MASSES & MAINSTREAM

SOCIALISM CRITICIZES ITSELF
MILTON HOWARD

OF POLITICS AND CULTURE
CHARLES HUMBOLDT

WHOSE SOUTH, MR. FAULKNER?
BARBARA GILES

LOLA GREGG
A Story by HOWARD FAST

CRUSOE'S SOCIALIST DESCENDANTS
ANNETTE T. RUBINSTEIN

CORLISS LAMONT AND FREEDOM
S. W. GERSON

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It Hurts Us More . . .

We've held off five months making this appeal to you. We told ourselves we didn't want to cry "Wolf!" so often. (The last time was a year and five months ago.)

Now the wolf isn't just at the door—he's at our throats.

"Oh, its the same old wolf," you say. Yes, the same wolf who brought us down from ninety-six pages to sixty-four and from four editors to two, who keeps us from paying our writers, who made us skip our February issue and turns us into amateur money-raisers two months every year.

Yes, it's the same wolf who, for three years, has kept Americans from marching with the rest of the world's people to honor the first day of this month: MAY DAY—bright Easter of the workers. Who imprisons the brave enemies of war, who tries to silence the *Daily Worker* and to cripple other progressive papers by deporting their editors. It is the same wolf who waits for you.

Can we drive him off? Of course—but we must do it together. On our side, we are working to produce a better magazine, broad in its outlook and alert to the practical and cultural issues that concern all Americans. Our pages will be open to full discussion and dissent, and reflect the highest level of thinking as well as the creative riches of the progressive movement. We will also bring you the works of world figures in literature, art, the sciences, politics and philosophy.

The rest is up to you—now! Here are the facts. We have a dangerous deficit of $7,500. We have no subsidies, no patrons, no Foundations or Funds to tell us comfortingly, "You can count on us." You, our readers, are the only Foundation on which we have ever built. You are the only Fund on whose goodwill we can draw.

We must ask you to give the most you can, according to your resources. Some of you will be able to spare five, ten, perhaps even a hundred dollars. Of others, we ask just a bit more than, say, the price of a movie, a few bottles of beer, a good meal outside, or one LP record. Little enough, isn't it? So much is at stake.

We had intended to enclose a stamped and addressed envelope in each copy of this issue, to make it easier for you to help us. We have just been informed that this would violate postal regulations. We shall therefore do the following. We shall insert an envelope in every copy that does not pass through the mails and is sold on the newsstands. We shall ask every bookshop dealer to insert one for us or to have them on hand for you. Lastly, we shall send every subscriber a personal letter with the enclosure. *Use it!*

THE EDITORS

Socialism Criticizes Itself

By MILTON HOWARD

WE ARE still at the foothills of the great developments, practical and theoretical, which were embodied in the views of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. But we know that they mark a new stage in Marxist thought, a breaking out of dogmas, a renovation of Marxist science which is always in conflict with itself as it strives incessantly to get closer to the constantly altering objective truth in the world.

The world's first Socialist revolution is criticizing itself. It is taking stock. It is nothing if not critical.

Past revolutions, even the most liberating, like American and French revolutions of the 18th century, could not criticize themselves from the same revolutionary standpoint with which they began. Such revolutions—and their bracing impact is still felt in modern society—always present a contradiction between their aims and their realization. The philosophers summon society to its liberating tasks; the people press forward with exuberant ardor; they begin to strain the boundaries set by the men of property who proceed to take over. These brush aside their own earlier proclamations. The author of the revolutionary "Marseillaise," Rouget de Lisle, looks out of the window during the people's uprising of 1830 and cries out, "The people are going wild! They are singing the Marseillaise!" The magnificent Jeffersonian visions of the young American republic collide with the Shays Rebellion; the propertyless Jeffersonians face the debt-collecting militia, their recent brothers-in-arms.

The post-revolutionary generation criticizes the "excesses" of freedom. At a suitable interval, there appears the criticism which denies that the revolution should have taken place at all. Is not man tainted with Original Sin? Does not popular democracy's "excesses" lead to Communism, where social production becomes social property? (See

the literature beginning with Edmund Burke's attack on the French Revolution, the books of De Maistre and Bonald, down to the latest New Conservative in the United States.)

The greatest revolutions of the past always criticize themselves for having gone "too far." The Socialist Revolution is now criticizing itself for not having gone far enough. It reproaches itself for not having provided enough freedom, for not having done enough to create the conditions in which its own revolutionary state power will disappear as useless and obsolete.

THERE are contradictions between Socialist aims and Socialist reality. Socialist criticism is not launched at its aims, but only at its failure to realize the aims. In a great passage, Karl Marx gave us this essence of the new kind of revolution:

"Working class revolutions . . . criticize themselves constantly, interrupt themselves continually in their own course, come back to the apparently accomplished in order to begin afresh, deride with merciless thoroughness the inadequacies, weaknesses, and meagerness of their first attempts." (*Eighteenth Brumaire,* K. Marx, International Publishers, p. 17.)

Three years after Stalin's death, the world's first Socialist revolution is putting itself into a historical perspective. It can do this only because it stands on the plateau of unshakeable victories. From this plateau it is able better to unmask its errors, its injustices, its tragedies. For we know better now that the first three and a half decades of this Socialist revolution were marked, amid conditions of capitalist encirclement, not only by miracles of social advance, but also by a debasement of its own socialist democracy which took, in the grave words of *Pravda,* "monstrous forms." How monstrous, the news of the unjustified execution of Jewish cultural leaders has just revealed to us.

We know better than before how deeply the new socialist society still bears traces of the old. Socialist ownership of the means of production is not of itself a guarantee of an uncomplicated progress toward freedom. Even the most experienced of all the Marxist parties could find itself the victim of the "cult of personality."

This apparently produced, during the latter years of Stalin's leadership, a serious deformation of that country's political system toward one-man domination, and a suppression of the right of criticism without which socialism cannot attain its goal of the fully liberated human being.

IT IS ALSO apparent in the light of the revolution's criticism of itself that the first Socialist state entered into incorrect relationships with other Socialist states. That this was based partly on necessary factors (the need for defense against aggressive imperialist encirclement), and partly on historically avoidable factors (here Stalin's mistakes appear as the main cause), does not diminish the harm done. The Tito affair was plainly one expression of this historic error in the new problems of Socialist state relationships. The ghastly injustices now announced by the leadership in Hungary are an even more appalling expression of the same error.

But this is an error whose mere announcement does not satisfy reason or historic objectivity. How do guiltless men "confess" in open Socialist courts? The question is insistent, baffling, and painful. The moral, no less than the political, basis of Socialism, compels a full clarification based on evidence, reasonableness, candor. The crimes committed in the Rajk frame-ups—and the others, if there were others—were not committed by Socialism. They were committed against Socialism. Frame-ups are a necessity to political reaction; they are the antithesis of Socialist justice. But these acts were committed in responsible countries, and certainly with the agreement, deluded or otherwise, of leaders who have the Socialist obligation of explaining the process of such a tragedy, and the social means by which such injustice can be prevented from happening again.

It is not a matter here of putting Socialism or the Socialist states on trial. This is an absurdity which history itself mocks. For in practice, the first Socialist state gave of its blood, its tears, its endless sacrifices so that mankind would not live under Hitler's heel. This state sought to prevent—and it could have been prevented—World War II through its appeal for a collective front with the USA and Britain against the Nazis before 1939. The Soviet Union held back the fires of war which threatened the world throughout the Cold War decade. It is the state which at this hour stands as a tireless protagonist of the peaceful coexistence of capitalist and socialist systems, and the abolition of atomic war. What is involved here is a clearer view of the first stage in the development of Socialism, the "encirclement stage" of a single Socialist country, so that Marxian Socialism can go forward.

For this we need more light on the situation faced by the Sovier leaders during the years when, according to their indictment, there was a

limiting of full Marxist leadership. Was it a choice of facing a split party and a disrupted country, certain to be conquered by the looming aggressor, or acquiescing until a more favorable historic relation of forces should arrive? We will know more as the facts are made available.

ONE watches the curious dismay of certain critics of Socialism now that their criticisms have been accepted as true in part. A self-criticizing Socialism is even more formidable in their eyes than a Socialism which—as the 20th Congress noted—had become rigid and had begun to brake its own advance. They are right in their disquiet. For their instinct tells them that Socialist policy is undergoing a painful self-exposure of shortcomings and injustices just as Marxism has achieved a historic turning-point enormously favorable to itself and to humanity. What are the elements of this turning-point which represent a triumph of Socialist theory and practice?

The Socialist leadership of the Soviet Union has achieved the most rapid industrialization in history. The modernization of Soviet socialist society now proceeds on the basis of a mastery of atomic technology not only equal to, but admittedly superior in certain respects to the best in other countries.

With the victory over Hitler, with the triumph of the Chinese Revolution, and the emergence of India and the colonial peoples into the center of world politics, the scale has definitely been tipped in favor of coexistence, freedom and Socialism.

The Marxist parties are mass parties in France and Italy. No bribery, threat or deceit has been able to shake them from this position. Perhaps the most disconcerting development of all for reaction has been its inability to use atomic war as a means of curbing either the peoples of Western Europe, the colonial millions, or the peoples of the Socialist states.

With this, the men of monopoly property face a new situation. Among them some still stake their destiny on the "final overthrow," on atomic suicide. But the new quality which has entered history makes itself felt against them. The people are consciously affecting the course of history as never before. Marxian Socialism, having weathered the mightiest storms during the first half of the century, is now moving forward from this initial stage of its advance in the twentieth century.

New relationships are arising among Marxist parties as these parties become more deeply rooted within the national tradition, and as they move to make themselves the defender and leader of the nation. Marxism, ever the enemy of fixed ideas, dogma, or ritual, turns its clear eyes on the new social facts, and comes up with new propositions.

Proposition one: war is no longer inevitable even though war-seeking imperialism still exists. Thus, Lenin's proposition of inevitable war based on the world of the first decades of the century is no longer true in the sense that he expressed it. The advance of Socialism and its allied forces has changed it.

Proposition two: it is no longer true—in fact, it never was an absolute of Marxism—that the working class faces an inevitable civil war for Socialism, or that it must create a new governmental form. It is now true that a future peaceful transition to Socialism is possible. It even becomes more probable as the scale tips toward peace and democratic freedom. Parliaments or Congresses can be transformed by the working class-led majority into expressions of popular will. Naturally, this requires big social changes, and the rise of new political alliances among the progressive forces in the country.

This view assumes that there will develop a preponderance of the popular forces pressing for economic and social change. It assumes that the banks and industrial power can be compelled, under such historic conditions, to accept of necessity the process of democratic change. Disruption of the democratic process of change will be on the heads of those in power who oppose it. American Marxism now challenges Big Capital to declare through its spokesmen that it is ready to abide by any democratic national decision for Socialism, or for changes leading to it. (See speeches by John Gates and Eugene Dennis, New York City, January 20, 1956.)

It seems to me that the defense of the rights of Constitutional social change—with all the implications of a free clash of ideas based on reason and evidence—brings American liberalism and American Marxism into a closer solidarity than has been the case for some time. The disagreements between liberalism and Marxism remain, of course. They need to be fought out on the level of thought in the every-day forums of daily practical life as well as in debate. In our opinion, the Marxian analysis of society, of classes and of the nature of historic change, is confirmed by the test of experience. But liberalism and Marxism have a common

enemy in the forces of irrationalism, anti-scientific bigotry, and the formidable assault which has been mounted against rationalistic humanism in recent years. Marxism and liberalism believe in human progress; their enemies do not.

Liberalism would stultify itself were it to conclude that the self-criticism of Marxian Socialism now makes that working class science outmoded or morally suspect. Liberalism could not have achieved socialism in the first place, or produced the enormous achievements from which the Soviet Union now confidently views its past, present and future. On the other hand, it would seem that Marxian Socialists could better apply the classic Marxist credo of giving a more attentive ear to criticism even when it comes from those with a different philosophic basis. The problem of freedom can only get a fundamental solution on the basis of historical materialism; but this does not justify the "communist conceit" from which we have suffered when it came to giving ear to very earnest criticism, a good deal of which is now proved to have been highly relevant, even if it was not always couched in the best way.

The creative influence of Marxism is bound to grow after the present act of self-criticism; it is growing already in the very process. The realities of the United States will be illuminated by Marxism and Marxism in turn will be enriched by our American national experience. "Look homeward, angel!" There is so much to do.

SECOND THOUGHTS

On Politics and Culture

By CHARLES HUMBOLDT

A FREQUENT complaint voiced about political writing is that the author usually insists on reviewing the entire world picture before he can get to his own corner, however modest. Anyone commenting informally on the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party and subsequent developments stemming from it finds himself suffering from just the opposite defect. The perspectives are at once so vast and so intricate that the writer hardly knows where to begin and where to stop. If he cannot decide, he may, as I've done here, simply jump from one part of this brave world to another.

If we start with the achievements of socialism—for that is how Khrushchev's report begins—we are confronted with one enormous fact: the transformation, within thirty nine years, of that economic and social "experiment" into a world system can no longer be in dispute. The apologists of capitalism can no longer claim that its productive forces alone are geared to ending the servitude and satisfying the needs of the peoples whom it knows only to oppress. Meanwhile the accomplishments of socialism are being woven into the fabric of daily life of literally hundreds of millions. With enormous rapidity, it is being revealed to other millions as fully equipped to overtake and surpass the capitalist economic and social order. While a relatively few fear this outcome, the majority of the world's peoples look to this system with hope and exultation, for it promises to bring about the liberation of all mankind and the release of undreamt productive possibilities and almost inconceivable human creative forces.

NEVERTHELESS, it would be shamefully complacent of us to make opportunistic use of these decisive considerations in order to turn aside from the disquieting revelations which have clouded over the brilliant landscape of hope. We have never, and do not now, accept the

jesuitical and vulgar-pragmatic interpretation of the concept that the end justifies the means. To say that we repudiate all non-human morality and that heeding Lenin's phrase, we shall use the best means we know to "help human society rise to a higher level,"* is very far from condoning injustice at any time and for whatever reason.

A word of caution. Since the leading personalities who shared roles in the happenings which are now coming to light (through their own revelation of them) have not yet described in detail their reasons for behaving as they did, the enemies of socialism are raising a rancorous clamor for immediate clarification. Such "honest" anger is pure hypocrisy. Those who have always kept their cautious mouths shut at legal murders committed under their noses, and those who were accomplices in the murders, have not earned the right to demand explanations of anyone.

BUT some friends, too, have allowed themselves to be swept away by speculations and rumors, from the probable to the most fantastic. They do not want to be calm; they want explanations not only of facts which have been given them but for matters which are still withheld. That the circumstances under which the terrible events took place must be projected by those who took part in them is not in question. Otherwise, self-criticism would be meaningless, an admitting shrug of the shoulders before one passes on to other business.

Every answer, even the best possible or most plausible, which we may give to questions concerning what happened in the Soviet Union, Hungary, or wherever else, is vitiated by its being based on utterly insufficient knowledge. Therefore, even the most earnest and hard-thought-out reasoning on these matters must have a taint of presumption just as the most impatient questioner must have a touch of the dilettante no matter how earnest the query and how well-meant the answer. What can be said of and by the Left in the United States is another thing. But this much should be noted at once. The discussions now taking place in the pages of the *Daily Worker* answer those who stated, both *a priori* and after the appearance of the freeest correspondence there, that the Left intended to suppress any expression of opinions which might shake its solidarity. For all these expressions of the most divergent points of view, alternations of confusion and confidence, bewilderment and cool-

* *Speech delivered at the Third All-Russian Congress of the Young Communist League, Oct.* 2, 1920.

headedness, depths of disillusion and attempts to come to grips with the complex realities that face all of us, all these letters and editorials prove that the leadership of the Left does not shudder at the voices of people, even when they rise to a shout.

NOW, does the sheer weight of the evidence still to come deprive us of the faculty of having any ideas about what has already transpired? I think not. We do know that many innocent people, both ordinary devoted individuals who never wavered in their loyalty to the working class as well as men of long service to the revolutionary movement, were humbled, silenced, imprisoned, their usefulness hampered and destroyed. A smaller, but not small number were physically annihilated. Some of these, like Rajk, were apparently forced or induced to conspire in their own murder. The crimes against the Jewish people have horrified us all. Naturally, everyone is asking: how did this come about? To say that we do not know is not to avoid the query that nags at us, too. The desire for an answer cannot be stifled, and therefore the accounting must come from those who are best able to give it. It must come for the sake of the moral prestige of the only movement in the world which has as its aim the liberation of all mankind.

The cry for such an accounting is not just a concoction of the enemies of socialism. It is the wish of those who yearn for the advent of socialism. It must be satisfied, for otherwise millions will be tugged at by doubts that will cast shadows even over the greatest achievements of socialism in the coming years. To dispel these doubts therefore becomes as urgent a task in the realm of human values as the fulfillment of a great economic plan would be in the sphere of production.

For it is not true that the nature of the productive relationships takes care of everything. If that were so, the founders of scientific socialism would have given themselves carte blanche for the making of blueprints of the future. We fight for socialism not because it automatically guarantees, let us say, the virtual disappearance of crime, but because it provides the conditions without which crime cannot be abolished. Many of us naively used to discount the possibility of juvenile delinquency or mental disturbance, other than of gross physical origin, in the Soviet Union. We were sure that the definitive defeat of capitalism there had put an end to such phenomena. We know better now. But we have not yet learned the deeper lesson: that even under socialism

unceasing self-examination, that is, ethical as well as organizational vigilance, is a sine qua non of political integrity and unity.

Oh, some friends will say, you are subordinating the basic political reason for what has happened, namely the "cult of the individual," to subjective considerations; you are "psychologizing." In other words, you are superficial.

NOW, first of all, the evaluation of subjective forces is not itself subjective. It is a standard procedure in science. In medicine, for example, if we did not take into account the elimination of the symptoms of angina pectoris by the administration of placebos (a thirty-five percent record), we would still believe that this dreaded syndrome was a disease entity and not a sensation stemming from some seventy odd physical causes and some psychic ones.

Secondly, it is no argument against one explanation of a fact to say that it is not "basic," that because there are deeper, more fundamental reasons for a given phenomenon, any tentative reason lacking the force of a final settlement has no validity. The science of biology is not discredited because it is dependent upon the science of chemistry, and this in turn upon the science of physics. Nor is the fact that psychology is rooted in physiology as well as in the social structure (and therefore in the mode of production) deprive it of its right to exist as a distinct field of inquiry.

The cult of the individual cannot be divorced from those who were responsible for its creation, nor from those who condoned it. This is a truism, but it seems to need repetition for those who believe that we are "simplifying the issue." We can only answer that simplifying an issue is better than avoiding it. Are we then to ignore the organizational background and, the objective circumstances (capitalist encirclement, treason within, fascist aggression, imperialist plotting) under which the cult arose? Of course not. But there are some who, having posed the problem in this fundamental way (and I do not, of course, use the word, fundamental, ironically), seem to have exhausted their powers of analysis; secondary causes make them uneasy. And so they reason in a circle: the practice of the cult of the individual, in all its monstrous ramifications, is accounted for by—the cult of the individual! This is not to say that the cult of the individual has not come to be a theoretical issue. The striking phrase, long hidden away in the store of Marx' almost casual prophetic

insights, has become an unfortunately unforgettable chapter of history, demanding the same serious study as its opposite, the theory of collective leadership.

One cannot account for what has been revealed to us in the past few weeks if one views the cult of the individual as a fixed cause. It is a framework which had to be built, and within which the emergence of repugnant negative personal traits could be nurtured. It was also a veil hindering the perception of obvious wrongs. If such a state of affairs were not altered, there would be no action so inexplicable that a rationalization could not be found for it, no crime which the awe of persons could not help to explain away. It would be presumptuous at this moment to fill in the present picture with one's fantasies; we are not obliged to create an imaginary drama if others are in a position and disposed to raise the curtain on the real one for us. But this much can be said:

For some years since the death of Lenin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, as well as other Communist Parties, have tended to see political theory and action too narrowly, ignoring the truth contained in the maxim of Gottfried Keller, the 19th century Swiss novelist and champion of democracy and of realism in art: "Everything is politics." Apart from other connotations, does this not mean that we cannot, in our political thinking, ignore even the most complex aspects of human behavior or the examination of motives as well as their social consequences? That we can never tire of delving to the roots of men's actions, and that we must be prepared for anything? It was not just because he had seen his father's ghost that Hamlet said:

> There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
> Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.

The apparent neglect of the element of character in all its ramifications in Soviet political thinking has been very costly. In contrast, the Chinese Communist Party has in its writing and practice devoted careful attention to human behavior and its motivation. Therefore it has been most successful in applying Communist morality, a political morality, to the achievement and consolidation of freedom. The writings of Mao Tse-tung and Liu Shao-chi are witness to this unremitting concern for ethical integrity in others and in oneself. How moving is Mao's quote of Lu Hsun, reminding men of the need to "bow your head willingly and work like an ox for the youth"!

SOME people compare this ardor for social and private virtue to the self-abasement and fanaticism of the old saints. (Many such critics have been known to join the hue and cry for a spiritual revival until it pleases them to accuse the Communists of turning Marxism into a religion.)

Now, whether such an opinion is delivered with malice or in good will, it must be said that Marxism can never be a religion nor a philosophy of abstract self-abasement. Its aim is not personal salvation through divining and obedience to the will of God. Its morality is entirely human, having as its aim the liberation and happiness of all men. It is not ascetic either, for it holds that the satisfaction of material and cultural needs is indispensable to the accomplishment of that aim. Why have the Chinese studied so intensely the countless devices which enable men to avoid responsibility, justify arrogance and intolerance, give rein to the desire to punish others, be virtuously inflexible in the face of situations that require pliancy and understanding, use righteousness to disguise their contempt for those who are weaker than themselves, in short, to all the abuses of office? Because only through the vigilant uprooting of old, insolent habits —the heritage of the pre-revolutionary bureaucracy—combined with the inculcation of democratic discipline, were the Chinese leaders able to arouse the creative enthusiasm of their more than half a billion people for the incredibly swift building of a new society.

WHAT—since this is, among other things, a cultural magazine—has all this to do with culture here in the United States? A great deal. I expect at this moment to take note of only the smallest part of it. The dissatisfaction which many workers in the arts and sciences have felt with the premises and practice of the Left cultural movement did not arise from recent hints at a re-evaluation in the Soviet Union with respect to many negative features in this field. (Just as the readers of the *Daily Worker* did not wait for a rallying call to open discussion, in order to send letters expressing the most diverse points of view.)

It must be admitted, however, that during the entire period during which the events occurred which were the subject of discussion at the Twentieth Congress, much of the discontent stemmed from the conviction that the Left had made itself harmfully dependent upon the pronouncements and positions taken on aesthetic questions by Soviet thinkers, writers and artists. Instead of courage in thinking, we began to ob-

serve the dreary spectacle of certain intellectuals carrying over their arms the ideological handouts of others, like old clothes to be brought home for refitting. Worse yet, our critics often descended to praising works they did not care for.

Was this slavishness? No, that supposes an absolute lack of principle. What actually happened was that the critic felt he had, for the time being, to put aside a lesser principle in consideration of an imaginary greater one. Thus, the need to make objective judgments became subordinated to the attempt to sponsor "healthy trends." Since the reader or spectator had, however, first to read the poor book or look at the untalented picture before discerning the "healthy" direction in which it was supposed to point, the critic succeeded only in arousing distrust in his judgment and suspicion of his honesty.

That all this was done in good conscience did not improve matters. Worse, it bred cynicism toward any principled criticism whatsoever, so that now one constantly meets people who tell one: "All I ask for is to enjoy myself. I don't want to be bothered analyzing that book (or play, or painting, or concerto)." We have become thankful for anything that warms the cockles of the heart, even if it is a graceful defense of the status quo or what a friend wittily calls "a masterpiece of irrelevant realism." Any dried out old piece of horsemeat passes for sirloin: a tenth rate musical for Mozart, the clowns of art for Velasquez or Cezanne, the case of Bridey Murphy for the work of Kepler.

AN EXAMPLE of our theoretical trailing was the uncritical way in which we employed the term "socialist realism." We reached such a state of calcification on this question—which requires the most careful, and sympathetic re-examination—that an author, sitting down to write a satirical novel might actually doubt that he had the right to begin; was it really a socialist realist venture he was embarking upon, and, if not, should he continue? And because of the lack of discussion of this valuable concept, no one could even suggest a common-sense answer: if the theory could not embrace a form like satire, then it was not worth its weight in feathers.

What might be called a side effect of our disquiet in the face of native thoughts was the creeping advance of an official style. Usually, the writer—and few of us are guiltless—would mimic a poor translation of some Soviet document, giving the effect of a hippopotamus charging

through a pool of molasses. Often, too, there ran through our pages a current of rudeness and abuse unworthy of intellectual discussion. All sorts of bad motives were attributed to our opponents by ad hominem arguments lacking in proof.

Most serious, though, was the slow silencing by implied censure or neglect, of many talented artists, and indifference toward any critical efforts to encourage them to continue working under the heavy stresses of economic insecurity, lack of recognition and political terror. For lack of competence I shall not speak of scientific thinking, but here too we can recall instances where only one of two positions—neither of which had been tested to the degree which true scientific method calls for—was given adequate outlet in our press. For this among other reasons, the publications of the Left have not, with few if splendid exceptions, reflected its intellectual potential, the high level of its thinking in the arts, in science, in philosophy. This is the picture we, all of us, must change.

Writers, and by implication, all artists, have been called "engineers of the human soul." But to move this soul, this mind, one must first know it. Art is, first of all, a form of knowledge. If political thinking is to encompass the baffling happenings of the recent past, it will do so with the aid of those sciences and arts which, each in its own way, probe the working of the mind. If they cannot perform this function, then they do not reflect reality, and these glittering toys are useless. But no Marxist believes this.

We have in the past criticized certain writers for viewing revolutionary thought as somehow subordinate to their own humanist vision. The Maltz case is an example. We were right then, but only in small part. Had we permitted our political life enough latitude to embrace humanism, instead of attacking it for having limits springing from its class origins, we could have shown that Marxism, the continuer of humanism, provides a much broader view of the world and of man. We would have known better how to advance that great tradition, of which socialism and, finally, communist society is the realization. If we find the way to show the American people that our conception of the future is linked to the liberators and decisive moments of our common history, the lessons of the past few weeks will not have been lost.

Escape

By THOMAS McGRATH

Hunting in the dark my father found me,
My mother claimed me, and led me into light
From my nine-month winter. In the herds of Right,
Branded and bawling, the christeners bound me.
God given, church shriven, hell washed away,
Adam purged, heaven urged, the dog would have his day.

Hell all about me with its infantry
Storming the fortress of my crying years
Could not get my notice. They had stopped my ears
With chrism of love in my infancy.
World poor, world pure, I kept my head level,
Unproud, but uncowed, shaming the devil.

And thus betrayed I fell into a world
Where love lives only in another name.
At eleven or twelve, when the kidnappers came,
I took the poisoned candy and off we whirled.
Innocence, nonsense, the seven priestly lies
Surrounded me, when, hands bound, I opened my eyes

Onto the bloody barnyard of my youth
Where the stuck pig wetly squealed against the wall,
And fell on the stone crop. False, rich, tall,
The elders judged me. The stone edge of truth,
Flint-sharp, heartless, stabbed my begging knee—
Harmed me but armed me: I cut my hands free.

Lola Gregg

A Story by Howard Fast

We are pleased to publish a chapter from Howard Fast's forthcoming novel, The Story of Lola Gregg. *The protagonist is the wife of a progressive who is being hunted by the FBI. The following is the recapitulation of an incident from her childhood in the form of a school paper which she wrote at the time. The novel will be published by the Blue Heron Press.*—The Editors.

This is a composition of something about myself, and also an interesting event. My name is Lola Fremont. I am twelve years old and live in Hagertown, New Jersey, where I was born in the year 1918. We are Presbyterians, but my mother was a Methodist before she married my father who was a Presbyterian. Our teacher suggested information about ourselves and some description of a general nature before the description of an interesting event.

I will try. I have two brothers. Robert is 14 years old. Thomas is only 9 years old. My father is Dr. Max Fremont, who almost everybody in the town of Hagertown knows about, and some people say that I resemble him but I think that I look more like my mother, Sarah Fremont. It is interesting to have a father that everybody knows about and almost everybody likes, but not everybody. There are some people who do not like my father for the things he thinks, but he says that he will think what he pleases, otherwise a man could better be dead.

There are some people who say that he is an atheist, which is a person that does not at all believe in God; but that is only because he does not go to church. He says that with the sun in the blue heavens, it is a sin for a man to lead his soul into a dry and musty church. He says that as for God, if there is one he will take care of things well enough without the assistance of pious-hypocrites who live in Hagertown, but my mother gets very angry when he says this. She believes in God very

truly. Robert and Thomas and I are allowed to make up our own minds. I have not really decided yet.

But most people in Hagertown like Doc Fremont and they say he is a little eccentric but a good doctor. Hagertown is a small town with a population of 1654 people and is steadily increasing. Its principal industry is the canning factory for tomatoes mostly and catsup. It also has a First National Bank and a new Post Office. I think that even if I was not born in Hagertown, I would rather live there than anywhere else.

We live in the white house on the corner of Elm Street and Union Avenue and the house looks bigger than it is because a wing of the house is Dr. Fremont's clinic and examining room. He says that the situation in Hagertown is no better than anywhere else in America as far as medicine is concerned, because they just let things happen, and if a town has a good doctor it is a lucky town or it can have a bad doctor or no doctor at all. I think Hagertown is a lucky town.

I have tried to put down some description of a general nature, because the interesting event has to do with Dr. Fremont and the canning factory and Hagertown. I think this is not strange because I am a doctor's daughter, and last week, when Mrs. Bently, my father's nurse, had to go to Patterson to nurse her sick mother my father asked me how would I like to come in afternoons when school was over and be his nurse. Of course, he didn't want me to be a real nurse, but just to answer the telephone when he was inside with a patient and to tell the people in the waiting room who was next.

I guess that I have wanted to be a real nurse since I thought about what I want to be and sometimes Mrs. Bently lets me help her so I knew what to do and my father teaches me first aid too, because he says I am the only one in the house with enough stomach to see blood without going faint.

The interesting event which I have chosen as the subject of my composition happened at four o'clock in the afternoon, the third day after Mrs. Bently had left to nurse her mother in Patterson. I was sitting at Mrs. Bently's desk wearing a white middyblouse, because that is the only thing I have that looks a little like a nurse's uniform and there were two patients left in the waiting room, one of them old Mrs. Garrison who has arthritis very severely and the other Sam Franklin on the high school football team, who sprained his wrist. I was reading my geography and doing my homework.

Then three men from the cannery burst into the waiting room in a great hurry. I guess it is not right to say that they burst in, because one of them was sick and the other two were helping him to walk but they did seem to burst in, even the man who was hurt so badly. That man had a face as white as flour. His face was so white that the whiskers stood out in a funny way against it. His hand was wrapped in a lot of rags and all the rags were soaked in blood but could not hold the blood which began to drip through the rags onto the oilcloth floor of the waiting room.

I guess I will never think of Sam Franklin or any of the boys on the football team as heroes anymore, because as soon as he saw all the blood and the pain expressed on the poor man's face, Sam turned green and ran right out of the waiting room. I don't mean that he really turned green, but that was the way it seemed. Old Mrs. Garrison just sat there as if she was frozen.

One of the men from the cannery said, "Where is the doctor? Is he in, little girl?" I ran into my father's office, where he was working on a urine test for Mrs. Garrison. I wouldn't use that word, but I asked my father today, and he said it was all right to use it in a medical sense, otherwise the people who read my composition would think that he was sitting in his office and contemplating his navel, something he never has a chance to do, although he says he would like to do it once in a while just for a change.

him about the man in the waiting room. Well, he didn't waste any time but opened the door and had them bring the man right in to his operating room. It isn't a real operating room, but because the nearest hospital is forty-five miles away, he sometimes has to use it. By now the man who was hurt was sobbing with pain and tears were running down his cheeks and the other two men did not look very good, but one of them said to me that I was a little girl and should go out. My father said never mind about me being a little girl, and he said to me to go and wash my hands like he had showed me how to do. It is not just washing your hands like you do every day before supper, but a special way a doctor washes them with special soap a doctor has.

While I was washing my hands, my father had the man lie down on the operating table and he cut off his shirtsleeve and took away the bandages, and then the man began to cry and it was the first time I ever heard a grown up man cry like that and I was really frightened and

then the man began to say, while he was crying, just like a little boy, "Am I going to lose my hand, doc? Are you going to cut it off, doc?" My father said that he wouldn't lose anything except blood and that had been lost already because no one had brains to put a tourniquet on his arm. My father has a wonderful way of talking to people so they think everything is all right even when it isn't all right, and all the time he talked he worked and he works so fast you don't even know that what he's doing is being done.

He put a tourniquet of rubber tubing above the man's wrist and another on his hand and he said to me at the same time, what on earth was keeping me and how long did it take me to wash my hands. I told him I was all washed, and he said to me, "Sterile syringe. Tablet quarter grain morphine, atropine sulphate, dissolve in 1 cc of sterile water."

This meant that he wanted me to take a pill, I guess it's better to call it a tablet, of morphine and atropine and dissolve it in a cubic centimeter of boiled water and load a hypodermic needle with it, and I was able to do this exactly as he told me to because he had showed me how and I had done it before. Then I had to look at the cut when I handed him the hypodermic and for a moment I thought the same thing would happen to me as happened to Sam Franklin, but my father spoke to me right away, very sharp the way he speaks when he wants something done and when he speaks that way everyone in town listens to him, even Selly Guhrman, the Mayor who my father said is something we endure the same way we do measles. My father said, "Lola, bandages and peroxide right away. Don't ogle." Then I held the pan while he washed out the wound. I guess maybe he would have wanted one of the men to hold it, but their hands were shaking and mine weren't, at least not as much. Then I watched him bandage, because he always said that dressing is an art within an art and some doctors not only can't dress but wouldn't recognize art if they saw it in a glass of water when they were dying of thirst.

Then the hurt man who all the time was moaning and crying fainted and my father said to the others that he had gone into shock and that they would have to take him right to the hospital because as much of a rotten shame as it was, the hand would have to come off. He told me to get blankets and I took them from where he keeps them in his office closet, and then they wrapped the man in blankets and carried him out to my father's car. My father said to me, "Lola, hold the fort until I come back.

No more patients today unless they're bleeding to death, and if they are I guess you can take care of it as well as I can."

So I went back to the office and told Mrs. Garrison that she would have to go home and come back tomorrow. She kept trying to talk to me about the man from the cannery, but I told her that Dr. Fremont does not allow me to talk about his patients. This is a sort of fib, or I would have no right to write this composition, but I just couldn't stand the thought that Mrs. Garrison would want to talk to me and ask all the things that went on in the office. Finally, she went home but she was very provoked at me and said that she would have to tell Dr. Fremont that I was insolent.

I sat at the desk and did the rest of my homework and then read some of *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come* but my father did not come back until eight o'clock. At six o'clock, my mother came in and said I had to eat supper, but I told her that the doctor told me I must remain here until he came back and at last she said, all right if I was going to be as stubborn and foolish as my father, she would bring me a sandwich and a glass of hot milk to drink in the office. Then my brother Robert came in and said why didn't I stop trying to show off and be grown up when I was just a kid and everybody knew I wasn't a nurse and couldn't be a nurse for anyone. I told him to go away and stop bothering me, and then when he did go away, I began to cry and cried for almost half an hour.

When my father came in, he grinned at me and said, "Well, my own Florence Nightingale, has the citizenry been well or ill since I left?"

I told him that no one called except Mrs. Schwartz who said that her little boy was croupy and she was very upset, so I told her to give him ipicac and steam him and that Dr. Fremont would call her when he got back, and she thanked me and that she must have thought that I was the nurse.

"So you were," my father said, "and why no smiles, no glad hellos?" I said that I didn't know, but it was just the way I felt, and my father said yes, he understood the way I felt. Then he took off his hat and coat, and when I asked him did he want me to tell mother he was home for supper, he said that would be in good time, but first he wanted to talk to me and first he wanted to kiss me. He took me in his arms so hard it hurt, and then he wiped his eyes and told me sternly to sit down and we would get a few things plain.

Then he said what a rotten thing had happened to that poor man and how they had to amputate his hand at the hospital, and how if he came out of it all right, which was touch and go because of all the blood he had lost, he would never be able to work in the plant again. He told me that even if he sued the company, they would get big lawyers and the poor man would be lucky to get a hundred dollars out of it. "So you see, Lola," he said to me, "a doctor can only bandage and stop the bleeding. He can't cure the disease." Then I asked him what the disease was, and he said God knows but doesn't even tell preachers, and maybe it was the selfishness of the canning company that would not shell out a few dollars for safety measures or maybe it was the way things always were and always would be.

I said to him that even if things always were one way, I didn't see why they always had to be that way, and he looked at me in a funny way and said, "Lola, if a man like me can produce something like you, then God only knows but what you may be right." I asked him what he meant by saying that, but he said, no, it took a little time to grow up.

So I think that this is a good place to end my composition about an interesting event that happened to me.

Hendrick Glintenkamp 1887-1946

MY FRIEND, Hendrick Glintenkamp, painter, wood engraver, author and teacher, belonged to that company of artists which made each issue of the old *Masses* an artistic event. The group included Bob Minor, Art Young, Boardman Robinson, John Sloan and George Bellows, to mention only those who have passed away.

When in 1917 President Wilson joined World War I "to make the world safe for democracy," Bellows was the only one to go along with him. *The Masses* stood for peace and was suppressed. A drawing by Art Young and another by Hendrick Glintenkamp were cited among the reasons for the suppression. Glintenkamp's drawing was of Death measuring a conscripted youth for the coffin.

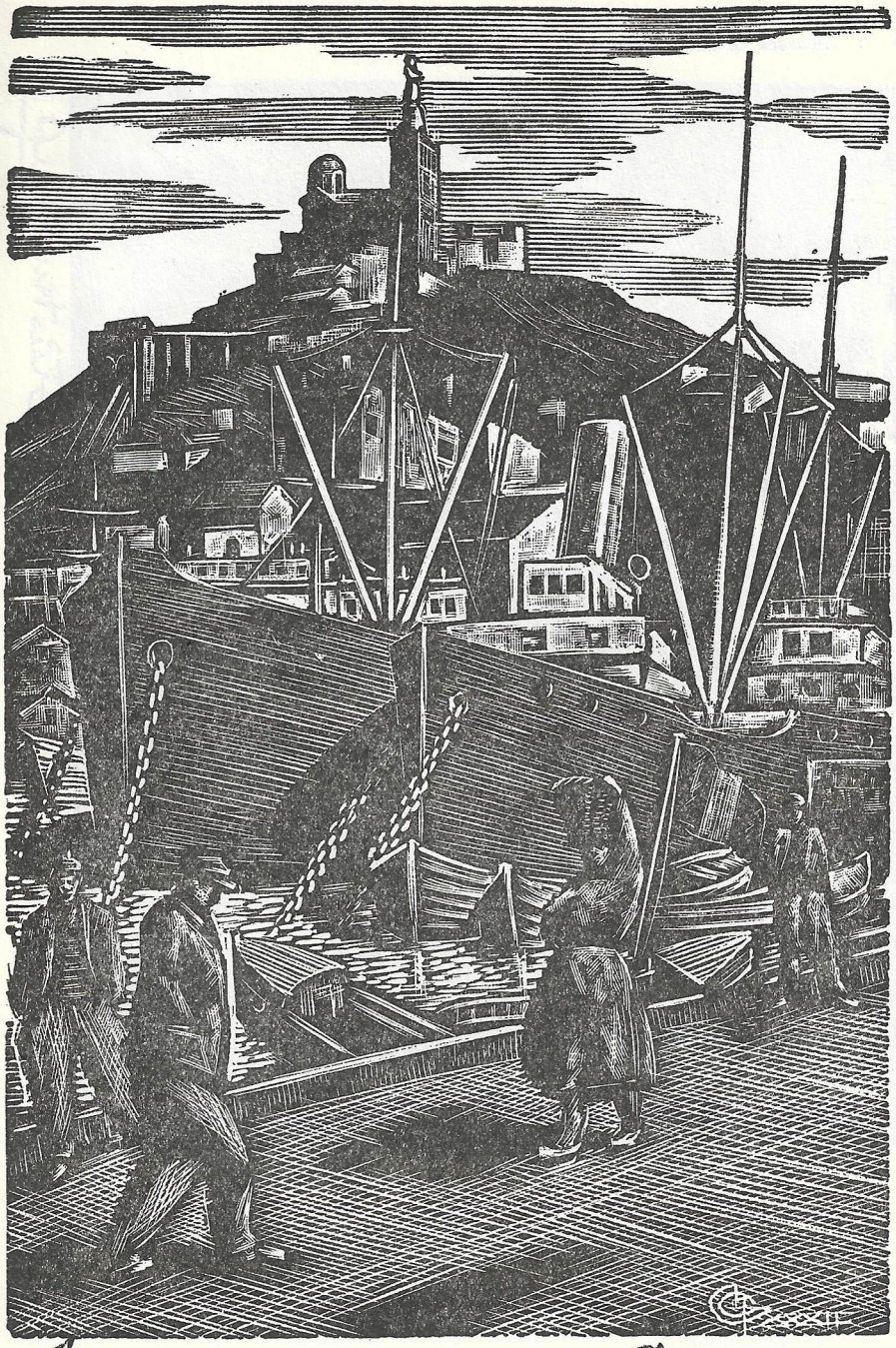
A teacher at the progressive American Artists School, active in the Artists Union during the struggles of the Thirties, a president of the American Artists Congress, able and energetic Hendrick Glintenkamp was busy wherever he felt that the welfare of his cultural co-workers and of the American people called for his efforts.

Though his works are in the Metropolitan Museum, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Victorial and Albert Museum in London, and have been exhibited throughout this country and Europe, and though he had a book published on his travels, written and illustrated by himself, this lusty painter and sensitive master of the wood engraver's art never had a one-man show. The first exhibition of his paintings and woodcuts will be held in May 11-18 at the Art of Today Gallery at the Great Northern Hotel in New York, sponsored by his fellow artists as a tribute to his memory ten years after his death.

I am grateful to have known him, and glad that *Masses and Mainstream* keeps his memory green by the publication of the few examples of his work which appear on the following pages.

HUGO GELLERT

FOUR DRAWINGS ▶



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ROBINSON CRUSOE
And His Socialist Successors

By ANNETTE RUBINSTEIN

THE USE of topical material in a novel—events of current importance or even achievements of genuine contemporary significance—will often serve to give it an immediate interest and apparent vitality. These are, alas, more evanescent than the interest in a good journalistic treatment of the same subject matter. But such reflection of the surface phenomena of an age should not be confused with a writer's attempt to express its central forces and conflicts, whether this expression is developed through the use of a story culled from the day's headlines, or through one seemingly far removed from its problems.

And unless we are willing to wait a year or two or, perhaps, ten, before evaluating our contemporaries it is often as difficult for the critic as it was for the novelist to avoid confounding timeliness with significance and urgency with profundity. Yet the attempt to guard against such over-estimation may also lead us to ignore elements of essential and durable meaning in a work which approaches its fundamental theme through some compelling immediate interest.

IF WE go back almost two and a half centuries to the first English novel we find that its author evidently thought he had written *Robinson Crusoe* merely to take advantage of the widespread interest in Alexander Selkirk's report of his years on an otherwise uninhabited island. In fact, Defoe was so far from understanding his own achievement that he hotly and dishonestly defended the book's factual accuracy against all critical aspersions.

When this position finally became altogether untenable he shifted his ground to claim that it had been intended as a detailed allegory of his own adventurous life in London. He supported this assertion with an ingenious and implausible analysis wherein one shipwreck represented a

bankruptcy, another an arrest and each of the other fictional incidents found a similarly specific factual analogue.

But far off the mark as this apology may be, it is not nearly so far off as those critical appreciations which account for *Robinson Crusoe's* singular durability by "the timeless spirit of escape in man" or "the eternal boy who lives in the oldest of us," and class it as an adventure story with *Treasure Island* and *The Three Musketeers.*

For in a sense which Defoe did not claim, *Robinson Crusoe* does tell the essential truth about his life; and its durable greatness can be fully understood only if we realize how fundamental this truth was to the life of his time, how profoundly it expressed the progressive core of the entire bourgeois revolution.

This was simply the enormous advance which that revolution made possible in man's conquest of nature, with the practical, materialistic, scientific view of the universe that such conquest entailed and fostered. These were the concomitant development of human independence and individual initiative.

Although over one-third of the book deals with Crusoe's adventures before and after his long solitary sojourn on the island, we persistently and correctly forget the earlier shipwrecks, capture by pirates, slavery and escape, and even the later battles on the island with savages, Spaniards and mutineers, as well as the final return home enlivened by the attacks of bears and highwaymen.

As unerringly as Defoe's own, our imaginations fasten on the real meaning of his fable—his class' leadership in man's great struggle to conquer and use nature.

ROBINSON CRUSOE, like his author, perfectly represents the historic achievement of his class although, again like his author, he is far from being simply an average member of that class. He is rather, in the Hungarian critic Lukacs' sense of the word, a perfectly *typical* representative, embodying the inexhaustible vitality, the elasticity of spirit, the intelligent curiosity about the world, the self-disciplined ability to work for a far-off material objective, and the capacity to act experimentally and selectively, learning from each success or failure, which were the characteristic virtues of that class at its most effective.

These were never, of course, either exclusively or universally bourgeois virtues. We must not forget that it was against the urging of his

middle-class parents that Crusoe set out on the voyage which forced him to come physically to grips with nature, and finally enabled him to create his own fruitful estate in the wilderness. But they *were* typically bourgeois virtues at the beginning of the 18th Century, when middle-class man still had a future before him, and could afford to face the reality he had to know in order to master it. And it is this central truth which gives much of its greatness to Defoe's simple myth of the first post-revolutionary capitalist era.

The world he created is no less true to the reality of his time than is its hero. Those who speak of the book as an adventure story often refer to Crusoe's being cast away "naked on a desert island." The central fact of the book is that it is not a desert island at all, but a fair sampling of the actual world, boasting considerable natural resources, a large number of wild but domesticable animals, and even a potentially useful native population.

Furthermore, Crusoe is not cast away "naked", but is comparatively well provided with the tools of civilization, not only in terms of education, ingenuity, skill and living standards, but also in the more literal form of hatchets, saws, crowbars, nails, spikes, canvas, seeds, guns, and so forth.

This is not, in the ordinary sense, an adventure story at all. We do not ask at each step, "What happened to him next?", but rather, "What did he do next?" The emphasis is not on wonderful and terrible events, but on resourceful and effective activity. The initiative comes from man throughout. Nature is raw material to be shaped, not a god to be propitiated or worshipped. Sometimes very stubborn and difficult, it is never purposeful or malicious and it can therefore be mastered and used by any intelligent, observant, energetic, self-reliant, prudent man who has a reasonable share of good luck—including the good fortune of a small capital to start with.

And when, after twenty-eight years on the island, Crusoe is finally enabled to return home, we are all, including our hero and his creator, far more interested in what he has done to the world than in what it has done to him. He spends less than a hundred words to summarize the state of family and friends on his return to Yorkshire, but describes in detail the prosperous condition of the island as he leaves it. A short paragraph suffices to announce his parents' death, his brothers' and sisters' fortunes, and even his virtual disinheritance, whereas the better part of a chapter is taken up with his careful instructions to the mutinous sea-

men whose pardon he has secured from the captain of the rescue ship, on condition of their remaining on the island to cultivate the plantation he had established there.

DESPITE the immediate and enduring success of *Robinson Crusoe,* no subsequent English novel used as its central theme man's conquest of nature to create a more abundant life. The wholesale expropriation of small farmers which attended the growth of scientific agriculture in England itself, the enslavement or extirpation of whole populations which accompanied the development of its colonial plantations, and above all the inconceivable human exploitation and destruction which characterized the building of Blake's "dark satanic mills", made it impossible for later bourgeois novelists to feel the triumph of man's continuing scientific and technological advance as Defoe had done.

Even in the United States serious writers were too sensitive to the tragic social contradictions involved in the opening of the West to celebrate wholeheartedly this domestication of a continent. Many novels of the frontier, like *Rolvaag's Giants in the Earth* do give some hint of Defoe's thrill at such heroic human achievement, but there is always a predominant tone of sadness at the terrible human cost. Hamlin Garland's *Main Travelled Roads,* perhaps the best of all these, makes explicit this sense of the cruelly unnecessary odds in the conflict. He concludes a story of a Union soldier's return to his homestead farm on the middle border: "His war with the South was over and his fight, his daily running fight with nature and against the injustice of his fellow-man was begun again."

Although the underpopulation of the United States and its sheer magnitude insured an immediate welcome to the machine, it is only rarely, as in parts of Mark Twain's *Connecticut Yankee,* that the novelists really exult in the power and freedom which machinery could afford mankind. For the most part the painful contradictions attending its use were all too apparent.

THE FIRST successor to Defoe's masterpiece, then, appeared in another tongue entirely when, in 1926, Gladkov's *Cement* heralded a new school of novels celebrating man's great struggle to conquer and use nature.

How many of these were originally published in the Soviet Union I do not know, but at least half a dozen interesting examples appeared

in English during the 30's, and perhaps twice as many more immediately after the war.

These writers were, of course, far more consciously aware of their theme than Defoe had been, and there were naturally many significant differences between their development of it and the method he had used. But before considering these we must first formulate some of the important attitudes which they shared with him.

We have already spoken of the practical, mattter-of-fact, unreverential way in which Defoe, unlike both earlier and later writers, treated nature. He never formulated his feeling of man's superiority as explicitly as did Katayev, for example, but he would certainly have found no reason to disagree with the Russian's statement in *Time Forward* (1933): *"The laws of nature . . . are inert and conservative. They are closed within themselves. They cannot emerge from their own confinement. But human genius is limitless."*

And Defoe would have been even more completely in sympathy with Azhayev, who says in *Far From Moscow* (1949):

> "An immense orange-colored moon rose across the Adun. It hung over the river and threw everything around into weird relief—the black silent hills, the sloping bank draped in figured shadows, and the bluish ice of the Adun, like a glimmering snow, stretching into the distance. 'Yes, it's good,' Beridze admitted. 'Fine landscape!' 'What's good in it?' Rogov demanded. 'It's probably been like this a million years.' . . .
>
> "His exclamation seemed to switch on an invisible rheostat. Lights flashed up momentarily—one string of lights along the bank, and another running down the ice track of the Adun. Bright and daring, they eclipsed the timid light of the moon and stars. Rogov turned his back on the river and looked down his construction line with a pleased face. . . . Life too stirred with the coming of the lights. Lorries could be heard honking on the river, a tractor by the bank began to clatter, and circular saws beyond the settlement struck up their piercing song."

We can hear in this the very accent of Crusoe's well-earned satisfaction:

> ". . . first, I had my little bower, as I called it, which I kept in repair; that is to say, I kept the hedge which circles it in constantly fitted up to its usual height, the ladder standing always in the inside.

I kept the trees, which at first were no more than my stakes but were now grown very firm and tall, . . . always so cut that they might spread and grow thick and wild and make the more agreeable shade. . . . Adjoining to this I had my enclosure for . . . goats. And as I had taken an inconceivable deal of pains to fence and enclose the ground, so I was uneasy to see it kept entire lest the goats should break through, so that I never left off till, with infinite labor, I had stuck the outside of the hedge so full of small stakes . . . that there was scarce room to put a hand through them, which afterwards when those stakes grew, as they all did in the next rainy season, made the enclosure . . . stronger than any wall."

The conclusion of this passage illustrates another distinctive way in which Defoe's values coincide with those of his Soviet successors. Crusoe ends the above reflections:

"This will testify for me that I was not idle and spared no pains to bring to pass whatever appeared necessary for my comfortable support. . . ."

THIS ATTITUDE toward work, and his unquestioning assumption, not of the virtue of strenuous effort in itself, but of the value of achieving the material security toward which it is directed, is highly characteristic of the entire group of socialist writers whom we are here considering as well.

The precision with which their values coincide with Defoe's appears even more clearly in two such parallel examples as these:

". . . I was full two and forty days making me a board for a long shelf, which I wanted in my cave; whereas two sawyers, with their tools and a saw-pit would have cut six of them out of the same tree in half a day."

"'What's this?,' Beridze asked Kotlyarevsky. 'Digging the foundation.' 'I know it's the foundation, the devil take you!' Beridze flared up. 'What's the idea of this barbarous toil? Why don't you do some preliminary blasting?' . . . 'Further! What's there to see further! . . . Further they're digging pits for oil storage, and also by hand. Thousands of cubic metres of earth by hand, eh? . . . And they are riveting metal tankage by hand too! I guessed as much as soon as I heard that din. They're doing everything here the way things were

done under Peter I, by human steam. Who gave you your engineer's diploma?' Beridze shouted in a towering rage."

THIS COMMON refusal to see hard work as good for its own or the soul's sake may impress us the more if we remember that figures as opposed as Tolstoy and Theodore Roosevelt both accepted the independent moral value of strenuous physical effort. And, of course, others as different from each other as Shelley and Thoreau would have found it absurd to consider expending such time and energy to improve the material conditions of life. But there is a significant divergence as well as an important agreement implicit in the two passages just quoted.

The complete individualism of Robinson Crusoe is fully expressed and, at the same time, rendered necessary and inoffensive, by the actual physical isolation Defoe has contrived for him. Defoe was well aware that men were often, in his competitive society, the most dangerous obstacles to their fellows' prosperity, but he reserved that knowledge for the theme of another novel, Moll Flanders.

In the expanding economy of his time it was still possible for him to see the bourgeois hero as dealing directly with things, and winning security and comfort from his exploitation of their potentialities, whereas it was already clearly necessary for his heroine to make the best bargain she could with the owners of things. (The likely limits of this bargain are admirably summarized by Moll Flanders herself in her well-known declaration: "I hold that no woman should allow herself to be taken for a mistress that hath the means to make herself a wife.")

But an essential element of the struggle against nature in the work of these Soviet writers is that it is waged, not by man, but by *men.* This creates certain difficulties, some of them still generally unresolved, as well as major new levels of interest, many already well realized, in their work.

AMONG THE FORMER, perhaps the most frequently felt inadequacy is that of the love interest. There have, of course, been many great literary works with no love story at all. More than half Shakespeare's plays, including eight or nine of the best ones, have none to speak of, and there is no whisper of any in *The Ancient Mariner* or *Moby Dick.*

But it is difficult to think of a realistic novel which does not, however half-heartedly, bow to the convention. Certainly there are few or no exceptions among the entire group of Soviet writers we are now consider-

ing. Yet almost none of them succeeds in giving a satisfactory account of their particular "boy gets girl" stories. The reader almost invariably feels that, instead of exploring the specific relationship in its new context, these novelists have too easily accepted a formula of romantic love, mechanically transforming the terms from "long eyelashes" to "work output." And even where this translation is skillfully achieved, the essential passion of the book is so concentrated on the central struggle that emotional involvement in the love story is comparatively trivial and superficial.

This has, of course, also been true in such a great novel as, for example, Dreiser's *Financier*. But although the clumsiness with which the love story is there handled is also unintentional, its comparative insignificance is a part of Dreiser's meaning. This is emphatically not the intention of the Soviet writers, who often give the love plot pride of place in the last pages of their books.

A somewhat similar weakness is the frequent use of a conventional villain, bent on sabotage rather than rape or mayhem. Although his presence is probably due to conscious didactic purpose rather than unconscious acceptance of a romantic stereotype, it also makes an effect of essential irrelevance. It is dwarfed beside the central conflict rather than absorbed in it, and rather irritatingly distracts us from it.

THIS CRITICISM of the use of an inadequately realized evil protagonist in *Far From Moscow* and almost all the other novels in the group it represents, is not a criticism of their general treatment of the human obstacles to be faced and overcome in the course of constructing a cement factory, a collective farm, or an oil pipeline. Human nature is often an important part of the nature to be changed, and many of the most successful portrayals are those of figures like the suspicious Nahai fisherman of the frozen East, or the "tired old Bolshevik" engineer, Topolev.

In fact, it is just here that one of the new elements of major interest frequently appears in these novels. The writers approach a large variety of people primarily through their actions, which are not observed naturalistically but keenly analyzed and carefully weighed. Their concern with motives is, predominantly, a practical one. They examine these, not as an academic exercise in subtlety, or to achieve an emotional identification, but to discover whether—and how—certain courses of action can be changed. This long disused but valid approach recalls much of the

sturdy common sense and knowledgeable attitudes of powerful 18th Century figures like Fielding, Johnson, and Jane Austen.

Another vital aspect of the new dimension introduced by the metamorphosis from *man* to *men* is the virtual discovery (in terms of the novel) of one of the oldest and most important of human relationships—a relationship so much more common in life than in literature that one hardly as a name to call it by. The emotions and behavior which grow out of consciously shared endeavor have almost never been touched on, much less fully described, in our novels. Even glimpses of the development of traditional skills by individuals—like the learning of laboratory techniques in *Arrowsmith* or the use of a more than life-long accumulation of knowledge in *Old Man and The Sea*—are very rare. And except for an occasional account of archaic farm life, or a few war stories, this immensely important and general experience of shared purposeful activity, the comradeship of work and solidarity of interdependent human effort, has been largely unknown to literature.

THE REASONS for this omission both in the underlying nature of our society, and in the peculiar conditions of the artist's position there, are indeed glaringly apparent, but the impoverishment of our literature is none the less real for that. All the more welcome, then, is this exciting new vista opened up by these pioneer novels in their treatment of such human relationships with their rich variety of emotional overtones.

There is also something especially exhilarating in the unprecedented scale of experiment into which they plunge the reader, even when it results in pain or loss, and in their buoyant assurance of the enormous untrapped resources man has on his side against the heretofore overwhelming odds. This last feeling is more often sensed than expressed, but a passage early in the third book of *Far From Moscow* begins with an explicit statement of such a consciousness, and concludes with a hint of the Promethean satisfaction of men who have outgrown the need for gods:

> "Batmanov thought of those early pioneers with respect and sadness. How lonely they had been in their fierce battle with wild nature and the numerous enemies! . . . How much stronger than [those pioneers] was Batmanov, sent out here at the head of an immense collective and richly equipped with all the resources of science and modern engineering. . . .

"He sighed, freeing himself as it were of a load of painful memories, and consulted his watch. The luminous dial showed twenty minutes past five. He tarried another minute, all tensed, then mentally uttered: 'Let there be light!'

"In the same instant the whistle began its blithe song and the dazzling lights switched on. One!—on went the lights of the dwelling settlement. Two; the whole site was lit up. Three!—the lights flashed along the shore and down the twenty-kilometric ice road, right out to the island. The spotlights on the hills and coast towers, the lamp posts scattered all over the section, established day and flung the night back into the taiga."

Some sophisticated readers complain of a certain naivete in these stories of heroic socialist construction. The artist is, in our society, so conditioned to frustration, sensitive men here are so attuned to lives of quiet desperation, that such assurance of human success seems, to many, blatant ignorance or heartless mockery.

But, as one Soviet writer remarked when reproached with his happy endings, "Stalingrad *didn't* fall." Few would be willing to give up Dickens and George Eliot for Defoe, or Tolstoy and Sholokov for Defoe's latter-day prototypes. But fortunately no such choice is required, and it may be well occasionally to remind ourselves that simplicity is not necessarily superficiality. A world may end with a whimper but it almost always begins with a bang, and it would be a bold prophet indeed who could say certainly that Defoe's progeny may not, in the long run, outlive that of both Joyce and Henry James.

WHOSE SOUTH?

A Reply to William Faulkner

By BARBARA GILES

ONCE upon a time—so the fairytale ran in the South when I was young—a large number of good and wise men, all of them Southerners, took on the duty of growing immense crops of cotton, tobacco, and sugar-cane for the rest of the population. This could not be done in the ordinary way of working the land themselves, or hiring farm labor (such was the nature of conditions), so naturally they used slaves, although of course no one *believed* in slavery and all looked forward to the day when, once the black man had been sufficiently civilized and spiritualized, the good and wise ones could give them their freedom.

That day had been fast approaching for nigh onto 200 years and now it had come close though no date had been set, this being a matter not of calendar and clock but of conscience, nobility, and a special, complicated, delicate understanding of the slaves' own best interests. It was close enough, however, to frighten and enrage the North, which simply couldn't stand to see the South make a generous gesture on its own, so they—the North—rushed in and said that the Southerners had to free the slaves (right away!), and then of course the Southerners wouldn't, not for a while longer anyway, and the North got so mad it invaded the whole South and "emancipated" the poor colored people, who didn't even want it. (Pause.) Good relations between white and colored were set back by about one hundred years.

THIS tale, which is thought to date from around 1865, is offered not as proof that the South hasn't changed since—it has changed immensely—but that in the area of racism, history as myth repeats itself endlessly. Once, any Southerner who "counted" had a grandfather who had had a slave that begged, "Massa, please Massa, don't make me leave you." Now, apparently, everyone has a cook who implores her white

employers not to force integration upon the Negro school children. Once it was told—and probably still is—that Emancipation was inspired by Lincoln's secret hope that the freed Negroes would immediately murder the whites. Today it is claimed that the Supreme Court order on desegregation is the result of a plot originally thought up by outside promoters of force-and-violence. What was a sacred "way of life" in the South is now an equally sacred "emotional condition." And where at one time cotton couldn't be produced without slavery, today it can't be grown without sharecropping. . . .

Those are only some of the prettier fairytales. They do not, for example, include the sadistic fantasies concerning Negroes spread by the out-and-out kluxers, with details fit to curdle the blood of Grimm's ogres. But, they are the ideological supports of a group within the anti-integrationists described variously as the liberal, the sometimes liberal, the more liberal, the moderates, the enlightened, or "the decent elements." In letters, interviews, and articles, members of this group have appeared in the national press with explanations, addressed to the North, of "the Southern viewpoint," an important tenet of which is that it can never be understood by anyone outside the South.

In one sense they may be right: perhaps no one who hasn't lived an appreciable time in that region can really understand the spell of the fairytale over the minds of the "enlightened" and "thoughtful"—who are, in actual fact enlightened enough to apprehend reality to the point that they can shut it out only by summoning up more subtle, involuted, and sonorous sounding versions of the same tales.

MANY NORTHERN progressives were astonished when William Faulkner announced in print that "If it came to fighting I'd fight for Mississippi against the United States even if it meant going out into the street and shooting Negroes." (*The Reporter,* March 22, as reprinted from an interview in the London *Sunday Times.*)

Their amazement was understandable. The Nobel Prize winner, alone among celebrated Southern writers, had spoken out for Willie McGee and against the murderers of Emmett Till. His own life had been threatened by kluxers because of such statements. How could this distinguished man of letters, who had gravely and profoundly admonished other writers to remember the importance of "the human heart"—he, moreover, the master of the subtle, involuted, and sonorous sentence—descend to the crass declarations of the "shoot 'em down" tacticians of white supremacy?

Then, again, it wasn't so amazing. The fact that the South's most famous writer of fiction is still possessed by some of the shabbiest historical fictions of his class (the remnants of the Southern aristocracy) may be discovered from a careful reading of his own novels and short stories. There one will find, under the unsentimental surface of violence, horror, and doom, the familiar entanglements of the Lost Cause, with its nostalgia, its defeat and self-pity, guilt and self-righteousness, sensitivity and arrogance. There isn't space here to elaborate this point, which I had an opportunity to discuss at some length in the pages of this magazine in 1950.

Besides, what concerns us most at this date is not the relation of Faulkner's recent pronouncements to Faulkner's literary output, but the way in which these pronouncements serve to encompass and support virtually every argument of the "decent"—and some of the indecent—leaders of the resistance to enforcing desegregation. To reply to them all would require several articles, but we can examine a few of the central assumptions.

OF THESE one of the oldest, most persistent, and currently most popular is the concept of the South as a separate nation "interfered with" by federal laws made in the North, invaded once, in 1861, and in danger of invasion again. "My grandfather had slaves," Faulkner says, "and he must have known it was wrong, but he fought in one of the first regiments raised by the Confederate Army, not in defense of his ethical position but to protect his native land from being invaded." And in the same way the grandson proclaimed he will "fight for Mississippi against the United States."

One might ask, "Whose Mississippi? Whose 'native land'?" But even assuming that they are to be equated with the Faulkners and their friends —and there was nothing in the history taught me in segregated schools to indicate otherwise—the reasoning still flows from myth. A region whose kings of cotton and tobacco dominated the United States Congress for some twenty-five critical years preceding the Civil War, who seceded from the Union themselves, who fired the first shots of war, and fought their way up into Pennsylvania should be less touchy on the subject of interference and invasion.

It's true there *is* a certain domination, even an invasion, of the South in the present century, which is not mentioned by the proud-and-

fierce orators. It proceeds (to speak coarsely) from the power of money —northern monopoly capital—but since it is not a menace to the Southern Bourbon's "emotional condition" (quite the contrary) perhaps we are being irrelevant. Nor is it to the point, we suppose, to mention that neither the enlightened liberals of the resistance nor the Eastlands are crying, "Stop now . . . wait a minute . . . give *us* a chance to be generous!" when it comes to millions flowing from the Federal treasury to the present-day cotton kings. At any rate, the determination of the South's ruling class to eat its principles and have them too is not new. On slightly higher ethical levels it becomes, in the modern euphemism, a "moral dilemma" or a "mental anguish."

THE next central assumption is that the Negroes in the South don't know what's best for them and couldn't be trusted to want it if they did. Only the white enemies of equality know that.

And while you "never can tell what a Negro's thinking," you can be certain that he does know who his best friends are and, if it came to a showdown, he would probably fight on their side. Thus Mr. Faulkner: "My Negro boys down on the plantation would fight against the North with me. If I say to them, 'Go get your shotguns, boys,' they'll come."

Now let's try to figure this out. Mr. Faulkner has already claimed that in a showdown *he* will be shooting Negroes; now, evidently, he expects "his" Negroes to do the shooting against some other Negroes. In the same interview he has charged the white Southerners with stupidity and credited the Negro with being "calmer, wiser, more stable than the white man." What then gives him the idea that Negroes can be persuaded to shoot other Negroes—and against their own best interests? One would think that both Southerners and Northerners, enlightened or not, would have gotten some notion of what Negroes are thinking from the Montgomery bus boycott, if from nothing else.

But when asked whether he thought that sort of resistance was a good idea, Mr. Faulkner answered, "Yes, anything they do is good *as long as they don't carry it too far.*" (My emphasis.) How far is too far? To the point of victory? Or merely to the point of "provoking violence"?

WHICH brings us to the next central assumption: that nobody is for violence except a handful of nasty elements, but violence and "trouble" will come—just as the Civil War did—if "the South" is pushed

too far, or prodded too hard. And on this assumption all hands may rest. From Adlai Stevenson to Eisenhower to the liberals and moderates, to the more careful strategists of the White Citizens Councils, the line of agreement runs: stop a moment, wait a bit, or you will have trouble. It doesn't matter whether they believe, as Faulkner believes, that white Southerners are not intelligent enough to change when the time for change has come, or whether they think as Mr. Stevenson does that the human heart has to change first. Whatever the case, everything has to wait for that slowly unfolding "spontaneous" decision on the part of the recalcitrants to obey the Constitution without making trouble, without violence.

At this point it might be well to ask just what "the South" is, actually. It is not, as Mr. Faulkner somewhat belatedly tells us ("Letter to the North," *Life* magazine, March 5) "a people decadent and even obsolete through inbreeding and illiteracy—the inbreeding a result of the illiteracy and the isolation—as to be a kind of species of juvenile delinquents with a folklore of blood and violence, yet who can be controlled by firmness once they are brought to believe that the police mean business." (Anybody who believes in such a picture must have been reading *Sanctuary.*) Nor is it a land of white-porticoed verandas and fields full of singing Negroes. It is inhabited by many different kinds of people; thirty-five percent of them are Negroes, and the whites include some of the poorest as well as the richest members of the population. There are industrial owners and industrial workers, professional people, labor organizers, share-croppers, tenant farmers and small independent farmers, dock workers, and in fact just about all the classes and occupations to be found elsewhere in the nation. Many of these people besides the Negroes know what trouble is and some know, though not so well, what violence is, having felt it on their persons too when they tried to move, though ever so "gradually," to obtain what was due them. The Negroes know, have known for years, that violence can come with no more provocation than an "impudent look." They don't like violence; they haven't used it themselves in the current battles although the provocation has been fierce. But I doubt that they dread it sufficiently from the other side to be willing to wait until their enemies' hearts have slowly ripened like an orchard peach and fallen into their patient hands. And if they are not cowed, why should their friends, North and South, be?

So let us have done with fairytales, dilemmas, and anguishes. Real

history is being written in the South. It has not reached the point where anyone should "pause" and listen to the counsels of people who tell you how much they themselves are for Negro and white equality, how in fact they regard it as "inevitable," but how it cannot come at all except through some divine grace working in the souls of those most bitterly opposed to it.

Historical reality, not grace, has already forced changes in the Southern scene. It has forced them all over the world where colored peoples struggle for independence and equality. In those places too there have undoubtedly been men and women who found colonialism morally distasteful yet who allied themselves with its most brutal exponents because of their fear of "going too far." The decision as to how far to go was not, after all, up to them—as they are now discovering.

In the United States it is not up to the South alone, and certainly not to those in it whose only promise to go anywhere is a threat to join the gunmen if the latter decide to shoot it out with an "inevitable" that arrives too soon.

WHITE SUPREMACIST: A Portrait

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

THE OFFICE of the White Citizens' Councils seemed reassuringly remote from the violence and terror—and poverty and hunger—of Mississippi as I sat there waiting to see W. J. Simmons, fruit broker and administrator. I felt far enough removed from the rather spectral glimpse of the town of Belzoni from a bus window at night—where one murder and one attempted murder had taken place in the last year—as well as from the empty, forlorn cabins on the plantation of Senator Eastland and the almost as rundown, primitive cabins which I could see were still occupied.

When I went to the Jackson office of the White Councils, in Room 605 of the Plaza building, I had been in Mississippi four days, during which Mississippi newspapers had carried stories of one new murder, one suspected outrage and murder, one shooting by a cop. I had called early in the morning to see Simmons, because I was taking a bus to Mize that afternoon to see what I could learn about the new murder. By the time I got back to Jackson that night the afternoon papers disclosed that another Negro had been shot in East Jackson the night before. All the victims were Negro, and except for the unsolved—and of course virtually uninvestigated—case of a Greenville truck driver found mutilated and burned to death in Belzoni, all were admittedly the work of white bosses or other white men.

SIMMONS soon emerged from the inner office with another man, after the typist announced me, and said he had to hurry off to the Capitol. He had an appointment with Governor Coleman, he said, and couldn't be late. But he'd be glad to give me an interview if I could wait.

The frail, pretty, blonde young woman in the office, after rushing to finish something she was typing for him to take along, turned to me and smiled after Simmons left. Obligingly she got out a couple of issues of "The Citizens' Council," the monthly four-page paper edited by

Simmons. I was busy reading in the December issue the joint statement of Eastland, Rep. John Bell Williams and Judge Tom P. Brady, widely publicized since, calling on the South to nullify "the Black Monday decisions rendered by the United States Supreme Court," when a sugary voice claimed my attention.

"How do you like our paper?" it said. I was reminded, looking at the young typist or secretary, of what Circuit Judge Brady in his book, *Black Monday*, the bible of all the White Citizens' Councils in the South, calls "The loveliest and the purest of God's creatures, the nearest thing to an anglic (sic) being that treads this terrestrial ball . . . a well-bred, cultured Southern white woman, or her blue-eyed, golden-haired little girl." Judge Brady, who speaks extensively for the White Citizens' Councils, is also the author of the often-quoted remark comparing the Negro to a "chimpanzee," and saying the "social, political, economic and religious preferences of the Negro remain close to the caterpillar and cockroach." He has warned that the North may try to impose desegregation "through force of arms" and that "it will take an army of a hundred million men to compel it."

In reply to the golden-haired young woman, I said I thought the issues she had shown me were a little heavy, what with all the stress on interposition, and all the long words and long articles. She agreed, looking thoughtful, then added: "How did you like the one on the churches and jazz?" I said I hadn't noticed it. She eagerly turned to it, the story in the January issue under a head reading, "From Bawdy Houses to Parlor, Via National Council of Churches." Her blue eyes were big as she said, "Read it. It just gives you the shivers down your spine." Then she added comfortably that she agreed lots of their stories were a little dry, but she thought they'd be having more on that order.

After an editor's note naming leaders of the National Council of Churches and linking them with the NAACP, there was a preface by the author, William Stephenson, president of the Virginia League, apologizing for introducing "our unpleasant subject matter into Christian homes." After stating he was "horrified" to learn that the Council of Churches planned to sponsor a jazz program over CBS, he made this an excuse for writing three columns of filth.

I read up to where he defined the origin of the word "jazz." I had seen enough, and turned back to another page. But the refined voice prodded me, while the blue eyes gloated: "Did you read that part about

the tropical men? You didn't? You didn't read the part about the West Indies? Oh, it's perfectly awful. You just can hardly stand it."

I WAS rescued from reading the words which were so fascinating to the flower of Southern womanhood by the return of her boss, Simmons.

At his invitation I followed Simmons into his office and took the proffered chair across the desk from him. I asked him chattily if his conference was successful, and he said, oh, yes. I had wondered at a quote in the paper from the Governor making a distinction between interposition and nullification, I said. He laughed, a dry, but comfortable laugh, indicated he wasn't worried about the Governor. "Interposition is nullification," he said briefly, with a half-smile, looking at me shrewdly. Could he trust the Governor, once the interposition was put through? "I think so," he said, again with the little smile, confident.

A tall, broad-shouldered man of forty-eight, without any superfluous flesh, Simmons' bearing is still military, as befits a former officer in the British Army. His manner is dry. He is not given to Judge Brady's flowery phrases, nor his reckless threats. He doesn't talk, as Rep. Henderson Lanham, of Rome, Ga., did on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, last January 9, of how if desegregation is put through, "the NAACP . . . will see the blood of the two races mixed, not in future generations, but rather in the gutters and streams of our land." He doesn't say blood will run knee-deep through the state, as White Citizens' Councils' organizers in Arkansas said.

Simmons prides himself on being frank with the press, unlike Herman Moore, Indianola Bank president and one of fourteen men who initiated the organization at a secret meeting in Indianola July 11, 1954. In the early period of the White Citizens' Councils Moore advised secrecy, and even now when the press was being wooed, Moore abruptly showed me out of his bank when I sought an interview. Simmons said with modest pride, "We've waked up the Southern press," but complained that *Time, Life* and others continued to say the Citizens' Councils aimed to "delay" integration. He intended writing editors to ask them to "change that world 'delay' to 'prevent.'" But these same journals, he said with satisfaction, are "showing more respect for the Citizens' Councils" than in the earlier period.

According to John Desmond of the *Daily News* of New York (Nov.

22 last) Simmons was appointed administrator of the Councils as a sort of counterweight to the ebullient executive secretary, Robert J. ("Tut") Patterson, thirty-two year-old Indianola planter.

Simmons has regular, so-called classic features, a closely clipped sandy-colored moustache, shrewd eyes and a casual manner which seems to contradict the cold deliberation of his words. He assured me that when it came to talking he was "one of the most conservative men you ever met," adding, "I always try to stick to facts that are demonstrable."

NOT THAT he was reluctant to give opinions. When I asked him if he considered the rapid exodus of Negroes from the cotton plantations of Mississippi "a good thing or a bad thing," he answered evenly, "A good thing." He said it was the "result of mechanization of farms, of course," then added with a sharp little half-smile, "Every n----r who leaves Mississippi becomes an ambassador for segregation in the North." He expanded his theme. "They're having their troubles up North with them." I now recognized the line: the Jackson press played up every item provided by wire services or correspondents involving a crime attributed to a Negro in the North. Simmons prophesied, "There'll be more of them." He said he was in correspondence with a number of Northern industrialists who had become interested in the Citizens' Councils. Patting a stack of letters on his desk, he said he received from twenty-five to a hundred letters a day from throughout the country. A number of manufacturers had persuaded the secretaries of their Republican clubs to write him and get segregation literature. "You'd be amazed at how many Republican clubs in the North I correspond with," he said.

I suggested that of course all Negroes who left the farms didn't go North; at least one read that many were "lured" to Southern cities by jobs in industry. "Not many," said the realistic Simmons, and I thought of the Negro women elevator operators I'd met in Delta cities, who made $11.25 a week for a seven-day week. And the waitresses, white of course, who worked a ten-hour, seven-day week, and were convinced Mississippi would never enforce the one dollar minimum wage law.

"What constitutes the main part of the leadership of the White Citizens' Councils in Mississippi?" I asked Simmons. "Planters, lawyers, merchants, or what?"

HE LOOKED at me quizzically. For a moment I thought he was going to say I was wrong if I thought planters dominated the organization, as was Dr. T. R. M. Howard, who on January 1 in Baton Rouge received national publicity when he said the White Citizens' Councils aimed to drive out 500,000 Negroes from Mississippi in the next ten years. But he made no mention of the Mound Bayou Negro leader. Instead, he chided me for using the phrase, "White Citizens Councils." "That's what the opposition calls us," he said. But as he knew, I'd just come from Arkansas, where the "White" is part of the official name.

Meanwhile he'd gone to a cabinet and taken down the October issue, the first, of *The Citizens' Council,* explaining that all the leading officers were listed by occupation. "I'm sure planters are way the most numerous, though," he said. He explained that the names represented only the twenty-four counties they had organized then, and the state's six Congressional districts. I had read in the local press that, as a speaker before the Kiwanis club, Simmons had reported fifty-eight counties organized. He told me all but three had some organization. (Subscriptions to the paper are two dollars each and he claimed from 70,000 to 75,000 members.)

He was right. The listing showed most of the organization's leaders to be planters.

But among the county chairmen were many planters who doubled in their functions: for Okibbena county, Horace Harned, Jr., of Starkville, planter, state senator; for Tate county, John M. Callicut, of Coldwater, planter, mayor; for Tallahatchie (where the Milam-Bryant murder trial was held in the Till case), Harvey Pennington, planter and senator. The chairman of the third Congressional district is Ed Britt, of Indianola, planter and cotton ginner. A member of the third district executive committee is Wilburn Hooker of Lexington, merchant, planter, insurance man and state Representative.

Simmons explained that in this country "voting is a privilege, not a right." He thought standards for voting should be restricted everywhere.

SOME of Simmons' terminology has an odd ring on Southern lips. Maybe in his years abroad he learned it, I do not know. But he said voting standards should not be "along class lines," but should test character. To show voting wasn't a "right," he reminded me women hadn't always voted.

I asked him if he favored a third party; Coleman had come out against it. "No," he quipped, "I just want a second party." Then he became serious. He was in favor of a realignment, with the agricultural West and the South joining forces. "It would have to be under the leadership of, say, Eastland and Mundt—someone, that is, from a state where there weren't many Negroes." Mundt had been down to Jackson once and spoken, for realignment, though he had "stayed away from the segregation issue." He'd made quite an impression.

I suggested maybe he could get him to come down again, under the auspices of the Citizens' Council. His eyes kindling, he said it was "a good idea—maybe I can—I think I'll get to work on it." The next month I saw in the Jackson press Mundt did address a joint meeting of the Mississippi legislature and call for a realignment of Republicans and Democrats, mentioning "voting blocs" in the big northern cities which he claimed control both parties, and attacking the CIO, as well as the "Communist menace." He also spoke before a dinner club—but not under CC auspices.

Simmons made no mention of Communists as such that I recall, but threw into one "leftist" category the CIO, NAACP and "the n.....r blocs." If Northern industrialists were beginning to understand, he didn't grasp why the Republican party couldn't see that "the White Citizens' Councils are the first real people's movement in opposition to the leftward drift."

IT WAS curious to hear the leader of the vaunted "people's movement" declare that the Democratic party was bound to be "the deadly enemy of vested interests so long as it's pinned to the n----r bloc vote in Chicago, Detroit and the Northern cities." It was controlled, he said, by "the leftists, NAACP, CIO and do-gooders." The Republican party, he said, "has lost the Negro vote forever" and "ought to see that we're their natural allies."

Several times during the approximately two-hour long interview we were interrupted by phone calls. The first, he told me after he hung up, was from "one of our members who's hotter 'n a pistol" over a news account of a speech by Thurgood Marshall, NAACP lawyer, from Memphis. To another caller he said he had "just what the doctor ordered," for his speech. "Be sure to stop in here before the meeting. It's a CIO kit on integration. It'll do the job—show those boys where some of their

dues money goes." I asked later if they really had many CIO members in Mississippi. "Quite a few around Jackson," he said. The meeting apparently was to be for workers in some adjoining county.

I heard him tell another caller he hadn't known "you were organizing in that part of Alabama." That was on Friday, February 3, and already Simmons had expressed his outrage over a dispatch in that morning's paper. It concerned an order to show cause issued against a dean of the University of Alabama, brought on behalf of Autherine Lucy whose admission had been denied. It also mentioned that Miss Lucy, then accepted as a student, had petitioned for residence in a dormitory and had been rejected. Now I heard Simmons tell his caller excitedly to tell them "at the legislature" that "they should order that dean not to answer the court summons." He added crisply: "And have 'em tell him to kick that n----r woman out."

When he had hung up the receiver he turned to me and said, "That's the way it is. A network—all over the South." Then, still fuming, "It isn't enough for her that the dean admits her. No, she has to live in a dormitory with whites. Can you imagine?"

books in review

The Thought of Corliss Lamont

Freedom Is As Freedom Does, by Corliss Lamont. Horizon Press, New York. $3.95.

CORLISS LAMONT'S newest work should rank high in the literature of the American Resistance. Part survey of the civil liberties scene and part personal chronicle, the meticulously documented *Freedom Is As Freedom Does* is a remarkably persuasive volume. Despite a deep underlying passion there is a total absence of the strident tone. Free of the legalisms that clutter up so many books on civil liberties, Lamont's latest contribution at no time condescends to the reader. It can well serve as an indispensable guide on American civil liberties to lawyer and layman alike.

Primarily it is because Lamont is no Olympian observer. Himself a victim of McCarthyism, he emphasizes that civil liberty is no gift from the gods and that the Bill of Rights—"the greatest of all state documents on civil liberties"—is no self-enforcing holy scroll. He points out that the American people have never enjoyed completely their formal rights and that constant struggle is an absolute essential for their maintenace.

The Lamontian thesis is simple and amply supported by a wealth of facts: 1) civil liberties are indivisible; 2) American constitutional freedoms are threatened today "because the multiplicity of . . . sanctions that can be used against the dissenter is greater"; 3) struggle and eternal vigilance are required to transform the Bill of Rights into a reality."

Lamont wastes no time sparring at invisible enemies. He charges flatly that the Government has undermined historic American freedoms through a series of "questionable Federal and State laws" with the threadbare argument that the nation's security is endangered by "the unchecked flow of ideas." In language from which every American liberal might well learn, he bluntly attacks the inspired anti-Communist campaign as a fraud with cold war aims:

"In all the anti-Communist furor of the past two decades, no member of the Communist Party has ever been indicted or convicted for an overt act of violence

against the Government or even for advocating such act. . . .

"The notion of an over-riding Communist menace in America has all along been a hoax, played up by rightist and fascist elements to camouflage their anti-democratic aims; manipulated by yellow journalists and careerists of all types as a means of making money out of sensationalism; and utilized by Democratic and Republican Administrations alike as a way of gaining popular support for cold war policies and as a political ritual designed to secure votes by alarming the electorate."

American political suppression in its various forms is scrutinized under Lamont's microscope. The Congressional inquisition, the activities of the Department of Justice, the loyalty-security program, the cultural repression, the assault on academic freedom and the other police steps against freedom of ideas are all examined with clinical care. He sees the repressive attack not as a campaign against a relatively small handful of Communists but as a move against *all* who dissent from the latter-day reaction. "The anti-freedom drive today," he emphasizes, "is not merely against Communist ideas, but against *all* ideas diverging from a confused right-wing orthodoxy."

Mr. Lamont's chapter on "Suppression Through Law" is required reading for those seeking to understand the present Justice Department attacks on progressive opinion. He terms the series of repressive laws adopted during the Eisenhower Administration "McCarthyism sweetened by the appearance of legality" and contrasts acidly the official hypocritical "prating about preserving freedom" with legislation "in the direction of fascism." He dissects the Smith Act and refutes it at every point. "The American people can no more afford to accept as final the ruling of the Supreme Court on the Smith Act," he writes, "than they accepted as final the Court's Dred Scott decision of 1857 broadening the scope of slavery in the United States."

"The Smith Act," he adds, "has in effect outlawed the teaching or advocacy by any group or organization of the very doctrine embodied in our Declaration of Independence." But in saying this he does not impute to the Communist Party any teaching of the doctrine of violent overthrow of the United States government. He declares flatly that the Constitution of the Communist Party "backs democratic majority rule in America" and he rejects the Government theory that this is only "Aesopian" language to conceal sinister aims.

PERHAPS one of the most searching chapters of his work is that on "The Decline of the Civil Liberties Union," a blow-by-blow description of developments in the national leadership of that organization.

Understandably tinged with some bitterness, this chapter deals with the author's personal experience in the organization. He describes the footsy-playing with Rep. Martin Dies in 1939, the expulsion of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn from the ACLU Board in 1940 ("a heresy trial, pure and simple"), the organizational shenanigans undertaken by certain leaders in order to jam through cold war resolutions and his departure from the ACLU in November 1953. He discusses with pride his leadership in the militant Emergency Civil Liberties Committee and the excellent work undertaken by that organization.

It is not a happy story, and few ACLUers will read it without experiencing a sense of shame. But one wonders whether Mr. Lamont's conclusion can be accepted as final. While pointing to the various local ACLU affiliates as being more advanced than the national leadership, he says, "It (the ACLU) can no longer be depended upon, with its present Board and officers, to wage a militant and principled over-all struggle for civil liberties."

Obviously, Mr. Lamont is in a far better position than we to discuss the inner workings and policies of the ACLU. He provides a bill of particulars that supports in essentials the thesis developed by Lucille Milner, ACLU executive secretary for a quarter of a century, in her remarkable book, *Education of an American Liberal.* But can one say for all time that liberals who succumbed to the cold war—or even rushed to appease the Moloch—are beyond redemption? Certainly, whatever may be said about Norman Thomas, can it be gainsaid that in his own way Thomas vigorously supports the struggle against the Smith Act, taking in practice a position opposed to that of his dear friend, Sidney Hook? Can it be argued that Thomas has not done yeoman service for civil liberties in his recent support of Smith Act defendants George Blake Charney and Alexander Trachtenberg?

New developments in the struggle against reaction would counsel a somewhat less rigid approach. All this is not to brush aside Mr. Lamont's stern indictment of certain ACLU leaders in the cold war period. But are not events compelling many, including ACLU leaders, to re-evaluate the past? And is it not up to courageous progressives like Corliss Lamont, unfaltering in devotion to civil liberties for all, to seek out every possibility for re-uniting liberals—including those who supported the cold war—to defend the Bill of Rights?

Mr. Lamont, as indicated above, vigorously defends the constitutional rights of the Communists, but he also has his criticisms. It would behoove Marxists to listen thoughtfully to him. He terms, for example, "one

of its biggest mistakes" the reluctance of American Communists to oppose the Smith Act prosecution of the Minneapolis Trotskyites in 1941. In this reviewer's humble judgment, Lamont's criticism is well-taken. His criticism, while only a passing one in his book, might well provide an opportunity for some long needed re-evaluation of the Communist attitude towards civil liberties, some of which is now being undertaken (cf. Max Weiss, "The Communists and Civil Liberties," *Daily Worker,* April 5-6, 1956; On Our Road To Socialism, Milton Howard, *Sunday Worker,* April 1, 1956, and Monthly Review, April 1956, Answers to Questions by *Political Affairs.*)

Despite slander to the contrary, the Communists have a long and proud record in the fight for the constitutional rights of the people. In the Mooney, Scottsboro, Sacco-Vanzetti and literally hundreds of other famous struggles, the Communists played an active and sometimes leading part. But the Communists have also made serious errors, as in the Minneapolis case cited by Lamont and the failure to fight until recently for the Trotskyite legless veteran, James Kutcher, who has been so shamelessly abused by the Government.*

Why did we not vigorously defend the Minneapolis Trotskyites? (At best, our position was ambiguous and at worst it cheered on the prosecution.) This not only proved to be a serious tactical error; worse, it was a deep error in principle. Why was this error committed by Marxists who themselves have demonstrated over and over again unflinching courage in the face of reactionary enemies?

TRUE, the Trotskyites were opposed to whole-hearted prosecution of the anti-Nazi war. True, their anti-Soviet bias helped create confusion about the need for uniting to defend the whole anti-fascist world, including the United States. But all this could and should have been fought out within the ranks of the labor and progressive movement. The Trotskyites' false position could and should have been defeated—as it essentially was—within the ranks of American labor.

In my judgment we accepted, consciously or unconsciously, the non-Marxist, "super-clever" theory that the Smith Act could be a "dialectical" instrument, i.e., "could be used both ways." There were some simple enough to believe that the Government could employ the Smith Act

* There are other profound questions requiring searching Marxist self-criticism, particularly our acceptance at face value of what are now admittedly gross departures from revolutionary legality in some Socialist countries. This reviewer has strong views on the subject but deems it inappropriate to use a review of Mr. Lamont's book as a vehicle for their development. Mr. Lamont scrupulously refrains from discussing questions outside the purview of the U.S. Bill of Rights. To divert attention from Mr. Lamont's central point would be doing his splendid work a disservice.

against reactionaries, against certain people in the labor movement and, perhaps, never against us. Those who held that belief (and during the Roosevelt Administration such illusions were not uncommon) are today wiser. If American history has demonstrated any thesis it is that anti-democratic laws, no matter in what guise offered and at whom ostensibly aimed, must be opposed at every step by Marxists. Prof. Zechariah Chafee, a liberal of the old school, saw this clearly. He penetrated very quickly the flim-flam under which the Smith Act and similar legislation is passed and pointed out that anti-sedition legislation is never used against men with money but invariably against the workers. Wrote Chafee:

"It is all very well to say that we need a sedition law to use against Nazis and Fascists, but if the Alien Registration Act of 1940 (which incorporates the Smith Act—S.W.G.) is thus employed, it will be almost the first time to my knowledge that a sedition act has been enforced against powerful men with money. The lamentable truth, which as a former employer I hate to admit, is that sedition laws operate in practice as a device to keep down the agitation of discontented workmen.

". . . What has happened? Hundreds not one Nazi and not one Fascist has been rounded up. . . . So far as I can ascertain not one Nazi and not one Fascist has been arrested and shipped overseas."

—*Free Speech in the United States*

This perhaps serves to clarify the old question: civil liberties for whom? There are some purists and dogmatists who fear that Lamont's slogan that "civil liberties is indivisible" and his defense of civil liberties for all, including the wealthy, collides with the class interests of the workers. They fear, perhaps, they will be called upon to defend the rights of Joe McCarthy to free speech.

Abstractly, they may be right, but real life is richer than any dogma. Life itself has demonstrated that the cry for justice comes from the disinherited, not from the money-changers. It is the Negro people of Alabama and Mississippi, the Westinghouse pickets, the Smith Act defendants who are deprived of their constitutional rights. The wealthy have no fear of sedition laws, as Prof. Chafee points out. To defend democratic rights for all in real life, in present day America, means in fact to defend these rights for the struggling people, the workers, the Negro people, the Communists and all others who are the victims of monopoly reaction. For one, therefore, I do not cavil with Mr. Lamont on his slogan that "civil liberties are indivisible." It remains an admirable banner under which all defenders of the Bill of Rights, irrespective of political, economic or religious views, can unite.

SIMON W. GERSON

New Light on Labor

Outline History of the World Trade Union Movement, by William Z. Foster, *International Publishers,* $6.

History of the Labor Movement in the United States, vol. II: From the Founding of the American Federation of Labor to the Emergence of American Imperialism, by Philip S. Foner. *International Publishers,* 480 pages. Trade ed. $5; Popular ed. $3.75.

Here are two historical works of tremendous significance, one by the chairman of the Communist Party of the U. S. and America's veteran labor leader and Marxist theoretician; the other by the most prolific and penetrating academically-trained historian of the U. S. labor and socialist movement.

Bill Foster's book is a vast undertaking (its table of contents alone takes eleven pages in the March *Political Affairs*) starting with 1764 and ending today, embracing 61 chapters and every country in which there has been any discernible labor movement. It naturally devotes a longer analysis to the movements in the major capitalist countries: Britain (birthplace of trade unionism), Germany, France, Italy and the U. S. And it gives us the condensed story of every trade union international organization in history. (The socialist and communist internationals were covered in his earlier monumental volume, *History of the Three Internationals.*)

This is the sort of book that only Foster's panoramic vision, planning and courage could undertake and complete—and in his 75th year! The illumination that it sheds on the past of trade unionism here and abroad is indeed badly needed by all of us at this time.

The extraordinary feature of Phil Foner's history, as of his previous volume covering the period from the origin of the American labor movement to the founding of the AFL, is the way he has mastered his voluminous primary materials. A major part of these he found in thousands of filing cases, crates and boxes in the basement of the old AFL building in Washington. The Herculean task of wading through this mass of manuscript sources, on the verge of being scrapped, and his scholarly use of these tens of thousands of items on the AFL, as well as vast manuscript collections from the Knights of Labor, is something few can appreciate who have not done at least a bit of research or historical writing. His organization of this material into an extremely readable and authoritative story of the two decades (1881 to

the end of the century) is an achievement for which he may some day, in a more favorable political climate, be given a medal by the labor movement itself as well as by the historical societies.

This reviewer was especially interested, not only in Dr. Foner's reports on the great strikes, unemployed movements, and eight-hour struggles in these two decades (Homestead, Haymarket, Pullman, Cour d'Alene and many others) but also in his discussion of former AFL President Samuel Gompers. He throws new light on the latter's relation with the class collaborationists and professional patriots of the National Civic Federation, financed by millionaires to influence the "pure and simple trade union" leaders. Foner shows that Gompers, although he had once attacked capitalism and exchanged letters with European socialists, gladly joined this Morgan-dominated group of anti-labor employers while refusing to have anything to do with the Anti-Trust League with which such people's leaders as Tom L. Johnson and Gov. John Peter Altgeld were allied.

Keen analysis of the various socialist organizations of the period and their background here and abroad is another feature of the Foner volume. He shows the relationships between the various left-wing groups—socialist, anarchist, syndicalist—and brings out the role of a number of sectarian bodies. Both Foster and Foner give fair appraisals of De Leonite theory and practice and their disruptive effects on the labor movements of this period. Foner has of course more room for documentary data on the subject but Foster sums it up when he says that the "brilliant intellectual De Leon" developed an ultra-left, super-revolutionary outlook and policy and "opposed all labor party tendencies and every form of cooperation with the struggling farmers. As for the Negro question, for De Leon it simply did not exist."

Foster shows which labor elements in all countries and periods were truly anti-imperialist. And Foner is able to give us the most complete account of the way in which U. S. labor leaders joined in the anti-war and anti-imperialist struggles of the nineties before the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, eventually, however, joining the war camp. The later development of a united front with upper-class opponents of annexation in the Anti-Imperialist League is one of the most instructive episodes in U. S. labor history. But the AFL, as Foner notes, finally capitulated to the big business imperialists.

Both Foster and Foner weave the vital economic, political and social history of the times into their interpretation of trade union trends. Foner, for example, draws a sharp picture of the trusts and the finance

capitalists who organized and used them in efforts both to crush competitors and to destroy the labor movement.

Foster's work embraces a span of years nearly ten times longer than Foner and has a world-wide canvas to cover. But he, too, carefully sketches the social and economic setting and the class forces that help us to understand the manifold socialist and labor movements. For example, in sizing up the great crisis and depression in the U.S. in 1929-32, he quotes from Labor Research Association's Labor Fact Books and other sources of the day to indicate the economic realities then faced by the labor movement in its struggles for jobs and some measure of social insurance. Similarly in other countries, in the period of prewar fascism he introduces the reader to conditions in the economy underlying the trade union struggles against Hitler, Mussolini and Franco.

Probably every reader who has some specialized information on a particular country or movement will note some omissions. I for one would have asked for more sources, for example, in Foster's section on the Russian trade unions after the revolution, especially the findings of several trade union delegations from Britain and the U.S. But then I remind myself that Foster was there in those days as a delegate to various congresses. He obviously knew from his own observation all that he needed to give the essential facts on the role of the unions in the USSR.

Both volumes deserve not only careful reading but a place on the reference shelf of every active unionist and progressive. Nothing we have read in their respective fields by any historian of the pragmatic school of labor theory can possibly take their place. And International Publishers also is to be congratulated for bringing out such substantial and valuable works at this time of limited publishing facilities. Both books make valuable contributions to our knowledge of labor and democratic history.

ROBERT W. DUNN

Communication:

Comment on James S. Allen's "Democratic Revival and the Marxists"

THE article by James S. Allen in the October *Masses and Mainstream*, "Democratic Revival and the Marxists," on which the editors invited discussion, centers on the problem of the integration of Marxists with the "democratic revival." Allen directs his fire—at least by implication—at those narrowing "leftist" tendencies which could prevent that integration, and sketches a broad concept of democratic alliance, stressing the "national interest" and the "national tradition." But in so doing he leans over in the opposite direction and fails to relate these concepts to the basic dynamic of social antagonisms.

The article begins with a description of the new international perspectives unfolded at Geneva and their effect on the American scene. "This turn in world affairs, still to be completed and secured against the resistance and obstruction of the prime movers of the cold war, opens stimulating and exciting perspectives for reversing the reactionary trend in our own country as well." (p. 1.) "Universal release from fear of atomic war is the cardinal outcome of the Geneva development. The perspective now opened presents great opportunities for changing the course of events in this country." (p. 2.)

TWO objections can be raised to these comments. In the first place, although they note that the perspectives of peace have yet to be "secured," they fail sufficiently to stress the continuing war danger. There has been no "universal release from the fear of atomic war." If there had been then there would be little need to continue to build the peace movement.

In the second place, these comments (which I choose as representative of the opening paragraphs), imply that the "democratic revival" in the United States will come about essentially as the result of international pressures. And that this is, indeed, Allen's view is indicated by his failure

to discuss the progressive struggle of the past decade in the United States and perceive its contribution to the "revival." The impression is given that there was no such struggle, that the past decade was one of unrelieved and omnipresent reaction.

> *The progressive forces, which had gathered during the years of great ferment, were seriously weakened and dispersed, the broader democratic camp was almost completely routed and confused, while the Left, especially the Communists, was isolated from it and also in the labor movement. Damage was done to the very fabric of what we have come to know as the democratic way of life, to the basic thinking of the nation, to our culture in all its varied aspects. The prosperity of the era helped blunt the sensibility of large sectors of the people, especially the upper tiers of workers and the middle class, including the intellectuals, to the national catastrophe being prepared by reaction in the name of anti-Communism. This is not to say that the democratic trend was entirely suffocated, for it is a symptom of the strength of this trend in American life that even during this dark period its influence could still be felt, and its spokesmen, although few in number, could still be heard.*
>
> *Nevertheless, reaction has held the upper hand for a decade, exerting the decisive influence in American life, shaping the mentality of the nation and especially of the younger generation.* (p. 3.)

While no one, looking at the bitter trail of parted families and shattered careers, of war and police state terrorism of the past decade, would wish to minimize the attack of reaction, this is certainly to emphasize one side of the picture completely out of proportion.

If it were true that "the mentality of the nation" had been "shaped" by "reaction" then we would today be a fascist nation and a nation at war. The "democratic trend" was not expressed only in the utterances of a "few" spokesmen but in ceaseless popular struggles, none of which are mentioned in the article.

THESE struggles were fought on three fronts: against war, against the oppression of the Negro people, against encroaching fascism. On all three fronts important victories were won.

That these victories were not won without the aid of international

pressures is true; but it is equally true that they were mainly won by the American people themselves. It is seldom, indeed, in history that important internal political changes result primarily from outside pressures.

And even although these pressures have today risen to an unprecedented strength as a result of the developing absolute superiority of the socialist world, American monopoly is limited in its activities primarily by the American people. The deciding factor in ending the war in Korea was internal opposition. We must not underestimate the power of this opposition because it did not assume organizational form but was deflected by reactionary pressures into less rigid (but very broad)) channels. The power of this opposition was demonstrated when the Republican Party perceived that to win the election it had to promise to end the war and then carry this promise through or face a political crisis. And the pressure continued. Without it there would have been no backing up on Indo-China and Formosa. Without it there would have been no Geneva.

If "the broader democratic camp was almost completely routed and dispersed" and if the Left was (without qualification) "isolated" from it, then how was McCarthy defeated and what defeated him? To think of McCarthy's defeat as resulting primarily or exclusively from international pressures is to deny the effectiveness of ten years of struggle, the fight of the Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee and the Hollywood Ten, the trials of the leaders of the Communist Party, the Steve Nelson case, the fights on loyalty oaths, the Rosenberg case, etc.

This was, moreover, a struggle that began on the Left and moved out to the "broader democratic camp." Hence, the "isolation" of the Left from that camp cannot have been absolute. We must not be misled into thinking that the breaking of organizational ties meant the breaking of all ties. Many such ties were broken, and many suspicions and prejudices engendered, but the American people never became permeated with witch-hunting hysteria. They were always prepared to listen.

And as the attack broadened and they perceived that the Left's claim that the attack was not, as it was represented, aimed at a non-existent "conspiratorial" minority but at the foundation of popular democratic rights, they began to drive it back.

And, so too, with the struggle of the Negro people. The Willie McGee, Trenton Six, Louisville cases and the innumerable suits brought into the courts for desegregation in schools and public transportation facilities

spurred the wider activity that resulted in the school desegregation fight and decision, and the ICC decision.

BY OMITTING any mention of these struggles and placing the main, indeed, almost the sole, emphasis upon international forces, Allen gives the impression that the revival will come about as a kind of gift from abroad to a comparatively passive people, a people whose "mentality" has been "shaped" by "reaction." And this impression is emphasized by the fact that the "revival" is always placed in the future, e.g. "the democratic revival that must come," and not viewed as a developing popular movement already under way.

Furthermore, the term "revival," when unaccompanied by an examination of the conflict of interests involved, implies that the progressive swing will be as absolute and unopposed as that of the reign of reaction depicted for the past decade. But a democratic upswing does not mean the abolition of conflicting domestic interests any more than Geneva meant the abolition of imperialism. In fact the reactionaries are even now struggling vigorously to stem the turning tide.

Allen's main object in his article is to ascertain how Marxists can become integrated into the coming "revival." In his answer the emphasis is placed almost entirely on a "reassessment" of Marxist views on the national interest and the national tradition. Such reassessment will demonstrate that Marxists are part of this tradition and are working for the national interest. And this demonstration will serve to reduce the "bias" against Marxists in liberal circles and assist their entry into the democratic coalition.

The importance of establishing in the popular mind the truth on these questions can hardly be exaggerated. For the "un-Americanism" slanders against Marxists and progressives have played a major part in retarding the development of the democratic forces, and this development cannot reach a high level—comparable to that of, say, France or Italy—until this slander is driven to the ropes. This objective, however, cannot be achieved by the approach which Allen indicates, nor will the integration of the Left into the broader movement be assisted by it.

The "isolation" of the Left, Allen argues, has been caused not only by the attacks of the "chauvinists and cold war patrioteers." It has been aided by the Marxists themselves, for the Marxists have "allowed to fall into the background" "those well established axioms of Marxist thought

which identify their program for a given period, as well as the advocacy of socialism, with the national interest of the country and with the enduring national tradition." (p. 5) "The Marxists and progressives should revive and mature these concepts of the national interest and the national tradition as an important part of their outlook." (p. 11)

THE FIRST question that arises here is whether it is true that American Marxists have failed sufficiently to identify their program with the national interest and tradition. It does not seem to me that it is true or that such a statement should be made without documentation.

But let us assume, for the sake of the argument, that more emphasis should be placed on these matters. Would such emphasis materially assist the integration of the left into the broader democratic stream? It does not seem to me that it would; or, rather, that it would only to the degree to which it was supported by increasing actions in a developing movement.

And here we come to a central weakness in Allen's argument, namely that he places the emphasis almost entirely on the development and propagation of policy. He seems to feel that the main way in which Marxists can overcome their "isolation" is by proclaiming their loyalty to American traditions and national interest. But unless such proclamations were supported by deeds in the popular struggle they would simply result in arousing suspicions as to their sincerity. If a Marxist intellectual, for instance, wishes to be accepted into the present massive struggles of the Negro people, his first step must be to *enter the struggle* (as a dramatist, organizer, reporter, teacher, writer, artist, etc.) and learn from it as well as give to it. If he finds bias against him in some circles he can overcome it only by genuinely sharing the burdens and dangers of the struggle. There is no easy road around the battlefields.

The problems of the integration of the Left into the broader movement require the most exhaustive examination. Such examination must include the problem of new working methods and types of activity suitable for broad organizational forms as well as questions of policy. It must be aimed at a *deep* rooting out of sectarianism and defeatism both in thought and action. If, however, we accept Allen's views that the main problem is that of emphasizing a program on national interest and tradition we may fail to make such an examination, and, hence, to get to the basic problems. Allen's views, in short, by leading to the acceptance of a partial and, in my opinion, superficial explanation, could hinder and not assist the mass integration of the Left.

ALLEN, however, is not simply advocating that American Marxists place more emphasis on the national tradition and interest, but that they "revive" and "mature" a particular set of "axioms" and "concepts" on these matters, specifically those developed in the thirties and early forties.

This, certainly, is a curious recommendation for a Marxist, for, although some of these concepts contained aspects of a true picture, they were *in essence* a falsification of Marxism and led to a serious weakening of the progressive movement. According to some of the "axioms" then developed, the "national interest" was identical with that of monopoly capital (which was to become progressive), and the "national tradition" was equated with the bourgeois democratic tradition. The struggles of the working class and of the Negro people were dissipated in a flabby and "classless" "national" front in which the real leadership passed over into the hands of the capitalist class.

A Marxist cannot call for the "revival" and "maturing" of these concepts for they would have the same effect now as they had in the past. The truth can, in fact, emerge only from a critical examination of these concepts. And this Allen fails to provide. On the contrary, the views which he himself puts forward (the examination of which would require an article in itself) contain many elements from these false concepts. In general the same weakness that we have previously noted, namely a failure to perceive the dynamic of social struggle, runs through them. The national tradition is viewed as an apparently classless "democratic and humanist mainstream" which "has impelled the nation forward" (p. 9), and the national interest is equated with the interest of the "entire people" (p. 8). Although the "pivotal position" of the working class is acknowledged there is no discussion of the social struggles of this class, or those of the Negro people, or of the connection between these struggles and the national tradition and interest. Such an omission could lead in practice to a tailing after monopoly capital.

In theory it represents the perception of but one part of a process and avoids one of the most difficult problems confronting the Marxist examining these questions, namely, how to pursue the popular anti-monopoly interest without losing national perspective, and simultaneously pursue the national interest without yielding to the omnipresent distortions of it as identical with the ruling class interest.

—J. BRANDRETH