NEW MASSES

FEBRUARY 16, 1943 15c in Canada 20c

THE NEW OHIO GANG

Plot of the Would-Be President Makers. The Bricker Boom. First of Two Articles.

By BRUCE MINTON

ANNA SEGHERS

An Interview with the Author of "The Seventh Cross"

By JOHN STUART

HOW TO GET RUBBER

By MARCEL SCHERER

RICKENBACKER: MAN OVERBOARD

By JOSEPH NORTH

Also in This Issue: *Vote "No Dies," by the Editors; Battle for Rostov, by Colonel T; Turkish Journey, a Cable by Claude Cockburn; "The Patriots," a Review of the Play, by Samuel Sillen.*

the perilous 25%

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NM SPOTLIGHT

Liberté, Unité

A FIRM step toward clearing the political atmosphere in North Africa and establishing basic unity among Frenchmen has been taken by General Giraud in releasing twenty-seven Communist members of the French Chamber of Deputies from a Morocco concentration camp. We hope that they will now be permitted to resume their roles of leadership among the anti-fascist forces of France. Except for reasons of physical rehabilitation these former Deputies should not be removed from those who look to them for leadership in the struggle against Hitlerism.

By this step General Giraud has demonstrated his good faith in working for national unity in cooperation with the Fighting French of General de Gaulle. A month ago de Gaulle entered into agreement with the Communist Party of France whereby the latter became an integral part of the movement to bring all Frenchmen together who meet the single test: opposition to Hitler.

In a recent interview with a British journalist, whose dispatch President Roosevelt quoted to his first press conference after his return from Casablanca, General Giraud emphasized that he would use any and all Frenchmen under the sole criterion that they wanted to fight Germans and not engage in politics. To illustrate his point Giraud mentioned members of the *Service d'Ordre de la Legion,* a formerly pro-fascist organization of French veterans, now reported disbanded. He also indicated his willingness to use members of the French Communist Party. It is particularly significant that President Roosevelt, when asked to comment on Giraud's position in this matter, told American correspondents that this was not a bad line for any country these days. The President thus again reenforced the policy of national unity among all anti-fascist forces declared by Sumner Welles in his interview with Earl Browder last fall.

The dispatch from Algiers announcing the release of the French Deputies also carried the information that 903 political prisoners had so far been released in North Africa and 5,500 still remained in concentration camps. The latter include a large number of Spanish republicans, who, the dispatch says, will be sent to Mexico as soon as transportation is available. Does this mean that the heroes of Spain will not be permitted to join the armed forces in active combat against the fascists? Does it mean that the United Nations will deliberately deprive themselves of the Spanish veterans' military experience, courage, and everlasting hatred of the Nazis? Surely the necessities of war demand that the freedom of anti-fascists be absolutely unconditional.

"What's the name of that congressman from Georgia?"

That Myth Again

WE THOUGHT that Aesop had died a long time ago. But you never can tell. He seems to have come back in the shape of Cyrus L. Sulzberger, London correspondent for the eminently "objective" New York *Times* and newest creator of Mikhailovich fables. Mr. Sulzberger apparently doesn't like the assignment of resurrecting a corpse, and his dispatches bear the uncomfortable note of "on the one hand and on the other" until he has cancelled himself out into a fat zero. It is too bad that Sulzberger acts as a vehicle for the nonsense produced by the Yugoslav government in London. It has been drumming him full of stories to the effect that the Partisan Army, operating under the broad leadership of the People's Government at Bihac, is Communist-controlled and led by a former Soviet Balkan diplomat named Lebedieff. The Nazi press naturally has been making a good deal of this "Communist domination." But no sooner had Sulzberger's myth appeared in the *Times* than the paper's correspondent in Moscow sent the following report (February 2):

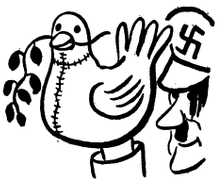
"Since his return to Moscow on May 27, 1941, Mr. Lebedieff has held a high position in the Soviet Information Bureau, dealing with English affairs. During this time when Mr. Lebedieff was 'reported to be in the Balkan mountains' he has been constantly in touch with foreign correspondents here." Poor Mr. Sulzberger, we can just see him dangling from the fishhook.

ACCORDING to Sulzberger, Mikhailovich is "prepared to mobilize an army of 200,000" for the day when the second front opens in the Balkans. Sulzberger "makes no pretense to verifying these claims" although he does not hesitate to wire them. The fact is that the high command of the Partisan Army has given documentary proof that Mikhailovich's "forces" are almost non-existent, most of them having joined the Serbian quislings while Mikhailovich himself cooperates with the Axis invaders. (See Stephen Dedier's and Tony Minerich's articles in NEW MASSES for Dec. 22, 1942, and January 5, 1943.)

This waiting for "the day" policy of the Yugoslav government's War Minister contrasts with the tremendous battles which the Partisan Army has been carrying on against the Nazis. The Mikhailovich myth has fallen into such disrepute that the Yugoslav government's trumpeters deliberately misrepresented a personal note from a member of the British war office as being Downing Street's official congratulations to Mikhailovich for "resisting" the invaders.

The case against Mikhailovich, based on authentic documents, has now been set forth in a pamphlet, *The Truth About Yugoslavia,* sponsored by Louis Adamic and a group of outstanding Americans of Yugoslav extraction.

Hitler's Doves



IF ELMER DAVIS will accept a suggestion for his planned series of OWI broadcasts, we hope that he will devote at least one to slamming the bogey raised high last week by the Wilhelmstrasse buzzards. Goebbels' "Red specter" is knocking on the door again and finding a hearty welcome in appeaser quarters—especially in a small though powerful section of the press. The *Daily News,* New York outlet for the Patterson-McCormick axis, warns Messrs. Roosevelt and Churchill what Stalin will do to Europe "if Stalin is victor. The effect of all this on us will be to leave us in as much danger from Europe as we were before this war." The *News* also doubts whether the President can really protect the country and strongly hints that we have to get ready now to undo via World War III the damage of a United Nations victory.

The tack is, of course, nothing new for the *News.* It merely proves that what many people thought was as dead as the proverbial door nail is very much alive and as perilous as ever. The Nazis know that by intensifying the jitters of conservative British and American circles—not to mention the outright pro-Nazi ones—with the Communist "menace," they can pave the way to splitting the Allies and a negotiated peace.

It is not surprising to find Goebbels repeating his Nazi anniversary performance just four days later in both a radio broadcast and an article in *Das Reich.* "Our continent," he whined, in the event of a German collapse "would become the booty of Bolshevism. Perhaps there are even some enlightened men in London who see what that would mean for England." How quickly the voice found its way to the *News'* editorial room.

BERLIN peace feelers are emanating from a half dozen places as followups to the Nazi pleadings. They take the form of Axis satellites, such as Rumania, angling for peace through neutral capitals. Bucharest has appealed to Turkey. The move is obviously inspired by Berlin because Rumania, although her peoples undoubtedly desire an end to the war, is so enmeshed with Berlin that the quislings cannot conclude a separate peace. Peace feelers are likewise reported from Madrid.

The Nazis are also inspiring stories of a deepening division between Hitler and his army heads. The latest one sent from Berne, Switzerland, tells about Hitler's refusal, contrary to the advice of his military chiefs, to bolster the Sixth Army with additional reserves in the attack on Stalingrad. People who should know better, such as the military commentator of *PM,* have been blowing gas bubbles about the growing friction between Hitler and the Mikado.

And friction there is, but such laboring of the point fits in with one plank of Hearst policy which would have Hitler join us in finishing off the Japanese, thereby saving Hitler. Finally, the newest curlicue is the rumor of Hitler's death. Even if it were true, the Nazis and their system are still very much alive. To spread this nonsense, however, helps perpetuate the theory that only one criminal is responsible for Nazism and his passing ends the crime. Therefore, the appeasers say, why continue fighting.

There's much work to be done, Mr. Davis, if our propaganda war is to keep pace with the military.

While Rome Burns

WHATEVER may be the immediate reason for Mussolini's redecorating his Cabinet, it mirrors again the acute military and political crisis within Italy. A few days ago the tottering duce went into the meadow for a military scapegoat and came out with the hide of Ugo Cavallero of the high command. Then, according to dispatches, Mussolini transferred Crown Prince Umberto to lead Italian troops on the Eastern Front. Umberto, some reports say, has been demanding the withdrawal of Italian soldiers from Russia and is supposed to be, along with Pietro Badoglio—deposed chief of the general staff—in the center of monarchist insistence on a separate peace.

The dismissal of Ciano from the foreign ministry and his appointment as ambassador to the Vatican have also given birth to a flock of rumors. Ciano has been the errand boy for fascist policy and it is hard to believe that this stuffed shirt has suddenly changed his linen. Still it is not impossible that Ciano is among the rodents deserting the rapidly sinking fascist ship—if he is not being primed as another Darlan. Mussolini's appointment of Auguste Rosso, former ambassador to Washington, as envoy to Turkey has brought forth some faint praise from American newspapers. They describe Rosso as a tepid fascist with friendly leanings toward the United States and Great Britain. That falsehood should be scotched once and for all. Rosso is a fullblown fascist whom the controlled Italian press would like to present as the possible means for arranging a negotiated peace.

Italian morale is now about as high as a grasshopper's knee. The balcony emperor is making hysterical efforts to keep his own head from rolling in the gutter. The Cabinet shifts undoubtedly had the approval of Berlin. It is not unlikely that Mussolini has been assigned the job of finding the "gentlemen" with whom peace arrangements can be made. Thus the appointment of Rosso and Ciano's new job. In any event the Italian Gauleiter reads the signs of inevitable doom. Rome burns while he reshuffles the cards.

Labor Counter-attacks

HITLER taught the nations of the world that they must get together or perish. Hitler and his American imitators, Gauleiters Dies, Cox, Hoffman *et al.,* are teaching the same lesson to the organized workers and dirt

farmers. It is good news not only for labor and the farmers, but for all of America that a coalition on the legislative front of the CIO, AFL, Railroad Brotherhoods, and the National Farmers Union is now being whipped into shape. Last week Pres. Philip Murray revealed plans for this coalition which will represent 13,000,000 organized workers and working farmers. Details are still to be decided, Murray said, but the general proposal has been "substantially agreed to" by all four groups. Such a coalition would not only be a weapon of self-defense, but could serve as the fulcrum of a vast mobilization of the entire nation behind President Roosevelt's victory program. For the cooperating labor groups this new development also signifies a further step toward organic unity.

This historic announcement came in connection with a three-day meeting of the CIO executive board. In its legislative report the board implemented the plans for the new coalition by urging every CIO local union to set up a legislative committee, which is to cooperate with similar committees of other CIO unions on a congressional district basis and with "AFL and Railroad Brotherhood locals, farm organizations, church and community organizations in their respective localities and congressional districts."

HERE is a bird's-eye view of some of the other things the CIO executive board did:

Urged wage increases to meet rising living costs in order to promote the government's wage stabilization policy as part of an "over-all and centrally planned national policy covering the entire field of economic stabilization"; called on Economic Stabilization Director James Byrnes to "direct the immediate application of an over-all democratic system of rationing all foods and other necessities," and also insisted on effective price-control; advocated that the provisions for centralized planning of the war economy contained in the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill be put into effect through executive action; recommended the establishment of labor-management committees in every war plant and decided to initiate labor-management production conferences in every war industry; called on labor to take the lead in eliminating the causes of absenteeism such as poor housing, inefficient scheduling, etc.; urged the highest responsibility for labor in formulating and directing the production program; appointed a nine-man committee to develop closer relations with the Confederation of Latin American Workers, headed by Lombardo Toledano; and proposed a new tax program including the following: a 100-percent excess-profits tax on all profits above five percent on the first $10,000,000 of invested capital and on all profits over four percent on capital above the first $10,000,000, repeal of the soak-the-poor "victory" tax, raising of tax exemption to $800 a year for single persons, $1,500 for married couples, with $400 additional for each dependent, increased rates on individual incomes over $3,000 a year, a $25,000 ceiling on net individual income, a bona fide pay-as-you-go plan that will not enrich the wealthy.

Ruins of Pompeii, 1943 — Jim Turnbull

Progress in Tennessee

TENNESSEE has come back into the Union. Last week the state Senate, by a vote of more than two to one, passed a bill repealing the state's fifty-year-old poll tax. The bill had previously been approved by the House. Congratulations are due the people, the legislature, and the governor of Tennessee on taking this important step toward unity in the war. Tennessee thus becomes the second state in recent years—the other was Florida—to abandon this anti-democratic vestige of the post-slavery era. What the killing of the poll tax has meant for Florida is attested by the fact that it made possible the election of the man who is probably the outstanding win-the-war member of the US Senate, Sen. Claude Pepper who, appropriately enough, authorized a Senate bill to repeal the poll tax in federal elections.

Undoubtedly the national campaign for such a federal law had much to do with Tennessee's action. Seven southern states still cling to this un-American, unconstitutional practice, which denies the franchise to millions of black and white Americans and enables the Dies' and Coxes to retain their grip on our national life. In the new Congress anti-poll tax bills have been introduced by several representatives, including Vito Marcantonio of New York. It ought to be possible to get agreement on a single measure, and with an energetic campaign and greater cooperation from the

administration, to defeat the filibusterers who hitherto have succeeded in burying the anti-poll tax bill in the Senate.

Re Mr. Ruml

IF YOU have a charge account at a department store, we suggest that you write a letter telling them that you have been so much impressed with the Ruml plan, originated by Beardsley Ruml, treasurer of Macy's, that you have decided to cancel your 1942 debts to that store and place your relations on a pay-as-you-go basis. You might also add that it really won't make any difference to the store except when its books are finally closed on Judgment Day. Then see what happens. In all probability you will receive by return mail a sizzling letter informing you that unless you pay up in full, the firm will take legal action to recover.

Which is as it should be. Yet this same Beardsley Ruml, assisted by a tremendous publicity campaign, is trying to persuade Congress and the American people that the very practice which neither he nor any department store executive would tolerate in his private business should be used against our own government in relation to the taxes on 1942 income.

First, it should be noted that at a time when we are supposed to be something more than ankle-deep in the war, Ruml and his supporters have succeeded in diverting attention away from the first order of business: raising the $16,000,000,000 in additional revenue requested by President Roosevelt, and concentrating it on a very secondary matter: the *method* of tax payment. This in itself, irrespective of the merits of the Ruml plan, is an injury to the war effort.

AS FOR the Ruml plan itself, it did not gain in logic and persuasiveness by its author's testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee last week. That committee isn't exactly notorious for its devotion to the general welfare, yet even most of its members, including its hard-boiled chairman, Doughton of Texas, seemed to have difficulty swallowing the Ruml nostrum. The pay-as-you-go feature is not original with Ruml and has long been regarded as desirable. The Treasury Department has also urged placing income taxes on a pay-as-you-go basis and has indicated it would favor some provision to relieve the small taxpayer of the burden of paying for 1942 and 1943 in one year. In his testimony, however, Ruml flatly opposed such relief for the lower brackets unless the wealthy were included in a general cancelation of 1942 income taxes. In other words, he is against permitting a married person with no dependents, who had a net income of $2,000 in 1942, to save $140 in taxes, or seven percent of his income, unless a man with a net of $100,000 is allowed to escape taxes of $64,060, or sixty-four percent of his income.

And suppose the corporations take it into their corporate heads that what is good for individuals is good for them. To "forgive" 1942 profits for corporations would boost their take to a figure five times that of 1939 and well above the peak 1929 year.

In opposing the Ruml plan before the Ways and Means Committee the National Lawyers Guild recommended that tax cancelation be limited to the liability on the first $2,000 of taxable net income, so that no individual would receive a tax reduction of more than $380. The Guild also urged that payments be deducted at the source week by week and month by month "out of pay envelopes and pay checks and, if administratively practicable, out of interest and dividend checks." The CIO, the Teachers Union of New York, and other win-the-war organizations are taking a similar position. The House Ways and Means Committee should lose no time in brushing aside the Ruml rumpus and getting on with the job.

Tribute to Planning

IT ONLY made page 23 in the New York *Times,* where it was buried in the thick underbrush of the business and financial section; but it is page one, banner headline stuff as far as the war is concerned—the news that nine senators, representing the Democratic, Republican, and Progressive parties, have joined in sponsoring the new Tolan-Pepper bill to establish a centralized, planned war economy. The notable nine are Pepper of Florida, Kilgore of West Virginia, Thomas of Utah, Green of Rhode Island, Murray of Montana, Johnson of Colorado, all Democrats; Ball of Minnesota and Capper of Kansas, Republicans; and La Follette of Wisconsin, Progressive. Five of them issued a joint statement linking the decisions of Casablanca's "unconditional surrender" conference with the measure they are sponsoring whose aim is "to break the bottlenecks now throttling our military production at dozens of points and thus lead to the speediest possible annihilation of the enemy."

But evidently there are people in Washington who are afraid that centralization, order, and planning, in place of the present shapeless congeries of conflicting jurisdictions, will invade private empires and tread on very sacred toes. So they decided to try to head off the Tolan-Pepper bill even if they had to use a defeatist like Senator Reynolds of North Carolina to do it. It was Reynolds, publisher of an anti-Semitic, pro-fascist magazine and before the war a frequent eulogist of Hitler and Mussolini, who moved that the bill be referred to the Military Affairs Committee, which he heads, instead of the Education and Labor Committee, which considered it last year. Because many senators didn't know what the score was, this motion carried. However, four of the measure's sponsors, Senators Kilgore, Thomas, Johnson, and Murray, are also members of the Military Affairs Committee, while a fifth member, Senator Truman, is considered sure to support the bill. The Reynolds maneuver has this positive side: it is an oblique tribute to the growing strength of the popular support for the Tolan-Pepper bill. That support, further expanded, can blast the bill out of committee and push it through Congress.

Equal and Different

CERTAIN well-to-do ladies in Washington are on the loose again. As far back as we can remember they have been jamming congressional corridors with an "equal rights amendment" which would reverse all the tortured years spent in winning protective legislation for the other half of the country. These feminists, out of this world since the nineteenth plank of the Constitution was passed, are making hay with the fact that thousands of women are now contributing magnificently to war production. Ironically enough, they have had no trouble pinning House and Senate poll taxers for the amendment's support. A former president of the US Chamber of Commerce, now titled Sen. Albert Hawkes of New Jersey, knows a good thing when he sees it and has been only too happy to go along. Opposition to the amendment, an opposition which needs considerable strengthening, comes from the women's bureau of the Labor Department, Mrs. Roosevelt, and key labor and women's organizations.

The point in reply to this spurious "equality" amendment is simple. The zealous ladies confuse the fact that there are and always will be differences among equals. A few minutes with an elementary text on physiology will tell them what those differences are so far as women are concerned. And every piece of protective legislation for women has been based on those differences. Mothers' aid, widows' pension laws, conditions and time of work, statutes safeguarding the family—all would go by the board if the amendment became

part of the constitution. Our advice to the "equal rights" crusaders is that they do something about the host of discriminatory legislation which still keeps thousands of Negro women from the polls, that they get after specific state laws which keep women from becoming full citizens.

Cap and Gun

AN ELOQUENT plea for more effective planning to utilize the nation's manpower at maximum is contained in the annual report of Harvard University's President Conant. The Army and Navy have selected a large number of institutions of higher learning, to which they will send members of the armed forces, in uniform, for specialized training. But President Conant, writing as late as January 11, was forced to admit that "What part Harvard will be called upon to play in this vast undertaking we do not know." Plans are still vague and confused.

Last August the War Manpower Commission declared that "All able-bodied students are destined for the armed forces. The responsibility for determining the specific training for such students is a function of the Army and the Navy." Draft boards are clearly not in a position to decide the problem of who should be selected for college education. As Mr. Conant points out: "To ask each draft board to undertake the difficult educational task of deciding who at eighteen has promise as a future doctor or a future engineer is patent nonsense." Similarly it should not be the responsibility of the colleges "to untangle the complications of the professional manpower problem." Yet Mr. Conant reports that in December, four months after the WMC pronouncement, additional directives went out to local draft boards on the subject of deferring students in certain subjects. "Let us hope," he says, "this is only a temporary expedient designed to bridge a transitional period. To return this whole problem to the mechanism of Selective Service would seem to me disastrous both to efficiency and morale."

SUCH chaos cannot be permitted any longer. The necessities of war demand that an over-all plan be speedily worked out whereby the nation's young men are used to the best advantage and the nation's educational facilities are fully employed in winning the war. The Harvard report draws attention to three conflicting claims that can be resolved only by a carefully calculated national policy and executed under a central administration: the need of

(Continued on page 8)

VOTE "NO DIES"

WHEN this war's history is written, the chapter on Martin Dies will stand as the most shameful in the record. That is, if the Allies write the record. This is not at all certain if the congressman from Texas has his way. As we go to press, the vote on extending the Dies committee another two years hasn't reached the House. But it has reached the people—and they are responding with a thunderous "Nay."

Wily Poll Taxer E. E. Cox of Georgia foresaw this when he "Pearl-Harbored" the resolution through the defeatist-packed Rules Committee last week recommending extension of the Dies committee's life. A number of congressmen who had asked to speak on the matter were out of town when Cox threw his sneak punch. Only half the Rules Committee members were present. Rep. John Folger of North Carolina hastened to the committee room in time to charge that the Dies committee had notoriously failed to examine Nazi and fascist work here and had confined itself to anti-Soviet, Red-baiting propaganda. Mr. Folger asked the pertinent question: "Are we fighting Germany or Russia?"

Russ Nixon, CIO representative, got a cool brush-off when he asked to testify on behalf of its 5,000,000 members. Twelve minutes after Folger finished —he was the only witness permitted—the Rules Committee did the trick: cleared the way for a quick vote in the House. The conspirators had to move fast—they sought to catch the nation off guard.

The country was not caught totally unaware. Among thousands of protests, the National Lawyers' Guild issued a deadly nineteen-page pamphlet recounting Dies' shenanigans which had won him the distinction of being the most-favored Axis spokesman this side of the Atlantic. It proved to the hilt that the labors of his committee afforded juicy pickings for Nazi propagandists in this country as well as for "theoretical" organs of the Nazi propaganda ministry; it revealed the committee's silence on A-1 Nazi agents here, many of whom are now imprisoned; it described his anti-administration finaglings, his broken promises, his multitudinous lies.

He demonstrated his technique amply in a speech lasting one hour and forty-five minutes on the House Floor February 1. Replete with ugly anti-Semitic overtones, he fulminated against "bureaucracy" (read, the administration) and insisted that the war against that was "more important" than the war for survival against the Axis. He abruptly dismissed demands to get after fascists and anti-Semites with declarations that he did not consider anti-Semitism a subversive doctrine worthy of investigation. ". . . There is no law against being anti-Semitic," he concluded. To cap the anti-administration jamboree he was roundly applauded by the majority of House members.

The House—however—did not reflect the feelings of the country. A surge of angry protest swept the nation. It included labor, prominent individuals in every walk of life, and a Cabinet official, Secretary Ickes, who termed the speech an act of "self-regurgitation." Ickes pointed out that two Interior Department employes smeared by Dies had left the service some time ago.

Meanwhile some 1,250 prominent Americans affixed their signatures to a statement that "continuation of the Dies committee would interfere seriously with the prosecution of the war." That was the burden of innumerable other statements of patriots eager for maximum effort and unity to win the war.

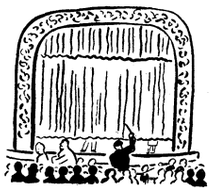
Millions in America were pondering this coincidence, too: the previous day Goebbels in Berlin told the world that Nazi Germany is warring on "the Communist menace." The following day Martin Dies, in Washington, echoed Goebbels. It was the old technique to a T—call all your opponents Communists and hope that that will rend the democratic lineup.

We don't know what will happen when the Cox resolution comes up for vote. If it passes, which seems likely, the next stage of the fight will be on the appropriation, which will be considered in committee and later on the floor. That affords more time—precious little at that—for everybody to tell his congressman that a green light for Dies is a go-signal for all America's enemies.

the Army for young fighting men, the need of the Army and Navy for engineers, and the need of industry for technically educated men.

To the utter confusion of the individual student, not to mention injury to the war effort, these conflicts have not been resolved. "For more than a year now," President Conant declares, "our students in such subjects as engineering, physics, and chemistry have been asking for orders from the government. To date, only in part and in vague outlines has this request been granted. At times the skies seem to lighten; then a fog of contradictory orders once again settles down. . . . We still live in hope of clearer days."

Mr. Rascoe Roars



THE Broadway stage, too long in the doldrums, has been given a tremendous lift by the appearance within one week of Sidney Kingsley's *The Patriots* and Philip and Janet Stevenson's *Counter-attack.* The first play (reviewed on page 26 of this issue) dramatically celebrates Jefferson's fighting faith in democracy; the second is a stirring adaptation of a Soviet play dealing with the war. Together with such new war films as *Commandos Strike at Dawn, Air Force, Journey for Margaret,* these plays show that the arts are at last beginning to catch up with the mood and meaning of the war.

It is hardly surprising to find this development violently opposed by the same defeatist elements that are obstructing the war effort in the political and economic sphere. Most glaring is the example of Burton Rascoe, dramatic critic for Roy Howard's New York *World-Telegram.* Rascoe does for the theater what his colleague Pegler does for the labor movement and what their boss, Roy Howard, does for the country in general. Rascoe treats *The Patriots* as a kind of New Deal plot. He warns his readers that President Roosevelt has dictatorial aspirations and should not be associated with Jefferson's devotion to democracy. And fearing that this argument will not get far, he writes two reviews of the Kingsley play seeking to discredit the work by arrant distortion and savage innuendo.

The answer to Rascoe has come from the National Theater Conference, which has requested an immediate release of *The Patriots* for production throughout the country. The conference is an organization comprised of several thousand non-professional producing groups in the forty-eight states. More than seventy-five such tributary theaters have performed Maxwell Anderson's patriotic play *The Eve of St. Mark.* This is a healthy movement, accelerated by the war, to create a vigorous theater in the farflung communities of the land. It is to be hoped that a play like *Counter-attack* or *The Russian People* (whose life on Broadway was all too brief) will similarly be produced by members of the National Theater Conference.

"Hot Copy"

FIFTY years hence, when our more curious grandchildren go through last week's papers, we hope someone is around to apologize for the press' handling of the case of Errol Flynn. We should like to tell these youngsters that the war was being fought, that men were dying, that planes were bombing the fascist capitals—even though they might get an entirely different impression from reading the front pages of the big city papers. We would remind them that the Red Army was approaching a critical battle at Rostov despite the banner heads shouting Flynn's acquittal on some sex charge. And finally we would tell them that many of us were deeply ashamed with the performance of newspapers who found more copy in a glamour boy's bedroom shenanigans than in a battle which was determining the future of the world.

Search for Manpower

THE War Manpower Commission has announced that physically fit men between eighteen and thirty-eight now working in twenty-nine occupations listed as non-essential must find essential war jobs by May 1 or be drafted into the armed forces, irrespective of the number of their dependents. There is no doubt that the transfer of workers from non-essential to essential jobs is indispensable for the full utilization of manpower and womanpower and the attainment of maximum production. But the method employed is questionable; it is entirely negative and is not part of a comprehensive plan for the organization of the nation's labor force. A man who is employed as a waiter is not doing essential work from the standpoint of the war. Yet if all men waiters between eighteen and thirty-eight should overnight leave their jobs, it would cause a breakdown in an important service because no provision has been made to replace these waiters with women and older men. Or take the situation in New York. It does no good to tell New Yorkers employed in non-essential occupations to get war jobs when 250,000 are unable to get jobs of any kind. Will the New York area receive sufficient war contracts to provide employment for these 250,000, as well as for those who leave non-essential work? The War Manpower Commission can't give the answer because it concerns a problem outside its jurisdiction—production. In other words, it is trying to do piecemeal what can only be done in a rounded, planned, over-all fashion.

A second wrong method that can do even more mischief is illustrated by the newly introduced Austin-Wadsworth compulsory labor draft bill. To pose the problem of the organization of labor supply as one of compulsion versus voluntary methods is to get caught on the horns of an unreal dilemma. The real problem is centralized planning versus planlessness, and the new bill not only contributes nothing to planning, but would create obstacles to it. In fact, conscription of labor is being most enthusiastically advocated by those who oppose not only conscription of excess profits, but effective planning of our entire war economy. In addition, the reactionary big business auspices under which the bill was originally launched and the demand for such a measure voiced by the new idol of the defeatists and labor-baiters, Capt. Eddie Rickenbacker, make the Austin-Wadsworth bill definitely divisive.

It is possible to substitute new bottlenecks for old. It is not possible to put all of America's economic and human resources to work for victory without a centrally directed and planned war economy along the lines of the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper bill.

Press Parade

WHEN Andre Marty's report on French internal affairs appeared in the New York *Daily Worker* on January 19, it was almost totally ignored in the American press. It was a document of first rate news importance. Marty explained the position of the Communists in promoting unity against Vichy and the Nazis. As a political commentary it represented the vibrant, resurgent voice of France. But not a word of it crept into the press until a few days ago when the New York *Times* seems to have made the discovery on February 6 that Marty had said something. The *Times* dispatch came from London. Why the *Times* had to wait almost three weeks for a story from London when the whole of Marty's articles were available in New York is one of those unfathomable mysteries. You can guess how long the *Times* would have waited if anyone had intoned an anti-Communist tirade. It would have been published quicker than you can say Ochs-Sulzberger.

PUERTO RICO: HUNGRY FORTRESS

San Juan.

IN RECENT weeks many people in this country have for the first time in forty-three years interested themselves in Puerto Rico in the belief that the inhabitants of this Gibraltar of the Caribbean are dying of hunger as the result of Governor Tugwell's and President Roosevelt's policies.

Leading newspapers in America have been publishing series of articles about the Island's almost starved condition. Even Colonel McCormick's paper, the Chicago *Tribune,* featured six pieces after having sent a correspondent to San Juan by air. This frenzy of stories has come as a surprise to most Puerto Ricans who get space in the American press only when they are overtaken by hurricanes. For the truth is that Puerto Ricans have been going hungry for a long, long time—for years before the big papers "discovered" the fact—for decades before Governor Tugwell's arrival. And the story behind the story is that the newspapers are paying Puerto Rico some belated attention as part of a campaign to smear Tugwell and through him the New Deal.

The battle against Tugwell began in the Island with a defeat inflicted on the reactionary parties. Those groups are the Chamber of Commerce of Puerto Rico, the Agricultural Association, the Union Republican Party, the Socialist Party, the Tripartite Union, and several leaders of the Free Federation of Labor. They also include the Resident Commissioner in Washington and president of the Socialist Party, Bolivar Pagan, and the San Juan newspaper, *El Mundo.*

IT IS worth examining the forces behind these groups:

1. The Chamber of Commerce represents very wealthy merchants linked to American corporations. Many of them are Spanish and sympathetic to the Falange. In the files of *El Mundo* and *Puerto Rico Illustrado* for 1936-39 can be found photographs of several of them celebrating Franco's victories and the arrival in San Juan of a Nazi warship.

2. The Agricultural Association includes the majority of absentee sugar corporations and a small number of local landholders. The outfit is a subsidiary of the reactionary American Farm Bureau Federation recently accused by a former adviser of the Department of Agriculture, Donald E. Montgomery, of hoarding, and of sabotaging the war effort.

3. The Union Republican and Socialist Parties recently formed an electoral coalition against the Popular Party. The URP is controlled by sugar corporation lawyers. The junction of Socialists and the URP produced a split in Socialist ranks, leaving the SP isolated from the Free Federation, which in any case had been losing influence. Many militant Socialists supported the Popular Party; many who were members of the Free Federation joined the General Confederation of Workers which at the present time constitutes the core of the Popular Party.

4. The Tripartite Union is a coalition formed by dissident elements from the Union Republican, Socialist, and Liberal Parties. Its influence is insignificant. Elements of the Free Federation of Labor support the Tripartite Union, but today this does not mean very much. For in addition to its declining strength in recent years, the Free Federation has just suffered a new crisis as a result of a resolution presented in its name by its president, Rivera Martinez. The resolution, offered at the AFL convention, asked for the removal of Tugwell. Leaders of the Free Federation in the Island condemned Martinez' attitude and approved a resolution supporting Governor Tugwell.

5. The Resident Commissioner in Washington, Bolivar Pagan, was elected through a misunderstanding between the Popular and Liberal Parties. If the Liberals had abstained from presenting a candidate for the Commissionership, thereby splitting the votes, Pagan would have been defeated by 125,000 ballots. He was actually elected by no more than 200 votes. The Liberals, however, do collaborate with the Popular Party and the two form a majority in both legislative houses whose presidents belong to the Popular Party.

6. *El Mundo,* arch enemy of the Popular Party and Governor Tugwell, is the semi-official organ of the Chamber of Commerce, of the Agricultural Association and the Union Republicans. One of the principal stockholders of the newspaper is Romualdo Real, a rabid Falangist. His brother, Cristobal, was correspondent for *El Mundo* from Franco Spain. In the last war the Real brothers published a pro-German paper.

Puerto Rico Illustrado, the most important magazine in the country, featured on its front page during World War I a camouflaged plan of the entrance to San Juan. The author was a German spy. When it is realized that *El Mundo* and *Puerto Rico Illustrado* are both run by the same group, it is not surprising to find them enemies of both Governor Tugwell and Secretary of Interior Ickes.

On a recent visit to the United States the presidents of outstanding Puerto Rican groups declared their support of Tugwell and President Roosevelt. These declarations came from the president of the Senate, who is also president of the Popular Party, Munoz Marin; the president of the Liberal Party, Ramirez Santibanez; and the president of the Confederation of Workers, Colon Gordiany. Similar pronouncements were made by the Island leaders of the Free Federation. All of which demonstrates that the majority of Puerto Ricans favor the war policy of the Roosevelt administration.

THEN how does one explain the campaign in the United States against Governor Tugwell? The campaign's purpose is, in the last analysis, directed at President Roosevelt. The defeatists here would like to picture Puerto Rico's economic crisis as the work of the New Deal rather than as the result of a policy of maladministration dating back to the years before the advent of the Roosevelt administration. In fact, this economic upheaval, the chronic hunger, began with the American system of colonial government. That is the origin of the tragedy. And it is that origin—colonialism—which American newspapers are fearful of attacking. The large papers and their echoes in Congress—Vandenberg, Taft, Wheeler, Chavez—have never challenged the sugar corporations. They have never asked for an end to this colonial relationship or for extending the rights of self-determination to the Puerto Rican people.

Before Tugwell's arrival on the Island, Governor Swope—also appointed by President Roosevelt—had begun to carry out the mandate given by the people in the 1940 elections. That mandate was "Bread, Land, and Liberty." Bread means work, higher wages, a minimum wage law. Land means the enforcement of the 500-acre law passed by the American Congress in 1900. This is the law which limits to that figure

the amount of land a corporation may own. Liberty is the hope of the Puerto Rican people enthusiastically fighting for the realization of the Atlantic Charter. This is the minimum program of the Popular Party—the program which the people won in an election during the governorship of Admiral Leahy. And it is our mandate which is used to make a target of Tugwell.

In the Island the campaign against Tugwell has failed. The reactionaries have succeeded in transferring the campaign to the United States. Moreover, they have presumed to present to Congress a proposal limiting the term of office of the governor to two years. This is not only a maneuver to destroy Tugwell, it is also an attempt to amend our Organic Charter by annulling all the progressive laws approved by the Puerto Rican legislature during the last two years. It is part of a conspiracy to wipe out the 500-acre law, to cancel minimum wage legislation. It opposes the few guarantees that our Organic Charter provides us. It strives to enslave us more to the sugar industry than ever before.

Behind this plan is the defeatist Senator Vandenberg who naturally claims the support of the Resident Commissioner, Bolivar Pagan. The situation is most critical. The reactionary members of Congress have found their weapon in a clause of the Treaty of Paris (1898) which places in the hands of Congress the political destiny of the Island without the need for consulting our people.

We regard the steps initiated by Congress for changing our Organic Charter as a menace to our rights acquired by untold suffering and labor. We denounce these Vandenberg plans as an affront to the dignity of a civilized people, as an attack on the unity between our peoples and those of the United States, and as flagrant sabotage of the war effort.

We ask that if amendments to our Organic Charter are made they be in the direction of progress—the progress embodied in the Atlantic Charter. Above all, we ask that the Puerto Rican people be consulted through a plebiscite. Any alternative solution must now be rejected by us.

JUAN JOSE BERNALES.

THE WEEK IN LONDON by CLAUDE COCKBURN

JOURNEY TO TURKEY

[*Claude Cockburn sent the dispatch below before the reports arrived of a dinner given by the Soviet Embassy in Ankara at which the Turkish Premier, Shukru Saracogolu, was the guest of honor. Both the United States and British Ambassadors also attended. The dinner is indicative of the growing improvement in Soviet-Turkish relations following Mr. Churchill's visit, and augurs well for closer collaboration in the future.*—The Editors.)

***London** (by wireless).*

THE first simple and correct public reaction here to the Adana conference was that, whatever else it may have signified, it was the biggest demonstration yet seen of the Soviet victories' effect on neutral opinion. For months the Turks have been watching those battles—Stalingrad, the Don, Caucasus, Voronezh—from a ringside seat in Ankara; and it's what they have seen that brought them to Adana. Nothing short of such victories could have emboldened the Turks to take such a step.

That much said, and against that essential background which overshadows everything else, it is possible to discern numerous more complicated factors at work in this situation. And I should say that perhaps clues to them are to be found as much in the palace of Boris of Bulgaria at Sofia as at Ankara or Adana—or Cairo. If you look at the rulers of any country in the Danube Valley, the Balkans and on to Turkey itself, you can see that in all their minds—whether they represent satellite states like Hungary and Rumania, semi-satellites like Bulgaria, or neutrals like Turkey—a doubt has been growing ever since the first successes of the Red Army's winter offensive; a doubt whether the "New Order" in the Balkans is going to hold.

The gigantic losses of the Rumanian and Hungarian troops have reenforced those doubts in a grimly practical manner—especially now, when the wounded are filtering back to base hospitals. Note that the Rumanian government has just introduced total censorship of all "private" correspondence within the country, and declared that only "brief, legible" letters can be forwarded at all. Note, in another sphere, that King Boris has very recently transferred his half brother and number-one foreign envoy from the legation at Berlin to Madrid. Note that from Hungary comes a stream of rumors. In all these countries there are influential elements who, if they were even half sure that the Hitlerian New Order were being broken up, broken to pieces under the blows of the Red Army, would begin to dicker with the Western Allies as anxiously as they dealt with Hitler in the past. Though obviously the real question is not whether such a moment would arise, but when.

Although it is of course true, as everyone keeps repeating, that the Turks have been in alliance and in a trading agreement with Britain all along, it would be merely silly to pretend that the spectacular Adana conference was nothing more than a routine chat between old pals. Or that it did not constitute a landmark and a signal—an announcement to all and sundry of a certain shift of tack or, if you like, a shift of emphasis, in Turkish diplomacy. It may be assumed that at least among the anti-Soviet influences at Ankara there are important ones who would like at the present juncture to employ all the leverage Turkey is capable of exercising to direct Allied strategy toward the Eastern Mediterranean and the Balkans rather than toward a decisive blow in Western Europe.

And even leaving aside direct military questions—or leaving them at least in the background—it seems probable that the British and American support of Turkey proclaimed at Adana may mean a preliminary strengthening of Turkey's hand for negotiations, particularly with Bulgaria. Such negotiations would be designed to maintain a, shall we say, conservative balance in the Balkans following the destruction of the "New Order" there. Negotiations intended to lay the base of a new Balkan-Turkish bloc enjoying the benevolence of Britain and the United States may possibly be the next logical step following Adana. I believe the idea has long been foremost in the mind of M. Kiroff, King Boris' representative at Ankara, and of M. Berker, the permanent head of the Turkish foreign office—who is, incidentally, an intimate friend of the Bulgarian king.

In view of the political feeling among the mass of Bulgarian people, including workers, peasants, and intellectuals, it wouldn't be surprising if the friends of dynasty representatives should be working overtime right now along these "conservative" lines.

FRONT LINES by COLONEL T.

CLOUDS WITH SILVER LININGS

IN THE eighty days that the Red Army offensive has now been raging, the following results have been achieved.

1. Approximately 1,000,000 German and satellite troops have been killed or captured and probably 750,000 wounded.

2. The enemy has lost about 13,000 guns, more than 6,000 tanks and 3,500 planes, considerably more than 60,000 trucks, and tremendous amounts of other materiel. For instance, at Stalingrad alone some 340 radio transmitters were taken; the trucks captured represent three-quarters of the number sent to the USSR from the United States through lend-lease in a year and one-half.

3. The territory recaptured by the Red Army is equal to about 120,000 square miles. This practically wipes out all the German gains during the campaign of 1942. Between Kursk and Orel the Red Army has crossed the front line as it was in early 1942. Between Kharkov and Stalino the Soviets almost reached that line when they took Barvenkovo (Marshal Timoshenko reached Lozovaya on Jan. 29, 1942). With the clearing of the western Kuban district and the reconquest of the Donetz loop, the status quo as of March 1, 1942, will have been reached. However, on the Kalinin Front and at Leningrad the Red Army is further west than it was early last year, so that it may be said with a certain degree of exactness that as far as square mileage is concerned, the status quo as of June 1942 has been restored.

3. Operationally speaking, the Red Armies of the Middle Don under General Vatutin have advanced to Yama and Barvenkovo to a distance of some 250 miles. General Yeremenko has advanced from Stalingrad by way of Salsk to Rostov some 300 miles. General Maslennikov has marched from the region of Ordzhonikidze to the Sea of Azov, a distance of 375 air miles, and much more than that actually.

4. Key "hedgehogs" of the German defense line such as Schluesselburg, Velikie Luki, Ostrogozhsk, Staryi and Novyi Oskol, Valuiki, Kupyansk, Barvenkovo, Lissichansk, Kamensk, Rossosh, Millerovo, Salsk, Tikhoretskaya, Kropotkin, Armavir, Mineralnye Vory, Prokhladnaya Mozdok and Kursk—to name only the major ones—have been stormed and captured. To top all this, the greatest battle of encirclement and annihilation, the battle of Stalingrad, has been won with the total destruction, by death or captivity, of more Axis troops than have been engaged in battle during this three-month period by all the United Nations except the Soviet Union.

5. Three major German defense lines have been broken through, outflanked, or rolled back. The lines of the Don and the Donetz were shattered and the line of the Caucasian Range has been rolled back for a distance of over 300 miles.

6. Three great operations of the "Cannae" type have been fought and won by the Red Army. The one at Stalingrad yielded more than 300,000 enemy troops. The Cannae west of Voronezh bagged about 100,000 Axis troops and practically finished off the Italian Army on the Eastern Front. The third Cannae, that of taking shape in the region of Krasnodar, will likely yield another 100,000 enemy troops.

7. The grand strategy of this Soviet campaign, a campaign without any parallel in military history, is paving the way for a possible fourth Cannae-type battle, in the entire area of the Donetz Basin. General Vatutin's vanguards, having cracked the line of the Donetz River on an eighty-five-mile front, are now only 120 miles north of the Sea of Azov. If this gap can be closed, the Germans will suffer a real disaster, and will lose the last of their 1942 acquisition, the Donetz Basin. And Hitler will stand before a sorry 1942 balance sheet: *credit:* territory—0; oil—0; iron, coal, and industry—0; *debit:* between 2,500,000 and 3,500,000 men killed or captured, wounded, sick, frozen.

Such is the rosy side of the strategic picture on the Eastern Front.

BUT while clouds have silver linings—there are still clouds. The following factors provide a none-too-bright background for the brilliant victories of the Red Army on the southern half of the Eastern Front.

Germany still has available great reserves of manpower. *Pravda,* on the first anniversary of the Soviet-German war, gave the following table of the losses in men and materiel on both sides:

	Germany	*USSR*
Casualties, all types.....	10,000,000	4,500,000
Guns	30,500	22,000
Tanks	24,000	15,000
Planes	20,000	9,000

There is no official estimate of the losses on either side for the next eight months of the war, except for the total of Axis losses on the Eastern Front between November 19 and Feb. 1, 1943.

A British estimate has it that Germany still has some 17,000,000 able bodied males, aside from those serving in the armed forces, those killed, captured, or permanently mutilated. We do not believe this estimate gives the true picture. A simpler way would be to put it as follows: Germany and its satellites had on June 22, 1941, about 24,000,000 men available for the armed forces, without disrupting its economic life to a dangerous degree. Of that amount it is probable that the Axis has lost in permanent casualties about 6,000,000 men during the first year of the war (we assume that 4,000,000 of the 10,000,000 in the preceding table were returned to duty in some form or other), and probably no less than another 2,000,000 in permanent casualties in the ensuing eight months: a total of 8,000,000 men lost to them forever.

During twenty months of the war the Soviet Union has probably lost no less than 5,000,000 men in permanent casualties, with untold millions slain in the occupied regions.

Thus we can conclude that the Axis has a manpower pool of about 16,000,000 men available, while the Soviet Union has not more than 11,000,000 men to use on its Western Front—we make allowances for the protection of the Far East and other borders—since it originally had a manpower potential of only 16,000,000 men available for use on the Western Front against the European group of the Axis. Which means that the Germans can still muster huge armies and stage a massive counterblow, either now or in the spring or early summer.

TREMENDOUS as are the victories of the Red Army, it still has breached the German "backbone of defense" only in one small sector, i.e., between Kursk and Orel, on the Shchigry-Fatezh line. The rest of the old line is still intact and the Germans may yet be able to hold it as they did last spring, even if they lose Lozovaya, Rostov, Stalino, and the Donbas. If worst comes to the worst, they may retire in the South to the Dnepr line and give up the Crimea, which is less important to them now that they see they cannot render the Soviet Black Sea Fleet "homeless." This springboard to the Caucasus is now relatively unimportant to them because the

STALINGRAD

The Haitian poet Jean F. Brierre, author of the poem below, is a former diplomat and a journalist, as well as a writer of stirring verse. He has served as secretary of the Haitian Legation in France (in 1930) and was once editor of *La Bataille,* a weekly paper in his native country. Two volumes of Jean Brierre's poetry have been published, *Le Drapeau Demain* and *Chansons Secretes.* He has also written a drama in verse about the life of Toussaint L'Ouverture, *L'Adieu a la Marseillaise,* which was acted at Port au Prince and at Jeremie, Mr. Brierre's birthplace. His latest work is a sketch in verse on the "Interview" between Petion and Bolivar. He is now studying at Teachers College, Columbia University, on a scholarship from the Haitian government. The following poem was written during tthe Christmas season and was sent us only recently. It is translated from the French by Joy Davidman.

"I shall not surrender the city of Cap until it is ashes; and even on those ashes I shall still fight you."
Henri Christophe to General Leclerc,
Haitian War for Independence.

In the chimney corner
the wistful shining of the Christmas trees
speaks of the absent ones who are not dead.
Some one is gone from every house;
the wives and sweethearts and mothers have empty arms.
Shadows fall on our joy
and tears fall in our laughter
I see the branches of the Christmas trees
stripped, and their lights put out;
I see them standing on a frozen plain
as naked silhouettes against the snow,
the black and tragic crosses of the dead.
The hearthfire swells into a conflagration
and here no place is empty; here the graves
lie decently in coverings of snow.
Here the corpses fold their arms
over the lost hopes of eighteen-year-old boys.

Through the Christmas carols
I hear shouting in the streets of Stalingrad;
I hear the walls falling
that sheltered happy people,
while Death reaps his dark harvest
of youth and hope and blood.

Great ruin,
incomparable splendor of heroism
blazing through our history; without you
and your towering fires, and rivers of red blood,
the earth would be all dark from pole to pole.
You shelter with your pyramid of corpses
the chimney corners and the Christmas trees
in all the threatened villages of the world.
And we keep Christmas still
because of you, on your unbroken ramparts,
standing between us and our enemies.

Stalingrad, your name burns on my lips
as your houses burn in the bitter night;
my heart wears your embers like a hairshirt.
Your men and women and children
bar Hitler from the Soviet soil.
THEY SHALL NOT PASS.
The earth that you defend is every man's home.
THEY SHALL NOT PASS.
The Negro flag of Haiti was raised in the flames
of burning plantations and burning palaces;
lives because the slaves destroyed a city.
THEY SHALL NOT PASS.

The light of Stalingrad
shines across the agonies of Europe,
shines into mutilated Africa
where all the nations of the world have camped
building their civilization on Negro bones.

The courage of Stalingrad
will set Africa free,
and build on the ashes of a rotten universe
the world of which Jesus dreamed
on the sunlit roads of Galilee.

JEAN F. BRIERRE.

Caucasus is beyond their reach anyway.

Should things go badly for them on the northwestern and western sectors of the front, the Germans can fall back on the historical defense position of the Dvina and Dnepr rivers, give up Rzhev, Smolensk, and part of the Baltic region, and hold the two rivers and the Votebsk-Orsha gateway between them. With shortened lines of communications, the Germans can offer a successful resistance here to the Red Army avalanche, which has to recreate its communications and perform vast regroupings before it can tackle this line—to say nothing of the fact that the Red Army's unprecedented feats since Nov. 19, 1942, have cost it a stiff price in manpower and supplies (especially in ammunition expended).

Finally, it must be admitted that the Allies of the Soviet Union have done very little since Nov. 8, 1942. On land the lack of decisive Allied action in Tunisia has brought about a marked improvement in the Axis position. In these three months the latter has greatly increased its forces in Africa which are now estimated as at least 150,000, including Rommel's army. Rommel has not been destroyed by Mongomery, who never caught up with him after the "fox of the desert" pulled out of El Alamein in early November, having lost nothing but a large piece of his "tail."

Allied thrusts to the eastern coast of Tunisia have had no success, and Rommel and von Arnim have joined hands. The early Allied thrust at Bizerte and Tunis, obviously prepared in a haphazard way, was a resounding failure. The Allies have air superiority in Tunisia and all the blabber about the Luftwaffe having "left Russia for Africa" is nonsense. The Luftwaffe has been split: the "Luft" is in Africa and the "Waffe" is on the Eastern Front.

Three ineffective months have been spent in Africa by an army which arrived in more than 2,500,000 tons of shipping. This army, together with Montgomery's Eighth Army, has not been able to destroy a body of troops equal to what Generals Golikov and Reiter knocked out in the Voronezh pocket alone.

THIS is a sad situation, unworthy of American and British arms. Last year, the German Army, by Berlin's admission was "on the verge of a catastrophe," but was saved by the absence of Allied action. It is nearer to that verge today. Will Allied inaction save it again for another bloody war year?

THE NEW OHIO GANG

Dealing for big stakes in the backrooms. The would-be President-makers. Senator Taft sews a mantle for Governor Bricker with Hoover's needle and thread. First of two articles.

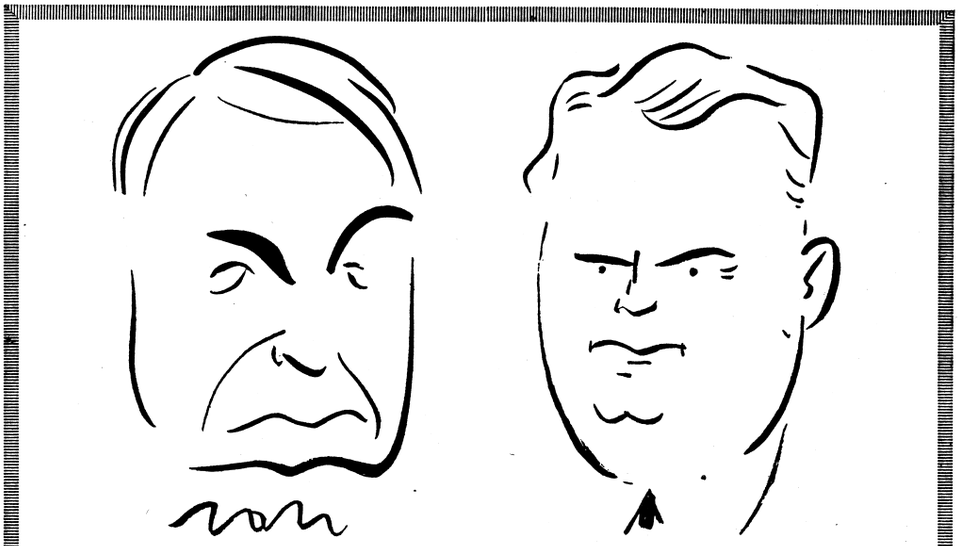
Columbus, Ohio.

THE Old Guard Republicans not only in this state capital but all over Ohio and the nation have come to the conclusion that Gov. John W. Bricker is their ace in the hole. No individual looms larger in Republican plans for capturing the national government in 1944. For Bricker has broken all state records by being elected governor three times in succession. Behind him stands the "new Ohio Gang," that powerful machine of "regulars," supported by the Wolfe family in Columbus, progenitors of the Harding gang, and controlled by the most powerful political figure in Ohio, Robert A. Taft.

With Taft ordering the new Ohio Gang to give Governor Bricker a real build-up, politicians here in Columbus can be excused for rubbing their hands together in anticipation. Taft, they know, has the "confidence" of the National Association of Manufacturers, and the allegiance of the appeaser and isolationist forces throughout America. They are well aware that Taft works hand-in-glove with Herbert Hoover himself, elder statesman of the GOP Old Guard. The ex-President has never dared to appear publicly at any large gathering in Ohio since he campaigned for reelection in 1932 and was booed by thousands upon thousands of workers and unemployed; but Hoover has had Taft as his Ohio proxy, and now the grand old bore of Republican reaction has let it be known that he is impressed with Senator Taft's Governor Bricker, that he considers Bricker his protege, that he looks on Bricker as a good safe man destined to go far.

The Bricker boom is significant both for its immediate import to the war effort and for the perspective it gives of the future strategy of the anti-Willkie, anti-Roosevelt, anti-progressive clique around Taft, Hoover, Vandenberg, and the Chicago *Tribune*. These prophets of defeatism are a shrewd and experienced lot; by grooming Bricker, they have more in mind than merely to name the 1944 standard bearer. Primarily, they are intent on grabbing immediate control of the Republican Party for its most cynical and degenerate section. If Bricker can be nominated, they are in. Prior to "Der Tag," they need to squeeze out competitors. The Taft-Hoover schemers are wise enough to seek some sort of front behind which they can operate.

They see in Bricker the nonentity, Bricker the man who stands forthright on no side of any national issue, the chance to create a symbol of all things to all men. Tom Dewey of New York has earned too many bitter enemies by aligning himself openly with the Taft-Hoover coalition on vital questions. Stassen of Minnesota and Saltonstall of Massachusetts are dangerously inclined toward Willkie—and both Taft and Hoover view Willkie as a menace only surpassed by President Roosevelt himself. Bricker is the solution, the catch-all.



Ohio Gang, Old and New: Warren G. Harding (left) and John W. Bricker

SO FAR, Gov. John W. Bricker has refrained from announcing his presidential aspirations. They are well known, of course; Bricker has had his eye on the White House ever since he began to climb the political ladder back in 1928. But Bricker is a cautious man. Part of the deal made with Taft—there was a deal, though it is violently denied by Bricker's henchmen—provided that the governor would sit back and say nothing. He really doesn't have to, not with Taft talking for him.

The senator startled smalltown Republicans in Columbus by announcing Bricker's candidacy a few weeks ago. The little fellows called Taft's maneuver a "double-cross." To them, it seemed unwise to put Bricker out in front over a year before the Republican nominating convention. That sort of thing can kill a candidate. A boom must be carefully planned, built logically and slowly, so that it does not pass its peak before the delegates are gathered together and ready to vote. Taft ruined that approach. So the word went out that Taft was up to some dirty work—which was no surprise. Actually, however, Bricker and Taft had reached an understanding.

Taft, on his way to the Republican National Committee meeting to choose a new party chairman, had one passion—to smear Willkie, come what might. Ever since Taft and Willkie spent an evening together last year at the home of Mrs. Ogden Reid out on Long Island—Dorothy Thompson was also present—Taft's loathing for Willkie has equalled his hate of President Roosevelt; beyond that point, Taft cannot possibly go. It occurred to him that his position at the St. Louis meeting would be far stronger were he personally to make a gesture of withdrawing from the race for the 1944 presidential nomination.

With Bricker's knowledge, then, Taft made his "announcement" in the fashion he has perfected for all his important political statements. He tipped off his stooges in the Hamilton County Republican Party (Cincinnati) to ask him a question. Accordingly the machine boys inquired of their leader whether he was planning to run for President in 1944; in that event, Hamilton County would want to be the first to endorse him. Taft replied in measured words. He did not say he was *not* a candidate. He did remark, however, that he would support John W. Bricker.

The cat was out of the bag. Bricker pretended not to hear. "I am not an ambitious man," he declared, with the expected modesty of an ambitious man. When the reporters "told" him of Taft's announcement, he smiled appropriately and replied, "That was very gracious of the senator." However, Bricker did intimate that he would not be a candidate for governor in 1944. That was the tip-off. Bricker does not give up a post just to be available. Gradually the deal between Taft and Bricker leaked out: Bricker was to be nominated, and Taft would run for reelection to the Senate without formidable opposition in the primaries; one of the gover-

nor's official family—probably Thomas J. Herbert, Ohio's attorney general—would step into Bricker's shoes at the state capitol. But if Bricker failed to get the nomination, then he would be taken care of by the Taft machine. He would not be left out in the cold.

As added proof of the deal, Mayor James G. Stewart of Cincinnati, a Taft machine man, tearfully gave up his plan to run for governor, and hat in hand, began looking for some other job, preferably in the judiciary. Moreover, the reminder went out that Bricker had withdrawn in Taft's favor in 1940—now the senator returned the obligation. But despite the obvious Taft-Bricker understanding, the governor continued the pretense of knowing nothing of Mr. Taft's maneuverings, as well as being unaware of the Republican nominating convention in 1944. Bricker has gone his usual way, keeping his mouth shut on any and all matters of national interest. He continued to be a "simple" man-of-the-people, a farm boy who made good.

THE Republicans in Columbus literally drool at the mouth when they discuss Bricker's chances. They can talk of nothing else. Six months ago Bricker was considered just another hack who sits in the governor's chair thanks to a lot of luck and the backing of the powerful Republican machine. Bricker has always been an unknown outside Ohio, and completely without distinction in his home state. The sudden widening of Bricker's horizon caught his followers napping. They still go around pinching themselves, hardly able to believe that in less than two years they may be moving into Washington.

They have not yet quite decided how to make over their governor into a national figure. "All these reporters come out here," one of the Republican publicity men complained to me in confidence, "but we just have to give them pretty much the same handouts." Doris Fleeson has already done a job of inflating Bricker for the Washington *Times-Herald* and the New York *Daily News*. Now *Fortune* is planning a big spread, along with *Life* and other publications. To date, the best the Ohio boys can think of is to present John W. Bricker as a budget balancer—except that this approach revives unfortunate memories of Alf Landon. Happily, Bricker is handsome, and the governor knows how to exploit his face. He is said to "look like a President," whatever that may mean; he poses for the camera with infinite patience and care. The governor knows which side of his head looks better for a profile study, which expression goes over most successfully, which clothes give him that unassuming, strong, simple-yet-knowing appearance.

"Poor old John," a farm leader remarked as we discussed the governor. "He's good-looking enough, but he has the misfortune of resembling Harding. He knows it, and that worries him powerfully. But they tell me if he is nominated, his face will win the women's vote, his failure to say anything will win the middle class, who will think him strong and silent, and his record will win him the industrialist's vote. You never can tell."

But, as I said, the Republicans don't quite know what to do about him. They stress the fact that he can't be bought—to overcome any fears that he may be another Harding. "Why, that's not a nice thing to say," they remonstrate when Harding is mentioned. "John W. Bricker just can't be had for money. John W. Bricker is no man's stooge. He has a mind of his own. You can't lead John W. Bricker around by the nose, and no man better try. Sure, Taft is horning in, but that don't mean anything, just that Bricker looks good for 1944. John W. Bricker goes his own way, and he won't make a deal with anyone, no matter what, and he certainly won't take orders from Taft."

They protest too much, with their chorus "He wears no man's collar." It is true that Bricker personally has been honest enough when it comes to money. But the new Ohio Gang is not modeling itself on the Harding mob by any means. In the twenties the Harding-Daugherty bunch was a small-town outfit of petty chiselers suddenly in the chips. Their pilferings embarrassed their backers—it doesn't pay to have political servants dipping into public funds. The new Ohio Gang under Taft is not thinking in terms of individual loot. They are thinking of political power on the grand scale, of control of the country, of legal operations that pay off in a much bigger way. They are thinking of tax programs in favor of their great monopolist backers, of labor laws to crush the unions, of special privilege for the few and oppression of the many for the benefit of the few. The new Ohio Gang is a sophisticated, large-city machine, with the farmers sucked in by false promises and hints of "prosperity" once organized labor is crushed.

Just as the Chicago *Tribune* has become the ideological center of appeasement and defeatism, so Taft's new Ohio Gang has become its organizational core. The new Ohio Gang is purposeful reaction, unimpeded by the contemptible little finaglings that got the Republicans off to a bad start in the twenties when the Harding outfit cavorted in Washington. It took Coolidge and Hoover to restore order and refurbish the Republicans' reputation for propriety. This time the new Ohio Gang takes a leaf from Coolidge and Hoover. After all, Hoover is around to give counsel. More, the new Ohio Gang looks back to another era when Ohio was the political center of reaction—to the good old days of McKinley and Mark Hanna. Bricker is a good imitation of McKinley, they feel, and lacking anything better, Taft can be the Mark Hanna. He hasn't the personality or the charm or the hail-fellow-well-met qualities, but there's no sense being idealistic. Taft will have to do.

JOHN WILLIAM BRICKER had the good fortune of being born on an Ohio farm near Pleasant Township, not far from Columbus. This event of forty-nine years ago can now be invested with the "log-cabin" overtones so dear to politicians. The fact that his father owned two 100-acre farms allows Bricker to tuck a hayseed in his hair and to pose among rural voters as home folks. Young Bricker learned his three r's at a one-room little red school house which makes nice decoration on campaign leaflets. He worked his way through Ohio State University in Columbus. The war interrupted his law studies—in 1917 Bricker was appointed a chaplain in the army. He has been berated for taking a soft job, since he was active in college athletics, a husky, big fellow. But Bricker indignantly points out that he tried in every way to enlist, and was rejected because of his heart. He became chaplain not to be left out of things. The controversy doesn't seem important, except that this phase of Bricker's career has proved embarrassing when mentioned by political opponents.

After the war Bricker returned to Ohio State for his law degree. He married Harriet Day, a fellow student. He spent three years in private law practice, and then entered politics. He rose rapidly: 1923-27, assistant attorney general; 1928, Republican nominee for attorney general (defeated); 1929-32, member of the Public Utilities Commission; 1933-37, attorney general; 1936, Republican nominee for governor, defeated by Democrat Martin L. Davey; 1938, 1940, 1942, elected governor.

Before Bricker became governor, he proved himself adept at picking his way through controversial issues. While a member of the Public Utilities Commission, he defended Columbus' forty-eight-cent gas rate against the company's demand for a fifty-five-cent rate. The utility interests were annoyed; at one time they were out for Bricker's scalp, but old fights have been forgotten in the light of Bricker's record as governor. As attorney general, Bricker defended whatever social legislation happened to squeeze through the Ohio legislature—he was a regular, and he upheld any law once it was enacted. Again he annoyed certain powers—and again he subsequently won these groups to his side.

As governor, John W. Bricker proved his real worth. In the early days, he did his share of labor-baiting and raising the Red scare. But Bricker is no longer anxious to tangle with labor—he must groom himself for President. So he avoids labor issues—and he has been lucky not to be involved in any serious labor dispute. He also avoids listening to labor's demands. Repeatedly the Ohio labor movement urged the governor to call a special session of the state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legislature to facilitate voting of enlisted men in the armed services. Bricker refused —it cost too much, he said. He likewise refused to convene the legislature for almost two years to handle other pressing problems. He did, however, hurriedly call a special session to provide for the separation of the state from the national ballot in 1940—because Bricker did not want to be faced too directly with President Roosevelt's vote-getting power.

Then too, Bricker has defied labor's many other requests. The most recent instance has been his refusal to set up a board on which labor would be represented to alter Ohio legislation with regard to women in industry. Revision is necessary because of the emergencies of war. Bricker, however, ordered the legislature to act—and the legislature is Bricker's so long as he doesn't cross Senator Taft.

Bricker's chief claim to fame is as a budget balancer. Like Landon of Kansas, Bricker has done wonders with state finances. Landon balanced the Kansas budget by closing schools, refusing relief, and using federal funds to alleviate the worst misery of the jobless during the depression, all the while attacking the Roosevelt administration for extravagance. Bricker has been somewhat more subtle—but he has also been lucky. He became governor at the low point of the 1937-38 "recession," during the sitdown strike of capital. Almost immediately after he took office, state revenues began to increase. Bricker kept expenditures down. In his six years of office he managed to pay off the $40,000,000 deficit he inherited from Davey, and to build a large surplus. He improved tax collecting machinery, and he refused to grant state funds to local communities with legitimate claims for help. Because of Bricker the Cleveland unemployed starved in 1939, and children were warped by malnutrition. Because of Bricker the Toledo schools at one period were forced to close their doors. Because of Bricker Ohio old-age pensions and relief expenditures have been shamefully low.

Even Republican mayors in Ohio's cities berate Bricker for his niggardliness. Local communities, for example, needed money for civilian defense projects. Bricker brought the mayors to Columbus, sat them in front of a roaring fire, and gave them a long, pious talk. The scorched mayors got nowhere. Finally they pried $2,500,000 out of Bricker, and the promise of the same amount for 1943. They needed—and still need—$15,000,000. But Bricker hangs on to the surplus for dear life. He has taken to hiding it, to pretending it is far less than it is. In the last three weeks the former estimate of a $25,000,000 surplus suddenly was revealed to be $45,000,000; those in the know wink and say it is at least $10,000,000 larger. Yet Bricker refuses to get rid of Ohio's high sales tax, offering only to remove it from meals served in restaurants and from certain medical supplies—five percent of the total tax levy. The governor has always been partial to the sales tax, preferring it—as does his mentor Taft—to a state income tax. Let the poor pay; Bricker and Taft insist that such a method encourages industry.

Bricker's budget-balancing necessitates the continuation of fiscal policies which can at best be labeled "ultra-conservative." Machinery and equipment owned by the largest manufacturers—Little Steel, the rubber barons, the mine owners, the welding and machine-tool industrialists—are assessed at fifty percent of value; therefore, the corporations pay low rate taxes on just half their property. The unemployment compensation

Herb Hoover

tax is collected so as to discourage hiring in slack times. Such practices, approved by Bricker, demand the maintenance of steep levies on the very poorest section of the population. The Bricker budget is balanced by digging deep into the pockets of the small farmers and the working class.

John W. Bricker thinks in big business terms. He has won the opprobrium of organized labor, CIO, Railroad Brotherhoods, and AFL alike (with the exception of a small group of AFL bureaucrats mixed up with the Taft-Bricker political machine). Aside from Bricker's ability to guard the state treasury against the needs of the people, he has just sat tight. Social legislation in Ohio is rudimentary. The small farmers—despite Bricker's friend-of-the-farmer pose—have received nothing. Neither have the middle classes nor the industrial workers. But worst of all, Bricker has done nothing for the war aside from adopting a minimum "patriotic" position. He has never expressed himself in any complete sense in sympathy with the war effort. He has never condemned appeasement—how could he and be Taft's white-haired boy? He has remained subservient to the new Ohio Gang, the tool of Taft, the friend of isolationist movements of every description. Bricker's contribution to war morale has been to mouth the stale Taft-Hoover cliches about New Deal "bureaucracy," and "dictatorship," and to call for protection of "state and local independence." But Bricker does not think these communities should question his handling of state funds. It is the governor's privilege to dispose of revenue as he sees fit. The state legislature approves—it must, since Bricker and Taft control it.

To sum up, Bricker can be called a money-honest Harding—the Harding of the most reactionary, defeatist, and isolationist industrialists like F. C. Crawford, Ohio's new president of the National Association of Manufacturers. Bricker is a handsome Coolidge; he has the political know-how of Coolidge, the shrewdness not to bite off more than he can chew, to be dependable, to keep his mouth shut on important issues. Most of all, he has luck—like Coolidge—the luck that all down-the-line politicians need. Bricker has won six out of seven nominations, mostly because he never faced serious opposition. He became governor when Ohio's business was on the up-grade. He has been able to avoid making formidable enemies among the right people; he has endeared himself to the Republican Old Guard with its proto-fascist outlook. Yet all the while, Bricker has managed to keep fresh the illusion that he is a simple farm boy, a good fellow, a naive and honest plugger. But if Bricker is naive, then so are his friends Senator Taft and ex-President Hoover.

BRICKER for President in 1944—Hoover gives a solemn nod of approval, and Taft indulges in his gruesome imitation of a smile. Taft is using Bricker—with Bricker's consent—not only to gain power in 1944, but to smash the New Deal *now*, to undermine President Roosevelt *now*, to sabotage the war effort *now*, to force a negotiated peace with the Axis *now*. Next week I want to report on Taft and his new Ohio Gang in greater detail, and to discuss just what the Bricker boom means in national politics and in relation to the war. The spectacle of John W. Bricker as statesman (he recently came East to address the New York State Bar Association in conjunction with Frederic R. Coudert, Sr., and to leave behind the thoughtful aphorism "One of the best solutions to the problem of bureaucracy is less bureaucracy") has its humorous side. But Bricker's new ambition to be a national figure is not to be dismissed lightly. It deserves a great deal of attention if for no other reason than Taft's sponsorship. Any public figure is dangerous when he becomes the darling of the appeasers.

BRUCE MINTON.

HOW TO GET RUBBER

Obstacles holding up production. A union technician points the way for a quick conversion of existing plants. Program for training manpower. Breaking a bottleneck.

"We're trying to do in a year what would take ten years or more in peacetime," said Rubber Administrator William Jeffers the other day. "It can be done and is going to be done although I don't know just how." Marcel Scherer, vice-president in charge of organization of the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians (CIO), tells just how it can be done in the article presented below. His article is based on a report which he prepared with the help of scientists and specialists of the FAECT. Their proposals have been forwarded to Mr. Jeffers, Donald M. Nelson, chairman of the War Production Board, and James M. Byrnes, director of Economic Stabilization.—The Editors.

THE synthetic rubber program for 1943 as established in the Baruch committee report is falling behind schedule. Rubber Director Jeffers and other officials concerned with the program publicly admit this fact. On December 28 Director Jeffers stated that we were "one month behind the progress envisioned in the Baruch Report." The Baruch Report states that to fall behind by 120 days in the succeeding year's program would seriously jeopardize our military victory. The present delay is dangerously approaching that point.

Therefore we must not wait for the opening of the new butadiene plants [butadiene is the base substance used in manufacturing synthetic rubber]. Steps must be taken to convert existing plants and equipment in order to proceed without delay to the "quickie" butadiene process. That means a substantial increase now in the butadiene production scheduled by refinery conversion processes. The slowness of the entire program is due to delay in constructing new plants for manufacturing butadiene from petroleum, the so-called permanent plants. These catalytic cracking and dehydrogenation plants require large tonnages of critical materials, and priority difficulties are given as the reason for the delay in their construction. But the priority system cannot solve the problem of raw material shortages in the absence of real production scheduling; so the mere assignment of priorities will not build these plants in time.

There is evidence before the Gillette (Senate) committee that the construction of more than one of the new butadiene plants is behind schedule. For example, Asst. Deputy Petroleum Coordinator Bruce K. Brown was unable to inform the Gillette committee whether Standard Oil's 6,200-ton-a-year butadiene plant at Baton Rouge was in operation, although it was due to go into production last September. The largest butadiene plant under construction is that of Shell Chemical in South California with an annual capacity of 85,000 tons, and it is doubtful that this plant will start operations as scheduled in March.

New technical difficulties in the Standard-Shell process of butadiene manufacture for the Southern California plant have arisen, and no satisfactory solution is in sight at the present time. This condition is symptomatic of all butadiene from petroleum plants, and mere completion of construction is no guarantee of successful operation.

It should be pointed out that no new chemical process works out as scheduled, particularly a process as untested and large in scope as the Standard butadiene from petroleum process. The experience of the small Shell butadiene plant in Texas indicated a delay of some ten months before capacity production was attained. It is apparent, then, that much greater reliance must be placed on the production of butadiene by the refinery conversion processes.

THE refinery conversion program as set forth in the recommendations of the Baruch Report called for 120,000 tons annual capacity of "quickie" butadiene production. This quota was set by the Baruch committee in spite of the fact that its own technical experts were of the conviction that 200,000 to 400,000 tons could be produced by conversion. In view of the present critical situation, the quota must be scaled upward by a considerable amount. The refinery conversion processes utilize existing refinery equipment and salvage materials, and require only a small expenditure of new, critical materials.

Furthermore, the annual capacities in terms of tonnage and completion dates are likely to be misleading. Actually the average plant will produce nothing the first month after completion, about twenty percent of capacity the second month, forty percent the next month, sixty percent the next month, and 100 percent the fifth month. If the program is expanded now without further delay, considerable butadiene can have been produced by Sept. 1, 1943, the expected low point of rubber supply.

WHY, then, has the refinery conversion program been delayed? On Jan. 6, 1943, the assistant deputy petroleum administrator told the Gillette Senate Investigating Committee that delay in obtaining official sanction for conversion of refineries to produce butadiene has impeded the rubber program. He stated that if the plant conversions had been started at the time the refiners and natural gasoline manufacturers first proposed them, the plant would have been in operation "many months prior to the best completion date which can be predicted for a wholly new plant." Whence stems the resistance to the conversion program?

I submit that it stems from the same monopoly of petroleum interests headed by Standard and Shell as was originally responsible in large part for the sabotage of the superior processes using ethyl alcohol as feed stock (basic raw material), as well as the sabotage of the Russian offer of technical assistance. These are the same interests that have conspired with I. G. Farbenindustrie of Germany to prevent the production of synthetic rubber in this country. In 1941 Goodrich Rubber developed its own process for synthetic rubber and Standard Oil filed suit for infringement of one of the I. G. Farben patents. This suit was pending at the time when the Axis struck at Pearl Harbor.

Any program which threatens the postwar dominance and monopoly of the large petroleum corporations and corporation combines can expect to meet ruthless opposition. Not only do the new government-financed plants enormously increase the total assets of the petroleum corporations; the entire existing refining capacity is retained intact for immediate use after the war. Monopolistic oil interests oppose the inclusion of independent, small refiners in the synthetic rubber program.

Oil Workers International Union Local 449 of Texas City points out that "it is precisely these people who now withhold the licensing of basic patents for production by independents." Not only is this corporate selfishness, this total disregard for the demands of military necessity, completely reprehensible—if it is not checked it will seriously imperil the prosecution of the war. The refinery conversion program should be accelerated, with particular emphasis on small, independent refineries.

For the Northern California area, I propose that:

1. One out of the four large petroleum refineries in this area (Shell, Standard, Associated, and Union) should convert all equipment capable of conversion to the manufacture of butadiene for synthetic rubber. The additional feed stock required could be furnished by the other three refineries involved.

2. If this conversion should occasion a loss of aviation gasoline output in this re-

finery, corrective stops should be taken to increase proportionately the output of aviation gasoline constituents in the other three refineries concerned.

3. A study should be made to determine which refinery is best adapted to conversion and which process is most advantageous for early maximum production.

This program may be extended to each oil producing area in the country, thereby accelerating the refinery conversion program to provide sufficient butadiene for the 1943 requirements of synthetic rubber.

It has been stated that where the aviation gasoline and synthetic rubber programs come into conflict the aviation gas program must take precedence. Steps whereby such conflict can be avoided have already been indicated. But can it be that this argument for the greater importance of aviation fuel comes from that school of military strategists which holds that the war can be won by aviation alone? It should be clear that an Allied invasion of Europe relies upon adequate and guaranteed supplies of synthetic rubber within the next few months for modern, mechanized equipment. We cannot base military offensives on rubber we do not have. Unless the success of our synthetic rubber program is guaranteed, the appeaser, defeatist forces will be sure to seize upon this situation as reason enough to withhold an early invasion of continental Europe.

EVEN more serious than the present problem of a butadiene production schedule is the problem of recruiting and training sufficient technical and semi-technical manpower to insure the successful operation of these plants. A startling admission came from Deputy Rubber Administrator Colonel Dewey, testifying before the Gillette Senate Committee, Dec. 16, 1942—that the *latest bottleneck* in the rubber program was the problem of the technical manpower required to operate the complicated butadiene, styrene, and co-polymerization plants.

Here we are expecting to operate a new chemical industry in which the government has invested upward of $650,000,000 to produce 800,000 tons of synthetic rubber per year. Yet a mere handful of trained men have had even a limited experience in manufacturing butadiene or similar products. We can estimate that a minimum of 10,000 chemists, engineers, technicians, and plant operators will be required. But we cannot see any steps toward training men and women for these posts. The efforts of the Federation of Architects, Engineers, Chemists, and Technicians in California, through labor-management committees, to induce interested leading petroleum companies to institute a special training program have been balked thus far. Yet these companies have on their present staffs trained technicians, operators, and engineers who, with a minimum of training, could be equipped to step quickly into butadiene plant positions of responsibility.

Each company is applying its old peacetime thinking to this problem, with the result that no adequate or coordinated program of training exists. For the most part these companies have demonstrated that they are not even aware of the problem's extreme urgency. The Shell Chemical Co., for example, which is to operate the largest butadiene plant in the entire rubber program, has selected one of its chemists and sent this chemist out to familiarize himself with plant practice. Otherwise this company is requesting applications from chemists with no rubber experience.

Or take another example—one of the largest research laboratories in the country, which is well acquainted with the butadiene problem. That company employs a staff of from 600 to 700 scientists, and technicians, yet less than ten percent of this staff is concentrated on butadiene problems. Moreover, this company is actually taking highly trained rubber chemists off rubber work for non-essential war work on paints. Other research units are working on the far-fetched problem of finding uses for butadiene for the postwar period, before we have mastered the manufacture of butadiene for pressing military needs!

A positive, coordinated plan on both a regional and national scale must be accomplished through joint labor-management-government cooperation. All the trade unions involved in the rubber program, the FAECT, the Oil Workers International Union, the United Rubber Workers, and the companies, and representatives of the War Manpower Commission should jointly work out such a training program. These agencies should endeavor to secure as many qualified technicians and operators as can be spared from the petroleum and allied chemical plants and laboratories. It is obvious that the problem cannot be solved by any one company alone. If in the Standard Oil and Shell laboratories of California there are today from 1,500 to 2,000 highly trained technicians, surely 500 of these could be commandeered to prepare themselves to man the new butadiene and rubber plants.

RECENTLY the FAECT approached the office of the Rubber Director with proposals to insure training of technical personnel, and the director answered: "If therefore you will furnish me with a list of men trained in technical fields related to that of synthetic rubber, with a brief notation of their training, experience, and qualifications, I shall be glad to bring it to the attention of those concerned with manpower problems in the several plants and laboratories." This attempt at piecemeal solution of a problem as large as this one—to train sufficient technical manpower for an entirely new industry—will not succeed. A much easier solution is to be found in planned utilization of the tremendous potential capacities of the existing petroleum company research laboratories.

The correct plan is to recruit the necessary number of men and women and begin training them immediately. In the past it has been the policy of large companies to hoard technical manpower and prevent their release to plants and laboratories of other companies in the same or allied fields. Further, the technical manpower from non-essential industry—for example, from the cosmetic and pseudo-pharmaceutical industry—must be released for work in the synthetic rubber program. Many organic chemists would thus be made available.

SPECIFICALLY for the Northern California area I propose:

1. A special intensive course in rubber technology should be given in conjunction with the University of California's Wartime Training Program. Outstanding experts from the Rubber Director's Office should be assigned to conduct this course. All chemists and engineers in the area with any experience in research or development in synthetic rubber (for example, the butadiene and rubber research personnel at the Shell and Standard laboratories and plants) should attend this course.

2. This personnel should be expanded by transferring from less important work sufficient chemists and engineers to staff adequately all synthetic rubber plants in the California area.

3. This special course in rubber technology should be followed by a period of inservice plant training to be given in the first butadiene, styrene, and polymerization plants to be completed in California. It should include inservice training in the refinery plants converted to butadiene manufacture.

4. This technical personnel would then be qualified to take charge of further on-the-job training in plants and laboratories and would function as "technical commandos" to solve operating problems and "bugs" in the synthetic rubber plants whenever and wherever they may arise.

5. Selective service should reconsider the cancellation of occupational deferments for trained technicians and the utilization of these technicians for the rubber program.

To insure the successful operation of the training program outlined above, a joint labor-management committee for rubber should be instituted to work out details. The committee should have representation from the FAECT, the OWIU, and the URW, the companies in the area involved, and the regional office of the War Manpower Commission. Quick action on these proposals is demanded by the urgency of the situation. What is proposed for the California area may likewise be adapted to all the areas where the synthetic rubber program is concentrated.

MARCEL SCHERER.

AS THEY SAW LINCOLN

Memorable word pictures of the Emancipator through the eyes of Emerson, Stowe, and Whitman. The titanic work of a humble figure.

IN SEPTEMBER 1862, a few days after Lincoln had issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, Ralph Waldo Emerson told a cheering audience in Boston that the President "has been permitted to do more for America than any other American man." Recalling this judgment by the leading literary figure of his day, we might add that Lincoln has done more for American writers than any other American. At twenty-three an obscure abolitionist reporter from Ohio, William Dean Howells, began his career as an author with an 1860 campaign biography of Lincoln; at sixty-one Carl Sandburg crowned his literary achievement with a monumental study of Lincoln in the war years. For the intervening period one need mention only the names of Walt Whitman and Vachel Lindsay to suggest the firm hold of Abraham Lincoln on the democratic imagination.

It is one of our national myths that Lincoln was not fully appreciated by his own generation. The legend may be flattering to us, but it scarcely does justice to either the force of Lincoln or the intelligence of his contemporaries. If an Emerson, a Whitman, a Lowell, had failed to grasp the great meaning of Lincoln, our literary tradition would be in a bad way. The facts are more fortunate. In his "Commemoration Ode" of 1865, James Russell Lowell said that "one of Plutarch's men talked with us face to face." He spoke for the intellectuals of his day. And if, on this birthday anniversary, we would deepen our knowledge of Lincoln, we may well turn back to his contemporaries for enlightenment.

THEY knew the man, and they have described him memorably. Walt Whitman tells us that when he was an army nurse in Washington he saw the President almost every day, as he happened to live where Lincoln passed to or from his lodgings out of town with his military escort. Whitman depicts the "unornamental *cortege*" as it trots toward Lafayette Square; Mr. Lincoln on the saddle, generally riding a good-sized, easy-going gray horse, "is dress'd in plain black, somewhat rusty and dusty, wears a black stiff hat, and looks about as ordinary in attire, etc., as the commonest man." Sometimes the President would be accompanied by his son, riding at his right on a pony. Lincoln, writes Whitman on March 19, 1863, "has a face like a Hoosier Michael Angelo, so awful ugly it becomes beautiful, with its strange mouth, its deep-cut, criss-cross lines, and its doughnut complexion." His eyes always seem to have "a deep latent sadness in the expression."

Harriet Beecher Stowe came to see the President, bringing her little Charley along so that he could some day boast he met the great man. "So this," said Lincoln to the tiny lady over whom he towered, "so this is the little lady who made this big war?" "Mr. President," the author asked as the conversation went on, "where do you ever find time to dine?" There was something irresistibly quaint and pathetic in the odd, rustic tone of the President's answer, as Mrs. Stowe recalled. "Well," said Lincoln, "I don't exactly, as you say, *dine*. I just browse round a little, now and then." When Mrs. Stowe and her boy got outside, Charley exclaimed: "Ma, why does the President say 'to home' instead of 'at home?'" In the words of Paul, Mrs. Stowe replied: "Though I be rude in speech yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things."

In his *Journals,* Emerson records two meetings with Lincoln on Feb. 2 and 3, 1862. When Sen. Charles Sumner introduced Emerson to Lincoln, the President said: "Oh, Mr. Emerson, I once heard you say in a lecture, that a Kentuckian seems to say by his air and manners, 'Here am I; if you don't like me, the worse for you.'" But Emerson liked this Kentuckian. "The President impressed me more favorably than I had hoped," he writes. "A frank, sincere, well meaning man, with a lawyer's habit of mind, good clear statement of his fact; correct enough, not vulgar, as described, but with a sort of boyish cheerfulness, or that kind of sincerity and jolly good meaning that our class meetings on Commencement Days show, in telling our old stories over. When he has made

Courtesy AAA Galleries

S. J. Woolf's Lithograph of Lincoln

his remark, he looks up at you with great satisfaction, and shows all his white teeth, and laughs."

On the following day, a Sunday, Secretary of State Seward took Emerson to see Lincoln again. In the President's chamber they found the two little sons, Willie and Tad. Emerson guessed that they were seven and eight, but actually Tad was nine and Willie twelve. The barber was dressing their hair—"whiskeying" it, as he said—amid the protests of the boys, particularly when the cologne got in their eyes. When the President came in, the children politely scampered out. Seward said: "You have not been to church today." Lincoln answered that he had not, and that if he must make a frank confession, he had been reading for the first time Sumner's speech on the Trent affair.

SUCH impressions are all the more significant in the light of the fact that Emerson and Mrs. Stowe, like so many other anti-slavery writers, were dissatisfied with Lincoln's tardiness in proclaiming emancipation and in getting rid of defeatist generals like McClellan. "Now is the time—the accepted time," the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* had written in her newspaper column during the autumn of 1861. "Let the people petition the Government! Let them demand that this mighty weight shall be cast into our scales now! Let the President of the United States proclaim that all men shall hereafter be declared free and equal, and that the services of all shall be accepted, without regard to color. Some are shocked at black regiments: they are shocked too late. The question is not, shall there be black regiments, but, shall they fight on our side or on the side of our enemies?"

And Emerson, on the very occasion just described, had come to Washington to lecture at the Smithsonian Institute in support of emancipation, calling on the President to hitch his wagon to a star. The weakness of the North, Emerson felt, lay in "its timorous literalism," words that parallel Karl Marx's observation in *Die Presse* during 1861 that "Lincoln, in accordance with his legal tradition . . . anxiously clings to the letter of the Constitution and fights shy of every step that could mislead the 'loyal' slaveholders of the border states."

At the beginning of 1862 Emerson had told his Washington audience that "In this national crisis, it is not argument that we want, but that rare courage which dares commit itself to a principle. . . . Emancipation is the demand of civilization. That is a principle; everything else is an intrigue." He repeated these words in Brooklyn and in Boston. He felt strongly that "The government is paralyzed, the army paralyzed"; our politics, he said, were "petty and expectant."

But Lincoln's caution, his illusions of conciliating various Copperhead elements, did not alter the "historic content" of his liberating acts, as Marx wrote to Engels on Oct. 29, 1862. For Lincoln did act; and the response of Emerson in his Boston speech of September, printed as "The President's Proclamation" in the *Atlantic Monthly* for November 1862, showed how deeply the country was affected by decisive action. "Forget," he said, "all that we thought shortcomings, every mistake, every delay. In the extreme embarrassments of his part, call these endurance, wisdom, magnanimity; illuminated, as they now are, by this dazzling success." The acts of good governors work a geometrical ratio. "A day which most of us dared not hope to see, an event worth the dreadful war, worth its costs and uncertainties, seems now to be close before us."

The health of the nation, Emerson rejoiced, is repaired, and with a victory like this we can withstand many disasters. The President might look wistfully for other choices; every line but this was closed up with fire. And though this one, too, bristled with danger, through it was the sole safety. "It is wonderful to see the unseasonable senility of what is called the Peace Party, through all its masks, blinding their eyes to the main feature of the war, namely, its inevitableness."

As the first writer of the time Emerson delivered a funeral oration on April 19, 1865, which deserves to stand as a work of prose beside Whitman's poetic masterpiece "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd." The calamity of Lincoln's death, he said, darkens down over the minds of good men in all civil society "like the shadow of an uncalculated eclipse over the planet." The main theme of Emerson's "Abraham Lincoln" is that of the address of the International Workingmen's Association to President Johnson. Drawn up by its secretary for Germany, Karl Marx, the Association's address noted that Lincoln had done his titanic work "as humbly and homely as heaven-born rulers do little things with the grandiloquence of pomp and state. . . ." The President stood before us as a plain man of the people, Emerson said. Rarely was a man so fitted to the event. In the whirlwind of war there was place for no holiday magistrate, no fair-weather sailor; "the new pilot was hurried to the helm in a tornado." And by his courage, justice, humanity, he stood a heroic figure in the center of a heroic epoch. "He is the true history of the American people in his time."

Whitman mourned in his great elegy:

"O what shall I hang on the chamber walls?
"And what shall the pictures be that I hang on the walls,
"To adorn the burial-house of him I love?"

He saw pictures of growing spring and farms and homes,

"And the city at hand with dwellings so dense, and stacks of chimneys,
"And all the scenes of life and the workshops, and the workmen homeward returning."

The captain had fallen, and the camps were hushed, and the hearts of soldiers were heavy. But the singing voices of America keep the memory and meaning of Lincoln forever alive with

"Lilac and star and bird twined with the chant of my soul,
"There in the fragrant pines and the cedars dusk and dim."

SAMUEL SILLEN.

The Great Douglass

THE Negro masses, who fought so nobly against the slavery that daily crucified them, produced their own "Lincoln"—Frederick Douglass, a man worthy of standing beside the Great Emancipator. The exact date of his birth is unknown, but it is believed to have been in February, about the year 1817. So it is fitting that the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass should be celebrated together.

As a leader of his own people before, during, and after the Civil War Douglass made his greatest contribution. He did not spare criticism of the hesitations and paralyzing compromises that marked the first two years of Lincoln's administration; yet, better than many of the white Abolitionists, he grasped the historic magnitude of the Civil War and of Lincoln's role. When the first bars to the enlistment of Negroes in the Union army were let down in 1862, it was Douglass' ringing call, "Men of Color: To Arms!" which rallied them.

Today Frederick Douglass' people are eager to play their part in a new and greater war to save the Union—the American Union and the union of all democratic nations. But everywhere they encounter the racial taboos that are the shameful legacy of the slave era. Yet the necessities of this war for survival are moving our country toward larger freedom as inexorably as did the necessities of the Civil War. On this joint birthday of two great Americans, it is heartening news that President Roosevelt has taken steps to end the scandalous attempt to silence the Fair Employment Practice Committee. A statement from the White House the other day declared that the President had requested Paul V. McNutt, chairman of the War Manpower Commission, "to call a conference of leaders of those groups opposing discrimination in war employment to consider a revision and strengthening of the committee's scope and powers." Moreover, "the hearings in the railroad case and in any other cases which may have been temporarily postponed will be continued."

RICKENBACKER: MAN OVERBOARD

I FIRST met Hank several years ago in my hometown—a chunky, blue-eyed, dourish Pennsylvanian out of Johnstown in the smoky hills—who said a working man minus a union card was like a head minus a brain. He built ships during the day and unions during the night. In the pre-CIO days they would blackball him at one yard and he would carry his satchel down the coast to another. They couldn't blackball his skill and men with his craft commanded a premium. So on he went, from Pennsylvania, to New York, to Maine, and then back to the Delaware—Phillie, Chester, Camden. A man without a family but with many a home; he could hang his hat in every house where men worked for a living and he was welcome. He talked and breathed union, and did something about it, and working men caught his drift. I remember the hours about dawn when he would drink a pint of milk, go out with the leaflets before he checked in for a day's work as a chipper and calker. Every once in a while he'd get a yen to go to sea and he'd return in a year or so, from South Africa or Argentina, rolling in with that curious gait—some accident or another had shortened one of his legs a few inches but he never talked about that.

LAST week I met him again; he remarked over the phone that he was shipping out in a few days so how about a drink? He'd been to sea the past sixteen months and had just come up from our hometown, where he had seen Mom and she was okay, knitting army sweaters to beat hell. At the bar, after the third drink, he mentioned something about a trip several months back, up the Persian Gulf carrying stuff for our ally, but the damn stuff never got there. Five days from port a torpedo blasted the freighter out of the sea. He mentioned something further about spending sixteen days on a lifeboat before they pulled in at some island or another off the coast of India. It was hard to get the whole story from him and I had to pump. He might have skipped mentioning the business at all but he had a bee in his bonnet, he said. He'd read upon his return that Eddie Rickenbacker, too, had been floating around on an ocean, and was mentioning the fact here and there, and interposing some things about labor he shouldn't be saying. "Skip Rickenbacker a minute," I suggested, "and tell me more about those sixteen days."

"There's not much to say that's new," he told me. He'd come off duty, some time about dusk, was playing rummy in the crew's quarter when something hit the ship, wham, knocked him two feet in the air, and the next thing he knew he was up on deck, the captain was yelling "Abandon ship," and they went overboard. He was dressed in a pair of shorts, and just before he went overboard he remembered he didn't have his wallet with the union card in it so he rushed back and got that.

EVERYBODY aboard ship was saved but the main thing, he said, the stuff went down. His friend, the third engineer, cried like a baby—tanks and planes went down—stuff they needed up there around Stalingrad, and Hank had to clip the engineer and tell him to come to, that there was more back home and the job was to get back alive to tote more over, and besides wasn't the government figuring on some ships catching hell and no use crying over spilled munitions.

No, he never believed their little lifeboat would go down, was always sure somebody would pick them up or that they'd reach shore, and they reached shore. No, there wasn't much to eat, of course not, but there was enough. Enough to stay alive. Twice a day, some tablets of some sort, a piece of chocolate at each "meal" about an inch and a quarter square, and a gill of water. Not good, not bad. The tablets were mighty rich in vitamins and he hadn't lost too much weight. Swimming was good in the warm Indian Ocean, until the sharks came. Only two men let it get them: one chattered about food incessantly, dreamed of eating lots of chow mein and talked about it tiresomely. The second went wacky altogether, but was kept in check pretty well by the other fellows. Not much excitement except one day when a whale came along "kind of nearsighted, the whale was," ploughed within ten yards of the lifeboat, dived, came up obligingly on the other side and passed on.

BUT all this was of no importance. "Hell, it's a war." What he wanted to talk about was this fellow Rickenbacker. Sure, Rick was a hero. All right. So he floated on the Pacific, but God knows, that doesn't make a labor expert out of him. Thousands of American men have floated around on lifeboats and rafts and Mae Wests upon every ocean on the globe, men you never hear about, men who never belonged to America First, but they come back, keep their traps shut, sign up and go out again. No fuss, nothing, except the country needs able-bodied seamen and they've got able bodies and they use them pushing the stuff across the seas. Where the hell does this guy Rickenbacker come off—attacking labor? Who the hell are men in foxholes if not brothers of men in unions? And why doesn't Rickenbacker kick about the slugs who scuttle the President's program and about those who talk like Hitler —guys like Dies and Cox and other phonies, and damn it all, what about Peyrouton and Murphy and some other eggs who don't do a seaman or anybody else much good thinking about—especially on a lifeboat in the middle of the Indian Ocean.

SURE, he was going out again, in a few days. Maybe another torpedo, maybe not. Who the hell knows. But he didn't want to go out worrying that one of these phonies would stab the President in the heart, same as they're trying to do to labor. "The knife won't cut labor," he said grimly. "Too many men nowadays carrying union cards where the phonies want to slip the stiletto." He wanted to let the President know how he felt about this and he was going to send him a letter if it was the last thing he did. Rickenbacker wasn't the only shipwreck on a sea. "If he can talk to the country," Hank said, "so can I. He's one vote, and I'm one vote." Hank said he voted for FDR in '32 and '36 and would have voted for him in '40 except for being on the high seas. "With my union card on me," he said. He especially wanted to tell the President that.

ANNA SEGHERS

An interview by John Stuart with the famous author of "The Seventh Cross." The experiences and credo of an anti-fascist fighter. "There are Heislers and Wallaus everywhere."

Mexico City.

I HAD met Anna Seghers even before my visit to her home. Only the completely impervious could fail to get some glimmer of her personality after reading *The Seventh Cross*. I also knew beforehand that she was among Europe's most gifted anti-fascist novelists; that she had won the Kleist Prize for her *Revolt of the Fishermen*, filmed in Moscow by Erwin Piscator. Her life is the epic of all courageous writers driven from the Nazi prisonland. And I considered it a stroke of good fortune that after a serious illness she was well enough to see me.

It was an early morning appointment and I came perhaps a few minutes too soon. She was profusely apologetic for keeping me waiting. "What can you do with a family that likes to stay out late? I'm afraid all of us have overslept," she said. Then it was my turn to apologize for disturbing her morning's work with questions I was sure she had been asked a hundred times before.

I told her that of all the anti-fascist fiction I had read, none had burned into my consciousness as did *The Seventh Cross*. George Heisler, one of the seven who had escaped the crossbars of the Westhofen concentration camp, seemed to me to be a character of heroic proportions. The killers' whole machinery had been pitted against him. He was, as I followed the relentless manhunt, an inexhaustible dynamo, constantly regenerated by the inspiring image of another fugitive comrade, Wallau. His final crossing of the border was a triumph of the underground—of a handful of people drawn courageously together by their devotion to freedom—over the swastika's vaunted omnipotence.

And I believe that Anna Seghers' comment on my feeling about Heisler is the key to what she thinks of all the anti-fascist characters she created in *The Seventh Cross*.

"Heisler as I saw him," she said, "and as I tried to develop him, was an ordinary human being. So was Wallau—although perhaps he was a little more mature and more experienced in fighting an enemy. Both men are typical of the hundreds who have been through the same ordeal. I can quite see how Americans might think that these men possessed extraordinary will. You have had no contact with direct Nazi persecution. My characters, women as well as men, came out of a definite milieu. And if what happened to Germany ever happened to America, you would quickly see thousands upon thousands finding in themselves a strength and tenacity which they never dreamed was part of them. There are Heislers and Wallaus everywhere."

I think that this is a reaffirmation of an artist's intransigent faith in the world's humble people. I have not read Anna Seghers' other novels. With the exception of *The Seventh Cross* and *Revolt of the Fishermen*, her work has not been translated into English. But hearing her speak of Heisler and Wallau easily suggests the heart of her writing.

"THE SEVENTH CROSS" itself was born of bitter wandering in European exile. Anna Seghers is only forty-three. Yet she is almost completely gray and if she looks somewhat older than she really is, I'm afraid that too must be charged to the Nazi cosmetician. She had fled to Paris in 1933 with her husband and two small children, Peter and Ruth. Her husband, Ladislaus Radvanyi, is a Hungarian sociologist whom she met when they were both students at Heidelberg. She studied art and wrote her doctoral thesis in 1924 on Jews and Jewry in the work of Rembrandt.

In the Paris of 1933-39 the family lived as best it could. In that space of time she wrote three novels before she undertook work on *The Seventh Cross*. One novel dealt with German peasants on the eve of the Nazis' coming to power—*The Price on His Head;* another with the February 1934 revolt in Austria, called *The Road Through February*. And the last novel of the three, the one she told me she liked best of all her work, was about German miners—*The Rescue*.

The Seventh Cross had been finished shortly before the war broke out in 1939. Her husband, enjoying the magnanimity of the "anti-fascist" Daladier government, had been sent off to the notorious concentration camp, Le Vernet, in the south of France. She was left with both children.

"It was a most trying time for me. The weeks passed by and I did not hear a word from my husband. No one knew whether he was dead or alive. Nevertheless, I continued putting the finishing touches on *The Seventh Cross*. As I met Germans who had just escaped from the Nazis, I took extensive notes. Naturally a good deal of the material for the book came from my own experience. And

Anna Seghers

when the book was completed, I thought it was a good job. Nothing more. There were three copies of the manuscript. One I kept. Another had been sent off to the States. A third was taken by a French friend who left for the Maginot line, never to be heard from again.

"My own copy of the book I had to destroy as the Nazis were coming closer to Paris. Had they found it, you can imagine what would have happened. So there I was the author of a novel, and I didn't know whether a single page of it was in existence. It wasn't until I got to Ellis Island that I learned that the manuscript was in safe hands in the United States and about to be published.

"When the blitz hit Paris, I took both children and joined the thousands of evacuees leaving the city. The roads were impassable. We were bombed and machine-gunned. The children were terrified. I saw things which I hope I shall never see again. What was most tragic were the hordes of children separated from their mothers. Mothers, grandparents, kept asking whether anyone had seen their Marie or Paul. Tacked on trees were notes pleading that if so and so were found, would the finders be good enough to send the children to some designated place miles away where the parents would be waiting.

"I could make no headway along the jammed roads. We spent nights in farmhouses, hoping that the way would clear. We ran into Nazi soldiers—young fanatics. What might seem to be a spark of humaneness in them was nothing but part of a pacification program. I'm sorry to say that many simple Frenchmen were taken in by it.

"I decided to return to Paris with the children. We were not getting anywhere on the road. At least in Paris, even though the Nazis had already entered the city, we might find friends. Each night we changed our hotel—keeping constantly on the move. The children, who were not suspect, went looking for friends. Our sense of loneliness disappeared as soon as we discovered that many good friends had also remained behind.

"And then our French friends helped us escape over the demarcation line which then separated occupied from unoccupied France. After that things seemed a little brighter. We traveled to Vernet where we stayed in town during a terrible winter waiting for my husband to be released from the concentration camp."

Even remaining in unoccupied France was a great risk for Anna Seghers. She was on the Nazi proscribed list and the Petain authorities might send her back. But the League of American Writers and the Publishers Committee obtained her husband's discharge, provided visas and money, and the reunited family left for Marseilles and from there shipped across the Atlantic.

"That too was an interesting journey. Perhaps some day I shall write about it. We stopped at Martinique where we saw the flower of French colonial rule at work. I

believe that someone who was on the same boat with us wrote an article for NEW MASSES about the treatment of the refugees at the hands of Martinique officials. [Hell Hole in Martinique, by Martin Ruppel, Aug. 26, 1941.] From Martinique we left for Santo Domingo, then to New York and finally to Mexico City."

I ASKED how she found life and work in Mexico and whether she planned to write about the country.

"Mexico," she replied, "is ideal for the artist. The atmosphere is stimulating. But I don't believe that I shall ever write about it. I know so little about the country—particularly a country building its nationhood with all the special problems which that involves. Europe, the Europe I know, reached its nationhood a hundred years ago. But here in Mexico things are just beginning to grow. Everything is so youthful and I have not quite absorbed it all."

It was inevitable that I ask her about her next book, which a friend told me she had finished.

"I wish I could tell you what my new novel is about. But whatever I would say would sound banal—just as banal as describing the theme of *The Seventh Cross*. There is nothing very unusual about men escaping from a concentration camp. Is there? And I will not be telling you much if I say my new book is a love story—about refugees looking for a new life. The real story is in the development of character, in the characters' handling of serious difficulties. These people in escaping from the grip of the Nazis experience a transformation of many values. Life and death often become utterly meaningless. When they talk about a refugee whom they haven't seen for some time, they use the past tense as though he were dead although he might be very much alive. 'Wasn't he a wonderful person? He used to do this and that.'

"Then again the center of life for the characters in my book is a piece of paper—the visa—without which existence has no anchor. Then there is the story of what people do to obtain that piece of paper guaranteeing some kind of safety. That more or less is a sketchy outline of the novel. I'm afraid it says very little."

We got to talking about writing as a craft, the problems some authors have in keeping the back seat of their pants pasted to a chair, and her own work methods.

"I spend my mornings writing at a friend's house where there are no interruptions. The words come easily, although on some mornings I can write more than on others. Before I actually get down to work on a novel, the whole of it is very clear in my head. And in writing I am not happy unless I have developed a situation with almost mathematical precision. Everything must fit as I originally conceived it. Details must be exactly as I want them so that the final page is completely satisfactory. I can't tell you what a feeling of exaltation I have when a book is finished. It is a feeling which I enjoy immensely.

"Speaking about a book's structure, I notice that some reviewers thought they saw the influence of John Dos Passos in the way I handled the brief scenes in *The Seventh Cross*. I am familiar with Dos Passos' work, but the structure of my book is quite different. If I have followed any model, it is a novel, *The Betrothed*, by the old Italian writer, Manzoni. What I tried to do in each short section was to deal with a special problem facing a character, thereby developing the character and moving the action one step farther."

She told me that she had very recently helped Viola Brothers Shore prepare the playscript of *The Seventh Cross* which Otto Preminger will produce. It gave her an opportunity to improve her English, to prevent mistakes which crept into the translation of *The Seventh Cross* from the German as well as some unnecessary omissions from the original manuscript.

"I had no idea until recently how good or bad the translation of *The Seventh Cross* was. But now my English is quite improved and it seems to me that the translation is satisfactory. Some things I would not have permitted, had I known about them in advance. But for some reason the publisher felt that it wasn't necessary to consult me. I think things will be quite different with my next book."

Over 400,000 copies of *The Seventh Cross* have been published in this country. Anna Seghers is, of course, delighted with the success of a book which had been turned down by some publishers who felt that it was "unsalable." For Americans the book is a celebration of the grandeur of the anti-fascist spirit. Few people can ever forget the closing sentences of the novel. "All of us felt how ruthlessly and fearfully outward powers could strike to the very core of man, but at the same time we felt that at the very core was something that was unassailable and inviolable." I think these lines almost best describe both Anna Seghers and the colony of German anti-fascist refugees now living in Mexico. With almost no resources they have been publishing a brilliant monthly, *Freies Deutschland*. Their new book on the Nazi terror has won official government sponsorship and the personal endorsement of President Avila Camacho. The Wallaus and Heislers are everywhere.

JOHN STUART.

Ante-Bellum, Anti-Negro

ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE FIFTH COLUMN, *by George Fort Milton. Vanguard. $3.50.*

WHAT are we to think of a "history" which, published in the midst of another great struggle for national survival, writes bitterly of the draft of soldiers in the Civil War; denounces the suppression of Copperhead newspapers as a "mistaken step"; decries the military offensive as an error and attributes to it the lost battles of the first years of the war; charges up the growth of Copperhead sentiment and organization in large part to the draft and to the Emancipation Proclamation; and speaks regretfully of the fact that Jefferson Davis lost the "opportunity for a negotiated peace"? Mr. Milton has not drawn the obvious inferences for 1943, but the fifth columnists will certainly not hesitate to do so.

It is worth while to discuss in greater detail the book's attack upon Negro emancipation. George Fort Milton is one of those historians who have never resigned themselves to the fact that the Civil War freed the slaves. Already the author of a number of anti-Abolition historical works, he has once more approached his favorite theme. This time he has made a flank attack, using the story of the Copperheads as the occasion. It is Mr. Milton's thesis that the Emancipation Proclamation was in large part responsible for fifth column activity. We quote from scattered passages:

". . . it (the Proclamation) intensified and quickened the transformation of such secret societies as the Knights of the Golden Circle . . . into active agencies of treason. . . . A great many Union soldiers . . . felt let down, almost betrayed, by the new revolutionary purpose for which the war would be waged hereafter. . . . Such leaders . . . as Horatio Seymour . . . hinted that if emancipation were the price the President had to pay for continued support from the Radical Republicans, it had been used to buy men who were no longer loyal at heart to the Union cause. And there seemed some ground for this suspicion." Emancipation was "an excuse for Copperhead conspiracy. . . . Men on treason's political fringe denounced with new fury these unconstitutional activities of the administration." Of the reverses suffered by the Lincoln administration in the 1862 elections—reverses due to the failure to take the offensive on the military and political fields—we hear that "the draft law, the Emancipation Proclamation—all these contributed to the humiliatingly adverse outcome. . . . Politically, the Proclamation had been a mistake."

Mr. Milton's Civil War hero is Gov. Horatio Seymour of New York. Seymour publicly challenged the Emancipation Proclamation. He hindered conscription by questioning its legality; denounced the arrest of traitors; addressed the draft rioters in New York City in words that could only be interpreted as approval and encouragement; presided over the 1864 convention of the Democratic Party that adopted a platform of immediate negotiated peace with the Confederacy. And this is the man of whom the author says: "His loyalty to the Union cannot be gainsaid."

Important facts concerning the Civil War's fifth column are to be found in this book, but the reader must be constantly on the alert to separate these facts, tediously and painstakingly, from their anti-Abolition context. He will therefore do better to read the history of the Copperhead movement in such works as Wood Gray's *The Hidden Civil War* (reviewed by Samuel Sillen in NEW MASSES for Sept. 22, 1942).

ELIZABETH LAWSON.

Austrian "Democrat"

BETWEEN HITLER AND MUSSOLINI, *by Prince Ernst R. Starhemberg. Harper. $3.*

IN THESE times of rationing one item is sold in ever increasing quantities: the self-styled "democrat" made in Germany, Italy, Cliveden, or some other breeding place of full-, medium-, or small-sized fascism. In the gallery of "staunch believers in democracy" such as Otto Hapsburg, Tibor Eckhardt, Milan Hodza, Hjalmar Procope, Admiral Darlan, Felix of Austria, etc., Prince Ernst R. Starhemberg is neither the most interesting nor the most important.

The memoirs of a man who, as the organizer of the Austrian fascist *Heimatwehr*, had close relations with both ends of the Axis; who took part in Hitler's *Bierhallenputsch* of 1923; who was a leading figure in the bloody events of 1934 in Austria and a member of the Schuschnigg government in the years immediately before the Hitler invasion—this man's memoirs could have been a useful source of material for the study of fascist politics in Central Europe in the decisive decade from 1923 to 1933.

Prince Starhemberg, however, displays all the bad qualities of the old Austrian aristocracy: he is superficial, dull, of microscopic political intelligence and gigantic insincerity. To give only one example of his manner of writing: the whole period of his intimate connections with the Nazi Party and the fascist Freikorps in Germany, stretching over several years, is dealt with in exactly three sentences in a conversation with Mussolini: "After the war, I said, I spent some years in his [Hitler's] movement. I still have connections with circles around Hitler. I also know him personally." Apart from casual remarks about the "years in the Freikorps" and one meeting with Hitler, nothing is said about the activities in that period, nothing about the ideas prevalent in the early Nazi movement, nothing about Hitler and the other Nazi leaders whom Starhemberg had met at that time. His opinions about Austrian politicians are entirely empty and pale. His descriptions of Mussolini and Hitler do not add anything to what is already known.

In his memoirs Prince Starhemberg strains

time and again to establish his early efforts against anti-Semitism, against the suppression of the labor movement, for a sort of conservative democracy in an independent Austria. If these things are true, he was highly unsuccessful in every attempt to do some good, whereas he always succeeded when he was making mistakes. Actually, of course, Ernst Starhemberg was one of the promoters of fascism in Central Europe. He was not as skillful as his German and Italian colleagues, but he certainly was not less guilty for the establishment of fascist barbarism. His conflicts with Hitler were quarrels between brothers. His late repentance was evidently not even good enough for the adherents to a policy of "expediency." But with his record we might see him pop up soon in one of the "democratic" committees of the busy House of Hapsburg.

BERNARD NOSTITZ.

Worse than Hunger

THE FOUR WINDS, *by Charles Edward Hayes. Macmillan. $2.75.*

WHEN the banks take the land and farmers are driven from owning to renting and finally to day labor or relief rolls, even worse than hunger is the break-up of family ties and neighborly folkways. The old sustaining pattern of work, love, and jocularity that kept life fresh at the source gives way to isolation and cruelty born of fear. Young people brought up on the religion that cannot save their parents come to despise both; the farmer must learn to recognize in his old work-fellow the shrewd new owner whose tractors take the best land; the renter's daughter finds out that morality is on the side of the rich; the hired man who revolts gets a vigilante flogging. All bearings are lost.

Such is the plain presentment of this strong first novel. Told by the central character, a Kansas boy maturing in the years just before the war, it contrasts tellingly the youth's inherited world of hopeful loyalties with the cynical dealings of the actual struggle in which a landless class is being created. The boy's hard-working father is dispossessed and driven to numb despair, his piously confused mother dotes on a whining older brother and a sister who abandon the family for the city, his loved younger brother dies, and as a young man he takes at last to the road. At his first step outside he is caught in an abortive strike of construction workers and has a glimpse of the larger kinship of labor. But the family and its values are lost to the four winds.

The author's theme dominates the characters and situations, yet the book does not suffer by it: the figures are rounded and the incidental action is pleasantly spontaneous, enriched by a memorable sensitivity to the Kansas countryside with its seasonal changes. The reader feels certain weaknesses—the unmotivated viciousness of the older brother, for example, and the unrelieved tone of the opening chapters—but these are minor flaws in a work of solid promise.

MACKLIN THOMAS.

JEFFERSON ON THE STAGE

Sidney Kingsley's "The Patriots" portrays the conflict between democracy and oligarchy in the early days of the republic. A stirring drama for Jefferson's bicentenary.

THE Pulitzer Prize Committee can salvage its somewhat leaky reputation next month by handing the drama award to Sergt. Sidney Kingsley. For in *The Patriots,* Kingsley has written the best American play of the war. And it is a war play, notwithstanding the fact that it deals with the years between 1790 and 1800. Those were fateful years in which the future of our country hung perilously in the balance between democracy and the tyranny of a few. Jefferson's triumph over Burr in 1800, as the play unfailingly suggests, was the triumph of the values in defense of which Americans are dying today on Guadalcanal and in North Africa. In this year of Jefferson's 200th anniversary, Kingsley has glowingly celebrated not only the man but his enduring faith.

The play has urgency and impact, for Kingsley has clung devotedly to the truth of history. His Jefferson is warm, alive, vibrant, a man who cherished liberty more than his life and who had more faith in the people than in precedent. He was a scholar, a philosopher, and, as every reader of our Declaration of Independence knows, a brilliant writer. In his later years, as Kingsley shows, he would have preferred the tranquillity of Monticello to the stormy life of politics. But the principles that he had immortally penned in 1776 were not words. They were the meaning of his life, his vision of America. And when they were gravely threatened by Federalist financiers and monarchists led by Hamilton, Thomas Jefferson fought back hard, founded a people's party, cemented the institutional base of our democratic heritage.

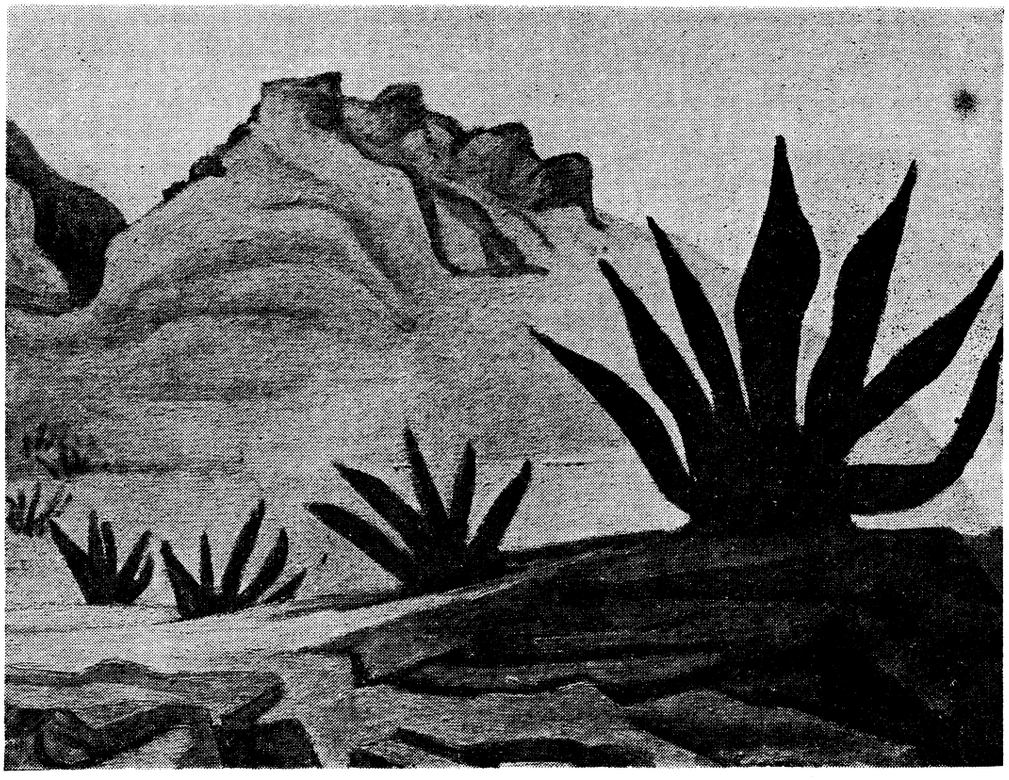
The electric clash on the stage between Jefferson and Hamilton is a profoundly affecting experience. Hamilton, who as a youth had served the Revolution in Washington's army, now calls the people a great beast. Ambitious, vain, clever, backed by wealthy and unscrupulous intriguers, Hamilton is a formidable opponent. Kingsley has carefully avoided either a blackhearted villain or a weakling. Hamilton too had his principles, though he was sometimes unprincipled in seeking to achieve them: a government of moneyed aristocrats, a "solid" dictatorship that would, in Jefferson's caustic words, ride and spur the people as if the people were born with saddles on their backs.

Hamilton is not a fop, like Colonel Humphrey, or a sycophant, like Henry Knox. He is a man who knows where he is going and will move heaven and earth to get there. The aging President Washington's efforts to conciliate his Secretary of the Treasury and his Secretary of State are bound to fail. For as Jefferson tells him, their beliefs are irreconcilable. And the central conflict of the play is a conflict of beliefs. In that conflict the swilling speculators are pitted against the blacksmith, the scurvy journalist John Fenno against Madison and Monroe. When Hamilton uses his influence against Burr in the deadlocked presidential election, it is not because his basic social beliefs have miraculously changed, but because he recognizes that Burr is a dangerous man whose election, contrary to the public will, would jeopardize the very existence of the nation. But the conflict between democracy and financial oligarchy remains irreconcilable, and Kingsley has given no comfort to appeasement.

Jefferson's humanity is effectively portrayed in the warm relation with his daughter Patsy and her children, as well as in his poignant though somewhat overdrawn memories of his wife, whose health he had been forced to neglect during the Revolution. But particularly admirable, I think, are those scenes which show Jefferson and his Negro servant Jupiter. Jefferson hated slavery and had been deeply disturbed when his anti-slave clause was stricken out of the Declaration. For Jupiter he has a profound human regard; and Jupiter in turn worships him. When Jefferson washes Jupiter's hand wound, gently and with friendship, we appreciate for the thousandth time how damnably southern poll taxers defile the great Virginian's name when they—more and more infrequently—mention it in Congress.

HERE at last is a historical work which sets history on its feet after *Tennessee Johnson, Oliver Wiswell,* and others had tried desperately to stand history on its head. The result is not only honorably American; it is also in the stratosphere artistically as compared with the gutter betrayals of our past that have recently been palmed off on us.

And the production at the National Theater, sponsored by The Playwrights' Company and Rowland Stebbins, is authentic and accomplished. Shepard Traube's staging of the play has great dignity, color, insight. Howard Bay's settings are imaginative and resourceful. And the cast has captured the spirit of the play magnificently. Raymond E. Johnson as Jefferson, House Jameson as Hamilton,



"Mountains and Maguey": This painting and the one on the opposite page ("Refreshment") are from the exhibition of Pablo O'Higgins' work, at the Associated American Artists galleries through February 15.

Juano Hernandez as Jupiter, Madge Evans as Patsy Jefferson, Judson Laire as Monroe, and Ross Matthew as James Madison—all helped the play strike fire. The night I saw the play, Cecil Humphreys could not be present to play Washington, but his last-minute substitute, Edwin Jerome, gave an effective performance.

America needs such a play at this hour; it has been overdue. I hope it will be around for our returning soldiers to see when Jefferson's twentieth century victory arrives.

SAMUEL SILLEN.

Next week's issue of NEW MASSES *will carry a review by Dorothy Brewster of "Counter-attack," by Janet and Philip Stevenson, a drama of Soviet resistance currently playing at the Windsor Theater. The play opened too late for Miss Brewster to make the deadline this week. Meanwhile we strongly recommend the play to our readers as an excellent, and inspiring, piece of theater.*

Drama Roundup

Unreal life in an invaded country. . . . "Tinker's Dam" and "Dark Eyes."

THE badness of a bad play like *The Barber Had Two Sons* is not entirely due to the accidental limitations of its authors, the Messrs. Duggan and Hogan. True, they are not very good writers. But their play's badness is a prescribed and inevitable thing. It is a bad play chiefly because it is "good theater"—a "well made play" of exactly the sort that called forth Bernard Shaw's best diatribes fifty years back. In other words, it has been written according to a stylized and distorted theatrical convention that cannot possibly produce anything good.

In life Nazi secret agents of great importance do not spend the moment before an invasion playing the violin at family parties, breaking off from moment to moment to telephone the Gestapo under the noses of their innocent Norwegian hosts. In life the key post in an uprising is not entrusted to an inexperienced and hesitating youth won over at the last minute. Nor do uprisings pop off, for that matter, as one-family affairs. No doubt the authors of *The Barber Had Two Sons* know this as well as I do. But they were not trying to produce a comment on real life. They were trying to produce a play for a theater as absurdly conventionalized, as remote from reality, as the *No* plays of Japan. So they pegged their story of Norwegian resistance to the Nazis to the amorous machinations of an unprincipled wench and the tribulations of a mother-forced-to-choose-between-her-boys, etc. And they made the barber shop the scene of no less than four killings, giving them variety by using as successive methods, strangling, throat-cutting, a Nazi firing squad, and a revolver wielded by Mamma.

In addition to all this unintentional nonsense, there was ostentatious suspense that suspended nothing, ostentatious "big emotion" that might just as well have been left unwritten, with the old stage direction, "Here Herod rages." There was every possible kind of theatrical conflict except the one conflict which gave the play its pretext for existence, the struggle between Norway and the Nazis. *That* was presented by having two German soldiers ask for extra eggs at breakfast without saying "please."

If you care, *The Barber Had Two Sons* purported to describe the Norwegian underground movement, planning to seize all Norway, and frustrated because one of its leaders was the town drunk and another a lovesick boy. That boy, incidentally, was supposed to be an artist—he didn't even know the Nazis were there, he merely wanted to paint. This sort of artist does turn up sometimes; some of them added to the confusion of betrayed France, some of them flourished in England and disappeared in all directions when the going got tough; and some of them still crawl in and out of our newspapers trailing the slime of reaction behind them. But any knowledge of the reaction of the Norwegian intellectuals to invasion would have prevented such a character study. The Norwegian students in London, speaking of themselves as the servants of the people; the Norwegian poets, writing their war songs, were following the tradition of a country where the artists did not maintain an artificial separation between themselves and their world. To make the play's quisling an artist is to misrepresent Norway.

Dialogue which could not possibly have been spoken offstage added to the play's absurdity. There was a stock phrase for every situation, and always a wrong one. The staging was cluttered, the direction had the mad irrelevance of farce. Most of the cast managed to be simultaneously strident and uncertain; Miss Blanche Yurka, who played the barber, differed from the others only in that there was no uncertainty about her.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

"EVEN if there isn't a God, those who believe in Him are better off than those who don't: at least they have their dreams," says the Tinker in *Tinker's Dam,* and that's what the play is about. A Blackfriar's Guild production, by Andrew Hawke, the best that can be hoped for it is that it will commend to the attention of the commercial theater the several people who act in it—none of them very well, but all earnestly and most with some promise—and those who stage it, rather commendably.

The forces of good (the Tinker, a Cow, and several small children) struggle with the forces of evil (a Black Sheep, some mimes, and, especially, a straw man materialist Professor, who, it is hinted, represents the New Deal) for the soul of a cynical newspaperman who is about to die from a bombing (a modern note!). The struggle takes the form of argument, some of it, a la *Blue Bird,* in the vestibule of Heaven; the argument you have read above.

Bright note: One of the children in the play was a Negro. Her part was not caricatured in any way, and the sentiments she expressed were no sillier than those of any of the others. SEYMOUR A. COPSTEIN.

★

PERHAPS no one so detached from real time and place as a Russian "refugee" (emigre) could have written anything so untimely as *Dark Eyes.* The comedy by Elena Miramova and Eugenie Leontovich—who also play leading roles—pivots on the invasion of a conventional Long Island household by "refugees" consisting of a former prince, two actresses, and an opera singer. They riotously throw their souls, their hearts, their charms, and their literary gabble around the place for two long acts—at the end of which Long Island surrenders to the czar. The dollar-a-year host promises to back the play the girls have written, they get away with writing a check unsupported by any funds, and there's some merry hysteria over an attempted suicide with poison that turns out to be only peach brandy.

Maybe peach brandy rather than poison is the correct label for the comedy itself. Or perhaps it would be if the characters weren't so insistent on declaring that *they* are *Russians.* With the newspaper headlines about Stalingrad printed sharply on the consciousness, it is impossible to listen to such a declaration—comedy or not—without being jarred. Nor do the playwrights' attempts to bring their characters "up to date" through references to Russia's ("Holy Russia's") resistance lessen the poor taste or archaic spirit in which the play is conceived. I will grant that it has funny, even hilarious moments, that it is very well acted and smoothly directed. But I can also state honestly that, discordant political notes aside, it is tedious on the whole. I got some laughs out of the first act; not halfway through the second I began to wish that I were home in bed with a glass of hot milk and a copy of the *World Almanac.* B. G.

"Air Force"

The boys in the bombers. . . . Two movies to watch for.

"AIR FORCE" is an honest and effective piece of screen reporting. Without artifice, it tells the story of the bomber *Mary Ann* from Pearl Harbor to the Tokyo raid; and finds in the inevitable experiences of a bombing plane in wartime quite enough natural drama to make a picture. There are no irrelevant plot complications of girls and spies in the stratosphere to make the film unreal.

The bomber's men come from all sections of America—even Brooklyn. They are quickly and convincingly characterized, without any attempt to make them stock types; and their speech is normal American speech, with its quick humor and its healthy avoidance of sentimentality. Put through the explosive hell of a dozen successive battles, they grow tougher and harder, changing from boys to men, without ever losing that healthy naturalness. *Air Force* does not, of course, go very deep into human relationships; that is not its business. Its business is to give you some idea of what the boys in the bomber do with their time, and this is accomplished with almost excessive thoroughness. There have been many genuine action shots since the war began, and many effective studio replicas of action, but few that gave you battles with the enormous detail of *Air Force.*

Although its scenes of naval warfare must obviously be done with miniature models, it is hard not to believe you are looking at the real thing. Innumerable torpedoes crash into Japanese battleships, cruisers, carriers; innumerable bombers wheel as gracefully as seagulls, lift a wing, dive, and explode a destroyer into flying rubbish. Zeros are caught on the cross-hairs of the gun sights. "Gee, they bust into little bitsa pieces!" exults Weinberg, the boy from Brooklyn. Ships heel over and sink; planes crash and flare; men stagger and hurtle through space, and the film itself quivers and blurs as the recording cameras are shaken by the explosions. Here and there a recognizable newsreel shot lends authenticity to the whole sequence.

In the interests of verisimilitude, the battle scenes are perhaps made a little too overpowering. Sheer blare of sound and brilliance of light leave you feeling like a shell-shock case yourself. This may be useful in suggesting to the comfortable audience that battle is not a soft and easy thing, but *Air Force,* with a little more imagination, might have achieved this end without giving you concussion. Its quieter moments, where restraint is in evidence, are more moving if less exhausting.

Indeed, it is these quieter moments that distinguish *Air Force* from the general run of action films. Between the battles is the place where trouble starts, as a rule; Lana Turner or Gene Tierney waggles her way in, Peter Lorre or Laird Cregar goose-steps his way out, and the murderous reality of fighting is obscured by the fantasy of glamour-as-usual. It is refreshing to find, in *Air Force* and the newer films, that nothing gets between you and the war. In a quiet moment the boys rescue the pet dog of the beleaguered Marines from Wake Island; in a quiet moment the sergeant learns his son was one of the first pilots to die. Each of these details is entirely relevant to the *Mary Ann's* fighting story. The one girl who appears does so on a hospital bed at Pearl Harbor.

Neither direction nor acting introduces any high jinks to weaken Dudley Nichols' straightforward screenplay. Howard Hawks, as director, keeps his mind on his planes; the cast, most of them competent newcomers with no glamour to obtrude, present American soldiers we can believe in. Harry Carey is particularly excellent as the sergeant; John Garfield handles a difficult part well, creating a young cynic who finds himself a better fighter than he thinks. Such unknowns as John Ridgely, who has the most prominent role, are a pleasant improvement on the shiny boys of pre-war movies.

ONLY now has this reviewer succeeded in forcing her way into *Random Harvest,* through the hordes of ladies forearmed with many handkerchiefs. It wasn't worth the wait, in spite of Greer Garson. Beginning fairly intelligently as a study of a shell-shock case, the picture soon takes a nose dive into Ye Olde Mossy Plot. The amnesiac hero gets hit on the head, forgets his new wife and baby, returns to his former life and becomes a great captain of industry. Wife tracks him down, discovers that he is eating his heart out with a sense of loss, because he can't remember what he did in his three missing years. So she very carefully doesn't tell him. Instead she becomes his secretary, then his wife-in-name-only, and they both suffer no end before he accidentally remembers All. This sweet disregard of elementary common sense enabled the sentimental in the audience to use up all the handkerchiefs, and forced me to consume bicarbonate of soda, a beverage which I hate.

THE improvement in film quality which has so suddenly appeared is not confined to war films. In *Keeper of the Flame* and *The Ox-Bow Incident,* two magnificent forthcoming pictures, Hollywood proves that it is studying civilian life with new political and human insight. The former film, written by Donald Ogden Stewart from the book by I. A. R. Wylie, is a study of an American fascist; and consequently the film is being attacked by powerful groups which, failing to block its production, have resorted to hostile reviews and a campaign against release. *Keeper of the Flame* says that the people have a right to the truth; and the reactionaries are doing their best to keep it from them. It is important, just now, to urge your local theater managers to book *Keeper of the Flame;* to write MGM urging its widespread release; to stir up interest in it, and above all to see it.

JOY DAVIDMAN.

A Prize Quintet

The conditions under which a 100,000-ruble work was written.

AFTER this reviewer had gone to bed recently with the strains of the Shostakovich quintet that received the 100,000-ruble Stalin award still ringing in his ears, his sleep was troubled with a strange dream, a dream of pies, pies of all sorts—apple, cherry, pumpkin, lemon—all the good pies. (He never did think much of prune pie.)

As he tossed on his Pie-crustean bed he marveled at the lack of connection between the two concepts, i.e., between pies and 100,000-ruble piano quintets. In a flash, however, the erstwhile incongruous fused into an harmonious whole.

Pies—and this is hardly strange—symbolize eating, good eating at that. The Soviet Union, by conferring $22,000-awards on composers, painters, poets, playwrights (as it did in March 1941), recognized eating as a prerequisite to creative work, as opposed to the starving-in-a-garret theory—an astounding discovery for any government to make.

These (to us) sensational awards are not a sudden Lady Bountiful gesture or a bit of international advertising on the part of the great socialist republic, but part of a consistent policy the USSR has been pursuing ever since its inception. Hundreds of creative artists in all fields have been getting monthly pay checks, making it possible for a Shostakovich to acquire, unhampered by financial worries, the growth and experience that went into the work in question—which, by the way, is his Opus 57, written at the age of thirty-five.

This mature product of Soviet genius was performed recently at a faculty recital of the Metropolitan Music School. (The school itself, situated in midtown New York, has some unique features which make one wish there were more music schools like it. It caters to low income groups, with evening classes and reasonable tuition rates, yet its faculty is of the best.) Present on this occasion were distinguished musicians, including three American composers, Richard Donovan, Otto Luening, Wallingford Riegger. Let the reader ask any of these if the Stalin award was misplaced. Or let him ask those who took part in the quintet's superb rendition—Vladimir Brenner, piano, William Carboni, viola, Felix Galimir, violin, Max Hollander, violin, Carl Stern, cello.

Better still, let him hear the recording of the quintet (Columbia) and see for himself that it is a great work. To be sure, it is not experimental, it does not open up new horizons, it is not a link in the development of music. It is, however, a work of consummate mastery, done in the conservative style of today, abounding in felicitous ideas, melodic, rhythmic, and contrapuntal, noteworthy in its treatment of the piano in relation to the other instruments. It does not spill over emotionally, it does not rant in the manner of the

Bloch quintet, yet it manages to say plenty, in something of the grand manner.

Of course, not all works turned out under Soviet sponsorship are masterpieces; indeed one could not expect more than a small fraction to be of great importance in a world sense. But when, in what period, in what country and in what civilization, was there not a surfeit of the less-than-memorable?

So sometime when the weather's nice, let's whisper in the ear of our own government that pies and piano quintets are not mutually exclusive; in brief, that we'd like a Department of Fine Arts in Washington—something even more than the present encouragement of music for morale by various departments (valuable as such encouragement may be)—a single department devoted to the dissemination and sponsorship of art in all fields on a scale worthy of a great nation.

LEONARD GREGG.

Schuman's Music

The Collegiate Chorale and others. . . . A new forum.

WHEN a living composer has his works performed by competent musicians before a large audience which pays to hear and discuss this music with him—that's news. When, in addition, it introduces a choral group of first rate caliber, it becomes a musical headline. It happened recently, when the Town Hall Music Forum presented the Collegiate Chorale, and others, in the works of William Schuman.

It is a credit to the composer that his music needs no verbal explanation. Indeed, Mr. Schuman attempted none in the forum or discussion period which followed the performance.

The music heard was certainly solid, well constructed, and listenable. If Schuman has not developed a strikingly original style at the age of thirty-three, his music nevertheless has a bite and pungency which arouses more than an interest for repeated hearings. Outstanding in my opinion was the "Prelude for Voices" (Chorus and soprano soloist, 1939) to a text of Thomas Wolfe. The music is more than skillfully and convincingly written—it really moves along and underlines the idea of a universal individual loneliness inherent in the words.

This quality of moving along, of getting some place, is very characteristic of Schuman's works, whether in the early "Canonic Choruses" (1932) or the "Concerto for Piano and Orchestra" (1942). The latter work, played by Rosalyn Tureck, pianist, and the Saidenberg "Little Symphony" showed a different side of the composer's musical personality. This was the work of a man in the know (he teaches at Sarah Lawrence College), from whom music flows easily, who can invent all manner of instrumental sonorities, and who enjoys doing so. In his enjoyment he forgets to let the audience in on some of his secrets, the result being that the music gives a patchwork effect that at times holds

promise but is never really wholly unified.

The star of the evening was Robert Shaw, brilliant young leader, and his Collegiate Chorale. Under his intense and inspired direction, the group, a majority of whose members have been participating for three months or less, gave some stunning performances of Schuman's work. Shaw must be seen and the Chorale heard to appreciate their true status. He is a man with ideas, fine ideas, and high ideals (as came out during the forum), plus the equipment to put them into practice. A bet on Shaw's musical future is a sure thing.

It is very heartening for modern music to see a Music Forum functioning again. The idea is not new. In the early thirties there was a Composers' Collective at the Pierre Degeyter Club and discussion of new music at weekly concerts. Audience size was limited, and since several composers were presented in an evening it was very difficult to get a true picture of any one artist's work. Considerations of economy also restricted performers to groups of chamber dimensions. After 1936 the WPA Composers Forum Laboratory did a tremendous job in the field of presenting living music for live discussion. These pioneers certainly help explain why no one at Town Hall was heard to say, "It sounds like a lot of notes to me."

Modern music stands on its own feet today. It was entirely unnecessary "appeasement" to begin the program with a Bach work, the "F-Minor Piano Concerto," with Miss Tureck as soloist again. People who want to listen to Bach don't have to attend a concert of new music to do so. As to its value by contrast, or any other standard, Schuman is not a Bach and doesn't pretend or perhaps even want to be one. A much more pertinent contrast would have been to present a concerto by another living composer. The audience reacted to Schuman on its own merits rather than any resemblance, intentional or otherwise, to the great Johann Sebastian. Discussion was lively but limited, due to the fact that Virgil Thompson, critic and composer in his own right, gave an excellent on-the-spot review that seemed to take the words out of most people's mouths. It might be well in the future to fix his function as discussion leader and let the audience get things off their chest —the composer can and does always get the critic's opinions.

B. TAYLOR.

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