

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A NEWS-MAGAZINE OF WESTERN OPINION

**TWO HUMAN
DOCUMENTS**

PERFIDY OF THE PRESS

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PACIFIC WEEKLY

VOL. II

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NUMBER 1

IN CASE YOU HADN'T NOTICED

This is the second issue of a magazine under the title of PACIFIC WEEKLY, but the eleventh issue of a magazine which was established and first published October 25, 1934, and of which I was editor. That magazine was *Controversy*, and it remains as *Controversy*, now being published fortnightly by Harold L. Mack, with Colonel Mack as editor and Elliott Taylor as managing editor. In fact, you regular subscribers to *Controversy*, while I was its editor, have already received the first issue of *Controversy* under the editorship of Colonel Mack and Mr. Taylor. It is a fine magazine—better, I do not hesitate to admit, than I could have made it without the absolute free rein under which I am at my best.

Both *Controversy* and PACIFIC WEEKLY are going out to the original subscribers to *Controversy*. You are entitled to receive both of them but we would appreciate it if you would specifically express your choice and notify *Controversy* or PACIFIC WEEKLY.

I have continued the volume number of *Controversy* on PACIFIC WEEKLY because, with the exception of Colonel Mack and David Warren Ryder, all contributors to the original magazine remain with me in the production of PACIFIC WEEKLY.

Under my editorship there will be no restraint whatsoever on these contributors. PACIFIC WEEKLY will not hesitate to print what it pleases to print and you will be surprised at

the latitude of that. PACIFIC WEEKLY will be liberal and it will be radical—this last in the dictionary sense—because there is a need in California today for a printed word that will offset the flood of capitalist and fascist propaganda which both deliberately and unwittingly is flowing through the state. PACIFIC WEEKLY will not uphold or support any organization as such—socialist, communist, vigilante, Liberty League, Democratic, Republican, Epic. It will endeavor to give utterance to claims and protests of all and any of these which it deems are for the public good.

I am proud to have as my associates and contributors those whose names appear with mine on the following page. They are all men and women of intelligence, discernment and rare ability in the various walks they tread in life. They are not agreed on any subject I can think of, but they are enthusiastic defenders of their personal philosophies and ardent believers in the dissemination of truth. They will contribute from time to time to the columns of PACIFIC WEEKLY that which is nearest to their hearts and closest to their ken. This will result in interesting and enlightening, as well as important and entertaining pages of politics, economics, literature, art, science and life generally.

PACIFIC WEEKLY will get better from week to week. I am sure that you will like it.

—W. K. BASSETT

NOTES AND COMMENT

PACIFIC WEEKLY this week presents what we choose to call "two documents". They are written by two young men. They are entitled "We Learn" and "We Save California". We consider them telling and vital documents. The two young men who wrote them are personally known to the editor of this magazine. The author of "We Learn" is an honor student at the University of California, and a Phi Beta Kappa; the writer of "We Save California" is a young man, perhaps not with equal academic background, but of exceptionally good family, keen-minded, and at present in magazine work in California.

You may yell "red" at one of these documents and "sour grapes" at the other, but that doesn't settle anything. It isn't as simple as that. The fact remains that these young men had these experiences, said these things and wrote these words. What you read in these two documents are human reactions. They touch on serious problems of our civilization and they are delineations of those problems as occur in the minds of two California young men who are soon to be certain and active parts of the machinery of our social system.

The tone of "We Learn" carries a note of bitter disrespect; that of "We Save California" of amused contempt. Well, what about it? These young men were not born

with this disrespect and contempt. They learned it. It was created in them by what? By the very forces that pretend to teach nobility of character, true Americanism, high statesmanship, and instead practice ignobility, un-Americanism and political chicanery.

The patriotic organizations which depend on gagging people to gain their ends; the political and capitalist rings that depend on falsehood to cloud an issue; the narrow-minded traditionalists who are blind to the march of events—these are responsible for what is in the minds of these young men and they will be responsible for what results from what is in the minds of these young men. Disrespect and contempt amalgamated have a percussory effect.

ENGLAND'S proposed scheme to realize everlasting peace in the world should be viewed with suspicion if only for the reason that war hasn't ever done England a great deal of harm—materially. In fact, history records that in modern times there has never been a war anywhere in the world, and whether or not she has been actively involved in it, that England did not turn up at the end with some material advantage. Only her war against the American Colonies was an exception and at that time England didn't consider that she was losing anything. She wasn't, really—then. Generally a war in which she is materially involved, or in which she is apparently no more than an onlooker ends up with her having more

territory under the British flag. The World war did her good in the main in that it paralyzed the world trade of Germany which had grown to proportions which menaced Great Britain industrially. As early as 1909 George Bernard Shaw predicted war between England and Germany because, he said, of Germany's growing world trade and its gradual closing of more and more British markets. So, no matter what high humanitarian idea English statesmen may have, it must be remembered that, as in America, the flag is hoisted, when it's time to hoist it, by the English businessmen.

WE ARE in receipt of a belated Christmas card which is pretty rough, but nevertheless gives us something to think about other than what last week cost us which is not an entirely unrelated matter. The "greeting" comes from one in Hollywood where, we have come to believe everything is consistently rosy and every man sends presents to all the wives he has had and every wife remembers handsomely her far-flung husbands. But this Christmas card appears to be a different vein. We repeat that it is a bit rough, but we also repeat that it gives us something to think about. Here it is:

Christmas is a racket; a feast of merchants presided over by that bloated hypocrite, Santa Claus, Ambassador of Big Business.

It is that supreme day of the year when the contrast between rich and

poor is most cruelly emphasized. A few sit by warm fires enjoying rich food while hundreds of jobless men rot in flop houses.

Girls working for \$16 a week wrap three thousand gifts and unwrap one. Street car men asking decent hours and a living wage are locked out while the L. A. Railway Co. declares a cash dividend of \$982,958.

Undernourished children receiving the patronizing charity of one full meal a year.

There can be no morality without Social Justice. Let us make vigorous mass protest against this senseless orgy.

THE JURY is chosen for the Criminal Syndicalism trials in Sacramento. Eighteen men and women, mostly young, very serious, are on trial for "aiding, abetting and organizing"—to improve the conditions of American workers. A prosecution calling for blood in a heated, hating red-baiting atmosphere seeks to prove these young people wanted to bring about the terrors Mr. Hearst thinks up in his nightmare editorials. It is important for American men and women to see that these trials do not end in a cloud of fascist injustice—a new Mooney case.

THE TAX on bank checks is off at last. It is reported that last year alone the return to the government was in excess of \$40,000,000. Now the rich and the big employers, whose money most of that forty million was, will be able to take what they will save this year and divide it between stockholders and workers, or new equipment and workers, on increased production and workers or more golf and workers. Chances are it will be divided between stockholders and new equipment and increased production and more golf.

GERHARDT SIEGER, social democrat refugee from Germany, spoke Friday night to more than 500 men and women students now attending a Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. student conference at Asilomar. Sieger, a rather quiet, calm, unemotional type of person, spoke on German fascism, what it is doing to the German people, and of persecution. His account of his own imprisonment in a concentration camp, simple and clear, had its effect on the young people. After several weeks, several days, in fact, the condition and atmosphere of the camp made it impossible for a victim to have any peace of mind. He spoke of the rottenness of the food: mostly starch; his hard exercise; no sort of privileges. But this was the least of it. There were worse factors: every day the guards and officers would change their orders. One day they would be told they could write letters, the next day this permission

was revoked. The guards have the right to do anything they wish to the prisoners: beat, torture, intimidate, terrorize, hang, shoot or incite to suicide. The Storm Troopers take full advantage of their license. After a few days of such life in camp a prisoner becomes so nerve-wracked, particularly because of the atmosphere of "what's next?" that he comes very near to insanity.

Herr Sieger told how his wife was put in a concentration camp for no apparent reason. She was classed as a political prisoner, and treatment for such prisoners is harsher than for any other type. Worse still, however, her seventeen-months-old baby was also taken "prisoner" and given a criminal number.

Sieger's account of his escape was exciting, but he felt it unimportant. When pressed to tell it, he did so, saying, however: "But remember, this is not important. The fact that I was lucky enough to escape does not mean that those poor victims still prisoners, and those at present free but living under the terror, have a chance of escaping. The chances are small. Fascism must be fought."

One of the points that Sieger stressed was the need of fighting fascism now. He said that in Germany, although it was expected, the people waited until it came before they started to fight it. He said that only about ten per cent of those who are being persecuted are Jews and that near ninety per cent are pacifists, socialists, social democrats, liberals, Catholics, communists, trade unionists and Reichwehr men.

Sieger is a tragic man, without a country. If he went back to Germany he would be tortured and probably put to death.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

A HAPPY NEW YEAR to you. And I mean new.

A prophet foresees that, when New York has its own power and light, it will have hot water, too.

The National Chamber of Commerce urges that the 7 A section of the NRA be eliminated. This is the clause proposed in the original, the one clause, for labor. The rest is for business. And, in accordance with my theory that sincerity and intelligence are twins, I feel that I can aver with sincerity, that the reform of the NRA by the Chamber of Commerce is sincere. As I have often explained, all that business wants in this world is the earth.

Professor Lipman of the University of California has reported to the Society of American Bacteriologists of Chicago that he has discovered again that rocks are "living"; that a kind of bacteria lives in travertine rocks found in Yellowstone Park. That's nothing. Robinson Jeffers has known all his adult life that there is life in stones. And he knows stones. He has carried up his hill on the point living stones from the sea shore to build into his house and tower. He may not be known to his nearest neighbors, but

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some friends of his who are not right next door are aware that he has talked to and listened to all those stones in his house all these years. Perhaps that's why he carries them so long and so constantly, for the messages they whisper to him of the five hundred million years of their quiet listening life. Perhaps that's why he is so quiet and such a good listener himself. Perhaps indeed that is why he differs so essentially from his wife, Una, and from me. It is quite possible that he knows something that we who have never listened to stones, do not know.

You could invent and perfect a social philosophy built solely upon the wish to save the children of the rich. They certainly need saving, as well as the poor. But the philosophy that would save them would save the poor also. A philosophy of revolution would be the opposite of a philosophy

of war: it would sacrifice only the parents.

Some non-athletic students were in here this week who explained in part the troubles and splits of their campus by saying that college athletics had become Big Business.

I see that Ernest Thompson Seton and his wife, Grace, are to be divorced after all these years. I knew Grace Gallatan well almost from birth. She used to come over to our house in Sacramento and see my sisters, and I used her, as I did them, to train my pony to walk over their prostrate bodies without hurting them. The pony learned to step gracefully between them. He began with logs and then when he could step over the logs without touching them I tried him on the girls, intending, if none of them was hurt, to go on to males. My father whipped me once for making on these girls an ex-

periment which I suppose he thought should have been begun on mice.

Americanism: it's gradually, very gradually, getting rid of our grafters without interfering in any way with the graft. I doubt that it can be done. At the risk of treason I have my doubts about it.

When Pop Ernest (Doelter) and Jo Davidson, the sculptor, said goodbye six months ago they embraced. And you could see that each felt that they were artists. As they were. And now Pop Ernest is gone.

It turns out to have been a Wall Street broker who suggested a dictator and a march on Washington—so prematurely.

The War Department seems to be pretty bad, compared, I mean, to corrupt city government.

PERFIDY OF THE PRESS

by W. K. BASSETT

QUITE editorially last week, in a letter addressed to the members of the American Newspaper Guild, I referred to the perversion of newspaper reporters by the publishers who hire them, and to the necessity for a newspaperman to keep constantly in mind the sacred cows of the publisher and his personal desires in the handling of almost any kind of news.

I had hardly got the words out of my mouth when the San Francisco Chronicle and the San Francisco Examiner perpetrated one of the most striking examples of just what I mean. The other San Francisco papers were probably as rank in the same matter, but the two morning papers will sufficiently illustrate my point. I will first state the case and then take you behind the scenes to show you how it is done and just how contemptible it is. I believe I can also show you how it is a case of obtaining money under false pretenses on the part of newspapers which accept certain sums a month from subscribers under the tacit understanding that they will provide the news in return for it.

Let us take the Chronicle first.

On page one, column one of the Chronicle last Friday morning there appeared an Associated Press story from Washington, D. C., which began with the following paragraph:

Washington, Dec. 27 (AP)—The labor relations board today asked NRA's compliance division to remove

the San Francisco Call-Bulletin's Blue Eagle for failing to reinstate Dean S. Jennings, a rewrite man.

I set that paragraph apart because I want you to center your attention on it particularly. I want you to note that it is a straightforward statement containing what is undoubtedly a surprisingly interesting piece of news.

Now, here are the next four paragraphs:

Jennings complained to the board he had been forced to resign because of his activity with the American Newspaper Guild.

The board upheld Jennings' contention.

This decision of the board was over the argument of Donald R. Richberg, director of the emergency council, that the labor board lacked jurisdiction. Richberg and Blackwell Smith, NRA general counsel, maintained, with the Call-Bulletin, that the complaint should have been heard by the newspaper industrial board.

The paper did not present any testimony regarding the circumstances of Jennings' departure from his job, confining its case to its claim that the labor board had no jurisdiction.

Interesting, isn't it, and important? A straight, unprejudiced, unbiased story, sent out by the Associated Press which has a reputation for being unprejudiced and unbiased. It isn't, actually, but it makes a strong pretense to be and in this instance it has pretty well lived up to the pretense.

But the Chronicle didn't like that A.P. story. The publisher of the Chronicle didn't like it. You can bet almost anything that the rank and file of the reporters on the Chronicle staff liked it, and that every newspaperman in San Francisco, and the country, for that matter, liked it. But the Chronicle, of course, didn't.

What to do? As it was an Associated Press story the Chronicle could not take liberties with it. It could throw the whole thing away, if it wanted to, but it couldn't change it in any way and leave that little (AP) at the beginning of it. The Chronicle is one of those papers which still believe that the public is impressed by that little (AP). Really, it isn't, much—a big part of the public doesn't even notice it, or know what it means when it does. But the Chronicle considers it a stock in trade.

What to do? Well, here's what the Chronicle did.

If you go back and read that story—the first five paragraphs of it which I quoted—you get the idea that a request has been made by the Labor Relations Board that the Blue Eagle be taken away from the San Francisco Call-Bulletin. Pretty plain, isn't it?

What happens to a story usually when it is received in the newsroom of a newspaper in the order run of events? If, for example, this had been a story to the effect that a request had been made for the removal of the Blue Eagle from the Umpity Chain Stores of Keokuk, Iowa, the story would have been shot over to the copydesk and the

man "in the slot" on the desk would have designated the kind of headline he wanted written on it and shot it across to a copyreader. The copyreader would have read it for typographical errors, or to cut it, if he considered it too long and then written a headline on it that would have set forth what he found in the first paragraph: something like this:

MAY TAKE EAGLE FROM CHAIN STORES

He would do this because he is a newspaperman and he knows that in a straight news story the story is properly in the first paragraph and the head should be written on that.

So much for the Keokuk chain stores which mean not a thing in any possible way to the San Francisco *Chronicle* except as they provide a piece of news. As far as the *Chronicle* is concerned the copyreader could be perfectly ethical about handling that story; he could follow the rules of journalism; in a word, he could be decent and honorable in handling it.

But this *Call-Bulletin* story! That is something else again. The *Chronicle* doesn't care a hoot about the *Call-Bulletin*. In fact, the *Call-Bulletin*, being owned by Mr. Hearst, is considerably anathema to the *Chronicle*. But the *Call-Bulletin* is a newspaper and now is the time for all good newspapers to come to the aid of each other.

So when the *Call-Bulletin* Blue Eagle story came in, it went to the managing editor and from him probably up to the publisher, and the publisher sent word back to the managing editor and the managing editor passed the word along to the man "in the slot" on the copydesk, along with the story, and then one of the copyreaders, on orders, wrote this headline on it:

PRESS OF U. S. TO MAP WAR ON RULING OF LABOR BOARD

There it is! Now look back and read the first five paragraphs of the story as I have quoted them for you. Good headline, isn't it? Written right on the lead of the story, isn't it? Gives you a good idea what the story is about, doesn't it?

Like hell, it does! It doesn't at all tell you the news as contained in the Associated Press story. The headline is actually written on a paragraph that appears farther down, the fifth paragraph in the story, and not the news at all. The news is that the Labor Relations Board requested the removal of the *Call-Bulletin's* Blue Eagle. That was the news last Friday morning and it was the news the *Chronicle* subscribers had a right to have called to their attention in the headline. The headline should have read:

LABOR BOARD ASKS BLUE EAGLE BE TAKEN FROM CALL-BULLETIN

and that is the headline the copyreader, with integrity, ethics and honor would have written on the story if his published had been ethical and honorable and possessed of integrity.

So much for the *Chronicle*.

The *Examiner* handled it in a different way but to the same ignoble end. Actually, Hearst was a bit less decent about it. The *Examiner* manipulated the bunk from the sending instead of the receiving end.

Hearst owns a news service called the Universal Service. It isn't much shucks of a news service and is only used by those newspapers which can't get the Associated Press or the United Press. Well, when the Hearst higher-ups in the Universal Service headquarters in New York were informed from Washington of the request of the Labor Relations Board that the Hearst *Call-Bulletin's* Blue Eagle be taken away, they said:

"Hell's bells, we can't send out a story like that. We'll get another angle on it and lead with the protest of the newspaper publishers against such a recommendation."

So they did. You see, Universal Service can do that. It can make a story read just as it pleases. It generally does. That's why it's not much shucks as a news service. So out of New York (Universal Service) goes the story with the first paragraph reading like this in the San Francisco *Examiner*:

New York, Dec. 27—(Universal Service).—Howard Davis, chairman of the Publishers' National Code Committee, announced tonight that a convention of 1,200 newspapers will be called immediately to consider the National Labor Relations Board action in the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin* case.

Isn't that a prize introductory paragraph for a news story? How every newspaper reporter who reads it will laugh at that one! That paragraph is like starting a brand new bank robbery story this way:

"John Doe and his gang were being hunted by police today in connection with the bank robbery and the killing of six persons."

"The *Call-Bulletin* case", the *Examiner* tells you, being careful to put the soft pedal on the fact that "the *Call-Bulletin* case" is the quite important matter of the possible loss of the Blue Eagle by a metropolitan newspaper.

If a reporter wrote a lead such as my example on a bank robbery and murder he would be fired, and well he should be. The newspaper official who dictated the Universal Service lead should be hung, drawn and quartered, preferably by a committee from the American Newspaper Guild.

The truth is, or have you guessed it, that the *Chronicle* and the *Examiner* do not want

their readers to learn much about the Newspaper Guild's battle for fair treatment and living wages and decent hours. They don't want you to know how Jennings was treated by the *Call-Bulletin*, how Redfern Mason was treated by the *Examiner*, how Clifford Gessler was treated by the Honolulu *Star-Bulletin*, how three men were treated by the Oakland *Tribune*.

The newspaper publishers are battling against organization by newspaper reporters, rewrite men and copyreaders, as they battled against organization by type-setters and pressmen years ago. They'll lose, eventually, just as they lost to the typographical and pressmen's unions, but the poor newspaper boys will take a lot of beatings before the inevitable end is reached.

In the meantime I shall give vent to a lot of ire I have been suffering with the suppression of for the past ten years. I shall touch printer's ink to a bunch of confessions that are pretty liable to distribute pains in the neck among publishers, owners and managing editors of certain newspapers in San Francisco, Oakland, Honolulu, Boston and Providence, R. I.

SONG OF THE STONEMASON

There's many a wall
I've known the call
To lay within my time;
And I carved each block
Of living rock
To the ring of a hammered rhyme.
And though I'm worn
And my hands are torn
And the mark of the years I've known;
Ten thousand rains
Will beat in vain
On the dreams I've dreamed—in stone.

—The living rock will serve above my head—

Tombstones are the stones that make a wall—

Close I hug the granite for its warmth,
and all

I ask is but a place to make my bread.

—RON MACKIE



THE CINEMA DOT PROTEST

by WINTHROP RUTLEGE

MOVIE AUDIENCES are so accustomed to applauding violence against radicals that they find themselves a little embarrassed at "The President Vanishes" (Paramount). The early scenes show the gray shirts beating anti-war speakers to death and draw ripples of hand-clapping from the more exuberant and less thoughtful members of the spectators.

Later they are given opportunity to blush into their collars when the president, hero of the film, denounces the gray shirt capers and takes desperate means to prevent the country from being plunged into a world war. The applause is heavier, it must be said in defense of the intelligence of the film audience, when the gray shirt leader is killed and the president succeeds in his fight for peace.

"The President Vanishes", as was ably stated in last week's issue of this worthy gazette, drew thunder both from right and left when it first appeared. The Great Hearst bellowed throughout his wind-blown daisy chain that the picture was the vilest communist propaganda, concocted by enemies of the worthy rich who should be permitted to continue running the nation without leash.

The reason for the Hearstian dart is simple when one sees the picture. One of the group of magnates who seeks to foment the war and establish the gray shirt fascists is the publisher of a string of papers. The others are steel and munitions tycoons. The publishers promises them he'll make the public war-conscious overnight with his journals.

On the other hand the communist organs branded "The President Vanishes" as fascist demagogic propaganda. This I can't quite go along with. It isn't always the most intelligent propaganda, but I can't find a way to call it fascist.

The story is like this: The munitions-steel-publisher group needs a war for business. There is already one in Europe and the profits there are plentiful. The president (played excellently by Arthur Byron) sees no reason why American youth should be sent to foreign soil to collect bankers' bets. Congress is willing to fight (which means to wave the flag while others fight) and the imperialist gang hopes to sweep aside the president's will with a wave of induced popular hysteria.

When things get too critical the president has himself kidnaped, and the public turns its thoughts from war to the finding of its missing idol. He stays in hiding until the war craze has abated and then returns under dramatic circumstances which involve the killing of the gray shirt leader and a successful radio appeal to the people for peace.

With certain of the communist arguments against the picture I can agree. It is true that it builds too dangerously upon the idea of a single leader. The president, though he uses popular opinion to win his fight, virtually becomes a dictator in so doing. It is demagoguery, to whatever end, good or bad, it is being used. And it may have in it the grains of the fascist idea. But I don't believe this was a consciously employed device of Producer Walter Wanger. He made a courageous effort and he succeeded in making what is—despite the cuts brought about by Headman Hearst—an engrossing and stimulating movie.

Moreover it performs a valuable service in showing that fascism is merely the tool of desperate or over-zealous capitalism. It shows some gruellingly realistic scenes of fascist terror and does not put the anti-war speakers in the usual hideously freakish light. But of course it is sheer fantasy; presidents simply don't do the things Arthur Byron does in the film, though many of them are, or have been, good, honest, conscientious men. They get persuaded . . .

The rest of the movies on view this week save "The Mighty Barnum" (United Artists), offer little. It is a highly amusing and gaily vulgar picture of the great showman. It is full of amusing episodes which may or may not be historically accurate. But it doesn't matter, for Wallace Beery blunders magnificently through his vicissitudes and Adolphe Menjou makes a splendid figure of the suave Bailey Welsh, whose first name, linked with his chief's last, was the official label of "the greatest show on earth".

Fritz Leiber's Shakespeare repertory is frankly disappointing. Leiber is a worthy actor, but often succumbs to the temptation—probably engendered by too much playing in "the sticks"—to go hammy. His "Macbeth", worthiest of all his offerings, was marred by the whining and uninspired performance of Virginia Bronson. The other offerings were little better than those of William Thorton, save for an occasional bit by one of the several good and seasoned troupers in the cast.

"SPRINGTIME FOR HENRY"

WE WENT to the first night of "Springtime for Henry" at The Playhouse in Carmel a little under protest. The night was cold and rainy, and the idea of the play wasn't particularly appealing. We were pleasantly disappointed in our rather gloomy forebod-

ings. The curtain rose on a really charming set, simple, restrained, moderne, without being distressingly eccentric, and our spirits rose immediately with this auspicious opening.

All the actors were new to us, and we trust that we shall have the pleasure of seeing them again in other roles. Reginald Foster was especially entertaining as the bland Englishman; he had a genuine feeling for the character and read his lines with ease and, we suspect, a secret enjoyment. Mrs. Jose Perez-Brown, who took the part of his wife, was a delight whenever she appeared upon the stage; she was extremely decorative; added to that she possessed a poise and distinction which were exactly right for the disillusioned and cynical part she had to play. Charlotte Lawrence, the secretary, looked pretty and innocent; her part didn't give her much scope, but she did what she could with an innocuous role. Digby Smith, as Henry, we feel has a decided flair for comedy; it was in his moments of rage that he seemed less convincing. It will be interesting to see him again.

The main criticism of the production was the slowness of tempo. Although the performance went off smoothly, one felt the need of more speed and sparkle; it was the clever, smart sort of thing that calls for technique at high speed. We judge by the first night; perhaps it went faster in subsequent performances. —L. M.

GEOLOGY FOR YOUR BOY

by JOE HOLLISTER

THE MAN who starts out with a hammer and compass into the hills or mountains is trying to figure out what he can't see from what he can see.

He knows a few things and he guesses the rest. He knows that lots of the rocks that he finds in the mountains were formed at one time on the bottom of the ocean because he finds sea shells in them. He also knows that some of the rocks are older than others because they are underneath the younger ones.

He knows, too, that there are some rocks that at one time were red hot and came from deep down in the earth, because he can see where these rocks have burned other rocks they have touched. Then there are a lot of rocks he is not so sure about.

In fact, there are lots of things he is not

sure about. Some geologists think they have made some pretty good guesses about how many years old some rocks are but they are only guesses. Some day someone may find out and then we will know how good those guesses were.

The geologists who believe only what they see make the best guesses. They also remember when they didn't see something and when they started guessing. There are not many like that. That may be one of the reasons we know so little about the rocks and the mountains.

To get an idea of what has happened a long time ago, the geologist watches what goes on now. He watches the rivers after a storm and notices that the water can roll big boulders down to the ocean but as soon as the water gets to the ocean it spreads out and loses its strength and so cannot roll the boulders any farther than the beach or a little beyond. Little bits of sand though are lighter and go farther out in the ocean and the waves swish it all along the beach and carry it out quite a way and then it drops to the bottom. Mud goes still farther before it settles in quiet water to the bottom of the ocean.

Then he notices, too, that near the shore certain kinds of shells are living and out in deeper water there are other kinds. So when

he goes into the mountains and finds a rock with a lot of sand grains and shells that he thinks used to live near shore because they do now he guesses that that rock was formed one time long ago along an old coast line. If there are lots of pebbles or boulders in the rock he thinks his guess is a pretty good one.

But when he was on the beach he noticed at low tide that the beach was pretty flat. The old beach he has found in the mountains may be all wrinkled up. What wrinkled it, he wonders, and that is what all geologists are trying to find out. Nobody knows. And in some places he finds an old beach that is still as flat as he thinks it must have been when the ocean waves were washing over it and yet it is high up in the mountains. What lifted it, or did the ocean sink? Nobody knows.

Some people, a long time ago, built a house on land, we are pretty sure because why should they have built it under water? Yet that building is full of holes and in the holes are sea shells that bored into the stone walls of that house and now you can walk up to the house and not get wet. It must have sunk down under water and come back up again. There are other things you can see if you look that show the land rises and sinks or the ocean rises and sinks. Why? Geologists are trying to find out.

Perhaps if we study and learn more about

earthquakes we will get an answer to some of our questions. If we can find out more about the bottom of the ocean and the things that live in the ocean or on the land, too, it will help. If we go into all the mountains of the world and see what rocks are there and what shells are in the rocks and how the rocks have been folded and how badly, we may find an answer. And then why did some animals live, thousands of them, a long time ago, and then die out so we can't find any of them alive today, or haven't we looked enough for them? Why did the horse once have five toes and why does he now have only one?—to run faster?—or did he have five toes?

Geologists have split rocks open and found all sorts of strange animals and plants that so far have never been seen alive. Some were huge beasts, bigger than elephants; some must have looked like dragons. And then in the younger rocks we find some animals that are living today—fish, frogs, deer, snails, and even bees and mosquitoes, anything that fell in the water, was drowned and covered up with sand or mud on the bottom of old oceans or lakes.

Geology is fun because there are so many questions without answers and because there is only one way to find the answers and that is by seeing.

WE LEARN

by JOSEPH BARA

PROMINENT U. C. L. A. GROUP IS SUSPENDED ON 'RED' CHARGE. When on October 30, this headline broke across the front sheet of the Daily Californian, it began a chain of events which to some of us stand out as the most significant of our entire university experience. "Upon their arrival on the campus today," ran the article, "the five students were given notices that they were suspended for a year . . . Dr. Moore (provost of the University at Los Angeles) charged that the students paid no attention to the wishes of President Robert G. Sproul of the University of California who did not desire them to hold a campus forum on next week's election and held a meeting discussing the forum." In this section we learned that, according to Dr. Moore, they "were using their offices to destroy the university by handing it over to Communists."

Certain suppression of freedom of speech was no new thing to us. That there were thousands of recent cases the world over was commonplace. We knew what had taken place in every industrial struggle in California itself in the past year, but not being

workers, we had never been actively concerned. As students we had stood immune, half believing ourselves safe in our little academic haven above the struggle. But these suspensions of fellow students in the branch of our university, for their advocacy of an open forum, which we ourselves were seeking, drove something home to us. Though we knew some such drastic action had long been impending, in our hearts we had refused to recognize the possibility.

As the details of the affair filtered through to us, the issue of the conflict became increasingly clear. Whether or not our liberty of action and expression were to be curtailed by the influence of outside groups, to whom the concept of a liberal university was foreign. We had from the first, of course, recognized the absurdity of Dr. Moore's charges of subversive activity which he never substantiated by a single concrete proof. Now we learned that this final blow was the culmination of years of pressure upon the southern university by various powerful reactionary groups. The Navy League had wanted the student body of U. C. L. A. to sponsor an essay contest in

the high schools and colleges of Southern California on "Our Navy", the American Legion had wanted a joint march of the R. O. T. C. and the Legion prior to the football game. Frustrated by a conscientious student executive committee, which refused to cooperate with them in spreading jingoistic propaganda, these were now screaming "Red". By terrific pressure they had finally broken the resistance of the few liberal vestiges in the spirit of Dr. Moore.

Some few of us gathered to see what we could do to voice support for the U. C. L. A. students. New blows were falling every day—Dr. Moore's call to athletes and fraternity boys to organize to quell all dissenters by intimidation, a similar call to vigilantes at San Jose State College, and the suspension of the Santa Clara student editor for saying, "students have nothing to gain in war". Curious incongruity in this alliance of athletes and administration against the Phi Betes!

Why did our liberal President Sproul remain silent through all this? Several hundred students, in spite of the rain, gathered at Sather Gate in answer to our call. We

voted to send a delegation to Dr. Sproul. Bob Sproul was the man to whom students were wont to appeal in a crisis. Most of the campus had implicit faith in him. We knew him as the distinguished master of the rostrum in university assemblies. His booming voice, hearty laugh and frank manner had endeared him to the campus, as did his warm loyalty to the Alma Mater, his understanding visits to football dressing rooms after a big Game, when he had been known to weep on the star half-back's shoulder. His fine liberal words at last year's commencement seemed almost written to give us encouragement in the present crisis: "Learn to think about American's problems . . . Upon you as students the future of democracy rests . . . If you cannot stand firm when things go wrong and courageously assume your responsibility as citizens, then our democracy will fail . . . The turbulent world you enter is no place for cowards. A courageous sinner is much more at home in it than a timid saint . . . Above all, don't be content with contemplative inaction. Don't be content to interpret the world. Go out and change it."

When we sought an interview with Dr. Sproul he "was very busy and unable to see us", his secretary said.

It was terrible to see active suppression in one school after another in the papers every morning, without even the intimation of a protest anywhere. We felt there was desperate need of something being done on our side. A committee of interested students met and voted to call a student strike as the most effective means of letting the world know that we, at least, stood behind the student leaders of U. C. L. A.

That same evening suddenly Dr. Sproul's secretary telephoned us that he could arrange to meet our delegation next morning. This was the first time we had met the president personally. He seemed worried and nervous; there were lines on his face and under his eyes that we had never noticed before. His booming laugh rang a little hollow and his gruff friendliness seemed forced. Yet he did not seem unsympathetic when we explained that we would not take lying down an action which seemed to threaten the things we held dearest in the university. After all, we were defending principles he himself had defended time and again in his public speeches. He was sitting as an impartial judge upon the case of the U. C. L. A. suspensions, he told us, and as such, would neither sanction or condemn our proposed strike in support of the southern students.

The days of preparation for the strike seemed as confused as nightmares in retrospect. The strike committee charged with the organization of the demonstration was made as large and representative as possible. This made for a wide split of opinion as to the exact tactics to be employed, and greatly increased the difficulty of planning

the countless details—mimeographing of thousands of leaflets, organizing committees to distribute them at the gates, making announcements in classes, contacting sympathetic members of the faculty, issuing public statements to the newspapers, painting posters, contacting the students of other colleges, and planning the mass meeting to take place during the hour of the student walk-out. We thrashed out the pros and cons of every step, hour after hour, hardly taking time to eat or sleep.

In our anxiety to avoid being labelled "fanatical reds" by the rest of the campus, many of us tending to disregard the advice of the more radical members of the committee, believing them to be too pessimistic and cynical in regard to the probable action of the university authorities. Hadn't Dr. Sproul told us personally of his attitude of hands-off and non-interference? But as our plans developed to meet the new exigencies which arose, we found ourselves falling more and more into the habit of turning to the radicals for the final word. Their predictions had a disconcerting way of coming true. The special delivery letter, sent by the administration to the professors, preemptorily demanding the faculty cooperate in preventing students from taking part in the one-hour demonstration, came as the first shock. The argument of the letter, which justified the rather drastic action as necessary to prevent "disruption of the academic schedule", was not very convincing when we remembered the many hour periods when all classes were dismissed to hear talks by athletic coaches. By the day of the strike, when Dr. Sproul issued, in the university paper, an appeal to the students, asking them to repudiate our action, (at the same time trying to discredit us by heaping ridicule upon us) we had lost most of our illusions about the liberality of the university administration.

Our most pessimistic premonitions seemed justified when the strike meeting began. An organized minority of students, mostly athletes and fraternity boys, tried to break up our meeting by hooting down our speakers, intimidating the students who carried posters, and finally bombarding us with eggs and tomatoes when we mounted the rostrum. When the whole thing seemed a failure, the tide began to turn. More and more of the two thousand people gathered at the Gate grew disgusted with the hecklers, especially when one of the speakers, a girl, mounted the rostrum and stuck it out in the face of a veritable hail of missiles. Something in her conviction and courage gave the scene almost the atmosphere of a martyrdom of a Saint Sebastian; gave it an intensity that brought your heart into your mouth. The reaction of the Oakland business man who came, at first out of curiosity, and at this crisis ran off to buy an American flag to hold beside the speaker,

was typical of many. Perhaps the strike had brought our enemies into the open; it had also made us many active friends.

All of this drew our strike committee into a unified whole. Beginning with a committee composed predominantly of "liberals", with a small radical opposition, we ended with a committee of "radicals". We were no longer surprised when we found that one of the vigilante committees was unofficially sponsored by an underling of Dr. Sproul's and that some of the fraternity vigilantes were paid by their southern California alumni to break us up. We began to see in our opposition not a casual movement, but a connection between it and the powers that were behind the statewide movement of reactionary suppression, active in the field against the manual worker as well as against the student who tried to develop independent ideas.

In answer to the problems raised by the strike we felt the need of permanent organization among the students. We felt that if anything were to be done, we would have to do it for ourselves. The Students' Rights Association was the result, standing upon the following declaration of principles:

We stand on the issue of free speech. We believe that freedom of opinion and of speech is a basic inalienable right, and that when we cease to have that right we cease to have democracy. We all know that this American right has already been destroyed in many parts of the country. Recent events in California have established precedents for the suppression of free speech which are even now having disastrous consequences. It is becoming increasingly clear that the demagogues and would-be intellectual leaders, who shout the loudest about Americanism, are launching a campaign of narrow nationalism that threatens to destroy all intellectual freedom.

We intend to fight every form of pressure or intimidation exercised against an individual because of his ideas.

Any of us who had lingering doubts about which side Dr. Sproul stood on had them dispelled by our last interview with him. He was now distinctly unfriendly, even to the point of discourtesy. Even though he must have known, as we knew, that the precedents established by the suspensions of U. C. L. A. students would hold as well for us at U. C. in the future, he refused point-blank to discuss them. "None of your business," he implied. When we told him that as delegates of the Students' Rights Association we were requesting a student forum, he answered us, "You must remember that freedom of speech does not concern the students alone. It concerns the students, the faculty, and the State, and the State has the final word." We reflected that the State re-

ferred to did not mean any abstract concept of commonwealth, but the "State" which had elected Merriam—and by what methods!

But most amazing of all was a remark he let fall concerning democracy, amazing not

in itself, but for its reflection upon the sincerity of his idealistic reiterations on democracy in his frequent addresses. In answer to our statement that the Students' Rights Association was representative of at

least a sizeable group of students, since the most democratic methods possible were used in election of officers, he said:

"Let's be frank about this—there is no democracy, here or anywhere else."

WE SAVE CALIFORNIA

by DONALD McRAE

WHEN the Sinclair primary landslide broke the hearts of the righteous in California, not to mention the collective political heart of Justus Wardell, George Creel and all party regulars of the Democratic camp, I became what was known as a "bolting Democrat". In Los Angeles Ham Cotton bolted for the honor of the party, Americanism and, according to rumor, twenty-one thousand dollars. I rather doubt the last because Ham didn't need the money and why the extra thousand on that good round figure of twenty grand? In the North, Justus Wardell bolted out of anger and for twenty-five jobs promised to followers of the original Roosevelt crowd in their fight to make Democracy safe for Wardell. I bolted for fifty a week and expenses. The job, press agent and organizer. With me went my friend, Hannigan, organizer, who learned his tactics during five years with the Vare machine in Philadelphia. Hannigan knew all the ropes and I stuck close to him throughout the campaign.

Down at Ham Cotton's headquarters for the bolters in Los Angeles there was high feeling of prosperity among the starved ward heelers and precinct men who had hobbled through a hopeful but painful existence in the primaries in one camp or another. Leo Steedle, who had put out that blood-thirsty, patriotic sheet called "American Democracy", was chief press agent for the bolters and very close to Ham Cotton. Another who seemed in the inner circle was a little Jew whose name I have forgotten except that he was known as Joe. What Joe's capacity was I have never found out. He used to sit at a desk next to Ham and draw up legal-looking contracts to be used in dealing with those "—— Republican ——". He would spend half an hour drawing up a contract full of whereases, whatevers, etc., and then at the end, with a deep sign of anticipation like a kid eating the icing saved from a cake, he would say, "Now we puts in de clause where we gets de sugar!"

Our orders were simple. We had both worked Democratic organization among the younger groups, Junior Chamber of Commerce and Twenty-Thirty club stuff. We were to go out and swing these groups into line where we had contacts. Hannigan was

on straight organization. I got private instructions on the press agency. "We can't sell this —— Merriam," I was told. "You know that. Look at the mug on the wolf. What we're working on is to discredit Sinclair and hope we'll get the votes on the bounce."

In San Jacinto, (not the name of the town where we worked, of course, for some of my friends still have hopes, of getting political jobs from the grateful Merriam Democrats) we started in to work by organizing the Junior Merriam Democrats. This was made from all parties, just so the members were young men. The tag "Merriam Democrats" was used for its publicity value. With the administration wavering and McAdoo cool in his statements regarding Sinclair, the ham and egg politicians who made up California's Democracy were very uncertain in regard to their party regularity. In talking to them we found that not one would mention Sinclair by name. Fearfully they quoted, as though it were their own, the famous Farley ambiguity that "the party has never failed to back its nominees." The more Merriam Democrats, the more uncertain were these regulars.

From the Merriam headquarters we sent out pages of letters proving Sinclair an atheist, a communist, a free-love advocate. We distributed this literature at churches, schools, women's clubs, etc.

I had a friend of mine call the manager of our local office and threaten bombing if the place wasn't closed within three days. We strung this story along for a week or two with regular telephone calls. The manager was scared to death and yelled for police protection just as we wanted him to do. The papers played it up and we made the Los Angeles Times with a half-column story.

Then I had another bright idea which worked partly. I tried to hire a man to take a shot at our office manager's car, but the lowest price I could get was twenty-five dollars for the job and that was too much to pad my expense account. Both the office and the manager's house were under police guard by this time and therefore the price for my proposed job was high. Finally I and one of my trusty assistants drove down town one evening, got a few drinks for courage and then tossed a brick

through the window of our manager's car. Next morning we took pictures of the broken window, the police guard and the office manager. The story landed nicely in the local papers, but we had to pay for our own cuts. The papers, of course, were suspicious. They were willing to print anything derogatory to Sinclair followers, but even then they wouldn't spend money for cuts on a phoney brick-throwing.

The best stunt we pulled was with the "trick ballot box" rumor. For a number of days our precinct workers had been bringing in reports of people who did not intend to vote. Obviously Sinclair supporters, they feared some possibility of losing their jobs. At that time we were taking names of all voters who admitted to our workers that they were for Sinclair. The list was made in a number of copies. One copy was sent to all banks, another to all employers of the city, and another to the gas and electric companies. I was given to understand that the banks and public service corporations used the lists to bear down on any Sinclair people who were slow with loan payments or in arrears in gas and light bills, but I do not know this. With the lists to work on I passed a story around to our precinct workers that I had heard a rumor that "trick ballot boxes" were to be used in the election. These ballot boxes supposedly let all ballots slide into the box in the order in which they were voted. At the time of the count, therefore, it would be simple to use the voting list and check how each one voted. This sounded plausible to the precinct workers as the Republican headquarters were working various stunts of which we had no knowledge. I told the precinct workers that I thought this story was being circulated by the Sinclairites to put our outfit in a bad light and that if they heard it they were to deny it. They denied it so successfully, even before it was mentioned, that in two days everyone in town had heard of it. Then I had our headquarters issue a loud and righteous denial of any complicity which only served to confirm suspicions, as I had hoped it would. In the next week the number of "won't tell" voters had increased 50 per cent and it was only in isolated cases that our precinct workers were able to get Sinclair voters to admit even a knowledge of the right of suffrage. This stunt was mime-

ographed and sent privately throughout the state and I believe was used successfully in other sections.

With San Jacinto organized, Hannigan and I took to the road. Other towns were along similar lines. Our only difficulty was that money on the campaign ran short. It took some important bolting to raise a fifty a week job in the last few days. The election was in the bag and Hannigan and I got orders to come in for the killing.

The extent of the damage we "bolters" were able to do to the Sinclair cause is hard to estimate. Of course, the state carried by

300,000 for Merriam. That plurality could have come only from Democratic ranks. In San Jacinto, which I have used as a yardstick, our cards showed 12,000 registered voters, almost an even split, Republicans and Democrats. Our precinct check showed at first 4,000 for Sinclair, 1,000 more than the primary count. After the pressure had worked two or three weeks we showed only 2,000 for Sinclair. Hannigan and I have talked it over since and we believe that we changed and scared off about 1,000 solid Sinclair votes. How many there were who would have voted for Upton and were brought to the true faith by our work is

impossible accurately to estimate. But we won the election. We carried every town where we worked. A letter from Hannigan, who is waiting for a political job as promised, tells me "no gravey train for us, boy. Its just another case of conversation. Maybe I'll get something around the first of the year and God knows I need it. Next time we'll ride that expense account for enough to last us for years."

But there will be no next time for me. This was my first campaign and it will be my last. I did my bit to keep California sane and American. From now on I'll leave it to the Merriams.

LINCOLN STEFFENS ANSWERS

AN interesting controversy has arisen in New York in which this magazine can claim no little part. Dr. Horace M. Kallen, professor at the New School of Social Research, has written the National Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners to resign his membership, because this organization has not sent to the Russian government the same protests on behalf of the recent shootings there as it has to the German and Italian fascist government the Spanish and Polish and Austrian governments, for their treatment of political prisoners. Dr. Kallen takes the well-known liberal point of view that it doesn't matter for what reason you are shot, or to what end: what matters is, that you are shot. To his and other liberal minds, the aim of the political shooting is immaterial.

"What Henri Barbusse said of the situation in Spain, applies no less to Russia" says Mr. Kallen, and quotes from Barbusse: "It is not a matter of political parties . . . It is the supreme battle for liberty and social progress . . . which faces all people without exception."

Lincoln Steffens, as National Chairman of this Committee, has addressed the following letter to Mr. Kallen, for release in the press (as was the Kallen letter):

January 2, 1935

Dear Mr. Kallen:

Your two letters about the Soviet Russian manner of dealing with the assassins of Sergei Kirov is evidently sincere, puzzled, and, it seems to me, typical of all our liberal thinking. I am afraid you will not get patient answers; my own feeling now is impatient. But on December 14, before your last letter was written, I said something in our local paper which states a view that may remind you that history is a better guide than logic in such matters. I find it so.

You and others might use it—to understand.

To justify is quite another thing.

I append what I wrote.

Yours sincerely

.... (Sgd.) LINCOLN STEFFENS

On December 14 Mr. Steffens wrote in his column in part:

And I remember that I warned the leaders whom I met, to look out. "Liberalism," I said, "is not really a law and a policy. It cannot be achieved by enactment in a constitution, as we Americans and English think. It has to be founded deep in your economic system and then, when you all feel that it is planted deep in your customs, in your habits of mind, then you can gradually relax your vigilance. But gradually, very slowly. The tendency, the natural human disposition will be to stand up suddenly and walk forth free men."

Well, you see. A murder came out. A colleague of Stalin in the government was killed and Stalin's government, jerked thus suddenly to a realization that the job was not yet done, that security was not yet secured, ran back to the Terror and put sixty or more men to death. Of course. Liberty is not a fact yet in Russia and that very wise man, Lenin, did not expect to have established it in less than "two or three generations."

Liberals in this country are enjoying the new Soviet Terror and making comparisons. But they do not see quite straight or even all around their theme. They think we have liberty "under the law" over here. Lots of workers know by painful experience that we haven't. I have seen with my own eyes, if not with a bruised head, that there's a

whole class that haven't liberty and that we cannot all have liberty. And I can see that we cannot ever have it under the law. Only people who have no use for it, who always do the conventional things, have our sort of liberty. And we should all begin now to see that no people can have Liberty, Democracy, Justice, etc., till these good things have been founded, not in the law, but in a fearless, unprivileged economic system.

The only justification of an appeal by wise radicals for free speech, free assemblage, justice and peace under our law order is to show that these things cannot be; that the law-and-orderlies do and must use violence against the law.

And the liberal Monterey Herald and its thoughtful editor should know that. Why does he think the Nazis, in their determination to maintain our capitalism, abolish liberty and all our other ideals, including peace, right away, and why—why do their people stand for it? I think the Germans and the Italians and the Fascists generally foresaw and are demonstrating that there are other things we have to have—first. We have to have, first, what the Soviet Russians have got a first, slight rude grip on.



ORIENTAL
ART

HENRY H. HART, INC.

328 Post Street D.Ouglas 8675
SAN FRANCISCO

THE TOWNSEND PLAN

(Re-printed from THE NEW REPUBLIC)

AT THIS moment the most popular panacea for the economic troubles of our times is probably the Townsend plan for old-age pensions. The backers of the plan assert that a petition favoring appropriate legislation has twenty million signers. The movement has organizations in every state, and the national office is moving on Washington, where it hopes to put enough pressure on Congress to obtain the passage of the law desired. Whatever the merits or demerits of this particular plan, and whatever the exaggerations of its publicity, there can be no doubt that it will score to the extent of giving an immense impetus to some form of national legislation on old-age pensions.

Unlike many of the gadgety new ideas, this one seems like simplicity itself. It proposes that the United States government offer to every citizen over sixty years of age the privilege of retiring on a pension of \$200 a month, on the following conditions: (1) that he does not work for money any more, (2) that he has not been a habitual criminal, and (3) that he promises to spend the whole of each month's pension within thirty days after receiving it, and spend it within the United States. The money necessary to pay the pensions is to be raised by a sales tax. This is supposed to supply a "revolving fund"—the money collected is immediately spent again by the pensioners, is taken in again as tax, and so on.

Who, if he thought such a thing possible, would not sign the petition?

But is it possible? Dr. Townsend argues not only that it is, but that it will cure the depression. He merely points to the truism that we now have an immense unused capacity to produce, but lack the ability to buy what can be made. Put this new stream of money into circulation by the purchases of all the people over sixty, and the machinery will hum. Unemployment will be ended, and the millenium will be here.

What he fails to see—although it has been pointed out to him—is that there is a fatal trick in the manner in which the money is to be raised. If curing the depression were as simple as this, all the government would have to do would be to levy a sufficiently large sales tax and spend the proceeds for anything whatsoever. The trouble with a sales tax is that it takes money from purchasers of goods. Consumers who pay the tax have just that much less to spend. Suppose 12,000,000 eligible persons applied for pensions at \$2,400 a year. That would mean that the government would have to impose a sales tax sufficiently large to yield \$28,000,000,000. Such a tax, applied to

present retail sales, would be of the order of 100 per cent. All of us would suddenly be compelled to pay at least twice as much for everything as we do now. And none of us, except those over sixty, would have any larger incomes than we now have, out of which to pay the prices. It is silly to contend that the enlarged purchases of the pensioners would more than offset our inability to buy. Probably the contrary would be true. The high prices would so discourage sales to the majority of the population that they would buy even less than half as much as before. Many people would be forced to go cold and hungry. To apply a sales tax for any purpose is unjust to those with the lowest incomes, and to do so is simple madness during a depression, if the aim is to assist recovery.

If more money is to circulate than is circulating, it must come from sources that are now idle, not from the incomes or purchases of the masses. The backers of the Townsend plan, who are presumably honest though economically naive, might be brought to see this point and accept a different method of raising funds. One obvious way is by a graduated income tax bearing heavily in the higher brackets. This would avoid taking the money from the poor as through a sales tax. But it requires only a little arithmetic to show that the heaviest conceivable tax of the kind would not provide the revenue necessary to pay \$200 a month to everyone over sixty, or anything like it. To follow this line is to come down to much more modest proposals of the standard old-age pension movement. We can raise by direct taxation enough to pay small pensions to those actually destitute, and there is no reason in the world why we should not do it. It is possible to substitute the pension system for the old and less humane poor house without any increase in public expenditure at all, or even with a decrease; somewhat larger pensions depending on extra income taxation are therefore entirely possible.

Much larger pension expenditure might be financed if the government in some way created the money rather than raised it by tax levies. It might print greenbacks for the purpose, or use the more disguised but equally effective method of borrowing bank-created credit. But here, as in all other governmental expenditures financed in a similar way, we run into the problem of inflation. If sufficiently large amounts are poured out into the markets for goods, the increase of demand in relation to supply will increase prices. Wherever shortages develop, profits will mount skyward. Business and employment do become active on the way up, but in the end inflation means, like a sales tax, a diminishing purchasing power on the part of

those with small incomes, since prices will rise more rapidly than wages or fixed stipends. Inflation in its later stages is really a concealed form of taxation, for the benefit of the owners of natural resources and industry.

Does this mean that there is no way of taking advantage of unused production capacity for the benefit of the aged or of other potential consumers? By no means. The Townsend plan, like so many other one-shot panaceas, sees the basic situation, and states a half-truth, or a quarter-truth, about it. It is indeed necessary to place and maintain in the hands of the masses more purchasing power. If this can be done, there is the technical possibility of making the goods with which to satisfy their demands. But there is no way in which the government can do it—except the purely temporary and self-defeating way of inflation—without taking over the more important functions of private capitalism. In the end there must be planned social control over prices, wages, production and the amount and use of profits, if any such scheme is to work.

BRYNHILD



You brought much joy to life when you came; you took much away with you.

BOOKS

THE FOLKS. by Ruth Suckow. The Literary Guild.

IF THIS book had been called "The Family" it would have covered the ground of its contents perhaps. This is certainly the story of the Ferguson family of Belmond, Iowa. But "The Folks"—well, it's about the kind of people who don't speak of the family, they talk about "the folks", and there you have them.

The chronicle of the Fergusons starts back in the days when those of us who are middle-aged now were going to grammar school. Those carefree—for us—times when the world centered in one small town and in the all-important doings at school. Parents might have done considerable worrying but children were shut out of adult confidence and carefully protected from unpleasant facts. Their world held a steady background of changeless security. "Childhood is the kingdom where nobody dies," as Edna St. Vincent Millay says.

The story of the Fergusons covers many years and many events, taking you into the minds and hearts of one after another of the four children and their gradual development as they grow up and finally leave home. It is an old-fashioned, honest, respectable family with definite pride in its honorable standing in Belmond and dad's position in the bank. Nothing sensational happens until Margaret goes off to become Margot and lead an emancipated life. But even this is carefully covered from possible neighborhood understanding.

Ruth Suckow has a gift for homely detail of the sort that builds a vivid picture of middle-class, middle-western life. The book is perhaps too long, at times it gets a little dull, but it carries you along by its sheer truth and sincerity.

Mrs. Ferguson belonged to the type of wife and mother whose days and thoughts were spent in keeping peace in the family and who was happiest making life comfortable and happy for those about her. She was looked upon in Belmond as one of the lucky ones of life, but this was partly because she refused to appear otherwise. Her troubles were never allowed to become the subject of gossip. Her principles are revealed in the following remarks at the time of her visit to her youngest daughter: "She (Dorothy) wouldn't permit even a suggestion that her married life wasn't perfection. And Mrs. Ferguson had to approve that, although she longed to be closer to her child. It was her code—the code of all women, she somewhat complacently supposed; unless they weren't

what she thought of as womanly."

The folks kept their sense of responsibility toward their children always. And the children, even when they felt themselves misunderstood, as children inevitably will, knew that so long as the comfortable old home still stood they had a rock of refuge to fall back on in any trouble. Carl, the oldest, in a crisis of his young married life, finds himself alone with his wife who has made a feeble attempt at suicide. He is in a horror of bewilderment and indecision—and then the folks come. And in the effect on him of their arrival you get what lies at the core of the family life of folks like the Fergusons:

"He felt an hysteria of relief. In spite of their startled faces . . . But someone knew. It was off his hands. He would have help. The folks were here. It seemed as if he had never appreciated them so much before. As if he had gone back to the utter dependence of his childhood! . . . They took things at once into their hands. Dad would get the doctor. They would have someone here soon. Everything was going to be all right. A moment ago, he had been sure that Lillian was dying. But as soon as mama was here with her, he felt that nothing could happen. Mama would do the right thing." . . . —D. C.

WAR AND PEACE AND THE SOVIET UNION. by Gore Graham, Introduction by Lord Marley. (Gollancz). 5/.

RUSSIA alone among the nations of the world can talk peace and really mean it. That is the first basic fact emphasized by the Englishman, Gore Graham, in his excellent book. But why? Has the change in the ownership of private property affected foreign policy also? Just that. Individual Russians are no longer investing their private fortunes abroad, or competing for properties or markets outside the boundaries of Russia, and then asking the Red Army or the Red Fleet to defend their profits. The Monopoly of Foreign Trade, though it carries on a glorified two-day barter system, does not aim at accumulating foreign exchange or capital. The Soviet Union has renounced all concessions and claims in China, Persia and other backward lands. Russia is no longer imperialistic because it is no longer capitalistic. The Revolution of 1917 was a violent protest against the insanity of the World War. The Bolsheviks came to power on the demand for peace. They have consistently pursued this policy—not only because they need peace to build up the first great sector of the socialist world—but because they do not need war to make their system function. Every other nation does. They can sign the Kellogg Pact and Non-Aggression Pact. They can propose complete dissolution of all land, sea and air forces. The destruction of all weapons, forts, battleships, planes and

air bases. They can and they do. It embarrasses the other nations. It shows the difference between the two systems as nothing else can.

This we learn from Gore Graham, but we get from his clear and deft analysis a view of the world as it was in 1934. More than that. He gives us a brief summary of the causes which have brought us to the brink of another world war inconceivably more horrible and destructive than the last. "1914" was the first big clash that had as its object the re-division of the fully absorbed imperial spoils. Look at the maps before and after. Germany lost her colonies in Africa to the Allies. The Turkish Empire, in parts, became Allied mandates. The German concessions in the Orient went to Japan. France hovered over the Saar, Germany's trade was snatched by many competitors, but mostly by the United States. Only Russia, through the Revolution, took herself out of the field of capitalist exploitation. That was a big loss. It was the first breach in the capitalist order. Three years of intervention and blockade failed to retrieve this loss.

How do we stand now—20 years after?

Greater competition in the markets of the world than in 1914. Greater armaments. Greater economic distress in each nation. Moreover there is Russia—growing and expanding under a new system. Russia makes colonials and the workers of the world think. Thought is dynamite to the old order.

Then why has Russia been recognized by all the powers? Why does France send Herriot and Cot to Moscow? The great powers are on the horns of the dilemma. Which do they fear most—the Workers' Russia, or Japan—the first Asiatic power to pursue its imperial way regardless of protest?

China is the great plum which is yet to be picked. The war for the mastery of the Pacific means war for the division of China. Japan at present is in the lead! She has Manchuria, and is proceeding to make puppet states in Inner Mongolia, Outer Mongolia and Sinkiang. She is preparing to capture North Sakhalin and the Maritime Provinces. The oil, coal and iron of these regions are absolutely essential to her industries. Japan is acquiring huge portions of China and "closing the door" on all the imperial powers.

Who will side with whom?

Some very interesting facts come to light.

In South America Japan is walking off with the trade of both England and the United States. American exports dropped from \$603,000,000 in 1929 to \$250,000,000 in 1932, while Japan's exports increased three-fold. Moreover she is beginning to buy raw materials in South America rather than in Russia. The same dramatic triangle exists in the Orient. England and the United States are Japan's greatest competitors and a perfect hurricane of Japanese exports have

swept the markets of the world in the last two years. France has felt it in Indo-China, Holland in Sumatra and Java. Japan exports more cotton goods now than Lancashire. She makes "Irish linen", "Scotch tweeds" and "Stetersby hats". She sells cameras in Africa for 25 cents and bicycles for \$2.50 (10s). This is war!

In 1932 world trade was almost half (forty per cent) of 1924, yet Japan had increased her total trade by ten per cent. The emergency is acute. With the first general world "crisis" still on, with the gold standard practically gone, trade barriers up, production of raw materials fallen 30 per cent, national incomes fallen to half, thirty million unemployed and Germany re-arming and demanding back her colonies—what are the harassed nations to do? Are they to see the last prize snatched from them without a struggle? Russia, at least, is not out for colonies and concessions. Russia, however, can be relied upon to defend her boundaries against Japan just as Soviet China can be relied upon to resist imperialism in China. The United States will resist the hegemony of Japan. France cannot permit anti-Soviet Germany to get the Ukraine and the Donetz coal or Baku oil. France is alive to the menace of Japan near her colonies. England is imponderable. Has Japan bitten off so much of China that she can afford a partner? Would England prefer to have Germany quieted at Russia's expense? Does England fear the Bolshevik bear in her colonies? Does she not find in the United States a rival in every market of the world? England hesitates, and while she hesitates there is a breathing space—but for how long?

—DOROTHY ERSKINE

MARX AND AMERICA, by Bertram Wolfe. (The John Day Pamphlets: New York. pp. 22 254.)

This is the most confused item on the meaning of Marxism today which has yet appeared. Among the recent crop of attempts to super-impose wholesale the writings of a man who died fifty years ago on contemporary social reform tactics, Wolfe had made no effort, as at least did Sidney Hook and G. D. H. Cole, to leaven Marx's doctrines by the expression of any qualms about the whole attempt. The author's *tour de force* is that the Communist party in America has dismally failed to exploit the revolution, a situation prevailing for the past four years and longer, because of its blindness to the indigenous items of culture: the fluidity of its class stratification, the absence of feudalistic remnants, the effect of the frontier, the polyglot character of the working class, and its contempt for theory. But these were not pointed out by Marx. In

consequence, Wolfe, fearing to be called an orthodox Marxian, has to quote extensively from Engels. Thus this pamphlet on Marx has twenty-one quotations from Engels and only nineteen from Marx himself.

Wolfe's utilization of the writings of Engels parallels the method of the Social Democrats and he, too, blandly assumes that Marx and Engels are the same. This, despite their disagreements over the theory of knowledge, historical materialism and the nature of Marxism. Engels made it out to be a general sociological "scientific" system; for Marx, it was a practical revolutionary program for a class striving towards the seizure of power. The real problem of the relation of Marxism to America arose out of Marx's speech at Amsterdam in 1872 when he conceded that in England and the United States the workers might secure their ends by peaceful means. This is the doctrine of "exceptionalism" with which radicals have wrestled; Wolfe offers not a single line on it, nor does he even indicate the revolutionary character of his subject.

The major part of this pamphlet is simply devoted to showing the insight which Marx had into the nature of the Civil War and the internal development of America, the accuracy of Engel's predictions in 1899 of a World War and the changed international set-up. Hence it is a reversion to a general sociological system, without a mention of the character of the State and its subserviency in America to the ruling class.

The need of a true workers' party in the country which will militantly reach and organize is apparent, but it cannot be satisfied by deducing any modes of coping with it from such a glorification of "scientific" socialism.

—HARRY CONNOVER



WRITTEN IN

USE YOUR OWN JUDGMENT

SIR: What is your idea of truth?

You announce, "it's the truth that counts", and, "above all, we shall print the truth as nearly as we can determine the truth and the chips may fall exactly where they will".

What is the truth? Oh yes, of course I know the dictionary definition, but what a number of people would like to know, is what you consider truth and how do you intend to "determine the truth". Is it going to be your opinion or belief or will it be something that you can prove to others, ten, ten hundred or ten million, and are they to be those you consider your equal in intelligence or more so or less?

You also "aim to provide a medium for the expression of opinions" apparently in relation to "art, drama, music, science and such literary expression as short stories, sketches and poetry as well as to politics, finance and current events". This is most interesting, but pray tell us, how are we to know when and where truth ends and expression begins?

Furthermore, you state, "It is all very well to propose new economic systems, new financial systems, new social systems—but that way lies apathy—until you first spread the verity of life, the absolute truth about what is actually going on around us". I recall the statement that apathy, according to its Greek derivation, is a simple absence of feeling or emotion.

If I understand your announcement, you claim we must either have absolute truth or else apathy, that is absence of feeling or emotion. Do you mean to claim that during the past two thousand years the world has had (must have had) either one or the other? If I know anything of history there has been no lack of feeling and of emotion though I confess there seems to have been plenty of truth lacking, in fact I have come to the conclusion that truth is missing from your own statement.

Carmel, California.

Bernard Rowntree

GOOD SUGGESTION

SIR: Three days after the opera season began Redfern Mason's music criticisms ceased to appear in the Examiner. People asked why, and on being told the reason expressed great indignation. A number of people cancelled their subscriptions to the Examiner. Music circles in San Francisco protested, among these, the Opera Association. I suggest to all lovers of music, admirers of Mr. Mason, and believers in President Roosevelt's New Deal, that there are other newspapers in San Francisco which publish music news besides the Examiner.

San Francisco.

James Farnham

WE'LL HELP TELL IT

SIR: I see you are still going after the big guys and it does my heart good. There's a lot of work ahead for you to do. The truth about the recent California election will never be told. Even Upton Sinclair doesn't know all of it. I have a friend in one of the studios at Hollywood. He wrote me that all of the employees there were virtually ordered to vote for Merriam and each had one day's pay deducted for the Republican campaign fund.

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