

# new masses

**JUNE  
1933**

**15c**

**ROOSEVELT'S REGIME**

**W. F. Dunne**

**AMERICA IN EUROPE**

**Karl Radek**

**REVOLT OF THE  
CHILDREN**

**Helen Kay**



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## Death of a Century

Philip Stevenson

**N**EXT day, the reactionary press—there was still a reactionary press in those days—came out and said we'd murdered him. Now I was there and saw the whole thing. Not that it made any difference, unless you take it, like I do, as a typical case. Seems to me that old James T. stands pretty well for his whole time and his whole class. Anyhow, here's the truth. Make what you can out of it. Old James T. is almost forgotten now. Chances are, our kids never heard of him. So I better remind you.

He was born about the time the factory system began to dominate production in this country. Marx and Engels hadn't written the Manifesto yet, and Lincoln, out in the Illinois Legislature, hadn't yet said, "Any people anywhere have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government and form a new one." The only hurdle between the capitalists and the most ruthless exploitation was the Declaration of Independence, and that had gone into the grave along with Jefferson. Old James T. had grown up with the system and been in his prime when the system was in its prime—at the peak of long hours, low wages, and child labor. As soon as reforms began to weaken the system as a means of getting supreme power, he dropped that tool and went in for high finance instead—combines and trusts and cutthroat competition all over the world. He made more money by this kind of speculation than he ever could have got by sweating a few thousand wage slaves in factories. Then the trusts were busted—or seemed to be—and he retired and began to pave his road to St. Peter's gate with gifts ranging from new Lincoln pennies to million-dollar blocks of bonds. This way the people were fooled into thinking the old skinflint had reformed.

But the whole system was on the down grade. You know how things have been for the past few years—the banks flat busted, riots, dictatorships, compromises, new governments every five minutes. Old James T. seemed out of it—you never heard a thing about him except once a year. Then the tory press would come out with a statement that ran something like this:

Plans are going quietly forward for the celebration of James T. Hamstringer's ninety-sixth birthday tomorrow.

The birthday dinner will be served at eight o'clock as usual, and the guests will in all probability include Mr. Hamstringer's three sons, James T. Jr., Ernest Hamstringer, Frank Lee Hamstringer, and their children, James T. 3rd, Faith, Hope, Charity, and Watt Price Ham-

stringer. It is rumored that James T. Hamstringer Jr., will blow out the ninety-six candles and cut the ninety-six pound cake for his venerable father.

Then, if you remember, the statement would tell how James T. was going to spend every minute of the day, getting up at six, breakfasting heartily, having telegrams of congratulation read aloud to him by his private secretary, transacting business, getting in a round of golf on his private course at Hamstring Hills, and going for an auto ride through our town, Hamstring Falls, and distributing Lincoln pennies to the kids. After dinner there'd be an organ recital by his old friend Minnie Potbergh, aged 87, playing all James T.'s "classical" favorites, like "The Rosary," "The Old Grey Mare," and "Brighten the Corner Where You Are." There'd be a lot about how vigorous the old guy was at ninety-six, how shrewd he was in business matters and how he made his 9 hole course in eight strokes or something.

Yeah. Well, that year old James T. was going to be a hundred. The statement read about the same, except that on account of "unsettled conditions" and the "protests of the nation against allowing Mr. Hamstringer to expose himself," he wasn't going to appear in public. Matter of fact he hadn't appeared in public, not even in Hamstring Falls, for six years at least.

You remember what happened that day. We took power in New York, Washington, Chicago—and a lot of the smaller towns on the outskirts had baby revolutions. Our town had one. Hamstring Fell, if you get me. As soon as we had the town where we wanted it, the boys suggested we go and take over James T.'s estate as a hospital and sanatorium for sick or wounded workers from the big city.

That sounded fair enough, so we started for Hamstring Hills in commandeered cars. At the gate we had quite a scrap with James T.'s private army, but our farmer boys and workers had the right spirit, and pretty soon the Hessians were on the run and we got in. Later I was told that the Hamstringer family were heading out sixty miles an hour through the gates on the other side of the estate.

The "mansion" had a deserted look. Most of the boys had never been inside the grounds before, and they thought it was something the movies had invented. One or two of them even took off their hats, and I had to remind them that as workers they were good enough for any goddam "mansion" in the cockeyed world. Then they straightened up and marched through

the dozens of rooms like they'd lived there, planning what they'd do with all the space.

By that time we were sure the place was deserted. We went upstairs. I was scribbling figures on a door jamb, estimating we could put a thousand beds in the house, when a kid off the farm came and told me he'd found a locked room. I investigated and found a second door into it, but that was locked too. I told the boys to be ready for trouble, and then we burst the lock with our shoulders.

I remembered hearing a woman scream. As we fell through the busted door a blousy wench was unlocking the other door and hustling out. We let her go. We were too dumb to stop her. Because in the middle of the floor was an old guy on his knees, his hands joined, his eyes turned up and streaming tears. He had on a goddam uniform and was trembling so hard that all his gold buttons and doodads clanked like a suit of armor. But the thing that froze us all was at the side of the room. There was a big carved bed with a canopy and curtains and pink silk sheets and pillows. One of the curtains was pulled back and lying against the pillows was something I mistook for a man-sized lizard. It had a crusty skull and a spiky, beaky nose. Oh, it was a man, all right, but all dried up, with thick cracked skin like a turtle's neck, and yellow like old cardboard. His black glasses made him look like something that's gone blind from living in a cave, and he didn't move, except for his mouth. He had no teeth, but his lips kept sucking in and out sunkenly, making weak little whining noises.

We stood dumb for maybe a full minute. It took us that long to work out that the thing we were looking at was human, and then to connect it up with the old robust old man we read about in the papers.

Eventually the guy in buttons decided we weren't going to cut his throat. He got up on his feet and fawned and bowed, calling us "Gen-tul-men" with a Limejuicer's accent, and "prayed" us not to "distress the mahster fuhther." That was the way he talked.

Bill—the kid who'd found the locked door—couldn't believe his eyes. "Is that old James T.?" he kept saying. "Is it, honest?"

"It aint honest," I said, "but it's James T. all right."

The lizard in bed must have noticed strange voices, because now his lips began to suck and twist harder. This got old Buttons all excited.

"Gen-tul-men, *gen-tulmen!* Ryahly, I beg of you!" he said, crying again and fluttering his old hands. "Ew, dyah me, dyah, dyah me!"

Seems like we were distressing the "mahster" on his hundred "baathday." Seems like the "mahster" had a message to give the world today, but none of the family had been able to get it. Old Buttons had hopes, though. He wanted to be the one to catch the "mahster's handredth baathday message" and give it to posterity. "I appeal to your sense of values, gen-tulmen! Think! if the mewment should pahss and this wisdom be lost to mankiyund!"

One of the boys pooped and we all laughed. Buttons had a fit.

"Gen-tul-men, please! I beg of you! His distress is acute!"

"Not so goddam cute," Bill said.

I didn't think so either. The funny little infant's cry was coming pretty regular now, and a skimpy tear trickled out from under the black glasses. You couldn't feel any pity for it, but I was curious—like you might be curious about anything disgusting—a bearded lady or a man with breastworks.

"How long has he been like that?" I asked.

"Ew dyah, I . . ." Buttons acted embarrassed. But I guess he realized the cat was out of the bag. "Some six yahs now, sir."

"You mean he ain't been out of bed for six years?"

"New, sir."

The boys had overheard, and they came crowding round.

"Well, what's all that in the papers about him playin' golf?"

"What about him doin' business every day?"

"Yeah! How about his bein' so goddam vigorous?"

"Tut, tut, gen-tul-men, tut-tut." Buttons was all diplomatic now—didn't act scared no more. Maybe he thought a long story would keep us busy till help came. Anyhow, he seemed plenty ready to talk. He explained—like we was all kids—how the country couldn't afford to know the truth about James T., how it would cause a panic on the stock market and pervert the youth of America to let out that "our most famous citizen," James T.

Hamstringer, had gone into his second child, od, like—"like any common laborer!"

He came close to being shot for that remark. There was a scuffle, and Buttons got out in the hall. But we caught him easy enough, and he forgot to be diplomatic after that. He kept raving that we had interrupted James T. "in the act of partaking of 'is narrishment." He said the old mummy would die and he'd be blamed.

"Well fercrysakes," Bill said, "what can he eat? He aint got any teeth."

Believe it or not, Buttons blushed to the top of his bold scalp.

"I bet he drinks milk like a goddam baby," another said.

"Yeah, out of some special prize cow, too!"

"Cow, sir?" Buttons was up on his dignity now. "Cow, indeed!"

"Well, goat, then. Ordinary milk ain't good enough for His Royal Majesty, is it?"

"Goat, sir!" (He pronounced it Gewt.)

I was getting fed up with this. I grabbed his shoulders and shook him.

"Snap out of it," I said. "It is milk, ain't it?"

"Ew yes, sir!" Buttons squealed, up high like a woman.

"All right, pop out with the mystery, or I'll bust you one!"

Buttons shrieked for mercy and was all for getting down on his knees again, but we held him up.

"Yooman milk, gen-tul-men! God forgive me for betraying the Secret! Yooman milk! For the pahst three yahs!"

I guess we made him say it a dozen times. I was so dumb it took me awhile to put two and two together—the baby whimper, the wench who'd been here when we came, the way the old lizard's lips moved. But when the boys got it, I had a tough time keeping discipline. They were for wringing the old buzzard's neck on the spot. All his life he'd exploited people, and even now, when he was completely helpless, he was exploiting motherhood, babyhood, stealing the very milk out of the mouths of workers' kids.

I'd wasted too much time out there already—you know all the organization work there was to do that day. So as soon as I got the boys quieted down, I locked up Buttons, posted a guard with him and another with the lizard, and hoofed it into Hamstring Falls.

I didn't get back till late that night. On my way I made up my mind old James T. would have to find a new diet. I didn't want to kill him; I'd already decided to let him keep his bed for the time being, though he'd have to share the room with the wounded who would arrive tomorrow. But if the only way he could keep alive was by using mother's milk, then it was time he kicked off. If the wench gave more milk than her own kid needed, there were always plenty of undernourished workers' babies to feed. I was choosing between a useless old mummy and the kids of the generation that would build a decent society in America, and I was sure that not even the most hard-boiled capitalist journal, if it knew the facts, would object.

I arrived at Hamstring Hills with a truckload of bed and bedding and found a terrible rumpus going on.

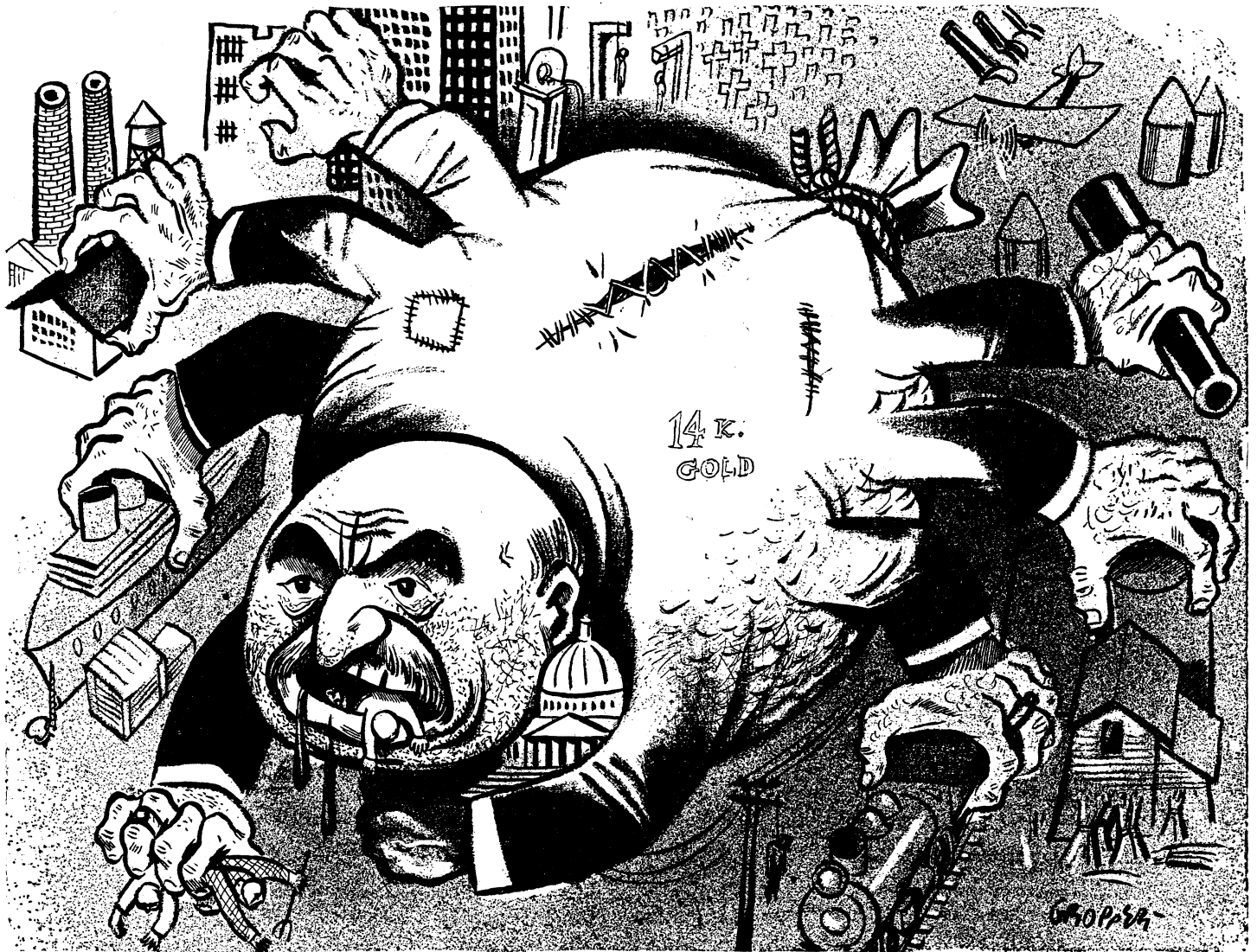
It seemed that Buttons had gone cuckoo. At first he'd pleaded with the boys to go to the phone and call up the wench and get her to come out and finish her job. Then he'd call us murderers and threatened that we'd all be shot some day for this. The boy hadn't exactly weakened, but they were farm boys, soft-hearted, and didn't want the responsibility of old James T. kicking out on them against my orders. They tried to get me by phone, but you know what the phone service was that day.

Meanwhile the lizard was raising his particular feeble kind of hell, whimpering and crying, till his guard, a young farmer with a baby of his own, got nervous and called in the others to discuss in committee what ought to be done.

Jesus! when I think of the energy wasted that day over an old parasite that ought to been butchered years ago! I wish I'd let the boys "wring the buzzard's neck" like they wanted.

Well, the committee decided not to send for the wench. One of them went out and milked one of the Hamstring heard of Jerseys and brought in a can of milk, all foaming and fresh, and started to feed the lizard through a funnel.

I expect you won't believe this, but it's true. The old devil knew the difference. He wouldn't take cow's milk. He gagged



BUSINESS IS PICKING UP.

William Gropper

and spit and wailed so loud you could almost hear him in the next room. But he wouldn't swallow a drop.

Then the boys thought maybe if Buttons fed him he'd take it. So they brought Buttons in and made him wheedle James T. into taking a swallow or two. But it wasn't no more than that—just a couple of swallows. James T. had another tantrum, and not all Button's diplomacy could make him take a drop more.

That was when the boys' patience gave out.

It seems that somewhere in the 21-car Hamstringer garage they found a brand new pressure grease-gun, never used. They brought that in, filled it with milk, struck the tube down the lizard's throat, and pumped milk into him.

It worked fine. Of course Buttons yowled like a maniac, and they had to tie him to the radiator, but afterwards old James T. seemed a lot stronger and began to try to talk. When I came in he was making all kinds of funny noises, interrupted by sucking smacks of those dry papery lips, and Buttons had his ear within an inch of the lizard's mouth, straining to catch the words.

"It's the same!" he yelled at me. "The same thing he's been saying all day!" His face was all lit up like he'd seen the Queen Sheba in her step-ins. "Once more, sir! Oh, just once more!" he said, bending down to the pink silk pillow again.

"Ah O oo O."

That's all I could make out of it, though the old mummy seemed to be trying awful hard to make sense, twisting his mouth into knots and following up with a couple of sucking smacks—*Mff! Mff!*

"Ah O oo Ah ig guee ungd!"

And damned if he didn't try to smile!

Old Button's eyes were almost falling out of his head by this time. "It's on the tip of my tang!" he yelled. "Once more,

Mr. Hamstringer sir! Your faithful owld retainer prays you! Just *once* more—Ah!"

A kind of spasm had shaken the lizard just then, and he'd belched right in Button's ear. Apparently the prize Jersey's milk wasn't so good. Buttons jumped like he'd been shot, wiped his ear, and screamed at us:

"E's dying! You've killed him! Ah, my sewl, I must try a-gain! Please, Mr. Hamstringer! For the lavv of Gawd and your cantry—once more!"

For a while it didn't look like old James T. would ever do anything again except puke and gag and belch. He made a terrible mess. The old lizard was going out, all right. But Buttons, smeared with filth and sweating like a cart-horse, was bound he wouldn't give up. He kept wiping his ear on the pink silk sheet and "praying" for a repeat of the Message to Posterity.

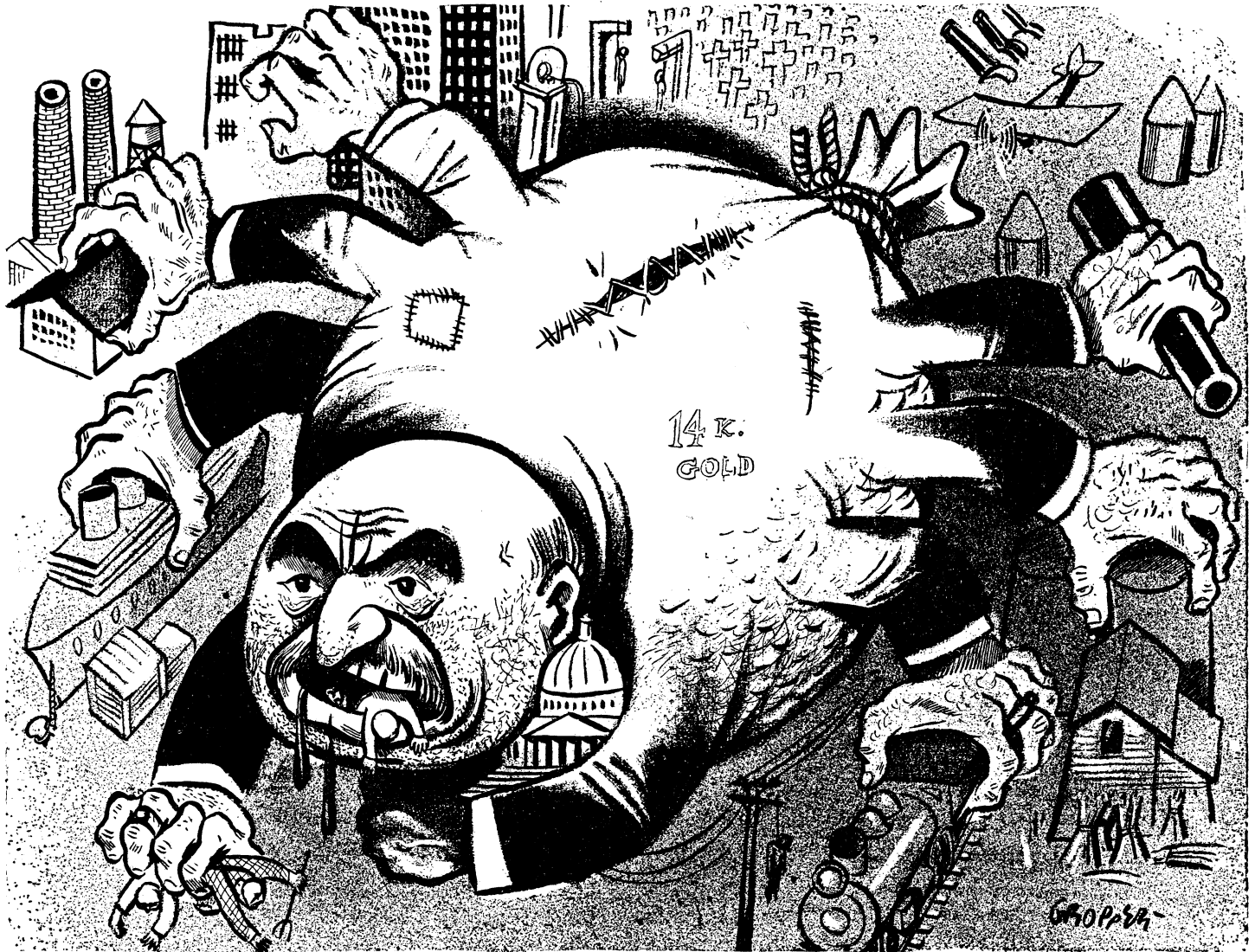
When James T.'s face suddenly went three shades yellower and the gagging and belching quit. I thought it was over. But it seemed the old boy had one more surprise for the world up his sleeve. Just as we were sure he'd stopped breathing for good, he filled his lungs to the limit and bellowed—at least it was so much louder than his earlier noises that it sounded like a bellow:

"Ah hole you ho! Ah hole you. Ah hib guee a hunb'd!"

He ended with a cracked cackly laugh that used up the air in his lungs, and he never filled them again.

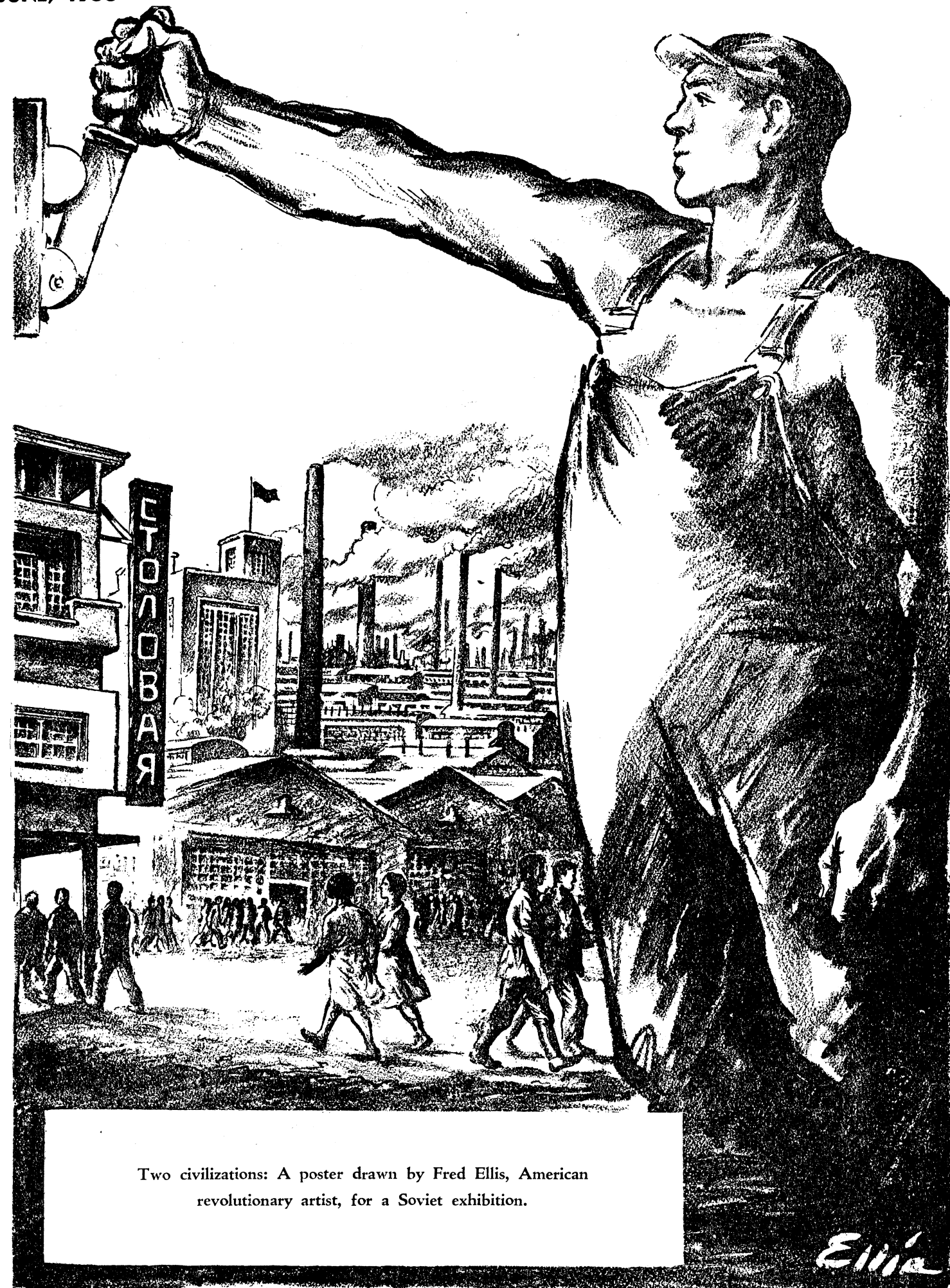
I doubt if Buttons realized for five minutes that the old buzzard was dead. His face was—well, like if the Queen of Sheba had took off her step-ins. He was down on his knees again, his arms stretched up and out, his eyes rolled up to the whites, saying over and over in a strangled voice:

"I tewld you sewl! I tewld you I'd live to be a hundred!—Ew mahster, mahster! Thank Gawd, I understood!"



BUSINESS IS PICKING UP.

William Gropper



Two civilizations: A poster drawn by Fred Ellis, American revolutionary artist, for a Soviet exhibition.



# America in Europe

Karl Radek

**T**HE meaning of the speech which Mr. Norman Davis, the American representative, delivered on May 22 at the Geneva Disarmament Conference, can be summed up briefly as follows:

America does not undertake to enter into war against the violators of peace agreements, but it pledges itself not to offer any resistance to an economic and political boycott against the aggressor, that is to say, it pledges itself to take part in such a boycott.

In order to judge the significance of this declaration we must call to mind what President Wilson declared in December 1914, some months after the outbreak of the world war:

"We have nothing to do with this war; its causes do not concern us."

The United States, after having taken part in the war which did not concern it, refused to put its signature to the Treaty of Versailles and kept out of the League of Nations in order not to be pledged to interfere in European affairs. "The United States cannot subordinate its decisions to any body standing higher than its own authority"—that was the main argument of the Senate. In the year 1930, at the Naval Disarmament Conference in London, when Stimson declared himself ready, provided France supported the decisions, to take part in a consultative pact, he was openly disavowed by Hoover. And now the United States wishes to undertake to participate in an economic boycott against an attacking country!

What are the causes of this change in American policy?

In the comprehensive literature on the most recent history of America, we find almost nothing about the causes which led the United States to take part in the world war. The writers represent the matter as if America had been concerned about the fate of democracy, as if it entered the war as a protest against the inhuman manner in which Germany conducted submarine warfare. In reality, America's decision to enter the war was determined by the fact that the British fleet had succeeded in cutting Germany off from the American market. America's powerful industry, developed still further during the war, was working at full pressure for the entente powers. When the Entente Powers had exhausted their stocks of gold, their foreign bills and their shares in American undertakings, they received huge credits from the American banks. When Germany had built so many submarines that it could commence to blockade England and France, the United States was faced with the alternative, either to take part in the war on the side of the Entente, or to lose the credits granted to England and France, to let industry come to a standstill, i.e., to be involved in a tremendous economic crisis as the price for avoiding war.

The United States decided for war. It emerged from this war not only with a powerful industry, with a modern fleet, but also as a creditor nation. The petty bourgeois masses, disappointed by the war, demanded that America should refuse to interfere any further in European affairs. Of course, this was not the reason why the American capitalists abandoned European politics. If the leaders of American finance capital succeeded in drawing America into the war, they could also have drawn America into the League of Nations. The leaders of American finance capital thought, however, that they had got the whole world in their pocket and that they could dictate their conditions to it. They could not, however, submit to the decisions of a body in which Serbs, Czechs, Lithuanians, etc., also had a say, not to speak of Chile and Peru, which were the objects of American policy. Apart from the war debts, the various countries owe America 17,000 million dollars so-called commercial debts. Of this sum Europe owes 5,600 million,

Canada 4,400 million, South America 3,000 million, Central America about 3,000 million and Australia 1,000 million. The United States did not abandon world politics, but it worked in the first place with the dollar, in the consciousness that the dollar is more powerful than guns, for it commands the guns.

This also explains the reason why, before Japan's attack on China, the United States possessed a fleet which proved to be inadequate. America did not carry out Wilson's naval program. At the Washington Conference in 1922, America obtained the right to possess the same strength in ships of the line as England. At the London Conference in the year 1930, the same right was extended to cruisers. As a matter of fact the strength of the American fleet at the present time is somewhere between 60 and 70 per cent. of the British. In Washington the United States, through the pressure of the dollar, succeeded in dissolving the Anglo-Japanese alliance. America was convinced that, through the further pressure of the dollar, in the question of the debts, it would induce England to act together with it in the Far East. It had such confidence in the dollar that it neglected to develop naval bases in the Pacific Ocean. America's naval power did not extend beyond the Hawaiian Islands; what lay beyond was delivered over to the attacks of Japan. America's omissions in regard to naval armaments are not to be attributed to any pacifist illusions, but to unbounded confidence in the power of the dollar.

So long as China was an open door for all capitalists, the independence of China meant dependence upon the dollar, as everything was dependent upon the dollar at that time. When, however, the dollar fell sick, Japan annexed Manchuria. When America declared that Japan's action had rendered the Washington Agreement invalid and that it would now arm in the Far East, it was already too late. Of what use was it that the Anglo-Japanese alliance had been dissolved? England avoided joint action with the United States; it would demand a high price for doing so.

Trusting in its financial power, America invested huge sums in Europe. In Germany alone it has invested 4,200 million, in long-term loans, in addition to the millions of short-term loans, and not calculating the sums invested in shares. The United States thought: France can rattle the sabre, we will rattle the gold. America did not foresee the consequences of a crisis, the impossibility of creating markets for the rationalized German industry: nor did it realize that vast masses of the petty bourgeoisie would be mobilized under the flag of nationalism. America is now trembling lest the warlike collisions which are possible in Europe should endanger its huge capital investments.

The United States is fighting on two fronts: against Japan, which prevents its expansion in Asia, and against England which is keenly competing against it in South America. In a war with England the United States could only rely on France, but on the other hand, owing to its investments in Germany, it has to oppose France.

In this situation, therefore, America is forced to abandon its attitude of proud reserve and interfere in European affairs in order, as far as possible, to protect its interests. Therefore America urged the League of Nations to adopt decisions which are directed against Japan, namely, not to recognize Manchukuo, whereby very little was achieved. It wishes now to set up an authoritative body to which one can appeal in the event of an aggression, including an act of aggression on the part of Japan. Negotiations are going on behind the scenes regarding neutrality and boycott. Germany is to leave France in peace and France is to leave Germany in peace. The debts to America are not to be endangered. It is probable, however, that America hopes in these negotiations to achieve something against Japan.

# The Royal Wrench and Other Stories

Robert Forsythe

THE British cabinet is in session. Ramsay MacDonald is in the chair.

"Shall we begin?" asks Ramsay. "As I was saying to the Countess of Warwick at Lady Westminster's last night . . ."

"What's this meeting about today, anyhow?" asks Stanley Baldwin.

"We're putting an embargo on Russia," says Walter Runciman.

"I thought we did that last week," says Mr. Baldwin.

"We just threatened to do it then," answers Mr. Runciman.

"One thing I learned from reading Disraeli," says Sir John Simon, "is never to mislead a sovereign power. If you promise them an embargo, give it to them."

"I still haven't got it clear," says Mr. Baldwin. "I know we're going to have the embargo, but just why?"

"As I was saying to Chevvie, the Earl of Norfolk last night . . .", begins Mr. MacDonald.

"It's because the Russians persist in trying the British Engineers," says Mr. Runciman.

"Yes, I know the case," says Mr. Baldwin, "but why? I know the reasons we give, but just between us here, the real reasons?"

"Really, Mr. Baldwin. . . ."

"Sir Eric Sutton was just saying to me yesterday. . . .", begins Mr. MacDonald.

"But why?" persists Mr. Baldwin. "I'm a bit mystified about it all."

"Well, as a matter of fact, Mr. Baldwin. . . ."

"Yes?"

". . . . It's on account of the wrench."

"The wrench?"

"Yes, sir, the wrench."

"What wrench?"

"Mr. Baldwin, really . . . I don't think we should. . . ."

"What wrench!"

"Well, sir, if you insist . . . *His Majesty's wrench!* (in a whisper).

They rise in unison and hold their glasses aloft.

*"His Majesty, the king!"*

They sit down.

"Do I understand that we're practically declaring war with Russia over a wrench," demands Mr. Baldwin.

"As Margot Asquith, the present Duchess of . . . . . was saying to me only last Wednesday, no Thursday, no Wednesday. . . ." begins Mr. MacDonald.

"I'm afraid you don't understand, Stanley," says Sir John. "The wrench in question is more than a wrench. It possesses the added sentimental value of being His Majesty's personal bathroom wrench."

They rise in unison and hold their glasses aloft.

*"His Majesty, the king!"*

They sit down.

"He fixes leaking spigots with it," Sir John goes on. "Puts new washers on, and that sort of things. Rather a treasured possession of His . . . ."

Our Roving Reporter listens in on the Whitehall Boys, and learns it was all a hideous mistake. Then he overhears two of Restless Ramsay's comrades in New York.

Two members of the cabinet arise and hold their glasses aloft.

"Sit down!" says Stanley. "I'm still foggy about it. Did some of the Bolshies steal the wrench?"

"Well-l-l, not exactly."

"How, then."

"The truth of the matter is, Mr. Baldwin, that one of the young men from Metropolitan-Vickers was up at Buckingham Palace fixing the — the . . . . And by mistake carried off the wrench in his kit. He was later transferred to Moscow for a little work . . . ."

"What'd he belong to?" asks Stanley. "The British Wrench Agents?"

". . . . To do a little work."

"Why don't you ask the fellow to send it back?" asks Stanley. "Who is it, anyhow?"

"A man named Thornton, Mr. Baldwin, and unfortunately . . . he has lost the wrench."

"Lost it, eh? Lost it, where?"

". . . . Lost it in a turbine, Mr. Baldwin."

Mr. Baldwin is suddenly stopped. He stands with his hands on his cheek, nodding to himself.

"In a turbine, eh? Ah-hah . . . well, that's a bit different . . . Just dropped it by mistake, eh? I can see that. And I can see also that we have to get back His Majesty's favorite wrench."

They rise and lift their glasses aloft.

*"His Majesty, the Wren . . . The King!"*

They sit down.

"I thought you'd understand it when it was explained," says Sir John.

"Rather a terrible people, the Bolsheviks, having those turbines sitting around carelessly like that," says Stanley. "An embargo is the very least they could expect . . . . But do you think there's any chance of getting back the wrench? If we don't get it back, the Ki—the old boy will not be amused."

"As I was saying to the Duke of Twithamamshire-on-wi . . ."

"Ramsay!" exclaims Stanley. "Why couldn't you go over and bring back the wrench! You haven't been anywhere for almost a week."

"I don't think that would do," says Sir John quietly. "We sent one MacDonald over and he's still there. Not the same family of course. I don't believe the Moscow MacDonald would know the Duke of Twithamamshire."

"Dear old Twithy," says Ramsay reflectively.

WELL, it's all settled.

What's all settled?

The Revolution's over. You fellows can all go back to work. I've just been reading Lewis Gannett in the *Herald-Tribune* and he says there's nothing to this stuff about a Revolution in America. You might as well stop fooling around with it, all you Communists, and go back to work.

Back to what work?



"SORRY—WE THOUGHT YOU WUZ A FARMER."

Phil Bard

Back to work.

You mean it? We can't have a Revolution? Gannett won't stand for it?

Gannett won't stand for it. The idea makes him sore. And do you know what else? Harry Hansen's against it, too.

Harry Hansen!

Yes, and William Soskin.

Soskin!

Yes, Soskin. And do you know what else? Brisbane's against it, too.

No, not Brisbane! I can believe everything else, but not Brisbane. You mean Arthur Brisbane, the friend of the people? Arthur Brisbane.

Well, that's going too far, that is. That's carrying a joke too far. You can make me believe a lot of things but you can't make me believe Arthur Brisbane's against the Revolution. You mean Brisbane who owns the Ziegfeld theatre? You'll be telling me next Hearst is against it.

Hearst is against it.

You mean William Randolph Hearst? You mean the friend of the working man? You mean Hearst who's helping the working man with the sales tax?

I know . . . It seems funny, but Hearst, too.

You'll be telling me J. P. Morgan next. You'll be telling me J. P. Morgan's against the Revolution and I heard him with my own ears helping the block-aid plan over the radio. He was for the block-aid plan. You don't call that being against the working man, do you?

Well, after all Morgan is a pretty rich man. . . .

Comrade, I dislike to see this mean streak in you. It's not

nice to jump on a man when he's down. Didn't you see that Mr. Morgan hadn't made a cent in three years. . . . Couldn't even give the government a penny in taxes? What you should realize, Comrade, is that we're all in the same boat these days; we're all poor together.

I just thought Mr. Morgan on his yacht and all that. . . .

Do you think he gets any pleasure out of that, Comrade, when he realizes that he hasn't made a penny in three years?

I'm sorry. . . I hadn't thought of it that way.

Well, I'm not criticizing you, Comrade. We all make mistakes.

All I started out to say was that Gannett was against the Revolution. You wouldn't want to make Mr. Gannett mad, would you, Comrade?

No, sir.

He says you fellows ought to go home and forget about the Revolution.

Comrade, I'd like very much to go home. Maybe we could all go to your home?

Well, as a matter of fact, Comrade. . . . You see it's like this, Comrade. . . . I haven't got a home either.

Perhaps it would be better if we all went to Mr. Gannett's home. How would that strike you, Comrade?

Comrade! Why, that's wonderful, Comrade! How is it I never thought of it myself. By all means, we must go to Mr. Gannett's home. He'll be expecting us. He'd be offended if we didn't come.

We'll go, of course, in a non-revolutionary manner.

Naturally, Comrade, in a non-revolutionary manner.



"SORRY—WE THOUGHT YOU WUZ A FARMER."

*Phil Bard*



"SORRY—WE THOUGHT YOU WUZ A FARMER."

*Phil Bard*

An eye-witness account of the "baby strike" in Pennsylvania, involving hundreds of young children brutally exploited in the shirt factories.

## The Revolt of the Children

Helen Kay

*The golf links lie so near the mill  
That almost every day  
The laboring children can look out  
And see the men at play.*

—SARAH CLEGHORN

NOT that the golf links were too near the mill, or that the laboring children could see the men at play, but that they slaved for penny pittances was why several hundred "teen age workers" in and near Allentown, Pennsylvania, struck.

The whistle blew through the factory. The presser who cut the cardboard to put into the shirts, who attached the shirts, and ironed them, and then pinned the shirts, and for all this got fourteen cents for a dozen, put down the iron, and stopped working. The seamers who sewed the seams to make the shirts, and who got four and half cents a dozen, took their feet off the treadles, and stopped working. The cuffers who turned the bands to make the cuffs, and who got two cents a dozen, folded their hands and stopped working. The trimmers who cut the threads off the shirts, and earned a cent and a half a dozen—these were the youngest of all—put down their scissors and stopped working. And as the last whistle shrieked its last toot, the shirt factories were empty.

From the very first day of the strike picket lines were formed before each mill. Girls and boys of thirteen, fourteen and fifteen, marched with signs carrying their demands, "Down with the sweat shop", "We want a decent living standard".

Before the Freezer mill in Allentown the picketing was particularly strong. Kidding and laughing, the youthful strikers were led by two little girls sucking lollypops. Between each lick they yelled, "Boo! boo! Freezer!" Encouraged by the other boys and girls the boos grew louder. But Mr. Freezer could apparently take the razzberry for he remained standing on the steps of the factory (guarded by several cops) and watched the picket line wind its way forward and back, forward and back.

An older boy shouted: "What do you do with the sweat in the sweat shop?"

"That's my profits", came Freezer's answer.

So great was the publicity of this first "baby strike" and so horrible the exposed conditions, that Governor Pinchot sent an investigating committee to study the conditions in the sweat shops of Northampton and Lehigh Counties. And Mrs. Pinchot paraded with the child pickets, timed to the pre-arranged click of news-reel and newspaper cameras.

On the upper platform in the dimly lighted Allentown City Council Chamber sat the Committee for investigating sweatshop conditions in Northampton and Lehigh Counties. In the long benches below the platform sat "teen age workers" of Allentown and Northampton ready to give testimony.

Charlotte E. Carr, deputy Secretary of the State Department of Labor, the Reverend Willis D. Mathias, of the Emanuel reformed Church, Clarence J. Moser, business representative of the Central Labor Council for Allentown and vicinity, Dr. Harry L. Baker, Dr. Charles Haff, of the Haff Hospital in Northampton, and A. F. Tidabock, official of the Northampton and Bath Railroad, and president of the Rotary Club, were the investigators.

The investigated numbered nearly a hundred children from six shirt shops of Allentown and Northampton, the Penn-Allen,

the Freezer, the Adelphi, the D. and D., Bernstein and Sons, and the Cuddy Shirt.

At first the questioning of the children was stiff and formal. The "baby strikers", as they were called by the newspapers, were afraid of the impressive array of grown ups on the platform. Their first statements were yanked out of them by stilted questions. "How old are you? Is your father working? Where do you work? How long have you been working?" As a result the answers were given in the same manner.

But soon the children warmed up. They became heated from the fire of their indignation, and tales of exploitation equal only to the conditions of child laborers during the early development of the factory system in England poured forth.

"I'll paste you against the wall like a picture, you blasted little son of a bitch", and that's what he told me when I wasn't working fast enough." The speaker was a little blonde girl of 16 who looked no more than 12. "There are six children in my family and counting my father and mother it makes eight in the whole family. My brother he's nineteen and I'm sixteen and we're the only ones in the family working.

"I was one of three that used to have to come to work in the morning at 3 a. m. I had to walk four miles to get to work, and for all that I only got three and sometimes four dollars a week."

Mary was a trimmer, she cut the threads off the shirts, but the same story was told by the cuffers, the yokers, the binders, the seamers, the pressers, the buttoners, and the machine operators.

From a dark haired child of 15: "In the factory that I worked in, we had no chairs. We had to sit on boxes with no backs, and sometimes we worked right through with no lunch time.

"He calls us all kinds of names, the boss does. He don't care what he says to us. When the inspectors come he chases those that are too little to work out the back door. The boss has cops on the watch to look out for the inspectors. I saw him give money to the cops."

A member of the committee asked the girl: "I can't understand why your mother lets you work."

The answer came back very simply, "She didn't want me to do it, she had to."

An older woman who worked in the mill, and who had five children to support, said she never received more than \$5 a week. She told of three little boys of fourteen years, who worked so hard that they curled up and went to sleep in one of the shirt bins. "Get up! What are you doing there," I asked them, and they answered that they'd been working day and night, from two to six a. m., and then again in the afternoon, and they were just so tired they had to go to sleep."

The investigators again asked a question, "Why do you think they employ so many children and so few adults?"

"Because they want these little playthings," Mrs. T . . . answered, "Every shirt factory is alike, they want to do just what they please with the little ones. They're used to getting whippings, and they'll take it from the boss. I saw them grab one boy by the collar and throw him down the stairs. They slap and hit the little girls, and often they go home crying. But what can their mothers do?"

Child after child told the same story. Mary, aged 14, a trimmer who usually earns one dollar a week, six in her family, one brother working, father unemployed for three years; Gertrude, aged 14, a machine operator in one of the shirt



H. J. Wagsdger

### Creed of Nazi clergymen:

“God has created  
me a German.  
Germanism is a  
gift of God, and  
God wants me to  
fight for my  
Germanism.  
Service in war is  
not a violation of  
Christian  
conscience but  
is obedience to  
God.”

shops, earns three dollars a week, but lost four weeks pay when her employer skipped town in the middle of the night; Florence, aged 14, boxes shirts, makes about three to five dollars a week, also lost four weeks pay, father unemployed two years, nine in family; Roger, 14, trimmer, makes about one dollar a week, six in his family, one brother and one sister working, but father unemployed four years. John, aged 18, a presser, earns about three dollars a week, only one of eight in family working; Lou's, aged 18, working since 15, button sewer by trade, boss ran off with month's pay amounting to fifteen dollars, only one of six working; Oscar 17, started to work when he was 14, twelve in family, only he and sister, 14, are working.

The investigating committee was “horrified” and “shocked” not so much by the actual exploitation for profit, but by the “looseness of the morals of the manufacturers.” The sweatshop is a training camp for prostitution.

A pretty red-headed girl shyly related an incident, many times repeated by other girls from other mills. “The foremen they don't care where they put their hands. They touch us all over. And if we say ‘stop’ why then we're given the hardest jobs to do, and are cheated all the time.

“‘Red Headed Elsie’ he calls me. When I work overtime he always says: ‘Come on, Elsie, I'll show you how to make money, you don't have to work in a factory all your life.’ And when I won't go out with him, he tries it on the other girls.”

Mrs. B. . . . told of how her daughter was fired because she resented the advances of the foreman. “But we needed the money so bad, that I went back to the boss, and I says to please take my girl back on the job, and he said he'd do me that favor. But then he never let my girl earn anything. When she'd iron the shirts he'd say there was a wrinkle in them, and rumple them all up and send them back for her to do all over again. Then my girl had to quit anyway because she couldn't stand it anymore. When he met her on the street, he said there was one way she could earn better money, if she only had some brains.”

For hours the investigation continued, through the whole afternoon, and into the night, and for hours the children told of

beatings, insults, slaps, abuse hurled at them; of children being put into the toilets when the state inspectors came, to keep the inspectors out and hide the miserable conditions of the lavatories, of finding bed bugs and roaches from dirty toilets in their lunches, of burns from the hot irons, of hands chapped and sore from the starch and wet cloths used to iron the shirts, of skipped lunch periods, no rest time, and no pay for hours upon hours of overtime work, of children getting T. B. due to gas leakage from the iron connections, unheated work rooms in winter, with the children so cold that they worked in their hats and coats.

Each child that spoke ended up with “I haven't told all I want to tell. There's so much, I don't know where to begin.”

Miss Ruth Scandrett, formerly chief child labor inspector in Alabama who was in the Lehigh Valley studying child labor in the sweatshops for the National Child Labor Committee, when these strikes brought to a dramatic head the exploitation of boys and girls, reported: “I have become hardened by my years in the south to child labor and sub-standard conditions but never have I seen so many children work for so little or under such conditions as exist in Pennsylvania today.”

The testimony proved that the only reason for child labor from the child's viewpoint are unemployment and lack of relief. The reasons from the manufacturers viewpoint are: cheaper and more docile workers.

The relief question works in an interesting manner. The lack of it drives the children into the mills, and at the same time the child in the mill cuts off the relief.

A local official of Northampton stated “The sweat shop is better than no industry at all. When these children work, we don't have to give their parents so much relief.”

It was for this reason that the Chamber of Commerce of Northampton and the Industrial Department of the Pennsylvania Power and Light Company brought the sweatshop manufacturers into Pennsylvania from New York and Connecticut with the inducement of “cheap and contented labor in Lehigh Valley”, plus long term exemption from taxes, and free rental for the first three months.



Creed of Nazi  
clergymen:

“God has created  
me a German.  
Germanism is a  
gift of God, and  
God wants me to  
fight for my  
Germanism.  
Service in war is  
not a violation of  
Christian  
conscience but  
is obedience to  
God.”





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Shall the artist passively play the "prophetic role" of the visionary? Or shall he fight on the side of the working class? A plea for action.

## The Authors and Politics

Edwin Seaver

DEAR Mr. Rosenfeld:—I see by your article, "The Authors and Politics," in the May issue of Scribner's Magazine, that you are "somewhat bored with the American author." Not only bored, but disgusted, especially with the "conduct of the large body of writers who took the sensational swing to the left." You accuse these writers with having betrayed the historic function of the artist, which you deem to be the "prophetic role" of "vision," and of having espoused instead the cause of "the world," "to defend its special interests."

Frankly, I find it difficult to grapple with your quaint and somewhat theological phraseology, although I do not think that such visionaries and mystics as Morgan, Rockefeller, Ford, Mellon, Hoover, et al, or any goodsized bishop or cardinal would have any such difficulty or disagree with you in any particular. "The role of detachment," as Romain Rolland has pointed out, "pleases the political masters, for the detachment of the aesthetes isolates them from the arena where the destinies of people are decided."

As I understand it, you argue that it is not the material things that concern the artists, but only the attitude of people toward materials, and since "the human psyche is strongly acquisitive and materialistic" nothing really worthwhile is to be gained by changing from a capitalist society to a socialist society. As a proof of your argument you cite the "change to state capitalism" in Soviet Russia. "And we have had the opportunity to observe that experiment almost fifteen years," you state triumphantly.

You will excuse me, Mr. Rosenfeld, if I say that you may have had the "opportunity" to observe the Russian "experiment" for almost fifteen years, but that you have certainly profited very little by that opportunity. I do not wish to argue this point with you here. If you will trouble to read Ella Winter's "Red Virtue," to mention only one book—the most recent—in an enormous library of available material, you may come to understand what I mean.

In the same way, may I suggest that if you took the trouble to examine the "whole tin armor of Marx," especially that part of the armor which protects and strengthens the brain, you could not be guilty of the sort of solemn nonsense you indulge in so freely in your article. You would not, for instance, so absurdly and ignorantly relish the words of your "clever contemporary," that "the Marxist conceives of the human being as a large intestine in search of food." You would not fail to see any difference, as by your own admission you do now, between the objectives of the Communist Party and those of the Republican and Democratic parties, or even of "those Tories like Paul Elmer Moore." You would not on the one hand libel your fellow man as being predominantly acquisitive and on the other hand spout about vision. (From whence comes this extraordinary and virginal vision you are talking about? Is humanity to be divided into acquisitive human beings and non-acquisitive artists?) You would not say that "the last thing they (the Communists) actually desire is "a change in the spirit of life." Have you ever heard, Mr. Rosenfeld, of a man by the name of Lenin?

For my own part, in spite of your article I shall continue to distrust those who talk of your artist's vision and at the same time are disgusted by the artist's demonstrating "in conjunc-

tion with communistic labor defense organizations." What kind of a tinker's damn does all your vision amount to if the innocent Scottsboro boys are to burn? In the face of Alabama justice, of Massachusetts justice, of California justice—in the face, I say, of capitalist justice—what do you suppose William Blake would have considered to be the historic role of the artist? Or Shelley? Or Tolstoy? Or Emerson? Or Thoreau? Or any artist or writer living or dead who is or ever was worthy of the name?

One does not need a microscope, Mr. Rosenfeld, to see that your vision crawls with its own disintegration. It is part and parcel of the decadent bourgeois ideology which you embrace so devoutly in the name of art. "Thought can never be separated from action," says Rolland in pretty much the same words as Blake used. "Thought which will not act is not thought but stagnation, death."

Let the artist by all means cleave to his vision of life. But let him remember that his vision belongs to his fellow men and that it is meaningless divorced from their sweat and their blood and their dreams. And suppose his vision tells him that this "culture" of which you speak, and of which the artist likes to consider himself the guardian, is meaningless to the bourgeoisie who have demonstrated in any number of recent acts that culture is a secondary concern to them? And suppose he abhors war and cherishes peace and his vision tells him that the bandit nations of the world are ready to slaughter him and his children without a thought for his vision or his art or his culture? And suppose he hates injustice and poverty and misery and ignorance and cruelty and suffering and a thousand other things that I am sure you abhor as well as I, and his vision tells him that in a world dedicated to the profit motif profits come first and human values are only secondary?

If thus his vision prompts him, shall he renounce "the world"? Remain above the battle? Refuse to take sides? Cling to his "vision" and rant about the historic role of the artist? Idle questions, since history will decide for us—and probably to our doom—what we lack the courage and the intelligence and the energy to decide for ourselves.

No, it is precisely because I agree with you that the artist longs for "a society moved by the desire for consciousness itself and freed from absorption in material ends" that I find it impossible to remain above the battle. Where I disagree with you is that "perhaps the artist's stand has been a lost one from the beginning." If that is so, Mr. Rosenfeld, then all your talk about vision is doubly a farago. But I do not believe it to be so.

Permit me to quote Rolland to you once more and for the last time: "That unfruitful aestheticism which delights in 'thought for the sake of thought' is but an inch from the pit. It stinks of the corpse. He only lives who acts. . . . Our age is untamed, cruel, devastating; but it is also energetic, fecund. It destroys, and it renews. Now is not the hour to whine and to sulk over our task. Today we have to struggle with old ideas, the dying and murderous gods, and with millions of blind spirits which serve them blindly. It is our task today to create a new vision and a new humanity. We can achieve this only at the expense of energy and unhesitating sacrifice. What we need, what the world needs, is action—and peace, which is the outcome of action."

Who called that Secretary of the Treasury a piccolo player? An appraisal of the Roosevelt regime as, with haloes badly tilted, its medicine men sweat to charm away the crisis.

## Three Months of the New Deal

William F. Dunne

**T**HREE months after the wet March day which witnessed the inauguration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, scion of the Hudson River aristocracy in the role of St. George slaying the dragon of depression, the once shining halo is seen to be tilted at a precarious angle and more than a little tarnished in spite of the unlimited supply of 24-carat gilding available in the coffers of the House of Morgan—tax free.

In three months, with the aid of a press and propaganda campaign unequalled in intensity and scope since the Democratic predecessor of Roosevelt made war for Morgan, but which has served mostly to emphasize the growing acuteness of the crisis, President Roosevelt and his corps of high pressure pedagogues have succeeded in showing with considerable clarity that capitalism in the fourth year of the crisis is capitalism with its evils and contradictions increasing in geometric progression.

The developments of three months of "The New Deal" have shown again that business and especially "big business," consists, as Marx said, largely of cheating, chicanery and fraud practiced on the masses and on the less adroit and weaker sections of the capitalist cliques.

The crisis, whirling with the speed of Poe's maelstrom, engulfs the entire working class and the working farmers in ever greater misery; huge sections of the lower middle class continue to be dispossessed.

The bulging bulwark of the great dikes of faith, hope and promised charity built of pre-election propaganda and post-election ballyhoo of returning prosperity has so far prevented the stupendous Harriman, Mitchell and Morgan scandals from dissipating entirely the rosy mist of radio inspired optimism which many mistakenly took for the early gleams of the dawn of the new day.

But the mist thins and its place is being taken by a miasmatic fog indistinguishable, except for the mixture of New Deal perfume with its poisonous effects, from the vapors exuded by the Hoover collection of capitalist shamans.

The product distilled by the professorial witches of Endor whom Roosevelt has gathered around him differs from that of their predecessors, so far as the masses are concerned, only in its label.

The rim of the maelstrom now touches the steps of the White House. Into the sanctums of the President and his corps of pedagogues are being hurled scummy bits of "American business enterprise," only samples of the worst that is yet to come. Large flecks of spume, some of them disgustingly slimy, are flung on to the sheets of nice white paper covered with diagrams of The New Deal. More than one deck of cards has had to be sent to the White House laundry, say the authors of the Washington Merry-Go-Round.

Carpets which have muffled the tread of the representatives of all countries of the world—except the country of the proletarian dictatorship—as they came to be urged to hitch their badly creaking wagons to the star of the Roosevelt dictatorship of Wall Street imperialism and agree to extinguish all others, are now cluttered up with an interesting and informative collection of flotsam and jetsam thrown off from the periphery of the crisis.

Much of it the menials dare not touch and most of the family circle are away, having been dispatched upon various lucrative missions or engaged in highly paid scribbling for journals of national circulation—pickings of the Presidency

of the most powerful and richest imperialist country in the world. There it remains—and increases—much to the annoyance of the entirely well-bred and highly intellectual persons recruited by Roosevelt to shuffle and cut the neat piles of marked cards, irritating their delicate nostrils so sensitive to all unpleasant odors except those arising from the sweat, suffering and blood of millions of hungry working class men and women, employed and unemployed and myriads of their children.

In the growing pile of debris, swept from all corners of American capitalism, there are to be seen such contrasting bits as Morgan and a circus midget—exploited by a press agent almost as callous as those who thump the tub for The New Dealer; a grafting reforestation army toilet kit contract, involving the President's law partner, the President's confidential secretary and one Robert Fechner, for long years a high-salaried bureaucrat of the International Association of Machinists noted for the fervor with which he helped suppress rank and file revolts and now elevated, at the insistence of the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor, to acting as the representative of "labor" as the head of the forced labor camps. So incredibly brazen, cheap and sordid is this piece of racketeering that the conclusion is forced that word must have gone out to the choice coterie of cappers and housemen gathered to operate the Roosevelt Palace of Chance that the picking up of all loose chips left lying around by careless gamblers is not the least of their activities in connection with the New Deal.

Another bit of wreckage over which the academic feet of the Roosevelt laboratory staff stumble is the twisted body of the piccolo-playing secretary of the treasury, touted only a few short weeks ago as the most brilliant ornament in the cabinet collection but caught with his exquisitely tailored trousers down around his ankles when inquisitive senators, with ears cocked to the roar coming from the cities and countryside, read out the list of Morgan's companions and crumb-gatherers in a piratical enterprise entirely ethical from the viewpoint of bankers, brokers, three-card monte men and short change artists, but at which hungry toilers, ruined farmers and business and professional groups of the lower middle class look with angry eyes.

Morgan's reluctant admission that he had been saving up to take a hand in the New Deal by not paying any income tax for the years 1930-31 and the revelation that he sat in on the game with a bank roll of some \$338,000,000 has made it very hard for the Roosevelt press agency to explain what he meant by his remarks about freedom from Wall Street control during the election campaign. With Morgan's man in the key post of secretary of the treasury, explanation becomes impossible and the Roosevelt halo has not only been tilted but dented so badly that the work of goldsmiths like Baruch and Davis can only make it worse.

While relief for the unemployed is being cut to dimes and pennies—paid in second and third class groceries—or discontinued entirely throughout the country, the President's family confound the millions of jobless and underpaid employed workers by showing that there is no excuse for not securing pleasant and profitable employment if one really wishes to, and provided that one's father or husband is president of the United States. Daughter Mrs. Curtis Dahl is reported reliably to have accepted a contract for a series of articles at a large but unstated remuneration from "Liberty." A 22-year old son is now head of

an aviation company in Southern California. A gifted boy—the youngest airways company president in the world.

The wife of the president sets a shining example of industry for all the homeless and hungry jobless. If she got no more than a cent per word, the income from her syndicated articles alone could support at least 50 unemployed families at a much higher standard than the present charity relief.

All the professors clustered around the throne, their brains bursting with blueprints for the Promethean task of planning production and distribution under capitalism, are writing voluminous paid-in-advance messages of hope and cheer for the American people. There is no unemployment and no want, no unpaid labor, in and around the White House.

The press has turned over its pages to news of industrial recovery. The purchase of a new wine press by Antonio Andisto is hailed as a sign of recovery in the grape growing region and much surprises Antonio who has hitherto been somewhat shy about his business activities. Budget Director Douglas announces that 1,400,000 men have gone back to work. The press does not question his figures. If they are correct, this leaves only 15,600,000 unemployed. It is clear that the professors, accustomed to abstractions like curves on graphs and charts, consider the problem of unemployment practically solved. They refrain with great care, however, from giving out any figures regarding the *total amount* of employment. The statistics on strikes and wage disputes, dispensed even by the arch-reactionaries Davis and Doak, have been discontinued by the "progressive" Miss Charlotte Perkins heading the Department of Labor. There are flies in the ointment but the Roosevelt policy is to keep them out of sight of those who get salvaged.

With this policy the Socialist Party leaders and the liberal journals like the *New Republic* are heartily in accord. They go out of their way to find something in the Roosevelt program they can sell to their followers. Space permits only two examples—both typical.

An Associated Press dispatch from Pittsburgh on May 16 said:

*"Norman Thomas, Socialist candidate for President in 1932, said tonight: 'the best thing about President Roosevelt's message to the nations is the fact that it was addressed also to Russia . . . I hope it will be followed by complete recognition of Russia.'" The Socialist leader added: "I APPROVE OF THE MESSAGE AS A WHOLE."* (My emphasis, W.F.D.).

Just one statesman to another!

The *New Republic* supports editorially, in spite of contradictory figures furnished by its own writers like John T. Flynn which show that the rocketlike "recovery" in iron and steel was based in the first week in June on an increase in demand of 1.5 percent, the Roosevelt thesis of "marked recovery." It has selected perhaps the most reactionary of the Roosevelt "recovery" measures for its praise—the forced labor and militarization of 250,000 boys as a preliminary to including them in the armed reserves under the guise of creating employment. The *New Republic* italicizes "one dollar a day and board." This Roosevelt standard is that of farm labor 30 years ago. Progress! The Socialist Party leaders and the liberal journals are straining themselves to aid the New Deal. Their mild criticisms are directed only to various parts of it and this only because of the growing skepticism and distrust among the mass of the working population. The A. F. of L. press slobbers over with flunkeylike plaudits.

What accounts, then, given the almost undivided aid to and praise of the Roosevelt program by the orthodox press, for the increasing difficulties of the administration? The Communist Party press alone, and that of other working class organizations influenced by Communists, has exposed the Roosevelt program for what it is: An intensive extension, with its tempo dictated by the deepening crisis at home and internationally, of the basic program of Wall Street imperialism—multiplied ex-



Ref.  
Anton Refrigier

ploitation of the working class and quadruple oppression of the masses, Negro and white; the most rapid concentration and centralization of wealth in fewer hands; more open throwing of the government authority and power behind finance capital—and speedy preparation for a new war of imperialist conquest.

The difficulties of the Roosevelt regime within three months of the inauguration are caused mainly by the fact that, with huge masses of workers and farmers believing in the New Deal at election time, the express train speed of the crisis and its results have brought great disillusionment, anger and action.

Every deed has its own logic, as Lenin was fond of saying. And what has Roosevelt done?

He has encouraged and permitted the use of troops against workers and farmers on an unprecedented scale. Not since the Whisky Rebellion has America witnessed the use of troops against poverty stricken farmers as in Wisconsin and Iowa by Roosevelt henchmen.

Troops against workers in New Hampshire textile mills and against Illinois miners.

Renewed persecution and deportations of foreign born workers. A new wave of attacks on Negroes in the Democratic south.

A united front with Japanese imperialism against the heroic Chinese workers and peasants fighting for liberation, and against the Soviet Union, through the medium of a \$50,000,000 R.F.C. loan to the Nanking murder government just after it completed its betrayal of the Chinese people. At the same time, \$235,000,000 have gone for warships. The National Guard is to be made part of the regular army.

Roosevelt has raised the cost of living for every worker and farmer in the United States by his taxation program for the benefit of the bankers. (In one week the cost of mutton increased from 17 to 23 cents per pound at retail.)

The working farmers, by the system of crop limitation and loan banks, have been placed still more under the thumb of Wall Street government.

The budget is balanced on the bodies of the toilers.

Roosevelt's "industrial coordination" scheme is a reactionary



RAF.  
Anton Refrigier



THE BRAIN TRUST

TO THE NEVER-NEVER LAND



THE BRAIN TRUST

TO THE NEVER-NEVER LAND



HYMAN GELBERT

improvement in the militarization of industry and the working class, more far-reaching than that put in force during the World War, and, like the Wilson scheme, to be carried out with the active cooperation of the A. F. of L. bureaucracy.

Roosevelt's ambassador-at-large, Davis, has endorsed the Four Power pact, directed against the Soviet Union, utilizing Fascist Germany and Fascist Italy as the main spokes in the wheels of Wall Street's European chariot. Machado's bloody rule in Cuba and the breaking of all pledges to the Filipino people are typical of the Roosevelt colonial policy.

The wave of strikes, many if not most of them by unorganized workers, fighting for wage increases, the wide spread and

determined farm strikes and demonstrations, the anger aroused by the slash in ex-soldiers' pensions, the mass struggle of the unemployed, contain the answer to the failure of the Roosevelt regime to make greater headway with its offensive.

In the face of the demagoguery of the Roosevelt regime and on the basis of the necessity of the struggle for the right to work and live, for the elementary needs of food, clothing and shelter, in the growing consciousness of the need for uncompromising mass battle against imperialist war and the defense of the Soviet Union, in the need for the fight against capitalist dictatorship with democratic trappings and fascism following on its heels, against the betrayals of the Socialist Party leaders

and the agents of Wall Street at the head of the American Federation of Labor, the united front of the working class and its allies is being formed. There is every reason to believe that the revolutionary labor movement of American workers is taking shape on a broader base than ever before.

"Organization," said Lenin, "is the only weapon of an oppressed class." It is this weapon, tempered and welded in accord with the demands made upon Communists and the advanced sections of workers by the decline of capitalism, that must be placed in the hands of the American working class. With it can be defeated the imperialist program of robbery and war which Roosevelt attempts, more and more unsuccessful-

ly, to conceal behind the phalanx of strutting professors and the phraseology of The New Deal.

In the most rapid building of militant mass trade and industrial unions in basic industries, in the rapid molding of a powerful fighting opposition in the A. F. of L. and railway unions, and the inculcation of these organizations with the spirit of resistance to capitalism at every point, the training of a corps of new leaders from the ranks, lies the rough but straight road to the victorious struggle for power by the American workers—the road to Communism.

This is the New Deal for which increasing numbers of American workers, farmers and intellectuals will work and fight.



The crisis bust up his home, so Vic jumped the freights. This vivid short story is one of the first to describe the life of America's homeless youths.

## They Won't Let Us Birds Roost Nowheres

Jack Conroy

VIC SPEARS let go of the grab irons and tried to light running on his feet, but his knees buckled and his face plowed through the chat alongside the track. He could feel the blood starting and it was salty on his lips. He'd been riding freights long enough, God knows, to be adept at it, but his head was whirling and pounding. The world swung about him like a flashing pinwheel. His sloshing belly nearly turned over. He had wanted to get off to lie down and rest on a patch of green grass he'd spied as the train rambled through.

Vic lay for a while with the events of the past year fading in and out of his consciousness like a movie. There had been five boys of them at home, but now they were scattered to hell and gone. The dollar and a half in groceries that the Welfare allowed his mother and father wasn't enough to keep two alive, let alone five. One by one, the boys drifted away, "looking for work." Their mother begged them not to go, but the old man said nothing. He sat pulling his fingers to make the points crack or stared stonily out of the window. He had worked all his life, and now he was uprooted, the tentacles of habit waving impotently in the air and lashing in vain for some place to take hold and grow again. So the boys had all struck out. Seeing the country was not as much fun as Vic had thought it would be. No town wanted the homeless boys to light—thousands of them were infesting the railroads and cities. Vic had been from coast to coast three times. A bowl of stinky soup, a more stinky flop—zip!—out of town and on to the next soup and flop. A month before Vic had been through the city where he had left his mother and father. The house was vacant. The neighbors told him that the old folks had been evicted and the old man had been taken to the workhouse, the old lady to the poor farm. So Vic took to the freights again, having no place to stop. And wherever he went, he saw hordes of homeless wanderers in the same boat.

Fifty miles down the line one of the boys in the box car had produced a quart of Jamaica ginger and when the freight stopped beside a creek he jumped off and fetched some water in a rusty tomato can. It was like swallowing live coals, but it was somehow exhilarating. Through the mist that crept around him, Vic could see the other boys laughing wolfishly at him. He wanted to show that he could down it with the best of them.

*First to my lips,  
Then to my gums.  
Look out, guts,  
Here she comes."*

he declaimed, flourishing the can. But when the train swayed on the curves, Vic could feel the soup, water and jake rolling uneasily in his belly, and he wanted more than anything else in the world to get off the freight and to lie down somewhere on the green grass beneath the shade of a tree.

He had misjudged the speed of the train, a miasmic blur tortured his brain and eyes, and his legs were wobbly. So there he lay at the ends of the ties, his face bleeding, the knees

torn out of his pants and the flesh lacerated. He arose unsteadily and stumbled across to a grass plot behind an ornate brick building. He slumped down on the grateful coolth. Suddenly organ music throbbed in the air and childish, reedy voices piped:

*"Jesus loves me, this I know,  
For the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to him belong.  
They are weak but he is strong."*

Then he remembered it was Sunday. Jesus! How the old lady used to scrub his map of a Sunday and send him off with his brothers to Sunday school. He rose painfully to his feet and a stab in his groin reminded him of those amorous maidens in the straw on the box car floor. He should have known better than to go to them, but there were older guys there and they hadn't minded. Vic saw that a small door opened into an ante-room, and he crept inside to listen. The room was directly behind the pulpit and the pastor's rotund voice was booming.

The Rev. Schuyler Patterson was gratified to see a larger crowd than usual. The church had had a very small attendance and an infinitesimal offering when he took it over. The District Conference had known him to be a live wire who could make the church "go." And he had. He announced a series of sensational sermons, and utilized the radio, billboards and newspapers to pack them in. Dollar bills and even fives and tens fluttered onto the collection plate after he had exposed all of the harlots and misdoers of the town. He even gave the names and addresses of the town's scarlet women. The congregation listened avidly.

Then he announced a series of sermons on "Communism and the Hidden Hand of the Beast." For to-day he had prepared a particularly forceful and sensational denunciation of Russia. Those who relished the juicy sensationalism of his expose of the whores would not be entirely bereft, for he had provided for that exigency.

The Rev. Patterson liked to make a dramatic entrance into the church. He strode forward from the ante-room, his eyes lifted piously aloft. A stained window depicting Christ's agony on the cross cast a ruby aureole about his head.

The Rev. Patterson had the heartburn and his indigestion was plaguing him again. He resolved to eat only three eggs for breakfast hereafter and to eschew the third cup of coffee. He drew two chalky-sweet indigestion pills from his pocket and munched them with as solemn and godly a mien as he could command.

"Dearly beloved," he intoned sonorously. "For my text this morning I wish to refer you to two passages from the Holy Scriptures. The first is taken from the 15th Chapter of Revelations, the 4th verse: 'Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest'. The second is taken from the 19th Chapter of St. Matthew, the 14th verse: 'But Jesus said, Suffer little children,

and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven'."

"I want to speak to you today of an unhappy nation that has tried to put Jesus Christ out of its life; there the modern saints of Jehovah are tortured, women violated, bestial orgies conducted in God's only temples, and everything that is sacred defiled.

"Yes!" he shouted, his voice gathering strength. "Hordes of wild boys and girls are roaming from town to town, living in bestial vice and degradation. Maidens of tender age are carrying babies in their arms, not knowing or caring about the fathers thereof. Their bodies rot with venereal diseases, they are debauched by every fiendish vice that Satan has instigated in the slimiest depths of Gehenna. In order to rid itself of these half-human outcasts, anticipating that they might cause havoc to the heartless forces that encompassed their ruin, the Government recently lured a number of the wild boys and girls to a military post, enticed the starved wretches with promises of food. When thousands were assembled, the troops turned machine guns on them and mowed them down like ripened grain. No word of holy prayer was voiced up over their dishonored and unshriven remains. Are we, as Christians, to allow this to continue? Christ himself, the gentle Nazarene, would countenance a War, a Holy War such as was launched to wrest the Holy Sepulchre from the infidels, against the venomous force that is destroying the foundations of the home, undermining moral influences, and setting hundreds of thousands of boys and girls to wander in sin and shame and rags. I say, IT MUST NOT BE! . . ."

"That's the way to shout it, brother! You spit out a mouthful!" called out Vic, reeling toward the pulpit. "I'm one of them bums you're a-talkin' about and, take it from me, it ain't all honey and pie. Let me tell these here folks about it." The canned heat was still fuming in Vic's head, and he leered cockily at the electrified congregation and the astounded minister. The congregation thought it might be one of the pastor's theatrical stunts. Occasionally he had somebody to dress up and dramatize some phase of a sermon. They decided that Vic, if he was doing that, was a good actor. The blood on his face was blackening in clots; his eyes blazed insanely in their grimy setting.

Rev. Patterson was distressed. He didn't know what to do. His first impulse was to grab the boy and then to holler for help to throw him out. But a prudent afterthought reminded him that mad persons are always abnormally strong and the boy might do him some bodily harm before assistance arrived. Moreover, Vic seemed to divine the pastor's resolution; he withdrew a heavy paperweight from beneath the altar and brandished it menacingly.

"Don't lay 'ary finger on me," he shrieked. "I've been slapped and kicked and knocked around butt over appetite till I got a bellyful of it. You talked like you got a feeling for us boys and you ought to want to know how one of us has had one hell of a time for a year past.

"It's true what you said about breakin' up the home. My brothers is gone ever' which way and I don't never expect to see none of 'em no more. The old lady's in one place; the old man in another. With us it's root hog or die, every man for hisself and the devil take the hindmost.

"They do play lots of snides on us, like you said. I never knowed they'd used machine guns, but I been expectin' it. Some railroad bulls in Carolina ganged a bunch of us up an' told us they was going to give us a big feed and some clean clothes. But they railroaded us to a turpentine camp. They whupped us there on general principles whether we need it or not. Guys died ever' now and then and was buried in the swamp. One fellow they locked in a little box with only his head, arms and legs stickin' out. They smeared sugar water on him and let ants and mosquitoes eat on him. Wouldn't even let him out to do his business, so purty soon he stunk like a crapper and got so sick he couldn't eat. Even a well stomach couldn't hold down the greasy fatback and sour bread, though. I run away from there; one of the guards felt sorry for me because I was jist a kid. Not many is that lucky, let me tell you.

"That's true about the girls havin' kids, too. There was a girl in a box car with a gang of us on the L. & N. out of St. Louie. She was about fifteen, and she looked like she had a punkin stuck up under her dress. We ast her where the father of the kid was, so's he'd have to support it. 'Listen', she says. 'Supposin' you was walkin' through a patch of wild blackberry vines in your BVD's. Could you tell which brier stuck you the deepest?'. She was tryin' to get to some place where she could have the kid, but she waited too long. In the night she took to screamin' like she was on her last go-round. We didn't know how to help her none, and the kid was half-born before a bull chased us all off at a water tank. He took the girl to somebody's house and left her, but the kid was dead as a mackerel.

"They're clappy, too," he cried, his face twisting as the pain struck him more sharply. "They're eat up and rotten with the syph. Them two bitches set me up, all right, and I bet they fixed every bastard that went to 'em. There was ten of us in the car with 'em, but three guys was too wise, said nix, they'd try the Widow Five first.

"Never mind the way I make them goo-goo eyes. It's the jake. It's worse than canned heat. You can make a drink to knock the fillings out of your teeth by strainin' canned heat through a loaf of rye bread. But the jake is hotter. It burns all the way down and burns in your gut after it gets down. It makes you goofier than canned heat, but I know what I'm sayin'." His face cracked in a smile. "The canned heat bein' so hot in your belly reminds me of a joke I heard."

He told two dirty stories.

Suddenly his mood changed and he was weeping gustily. "I'm tired of hightailin' it ever'where," he sobbed. "They won't let me stop, they won't let us birds roost nowheres. . . ."

## Song to the Soldier

Rose Pastor Stokes

Workers in uniform—  
Farmers in uniform—  
We are your fathers!  
Your fathers, your brothers.  
Say will you aim at us?—  
Shoot at the hungry?  
Shoot at the mass?

Workers in uniform—  
Farmers in uniform—  
Come!  
To your class.

Workers in uniform—  
Farmers in uniform—  
We are your sisters!  
Your sisters, your mothers.  
Turn to your officers:  
"We will not shatter  
Bone of our bone!"

Workers in uniform—  
Farmers in uniform—  
Come!  
To your own!

Carefully selected exhibits at the Chicago fair ballyhoo a "century of progress" under capitalism. But a little observation reveals the rot beneath the glitter.

## The Chicago Fair

**C**HICAGO, enveloped in an unprecedented fog of ballyhoo, hears raucous shouts of good cheer from the press: "Business is booming." "The worst is past." "The Fair will be the turning point." "A light on a rock . . . guide the world to better things." "It will end the depression!"

Posted near the entrance to the World's Fair, for the benefit of 200,000 applicants for jobs, this sign:

**NO HELP WANTED**

— *Century of Progress*

An official booklet of the Fair proudly says: "The primary purpose . . . is to convey an understanding of the significance of . . . scientific achievements . . . Science knows no ethnic boundaries, it has no limitation of creed or nation."

The Fair took over Chicago's only Negro beach, which provided for the city's 250,000 Negroes their sole access to the Lake front. "An Atlantic City is being built at the Fair," the press exults, "so that 1,500 white visitors may cool off in Lake Michigan." No provision made elsewhere for the Negro workers—no guarantee that there will not be a repetition of the 1919 race riots if they venture on the Jim Crow beaches nearby. While the Negroes used it, the beach was allowed to remain unsafe; several lives were lost each year; heads were split on the rocky bottom. Now, the Jantzen Company, which has bathing suits to sell, has removed the danger points, digging special depths, since 1,500 white visitors daily are expected.

The Fair exhibits a thousand cunning devices that make living effortless, and reduce household drudgery to a matter of pressing a button—machinery to warm you in winter, cool you in summer, open doors, dispose of waste, self-cleaning, self-adjusting, little masterpieces of applied science.

Within the shadows of the Fair buildings are huddles of miserable packing box hovels, where unemployed workers cling close to the barren sand and cinder shore of Lake Michigan, combing garbage cans for food, living like hunted animals. Many of them have been forced out, but in hidden recesses, between the large boulders, they can be found from 49th street to the catacombs underneath Wacker Drive. The press, when it peers into these lower depths at all, sheds crocodile tears: "Life has not beaten them, it has just passed them by. They are not bitter, they are simply spiritless, the cold hand of economic adversity has chilled them into insensibility; they are even quite proud of their little settlements." But Roosevelt's "Forgotten Men" in their wretched hiding place write their own comment on this bitter lie. In chalk and paint, they have put up their slogans: "Vote Communist." "Down with Police Terror." "Work or Un-

employment Insurance." And here, at last, the color line is smashed; white and Negro, native and foreign born, with few exceptions Chicago's homeless workers fraternize as comrades in a common cause.

All the monopoly trusts are displaying their methods of production—a production that has no markets. General Motors will make Chevrolets, exhibit the Belt System in full operation, except—

Except that they will turn out one Chevrolet every twenty minutes, thus allowing for an attractive slow-motion demonstration of efficiency methods, and completely masking the merciless man-killing speed-up which in the factory spews out a car every few seconds. The company spy system, the company police system, the company blacklist system, are not among the exhibits.

The American Tel & Tel. shows in its exhibit how a message is transmitted.

It does not show how many million phones have been removed from impoverished homes in the last few years.

Want to see how coal is mined? A beautifully executed exhibit of a coal mine is there, with all the modern safety devices known.

The only things missing are a few realistic pictures of the mining regions of Illinois, not so far away, where safety devices are unknown, where hired thugs of the Insull-Peabody Coal Co. enforce a reign of terror where homes of workers are broken into without warrants, the workers shot down in cold blood, and the frame-up system is routine police business.

A Century of Progress turns to the past to picture, by inference, capitalism's benevolent sway. Mussolini sent over the Emperor Caligula's slave galley.

Mussolini's own torture chambers for revolutionists, the sadistic ruffians that rule Yugoslavia and Roumania, Hitlerite Germany's "Brown Houses" of assassination, Machado's murder gang, the electric chair of Sacco and Vanzetti, and Tom Mooney's cell—these are not on exhibition.

The Fair was made possible by the pennies of school children, unpaid teachers, organized and unorganized labor, wrung from them by compulsion with the aid of their A. F. of L. leaders.

Nothing is free. It costs a dime to use a comfort station in A Century of Progress.

The Fair is "International." Fascist Italy is there, Nazi Germany, the brutal Balkan governments, pogromist Roumania, little Belgium is not overlooked, nor the reactionary Mexican regime that is built on the bodies of revolutionary workers, imperialist England,—all symbols of capitalist achievement, exemplars of "A Century of Progress."

Soviet Russia was not invited.





HVGO  
GELLERT

## Clara Zetkin

Gertrude Haessler

**“W**E must fill every member, every working man and every working woman, with the conviction that although their will and their deeds may be but a drop, nevertheless it may be the drop which will fill to overflowing the cup of the revolutionary will to act. If we succeed in working and fighting in this manner, the revolutionary wave will again well up from the depths of objective forces and to it will unite itself the will of the masses under the leadership of the Communist Party, tense for the fight, driving the wave of revolution forward with irresistible power, so that it swallows up bourgeois society. Let us exert every effort to make the wonderful proud slogan of the Young Soviet Pioneers a reality in our Party: “Always Ready!”

This is how Clara Zetkin concluded her speech at the Fifth Congress of the Communist International in June, 1924. It had been a dramatic speech, and it had been on a dramatic subject.

In October of the previous year, the Communist Party of Germany had made a retreat at a time of a high revolutionary wave. The Fifth Congress was the first to be held after that retreat. The failure of the German Party to act correctly was the central point of discussion. The entire world proletariat was, through its leaders, analyzing this situation and drawing lessons from it for future use.

When it was Clara Zetkin's turn to speak, the hall quickly filled with delegates eager to hear the aged veteran of many a revolutionary struggle. It was no secret where she stood on the question. She was with the minority. While admitting certain errors, she would not admit that fresh leadership was necessary. It was obvious that on this occasion she would cling to the comrades with whom she had gone through numberless struggles.

But if Clara Zetkin was magnificent as an agitator among

the workers, she was equally magnificent in her method of fighting for the tactics in which she believed. The very circumstances under which she spoke, eloquently testified to the undying courage and undying energy of this remarkable frail little woman.

The hall was filled with expectant listeners. We all waited for the appearance of our aged comrade, who was known to be very ill. But we hardly expected to see her in such a fearfully weak condition. She was brought onto the platform in a wheelchair, a friend close by her side. Her son, Maxim Zetkin, a skilled physician, was near her, ready for any contingency.

Her appearance was the signal for stormy applause. She was wrong, and most of the comrades in the room knew she was about to begin her plea for a lost cause, but her staunch revolutionary spirit, her long history of achievements and contributions to the working class struggle had won her a place in the hearts of her comrades all over the world, that nothing could shake—for a revolutionary she always was, and a revolutionary she always would be.

She was impatient at this applause. She waved it brusquely aside. She wanted to get down to the serious business of the day. She tried to raise herself in her chair but sank down exhausted.

Then seated, she began, in a voice scarcely audible—a tremulous quavering little voice. We caught the first words. Before she had gone farther than the first few sentences, the old timbre came back. It was flashing with sincerity and revolutionary passion. Her voice rang through the hall. Unassisted she rose from her chair.

“If we are now engaged in weighing and reviewing the road already traversed, it is because we wish to outline the path for the next courageous advance. For we are all united in the conviction and the desire that we must speed the course of the revolution. In this respect the central points are the October retreat of the German Communist Party, and the tactics of the united front, two subjects of international importance.”

Then followed her own erroneous analysis and her heated defense of her colleagues.

But her frail body could not keep up with her energy and ardour. Every now and then the voice would fail to function, and we heard not even a whisper. Every now and then she would sink back, exhausted, onto the chair, while her watchful son would administer a stimulant for her heart. It was a magnificent fight—characteristic of the entire life of this genuinely revolutionary woman.

She was not spared the most incisive and searching heckling on the part of those who thought they knew better—and who did know better—but her scathing replies showed that her mind was as clear and nimble as her body was frail.

She later was indefatigable in defending the line of the Communist International, and did not hesitate to attack her old comrades when they drifted from this line into the counter-revolutionary camp.

But Clara Zetkin was a Bolshevik, and in Bolshevik manner knew when to admit a mistake and how to rectify it.

How did Clara Zetkin, in part, analyze the 1923 situation? She said:

“How are these mistakes to be explained? The Party was convinced that the fight for the conquest of power would be inaugurated by an extreme effort, in which all the forces would pull and work together. It considered the partial fights and the partial demands merely as the premature dissipation of the energy of the masses. It did not consider the fight for partial demands as a means of recruiting, mobilizing and educating the proletariat for the mass-fight for power. This wrong view is indeed a fatal social-democratic legacy. When the Party at last saw the full meaning of the revolutionary situation, it made a belated effort to rally the mass organizations, and to equip them militarily and technically for the armed rising. Of course, military and organizational preparation are both necessary things. But they alone do not suffice. They must go hand in hand with tireless and consistent education of the masses to the necessity and inevitability of the armed fight.”

At present the German Party is actively preparing for meet-

(Continued on Page 24)



**Clara Zetkin**



**Clara Zetkin**

# Rose Pastor Stokes

Marguerite Young

“I SLIPPED into the world while my mother was on her knees scrubbing the floor.”

Those are the first words in Rose Pastor Stokes' story of her life. By the time they are published, next winter, her ashes will have been enshrined by the revolutionary workers of the United States. . . .

Martyrdom was upon her when I first saw her, in the autumn of 1932. But I shouldn't have suspected, had I not already known, that the hand of the disease—the cancer which was activated by a policeman's nightstick, falling on her during a demonstration against American imperialist intervention in Haiti—had already spread its searing fingers through her breast. She was so strong and supple and straight! Her vitality was a thousand currents flowing in every direction around her.

Her slow, packed sentences stood out like flags in my mind. What kept lifting them, afterward, was the unforgettable conviction, the spirit with which they were spoken. The memory of it stirs them even now.

It was cold in the Connecticut wood, where the tiny cabin with its one enclosed room had a stove only because Rose had delayed the interview until she could obtain one, for the reporter's comfort. In her thin grey sweater and soft dress, she walked with a long, sure stride. Her chestnut hair was clipped and greying, but her eyes were young. It was the strength of the high, broad forehead and prominent brown eyes that held me. There were chrome flecks in the brown. They seemed at once the most deep-searching and wise, and the most naive eyes that I had ever seen. They had tried to, but could not, be trustless. I represented a press which she despised. Yet soon from the interstices she realized that I was sympathetic.

From that moment on I knew there would be no other interview exactly like this for me. My heart pounded as she said, so quietly, so certainly:—

“I'll pull through. I'm determined. I must see a Soviet America. I will see the workers here rise to power and build their own world as they are doing in Soviet Russia—a world in which there will be no unemployment, hunger, insecurity or war.”

Another day, in the cabin, she confessed for once the measure of her suffering. “I think it's got me.” Her hand groped over her mutilated body.

Yet the same night, driving with some friends into the city to be treated, she unearthed the Red Song Book and began to sing!

The songbook dropped. Too heavy. But her voice, clear and sweet and still possessing shades of the power which once reached the highest rafters in Carnegie Hall, continued through the “Internationale.” At length she spoke, stirring, of standing in the snow in Moscow with Clara Zetkin—standing in the snow in 1924, singing “The Workers' Funeral March” while the breaths of the massed formed a foggy mist above—standing, singing, waiting to see the body of Lenin carried into Red Square.

I remember her, again, last winter, wracked by pain. Her voice was like an echo. She was lifting it not in complaint against the torture she had endured from neglect in a certain hospital—but in protest against the working conditions and low pay of the nurses, which she had ascertained in the midst of and despite her agony. . . .

Her life was a mirror of the heroic struggles, defeats and glories of that sector of the revolutionary masses who entered the Communist Party after years of practical experience in trade unionism and “Socialism”; after full realization of the futility of efforts to will, organize, or charm away the irreconcilable antagonisms between the classes.

It is this—as well as the revolutionary passion with which she spent herself in years of strike-leading and anti-war activities, in which she faced jail repeatedly only to return to the struggle with greater fervor; and the mature theoretical understanding with which she performed important underground work in the party—that made her an historic Amer-



ican mass figure. These things and her martyrdom. . . .

A portrait of the tyrant, Alexander II, hung in the hut where she was born in Russia, fifty-four years ago. When she was three, in the hell-hole which was London's East End, she dreamed of ripe, ever unattainable fruits. She hungered.

Both her mother and father were workers. It was the mother who took Rose to England and set before her an example of struggle. One of the daughter's earliest memories was how her mother went to work, one day, to discover the windows of the garment factory white-washed by a master who denied the workers' right even to look from their bondage upon the free air outside. Folding her apron, Rose's mother faced her fellow workers, crying, “Are we already among the dead? . . . Come, girls, we'll strike!” And they struck, and won.

Frequently in childhood Rose showed the sensitiveness, the humor, the courage and headstrong determination which were to endear her later to everyone. She showed, too, an intuitive sense of social justice, a passion for which was to become the pivot of her life.

She never forgot how her mother sacrificed a new penny to replace one which Rose had given to a frozen, barefooted beggar. It was no use. Rose wept on, bitterly. Much later she was to ask, “How could I tell them it was not a new penny, but a new world, I wanted, when I myself was not aware?” and she was to record, of the plight of the submerged, the exploited, the earth's producers:—

“There are some things in the lives of the workers that cannot be told. We have no words in which to tell them, even to each other, in secret. These things, I feel, must be buried in the hearts of our class till they find expression in our deeds on the great day of our self-emancipation.”

At twelve Rose became a child slave in a “buckeye,” a sweat-shop cigar factory, in Cleveland, whither they had migrated. Seventy-seven cents a week. Ten or eleven hours a day. Finally a second job, until midnight, in desperation to help eke out an existence for a family who measured thin bread by the square inch.

At twenty-one she came to New York to write for a Jewish

(Continued on Page 24)





HVGO/  
GELLERT



HUGO  
GELLERT

## Rose Pastor Stokes

(Continued from Page 23)

"labor" newspaper! (How she writhed under the desk's orders for half-truths!) Although for years she had known only two books, *Les Miserables* and *Lamb's Tales*, she had an undefined resentment even then against the fact that all the poor in Shakespeare were buffoons.

Now began to dawn a consciousness of the economic-social-political nature of the misery of the workers. Rose saw beyond her mother's trade-unionism. She joined the Socialist Party.

It was 1906. Rose had just married J.G.P. Stokes. Even then Rose perceived the contradiction in an "independent" millionaire-philanthropist politician backed by William Randolph Hearst—so instead of a Hearst gubernatorial nominee, Stokes became a "Socialist." I think that, to Rose, the union symbolized her belief that the lion and the lamb could lie down together without disaster to the lamb.

With Upton Sinclair and Jack London they went campaigning through the Mohawk and Hudson Valleys, and into the South. The Intercollegiate Socialist Society, they called themselves. From then on it was continuous battle. With striking hotel workers (she considered this one of the most important) with telegraph operators, restaurant waiters, musical instrument workers . . . against profiteering butchers in Philadelphia . . . against the division of southern, white and Negro workers by race discriminations. . . .

Her eyes were open to the realities of the "Negro problem." Writing later of an incident of that period, she said:

"Dr. W. E. B. DuBois was also a guest. I found him a cold intellectual with frozen sympathies. He was perhaps the first black man to make me realize that not all men whose skins are black are oppressed proletarians; that the black like the white workers have in their midst the shrewd reformers concerned not with freeing the workers, but with keeping them in need of 'social service' which, like the Company Store, weaves about its victims an eternal web of debt and servitude."

And then early in 1917 Rose resigned and went into the American Party, a pro-war, reactionary group. But in less than a year she returned to her own. The cosmic October days exploded her illusions. Seeking defenders of an anti-war resolution which a militant minority had forced upon the majority of the Socialist Party, Rose was drawn into the left wing and immediately began her famous speaking tour with Eugene V. Debs. Already convicted under the wartime sedition laws (Woodrow Wilson pardoned her) she was indicted again for helping to form the Communist Party in 1919—and once more in 1922, with 86 others, for participating in the Communist convention in Michigan.

Stokes never returned to the Socialists. When the two were divorced in 1925, the newspapers again gushed over the sudden end of a stale and puerile Cinderella-romance theme which the yellow journals had created. In reality they had been divided for years by political differences.

From Rose's home Party work was going forward. She renewed her interest in drawing. She never became, as the newspapers reported, a "quiet-living artist." She almost apologized, in fact, for exercising her talent. She seemed to consider it a self-indulgence.

For the most of the liberal and socialist associates of other years Rose had little more than contempt, toward the end. She was acutely aware that most of them turned reactionary in the crisis which sent her forward. "My life with them," she said once, "was in another world. They still live in that world."

Referring to an incident in her childhood, Rose wrote in her autobiography one sentence that fits, and reveals her entire life:—

"I had no fear—had never been taught to fear, never been threatened with bogies, or ghosts, or devils."

Her inextinguishable militancy is reflected in a recent letter to her husband V. J. Jerome written from her hospital bed at Frankfurt.

"Hitler speaks around the corner tonight. The hall is in a rich respectable neighborhood. If I were not so ill, they'd probably throw me out of the country. I agitate everybody."

## Clara Zetkin

(Continued from Page 22)

ing another revolutionary situation soon. The searching analyses made of the 1923 debacle have not been in vain. This time the German Party knows how to gird its loins, and will know when the time is ripe to deal the death-blow. It will not be led into premature adventurist actions.

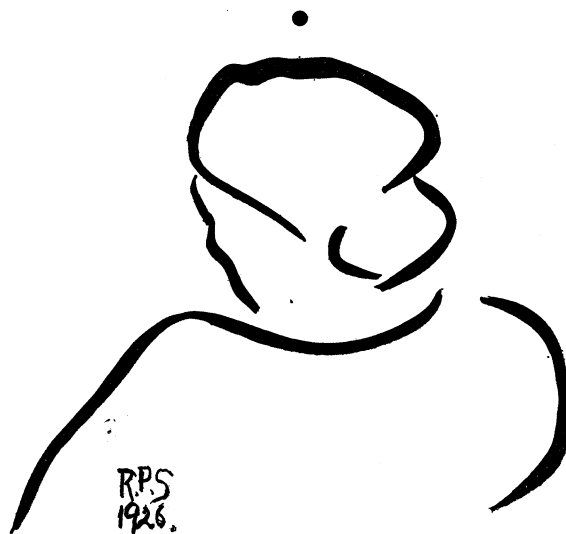
It is now, day by day, laying more firmly the groundwork for the coming decisive struggle. In the factories, in the worker's organizations, in the workers' residential quarters, in the unemployment offices it is organizing and educating the workers. Illegality makes this work a hundred-fold more difficult, but we all know it is going steadily and courageously on.

When the history of the German working class struggles is written, Clara Zetkin's name will rank alongside the most revered and beloved of the leaders. Marx, Engels, Bebel, Liebknecht, Luxemburg, Mehring—most of whom she worked with in closest association—this list will not be complete without Clara Zetkin. Her whole life was imbued with revolutionary fervor. As a young girl in her home in Saxony, she studied Marxism, and early broke with her bourgeois life and bourgeois feminist associates. She entered the ranks of the revolutionary working class, and never left it till death removed her. As Editor of "Gleichheit" (Equality), the Socialist women's paper, she fought valiantly against the conception that no special bodies for systematic work among women were necessary. Later on, after she had fought the opportunist leaders of the Socialist Party, and helped to found the Communist Party, she continued to fight for this work as an activity of major importance for winning over the working class. The Communist Party itself underestimated the work and Lenin had to come to her assistance.

At a time when she was already so weak that it was difficult for her to move around, history created a situation where she was once more called upon to fulfill a highly important and dramatic role. She lived up to the occasion.

Nearly a year ago, as the oldest Reichstag deputy, the task devolved upon her of opening its sessions in the face of the angry, but impotent protest of the fascists who have now come to power.

It was thrilling to read how this emaciated woman, who had not lost one ounce of her revolutionary passion, hurled defiance into the faces of the men who are now standing in the path, obstructing, for the time being, the inevitable march to a high and humane civilization—the classless society, without exploitation and without parasites, for which Comrade Zetkin devoted her entire life. That same defiance will soon be hurled by the entire German working class into the teeth of the German fascists. They will be swept aside. Nothing can stop the German workers. They are prepared, and Comrade Zetkin was a tremendous factor in preparing them.



Drawing by Rose Pastor Stokes

# Correspondence

## Thinking, Watching

Editor, *New Masses*,  
New York City.

I am enclosing the editorial page from a recent issue of—notice especially the name—Liberty.

This editorial suddenly and without warning transformed me into something that has been two slow years in the making.

I am but an atom—one of fourteen million atoms—but I am also a mother of three perfect children. It is too late to save me, but I am vitally interested in the sort of civilization that my children, and my children's children will have to live in. In a few months I shall be compelled by law to send my fine, intelligent little boy into a school system that is antiquated and pitifully useless in preparing him for the future. Meanwhile, his father and I, who have always been hardworking, selfrespecting and respected by our community, must sit helplessly and hear him sneered at, to his utter bewilderment, by the children of the better privileged—and we cannot even feed him.

I was born of a West Virginia coal miner's family. I secured an education and became a trained nurse. A few years ago I married a good man—an accountant. We worked hard, as we always had. We had a nice little home in California; a cheap car; a radio; some savings and life insurance. I had a bathroom, running hot water and a washing machine. We were simple people, and with our three little ones were very happy.

My husband had put in his best years with the big corporation where he had been advanced to office manager. Then without excuse or warning he was let out. Depression! Our home went, our car, our savings, our furniture, and finally the life insurance. In almost two years he has never been able to find even a week's work.

So here we are today. We live in a two room shack. It has not a modern convenience. We have for furniture, three old chairs, two broken stoves and an old table. We sleep on bags of straw. Food we are handed by the state enough each week merely to sustain life—not health. We are humiliated in the process. We are treated as the lowest form of animal life by our towns people.

We have been, as the rest of the millions like us—FOOLS. We never bothered about how the country was run. We did our work, got the best we could for ourselves, and slept on! So we, like the millions of others had it coming to us! But we are awake now, and if I know anything, the others are coming awake, also.

This editorial took my breath away—and I thought nothing could do that again. This millionaire Macfadden cannot be an absolute fool, so I judge he is simply bold. BOLD! Bolder than others have dared to be. He is smart enough to know the temper of the hungry millions; to know that they are coming out of their lethargy, but he feels secure enough to sit upon his millions and adopt the attitude of the aristocrats before the French Revolution. Saying to his fellow plutocrats—"Here, these clods are coming awake. If we allow them to awaken they will be a menace to our security, so we must keep them asleep. They are animals, who are savage only when they are very hungry. If we keep just enough in their stomachs to keep the hunger pangs quiet, that will not cost us so much, and they will not awaken. Better that than take the chance that they, from savage hunger, pull us from our throne and rend us apart."

I have never been a radical or even a socialist. Nothing at all but a quiet hardworking woman. Now I am a mother and this civilization is not fit for my fine children to grow up in.

I am not saying that I care for Russia's plan, although, it

has its points. But one thing is absolutely certain—from this day forth—I will in some way work for something vastly different from the form of civilization we know here. I was once a proud, selfrespecting mother. I am now merely one of the hungry millions who would be the first to help pull millionaire Macfadden and all his kind, from their throne of power—and DEVOUR them.

I wonder if our people *are* such clods that, so long as they are thrown a bone to keep away severe hunger pangs, they will be satisfied to grovel indefinitely at the feet of the capitalists?

Also, I wonder if there are any sincere leaders of mankind? If most of those called Communists are not simply trying to grind their own little—or big—axes?

Robbed of all faith in human nature—I am wondering, thinking, watching. I am almost savage enough to welcome a revolution, since history has proven that to be the only way the oppressing powers have ever been dragged down—in order that a more progressive civilization may arise.

I have written this merely to say that I find some gleam of hope in the articles in *New Masses*... I am an average person—and there are millions like me.

Sincerely,  
ELIZABETH SANTANA

Danforth, Maine.

## Kansas Farmers

Dear New Masses,

Enclosed a one dollar bill. Will you please enter my subscription for 8 months,—starting with the Jan. issue if you have it.

Western Kansas is in a very bad shape—almost as bad as central Kansas. Out here we did not have enough wheat last year to pay expenses. Recently I sold some wheat for 26 cents. This years seeding has not had enough rain to bring it up or all of it up—consequently except on fallowed land most of what did sprout is dead. We are facing a total failure. Most of my neighbors, in the last seeding had to resort to such expedients in order to get seed: contracting to deliver 2 bushels to anyone who would furnish them one for seed:—contracting to give 1/6 of the renter's share to any person who would furnish seed.

Scarcely anyone out here owns his land and taxation is much lower in central Kansas. In central Kansas banks have been dropping this winter like ripe plums. Taxes are high there and farmers' indebtedness large. Farmer after farmer is losing his land—farmers who live on home places inherited from their parents feel the ax grind as keenly as others. This process of expropriation has been going on so fast the past three years that you can imagine the temper the farmers are in. A receiver of a failed bank becomes conscious of threats of tarring and feather or of getting shot. Still there is no Farmers Holliday Association in the state that I know of.

Several days ago a farmer near Garden City, Kansas, held up a Garden City bank. He was caught of course before he got out of town. He was facing foreclosure on his farm.

Yours for the Revolution  
MAX AUSTIN

Dodge City, Kansas.

## From Bulgaria

As you probably know, the political situation here now is very much worse and only for a receipt of the *New Masses* (according to the law against the Bolsheviki) I must go in the prison.

I am very sorry to write you, it is necessary to stop to send me the *New Masses*.

O tempora, o mores! O sancta simplicitas!

Sofia, Bulgaria.

Sincerely,

I. A. K.

# Books

## Incentives in the U. S. S. R.

*IN PLACE OF PROFIT*, by Harry F. Ward, Charles Scribner's Sons. \$2.50.

One of the arguments most tediously urged against both democracy and socialism is the presumed stupidity of the masses. Government by the elite, whether in the form of aristocracy, plutocracy, or dictatorship, has always spawned its apologists who proved its necessity by slandering the masses for their backwardness, their incompetence, and their lack of character. Why change their linen, has been the prevailing attitude, when the masses wish to remain dirty!

But the recognition of the class structure of society reveals beyond a doubt that under the property relations of capitalism the masses are no more capable of achieving "cleanliness" than a man in prison. When concentration of wealth and power in the upper class is marked, the resulting want of brilliance and dignity among the workers is held to reveal a natural defect, and inferiority of social status is justified as the inevitable recompense for inherited weakness of character. But given economic air in which to breathe, the "masses," in the lyrical words of Michael Gold, "are never far from earth . . . never far from heaven. Masses go on—they are the eternal truth . . . their primitive sweetness, their primitive calm, their primitive satisfaction and self sufficiency . . . the masses . . . live in gusto and joy." Freed of its Rousseauistic unhistoricism, this passage movingly describes the proven potentialities of the masses in the Soviet Union, the first to have taken the opportunity to develop to the fulness of their human stature.

In the actual documentation of this process we have as yet no better study than *In Place of Profit* by Harry F. Ward. By supplementing a close scrutiny of the Soviet forms of industry with real participation in the activities and attitudes of the workers, the author has succeeded in giving us a picture of socialized incentives that should finally silence the legionary praters of that counterfeit axiom: "You can't change human nature."

Though a dialectical study of the subtle penetration of the forms of production into the remotest recesses of consciousness has still to be written, Ward has suggestively described how human nature is changing in the Soviet Union. The most persuasive evidence of this fact, in my opinion, is the Strechney, or Counter Plan. Here is an event that could never have happened in a capitalist factory. When the Gosplan headquarters sent out its preliminary general estimates to the Karl Marx metal factory in Leningrad, the rank and file workers examined the figures and found them much below their production capacities. They drew up a plan of their own, submitted it to the management, and as a result increased the program for the year by 120 per cent. The Strechney plan, the workers' own plan to increase production, then spread spontaneously throughout the country and is found working today in every institution. Imagine, if you can, such an occurrence in the Ford Factory. It is easier by far to remember what occurred there a year ago when men of Detroit came in search of work.

This inspiring rehabilitation of character in the Soviet Union is in nowise to be explained by the usual journalistic hocus-pocus about the innate religion of the Russian masses, the mystical emergence (source unknown) of a new folk "geist," or the power of Soviet propaganda. Ward makes it crystalline clear that the new attitudes toward work and the social body are a consequence of the new productive relations of socialism. Sustained shock brigading, Strechney plans, Hozraschet (cost accounting administered by the workers), workers' rationalization, mass inventiveness, and workers' direct participation in government—all are the natural results of a socialist society which provides new opportunities for the masses to express

initiative and the controlling force of the machinery and process by which they live.

*In Place of Profit* offers abundant refutation of the cynical charges that the similarity of Soviet motives to those of capitalist industry represent a return to capitalism. For instance, piece work under capitalism bears no resemblance to piece work in the U.S.S.R. where the sole purpose of this incentive is to enlarge production for workers' consumption and where the less skilled workers are protected by a minimum wage and a variety of social benefits, plus sick, old age, and unemployment insurance. Competition is stripped of its invidious bourgeois content and reinvested with social meaning. Warlike impulses are utilized in the militant organization of production. Hero-worship does social duty by the celebration in song and monument of the exploits of exceptional workers. In a word, socialism employs the same techniques for the encouragement and development of social virtues that capitalism uses for the encouragement of bourgeois virtues. Only the shallowest and most deliberate sophistry can make an identity between the two.

What is most remarkable about *In Place of Profit* is that its author, an ardent advocate of Christian socialism, saw no necessity in Communism for religion as an instrument of social control. "For the compensating aspects of religion," he says, "the Communists have no need, since theirs is a world-conquering faith . . . In place of that struggle of the soul for union with the infinite which leads to withdrawal from the world, they put a struggle of the person for unity with the social whole in whose creation he thus participates." The intellectual courage of this admission sheds its illumination on every page of the book and makes it a dependable and notable record of a perplexing period in the history of Communism.

NORMAN WARREN

## The Man Who Ran Away

*LAWRENCE AND BRETT: A FRIENDSHIP*, by Dorothy Brett. 301 pp., \$3.00. J. B. Lippincott, Philadelphia.

Theosophic old ladies will read *Lawrence and Brett* at one sitting, fold their neat hands in their laps, and, their loins atwitter, will look past their penthouse skylines, seeking to recover something they have never had.

The book is a pathetic, narcissistic posture; it is a trivial diary of insignificant days spent at Taos, New Mexico and in the old Mexican peasant country. A superficial assimilation of the Lawrencean adjective and adverb studs the book; seldom are any of the people realized. However, at rare moments Lawrence does come through.

"You children brought up by nurses and in nurseries, what do you know of life? What do you know of the mechanics of life? Nothing—nothing! You take no part in the actual work of everyday living. I hate your class—I hate it!

"As a boy", he continues, he spent, "on the whole the happiest time of my life, maybe the only time I have known real happiness, and it was real life, not a false life like yours has been."

Many months later, in Italy, Lawrence returns again to his childhood. "It was terrible . . . Terrible with the constant struggle, the lack, nearly, of the bare necessities of life. To be sick meant the doctor; that meant any extra shillings went for the doctor's fee and medicine; and usually we had only one shilling extra every week—only one. Think of that, Brett, boots and clothes had to be saved up for slowly, week by week. Every little thing we needed extra, meant saving and scraping for, and not having enough to eat. And the wages varied—never more than twenty-five shillings a week, sometimes much less".

At still another time (and these three, perhaps, are the only occasions the significant man is realized), Lawrence speaks of the jobs he had as a child, of the painful impression they left upon him.

There is one thing that does remain from the book: the mean, hysterical life he led among hysterical women; the blind alley his life ended in.

It must be remembered that Lawrence was the son of a miner who married a refined woman from an alien class. The woman felt she had been cheated by being drawn into a worker's life. She turned on her children with one thought in mind, to hold

them for herself against the husband, to teach them how to climb out of their class to where there would be no coal-grained hands and backs; where there would be delicacy and refinement. Lawrence turned his back on the mines, on the miner's life. He became his mother's son and entered her world. He found only barrenness and sterility and all his life he ran from it. When his mother died, there were other women, mother-like, to nurture him. He spent his life seeking fruitfulness, he remembered bitterly his youth in the colliery village. It never occurred to him, that, perhaps there, in his father's world, he could find the door that opened on reality.

He turned in on himself, as a cancer does. Lawrence died long before they placed the stone phoenix over him. He died when he became his mother's son.

NATHAN ADLER

## New Attitudes

*PITY IS NOT ENOUGH*, by Josephine Herbst. Harcourt, Brace & Co., \$2.50.

In the work of contemporary writers one often finds evidence that the author's mind has been functioning on two different levels. This is inevitable in a period of realignments and readjustments, when new ideologies and new ways of life are coming into importance. In his thinking the writer may have given up theories and attitudes that he once cherished, but his imagination still follows patterns that earlier years created. The complete reinterpretation of experience is perhaps impossible, but the extent to which an author approximates that accomplishment is some indication of the likelihood of his artistic growth.

One inevitably assumes the authenticity of much of the material in *Pity Is Not Enough*. Both the characters and the episodes, one feels sure, have a place in the true chronicles of Miss Herbst's family, and apparently she has been thinking about these people and events for a long time. Originally, one is inclined to guess, she planned to build this story, much as Glenway Wescott built his *The Grandmothers*, around the theme of frustration and disillusionment. But, before she came to the writing of the novel, she began to see the broader implications of her material. She began to see that what happened to the Trexler family had happened to millions of others in the fifty years after Civil War. She saw her opportunity to record a representative example of the innumerable failures that attended the few successes of the great era of American expansion.

It is true that the two aims were not inconsistent, but the moods that lay behind them were very different: in place of the mildly nostalgic pessimism, so familiar in our literature of the past two decades, came the harshly realistic and essentially militant attitude of class-consciousness. The whole conception of the story had to be modified to fit this new attitude; emphases and proportions had to be changed; ideas and actions had to be reinterpreted. And of course the marks of this readjustment were left on the finished novel. They would probably not be quite so evident if Miss Herbst had not attempted such an amazing piece of condensation; but, in trying to tell the story of fifty years and a dozen lives in 350 pages, she was bound to betray uncertainties of attitude, conflicting emotions, and inconsistent interpretations.

The central character in the story is Joe Trexler, who as a young man in the days of the Reconstruction went South, engaged in corrupt practices of a very common sort, was found out, was made the scapegoat by greater and more experienced grafters, and had to flee. The rest of his life is a series of failures to recapture the grandeur that had once been his, and his death is ignominious. His collapse naturally affects the other members of his family, especially his sister Catherine, who idolizes him and who collapses when she finally learns the truth about his southern exploits. Catherine, Anne, Hortense—the shadow of his failure lies over them all. His brother Aaron drifts into indolence, and only the younger brother, David, profits by Joe's mistakes and becomes a success. And both Lucy Blondell, to whom Joe was engaged in his prosperous days, and her sister Lenore, who is in love with him, are blighted by his fall.

The first part of the novel, which is concerned with Joe's adventures, is too detailed, at least in proportion to the remainder of the book, and is rather dull. It is when Miss Herbst shows us Joe indirectly, through the eyes of his sisters, that he is most real to us. David is never quite satisfactory: Miss Herbst, simply because he is a success and this is a story of failure, arbitrarily describes only his boyhood, and her attempt to show in the boy the qualities that would make the man a success in a grasping age is slightly artificial and unconvincing. The chapters about the Blondell sisters have little relevance and seem to belong to some earlier conception of the novel in the author's mind. Some of the brief notes that concern the author's own generation are effective, but others, notably the one headed "Seattle, 1918," seem purely schematic.

But it should not be supposed that these and similar faults destroy the value of the novel. It is a memorable picture—wise, tender, and unmistakably authentic—of what was happening to the great majority of the American people in the post-war years. Miss Herbst is peculiarly impressive in her portrayal of the Trexler women: the way Joe's brief triumph creates in them new desires, their courageous adjustment to poverty, their pathetic but sustaining faith that some time success will come. We have had novels about men who succeeded in that era; we have had novels about immigrants and their hopes and disillusionments; but here is the tragedy of the average middle class American family.

One is amazed at Miss Herbst's progress. The cold commonplaceness of *Nothing Is Sacred* had not prepared us for the richness, tenderness, and resourcefulness of *Pity Is Not Enough*. What will she do next? None of her contemporaries, except Evelyn Scott, has concerned himself with this particular area of American experience, and obviously Miss Herbst has a sounder awareness of what is important and what is not than Miss Scott has. Her perception of the broad social forces that control the destinies of the Trexlers, though not always so sharp as it might be, is nevertheless what has given her novel its unity, its force, and its importance. When the processes of clarification, reinterpretation, and integration have gone a little further, she should place herself unmistakably in the front rank of American novelists.

GRANVILLE HICKS

## To Upton Sinclair

UPTON SINCLAIR PRESENTS WILLIAM FOX, Published by Upton Sinclair. \$3.00.

Dear Upton Sinclair:

One of the hardships of being a great writer is the fact that the function of criticism is not confined to one's peers. Whoever appears in print, bares his back, and often as not the greater the writer, the less worthy the wielder of the critical lash.

With complete awareness of any unworthiness as a critic, I presume to address you publicly concerning *Upton Sinclair Presents William Fox*: I offer one justification—my admiration for you and my profound consciousness of your importance in American letters.

To begin with, I believe the book in itself is of vital importance only as an indication of the direction in which Upton Sinclair is travelling, or as some of your more extreme critics in the revolutionary movement insist, the direction in which the revolutionary movement is travelling away from Upton Sinclair.

The book itself is an unimpeachable example of your prowess as a publicist although it doesn't compare favorably, in my opinion, with *The Brass Check*, *The Goose Step* and other earlier works of a similar nature.

There is no doubt that Upton Sinclair's presentation of William Fox's case history adds enlightening touches to the picture of finance capital's domination of American and world capitalism. Yet both your critics and defenders in the revolutionary movement are asking "Why did he write that book?"

You say in your introduction that the story of William Fox's victimization by a conspiracy of finance capitalists is not a new

one. You have told it several times before. Do you believe then that Fox's story, if not new, is different?

Essentially, William Fox the individual and William Fox, the captain of industry are the products of a certain set of economic and social conditions called capitalism and therefore his story cannot be essentially different.

Perhaps you wrote the book because you believed that in any event it was your Socialist duty to expose the machinations of finance capital as exemplified in the case of William Fox. If this is so, and if Socialism is not merely a personal prejudice but a scientific instrument evolved expressly for the measurement and evaluation of phenomena characteristic of capitalism, how can you discard your Socialist viewpoint so completely in dealing with William Fox, a typical representative of the American capitalist class?

Your treatment of William Fox might be explained by your weakness for reducing sociological considerations to biological ones. You may have been captivated by Fox's personality, his mind, his capabilities. Apparently you have been, for you picture him as a hero more pure and noble than the most absurdly perfect creature of fiction which Fox ever caused to be vivified in his theaters.

But you present a fairly complete personal picture of your subject and I find in it nothing which ought to overwhelm you to the point of making you discard your Socialist viewpoint.

Let's take another look at that picture—William Fox, leader of the fourth largest industry in America. Master of hundreds of millions of dollars who knows so little of the society in which he is a ruler that he believes the deepest-going crisis of capitalism is the result merely of technological unemployment and who thinks that unemployment can be remedied by economic inflation.

A trenchant gladiator in the world's financial arena who professes sublime faith in the direct guidance of Providence but who spends hundreds of thousands of dollars for lawyers nevertheless.

A Hollywood Galahad whose strength is as the strength of flouting the anti-trust laws in the subtle and circuitous manner flouting the anti-trust laws in the subtle and circuitous manner peculiar to big business men.

An upright movie merchant who taxes his enemies with breaking their verbal bond, but who tells with righteous unctious how he double-crossed a lawyer because the lawyer tried to double-cross him.

A Croesus who collects millions of dollars worth of art treasures and who apparently believes that such movies as "Over the Hill" "A Fool There Was" and "Mother Knows Best" are pinnacles of American culture. A Republican in national affairs, a Democrat in New York City affairs and a sycophant at the heels of every American capitalist more powerful than he.

This is the impression of William Fox I received from your praiseful picture of him. I and others must remain forever mystified as to what you find in the man to admire as much as you do.

Presumptuous though I may be, I must say out loud that you should never have written this book. Since you decided to write it, however, there still remains the question of your entirely wrong approach.

Had you retained a realistic viewpoint, you would not have accepted Fox at his own evaluation as an altruist merely because he worked zealously for the interests of his stockholders, which interests were certainly never different or antagonistic to his own.

You would have realized that one who becomes rich and powerful, and especially when he starts with handicaps such as Fox's, can remain honest only in the legal meaning of the word as defined by capitalist law.

You write of Fox only in his relation to his own class and associations because Fox, whose story you are telling, cannot see his relation to the rest of society. Did you not, at some time while you were writing the book, stop to reflect on the role of William Fox as an exploiter of labor?

No doubt Fox was kind and generous to his stockholders, his executives, his actors, directors, technicians. But what about the tens of thousands of extras, ushers, truck drivers, cleaners, shipping clerks, office workers whose bodies supported and whose energies really nourished the gigantic structure of Fox Film and associated enterprises?

I have always hoped to see Upton Sinclair write at least one book about the movie industry. But I had in mind another kind of book, one which would reveal the calculated, deadly manner in which the American ruling class uses the movies to drug the workers into accepting capitalism as "the direct guidance of Providence" and to make them proof against revolutionary ideas and action. Certainly I have a right to expect such a book from the author of *Mammonart* which declares that art has always been an instrument of propaganda in the hands of the ruling classes.

The few brief paragraphs of your book in which Fox tells of the part played during the war by Fox Film and Fox theaters offer the theme for such a book about the movies as everyone would expect you to write.

You, who know why it was impossible for Sergei Eisenstein to work in Hollywood, could certainly be expected to write, not a panegyric of William Fox, but an expose of the manner in which American capitalism uses its strangle-hold on all cultural resources and agencies to maintain its power.

And what is the remedy you offer for the corruption and bankruptcy of the movie industry which is revealed in your study of Fox? You write a letter to "W. F." as you fondly call him, saying: "I would like to say that William Fox, observing the motion picture world on the verge of bankruptcy, realizes that it has got to be transformed from an instrument of private profit to one of public service and that he announces, that if and when the government is ready to take this bankrupt industry and make it a means of happiness and enlightenment for of the American people, he, William Fox, will become a dollar-a-year-man . . . Why should we not have . . . dollar-a-year-men for the ending of the depression. . . ?"

How can government control of the movies enlighten or exalt the masses unless the masses control the government? What you are asking has already been advocated by such a progressive institution as the Holy See. How can such a pronouncement be reconciled with the doctrine that culture has always been an instrument wielded by the ruling class for its own welfare?

Such utterances lead one to believe that although you write on current matters, you are in danger of falling behind the march of workingclass political thought in America. It would be very sad if the vanguard of the American workingclass were to look about and find that its double-quick time of thought and action had left Upton Sinclair behind.

With revolutionary greetings,

PHILIP STERLING.

## Decay and Regeneration

*IN GOD'S LAND*, by Martin Anderson Nexo, translated from the Danish by Thomas Selzer. Peter Smith. \$2.50.

This is a timely book and it might have been a timeless novel, for the great novels are rooted in the soil their people tread, and this novel has such roots. Its struggles, moreover, are important ones and they involve a world. The drama that opens the story is more than the drama of the Danish peasant of the neighborhood of Oster-Vester; more than the rise, the decline and the regeneration of Jens Vorup of Spring Farm. It is as if the elemental peasants of the north, whose lives Knut Hamsun has recorded, have outgrown their primitive stages, have learned the lessons of an industrial age, and have been transferred by Nexo to Denmark, where they have acquired culture and have become the most important class in a highly developed country.

When the book opens, we see these peasants less as individuals than as threads woven into the more important pattern of "In God's Land." It is the pattern of national development in the nineteenth century and of the first two decades of the Twentieth. It is the pattern of struggle and change, of the development of a national idealism, of new conflicts that arise from national and class rivalries. Insofar as Nexo traces this pattern with skill, the first part of his work deserves a high place among the novels that add important chapters to sociological records. But because the author has in his own mind not yet eliminated the confusions, the naive generalization that betray

his characters, because he seems to offer to the world solutions which have so consistently failed these characters, the book falls short of the significance it should have had.

There is, however, a positive value in this novel today, when through countless vacuum tubes on countless Sundays the world is offered a variety of religions with a social message. For "In God's Land" is a record of a "Spiritual" regeneration brought about by sincere men and allowed to develop; a regeneration that has brought with it the more common types of social reform, widespread material improvement and a measure of enlightenment; and yet has failed completely to solve the more fundamental problems of its people, and in the end has served only to intensify those inequalities which it set about to correct. This regeneration freed the peasant from feudal domination but it made him an individualistic *kulak*, exploiting in his turn the laborers he employed; it separated his church from the state but he soon learned to use his new church as a means of class aggrandizement. It taught him the value of cooperative enterprise, but he used his cooperatives for speculation and exploitation.

There are in the book a few dissenters. There is always the high-principled Ebbe, the old Grundtvigian, who stands as the conscience of the community. There is his son Niels, the free-thinker and socialist, whose experiences illustrate the relation between the school and the society that fosters it. Niels had been taught to seek solutions of vital truths independently of authority. But his teachers "shrank in dismay" from his questions, "urging him to strengthen his faith and abandon his searching and probing." After Niels had lost his position as a teacher because of his unorthodoxy, he learned to make a socialistic analysis of world forces, but his Marxism was vitiated by his idealistic approach.

Part two of *In God's Land* deals with the period of the War, and it is here that the force of Nexo's work is considerably weakened, for the promise of Part One remains unfulfilled and its implications are lost.

Everyone is after the new wealth. Everyone becomes restless and neglects the productive life of the soil for the life of paper transactions in paper industries. Only those who have nothing to sell are lost in the rush. They have nothing to gain. Their lot become worse than ever. They are the dispossessed of the disinherited.

When the breakdown comes it does not surprise us. The aftermath of a period of war inflation and paper prosperity has become familiar. We know its implications. The fate of these Capitalist-Peasants is too clearly foretold; but, as nearly as we can make it out, the handwriting on their wall spells out only such symbols as "Retribution" and "What Shall it profit a man, etc., if he lose his own soul." It becomes a problem of individual salvation.

As the book closes we are made to feel that a revival of the teachings of Pastor Grundtvig and of the romantic all-embracing humanity of Bjornson is all that is needed to save the world. One must go back to the old ways, one must start the system all over again. The "life goes on" motif is functioning again.

Now, one may not quarrel with a novelist if he chooses to portray the characters and the life that he knows best. It may reasonably be said that Jens Vorup and the other peasants of this class would discover in their lives exactly the lessons that Nexo has found in them. Nexo is unquestionably a sincere man with a warm heart, who writes with sympathy and charm.

But all this is not enough. The book's significance is in its record of social forces. The author is conscious of the struggle of these forces. That he and his characters have at least a clue to the meaning of the struggle is clear. True, Niels' socialism and free-thinking are not far-removed from the idealistic spirituality of his father. But he speaks here and there important words.

BORIS GAMZUE

A new issue of *International Literature*. No. 1 of the 1933 series, has just been received by International Publishers, 381 Fourth Ave., New York, distributors of the magazine in the United States. This issue of 160 pages contains stories translated from the Russian, French, Hungarian, German and Polish, critical articles and autobiographical sketches of a number of prominent Russian authors.

# Theatre

'' 1931 -- ''

"1931—" by Paul and Claire Sifton, as produced by Theatre Collective, May 21. 1933.

In reviewing "1931—", by Paul and Claire Sifton, as produced by Theatre Collective, the old yardstick of professional theatre criticism is found to be totally inadequate for reasons which will appear in the course of this critique.

The production is three-fold in aspect. First as a historical cultural phenomenon. Second, as a socio-political force. Thirdly as an art-form and example of theatre technique.

That this production is a historical phenomenon in American culture is evident to anyone who has followed the development of American proletarian theatre culture with sufficient attention. It is the first "professional" appearance of the but recently-born proletarian theatre. It was born in travail, without the easing midwifery of subscription, donations and wealthy sponsors. It was born of militant enthusiasm, clear-headed conviction and unwavering determination. It was delivered through heroic sacrifice. It is a production made by history—the history of the awakening, rising American proletariat—and a production which makes history, the history of the struggle of the worker for freedom and enlightenment.

These things are not set down here simply out of an excess of revolutionary zeal on the part of the reviewer—they are absolutely necessary to an understanding of what are perhaps the major qualities, the most remarkable and valuable things of the production. For all those who critically witnessed the moving sequences of this play—especially those who saw the audience of May 21st spontaneously stand up and sing the "Internationale"—realized that the Theatre Collective, in "1931—" accomplished something that dozens of producers, both commercial and "artistic", have tried to do for years—"break down the invisible wall" between spectator and player. Furthermore, they have seen that rarest of things in any company of actors—genuine "ensemble" playing, that priceless complete synthesis of all the players into a kinetic whole. A synthesis as artless and spontaneous as the players themselves. This double achievement of unity—unity of player with player, and players with audience can only be attributed to the above mentioned causes, for the staging, as artless as the play and the players, had certainly little to do with it.

This brings us to a truth, a truth which has been forgotten since the days of the medieval theatre. The neglect of which truth, or rather the denial of it which is implicit in the capitalist system and its social philosophy has brought the bourgeois theatre as an art to the state of abysmal decay in which we see it today. And this is the truth: technique may further, enrich, develop the above noted synthesis—but it cannot create it: The ultimate synthesis can only obtain where the spectator, the play and the players share a common ideology a common conviction and a common purpose—both subjectively and objectively. It is significant that the basis, the soil for such a condition is to be found only in the working class and the radicalized petty bourgeoisie. So much for the historical significance.

As a socio-political force, the play is equally noteworthy. It brings home in a warm and graphic manner the radicalization of the un-classconscious worker. It presents in human terms, in sympathy-compelling terms, the misery, suffering and oppression of the workers as a class and the worker as an individual. And finally it points unmistakably to the logical and inevitable revolutionary way out.

Of course, in a strict political sense, the play is not entirely



satisfactory. The almost completely subjective exposition fails to drive home with sufficient clarity the internal logic and causal connections of the phenomena exposed. For instance, we are firmly convinced that there is no work, that wages are being slashed, that the masses are starving, that militant action must be taken. But it must be pointed out that the weight of the argument lies in its emotional force rather than logic. There is no clear demonstration of the forces behind the scene, the inherent weaknesses of the capitalist system, and exactly *why* the proletarian revolution (forecast so vividly by Adam in the flophouse scene) must of necessity provide the real solution to the problems involved. This is the main weakness of the play.

Now as to its artistic aspects—the question of form and technique. First, the play itself, as a dramaturgical creation. With no doubt, the best intentions in the world, the authors have chosen a formal structure which plays havoc with the very nature of the content. The content, bristling with the dialectical possibilities of a thousand contradictions, is forced into a slow, logical piling-up of scene on scene (brick on brick) to form that utter antithesis to dialectics, the Euclidean pyramid. This is termed by Eisenstein the “Epic Principle”—a principle which has been thoroughly discredited by the advanced masters of cinema and theatre in the Soviet Union. The effect of such a structure was evident in the production. Despite the keen interest of the audience in the *characters*, the play seemed to drag. One felt a sort of impatience—one felt as if one were walking slowly down a long, narrow passage, completely walled in, unable to see to the right nor to the left.

Interludes were introduced in order to show at the same time the general situation of the masses. The idea is creditable and necessary. But we did not realize they were interludes. The structure, instead of bringing out the full impact of these scenes as contrasted to the progress of Adam, forced them into the same logical uniformity. With the resultant loss of power. The staging was also to blame here—which we shall discuss later.

Thus we see that the straightline, end to end, logical, unrolling-story form is incompatible with a content which comprehends such a vast interplay of conflicting social and individual forces.

The form necessary is one based on the “Dynamic Principle” (to use another apt term of Eisenstein’s), which means the dialectical arrangement of conflicting images (the conflict may be in content, or in rhythm, or in visual form or in all of these and more), the inter-impact of which synthesises (or “explodes”) into the concept desired. Unfortunately, there is no time for this discussion here. I would recommend to all concerned Eisenstein’s article in No. 4 of “Experimental Cinema.”

In spite of the form of the play as found in the script, skillful staging could have vastly modified these inherent defects. And here is where we come to the weakest point in the whole production. The director (or directors) made his first grave mistake in being subservient to the formal structure of the script. If he had been able to attack it in the light of the principles hinted at above, it would have been an entirely different production. The distressingly even tempo of action (not necessarily *slow* but *monotonous*, the irritating rise and fall of that guillotine of a curtain, the flatness of the stage, the limited dimensionality of movement, the timid use of light—all these and more are a result of faithfully following out the inherent structure of the script. In fact, in this sense, the job was very well done—unfortunately I am tempted to add—too well done.

We must realize that the director (or collective directorship) makes or break the play—that he, as Meyerhold puts it, is the *author* of the *Spectacle*.” That the script is but one of the many important elements in a theatrical production. That the sum total of all the elements is the “play”. That the script is not the be-all—, but a *means* to an end.

The acting was perhaps the most outstandingly good feature in the production. Not so much for individual performances (though there is here also much that is praiseworthy) as for that rare “ensemble” playing, which gives the spectator a great feeling of satisfaction—seeing actors play wholeheartedly to each other. There were many places where the director left his

players “flat-footed”, as we say. But even here the natural enthusiasm, the complete immersion of the players in their characters and common theme result in a spontaneity of improvisation and natural gesture which carried them through.

Individually the most outstanding performances were those of Fred Herrick as Adam, and Mary George as the Girl. Herrick’s playing was naturalism unadulterated, simple and direct. Very satisfying. The writer detected however, in the more sentimental scenes a slight tendency to a certain over-naïvness of voice and incoherence of gesture which leads one to believe that comrade Herrick has played more “juvenile” roles in stock than is good for his artistic development.

Comrade George, if anything, underplayed. At times she gave one the uncomfortable feeling that there was something about her character that she didn’t quite understand, wasn’t sure of. But on the whole she struck a sympathetic note and held it convincingly enough, playing with a sincerity that gives great hopes for her future work.

Of the vast parade of minor characters several stand sharply in my memory. One is that of Emanuel Berlant’s ex-floor-walker in the snowshoveling scene. Another is S. Boonio in all of his varied parts. A third is Louis John Latzer in his multiple roles. Berlant’s bit is a marvel of sensitive understanding and economic portrayal, while the latter two actors are to be praised for their capable versatility and sharply differentiated characters. The desire to make an object lesson forces me to throw a gentle brickbat at one player—who probably has better stuff in him. But I really think it seriously important to point out that the manner of playing of (I spare the name) the actor who played the role of the manager of the flophouse should not be emulated by the less experienced members of the troupe. He is the victim of a definite “stock company” style—a few smart surface tricks making for smooth delivery and an easy manner, but utterly lacking in weight and conviction. This was also evidenced in the other two roles that he played. It’s more the fault of the system than yours, comrade, but—better chuck it all overboard and start from rock bottom. I could go on and on commending bright bits here and there (the woman on the park bench—was it Elisabeth Beck?—a difficult and well done bit).

In conclusion, let me say that personally I found it a thrilling production, that I think the Theatre Collective is rich in possibilities, and that if they set to work with the same energy and enthusiasm upon the task of digesting and building on the experiences of this production, they are destined to become an unprecedented powerful artistic and social force in the American theatre—and a guiding, enlightening beacon to the struggling workers of America.

—ETIENNE KARNOT

## NOTICE

The winner of the subscription contest of the *New Masses* (September 1932 to March 1933) is Victor Cutler of Los Angeles, California. Upon his request the May Day tour through the Soviet Union (the first prize) has been postponed until the November celebration. Details will be printed in a later issue.

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