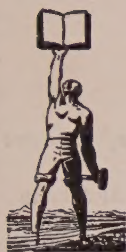


Mainstream

THE POWERS' TRIAL

Phillip Bonosky

CRISIS IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL

John Howard Lawson
Robert Forrey

nton Refregier BUCHENWALD

ars Lawrence THE PURE IN HEART (A Story)

ohn R. Salter Jr. THE MINE-MILL UNION'S GOOD, TOUGH FIGHT

ctober, 1960 50 cents

Vol. 13, No. 10

Mainstream

OCTOBER, 1960

The Second American Tragedy: *Phillip Bonosky* 2

William Styron: Darkness and Fire in the Modern Novel: *John Howard Lawson* 9

From Whitman to Wolfe: The Liberal Tradition in American Literature: *Robert Forrey* 19

The Pure in Heart: *Lars Lawrence* 28

Buchenwald, A Commentary with Sketches: *Anton Refregier* 33

Songs of Impatience: *Mordechai Avi-Shaul* 41

IUMM&SW: The Good, Tough Fight: *John R. Salter, Jr.* 46

Books in Review:

A Theatre in Your Head, by Kenneth Thorpe Rowe: *Sidney Finkelstein* 57

The Gentleman From Mississippi: Our First Negro Senator, by Elizabeth Lawson: *Clay Calvert* 59

The Liberal Hour, by John Kenneth Galbraith: *R. F. Shaw* 60

The Absence of A Cello, by Ira Wallach: *Chuck Wilson* 62

The Letters of Herman Melville, edited by M. R. Davis and W. H. Gilman. *The Long Encounter, Self and Experience in the Writings of Herman Melville,* by Merlin Bowen: *Robert Forrey* 63

Board of Editors

HERBERT APTHEKER

PHILLIP BONOSKY

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

SHIRLEY GRAHAM

CARL MARZANI

Editorial Assistant

ROBERT FORREY

Contributing Editors

JACK BEECHING

JESUS COLON

HUGO GELLERT

MILTON HOWARD

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

MERIDEL LE SUEUR

WALTER LOWENFELS

PHILIP STEVENSON

MAINSTREAM *is published monthly by Masses & Mainstream, Inc.,* 832 *Broadway, New York* N. Y. *Subscription rate* $5 *a year; foreign and Canada* $5.75 *a year. Single copies* 50 *cent outside the U.S.A.* 60 *cents. Re-entered as second class matter February* 25, 1948, *at the Po Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March* 3, 1879. *Copyright* 1960, *by Masses Mainstream, Inc.*

"dig down"

VE HAVE witnessed a number of stirring events in the last year. Progressive forces spoke out loudly for peace and end to the Cold War. Three capitalist satellites—Turkey, ıth Korea, and Japan, moved further out of the orbit of Cold ır alliances. In Africa and Latin America, resistance to Wall eet domination has been dramatically heightened. In our own ıthern states Negro students "sat in" at lunch counters in a npaign to end discrimination.

No one can doubt that progressive forces made tremendous ides in 1960 and there is good reason to believe that 1961 will even more advances.

It is extremely important that *Mainstream* continue to publish icles, stories and poems with a progressive point of view, for if don't who will? Often an author sends us a piece with a note ich begins, "I am sending this to you because no other magazine uld be able to publish it even if they wanted to. . . ."

VE BEGIN a new decade confident that you, the readers of *Mainstream*, will continue to give it your support. It is only ough your generosity that we will be able to meet the costs of olishing which, like everything else, are constantly rising. The olute minimum which we require for the following year is 500. Continued publication requires sacrifices on everybody's t: editors who serve on the board without salary; authors who tribute material without remuneration; and subscribers who only renew their subs faithfully but also dig down, at a time this, and send whatever they can by check, cash or money er to keep America's last progressive cultural magazine on feet.

—*The Editors.*

THE SECOND AMERICAN TRAGEDY

PHILLIP BONOSKY

Mr. Bonosky, a member of the Editorial Board of *Mainstream,* is author of t novel *Burning Valley* (International Publishers, N. Y.). He has been traveli in Eastern Europe and the U.S.S.R., and sat in on the Powers trial in Mosco

Moscow.

SITTING in the dock with Francis Gary Powers and being judged alor with him was that other America which, like him, wanted only make some money, buy a house and a filling station and "be independen For that it didn't really matter what one did, especially if one was aske as Powers at his trial maintained he was asked, merely "to flip on son switches" in an airplane flying over a country so high nothing cou possibly reach it. For flipping on some switches as you flew from Pakist to Norway you could receive $2500 a month. What could be easier?

This trial, through which I sat with such a feeling of anguish f our "average America," was as much an American tragedy as was the sto that Theodore Dreiser told in his classic of a generation ago. Franc G. Powers sat in the dock as Clyde Griffith sat in his cell trying understand how he had come to such a sordid end when all he want was to succeed and be rich and live in the approved style of t American Dream. Dreiser indicted the whole concept of that Americ Dream when it was still more dream than nightmare. Now it is indict again, for all the world to see. The 31-year-old American pilot, born Kentucky, son of a poor shoe repairer, escaped the fate of his fath and flew high. Like Icarus of old, he was brought down again; but

ad nothing to tell the world except that, as a typical American, he had een willing to do anything if paid for it.

I say that this is the second American tragedy and that all of "averge" America, so lovingly portrayed in our slick fiction and slick adertisements, sits in the dock with Powers. It is a tragedy only because ıose who victimized Powers (and I could not see him as other than a ictim, though he was a willing victim in the beginning) have not yet een caught. Mr. Nixon and Mr. Dulles, and Mr. Eisenhower should e really sitting in that dock: for it is their policies which have come ɔ such a catastrophe and which have been exposed before the entire world as the cold and brutal policy of men with only one aim in mind: world conquest through terror.

A moment sometimes comes in the history of a nation when its honor nd its character are placed in the hands, not of its chief spokesmen for efense, but in the hands of one of its lowliest, most typical, most verage of its citizens. This becomes an acid test of that country's real uality as it expresses itself through its most modest representative. We now these heroes from history; our past is full of them.

And this moment in the Cold War found Francis G. Powers sudenly thrust into the world spotlight as the defender of America's onor as its unforeseen spokesman. Here was the celebrated "average American" of whom the world had heard so much. He was the most ampered, the most blessed by circumstances, he lived well, and the way e lived was advertised throughout the world as the way in which all nankind should live, and to fight for that way of life was the sacred uty of all Americans, even if it included atomic warfare.

Francis Powers was born poor, but, like millions of other Americans, e had "gotten his chance to rise." He went much farther than most eople in the world do: he acquired a higher education and could be ssured of a decent income, if not an overpowering one. Wasn't he, herefore, running over with gratitude and love for the System that pened up these possibilities for him? Was not People's Capitalism is dream, his vindication? What would he say of it when the crucial noment to defend it came upon him?

To make sure, in the final instance, of his loyalty, it was sealed with a ontract that was to give him $2500 a month.

And yet, Mr. Powers, American, born and raised in Kentucky, in ne final analysis, did not stay bought. It was not Mr. Nixon who was ent by plane across the USSR. Perhaps he would have made a better efense of Wall Street's foreign policy than did Powers. For when ne average American was asked whether he did well or ill by the

American people when he took the U-2 plane across the USSR, he said: "I did them an ill service," and he added: "I am sincerely sorry."

I thought, sitting in the audience among several thousand other spectators in the Hall of Columns in Moscow, that among many things that the trial of Francis G. Powers was proving, it proved one other thing: no matter how deluded, how misled, how steeped in illusion the American people may at any one time be, and how willing they seem to be to "pull the switch" and leave it up to those whose business it was "to think about those things," nevertheless the potential always exists in them, as it did in Powers, to say at the last, late but not too-late: "I am sincerely sorry that I had anything to do with it. . . . I am not a personal enemy of the Russian people who have treated me very well. . . ."

Powers was equipped with a poison pin to kill himself in case of capture. When he was actually captured, he did nothing of the sort. He did not try to use the rubles to bribe his captors, nor offer them gold rings, nor watches, nor did he unfurl the comical banner he had been issued by high-level strategists of the CIA which said, in 14 languages, among them Russian :"I am an American and I do not speak Russian. I am in need of food, shelter and help. I shall do you no harm. If you can help me, you will be rewarded."

Of the Russian people Powers only knew what he read in books and what he had been told in indoctrination sessions in the air force. Apparently the CIA believes that before a gold watch any Russian will sell out his country. But when it came to the test, Powers did not even use this comic opera paraphernalia, but admitted immediately that he was an American when he was caught by the ordinary Russians who first found him. When he was questioned, he admitted everything. At the court session, he thanked the men who captured him, explaining that they had been very humane in their treatment of him, and he admitted, in answer to Roman Rudenko, the prosecuting attorney's comment, that he had no illusions at all that he could have bribed these Soviet citizens.

Nor did he attempt to blow up the plane, either in the air or on the ground, as he had been instructed to do if such an emergency arose. Why not? Was it because he suspected that he would blow himself up with it? That poison pin left no doubt in his mind as to what Colonel Shelton preferred him to do if the worst happened. Then, to cap it all, he knew that that $1,000 a month which was held back, according to the terms of his contract, to be paid only upon the "successful completion of his mission," was gone now forever. The mis-

ion was not completed; his future house and filling station were never o be. The American Dream had been exploded above Sverdlovsk by . Soviet rocket. What loyalty then had he left and to whom? Powers ıad never belonged to a political party, he said, nor had he ever oted. Obviously he had expected less via the ballot box for his peronal future than via the dollar, quickly made and in abundance.

This revelation of his political indifference both amused and amazed he Soviet people who listened to him and who read his testimony with uch great avidity. For they had recognized "the average American" n him, and he remained consistent in that role until the very end. If ıe managed to escape complete banality, it was only because it was vident that a spark had come to life in him and that brain which had een content to leave all such questions as war and peace, the Summit neeting and so forth to "the people who sent me," was beginning to unction for the first time.

When he was asked by the chairman of the Military Collegium, .t. Gen. Victor Borisglebsky, who along with two people's assessors, ried the case, whether by crossing the USSR border on such a flight n the very eve of the Summit meeting he knew he might be jeopardizng that meeting, Powers replied: "The Summit was very far from my nind." And when he was further asked if he didn't realize such a rovocation could have started a war his answer was: "The people vho sent me should think of these things. My job was to carry out he order." And if his order had been to carry and drop an atomic omb?

In any case, by the end of the trial, it was evident that Powers ad lost all confidence in "the people who should think." It is obvious ɔ him that they are unable to think, or at least to think like human eings, among whom Powers pleaded that he be included in spite f everything. In his final appeal to the judges he said: "Try to judge ne not as an enemy but as a human being. . . ."

The court so judged him. It was, in fact, another revelation in the rucial shift of moral values from one world to the other that the trongest argument that stood in Powers' favor for leniency was not that e was a middle-class boy trying to make good, but that he came from a vorkingclass family and had known what it was to be poor. This fact ffected the entire Soviet public, which had started the case very heavily rejudiced against Powers in whom they saw today's reincarnation of the merican fliers who dropped bombs on Hiroshima, or the Nazis who ed millions of martyrized Europe into the gas chambers.

It would be too much to say that they ever got to feel more for

him than a reluctant pity for his backwardness and ignorance and weakness in allowing himself to be used as a tool. His backwardness and political ignorance were all the more inexplicable to them since he was a college graduate. The Soviet public find it very hard to associate a higher education with Powers' confessions of ignorance of the world in which he lived. Through him they caught a glimpse of an America which left them absolutely unenvious of anything that can be found there. For one must always remember that, far above automobiles, air-conditioning and comfortable apartments, the Soviet people demand that a higher civilized human being be shown to them, a human being who is cultured, who possesses a wide sympathy with the world's oppressed, and who has a broadly humanist approach to life. In that respect, Mr. Powers failed them utterly. You could hear all over Moscow the judgment of the people: Americans will do anything for money.

Powers was the representative of America for those three days before the world, and when he came to examine his conscience, he found little in it that would pass for "patriotism" or love for that strange country of ours which is so unloved except by the workers, by the Communists who love it for what they have known of its best traditions and more for what they know it can be. But Powers felt no such love in his moment of truth. In this lies the whole Achilles heel of American class policy, and there is no escape from the fatal implication of it.

The entire world press was present at the trial. It was scrupulously "fair." Powers had every opportunity to defend himself, to contradict the testimony of others, and his defending attorney, Mikhail Grinov represented his case effectively and even brilliantly. I could see the CBS reporter examining Powers through his opera glasses, watching and watching to see, now too late, what it was that made him tick. How could it be—this is his agonizing problem—that this same Powers who in America, one feels comfortably trapped and obediently happy in his wall-to-wall traps and his status dreams—how could it be that he has changed from that de-humanized product of American mass-myth into this man giving evidence that convicts his own country in the eyes of the world? And yet this time few are tempted to cry: "Brainwashing." For as any observer here saw for himself, Powers was painfully and obviously trying to think for himself for perhaps the first time in his life. Then, of course, one scarcely expects a coherent answer from a CBS correspondent when asked: "Would you have used that poison needle? Even for $2500 you'll never collect?"

Characteristic, too, of the morality involved was the stipulation

the contract he signed (a fact that astounded the Soviet public) it he would not collect that withheld $1000 a month until his mission is ended successfully. Powers cited this as the reason why he had make the flight when he was ordered, eve of the Summit or not. It s a club over his head.

The U.S. policy-makers miscalculated in this instance in such an palling way one shudders to think of what future blunders they are pable of, if they continue along the same course, as they show every n of doing. The fact, too, that neither of the Presidential candidates s voiced any regret over the episode, and that Nixon has instead used to raise the banner of anti-Communism which was last in the bloody nds of Hitler, Mussolini and Hirohito, has gone far to toughen up the inion of the Soviet people that they must continue their wise and xible policy of peaceful struggle for coexistence and support of all anti- lonial forces now rising to the surface all over the world.

The Soviets are proud of the way in which their four soldiers cast rift for over 40 days in the ocean had endured that ordeal. They v in those ordinary soldiers the proud product of their socialist system. ey feel no sense of respect whatsoever for Powers and the policy ich sent him to them, an unwilling present of the Cold War. They ow no hostility to Powers' family which came every day to the trial d sat stoical through the proceedings. No attempt was made in her the newspapers or by the prosecuting attorney to rouse passions ainst Powers, unlike what was done in the USA against the Rosenbergs. wers was not badgered in court, nor insulted, nor were any attempts de to entrap him or expose him through tricky cross-examination, hough Powers was stubborn in his arguments that he was only formally nnected, almost like a passive instrument, to the purpose of the spy ght.

His defending attorney was effective in his defense and summing ; effective certainly since the recommendation of 15 years imprison- nt which the prosecutor made was not accepted by the court. Powers s given 10 years, the first three to be spent in prison, and the next oresumably in a corrective labor camp or colony.

It is a very mild sentence, in view of the circumstances. When was pronounced the entire audience broke into applause. It was nerally well-received by the Soviet public, which saw in it further dence of the generous spirit towards its misled enemies that the viets are capable of, if only they show a shred of repentence and prospect of reforming themselves.

Powers does show that possibility. It's a pity he has to take his

post-graduate course in human education in a prison in the USS even though such prisons are quite decent, as I have seen from dir observation.

But perhaps in the end he will benefit by it. If all the other "av age Americans" of which he is such an accurate specimen could a benefit by it, then even his ordeal will have been worth what it l cost him. The world cannot afford a mass American tragedy, for will be the tragedy of the whole world.

New Publication

A new progressive youth publication made its first appearance th month. Subscriptions to *New Horizons for Youth,* which will be monthly, are only $1. The address is Youth Publications, Inc., 799 Broa way, Room 235, New York 3, N. Y.

STYRON: DARKNESS AND FIRE IN THE MODERN NOVEL

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

The author is a world-renowned playwright, screen-writer, and critic. His *Theory And Technique of Playwriting* has just been published as a paperback. Drama Books, Hill and Wang, N. Y.

IT MAY seem unfair to burden the work of a single young novelist with reflections on the course of American fiction. Yet Styron's work is so brilliant and yet so murky, so shadowed with darkness and consumed with fire, that it may serve as an intensified example of concepts and tendencies that are less violently presented in the books of other writers.

Styron's most recent novel is thoughtfully reviewed in the September issue of *Mainstream.* I cannot quarrel with Mike Newberry's conclusion that it "totters so often on the edge of failure." I would go further, and say that it not only totters on the edge but falls into the abyss. It is this tragic deficiency—tragic because Styron's qualities of poetry and passion are as striking as his lack of clarity—that makes the whole course of his writing worthy of careful and sympathetic analysis.

The deterioration of promising talent is such a common phenomenon in our literature that it has ceased to shock critics. Norman Mailer and James Jones wrote massive first novels which derived their social and personal emotion from the impact of military experience. Both authors revealed their immaturity when they attempted to deal with the realities of American life.

There are cases of similar deterioration in the work of older writers. Dos Passos, moved to anger and understanding by the First

World War and the troubled years that followed, has become a crabbed reactionary who can no longer write with sense or feeling. Steinbeck, appearing a decade later, rose to near greatness in *The Grapes of Wrath* at the end of the thirties, and then descended to his present commercial exploitation of the sins and sorrows of "picturesque" Mexican-Americans.

Styron, born in 1925, was extravagantly praised when his first book, *Lie Down in Darkness,* appeared in 1951. The sensitivity and power of the book seemed to promise that a serious representative of a new generation of writers had emerged. Yet this first novel has many of the weaknesses which are more largely displayed in *Set This House on Fire.* Both books are touched with fire and poetic beauty. But the poetry is all too often marred by purple passages and pretentious mannerisms.

Both books combine realistic and minute observation with a stream of consciousness technique, heightened to frenzy in the musings of people who are intoxicated. Both books tend to repeat situations, and even metaphors and phrases, so that what at first strikes us as unbridled vigor and imagination is finally identified as a lack of sustained invention.

In spite of these limitations, Styron is a gifted and dedicated writer: he may be described as dedicated, because he attempts to fulfill the function of the artist, to explore human motives and values in the context of contemporary reality. He sees that there is something wrong with our society; he sees that the trouble is reflected in an apparent paralysis of purpose and breakdown of morality; he is not content merely to observe the ill-effects; he tries to understand and probe their meaning. It is in this respect, in the structure of social thought, that the new novel marks a retreat, a decline from the promise of the earlier work.

In examining the relationship between the two novels, it must be borne in mind that there is an interval of nine years between them. During this period, Styron published a short anti-war novel, *The Long March,* in 1952. It tells of a group of marines in training for service in Korea, and is a harsh diatribe against military stupidity and barbarity. These men were "as helpless as children" before the horror of war: "for six years they had slept a cataleptic sleep, dreaming blissfully of peace." The tale centers around Colonel Templeton's order that the battalion go on a crazy march of thirty-six miles at night. "I don't want my marines doping off," says the Colonel, "they're going to act like marines." The leading figure in the story is a Jewish Captain Mannix who "had a violent contempt for gibberish, the boy-scout password

hich replaced ordinary conversation in the military world." Mannix rebellious, but he can do nothing, and his anger collapses in futility. *The Long March* shows that Styron, like so many of his generation, gards military order as a symbol of the degrading conformity that stroys initiative and hope in our society. Appearing shortly after *e Down in Darkness,* it defines in a simple allegory the social problem hich is inherent in the first novel and with which the author has ruggled during the period of silence that ended with the appearance *Set This House on Fire.*

ET us now turn back to the first book, *Lie Down in Darkness* and consider the statement of the social problem. The book is conucted around a single event—the funeral of Peyton Loftis, a young oman who has committed suicide in New York. The body is brought ck to Port Warwick, Virginia, and the whole history of the girl d her family is covered in retrospect while the hearse is moving ward the cemetery.

It is a history of total disaster. It begins with the drunken meditions of Milton Loftis, the father, and it goes back over his wasted life, s passion for the lovely child, Peyton. His wife, Helen, was always lous of Peyton, and all her emotion was centered on the younger, entally defective daughter, Maudie. Milton recalls the beginnings his affair with Dolly Bonner, who is riding with him to the funeral, e break-up of his marriage, Peyton's wedding, her death in New York.

The events are told chiefly in a stream-of-consciousness technique, rtly through Milton's memories, and partly through his blurred, inxicated response to the drama around him. The story ends with the al meeting between Milton and his wife at the cemetery, when in momentary "red flash of violence," he threatens to kill her.

The frame of reference is obviously Freudian. It is so obvious at it seems to be super-imposed on material which does not lend itself the psychoanalytical interpretation. There is nothing in the fabric the narrative to convince us that the father's incestuous feeling for his ughter is at the heart of his disaster. When he kisses her on the lips a drunken moment at her wedding, the revelation is curiously unamatic. It is a repetition of what we already know, and it comes as absurd gesture, an incident in their lost lives.

Yet the author's insistence that this is a "classic" tragedy of incest licates the conceptual weakness which prevents the novel from atning the stature of tragedy. Styron feels the tragic plight of middle ss people, whose lives are frustrated by their lack of purpose, their de-

votion to false values, their fevered search for emotional stability. B
he is unable to place the horror in a fully realized social setting, a
therefore the horror is elliptical, and unrealized in its full depth.

The psychoanalytical interpretation is related to the use of i
toxication as the motivating force of the novel. A great novel mig
be writen about alcoholism. But drunkenness is not the theme of t
story; it is used, as the Freudian frame of reference is used, to conv
a larger social meaning. But the meaning is clouded by the use
these devices. The disaster that overtakes the Loftis family is neith
due to excessive drinking nor to incest wishes.

STYRON'S technique consists largely in establishing a rather solen
bourgeois occasion—a family reunion, the fatal illness of a chi
a wedding—and then destroying it in drunken confusion. These situ
tions achieve a high level of humor, as well as rising to a dimensi
of terror. But it is a little as if Chekhov's plays were transformed in
drunken revels, dissolving the reality of frustration in the fumes
whiskey.

I have noted that the technique is repetitious. Milton's drunke
ness at the country club is duplicated in Charlottesville when Mauc
is dying, and again at Peyton's wedding. Yet Styron possesses a comp
sion which justifies comparison with Chekhov. These are not evil peop
They are not the mindless seekers after sensation who wander throu
the pages of so many contemporary novels. They are truly represen
tives of their class.

Milton and his wife and daughter are eager for love and usefulne
While the haze of drunkenness in which Milton moves expresses
lost condition, there is never any confusion in the story concerni
essential moral values. The man who marries Peyton and tries to sa
her is a minor character who appears late in the novel. Nonethel
he is by far the most positive figure. Harry is a Jewish painter w
fought with the Lincoln Brigade in Spain, and his closest friend
Lennie, whose life he saved on the Ebro River in 1937. Harry is
serious painter; his love for Peyton is genuine, deep and poetic.

The last scene between Harry and Peyton takes place shortly af
Hiroshima. Peyton has decived him with other men. She comes
Harry in drunken agony. He remembers how he has compared her
Dante's Beatrice, and his words are really the key to the book's mea
ing: "I'd like to sit around like I think I remember we used to a
talk about color and form and El Greco . . . Blessed Beatrice." S
interrupts him, saying, "Don't," but he continues: "There are a lot

ngs I'd like to talk about. Do you realize what the world's come to? you realize that the great American commonwealth just snuffed out hundred thousand innocent lives this week?"

The flash of larger meaning is brief. But the words about art and oshima afford an insight into the writer's thought. The girl, re-ed and lost, wandering through the bleak streets, seems to be pursued nameless furies. Yet the author knows, and we know, that the curse on her is not nameless and that she is not alone; she is part of *us,* is doomed by the waste of creativity and life that is the way of world.

The final passages of *Lie Down in Darkness,* illuminate Styron's pose, and enable us to understand his difficulty in mastering his art. e difficulty is sharply revealed in the novel published nine years later. n the earlier book, Harry, the artist, the man of good will, the gentle er (and veteran of the crucial struggle in Spain), feels responsible Peyton's suicide, but he cannot save her.

In *Set This House on Fire,* the central figure is another artist, Cass nsolving, driven and tortured in his search for artistic fulfillment and sonal salvation. It is a mistake to say, as Mike Newberry does, that novel is a struggle of "evil versus evil," and that all the characters ve similar philosophies and bespeak the same social degeneration." s may be the critic's viewpoint, but it is plainly not that of the elist.

Cass Kinsolving is a man of good will, a talented painter. His feeling ard his wife is ambivalent, but he wants to stabilize his marriage he is devoted to his four children. Styron does not excuse his al-olic aberrations or his infidelities, but Cass is a man struggling h whatever strength he can muster against the destruction that eatens him.

HUS the novel enlarges on the theme of *Lie Down in Darkness*— the desperate fight for fulfillment and creativity in an environment : mocks and denies these aspirations. Styron sees the threat of evil being both psychological and environmental, in the heart as well as in social situation. But he is dealing seriously with the relationship ween the human personality and the society in which we live, and his k must be examined and judged on these terms.

The method and structure of *Set This House on Fire* repeat the pat-of the first novel. There is a present drama, with long retrospective ratives covering the lives of the principal characters; there are nken reveries in which consciousness moves in darkness to flashes

of revelation; there is the combination of sensitive poetry with gauc overwriting; there is the constant repetition of similar incidents.

But it lacks the tight structure of the earlier book. This is large due to its more ambitious scope. The author's search for social defin tion, for the reasoned splendor of tragedy, leads only to multiplied co fusion. The clue to the structural difficulty lies in the central situatio The immediate action takes place in a single night, and involves ra and murder. The retrospective narratives are badly organized: this is part because the story is told by an observer, Peter Leverett, who has emotional part in the events; since he has only known one of the tw main characters, Mason Flagg, his reminiscences can relate only to Flag and the history of Cass Kinsolving is chiefly conveyed in a later co versation with Peter, some years after the occurrences took place. Cas drunken stream of consciousness during his wanderings in Euro (which is the essence of his story) much reach us third-hand: Cass te it to Peter, who reports it to the reader.

The awkwardness of this structure is evident. But, like all stru tural problems, it springs from the author's conceptual difficulty, h unclarity concerning his social viewpoint and meaning. The troub is most sharply defined in the central situation. The meaning of t rape and murder is blurred, and the action is blurred. The love peasant girl, Francesca, was raped earlier in the evening by Mason Flag But it turns out that, just before the murder, she was raped again, th time being brutally assaulted by a half-witted Italian. Shortly after th Cass murders Flagg by throwing him off a cliff. Later the Italian gi dies. She confesses to only one person that she was assaulted by t mad Italian, and he conceals the truth. Thus it can be assumed by t police that Flagg assaulted her and then committed suicide, enabli Cass to avoid suspicion and go free.

The mere telling of this plot exposes its absurdity. But it also e poses with unusual clarity, the way in which an author is bound a restricted by his thesis. Every move in the rape-murder situation necessitated by the meaning which the author intends to convey. T elementary conflict in the novel is between Cass and Flagg, the ri man who is the personification of the evil that threatens to destroy t artist. Cass must be justified in killing Flagg. Therefore, Flagg mu be guilty of raping the peasant girl, the symbol of innocence and beau But it would be psychologically false to suggest that Flagg would vi late the girl so brutally as to cause her death. Yet he must be suspect of this attack in order to give an excuse for his apparent suicide. T police theory that Flagg committed suicide is essential to the wh

cheme. It enables Cass to tell his story to the narrator, but, more rofoundly, it permits Cass to live so that he can find a measure of elief and salvation.

HAVING examined the crime which forms the climax, we can grasp the root-idea underlying the action. The moment of maximum ntensity, the rape and murder in the Italian village, is the crowning oint of the retrospective narrative, which establishes the social frame-ork, the corruption and decline of American society, the frustration f the creative spirit.

The narrator comes from Port Warwick, Virginia, the town which the setitng of *Lie Down in Darkness.* Early in the book, he returns here to visit his father, a "rare and prodigious man," the only true beral I think I have ever known." The old beauty of Port Warwick as been destroyed by modern industry. His father says: "These are iserable times. . . . Empty times. Mediocre times. You can almost sniff rot in the air." The theme recurs again and again. Cass speaks f America's "degradation of its teachers and its men of mind and haracter, and its childish glorification of scoundrels and nitwits and ovie trash."

Mason Flagg, the wealthy dilettante, with his false concern for art, is perverse and horrible sexuality, his determination to dominate and orrupt everyone around him, is the evil incarnate that is betraying merica. In a sense, Flagg is "the enemy" described by Thomas Wolfe the *Credo* that concludes his last novel: "I think the enemy is here efore us, with a thousand faces, but I think we know that all his faces ear one mask. I think the enemy is single selfishness and compulsive reed."

Peter speaks of his own former subservience to Flagg in words that e reminiscent of Wolfe: ". . . that slick, arrogant, sensual, impeni-ntly youthful, American and vainglorious face to which I had paid r so long my guilt-laden fealty. . . ."

Yet Flagg never emerges as a convincing or menacing figure. Flagg's tions, his earlier history and his conduct at Sambuco, make him more diculous than dangerous. The American film company which is on cation at the villa is supposedly illustrative of American corruption; but e motion picture people are cardboard clichés, and their vices are more cuous than venal.

More basically, Flagg's relationship to Cass is clouded. He controls e drunken artist, because he has money. He forces him to paint a amefully obscene picture. He makes him perform clownish and dis-

reputable acts before the Hollywood visitors, and it is even suggestec that Cass is persuaded to put on an imitation of perverse sexual acts Flagg has a homosexual interest in the artist, but this is merely hinted because Cass is too decent, too capable of redemption to permit any such physical violation.

One feels that the author is straining to make the degradation of Cass more explicit, so as to justify the killing of Flagg. But the trouble is that "the enemy" cannot be symbolized by a wealthy fool like Flagg, who is too frail a vessel to hold the weight of meaning imposed upon him The forces that really threaten Cass are not adequately suggested by the millionaire. His trouble goes back into his past life and is only vaguely related to his cruel patron. Cass suffered a mental breakdown as a result of his military experience during the Second World War, and was under psychiatric care. He decided to become a painter, and then found himsel at war with bourgeois society.

Flagg is related to the war through his lies about his "heroism." Actually, we find out that he used his influence and money to avoid service He has made up a fantastic story of adventures as an O.S.S. officer who was parachuted into Yugoslavia. This fabrication is an ironic commen on the false values the bourgeoisie attach to military prowess.

Styron's hatred of bourgeois pretensions is intense, and is especially directed against religious hypocrisy. His favorite device, as in his earlier novel, is the development of a smug and formal bourgeois situation which explodes into its opposite. In *Set This House on Fire,* these situations are as repetitious as in *Lie Down in Darkness,* and much less integrated in the main movement of the story. These tangential adventures include the tale of the pious young Seventh Day Adventist who is revealed as a teen-age harlot; the devout Catholic couple on a pilgrimage to Rome who turn out to be crooked gamblers.

Cass is the enemy of corrupt and conventional conduct. But he is also guilt-ridden, tortured by his feeling that he is part of this bourgeois world which inhibits his creativity and clouds his reason. His guilt is specifically related to his feeling as a white Southerner that he has participated in shameful treatment of Negroes.

The book has its share of anti-Italian, anti-Semitic, anti-Negro stereotypes. Yet Cass speaks of his nightmares being "tied up with Negroes Negroes in prison, Negroes being gassed, me being gassed, Negroe watching me while I was being gassed. . . ." Cass remembers his participation in destroying the cabin of a Negro who had failed to pay an installment on a small radio. He is haunted by his part in this: "Certain things are so monstrous there is no atonement for them, no redemption.

STYRON is manifestly opposed to oppressors and despoilers. Yet he cannot frame his indictment so that it achieves any potency. The onflict between the rich man and the artist lacks social extension, because he premise of the conflict and the murder is false. Styron has moved rom the Freudian frame of reference to existentialism. While he sees hat something is wrong with American society, and that the rich and owerful bear the responsibility, he sees no way out, no hope for change.

The existentialist frame of reference is more pervasive than the psycho-nalytical element in *Lie Down in Darkness;* it is apparently more deeply elt; it is certainly more fully integrated in the structure.

The individual, crushed and bruised by the "absurdity" of the human ondition, must find an existentialist mode of action. The murder is absurd," because it is morally wrong and accomplishes no social result. Yet it is necessary for Cass, because he has no other way of asserting his ersonality. Cass says that he despises politics. The killing is a substitute or the confrontation with social and political reality.

Styron does not attempt to excuse the crime. Cass, describing his eeling when he found he could escape, says: "A crime was a crime, I houted, and I would suffer for it." But he is not punished, and he chieves a sort of peace, an existentialist fulfillment of himself, which nables him to live and work.

The inadequacy of the idea accounts for the sprawling structure. The aults in writing arise from the struggle between the author's social anger nd his feeling that the trouble is mystic and hidden in the soul. The ttempt to create a menacing atmosphere in these terms necessarily pro-uces feeble phrasing: "Dementia seemed to hover over the city like a nist. . . . I was caught up in some endless circle of self-loathing and venom nd meanness."

The purple passages that occasionally marred his previous work assume darker hue of purple. Styron seems at times to realize that he is failing o get his effect, and he strains to overcome the difficulty. The result— nelodramatic clichés: "Gut churning with fear . . . fingers of pain en-ircling his heart caused him to sink to earth like a stricken deer." The training for effect explains the use of obscene language, which has no rtistic justification, and is often seriously objectionable.

Yet, with all these negative aspects, the failure of *Set This House on Fire* is the failure of a brilliant and sensitive writer. Styron is affected y the ideas and pressures that shape our contemporary culture. The ystem of ideas in his last novel is as much the product of current literary ashions as the dirty words which mar the felicity of his style. It may be oo much to ask that Styron face the fact that he himself is abetting the

corruption of life and art to which he has declared his passionate opposition.

At the end of the novel, Cass prepares to go back to America:

> "Some thing about the dawn made me think of America and how the light would come up slowly over the Eastern coast. . . . And I kept thinking of the new sun coming up over the coast of Virginia and the Carolinas, and how it must have looked from those galleons, centuries ago, when after black night, dawn broke like a trumpet blast, and there it was immense and green and glistening against the crashing seas. And suddenly I wanted more than anything in my life to go back there. And I knew I would go."

Styron's authentic spirit, and his lyricism, are in these lines. And there is conviction in them, and hope. Perhaps he will have the courage to rediscover America, seeing it as it is, emerging from darkness into light, a new world as potent with promise as it was when the galleons first sighted the green shores.

WHITMAN TO WOLFE

ROBERT FORREY

The author is assistant to the Editorial Board of *Mainstream.*

THE publication of Elizabeth Nowell's biography of Thomas Wolfe should encourage new evaluations of one of America's most controversial writers.* Miss Nowell's book is heavily documented with facts, for she was for years Wolfe's literary agent and personal friend. There is in the book, however, no real attempt to draw conclusions from the facts. The biography is loosely organized around the idea that Wolfe's life was a continual search for father figures.

The wealth of material in the biography does enable the reader to go beyond the limitations of its approach. There is quoted, for example, the insightful remark by Henry Seidel Canby about Wolfe's novel, *Of Time and the River*:

> It is in the direct tradition of these earlier anguished spirits and great seekers on our soil, Thoreau, Melville, Whitman. It is in the tradition, but with a momentous difference for which the break-up of the twenties and Mr. Wolfe's own idiosyncracies are responsible.

Wolfe is not only *in* the great traditon of Thoreau, Melville, and Whitman; he is, in important respects, the end of that tradition. In Wolfe we get the tail end of the liberal tradition in American literature which

---

*Elizabeth Nowell, *Thomas Wolfe: A Biography.* Doubleday & Co. New York. $5.95.

reached its peak in the progressive period of American capitalism before the Civil War.

The hope of this tradition had been a nation of small property owners competing under conditions of permanent economic equality. Such an ideal was conceivable then, for the average people of America enjoyed a degree of economic and political independence and the term "free enterprise" was not just a meaningless phrase. That a fairly equal distribution of private property was the economic ideal of American liberalism, of this there is little doubt. The poet who best expressed the aspirations of the American people in the period, Walt Whitman, was quite explicit on this point:

> The true gravitational-hold of liberalism in the United States will be a more universal ownership of property, general homesteads, general comfort—a vast, intertwining of reticulation of wealth. As the human frame, or, indeed, any object in this manifold universe, is best kept together by the simple miracle of its own cohesion, and necessity, exercise and profit thereof, so a great and varied nationality, occupying millions of square miles, were firmest held and knit by the principle of the safety and endurance of the aggregate of middling property owners.

Whitman tried to sketch an outline for democracy modeled on conditions which were really only a temporary phase of American capitalism. This democracy depended for its success, in Whitman's words, upon "men and women with occupations, well-off. owners of houses and acres, and with cash in the bank. . . ." But this was middle class democracy which tended to exclude, especially as time went on, numbers of wage earners who had no such security and were helpless in depressions and economic dislocations. This class of property-less workers pointed to a tendency of American capitalism which threatened middle-class democracy. The proletariat posed a problem which that democracy found difficult to deal with, and forced Whitman to say such things as, "ungracious as it may sound, and a paradox after what we have been saying, democracy looks with suspicious, ill-satisfied eye upon the very poor, the ignorant, and those out of business."

There was however nothing accidental about the growing number of property-less and poor, as there was nothing accidental about the eventual breakdown of bourgeois democracy. As Lenin wrote, the "transformation of competition into monopoly is a most important—if not the most important—phenomena of modern capitalism. . . ." In his belief that democracy could be founded on private property, Whitman expressed the illusions as well as the aspirations of the Americans of the period. As the Russian critic D. S. Mirsky said:

> Whitman is the poet of American democracy of the fifties and sixties, with its strengths and limitations. He is the poet of its illusions about a new humanity already born and having only to grow and develop normally. He gave the most grandiose political expressions to these illusions. But with all his genius he bears the ineffaceable impress of that democracy's provincialism and anti-revolutionary character.

Whitman himself saw that property and competition were turning into their opposite; that instead of strengthening and broadening freedom they were stifling it. In the prose writings of Whitman's later life, he as much as admits that the democracy he had prophesied in *The Leaves of Grass* was not materializing. In *Democratic Vistas,* a prose work published in 1871, he said the chief aim of life in America was "to feverishly make money during one half of it, and by some 'amusement,' perhaps foreign travel, flippantly kill time the other half. . . ." American society had decayed since the forties and fifties and become, in Whitman's words, "cankered, crude, superstitious and rotten." He went on:

> I say we had best look our times and lands searchingly in the face, like a physician diagnosing some deep disease. Never was there, perhaps, more hollowness at heart than at present, and here in the United States. Genuine belief seems to have left us. The underlying principles of the States are not honestly believed in. . . . Nor is humanity believed in. What penetrating eye does not everywhere see through the mask? The spectacle is appalling.

The word that came to haunt Whitman above all others was "business." It had become, he said, the all devouring word of American life. He compared it to the serpent in the fable that "ate up all the other serpents; and money-making is our magician's serpent, remaining today the sole master of the field." He thought the "depravity of the business classes . . . not less than has been supposed but infinitely greater."

In the later Whitman we can see the liberal tradition becoming disillusioned with its own ideals. In Wolfe we can see these ideals turning into their opposite, and having a negative rather than a positive value attached to them. One such ideal that was eventually inverted in the liberal tradition was the concept of the individual.

In *Leaves of Grass* Whitman wanted to portray a model democratic man—the average American individual. When *Leaves of Grass* first appeared, short-sighted critics accused Whitman of unbridled egotism.

How, they asked, could one dare to write about themselves the way Whitman did?

> Walt Whitman am I, a Kosmos, of mighty Manhattan the son. . . .

What these critics overlooked was the fact that the Walt Whitman of the *Leaves* is a type, not a particular person. Whitman called on American authors to "incarnate, to endow a literature with grand and archetypal models—" which is what he himself tried to do in the *Leaves*. His "Song of Myself" is not a song about himself but of the average American. The Walt Whitman of the poem is an amalgam of the mass of Americans—workers, farmers, artisans, and small merchants, who came to consciousness of themselves as the dominant class in the United States of the forties and fifties. The Walt Whitman of the *Leaves* reflects the energy and optimism of this class. The Poem itself is exhilarating insofar as it reflects the enthusiasm of Americans of the age for life and experience.

In Wolfe the individual defines himself in opposition to the masses. Individualism replaces individuality. It was one of Wolfe's strongest convictions that man is essentially a lonely animal and that no man can truly communicate with his brother. The profound sense of loss and transiency which the Wolfean hero feels is in part the impotency of individualism. The individual has all he can do in Wolfe's novel to maintain his own alienated identity. The mere passage of time and the apparent anonymity of the crowd stand as a threat to Wolfe, for he was always afarid of being swallowed up in the hugeness of America, with its vast territory and millions of people.

There is a qualitative difference in the way the ego relates to experience in Wolfe and Whitman. In the *Leaves of Grass* Whitman, confident, cocky even, ambles through America. In Wolfe the ego frantically expands to encompass the American experience, but being only an individual the attempt is doomed to failure. The most recurring theme in Wolfe is the lament "O Lost. Lost."

And yet it was characteristic of Wolfe, as an heir to the democratic tradition, to insist he was one of the people, a revolutionary leader. But he spoke of "revolutionary" in a very individualistic sense. As he wrote to his editor, Maxwell Perkins, "When I say that I am a Revolutionary, I know that you will never for a moment think of me as some one who is usually referred to in America as a 'radical.' You know that my whole feeling toward life could not be indicated or included under such a category."

Wolfe felt that the working man's best friend was not the commu-t but the artist; his deepest resentment was reserved not for capitalists t for the critics, who were always crucifying the creative individual.

> I believe that I myself not only know the workers and am a friend of the worker's cause but that I am myself a brother to the workers, because I am myself, as every artist is, a worker. . . . I know furthermore that at bottom there is no difference between the artist and the worker. They both come from the same family, they recognize and understand each other instantly. They speak the same language. They have always stood together. And I know that our enemies, the people who betray us, are these apes and monkeys of the arts, who believe in everything and believe in nothing, and who hate the living [working?] man no matter what lip service they may pay to us.

hen Wolfe said that the artist was "life's strongest man, earth's great-hero," he did not mean the same thing that Whitman had meant en he said the poet should be the champion of the people. Whitman s a champion because he stood with, not apart from the people. olfe was inclined to divorce himself from the people, to go it alone. rhaps that is why, at the age of thirty-four, he had to confess he was eary, tired, dispirited, and worn out." He wrote, in connection with e of his trips to Europe:

> I came "abroad" to be alone, but what I am really tired of, what I am sick to death of, what I am exhausted and sickened and fed up to the roots of my soul with, is being *alone.* I am tired of myself, I am tired of being with myself, I am surfeited.

Perhaps it was Wolfe's chief limitation as a writer that he failed to in the average people of America his best source of inspiration. ven this limitation, Wolfe was forced to do what Plekhanov thought st romantic artists do when they are fed up with "the sordidness, tedium and the vulgarity of bourgeois existence"; they idealize negation of the bourgeois mode of life.

From his first novel to his last, the best alternative Wolfe can offer the bourgeois types he so disliked was the completely alienated indi-ual, like his brother Ben, in *Look Homeward, Angel,* and the blind lge Blaine, of *You Can't Go Home Again.* Wolfe's heroes are angels, Ben, or devils, like Blaine, in whose utter estrangement from bour-is society Wolfe pretends to see some profound comment upon life.

Judge Blaine is a usurious old lecher who specializes in high intere
loans to poor Negroes. Wolfe pretends to see in Blaine an essentia
good man corrupted by an evil town. Like the blind sage of Gre
drama or the wise fool of Shakespeare, Blaine, we are to believe, u
derstands life better than anybody else. It is he who tells the you
hero of the book that he can't go home again. It is to alienated typ
like Blaine that Wolfe turns for inspiration. "Perhaps," as Wolfe sa
of him, "he was the key to this whole tragedy."

An even better example of the outcast type is the suicide, C. Green,
Chapter 29 of *You Can't Go Home Again.* Whitman had called f
"grand and archetypal models." What Wolfe gives us in Green is
archetypal failure—the lonely individual in a society dominated by t
corporation.

> No, no. He was no voyager of unknown seas, no pioneer of western trails. He was life's little man, life's nameless cipher, life's manswarm atom, life's American—and now he lies disjected and exploded on a street in Brooklyn. . . . Poor, shabby, and corrupted cipher! Poor, nameless, and exploded atom! Poor little guy! He fills us Concentrated Blotters of the Universe with fear, with shame, with awe, with pity, and with terror—for we see ourselves in him.

Wolfe makes much of the fact that the name of the hotel fro
which the suicide leap was made was the Admiral Drake. Drake liv
in an adventurous age of exploration and played the part of the he
whereas Green the little guy in the age of monopoly capitalism
forced to lead an excruciatingly frustrated life. The only act by whi
Green can seem to assert his individuality is self-destruction. It is ju
the individual quality to the act of suicide that makes Green such
perfect example of the alienated type—of the extension of alienati
to the point of self-negation. This is an idealization of negation b
cause what we have in the end, in the case of Green, is a bloodi
streetcorner in Brooklyn, as, in the case of Ben in *Look Homewa*
Angel, what we have is a phantom who escapes into the shadows
life and finally "to the hills beyond" in death.

Not only the concept of the individual but that of private prope
and "free enterprise" become in Wolfe the opposite of what they h
promised to become in the period of the *Leaves of Grass.* In *Lo*
Homeward, Angel Wolfe's alienation from bourgeois property a
commercial relations is expressed primarily in his reaction against
mother, the Eliza Gant of the novel.

In social evolution Eliza Gant stands somewhere between

miser of the feudal period and the financier of the period of monopoly capitalism. Like the financier, she knew that money was not being properly used unless it was invested. This was a law of capitalist development that her side of the family knew well. "Not merely to possess property," Wolfe wrote, "but to draw interest from it as well was part of the religion of her family." In this respect Eliza is to be distinguished from classical skinflints, like Moliere's Harpagon and Balzac's Grandet, who, ignorant of the power capital had to reproduce itself when invested, buried their money in the ground.

But Eliza still shows the provincial character of the Southern petty bourgeoisie, still strongly tied to the land and the ways of the old order. She was something of a peasant in her distrust of the more advanced form of caiptalist relations. Money and interest from investments was not for her; she had to have her wealth in the palpable form of property. It was not enough for her that a man have money—even a great deal of money. Her criteria of success was property. She thought a man was crowned with infamy if it could be said of him: "He hasn't a stick of property to his name."

She understood life only in terms of property. When she looked at the town, she saw it "in the pattern of a gigantic blueprint. She knew the history of every piece of valuable property—who bought it, who sold it, who owned it in 1893, and what it was worth now." "She was obsessed. She talked real estate unendingly. She spent half her time talking to real estate men; they hovered about the house like flesh-flies." Eliza demanded everything show a profit, even her own home, so she turned it into a boarding house, just as Wolfe's own mother had done. "Dixieland," as it is called in the novel, became "the heart of her life."

In his father, Wolfe hoped he had found a principle by which he could negate the property world of his mother. That is why Wolfe romanticizes his father, a sculptor of headstones, as the artist and seeker—the hater of property and bourgeois respectability. The boy sees in the father "a silent horror of selling for money the bread of one's table, the shelter of one's walls. . . ." Because he was unalterably opposed to the mother's plans for making money, the father appeared to Eugene in *Look Homeward, Angel* in a glowing light. The father says quite early in the story: "I hope I never own another piece of property as long as I live. It is nothing but a curse and a care, and the tax-collector gets it all in the end."

But it turns out that Gant is not so much opposed to the spending of money as he is to the making of it. The father, in his own way, turns out to be as selfish as the mother.

> Gant, for all his hatred of land ownership . . . would have like ready and unencumbered affluence—the possession of huge sums of money in the bank and in his pocket, the freedom to travel grandly, to go before the world spaciously.

Grant was just as selfish in regard to experience as Eliza was in regard to property. Eugene comes to realize that "his father's life had devoured whatever had served it, and that few men had had more sensuous enjoyment, or had been more ruthless in their demands on others."

The boys turns from his father to his brother in search of a principle by which to negate property. It is Ben who questions the basis of their life most searchingly. Ben says to Eliza:

> "My God, my God, where are we going? What's it all about? . . . Look at his life. Look at yours. No light, no love, no comfort—nothing. . . . Mama, mama, in God's name, what is it? What do you want? Are you going to strangle us all? Don't you own enough? Do you want more string? Do you want more bottles? . . . Don't you own enough? Do you want the town?"

What dramatic resolution there is in *Look Homeward, Angel* is the result of Eugene's departure from his family for the North with this dramatic repudiation on his lips: "To hell with the real estate! I want none of your dirt. I hate it."

Wolfe's next two novels after *Look Homeward, Angel, Of Time and the River,* and *The Web and the Rock,* are rich in incident and detail, but they show the protagonist in flight without clearly showing what it is he is fleeing from.

In *You Can't Go Home Again,* Wolfe's last novel, he returns to the contradictions engendered by private property, but this time it is not just his mother who is obsessed with money-making but all of America. The important event which separates the two books, one which accounts in part for Wolfe's deeper understanding of life, was the crash in 1929. From this catastrophe Wolfe learned that the problems he dealt with in *Look Homeward, Angel* were not confined to one family but were rather of national scope, and it was not his mother or her family alone who were the cause of the trouble but rather the huge corporations which controlled almost every aspect of American life.

Wolfe convincingly describes the bankruptcy of bourgeois society in *You Can't Go Home Again,* but for all that he somehow never transcends the limitations of the liberal tradition. To the last Wolfe distrusted and feared the masses. In one of the rare cases where he tried to deal with

orking people under capitalism, the results were not very successful. am thinking of the two elevator operators in *You Can't Go Home Again.* hese two get trapped in an elevator during a fire and suffocate. The ony is that their death is attributable to the carelessness and indifference the wealthy occupants whom they were trying to evacuate from the uilding. While the scene is intended to point up the callousness of the ch and the foolishness of any loyalty to them on the part of working eople, in fact, what the scene does better than anything else is to show Volfe's inability to attain real insight into the lives of any but his own ass. The problems of working people are neither quite so dramatic or mple as suffocating in elevators.

The failure of the liberal tradition, if we take Wolfe as our example, that, once it had shown property was not a basis of true democracy, it as not able then to go on and show that it is the people themselves nd not the individual standing apart by himself who can make American emocracy a reality.

Miss Nowell's book confirms what has generally been suspected: Volfe's writing is strongly autobiographical. Hers is a literary biography the first order. But a full study of Wolfe and his work has yet to be ritten. When it is Miss Nowell's biography will probably be drawn pon extensively.

THE PURE IN HEART

LARS LAWRENCE

The following story is an excerpt from *The Hoax,* an installment of a multi-volume work of fiction by Lars Lawrence entitled *The Seed.* This volume will be published by John Calder in London. The first two books in the series, *Morning Noon and Night* and *Out of the Dust,* appeared in 1954 and 1956.

Those volumes sketched four critical days in the southwestern industrial town of Reata. An eviction results in a riot in the course of which a prisoner escapes, a sheriff and two workers are killed, hundreds of coal-miners and their wives and children are terrorized, their leaders jailed on murder charges after an irregular hearing.

Frank Hogarth, a labor lawyer, is summoned from Los Angeles to defend the workers, but, refused permission to practice law in Reata, he moves on to the capital city of Hidalgo in search of legal and financial aid for the defense. There, wealthy Doctor Pan Parmalee and her lover Petty Pierce give a cause party for the Reata workers at which Hogarth is the main speaker, the guests mostly intellectuals and members of the local art colony. For a general account of the embattled union the reader is referred to Mr. Salter's article elsewhere in this issue.

AT THE TOP of the steps leading down into the living-room F made a megaphone of her hands. "Friends," she said, "you've all se my etchings—now wouldn't you like to admire my Hogarth?"

She got the friendly squeak she had hoped for. Joining in the laugh she put out her hand and drew Frank up the steps beside her. Bef she finished her affectionate introduction everyone seemed to have f

tten what a frost the party really was; they settled down as if they
oked forward to enjoying themselves.

However, as Frank began recounting the events leading up to the
ata riot, he seemed as deliberate as an orator launching into a two-
ur harangue. Perhaps her impression was due to the fact that she had
ard the story before; but if she herself was fidgetty, she was sure this
stless bunch would never hold still for it.

This night was hoodooed, and Pet, the smart cookie, had foreseen it
. He had given her hell last night, after the Hogarths' departure, for
mbining a party with a political meeting—and how right he had been!
e was always doing that, underestimating Pet and getting into jams in
nsequence. . . .

"In order to escape the exorbitant rents charged by the coal company,"
ank's voice rolled on, "the miners squatted on what they believed to
public land, put up their own huts and lived in them for years. Then,
e day, a man came to them saying that *he* owned that land and demand-
g payment for title to it. That man was State Senator Jaques Mahoney.
ost of the miners were working then; they felt they could afford to pay.
they signed papers agreeing to make certain periodic payments.

"Now mind you, I don't at this moment question Senator Mahoney's
gal right to evict those who couldn't pay. That is a matter between him
d his conscience—and ours."

Pan noted with dismay that one of the native workers, Jacobo Gal-
gos, was nodding in his sofa corner, and Lydia Kovacs and Steve Sena
ere elbowing him to keep him awake. Poor man—he was probably
hausted by a long day's work, and Pan was sure the sofa was more com-
rtable than his own bed. He ought to be allowed to enjoy it. Hurry,
ank!

"After they had reestablished the Fernández family in their home,
e people decided to take up the whole question of the evictions with
e officials. All the next day they tried to find the Mayor. They returned
his office again and again. At last, late in the day, they were informed
at he had been 'called out of town.' And on the second morning they
ere shocked to learn that Mr. Fernández had been arrested——"

Her guests were beginning to hang on his words at last when all at
ce the front door burst open and a man's voice cried, "Shirkers of the
orld, unite! You have nothing to lose but your brains!"—followed by
tremendous whoop of laughter.

Pan recognized the chronically late Worthington Short and his dinner
ests—Anna Forrest, Stanton Walls, the Blyes (mère et fille), Pixie
an, and a sad young man Pan didn't know—all of them more than half-

crocked. Frank, finding it impossible to compete with a circus, turn in the direction of the door and grinned his good-fellow grin.

Pan sped to the vestibule, finger on lip and hissing loudly, not wi any hope of silencing so irresponsible a scene-stealer as Worthy Sho but to demonstrate to Frank that she was at least trying. As she mig have expected, the newcomers all took up her hissing, exaggerated noisily, then berated each other for being so loud. They were so outragec that under any other circumstances Pan would have broken down a laughed.

Their apologies for "disturbing divine service" were as disturbi as their entrance. Insincerely they begged Frank's pardon, then proceed to halloo and wiggle their fingers at friends in the living-room befo relinquishing the upstage eminence of the stairs.

Getting them seated almost unseated the rest of the room. Th stumbled over others' feet, upset ashtrays into people's laps, clumped the selves together into inadequate spaces from which they begged to extricated: "*Would you* mind *dreadfully* moving over so we can sit gether? Wonnnnnderful, *thank* you." Even after they were down th borrowed each other's cigarettes and matches, repainted mouths, comb hair, and tossed out the last crumb of wit before surrendering the flo with an air of "Now *you show me*" . . .

The return of quiet gave Pixie Ryan an irresistible opportunity to go his piercing wolf-whistle and roll his eyes, calling attention to An lique Blye, a sexy little minx straight out of a Paris convent who w sitting with her chubby little legs crossed and her skirt "unconscious hiked above the knee. At the sound she blushed ever so prettily, hu her head at the wrathful whispers of chère maman, and hastily lowe the curtain on the tableau.

Just as Frank was opening his mouth to resume, Worthy Short his lips to Stanton Walls's ear and asked in a high falsetto, "Daddy, wh does Uncle Pet sprinkle the pollen?" And whooped.

"Short!" Pan megaphoned over the din, "be worthy of your hire shut up!"

But it seemed everybody had to embroider on the crack, and it another minute before Frank could relax his by-now stiff smile. "May he said. "Thank you.'

That ought to hold 'em, Pan thought—unless it antagonizes them.

Frank's confidence grew as he built up to his climax—the riot, terror, the raids—and pictured a whole city in the grip of vengeful m men. Pan no longer worried about his ability to hold their attenti Pet was listening with his mouth open. Even Worthy Short's pink plu

countenance looked wholly absorbed. Only Jacobo Gallegos had surrendered to sleep, and no one thought to nudge him any more.

". . . When I say 'hundreds' were terrorized, have you any clear idea of what that means? There are fewer than fifty people in this room. Suppose now *that door* was suddenly smashed to splinters by armed thugs, who then proceeded to crack our skulls with pistol-butts and blackjacks and drag us off to the Pen—just down that road!—on charges of "conspiring to commit murder!—and locked us up in the death house next to the electric chair!"

Pan saw that many besides herself were feeling an irrational anxiety, though they masked it with nervous giggles.

Then Frank gave them the wide friendly smile. "Don't worry, it can't happen here. This is not Reata. Not yet! But as sure as you sit there it can and *will* happen here if we look away and do nothing while it happens to our neighbors in Reata . . ."

Inevitably there came a let-down when Frank began explaining why he had left Reata and come to Hidalgo; but Pan calculated hopefully that another two or three minutes should see him through.

". . . In Reata I was effectively stymied. I was not allowed to interview witnesses. In fact, I was turned away by force of arms.

"However, you may well be asking yourselves another question: Why did I come *here*—to Hidalgo—rather than to some other city?

"My friends, I came here because I knew this was a community of the pure in heart——"

Frank was utterly taken aback by their roar of laughter. He tried several times to continue, but they wouldn't let him until they had laughed their fill.

"You know," he told them, shaking his finger, "you're too modest. Because it's true. It has always been the function and privilege of artists to uphold the dignity and the rights of man—to reaffirm humanist principles in every age. Of this you should be proud."

They looked so embarrassed that Pan had difficulty repressing a giggle. Ah, she understood them so well! They had always thought of the role of art as being to shock, to startle, to épater the bourgeois, rather than to defend his victims. They had been made to feel like moral lepers so long, by busybodies who censored their plays, derided their pictures and denounced their private lives, that the very idea of their upholding old-fashioned moral values seemed to them ludicrous. If they gave a moment's thought to "the dignity of man," it was to scout such a notion as stuffy and outmoded. How often had she heard them agree together that since the abolition of the anthropocentric universe by Copernicus, and espe-

cially since the reduction of human nature to blind unconscious instinct by Freud, man had lost all human dignity and slipped back into the company of worms, in life as in death.

She too had laughed at Frank's characterization of artists as the pure in heart. She too had always thought of them as misfits in their own time, no matter how eloquently their work might speak to future generations. How many invalids and madmen crowded her gallery of immortals. How many sots and lechers, hopheads and queers . . .

Suddenly her world was upside down. For an instant it was as if she heard again the jeers of the elegant marionettes whom she had told during a suffrage debate: "If women are wiser than men, it's because they've never been free to be as stupid." It seemed in retrospect to have been an inspired phrase. And so Frank Hogarth seemed no longer the rather heavy-handed propagandist she had thought him till now, but a penetrating and creative spirit, while those who felt embarrassed by what they considered his sentimentality seemed less like creative artists than insensitive bourgeois, épatés and dumb in the face of the eternal verities of art—mere clods disguising their conventionality by a mask of unconventional wit, wilfully eccentric poems and paintings, or psychological deviations. She tried to hold the thought and relate it more exactly to her experience in the fight for suffrage; but even as she began to examine it it faded, and presently her world was turned back, right side up, and Frank seemed either very naive or very stupid to be lecturing intellectuals on the function of the intellect.

". . . In any case you can be proud of your city; for the very first lawyer I approached here agreed wholeheartedly to associate himself with the defense——"

Pan herself led the applause with a "Bravo!" Frank had returned to firm ground.

"Thanks to Paul Schermerhorn, the undefended are now defended. The accused at last have counsel—which they should have had days ago.

"Much ground has been lost through these delays. Nevertheless I say to you with confidence, echoing the words of General Foch at the Marne, 'Hard-pressed on my right, my centre giving way, I find the situation excellent—I attack!'"

Even before the applause was over, members of Worthy's party began a movement in the direction of the bar.

BUCHENWALD

ANTON REFREGIER

The author is a painter and muralist who is well known in this country and abroad for both his art and his efforts on behalf of peace.

NOT so long ago in the press, there were stories of the neglect of the Memorial in the former concentration camp of Dauchau—near Munich in the German Federal Republic. This reminded me of my recent visit to Buchenwald, in the other part—in the German Democratic Republic, commonly known as East Germany.

Early one morning, I left the East Berlin Airport and after an hour's flight, landed at Erfurt. And then by car, drove through the lovely countryside to Weimar—a town of old winding streets, little squares, and the houses of Goethe and Schiller. We drove through the town out into the countryside again. A winding road cut through a pine forest, to the gate of the concentration camp—Buchenwald. The iron gate was well ornamented, obviously the work of a fine craftsman, in the center a legend—TO EACH HIS OWN. The gate that opened only once for thousands and thousands of people.

Here, I was met by a guide, a man who himself had survived 8 years of imprisonment. The vast area covered with fine crushed stone from the nearby quarry was now empty. Formerly, rows upon rows of barracks stood here. Now there was only the entrance with a long wire fence rusting but formerly charged with electric current—the fat, ugly, chimney and the low houses of the crematorium—a museum at the opposite end —and way at the other end of this vast, empty area, a tall post with metal spikes and a cart half-full of stone. Down below, stretching in all directions, a soft, lyrical landscape. A horrible contrast—the beauty of

THE OLD WIRE FENCE *Buchenwald*

VISITORS *Buchenwald*

nature and the ugly work of man. On the way to the crematorium, we stopped by a spot now covered with grass. This place, my guide said, the Nazis called ROSE SQUARE. For punishment, prisoners stood here barefooted, on the sharp edges of stone—stood here for hours bleeding.

The crematorium was dim and quiet. I don't remember if the quietness was in the room or in us standing there before the open doors of the furnaces. A wreath of fresh flowers with a blue ribbon was lying on the floor. We just stood there, for the reality was overwhelming.

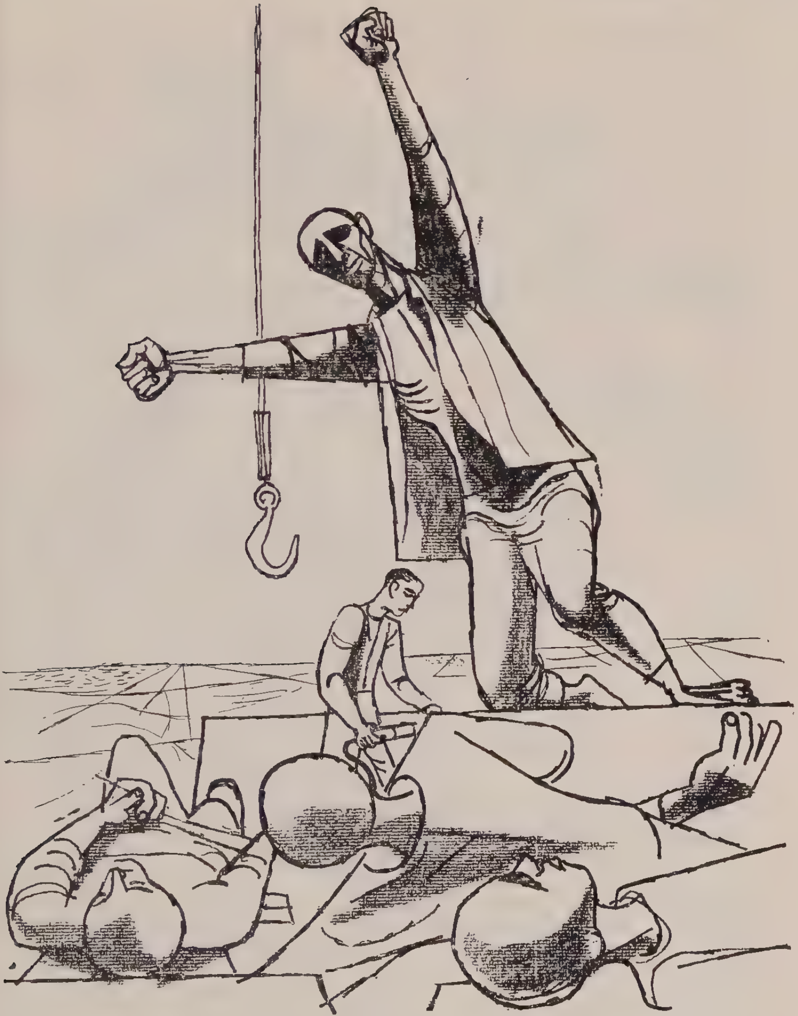
We passed the torture room. An ingenious execution room. And, finally, the dissection room. Neat and white-tiled with a tile block in the center where the doctors verified their medical experiments. Out through a door to the courtyard, we passed by the portable gallows now grey with age, its hooks rusting.

Again we crossed the empty area where less than two decades ago men were suffering and dying. In the very first days, an Underground was organized, my guide said. Over 800 people in 11 language groups methodically worked saving lives and keeping up the courage of others. This post used to hang the men by their bound wrists, their arms twisted towards the back of their necks. And any man arriving here who was tattooed was automatically condemned to death. For he was the favorite subject of Elsa Koch. His body was skinned. The skin cured and the anchors, eagles, hearts and girls and other fanciful tattoos were made into lampshades.

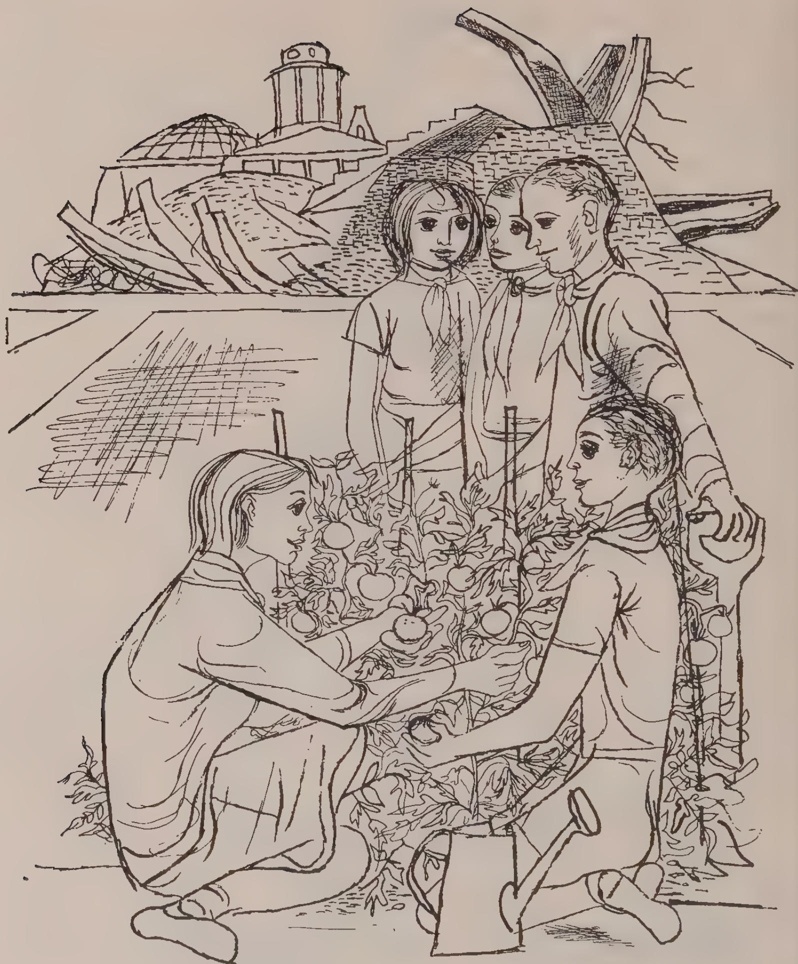
Many groups were entering the gate. Visitors from various parts of the German Democratic Republic, from West Germany, and, literally, from all over the world.

We entered the museum. In photographs and documents, the rise of Nazism is traced here. Starting with the end of the first World War, the rise and defeat of the revolutionary movement, photographs of Hindenburg, Hitler, and Hitler's backers, the German business men and financeers and the financeers from outside Germany. In one section of this vast hall, there is a heap of children's shoes—so elequently speaking of the dead children. Another exhibit—a bolt of cloth woven from women's hair. A radio smuggled into the camp and a small radio built by the prisoners. And the weapons. Photographs of the Heroes of the Underground. And, finally, photographs of the prisoners in their striped garments, who after liberating themselves, greeted the British soldiers outside the camp.

A visit to the former camp of Buchenwald is a deep and terrible experience but the exhibit does not allow one to walk away in sorrow alone. One feels a deep respect for the courage and endurance of man.



MEMORIAL UNDER CONSTRUCTION *Buchenwald*



BERLIN*

* *The destruction in the background was present during the artist's first visit in* 1959 *but entirely cleaned away on his return in* 1960.

On the way out, I bought an illustrated book—a memento of luchenwald—and in it I read: "In Weimar, Goethe and Schiller created or the glory and fame of Germany and for the good of the world; and veryone, sometime in his life, moved by their words, paid respect to hese writers. Not far from Weimar, is another place which became world amous. It is not far—an hour's walk up the hill. But after all, don't e frightened—YOU will return. . . ."

"Fifty-five thousand people died here," said my guide. "And you must emember that there were many Germans among them. The first people o die in the concentration camps were Germans." This, I thought, is im-ortant to remember. "Many guilty people escaped from here to the Vestern Zone," he continued, "doctors responsible for brutal experi-nents that maimed and killed people. There was Dr. Eisner and Dr. Dook. One even practiced in Western Germany until public opinion orced his flight abroad."

Some distance away, carved into a slope against a vast landscape lowing into the horizon is a huge Memorial. Blocks of stone, carved vith the history of the Nazi terror and the resistance of man, line the taircase ascending to the Plaza of Nations. They are inscribed with the ames of the many countries the prisoners came from. On either side, ound pits, the common graves. And, again, a staircase rising to a bronze roup. This is the work of one of the leading German sculptors of the German Democratic Republic—Fritz Cremer. It is a powerful and eautifully conceived group of emaciated men unbroken in spirit. This culpture like all the art I saw here is in the continuing tradition of the est of the humanist art of Kaethe Kollowitz, Lembruck and Barlach. The Memorial was under construction—several figures lying on the round grotesquely paraphrasing the bodies of men we have all seen n hundreds of photographs.

Further on, as a setting to the sculpture, rises a huge bell tower. Here I read the inscription—"Our purpose—the complete destruction f nationalism. Our goal—the construction of a new world in peace and reedom." Inside the tower, is an empty shell. A wooden staircase, hugging s sides, rises to the top and in the center, impressed in the floor, is a rge bronze plaque—the work of Waldemar Grzimek. Engraved in the laque are the feet of men standing on thorns as if seen from below nd surrounded by the names of all the concentration camps in Germany. s I stood there in the quiet, a group of children came through the door arrying a wreath of flowers. They lowered it to the bronze plaque thus oining their gift to the many others. . . . A steady stream of flowers rought by groups of people coming from everywhere.

Five years it took to build the Buchenwald Memorial—a vast su
of money—the labor of a vast number of people. "It is good to know
I said to my guide, "that this was done by your people at a time whe
housing was badly needed and clothing and food and schools." "But
he said, "this Memorial, we needed too."

As I looked down on the valley below, I thought how fantastic-
people were living there in the comfort of Weimar—warm in the wint
—their children playing in the sunshine of the summer—and, here, n
a mile away, among the pine trees, smoke constantly poured out of th
chimney of the crematorium, burning the flesh of human being
Families of Weimar spent a quiet evening at home, perhaps, at that ve
moment people were dying in the gas chambers and wasting away fro
the killing work in the quarry.

As I was thinking these thoughts, my guide said: "When the Briti
and Americans came, they made every inhabitant of the town of Weim
come to Buchenwald to see the death—to smell the stench—to lo
into the eyes of those still living."

I got into the car, and again entered the town of Weimar. We dro
by the house of Goethe and the house of Schiller and into a square whe
on the side of a three story building, hung a huge, blue, banner wi
Picasso's dove. This was for everyone to see in the shadow of Buche
wald.

SONGS OF IMPATIENCE

MORDECHAI AVI-SHAUL

"Ach diese Lucke! diese entsetzliche
Lucke, die ich hier in meinen Busen fuhle"*
(Goethe)

I

YOUR HAND, BROTHER

Quick, quick, a hole's in my chest,
On the left side, there is a hole,
There is a hole in my heart.
Call for the doctor
For there is a hole in my chest.
Electricity flows through me in the prisons of Algiers,
Iron breaks my bones in the jails of Pretoria,
And in the fortress of Burgos they gouge out my eyes.
There is a hole in my heart
And the knife cuts through the hole
One hundred and seventy times every second.

Do not believe the unbelievers.
There is a hole in my chest, a deadly hole.
If there is a physician, call him now
For there is a hole in my heart.

*"Oh this hole, this dreadful
Hole that I feel here in my chest."

Do not stare upon my impatience.
Run—every minute is centuries.
In Angola they snatch my child from me,
In Saigon they make me drink the poison of vipers,
In Seoul the scorpion strikes at my neck.

Oh, brother, your hand—
Your warm, living hand, brother—
Your hand in mine
As long as I breathe
For one part of me will not be broken
They will not break my spine.

Give me your hand—heal me.
Do not tarry over the hole,
You, whose eyes have seen the inferno,
You, the wounded of the race,
You, witnesses to the columns of smoke,
Do not be serene in judgment.
Quick—every minute is centuries,
Every pulse beat a knife in my heart.
Give me your hand, brother,
Clasp your hand firmly to mine.

II

TWO YEARS

Come, said to me the generous white master,
You'll strengthen your body so wasted,
Come with me, said the noble white master,
And your pagan soul will be cleansed.
Wages is honey so sweet
And wonder advises the drink—
Come, and without any fuss,
Or else . . ! And that's all.
Come, dig me stones of fire and water
From out of the womb of earth.
You'll see, they are more beautiful than the stars in the sky—
And two years later

The Chapter will be finished,
Clad in trousers and tie
You shall go back to the Kraal—unexpected.
Where is the wife? The children?—Dear me!
All the world is breathless
They will measure you, front and back:
Hang it all, ha, ha, ha, ha!
Who is this black scarecrow?
Jewels will jingle—every limb adorned with them—
The hut will be gone, and a house you build, a palace . . .
Domkop,* the hut is but a grave!

I went with the generous white master
To strengthen my body so wasted,
I went with the noble white master
To cleanse my pagan soul.
He gave me my wages
And sold me his drinks.
I went out without any fuss,
for else . . ! And that's all.
For him I dug up stones of fire and water
From out of the womb of earth,
And truly, they were more beautiful than the stars in the sky—

Two years went by
And the chapter was finished.
And without tie and trousers
I came back to the Kraal—unexpected.
Where is my wife? Where are my children?—Dear me!
All
    the world
            is breathless—
They measure me, front and back,
Hang it all, oh, oh, oh, oh!
Who is this black skeleton?
His ribs rattling . . . every limb of him cracked—
The hut is gone, and in Cape Town a palace is built . . .
The hut . . . the hut is but dust and ashes.

---

* Domkop = fool (in the Africaan-Boer language).

III

PASS CARD

My white lord,
Here is my pass:
It is stamped on my arms with hot irons,
Engraved on my back with your horse-whip.
    But it is worth the price. Destiny is generous,
    My old mother waits for me in the Kraal,
    And washes away the dirt of the town
    Where no Kaffir may lodge.
    My child plays in the depths of the sewers
    Burning in fever at night . . . father, father.
    His little hands reaching up to the stars.

Here is my pass:
My arm sowed the dawn on the Cape of Dreams,
In my chest silicosis, reward of the diamond,
My back bleeding with the load of pillory.
And here is your signature:
A scar,
And it reads:
Allowed to pass and to die in the shade of the Lord of Hosts.
    But it is worth the price,
    Here and there, destiny is generous,
    Without iron or whip or barbed wire.
    But down in the Kraal before dawn
    My wife's soul flew away from the threshold.
    And I hear my children laugh—laugh—
    In their dreams, so near is the far-away.

Here is my pass:
The hammer: my fist,
My eye which will lighten my coast,
My heart which overflows to the very ends of my landscape.
    But it is worth the price:
    Bring back my generations,
    Oh, desert of Kalahari, dress me with your violet cloak,
    Witwatersrand
    Give me back the salt of my sweat,

For my time has come.
The earth so drank its fill,
Let my fountains swell up from deep under,
The stammering of my tongue which licked the flames
Will be cured by their liquid.
They will break the chains which have cut deep into the
flesh of Africa,
Three miles deep, from sea to sea.

frica, dark!—
'hite lord, do you see her destiny's mark?
Here, in the palm of my hand
hold of her dawn the Pass Card.

el-Aviv, 1960.

Translated from the Hebrew by Bilha Bahr.

IUMM&SW: THE GOOD, TOUGH FIGHT

JOHN R. SALTER, JR.

I. A Couple of Words

FEW stories in history are as colorful as are those relating to th struggles of the American worker, who through his labor unio has striven long and hard to escape the status of an exploited c within a vast industrial culture. He has had to battle mightily inde against those forces founded upon ignorance and reaction to furth his dignity and well being as a member of mankind.

The Machiavellian tendencies of capitalism have, for the time bei at least, shaped the course of mass population growth and increasi technology in such a way that fear, apathy, and ignorance course throug out the United States of America.

Yet the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Work (Ind.), in the face of the most embittered opposition from all sides, h survived, expanded and conducted its fight for its membership and better America in a far more than merely satisfactory fashion.

Sketching the Context

KNOWN in its early days as the Western Federation of Miners, Mine-Mill union was formed in 1893 following violent and blo labor upheavals in the Coeur d'Alene mining district of nothern Ida Against the power absorbing growth of gigantic industrial corpo tions which—in the mining industry as elsewhere within the Uni States were callous regarding the welfare of those whom they emplo

—the western miners, millmen and smeltermen incorporated into their organization the very finest strains of radicalism and the most resourceful and tough aspects of the frontier tradition.

From the time of its inception to the present, IUMM&SW has crusaded with vigor and competence for the cause of the working people. Through both industrial and political action, it has been responsible for such advances as the cutting of long working days—some once as high as sixteen and eighteen hours—to eight. It has raised wages from a barely subsistence level to the point where its members now eat and live in the fashion to which people are entitled. It has secured safety conditions infinitely better than those of the pre-union days when lead and arsenic poisoning and lung-eating silicosis were rifle and mine cave-ins occurred at close intervals and with great loss of life and limb. It has obtained well equipped and well staffed hospitals in the metalliferrous industry camps and has fought for and secured far better housing in the company towns than was once the case when privy-like sacks were common. It was instrumental in the expansion of the American Federation of Labor, was the prime founder of the Industrial Workers of the World, and in the 'thirties and 'forties it was an integral and most active component of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

One of the most democratic of all unions in organizational structure, theory, and practice, IUMM&SW has crusaded in every conceivable fashion for the furtherance of civil rights and civil liberties for everyone, whether the individual concerned is a rank-and-file member of Mine-Mill, or whether he is a member of a political, religious, national, or racial minority with no IUMM&SW connection. The union has stumped successfully for increased public welfare measures for all Americans and, in the towns where it exists as a collective bargaining agency, it has performed extremely well as a constructive community force with respect to civic problems.

And, unlike most American unions and self-styled liberal bodies, Mine-Mill has resolutely held—no matter the nature and degree of the opposition—to a genuine, *fundamentally progressive* course.

AND there has been much opposition. All through its history, the antagonists of IUMM&SW have mustered a wide variety of repressive techniques: the killing and maiming of union organizers and pickets, the deportation and blacklisting of unionists, raids from rival labor unions including many of the "company union" sort, strike-breaking injunctions, and framed-up charges against its spokesmen and

membership. This has been quite true indeed whether the struggle was back in the 1890's an early 1900's at Coeur d'Alene, Telluride, Cripple Creek, Lead—or at Boise, in 1907, when Clarence Darrow successfully defended the hulking prophet of the miners, William D. Haywood, against a false murder charge manufactured by the mine owners. It was true in the Arizona of 1917 where, at Bisbee on the Mexican border on a hot July day, a self-termed "loyalty-league" deported 1200 striking miners into the desert without food or water. It was true in the great organizing campaigns of the 'thirties and 'forties in the Tri-State region of Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma and down in the iron mining sections of Tennessee and Alabama when the Klu Klux Klan crawled forth from its hole in the ground. For businessmen characteristically deliver nothing but the most vicious type of opposition when the vision of socio-economic democracy rises upon the horizon.

But the anti-IUMM&SW campaign was particularly intensive during the 1950's—when the United States government joined forces with the traditional enemies of the union, to overtly try its hand in a strike-breaking, union-wrecking role.

Cold War fear and hysteria and an anti-union campaign were sparked and threaded and molded together in the machines of the reactionaries —and the poisonous product flowered like jimson weed in post World War II days to permeate nearly every section of America. Forthwith the officialdom of the CIO—of which Mine-Mill was a member— became increasingly cautious and conservative. In 1949 and 1950, the CIO expelled and forced out twelve of the so-called "left-wing" unions which had, without compromise, refused to follow the detrimental house-broken line being laid down by leaders of the multi-union federation. One of the left-wing unions was IUMM&SW, whose sins included negative criticism of the Marshall Plan, a championing of the cause of the Wallace Progressive Party, a hostile view of the Taft-Hartley Act, and the greatest bogey of all—alleged domination by the Communist Party. And, once out of the CIO, Mine-Mill found itself the recipient of a number of extraordinarily vindictive thrusts calculated to either irreparably hamstring it or destroy it completely. Opposed viciously by management, it was also raided without mercy by AFL and CIO unions—which displayed no qualms regarding use of the "red-bait." The raiding campaigns netted some IUMM&SW locals and opposition from the bosses smashed a few, but—unlike many of the other left-wing unions which were subsequently destroyed by such a double-smash—Mine-Mill had a long, long history of entrenched

orker militancy and loyalty in its jurisdictional area. The doughty
nine union recouped most of its losses and even organized a substan-
ial amount of new territory and, thus, expanded to an appreciable
egree.

When it became obvious that management and right-wing union pres-
ure was not enough, the government moved in.

IN 1952, the Senate Internal Security Committee, led by the late Pat
McCarran of Nevada, and staffed by such worthies as J. B. Mathews
nd Harvey Matusow, hauled some of the most prominent Mine-Mill
pokesmen before it, in a futile attempt to prove "Moscow domination"
n a IUMM&SW strike in which, ironically enough, it had been the
nining concerns and not the union, who had refused to bargain. The
and of the government was in Grant County, New Mexico in late
952 and early 1953, when Mine-Mill Local 890, led by Juan Chacon
nd Clinton Jencks, assisted a Hollywood group in filming "Salt of the
Earth," based on a prolonged and successful IUMM&SW strike which
ad occurred at Hanover, New Mexico the year before. Intermixed
vith the burning of homes of union members, the brutal assaults on
Mine-Mill officials and friends, and the formation of a vigilante com-
nittee which told union militants, "Clear out of Grant County in twelve
ours or be carried out in black boxes," the U.S. Department of Immi-
ration deported, on a minor technicality, leading lady Rosura Revueltas
o her native Mexico. In 1954, Clinton Jencks, then an International
Representative of IUMM&SW was, on the flimsy and sketchy testimony
of Harvey Matusow, convicted in a Dixiecrat courtroom in El Paso of
erjuring himself on the non-Communist Taft-Hartley affidavits. Years
ater, Matusow announced that he'd lied, and eventually, in 1957, Jencks
vas released by the Supreme Court. In 1954 again, the National Labor
Relations Board attempted to strip, through de-certification procedures,
he bargaining rights of IUMM&SW, charging that Idaho-born Maurice
Travis, at that time International Secretary-Treasurer, had committed
erjury when he had signed the non-Communist Taft-Hartley oath.
The Supreme Court later killed this maneuver which, had it been suc-
essful, would have eventually led to the complete destruction of Mine-
Mill. Travis, however, was singled out in 1955, charged and eventually
onvicted of Taft-Hartley oath perjury. He appealed and received a new
rial, at which he was again found guilty. And in 1957, the Subversive
Activities Control Board held almost half a year of hearings calculated
o prove the "Communist domination" of the mine union. The hear-
ngs were eventually recessed with no decision being announced.

III. The Crucible of 1959

THE severest test of any labor union comes either during a prolonge
and embittered and far-flung strike, or during a well developed lega
attack. When the two occur simultaneously, the union involved is o
extremely dangerous ground. In varying degrees, such a combinatio
of circumstances and methodology had been most instrumental in almos
completely wrecking such dissident groups as the Industrial Worker
of the World. In the late summer, fall, and early winter of 1959
IUMM&SW faced the most crucial assault of its entire history when i
became embroiled not only in the largest and longest copper strike t
ever hit the industry, but also in an intense legal struggle with the fed
eral government.

In mid-1956, a federal grand jury began sitting in "secret" session i
Denver and, at the same time, agents of the FBI commenced to drif
quietly through the hard-rock industry towns falling within the juris
diction of Mine-Mill, and hopefully asking a great many managemen
officials and others questions regarding knowledge of the alleged "Com
munist domination" of the union. The month of November, 195
saw government authorities hand down indictments against thirteen to
Mine-Mill staff members and Maurice Travis who had left the unio
some time before, charging them with "conspiracy" to file false non-Com
munist Taft-Hartley affidavits in the period between 1949 and 1956
After each was released on five thousand dollars bail, they waited fo
many, many months before being informed that their trial date was se
for October, 1959.

The particular date of the judicial proceedings is of no small im-
portance. It was common knowledge to both union, management, an
much of the informed public in the geographical sections concerne
that upon the expiration of the copper industry collective bargainin
contracts in the summer of 1959, there was (owing to the declinin
state of the copper market and the subsequent stockpiling of the metal
and to the generally widespread and increasing opposition to unionism
an excellent chance of a lengthy strike. When the trial date was finall
set, many felt that it was no coincidence that the Denver conspirac
trial of IUMM&SW would coincide with the strike. It is almost uni
versally accepted by those cognizant of the general background tha
the government had engaged in a move calculated to hit Mine-Mil
when it was financially weakest and to level it to the ground.

It is pertinent, then, to note that, in the late spring of 1959, as th
contracts at Phelps-Dodge, American Smelting and Refining, Kenneco

Anaconda, Magma and lesser concerns, came to expire—and as the trial date moved closer—the employers showed no desire whatsoever to come to any sort of terms with Mine-Mill and thus avert a strike. The union was aware of the thin ice upon which it had been placed, and had absolutely no desire to institute walk-out action. Later, it said:

> For three months we copper workers tried everything short of strike to move the corporations. We patiently tried to negotiate. Twice we reduced our bargaining proposals. We enlisted the efforts of the U.S. Conciliation Service. We were always ready to meet at any time with the companies. . . . Even after a secret ballot strike vote on June 30 had authorized a walkout by a Yes vote of over 90 per cent, we still waited six weeks before striking. During all this time, the corporations just continued to say "No," and made no counter proposals of any kind.

In the middle of August, 1959, with the trial date less than two months away, Mine-Mill—troubled by the specter of permanent unemployment, faced with increasing job elimination, caught with static wages in an inflationary context, and sorely worried about rising medical costs and slipping working conditions—called out 30,000 of its 125,000 man membership, and struck the entire American copper producing business in the most widespread, and what was to be the most prolonged, strike in the history of the industry.

In October, 1959, pickets walked in front of the mines, mills, and smelters in the hot barren desert towns of the Southwest, and in the high, mountain communities of the Northwest where the winter winds were already beginning to blow. They stood in front of the scattered copper refineries in such cities as Omaha and Buffalo. And while union negotiating commitees attempted to bargain with unyielding and recalcitrant management officials—the government, in Denver, opened its case against IUMM&SW.

Witnesses brought by the government—ten in number—included a motley collection of former Mine-Mill members, one of whom, James Peterson, had left the union staff bracket to accept a much higher paying position as labor relations expert for the Kennecott Corporation. Others, such as former Executive Board officials Kenneth Eckert and Bill Mason, had—when the union had been under its especially bitter attack from all sides some years before—left IUMM&SW for the rival AFL and CIO unions. A prime informer in the government's string was Art Morales, who had once been simultaneously receiving money from four different sources: a job in the mines, part-time em-

ployment as a Mine-Mill staff man, the Communist Party, and the FBI —this latter group having paid him on a "so much per each report" basis. Such a piece-work arrangement had inspired Morales to be most prolific and, in a six year period, he had received nearly $13,500 from the Department of Justice. Of even more notorious nature was John Lautner, never connected with Mine-Mill, a man who had been for years a prominent official of the Communist Party and who, when the red-hunt had begun, had become a star witness and "Communist expert" for a host of government prosecutors and investigating outfits. One after another, those comprising the side of the government attempted to prove that the fourteen defendants had merely "pretended" to resign from the Communist Party in order to sign the Taft-Hartley oath. None were very successful at all in establishing such "proof" and even the highly skilled and resourceful Lautner could only mention a Communist Party gathering in New York City where it was decided that the left-wing unions would be better off if they would sign the Act. But no matter how much he skirted the issue, he could not specifically involve IUMM&SW or any of the defendants in question.

The trial dragged on and on. Out on the strike front, the corporations steadfastly refused to even make a shallow pretense at bargaining. In the regions where the shut-down was in progress, anti-union elements of all sorts flocked around the copper concerns in denouncing the "red" union. As October drew to an end, the company anti-union strategy suddenly took an ominous turn. In the little mining community of Superior, Arizona—only organized in late 1957 after a hard fought campaign which brought to an end nearly sixty years of open shop status—the controlling corporation, Magma, instituted a throw-out-the-union, back-to-work movement. Seizing a handful of die-hard "company pets" who had not, owing to Arizona's right to work law, joined the union, and a scattering of embittered and disgruntled straws-in-the-wind, the Magma concern persuaded these malcontents to circulate petitions calling for an NLRB union recall election calculated to wreck the union and terminate the strike. With ill-concealed enthusiasm, the dominant Arizona newspaper, *The Arizona Republic*—voice of the extreme right wing of the Goldwater-dominated Arizona Republican Party—came forth with a banner, front-page headline which proclaimed, "Mine Union Doomed." It was quite easily seen that the *Republic* hoped that the strike and the IUMM&SW would collapse.

In mid-November Nathan Witt, a most competent and prominent New York City labor lawyer, came to Phoenix. Witt, in the company

of Mine-Mill staff men, and officials and rank-and-file of the embattled Superior local, presented evidence to the NLRB regional officials of such nature as to conclusively indicate that the Magma corporation was illegally attempting to coerce workers into rejecting IUMM&SW. A bitter hassle ensued at the NLRB offices, and the entire matter was finally sent to Washington for a decision. The Washington NLRB office, however, acting with unusual dispatch and apparently ignoring the evidence garnered by Witt and others, shot back a reply that a Superior NLRB recall election would have to be held. Angry at what it felt was additional evidence of federal collusion with the mining corporations, IUMM&SW poured its best staff members into Superior in an attempt to hold the battle lines at that sector.

By now, however, back-to-work movements were flaring up sporadically at Douglas, Arizona and Ely, Nevada, with the perpetrators being essentially the same sort of anti-unionist species as was the case at Superior. At another Magma corporation town—San Manuel, Arizona—an incipient wreck-the-union campaign resulted in a clash between Mine-Mill stalwarts and company followers with the followers claiming that their recall petitions were being forcibly destroyed by the unionists. Local newspapers began to step up their campaign against the strikers, with the Denver conspiracy trial news being prominently displayed and with red-baiting quite a common feature. At Ray, Arizona, Kennecott officials began to send strikebreakers through the picket lines. When Mine-Mill called out its membership en masse for picketing, the company secured an injunction from a copper-collared judge and, when the union ignored the "legal" decree and continued to turn back the strikebreakers, law officials moved in and arrested the IUMM&SW militants, charging them with contempt of court. A wave of bitterness and angry dissention began to course through most of mining Arizona, and much of the West, and in the more easterly outposts of the struggling union.

Few doubted that IUMM&SW was in a grave condition. The massive legal defense efforts, coupled with mounting strike needs, had nearly emptied its treasury and it was receiving virtually no financial aid from anyone. Its two major surviving left-wing brethren, the International Longshoremen and Warehousemen's Union of Harry Bridges, and the United, Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, both having had severe difficulties of their own with the government, sent what they could spare. A scattering of farm organizations, liberal groups, friendly individuals, and a few AFL-CIO local unions, sent contributions, most of a merely token nature. From the leaders of the AFL-CIO, Mine-Mill received nothing save a continuation of the old

hostility. Indeed, some AFL-CIO unions attempted to "raid" Mine-Mill striking locals, tactics which, had they succeeded, would have broken the strike in those areas. Only a few non-IUMM&SW unionists were perceptive enough to realize what was at stake. In an Arizona AFL-CIO delegates meeting, an official of a staid and quite respectable craft workers' local arose and, in the face of embarrassed hostility from the remainder of the federation unionists, told them bluntly that:

> "Go on. Carry out your grudge against Mine-Mill. Don't contribute a dime to those guys packing the pickets up in the mine country. Don't contribute a penny to the defense of those officials in Denver—who aren't making half the salary you are and who are working twice as hard and who, despite the fact that their freedom could not be more in jeopardy, are spending as much time as they can away from the trial, trying to negotiate with the copper bosses. So just go right ahead and refuse to help Mine-Mill, but remember: If Mine-Mill goes, particularly in Arizona where its militancy has been about all that's kept our union movement going, your own organizations will eventually go, and you'll play right into the hands of the Goldwaters and the industrial bosses."

In the mine, mill and smelter towns the pickets continued their march. In Denver, the IUMM&SW legal staff pointed out that, along with the conflicting and highly ambiguous testimony from the government witnesses, there were also such points to consider as the fact that three of the defendants had never signed the Taft-Hartley oaths during the period in which the so-called "conspiracy" was said to have occurred; that the Taft-Hartley oath proviso was repealed by the September 1959 Landrum-Griffin Act; and that "A conspiracy indictment . . . permits [the prosecution] to drag in witnesses and evidence which would be excluded in an ordinary criminal trial and which often have little or nothing to do with the individual defendants."

The defense presented twenty witnesses, including rank-and-file unionists, some Chamber of Commerce folk, and even an open-minded corporation official, all of whom testified to the good character of the accused. When the IUMM&SW defense, however, brought in a well-known Quaker labor attorney, Stewart Meacham, who had volunteered his services to testify in behalf of Mine-Mill regarding specific details revolving around the union's decision to sign the Act, the court refused to hear him.

It was now early December, and a great many observers on all sides had come to realize that the outcome of the approaching NLRB union recall election at Superior might well symbolize not only the success

the failure of the copper workers' strike, but perhaps the very survival of Mine-Mill itself. A few days before the controversial election as to be held, IUMM&SW rushed venerable International President, hn Clark, into the strike-torn community, to use his tough and militant rsonality to hold the local together. With a personal history in the rd-rock union movement dating back to 1915 and the days of the 'estern Federation of Miners—the great hey-day of American left-wing ionism—John Clark was well qualified to institute constructive reedial action at Superior. Calling a series of mass meetings, Clark oke for hours to miners, townspeople, civic leaders, and even defections. A shrewd analyst, he was fully aware of the role of the womanlk in any successful strike and, in old fashioned "single-jack" fashion, visited home after home, sitting at kitchen tables, drinking coffee, d explaining to men, women and children the position of the union d what they stood to gain if they could but hold out a little longer. e was successful and, a day before the election, the Mine-Mill women ed out of their homes, carrying picket signs which called upon their en to stand by IUMM&SW and the strike, and with their children raded up and down the tense streets. Election day dawned in Surior, with seventy-odd state troopers, sheriff's men, and city police on nd. But the Superior strikers (including many who had come from nporary employment in California and New Mexico) voted five to e to retain their IUMM&SW local and continue the struggle. Within matter of hours, the throw-out-the-union, back-to-work movements d collapsed all over the West.

And so the strike was fought on, but up in Denver—where the fate the union rested not in its own hands, but in those of a judge and y—both prosecutor and defense summarized and rested their cases, d the judge released two of the defendants for total lack of evidence. t the jury found the remainder of the IUMM&SW spokesmen guilty. ubsequently, in March, 1960 sentences from eighteen months to ee years, laced with heavy fines, were levied. The Mine-Mill dese, backed by a number of socially aware and interested private citis, all feeling the conduct of the government's case and the verdict the jurors to be most questionable, filed an appeal.)

Suddenly, in mid-December, with the copper stockpile declining in e and apparently realizing that IUMM&SW would not die, American elting and Refining reluctantly came to terms, granting—in substance he Mine-Mill demands.

Magma followed, then Kennecott, and finally, in January, 1960, the nainder of the copper corporations conceded defeat.

IV. A Last Word

Said one union official, not too long after the last of the deman
had been ratified by the rank-and-file, and the last picket sign had bee
—for the time being—laid down:

> It was a fight for survival, and nothing less. Even in the early days, our union never faced what we've just gone through—not even really in the Cripple Creek and Coeur d'Alene strikes or during the Haywood trial. The only thing that pulled us through was our past and present tradition of militancy, liberalism, and rank-and-file democracy. We won—there is no question of that—but with all of the opposition and our almost total lack of money and the hardships our people went through, we can only say that if we had been the rotten and terrible and sorry outfit our enemies have made us out to be, we could have never won. But we're a pretty damn good outfit—and so we did achieve our grandest victory. And let me tell you: we'll go on to win a hell of a lot more of them.

And, not so very far away at all, a man could almost imagine that l
saw the shadowy figures of Haywood, Joe Hill, Frank Little, Debs, an
many others indeed, nodding their battle-scarred heads and smiling
an extremely friendly way.

CORRECTION

In the review of John Beecher's *In Egypt Land,* in September's issue, the tow
had been spelled incorrectly. The complete correct address is: Rampart Pre
P.O. Box 1506, Scottsdale, Arizona.

books in review

Exhilarating

A THEATRE IN YOUR HEAD, by Kenneth Thorpe Rowe. Funk and Wagnalls. New York. $6.95.

A *Theatre in Your Head* is a healthy and exhilarating book about a subject which is, so far as our country is concerned, if not sick unto death, at least existing in an invalid state with no immediate prospect of recovery. The author, who is professor of playwriting and the history of the drama at the University of Michigan, does not take up the sad situation in which the theatre find itself today. He is an optimist. "This is a dynamic age and drama is the most dynamic form of literature, which may be one reason for the growing response to drama as reading as well as to the theatre." He has a rhapsodic and contagious love for the stage and an encyclopedic knowledge not only of the dramatic literature but also of the varied practical activities that go on behind the stage as well as on it, transforming a sheaf of dialogue with some sparse stage directions and scene descriptions into the living art work conceived by the playwright.

It is with these contributory activities that the book concerns itself, although there is abundant description as well of actual plays and their styles. The author takes up step by step the role of the various "collaborators" necessary to a playwright; the producer, director, scene designer and actors. Drawing upon his own considerable experience in play production and memories of outstanding theatrical achievements, he shows how truly creative are these contributions, requiring not only technical command but also artistic imagination, and calling upon the collaborators' own experience and feeling for life. His intention is to help the reader visualize a live production while reading a play.

It is a good book in this respect, although one doubts whether any book, even one so well-informed as this, can supplant the feeling for the theatre that comes from periodically seeing a first-class production of a good play. It is a book that one can profitably read along with the practice of play-going itself. And there's the rub. The theatre is suffocating from the embrace of "free enterprise," better termed, in this area, gross commercialism. It has dwindled to almost nothing as a factor in the cultural life of the vast majority of people in the

country. One can assemble impressive looking statistics about the theatrical productions put on at universities and the summer stock performance near vacation resorts, but what is crucial is how little theatre falls within the reach of the average person engaged in making a living. Television is no help, for the few good TV plays that can be seen, while better than nothing, are *ersatz* theatre, without the sense of stage, the interrelation of living people moving on it, and the rapport between actor and audience, that are the heart of a theatrical experience.

In New York City, the one city in the country with a pretense at a thriving theatrical life, there are less than half the theatres that the city had twenty-five years ago, rentals are accordingly astronomically high, and ticket prices have similarly climbed to the stratosphere. Most actors suffer from chronic unemployment, there are no permanent repertory groups which raise the stature of acting itself, and the process of hiring actors resembles a slave market. A play that doesn't possess glamor for the carriage trade or the visiting politicians, salesmen, buyers, and convention-attending business men whose expense accounts are the lifeblood of the theatrical box-office, suffers sudden death. The theatre has become primarily a tourist attraction. The "collaborator" whom Professor Rowe discusses least, because his aesthetic contribution is nil, namely the "angel," has come to be the decisive force. He puts up the necessary money with the mental attitude of a stock market speculator. Most of the activity on Broadway now centers about the concoction of a successful musical comedy, and where a few years ago motion picture companies played a prominent role as "angels," now the rich phonograph record companies have entered the field, gambling for the stream of gold that comes from the sale of an original-cast album of a "hit" musical like *South Pacific* or *My Fair Lady*. At this moment, three forthcoming Broadway musical comedies have been invested in to the tune of $400,000 each, by record companies. In the face of this lottery psychology what hopes are there for a writer who, inspired by the great tradition of Sophocles and Shakespeare, Ibsen and Shaw, simply wants to write a good play?

There is some hope for the future of the American stage in the fact that enthusiasts like Professor Rowe are around. His tastes are broad. He likes every sort of play, written in poetry and written in prose, realistic, symbolic, expressionistic and epic. All he asks is that it show some respect for the high standards set by the art, and, whether comic or tragic, a serious interest in real life, both that of the outer world and that of the mind. It is a real distinction of his book that the one play which he chooses to reprint in full, and analyze scene by scene, is Theodore Ward's *Our Lan'*, which deals with the Reconstrutcion era following the Civil War, telling of the struggles of the Negro slaves, who had won their freedom, for the land that had been promised them, and the betrayal of these promises. A beautifully written, poetic and stirring drama, parts of which appeared in *Masses and Mainstream* it was acclaimed in 1947 by critics as one of the best plays of the year but had unfortunately all too short a run.

Reading this play, the value of which

s been enhanced rather than de-
icted from by the passage of time,
e realizes how much the American
ople lose by not being able to see
is work on a stage, let alone the rest
Theodore Ward's twenty plays, eight
which are full length dramas. And
e realizes how much the people are
ing robbed on a larger scale of the
ritage which is rightfully theirs and
which Professor Rowe writes with
ch love.

SIDNEY FINKELSTEIN

'rail Blazer

HE GENTLEMAN FROM MISSISSIPPI: OUR FIRST NEGRO SENATOR, By Elizabeth Lawson. Introduction by William L. Patterson. 63 pp. with frontispiece and bibliography. Published by the author, Box 316, Times Square Post Office, New York City 36. 35 cents.

HIRAM Revels was only a footnote in a few forgotten books till Miss
wson gave us our first overall in-
rpretation of him in this carefully
cumented pamphlet. A man of ac-
on rather than a literary person, he
ft no autobiography beyond fourteen
ges of handwritten notes presumably
ctated to a daughter more than a
neration after the close of the Re-
nstruction era. Very little about him
to be found in the annals of Mis-
sippi, now represented in the Senate
Stennis and the infamous Eastland.
et from patient gleaning of obscure
urces, Miss Lawson has given Ameri-
n history one of its most vivid por-
ayals of one of its most outstanding
aracters.

As Wendell Phillips described him,
nator Revels was "the Fifteenth
mendment in flesh and blood." He was, as Mr. Patterson states in his introduction, the living symbol of that popular upheaval when "former slaves and poor whites marched onto the stage of history to take over the political posts once reserved for their former masters." He had to fight, even to claim the seat to which he had been legally elected, with southern Senators from the border states conducting a traditional filibuster to keep a colored colleague from being sworn. Minister and educational leader by profession, he served in our national legislature for only one year, since he'd originally been elected to finish the unexpired term of a Mississippo bourbon.

Yet the indelible mark of this Negro statesman can be traced in all the battles that are being fought for equality and integration in the South today. Miss Lawson shows, by a minute examination of his votes in Congress, that he prefigured all these struggles; that, with far-seeing vision and courage, he realized that the final emancipation of the South's masses was indivisible in terms of race yet could scarcely be accomplished until the least free—the Negroes—were accorded their natural right of complete and functioning citizenship.

On larger levels, he was also the inspired spokesman for all of America's Negro population, North and South. Less than a week after he was sworn in, he presented a petition from the Negroes of Philadelphia asking that Congress enact a bill sponsored by Senator Stewart of Nevada "to secure all persons by federal statute, the equal protection of the laws." Eventually the principles of the bill became incorporated into the Fifteenth Amendment which is the legal peg of the contemporary southern struggle.

REVELS contested the readmission of Georgia in 1870, demanding that Georgia first reinstate twenty-eight Negro senators and representatives expelled from its legislature. This outrage, he declared in his maiden speech as a Senator, would gravely endanger "the safety and protection of the loyal white and colored population of those states lately in rebellion." For like all the twenty-one Negro Reconstruction Congressmen who followed him, he believed that he had been chosen to advance the political and social interests of both Negro and poor white.

Another speech of his, demanding school desegregation and an end to Jim Crow travel restrictions can, as Miss Lawson declares, "be used today without changing a word." And what a pity that the progressive forces of America do not reprint that speech for broadside distribution wherever schools are currently segregated, whether in Hiram Revels' regressed Mississippi or in New York City with its peculiar form of uniracial classroom.

"It matters not how colored people act," he commented bitingly while a Senator, "it matters not how well they behave themselves, how intelligent they may be, the prejudice against them is equally great as it is against the most low and degraded colored man."

Miss Lawson's portrayal of Revels has evoked a wide response throughout America and particularly from colored Americans now fighting this last stage of the long-unfinished struggle for emancipation. It has been reviewed favorably and enthusiastically by Negro newspapers, large and small. The noted historian, Joel A. Rogers, recommended it highly to his legion of readers in the *Pittsburgh Courier.* The *Afro-American* newspapers, a major publishing chain, devoted a lead edi ial to the work. An intelligent, preciative summary appeared in *Chicago Defender.*

With absolute honesty, Miss L son concedes Revels' weaknesses, cluding his major one of capitulat to the principles of the Southern Den cratic party. Why he finally alig himself with the neo-Confederate tion is also still a matter of speculat among the handful of southern p gressive historians. Perhaps the swer is to be found in a question s largely neglected by scholars—the c divisions between the educated N gro leadership of the Reconstruct period and their untrained mass lowing.

Yet Hiram Revels blazed a t that Negro and forward-looking wh southerners can yet follow. The t grows wider as the neo-Confederacy James Eastland and Orval Faubus fi only the exits given it by history.

CLAY CALVI

Potpourri

THE LIBERAL HOUR, by John K neth Galbraith. Houghton Miffl $3.50.

JOHN Kenneth Galbraith's *The L eral Hour* is a random collect of essays on just about everyth under the sun, from peaceful com tition with the Russians to the tr and tribulations of the gentleman fa er in Vermont. Addressing him to a select audience of "reconc and reasonable men and women," author appears before us in his n expansive mood. Galbraith shuns professorial stance; he does not to convince or convert his readers,

ly to amuse them. For this reason ere is very little of real interest any of these essays; but no one can that they are dull. Galbraith's ief delight is to supply us with the ost commonplace observations in a w and witty form. Thus he reveals the unsuspecting public that Henry rd was something of a fraud (cernly the mildest thing which could be d about him); that the image of vight D. Eisenhower created by the nerican press in 1952 did not fully respond to the real Eisenhower; d that Calvin Coolidge did very little prevent the Great Depression (which body can deny). On the other hand, cannot be said that *The Liberal Hour* es not contain more than a few ly original discoveries. Thus Galaith denounces as pure "slander" notion that the U.S. foreign aid ogram after World War II was motited by any other consideration save re generosity; the idea of buying ies to help fight the cold war apently never entered anyone's head. d Galbraith does not believe that "problem of race relations" is a jor weakness of American society ause "we are on the whole aware" its importance. It must be a great nfort for the embattled lunch count- demonstrators to learn that Prosor Galbraith is "aware" of their ation. But it would be unfair to e the good professor to task in a ious way, since he is not really seri- himself. In these days of "mas- introspection," what Galbraith rs more than anything else is "our rible solemnity." If we persist in ing ourselves seriously, he reminds we will never be able to compro- e, we will not be sufficiently "reed." It is good to know that in these troubled times there is at least one man who can still proclaim, "What, me worry?"

Yet *The Liberal Hour* is not necessarily a total loss. After all, Galbraith is not only a professional wit, but also a leading light in the Democratic academic braintrust. His views are the views of the Kennedy liberals in general; should the Democrats win in November, Galbraith will undoubtedly be consulted in the formulation of administration fiscal policy. For this reason, some of Professor Galbraith's comments, particularly on the subject of public planning, are of more than casual interest.

The first essay in *The Liberal Hour* deals with the subject of "peaceful competition" with the Soviet Union, and it is this theme which dominates Galbraith's approach to the question of government planning. If capitalism is to defeat socialism in peaceful competition, it must learn to deal more successfully than in the past with such problems as unemployment, inflation, arms spending, urban decline and cultural inadequacies. Since private enterprise does not appear to be able to solve these problems on its own, some form of government "leadership" is called for. In other words, Professor Galbraith would like to adopt the public organization and planning characteristic of a socialist society while at the same time retaining our cherished private property in all its purity. Galbraith looks for a resurgence of the New Deal, not because he is concerned about America, but because he is worried by the Soviet Union. Like most "Kennedy liberals," he stands for public planning only because he can see no other way to "beat the Russians."

How does this approach to government "leadership" work out in practice? According to Galbraith, one of the chief weaknesses in the American economy is runaway inflation. In order to prevent inflation, it is necessary to prevent constant price increases in key industries, such as steel or automobiles. Since these industries are unwilling to regulate themselves, Galbraith concludes that some form of government control ("supervised self-regulation") is called for. So far so good. But at the same time, Galbraith also demands government *wage* controls. Each year, labor, management and the government would decide upon a "reasonable" wage for workers in key industries; "unreasonable" strikes would be prohibited. If a wage increase should be granted, then management could legitimately demand a compensating price hike. In other words, Professor Galbraith's "cure" for inflation puts the worker at the mercy of a federal regulatory commission, while at the same time it does not really bar the way to further price increases. Does anyone doubt in what manner James Mitchell's Department of Labor would administer such a law? Because Galbraith is not really concerned about the welfare of the American people, but only with "beating the Russians," his version of public planning is worse than no planning at all.

Is government "leadership" therefore impossible—or at any rate undesirable—in a class society such as our own? Not necessarily. The factor which is missing from Galbraith's calculations, and from the liberal approach in general, is the role of the American people and the progressive movement within it. Under the New Deal, progressive forces in America were a to compel the government to act— a certain extent—in behalf of the r interests and needs of the Ameri people. Such positive achievements Social Security typify the real ga made through public planning dur this period. But similar gains w never be made in the future mer because someone wants to "beat Russians." Nor will they be achie simply through the goodwill of a f liberal professors. Only the mass tion of millions of Americans, uni around the slogans of peace, econo security and civil rights, can o more infuse a positive content i the exercise of government "lead ship."

R. F. SHAW

Sharp Satire

THE ABSENCE OF A CELLO, by Wallach. Little Brown and Co., B ton. 1960.

IRA Wallach has made another w addition to his already famous lection of humorous works. *The sence of A Cello* basically is concer with the attitudes, misconceptions practical problems of intellectuals their dealings with the world of business. The action pivots on the c flict between a small intellectual gr and a personnel director of a large poration.

Andrew Pilgrim, physicist and player of cellos and horses, feels for both by financial necessity and a se of personal failure to offer his serv to big business. Before these serv can be accepted Andrew must und

in examination in his "home environ-nent" by a personnel director, Otis Clifton, to determine whether his atti-tudes and temperament are those of a corporation man, "a team player." With the aid of Perry Blewitt, executive trainee in the Wharton School of Finance and boy friend of Andrew's daughter Joanna, Andrew and his wife Celia, a medieval scholar, prepare to beat Mr. Clifton at his own game by presenting a picture of insipid normalcy. (Among other things this requires the absence of Andrew's cello from the living room.)

What at first seems a straightforward confrontation between two hostile camps, the intellectual and big business, becomes more and more complicated as Otis Clifton grows increasingly enig-matic and as the personal contradic-tions of the characters come to the fore: Andrew, who is in danger of trans-gressing his own nature; Celia, who has sacrificed her own intellectual career for husband and home and now won-ders if the new turn of events is really worth new sacrifices; Joanna Andrews, who at nineteen seems a level-headed fifty as she suppresses the im-practical, earthy sides of her nature; Marian Jellicoe, Andrew's widowed sis-ter, who hides her physical attraction for Otis Clifton under the masks of sarcasm and self-sacrifice; Perry Blew-itt, who is chained to the concept of "the acceptable," and who has stifled his own development in a sisterly rela-tionship with Joanna; Grant Littlewood, engineer turned electrical contractor, who hates his job but is trying to put Andrew in the same position; and Otis Clifton, who appears as a stolid seeker after talented mediocity but is actually a player of horses and a crusader for genius.

Ultimately Otis Clifton is both cata-lyst and therapist for the personal con-tradictions of the characters. By the end of the novel practically everyone has been forced into a painful exami-nation of his basic nature, and in the process many pet conceptions and de-fenses are turned inside out. The old clichés of individualism and conform-ity, genius and mediocrity, hypocrisy and sincerity, are smashed and then placed in the context of a real world with real people where intellectual su-periority does not necessarily mean moral superiority.

The Absence of A Cello is a care-fully worked out novel with a cutting edge of sharp satire on the American scene. The dialogue stays witty and satisfying from beginning to end. The Wallach touch keeps things bubbling even in the most serious satire, as for example Grant's wife Emma, who in-dulges in shop-lifting forays not out of financial need but on the theory "that in this world those who carry on an incessant guerrilla warfare lead happier and fuller lives."

One might regret that Mr. Wallach did not develop some of the darker facets of the relationship between sci-ence and big business. However, though *The Absence of A Cello* would then be more significant it would not be as amusing.

CHUCK WILSON

On Melville

THE LETTERS OF HERMAN MEL-VILLE, edited by Merrel R. Davis and William H. Gilman, Yale Uni-versity Press. $6.50.

THE LONG ENCOUNTER, SELF AND EXPERIENCE IN THE

WRITINGS OF HERMAN MELVILLE, by Merlin Bowen. The University of Chicago Press. $5.00.

TWO more books are added to the long shelf of Melville scholarship. *The Letters* are 271 in number, 42 of which are printed for the first time. This volume represents the first full collection of Melville's correspondence, and will be a valuable aid to future Melville scholarship. "All the letters are interesting as Melville documents," the jacket blurb states, but actually the collection will probably appeal mainly to specialists. I doubt if most readers would be interested in many of the letters. Take No. 2 for example:

"Mr. Mellville takes great pleasure in presenting to Mr. Weed the accompanying copy of *Typee*—and much regrets not seeing him this morning."

But the notes attached to the letters are probably the most valuable part of the book, and they represent years of research on the part of the editors.

Davis and Gilman, the editors, have already produced important studies of Melville, the former of *Mardi*, the novel which preceded *Moby Dick*, and the latter of *Redburn*, perhaps Melville's most autobiographical work. Both men, if I recall correctly, received their doctorates from Yale. Their own work and the letters they have collected and which have been published by Yale University in this volume are part of the best Melville scholarship in this country. Along with Jey Leyda's *Melville Log*, this school of Melville criticism has avoided the Freudian approach. Instead of concentrating on Melville's psyche, they have examined instead the actual events which make up the life and age of Melville and brought this to bear on their treatmen of his writing. The chief limitatior of this school is its disinclination to do much with the wealth of material they have painstakingly accumulated. Gilman's book on *Redburn*, for example clearly shows the central role which the erratic tempo of life under mercantile capitalism had upon Melville's development. First his father, then his brother were ruined in the financial crises of the period, and finally the family itself was split up, with Melville taking to sea, as a direc result of economic crises. But Gilman seems reluctant to follow thi avenue too far, lest he wind up "over simplifying" things with economic interpretations.

Mr. Bowen, with his *The Long Encounter*, is a horse of another color Both book and author are product of the University of Chicago, where scholars do not hesitate to take a stand especially in favor of God and the individual. In many ways *The Long Encounter* stands at the other end o the spectrum. Mr. Bowen studiously avoids contaminating his analysis with any biographical or historical fact Bowen is after what is "relatively permanent and central" in Melville' "thought and imagination," which is to say he does not get bogged dowr in history but deals with Melville' "timeless confrontation of the undiscovered self and the mysterious univers about it."

THERE are three stances for th self, Bowen says: defiance, sub mission, and, which is closest to Mel ville's own point of view, a position o "armed neutrality." The book is buil around an examination of three type of characters in Melville's work wh

fall roughly into one of these categories. The interaction of these three types is the drama of the self.

Mr. Bowen is an intelligent critic who knows his Melville thoroughly. Unfortunately, if he knows anything else about Melville other than the texts, he manages not to show it in this work. His avowed purpose is to avoid making application of any of the historical and literary material on Melville that has been gathered by a generation of Melville scholars. Just what the advantages of such a scholarly blackout are one can not easily see. It may of course be related to the subjectivist-individualist bent that characterizes much of the work of what has become known as the "Chicago School."

In all fairness to the author, it must be noted that he does not see *Billy Budd* as Melville's testament of acceptance.

Rather than staying just with *Billy Budd,* where the ambiguities allow opposite interpretations, Mr. Bowen moves on to *Clarel,* a long poem written by Melville late in life, to show that Melville never was able to acquiesce. The contradictory character of reality, which Melville's genius apprehended in his work, never allowed him to fall into the comfortable but false unity of religious ideals where all moral distinctions disappear in a horrible whiteness.

ROBERT FORREY

JUST PUBLISHED!

THE HISTORICAL ADVANCE OF WORLD SOCIALISM

By WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

This important study by the veteran Communist leader, whose invaluable contributions to Marxist theory, especially in its application to American history and conditions, have won him a world reputation, focuses on a number of key ideological issues confronting the world today.

He analyzes the most vital developments of our era under seven main chapters, as follows: 1. The Capitalist System and Its Crisis; 2. The Class Struggle Up To the Russian Revolution, 1917; 3. From the Russian Revolution to the end of World War II, 1945; 4. Fascism Threatens to Destroy the Labor Movement; 5. The Revolutionary Aftermath of World War II and the Cold War, Up to Geneva, 1955; 6. The Struggle for Peaceful Coexistence; 7. The Growing World Predominance of Socialism.

This new booklet takes on enhanced relevance in light of the historic 15th UN General Assembly where the continuing struggle for peaceful coexistence reached new heights under the vigorous advocacy of the socialist countries, headed by the Soviet Union.

An International Title, Price 50 cents

At your local bookshop or

NEW CENTURY PUBLISHERS, 832 Broadway, New York 3