels show the distribution of land. Brown-faced peasants in white shirts and blue overalls, carry bright red banners, surrounding the heroes of the agrarian revolution, Zapata and Felipe Carillo. Elsewhere there appear the Soviet five-pointed star, the hammer and sickle. The worker and peasant appear either as victims of oppression or as heroes engaged in a struggle for liberation; the bourgeois, Mexican and American alike, is savagely caricatured in his greed, cruelty, and decadence. The revolution had found an artist, and the artist had found the revolution. But the revolution could go on without the artist. Whether the artist could go on without the revolution remained to be seen.

The test came in 1929. At that time Rivera was famous as a revolutionary artist. In Mexico he was also known as a member of the central committee of the Communist Party. As such he participated in the formulation of crucial decisions. The government at that time consisted of petit-bourgeois reformers who had flirted with Communism. President Portes Gil was accustomed, as governor of Tamaulipas, to hand out portraits of Lenin to the peasants who visited him. Marte Gomez, Minister of Agriculture, and de Negri, Minister of Industry, Commerce and Labor, both expressed sympathies with communism which had a considerable following among the workers and peasants. In the spring of that year a revolt headed by General Escobar attempted to restore the power of the church and the old landowners. The Communist Party not only aided the government in suppressing this revolt, but in some cases victory was chiefly due to the workers and peasants under communist leadership. In Vera Cruz it was a force of armed peasants, carrying red banners with the hammer and sickle, that defeated the counter-revolutionary troops. The government found communist assistance useful as long as it was threatened by the Escobar revolt; but the moment that revolt was crushed, it initiated a policy of disarming the peasants and suppressing the Communist Party. Militant workers and peasants were arrested in various parts of the country, their organizations were disrupted, and several communists were assassinated. In the State of Durango supporters of the government assassinated Jose Guadalupe Rodriguez, agrarian leader and state organizer for the Workers' and Peasants' Bloc, and in Puebla they arrested Jesus Garcia, head of the state organization of the Bloc.

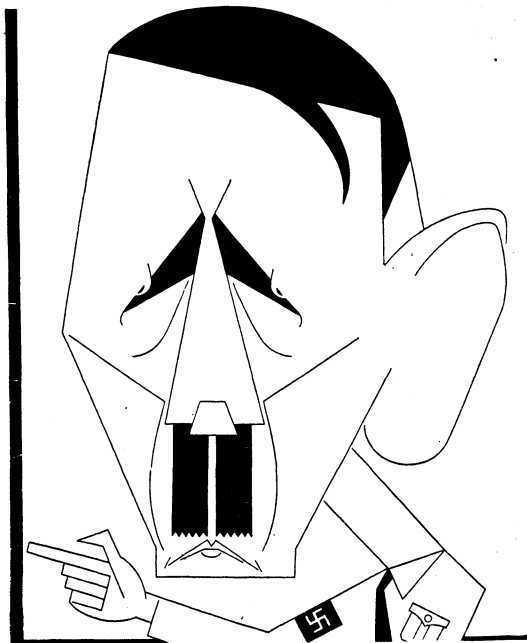
The head of the Bloc was Diego Rivera. He was the object of violent political attacks. Terrones Benitez, governor of Durango, denounced him as a traitor to the republic and a bad painter. Rivera replied to these charges in a letter published in *El Universal*, August 10, 1929, in which he defended the artistic merits of his frescos, and declared that for three months he had been inactive politically with the permission of the Party because of ill health and his professional duties. The duties involved the painting of a vast fresco on one of the walls of the National Palace. It was to depict the history of Mexico from the Aztecs to the present time, and the original design culminated in a figure of a woman, symbolizing Mexico, holding to her heart an armed worker and an armed peasant.

The government's campaign of terror against revolutionary organizations con-

tinued. In August thugs hired by landowners in Potrero Alamo, State of Nuevo Leon, murdered the local chairman of the Workers' and Peasants' Bloc. The police of the State of Durango invaded the State of Coahuila and in the city of Torreon arrested and kidnapped two organizers of the International Labor Defence. In Mexico City, the government confiscated the Party organ *El Machete*, the organ of the communist trade unions *Defensa Proletaria*, the organ of the Workers' and Peasants' Bloc *Bandera Roja*, and the organ of the Young Communist League *Spartak*. A number of Communists were arrested. In the State of Coahuila the governor ordered the disarmament of all communists and leftwing peasants. In September the government ordered the state governors to send arrested communists to the penal colony of Islas Marias where the worst criminals are kept. Catholic rebels who had been imprisoned on Islas Marias were released to make room for communists. In the State of Tamaulipas, two peasants active in the Workers' and Peasants' Bloc, Anselmo Guzman and Leon Morales, were hung.

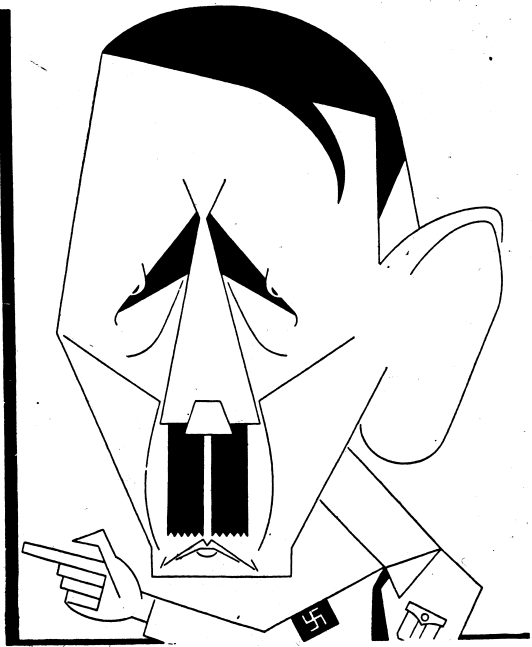
As head of the Workers' and Peasants' Bloc, and member of the central committee of the Communist Party, Rivera had to clarify his attitude toward the government which was persecuting, arresting and murdering his comrades. The Party asked him to protest against the terror. Furthermore, both as a revolutionary politician and a revolutionary painter, he had to take a definite stand on the fundamental questions behind the terror. These questions revolved around the central fact that the Mexican government had taken the road of counter-revolution. It persecuted communists because the Party vigorously called the attention of the workers and peasants to the counter-revolutionary role of the government, and led an organized struggle against it. For one thing, it conducted a fight against the labor code which the government was attempting to put through. It condemned this code as fascist in character, destroying the right to strike, favoring foreign and native capital, establishing compulsory arbitration, and placing the solution of industrial conflicts in the hands of the bourgeois government. The Party further attacked the government's compromises with the clerical and porfirist elements, as exemplified by the pact with the church; its cooperation with American imperialism, represented at that time by Dwight Morrow; its reorganization and rationalization of industry in the interests of native and foreign capital, its agrarian policy which robbed the peasant of his land.

The latter question was of special importance to Diego Rivera both as Communist and painter. His frescos celebrate, above all, the agrarian revolution; the hero of his epic in colors is Zapata. Yet, as a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, Rivera subscribed to a thesis whose line on the agrarian question was opposed to Zapatism. This thesis, adopted in the summer of 1929, pointed out that the outstanding economic facts in Mexico at that time were the intensification of semi-colonial capitalism, the extension of imperialism, the liquidation of the revolution of 1910, and the preparation for a new workers and peasants revolution. The agrarian reform was bankrupt, and the big landowners had triumphed, the Party maintained. The Mexican masses had fought for eighteen years to obtain land only to be betrayed by the government, which now suspended the distribution of land. During those eighteen years the peasants had received only six million out of a total of one hundred and sixty million hectares. Millions of peasants were still without the land to which they were entitled. On the other hand, the old landowners had lost nothing, since they had been compensated for their land. In short, the government's policy had created a class of rich landowners with large estates, and a class of well-to-do middle peasants, while leaving the mass of Mexican peasants poor and without land or without means for working the land. A similar process has taken place in all countries where there has been agrarian reform, such as Poland, Rumania, Lithuania, Esthonia, Czechoslovakia, and so on. Agrarian reform is a piece of demagoguery used to destroy the agrarian revolution; and everywhere its results:



Theodore Scheel

FASCIST HITLER



**FASCIST HITLER**

*Theodore Scheel*

are the same: it leaves the majority of the peasants no land at all, it aids the big landowners, and creates a stratum of rich peasants who become allies of the counter-revolution. The position of the Communist Party was, therefore, that the bankruptcy of agrarian reforms was the bankruptcy of petit bourgeois agrarianism in Mexico which attempted to solve the agrarian problem in a legal manner within the frame-work of capitalism. Despite the Party's attitude, Rivera continued his alliance with Marte Gomez, a leader of this petit-bourgeois agrarian movement.

The Communist Party's attitude toward the Zapata movement may be stated as follows: Direct action by armed peasants for the destruction of the large landed estates was sufficient to compel the dominant classes in the regions menaced by the Zapata movement to make concessions. That is why in the State of Morelos, of which Zapata was a native, thirty-three percent of the land was distributed among twenty-five percent of the peasant families, the highest figure in all Mexico. Nevertheless, this action of the peasants, territorially limited and operating within the frame-work of capitalism, was insufficient to obtain land for all the peasants. Zapatism had great historical importance because it initiated the agrarian revolution and the war for the abolition of feudal agrarian relations. But it was defeated because the time has passed when peasant revolutions are possible without an alliance with the workers. On these premises, the Communist Party urged that the agrarian question could be solved only by a workers and peasants soviet revolution. Painting Zapata as the hero of the Mexican revolution while condemning Zapatism as a social solution, undoubtedly tended to confuse Rivera's conceptions on basic values, both as painter and politician.

In the midst of the Communist Party's struggle against the government and the government's attacks on the Party, Rivera, still a member of the central committee and head of the Workers and Peasants Bloc, accepted a government post as head of the national school of fine arts. In 1928, a year prior to this appointment, Portes Gil had offered Rivera a post in the cabinet as minister of fine arts, but the painter had declined the offer. About a week prior to the appointment, Rivera had defended himself against an attack of Governor Terrones Benitez by saying that his murals had been praised by painters of all cultured countries for their technical skill and, what was more important to him, the proletariat of Europe, the United States and Mexico had recognized him as their painter and had sustained his work.

Now Rivera adopted a different line. To begin with, his action raised the question as to whether a communist ought to accept a post from a government which was jailing, deporting and shooting his comrades. This was a political question, yet, so closely is Rivera's art bound up with politics, that following his appointment marked changes were noticeable in his work and in his attitude toward it. He now abandoned the line upon which he had developed his career; instead of painting the workers and peasants revolution he turned to "national" art. The original design for the mural in the National Palace showing Mexico as a gigantic woman holding a worker and peasant in her arms was altered; for the worker and peasant, no doubt a painful sight to the government officials who pass the mural every day, were substituted harmless natural objects such as grapes and mangoes. Young art students who had been taught by Rivera to paint the life of the Indian masses, were now puzzled to hear him grow enthusiastic about colonial art, the art of the Spanish conquistadores hated by the Indians and beloved by the reactionary and clerical elements. They were further puzzled to hear the master who had taught them that only by working in the Communist Party, in close contact with the masses, could they do great work, now teach that they ought to leave the Party, that the form of art is everything, the theme nothing. Once, during the revolutionary period, the master had issued manifestos attacking studio and easel painting as bourgeois; now he was beginning to sell his talent to Chicago and California millionaires, whose wives he painted in yellow evening gowns with pretty little flowers in the corner of the canvas above his signature.

Rivera was the most striking but by no means the only example of the effect of the social struggle on art. Revolution and counter-revolution in Mexico had split the old Painters Syndicate, now dead as an organization. Orozco was in New York, disgusted with the political corruption of his country; Siqueiros was absorbed in politics; Xavier Guerrero was in Moscow, done with art. Painting was dominated technically by Rivera and the academicians like Montenegro, and ideologically by the counter-revolution. Rivera, who had once served the revolution, now went to Cuer-

navaca to do a commission for Ambassador Morrow, whom the Party of which Rivera was a member was attacking as the representative of American imperialism. He even accepted a commission to paint murals for the Palace of Cortes in Cuernavaca, which, it is reported, Morrow predicted Rivera would accept since he was a Communist only "because he thought a red tie went well with a blue shirt." There were revolutionary artists in Mexico who thought they saw definite marks of decline in Rivera's technical skill as he abandoned his revolutionary faith and with frank cynicism accepted commissions which he despised both as an artist and as a man. But his technical degeneration was no immediate concern of the Communist Party. It had to deal with a political problem of which Rivera's activities as a painter were an expression. The problem was formulated in a resolution adopted by the Party in September 1929 on the expulsion of four members of the Central Committee, one of whom was Rivera, the gist of which was as follows:

The terror in Mexico had been accompanied by an increase of pessimistic, opportunist, and liquidatory tendencies within the Communist Party. This was true not only among certain sections of the rank and file but even in a section of the leadership. Regardless of the different forms in which their liquidatory tendencies expressed themselves, the political basis and general position of Diego Rivera, ex-Senator Monzon, Fritz Bach and Reyes Perez were the same. All four refused to see the radical change which had taken place in the Mexican situation. They refused to admit the organization of the counter-revolutionary regime and the fascist persecution which are part of it by the government. They considered the persecutions of the Communist Party not as a plan of imperialism and bourgeoisie, consciously prepared and systematically practised, but as accidents, as "exceptional cases", independent, not carried out under pressure from the center, and in some cases merely as the caprice of some governor or functionary. Without taking into account the counter-revolutionary character of the government, Rivera and his colleagues reacted in a negative way to the Party's policy, and even carried on an open struggle against it. They continued to follow the opportunist line which the Party followed up to the rebellion, that is, of supporting the government, but which the Party had since abandoned. They believed it possible to avoid a frontal attack on the government, a line, which in practice, became collaboration with the government of the national bourgeoisie and with imperialism. Under existing conditions this meant treason to the cause of the proletariat.

These four men (the resolution continued) even went so far as to falsify the policy indicated by Lenin regarding communist activities in relation to a national bourgeoisie fighting for the independence of its country against feudalism and imperialism. This policy means that communists support a national bourgeoisie when it is really revolutionary and anti-imperialist; it is an alliance during which the Communist Party must maintain its independence, criticizing the vacillations of the bourgeoisie. But Rivera and his colleagues falsified this theory; they failed to see the transformation of the Mexican bourgeoisie into a counter-revolutionary force; they demanded that the proletariat should renounce its leadership of the revolutionary struggle and the independent fight of the working masses. Furthermore, they called upon the Party to ally itself with the counter-revolutionary "left" bourgeois elements in the government. As a consequence of this reformist attitude, Rivera and his colleagues followed an opportunistic line toward the leaders of the urban and rural petit-bourgeoisie, which completed its historic role during the course of the 1910 revolution. Petit bourgeois leaders like Ramon de Negri and Marte Gomez remained in the government and supported its counter-revolutionary activities, de Negri as the co-author of the fascist labor code and the director of the anti-labor policy of the ministry of Industry, Commerce and Labor; Gomez as director of the agricultural ministry's land policy. Despite the fact that these ministers had capitulated to imperialism (the resolution went on) Rivera and his colleagues urged the Party to adopt a policy of alliance and conciliation, a political bloc, with these elements. They refused to recognize that the bourgeoisie in power is already a counter-revolutionary force which favored American imperialism in order to consolidate its own power. The bourgeoisie sought to preserve in the working class the illusions created by "left" petit bourgeois leaders like de Negri, Marte Gomez, and Tejada, who, by their pseudo-revolutionary phrases shielded the bourgeoisie, which had lost among the workers and peasants the prestige upon which it relied during the revolutionary period. These "left" petit bourgeois leaders stopped at nothing to prevent the radicalization

of the masses, even threatening to create a "national communist" party of their own to cooperate with the fascist government. Toward such dangerous enemies of the working class, the Party could not accept the conciliatory line of Rivera and his colleagues, who had been corrupted by the government.

In addition to these general considerations, Rivera's expulsion from the Party was based on certain specific charges. Immediately after the termination of the March rebellion, the resolution explained, Rivera asked the Central Committee for a leave of absence on the grounds of ill health. At this time the government intensified its terror against the Party. Nevertheless, the Party did not object to a leave of absence. However, despite the Party's decision that a struggle must be carried on against the government and the "left" petit bourgeois leaders, Rivera not only maintained his friendship with the chief organizers of the counter-revolution, but participated in official actions with de Negri and Marte Gomez. At a time when the government was attacking communist organizations, imprisoning, deporting and assassinating some of its leaders and confiscating its press, Rivera failed to join the Party in its struggle, but did find time to attend banquets given by students who supported the reactionary candidate for president of Mexico, Jose Vasconcelos. Furthermore, without Party permission, Rivera accepted a government post as head of the national school of fine arts. He refused to denounce the government for its atrocities against the workers and peasants until he had finished the mural at the national palace, which would take several years. He then frankly admitted that his bourgeois mode of life did not permit him to follow the Communist Party, which it was a mistake for him to have joined in the first place, and added that he preferred to be expelled than to sign a protest against the government or to resign as head of the fine arts school.

It is worth noting that neither the resolution nor the discussions preceding it referred to Trotskyism. For two years after Trotsky's expulsion from the Russian Party, Rivera remained in the central committee of the Mexican party and supported its line. It was only after he was expelled that he discovered he was a "Trotskyite". He issued a statement to the bourgeois press to that effect, ascribed his expulsion—quite falsely—to his Trotskyist beliefs, and for the first time launched public attacks on the Soviet Union to the tune of "Thermidor". It is characteristic of a certain type of intellectual at this time to flaunt Trotskyist colors; it enables him to pose as a communist without being one. In capitalist countries he can refrain from criticism of capitalism and indulge his "revolutionary" bent by attacking the Soviet Union.

The Trotskyist label left Rivera free to pose as a "revolutionary" painter while glorifying Mexican chauvinism on the wall of the national palace and accepting commissions from the wealthy American bourgeoisie he once so savagely caricatured. For the past two years he has followed this path. These years have justified the analysis of the Mexican situation contained in the Party resolution which expelled him. The "left" petit bourgeois leaders like de Negri, Marte Gomez and Portes Gil were indeed tools in the hands of the Mexican bourgeoisie and of American imperialism. But the bourgeois government which took power in January 1930 with Ortiz Rubio as its figurehead no longer needed them as camouflage. The "left" leaders were eliminated, and the bourgeois leaders took open control. There has followed a period of intense reaction in which greater and greater concessions have been made to American imperialism and in which the government no longer takes the trouble to disguise its attacks on the workers and peasants. Filled with the "revolutionary" spirit of his new Trotskyist faith, Rivera made a pilgrimage to California, whose prisons still hold Tom Mooney, and painted a mural glorifying American business. The workers and farmers in this mural form one happy family with their exploiters. The State of California—a buxom wench—is the great mother of them all; the force of the revolutionary ideas which made the frescos in the Secretariat great are lacking; instead, the artist resorts to anemic abstract symbolism, the necessary refuge of the bankrupt bourgeois artist.

There may be some readers who will look on Rivera's expulsion from the Communist Party as a political episode which has no bearing on his art. Such an attitude underestimates not only Rivera's dependence on social and political ideas, but fails to take into consideration that the conflicts of this epoch have compelled artists to take sides. If T. S. Eliot takes to royalism and anglo-catholicism, Allan Tate to "regionalism", Irving Babbit to Fascism, Dreiser to Communism, if the French surrealist painters and writers split into two political camps, it is because no man can create art without some belief, without a view of the world

based on the life and aspirations of some social class; and since social classes are now engaged in sharp struggle, these views take on a militant political character. Cut off from the Communist Party, which leads the Mexican workers and peasants, Rivera was automatically cut off from the masses whose life and aspirations furnished him not only with the themes of his murals but with that faith and purpose which are indispensable to great art. When he began to paint insignificant portraits of bourgeois ladies and gentlemen, he severed the cord that bound him to millions of workers and peasants the world over upon whose revolutionary struggles his power as an artist rested.

Rivera himself must be conscious of this. How else can he explain the fact that the American bourgeoisie which neglected him at the height of his power, when he was a revolutionary artist, now coddles and lionizes him when his themes are banal and his technical skill rouses the contempt even of young art students? And how else can he explain that now, when the American bourgeoisie coddles and lionizes him, he should find it necessary to seek out the John Reed Club in New York, there to attempt some kind of justification of himself, to proclaim himself still a revolutionary painter and a communist, to revive his old slogan that only the revolution can inspire great art? Was he seeking publicity? Is there, perhaps a streak of the mountebank in the artist who, calling himself a Trotskyite, at the same time flirts with the Communist Party, with the Lovestone group and with the Socialist Party? It would seem that whatever truth there may be in these suppositions, Rivera's chief problem as an artist is to regain the motive power of his art. The methods he has chosen so far will lead him nowhere, but amidst the sterility and aimlessness of his bourgeois "success", he must realize that cut off from the revolutionary workers and peasants, he faces corruption as a man and bankruptcy as an artist.

ROBERT EVANS



DOLLAR A NIGHT AND CAR FARE

Ivor Rose



*DOLLAR A NIGHT AND CAR FARE*

*Ivor Rose*

# BOOKS

*Discretions, by Frances, Countess of Warwick. Scribners. \$3.00.*

The Lower Classes as Seen through Binoculars from a Castle Window, or Why the British Socialist Movement is so Amusing, would be a better title than the one Lady Warwick chose for this volume. It catches the general tone better, although there is no denying the book is discreet, to the point of dullness in fact.

Unless it has been forgotten during these past years of her comparative absence from the rotogravures, Lady Warwick, one must know, is a Socialist. Oh yes indeed. Her pictures used often to appear in our papers under captions proving it. "Famous English Aristocrat who is Socialist." One learns in these pages how it all began. She read some pieces by "that great Socialist and Thinker", Robert Blatchford. Thereafter she was hot for equalitarianism, but still kept her hand in by continuing to attend Royal Receptions, maintaining her friendship with a Certain Royal Personage (her own style and capitals) and keeping green her expertise in matters of Court Etiquette and Precedence. But she went forth, in between floods of social engagements, "taking up the cudgels on behalf of the oppressed, struggling against the darkness that enveloped the working classes, seeking to do my best to help them to rise." And so "in Socialism I have found the satisfaction denied me in the spacious days of the Edwardian era." It is all quite touching.

Arresting is the inexorable march of logic in Lady Warwick's mind. One example will suggest it. The Great War was caused by the *entente cordiale*; the erection of the *entente cordaile* was the major life work of King Edward VII; the war was an unmitigated "reverence" for his memory.

Hundreds of notabilities are mentioned in the book. Not a word about any of them is of any importance. Her conclusion about Arthur Balfour: "I think he will always be remembered as being a very fine tennis player and a most assiduous golfer." From a Guedalla this would have an ironic significance, but Lady Warwick had no ironic intention. To use a phrase from the stage world, she plays straight. Her catholicity of taste and judgment leads this so-called Socialist to say of the Fascist Sir Oswald Mosley: "I think he is the most promising of the younger school. He has the vision without which the people perish . . . . I do not know whether he will lead the people to the Promised Land . . . . but I am sure that he will take them at least over part of the road."

It is all very much like the garrulities of an aging woman who wishes to be kind to everyone. And she writes her own criticism of the book in an afterthought, done while reading its proofs: ". . . . it seemed to me that it was full of desultory thoughts, with only a thin thread of general interest to hold them together."

WILLIAM PROHME

## Those Liberals!

*Strike Injunctions in the New South, by Duane McCracken. University of North Carolina Press. \$3.00.*

Take one lively subject, preferably a hot focal point in the class struggle; isolate it thoroughly from other elements in the class situation; soak it slowly in tepid comment, allowing an occasional rise in temperature by quoting "extremists" but cooling off immediately with generous dashes of "impartiality"; stuff with details; and serve with a garnish of footnotes.

Even a faithful following of this standard recipe for liberal research on labor questions has not completely spoiled the fresh material gathered by Dr. McCracken on two printing strikes in North Carolina, and on the Marion, Elizabethton, and Danville strikes of 1929 and 1930.

At Elizabethton, he tells us, strikers were picketing the highway in spite of an injunction against all picketing. "A truck carrying non-union employees with guards came up and stopped. The guards ordered a girl who was standing in front of the truck to get out of the way. She refused to move. The officer then gave orders to drive over her. The truck ran over her and dragged her

several yards, causing serious bodily injury." All of which, he suggests, might not have happened if there had been no injunction to encourage "a martyr spirit"!

Very simple Dr. McCracken is aware of the reality of the class struggle. He is "intellectually honest" (so he says) and impressed by the "baffling complexity of the whole problem. Conflicting economic philosophies, and claims to rights which are irreconcilable, present a problem to the court, as well as to the student which cannot be solved in a manner satisfactory to all parties." He rules out reactionaries who "regard trade unions as a sinister force in American life" and those at the other extreme "who believe that capitalism is a vampire system which serves no good end and which must be discarded,"—although "there are doubtless many sincere people in both groups." He is only concerned with the "vastly more significant" group who "believe that, within reasonable limits, property rights should be protected. They believe, on the other hand, that trade unions, when properly conducted, perform a useful function."

Approaching strike injunctions with this "impartial" capitalist viewpoint, he finds them undesirable. Like Newton D. Baker and George Wharton Pepper—who are counsel for openly anti-union groups—he finds that injunctions have been helping to break down the legend that courts are impartial, and this will never do! Besides, they do not really succeed in breaking strikes. On this point, Dr. McCracken depends too heavily on opinions gathered in the five towns of his case study and disregards evidence from long experience in hundreds of other strikes.

And injunctions are needlessly expensive, with arrests, and court proceedings and appeals, when employers could have "the absolutely free services of the Conciliator from the Department of Labor." What more could they want?

ANNA ROCHESTER

## God, Incorporated

*The Church and the Workers, by Bennett Stevens. No. 15, International Pamphlets. Ten cents.*

This pamphlet is the most recent one in the current series prepared under the direction of the Labor Research Association. It serves as an admirable introduction to the hypocritical and reactionary role played by the Church in the struggle of the workers to throw off the burden of Capitalism. The author starts with a brief outline of how in general the supernatural and ethical teachings of the Church tend to stifle all thoughts of protest or revolt in the masses. He then goes on to point out that the churches in this country are in reality wealthy capitalist corporations with property amounting to billions of dollars, and that they therefore have a very natural interest in preserving the capitalist order. Short sections follow showing how the churches join in deluding the unemployed, participate in strike-breaking, help "keep the Negro in his place," and support capitalist war and imperialism. Stevens also makes valuable exposes of the church "liberals" and the so-called "Christian Socialists." After giving an account of the successful struggle against the Church in the Soviet Union, he concludes by pointing out the necessity of everywhere linking up the fight against religion with the fight against Capitalism.

All of the main topics covered in this pamphlet (and some which are not covered) need and deserve a full pamphlet each, if not a book, for adequate treatment. Unfortunately, however, such pamphlets and such books are exceedingly rare at present; and for this reason Stevens' tract must temporarily remain an introduction to a field where, though there is an almost infinite wealth of data, very little material exists as yet in organized printed form. Thus his work constitutes a standing challenge towards making thoroughgoing studies from a Marxian viewpoint along the whole religious front. It will take a long time to completely liquidate the Church and all the superstition and defeatism which it has fostered: the task cannot be undertaken too soon or too energetically.

CORLISS LAMONT

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# WORKERS ART

Reports & Discussions of Workers Cultural Activities



## CHICAGO — Marionette Theatre.

The Proletarian Marionette Theatre has made its appearance in the revolutionary cultural world of Chicago. Andy and Emil Guttman, H. Kershman, M. Emynitoff and Aaron Lebedinsky, artist, (known to readers of *New Masses* and "Who's Who" this month) have "built and made everything and are the 'actors', too."

The theatre is portable and can be set up in less than 5 minutes on any stage or table.

In the "reportoire" are *The Strike*, a short 3 scene playlet, *The Cross Word Puzzle*, and *Hoovers Heaven and Hell*. The photo above (by the Photo League of the Chicago John Reed Club) is from one of these productions.

First presentations have been more than successful. We realize we have struck a new and rich field of proletarian culture. We want others to know of it. For information, materials, arrangements, etc., write

M. EMYNITOFF

1418 N. Tolman Ave.,  
Chicago, Ill. Phone Armitage 5375.

## John Reed Club—Labor Sports Union—

The Chicago John Reed Club, cooperating with the Labor Sports Union, has arranged an International Poster Competition in the occasion of the International Workers Athletic Meet (Counter Olympics) to be held in Chicago during July, 1932, in which proletarian athletes from Germany, Russia, France, Japan and other countries will compete.

The poster competition, to popularize the event, will end in a public exhibit of all work entered, the winning poster to be announced by a jury of John Reed Artists and three unattached Chicago artists. The proceeds of the exhibit will go towards defraying the expenses of the Labor Sports Union.

Suggestions for poster subject-matter: the role of workers sports as against boss-controlled sports; sports and war training, etc. The wording on the poster should read: "International Workers Athletic Meet (Counter-Olympics) Chicago—July—1932. Auspices Labor Sports Union of America, (Section of the Red International)."

Address all communications: Jan Wittenber, Artist Group, Chicago John Reed Club, 2457 West Chicago Ave., Chicago, Ill.

## NEW MASSES CLUB, N. Y.

Philip Sterling, author of the "Songs of War" which appeared in *New Masses* recently, spoke at the New Masses Club on Monday, February 8.

The next meeting to be addressed by one of the editors of *New Masses* will be held on Monday eve, February 15 at 8 o'clock. All readers, workers, students invited.

## American Sculptress in Moscow

Minna Harkavey, a member of the John Reed Club, had an exhibition of 14 sculptures, mostly bronzes, at the Museum of Western Art in Moscow under the auspices of the VOKS (Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries). Outstanding among these sculptures were a group, "Miners' Family", "Singing Negro", "Head of Worker", "Portrait of Hall Johnson", etc. The portrait of Hall Johnson was acquired by the Museum.

This is what the *Pravda* had to say about the exhibition:

### A CHALLENGE IN STONE AND BRONZE

(Exhibition of the American Sculptress, Minna Harkavey).

"We, a group of American artists of the John Reed Club, are seeking the sources for our creativeness among the masses of the oppressed and the exploited. We thus strive to aid those masses in their struggle against the mighty power that aims at crushing them. We have just begun."

"The sketch for the group, "Miners' Family", was made in the mines of Pittsburgh in 1930. It was during a strike which lasted for nine months and eventually was lost. The family, together with hundreds of others, had been evicted and lived in barracks. There was a shortage of food; the cold and the wind penetrated through the cracks of hastily constructed barracks . . . men and women suffered privation, and still they had to live.

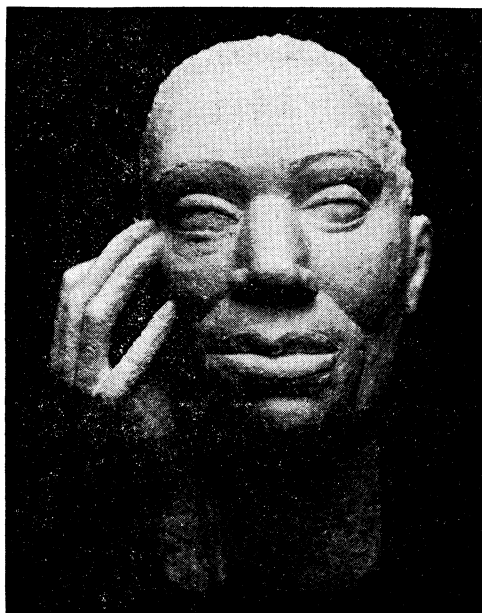
"This is how the group, "Miners' Family", occupying the central place at the exhibit of sculpture by Minna Harkavey in the Museum of Western Art came into being. The talented artist succeeded in carrying out her idea. Everything which we read about the capitalist crisis in the U. S. A., about unemployment, about Hunger Marches, is embodied in the 'Miners' Family' with the simplicity and power of true artistic realism. And if in the figure of the 'father', an old worker, is expressed the despair of the average American worker who has been educated in the schools of passivity, submission to the yellow union leaders, the figure of the 'mother', a prematurely aged woman worker, tells us without words about the heroism of those working masses in the U. S. A. who under the clubs and bullets of capitalist police are fighting for the lives of their children.

"Minna Harkavey came to the John Reed Club from among the American petty-bourgeois intelligentsia which started a struggle against capitalist art. At first it was only a protest against decadence, against philistine sentimentality, against the tendency to

beautify reality and to slur over social contradictions and the revolutionary struggle. The traces of purely formal gropings have remained in some of Minna Harkavey's works. Later she decidedly turns towards proletarian subjects. The worker, moments and functionaries of the revolutionary labor movement, an oppressed Negro,—these are the subjects of her works which have been modeled with considerable mastery. Only a small part of these works is shown at the exhibition, but they acquaint the Soviet onlooker with a most interesting corner of the American revolutionary social life."

## THEODORE DREISER

Theodore Dreiser, noted American writer, who has been active on the Committee for Political Prisoners, has just been chosen as a member of the presidium of the International Union of Revolutionary Writers and on the International Advisory Board of its central organ *International Literature* (formerly *Literature of the World Revolution*). His latest book *Tragic America* is just off the press.



Sculpture of Hall Johnson, by Minna Harkavey, acquired by the Museum of Western Art, Moscow.

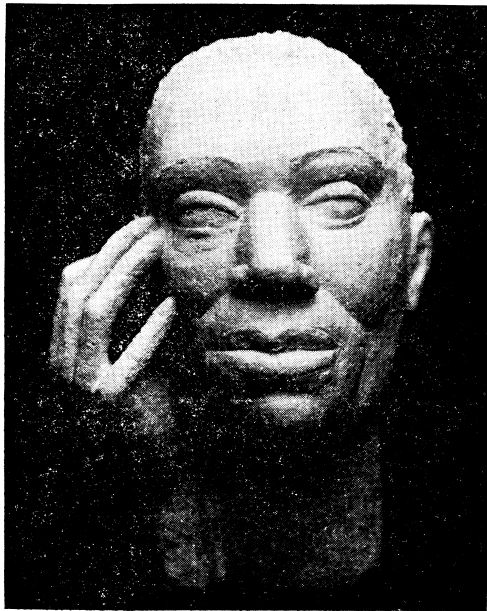




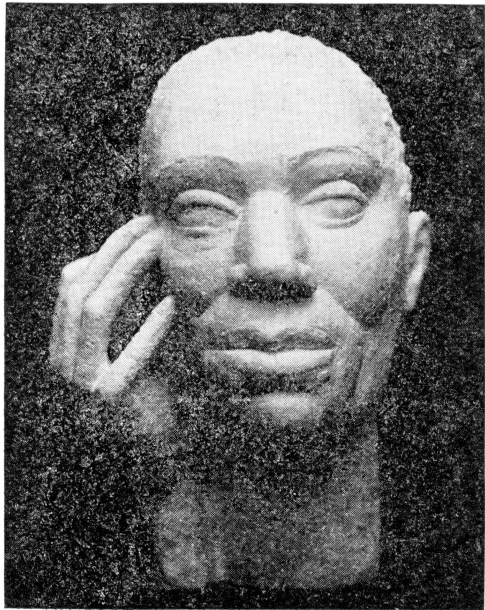
**CHICAGO** — *Marionette Theatre.*



**CHICAGO** — *Marionette Theatre.*



*Sculpture of Hall Johnson, by Minna Harkavey, acquired by the Museum of Western Art, Moscow.*



*Sculpture of Hall Johnson, by Minna Harkavey, acquired by the Museum of Western Art, Moscow.*



*Unemployed Demonstration—City Hall—a painting by Eitaro Ishigaki, exhibited at the John Reed Club Gallery in New York in January. Photo by the Japanese Cultural Club of New York.*

**CLEVELAND—John Reed Club**

Add the John Reed Club of Cleveland to the growing list. It is still small, about 20 odd members, all willing to contribute to the development of revolutionary culture. G. T. Limbach, of the artist group is already known to readers of *New Masses*. Our writers are capable, tho unknown. Two very fine musicians, one a member of the Cleveland Symphony Orchestra are included. By the time you have printed this I'm sure we will have grown.

Our first public efforts have included posters for demonstrations; plays, scenery and costumes for anti-religious (Xmas) plays for the Y. C. L. and Pioneers, and a play for the Lenin Memorial meeting.

We have had some very good discussions in the club on the class nature of the various arts, led by members.

We invite correspondence from the various John Reed Clubs and all workers groups and will gladly exchange material.

We certainly want to be counted in all the cultural campaigns in which the *New Masses* and revolutionary clubs are carrying on.

HAZEL STRONG, Sec'y Writers Group.

1426 West 3rd St. Room 215, Cleveland Ohio.

**SEATTLE — Workers Cultural Council**

*Comrades:* A Workers Cultural Council has just been organized by representatives of various workingclass organizations of Seattle, Washington.

We mean revolutionary activity: We have organized a Dramatic Group, a Photo Group and a Workers Orchestra and Chorus. An immediate task is the organization of a John Reed Club of Seattle.

On March 5 we are planning an entertainment. Meanwhile send us on a copy of Harbor Allen's play *Mr. God Is Not In* for immediate production. And count on us for *New Masses* promotion. We don't want Seattle, with all our American revolutionary traditions, to be lagging behind in revolutionary cultural activities.

M. SAKSAGANSKY, organizer.

Workers Culture Council,  
627 First Ave., Seattle, Wash.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

*The Student Bulletin*—issued by the Student League of Western Pa., 611 Penn Ave., Room 414, Pittsburgh, Pa.; *The New Force*—issued by the John Reed Club of Detroit, (monthly), 1343 E. Ferry Ave., Detroit, Mich.; *Western Worker*—(weekly)—western organ of the Communist Party, 1164 Market St., San Francisco, Calif.; *Unemployed Weekly*—issued by Unemployed Councils of Greater New York—5 E. 19 St., New York, N. Y.

**NEW YORK — Writers Conference**

On January 10 the first conference of revolutionary writers, journalists and workers correspondents of all nationalities ever to be held in this country took place at the Workers School, New York. Sixty-one delegates were present, most of them representing organized groups or revolutionary newspapers and magazines. The meeting was a preliminary conference for the purpose of linking up the proletarian literary and workers correspondence movement in the New York area. It was called at the initiative of the John Reed Club of New York, the Proletpen (Yiddish proletarian writers), the Hungarian Proletarian Writers, the Hungarian Workers Correspondents and the Workers Cultural Federation. A. B. Magil of the John Reed Club gave the report for the Organization Committee, with a supplementary report by E. Austin of the Hungarian writers, following which there was broad discussion.

The conference adopted a resolution protesting the terror against revolutionary workers, peasants and intellectuals throughout the world, and sent a telegram to the governor of Kentucky demanding the release of all workers and writers arrested in connection with the struggles in the mine fields. A Provisional Committee was set up, composed of representatives of the various nationalities. It will be the task of this committee to stimulate the organization of groups of writers and of workers correspondents among those nationalities where they do not yet exist, and to lay the preparations for another conference in the near future which will organize a federation of all revolutionary writers, journalists, and workers correspondents as a section of the Workers Cultural Federation.

*To All Workers Groups—*

*Comrades:* The Artists of the John Reed Club desire to cooperate to their fullest in supplying programs to the mass organizations in the revolutionary movement. In order to guarantee programs and to link up the programs with the struggle of the various mass organizations we request you to adhere to the following points:

1. Send request for a program at least two weeks in advance.
2. Mail request to W. Quirt, secretary of Artists' Group, John Reed Club, 63 W. 15th Street.
3. Material (paper and support to rest it upon) must be supplied by organization requesting the program.
4. State type of affair being run (anti-war, memorial meeting, etc.) so we can link up our program with the aims of the affair.
5. Do not advertise the Artists of the John Reed Club as a part of the program unless definite word has been received from them.

JOHN REED CLUB BALL, ETC.—

A proletarian costume ball will be held by the John Reed Club at Webster Hall on Friday, February 19th. Workers are especially being invited, individually and in groups—with and without costume. Other club events include a series of public meetings now being arranged for Sunday afternoons by the Writers Group and Lithograph and poster groups by the artists. The John Reed Art School, functioning well, has become a major club achievement.

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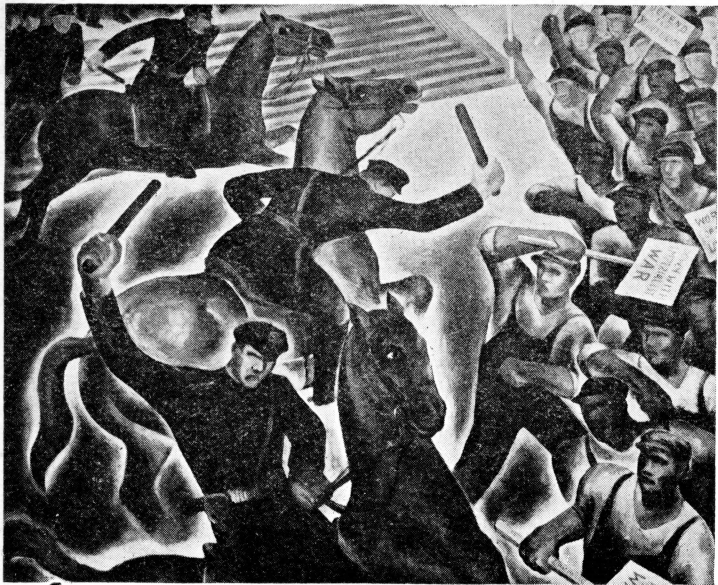
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*Unemployed Demonstration—City Hall—a painting by Eitaro Ishigaki, exhibited at the John Reed Club Gallery in New York in January. Photo by the Japanese Cultural Club of New York.*

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*Unemployed Demonstration—City Hall—a painting by Eitaro Ishigaki, exhibited at the John Reed Club Gallery in New York in January. Photo by the Japanese Cultural Club of New York.*

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- PICKET LINE ..... Jack Conroy
- LOOKING FOR A JOB ..... Albert Halper
- PLECHANOV & THE MARXIAN APPROACH TO ART ..... Leon Dennen
- FALL RIVER ..... Jon Cheever
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- THE INTELLECTUAL CINEMA ..... Sergei Eisenstein
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**PAGANY**

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VOLUME III — NUMBER 1

WINTER

1932

- THE LAIC MYSTERY ..... Jean Coteaux
- BOUQUET FOR OCTOBER ..... Katherine Anne Porter
- WARM RIVER ..... Erskine Caldwell
- BROWN RIVER, SMILE ..... Jean Toomer
- THE SMALL ROOM ..... Syd S Salt
- ADIRONDACK NARRATIVE ..... Julien Shapiro
- BROTHER TO THE HAPPY ..... Tess Slesinger
- NEW YORK SLEEP-WALKING ..... Robert McAlmon
- AND RESTED THE SEVENTH ..... William Chapman
- IN A HALF DREAM ..... Solon R. Barber
- A DREADFUL NIGHT ..... Josephine Herbst
- WHITE MULE ..... William Carlos Williams
- THE BROWN BIRD ..... Myra Marini
- MOON AWARENESS ..... I Lawrence Salomon
- NELLA ..... August Derleth
- GENUFECTION TO THE ENGINE ..... R M Thompson
- COQUETTE ..... Frances Fletcher
- HERALD-TRIBUNE ACME ..... R B N Warriston
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## Diego Rivera and the John Reed Club

On January 1, the Mexican artist, Diego Rivera, was the speaker at a public meeting arranged by the John Reed Club of New York. The invitation was extended to him hastily on the basis of his former record as a revolutionary artist and as the result of rumors that he was seeking to return to the revolutionary path which he had deserted when the terror against Mexican workers and peasants was launched in 1929.

At this time, the Club without investigation or proper consideration had also accepted a \$100 contribution from Rivera.

The January 1 meeting, instead of coming up to the expectations of many members of the John Reed Club, proved to be an attempt by Rivera to achieve a personal triumph. In his speech, he made no mention of his own unprincipled activities as a supporter of American imperialism and its tool, the Calles Government.

Rivera was exposed as a renegade and a counter revolutionist, who since 1929 has deliberately and without hesitation used the influence he obtained as a Communist and working class leader to play the game of Wall Street and its Fascist Government in Mexico. It was also shown that Rivera's renegacy has been reflected in his art, which has grown increasingly sterile as he has drawn further away from the working class, which once made him articulate and which transformed a feeble imitator of Picasso into a powerful artist of the Revolution.

Rivera, not only refused to renounce such artistic manifestations of his capitulation to the bourgeoisie as his San Francisco stock exchange murals with their vulgar glorification of American capitalism, but even attempted a specious, profoundly counter-revolutionary and patently dishonest "leftist" defense of them. This, of course, was immediately and decisively exposed by members of the John Reed Club as reactionary art.

The John Reed Club recognizes that it was a serious error to have invited Diego Rivera and provided him a forum for his opportunism. Rivera was branded as a renegade from the revolutionary movement at the Kharkov Conference of revolutionary writers and artists, held in November, 1930, and is so characterized in the report

of the American delegation to that conference, printed in the February, 1931, issue of *New Masses*. The club should therefore have investigated carefully before opening its doors to this intimate of Dwight Morrow and cultural agent of American imperialism. Since the John Reed Club meeting Rivera, who professes to be an adherent of Trotsky, has further proved his "revolutionary" character by speaking before the Lovestone group of renegades from Communism, before the social-fascist Rand School, and various bourgeois circles.

The John Reed Club declares that the ideals for which it stands, have nothing in common with the "ideals" of the man who sold out everything for which he had stood for a job with the Mexican government. We therefore call upon writers, artists and other cultural workers to repudiate this unprincipled demagogue and to expose him at every opportunity.

Since we do not wish to carry on our activities with the money of a renegade, the John Reed Club will return Rivera's \$100 contribution, with which he hoped to buy himself that revolutionary cloak which he needs to serve his capitalist masters effectively.

### JOHN REED CLUB OF NEW YORK

*Jack Conroy*—of Moberly, Missouri, auto worker, recently railroad section hand, and now working on a frozen farm in the middle west, is president of the *Rebel Poets*, contributor to the *American Mercury*, *Left*, etc.

*Robert Evans*—Executive Board member of *New Masses*, is the secretary of the Writers Group of the N. Y. John Reed Club.

*Ivor Rose*—artist, now living in New York, makes his first appearance in *New Masses*.

*Jacob Burek*—is staff artist of the *Daily Worker*.

*Jim Waters*—house-painter, proletarian poet, now in Florida, has contributed verse to *Poetry*, and other publications and has written for the revolutionary press for years.

*William Gropper*—staff artist on the New York *Freiheit*, is exhibiting a series of Russian drawings at the Decora Gallery beginning February 16.

*Anna Rochester*—is author of *Labor And Coal* and of a new pamphlet *Profits And Wages*.

*Mitchel Siporin*—is an active member of the Art Group of the Chicago John Reed Club.

*Langston Hughes*—author of *Not Without Laughter*, and two books of verse, has just completed a lecture tour thru the South.

*William Siegel*—illustrator, is one of the art editors of the *New Pioneer*, contributor to many publications.



*A. Lebedinsky*—member of the John Reed Club of Chicago, active member of the newly organized Chicago Proletarian Marionette Theatre, was born in Nickolaev, U. S.S.R. He writes: "I went thru the days of the Revolution and starvation and my views are shaped by the new spirit of the Soviet government. I am 22 years of age. In the U. S. about 7 years. In Chicago, I continued the art education I began in Europe. Attended the evening school at the Chicago Art Institute and the Hull House. Scholarships helped a lot on tuition. Meanwhile, jobs in a factory, laundry, teaching, etc., helped to keep hide and bones on speaking relations. Outside of the school annual, the *New Masses* was the first publication that printed my work. With that kind of encouragement, I'm going to work much harder."

### In This Issue

*Sherwood Anderson*—noted American author, is now at work on a new novel, *Beyond Desire*.

*Phil Bard*—author of the picture story *No Jobs Today*, is at work on a new story in pictures based on the present American world we are living in.

*Joseph Kalar*—lumber worker of Minnesota, now unemployed, is a contributor to *Left*, *Rebel Poet*, and other revolutionary publications.

*Michael Gold*—executive board member of *New Masses*, is now at work on a biography of John Reed.

*Moe Bragin* making his first appearance in *New Masses*, teaching in Brooklyn, N. Y., is a contributor to the *New Republic*, *Hound & Horn*, *Pogany*, and other publications.

*Theodore Scheel*—artist of St. Louis, Mo. now living in New York, contributes caricatures to all leading newspapers and magazines.

*Walter Steinhiller*—New York commercial artist, designed the cover for this issue.

### CURRENT EXHIBITS

#### JOHN REED CLUB GALLERY

(63 West 15 Street)

FEBRUARY 2-15—Paintings by *Louis Ribak*, *R. Soyer*, *N. Cikovsky*, and *M. Solotarof*.

FEBRUARY 16-29—watercolors and drawings by John Reed Club Members.

DECORA GALLERY—(140½ East 52 St.) February 2-15—Watercolors and drawings by *Miki Hammer*.

FEBRUARY 16-29—Drawings of Soviet Russia by *William Gropper*.

LE-LAN GALLERIES (50 West 52 St.) beginning February 19, paintings by *Raphael Soyer*.



A. *Lebedinsky*—member of the John Reed Club of Chicago, active member of the newly organized Chicago Proletarian Marionette Theatre, was born in Nickolaev, U. S.S.R. He writes: "I went thru the days of the Revolution and starvation and my views are shaped by the new spirit of the Soviet government. I am 22 years of age. In the U. S. about 7 years. In Chicago, I continued the art education I began in Europe. Attended the evening school at the Chicago Art Institute and the Hull House. Scholarships helped a lot on tuition. Meanwhile, jobs in a factory, laundry, teaching, etc., helped to keep hide and bones on speaking relations. Outside of the school annual, the *New Masses* was the first publication that printed my work. With that kind of encouragement, I'm going to work much harder."



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