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PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

SEPTEMBER 30, 1935



LABOR'S LOVE LOST

AT SAN DIEGO

A UNITED FRONT AGAINST MAYOR ROSSI

\$2 A YEAR

VOL. III NO. 13

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PACIFIC WEEKLY

A Western Journal of Fact and Opinion

VOLUME III

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1935

NUMBER 13

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NOTES AND COMMENT

YACHTS IN BERKELEY

How many families in Berkeley own yachts? The City Council of the university town has undoubtedly determined this by survey because it has applied to the PWA in Washington for \$600,000 to aid in the construction of a \$960,000 yacht harbor on the Berkeley shoreline of San Francisco bay. We haven't the statistical information the City Council undoubtedly possesses in the matter, but we are ready to assume that if there is one thing the residents of Berkeley need right now more than anything else it is a yacht harbor. Yacht congestion, and no parking available, must be the big Berkeley problem.

FRANK, AT LEAST

EVERY now and then men in high places in government speak out in meeting and say what they think and what they know to be true. Here's Secretary of War George H. Dern opening his mouth in Salt Lake City, as reported by the *United Press*:

"It is foolish to think the way to keep out of war is to abolish military establishments. European peace ties are severely strained and an Italo-Ethiopian war is certain. The United States will keep out of the war although we are taking no chance with being caught unprepared should war be necessary. The Roosevelt administration is 'military minded' and we are building up our defenses."

The *United Press* did not use the italics, but we do.

OUR ERROR

IN LAST week's issue of *PACIFIC WEEKLY*, due to a printer's error omitting a line in the editorial comment "Agricultural Prosperity", a sentence read: "The 1934 Santa Maria and Salinas strikes raised wages before they could get any pickers." It should have run: "The 1934 Santa Maria and Salinas strikes raised wages, and the Sonoma County hop-farmers had

to raise wages a quarter of a cent a pound before they could get any pickers."

HEARST SOB SISTERS GO POLITICAL

COINCIDENT with the peak of the crop season, apples, hops, grapes, with cotton, citrus and orange picking to come, Hearst is running a series of articles showing that relief is keeping people from honest toil. Elsie Robinson splurged over a full page on Sunday last showing that people who could make \$3 to \$5 a day (really!) picking honest fruit were preferring \$4.93 a week on relief. Women were refusing domestic jobs at the equivalent of \$60 a month (counting room and keep) and factory jobs at much more, for their \$20 a month on relief. Why? Because the "dole" had taken away their desire to work, a molly-coddling government had made them into charity bums. They wanted security, too, yes, that was true, said Elsie (who should know; she gets \$25,000 a year from King Features Syndicate); but that wasn't enough reason. For when the SERA people offered to take the hop-pickers back on to relief after the harvest was over they still refused to work at hop-picking.

Annie Laurie took up the sad tale on Sept. 24. Children were drafted into the fields to pick now—and was child labor an evil?

Why no—it was good for the little dears, the great outdoors, picking the warm and happy scented prunes and apples and berries . . . Maybe the depression was a veiled boon after all, opined Annie.

But those relief bums . . . relief must stop . . . it is ruining the fibre of the American people. The fibre of the grower-shippers is never ruined by their leisure and security; only that of those who live on or below security line.

But the tendency is another illustration of Hearst's unceasing fascist propaganda: depress wages, draft relief and child labor till you have forced labor under armed guards at coolie wages: this is Americanism.

LOWEST OF THE LOW

WITH consistent patricianism the *Portland Oregonian* comes out editorially in favor of the permanence of CCC camps, especially in Oregon, but wants the moral tone raised. It contends that the "present policy of recruiting the CCC should be abolished". The *Oregonian* has a distinct disliking for persons who, under the present debacle of the capitalist system, cannot find work to do and must be taken care of by the government. The *Oregonian* says in so many words that this class of person is not much good; that is, not good enough to "take care of federal properties". You can expect almost anything from the capitalist press nowadays, but it does seem unbelievable that a newspaper can make such editorial comment as the following from the *Oregonian*:

The present policy of recruiting the CCC should be abolished. According to orders issued some months ago, recruits must come from families on relief rolls. And obviously that policy lowers the tone of the organization.

Perhaps there is no undoing the damage already done, but at least an effort should be made, particularly if the CCC is to become permanent. It should be an honor to a young man to spend an enlistment in the organization, and so recognized by the public. All classes should be eager to enlist. If the CCC is to be made permanent, let it have a double purpose. Let it take care of federal properties, but let it also build morale among the youth of the nation. It could be a very powerful influence if properly devised.

NEW SANTA ROSA INFORMATION

SUIT has been filed by the American Civil Liberties Union for \$25,000 damages on behalf of Jack Green, the Santa Rosa resident who was tarred and feathered by vigilantes on August 22. The suit is brought against Fred Cairns, secretary of the Healdsburg Chamber of Commerce, who is an unnaturalized alien. Since the Santa Rosa affair there has leaked out much more detailed information about the outrage than at first came to the surface. For instance, here is part of a letter written last week by a Santa Rosa resident explaining just what started the terrorism:

There was a mass meeting scheduled to take place in the unemployed hall to discuss whether the SERA workers should go out and pick fruit at the offered price or strike for SERA wages, 40¢ per hour. The vigilantes raided this meeting but failed to get the men they were looking for. They had notified the press and the stories were set up in type about the tar-and-feathering several hours previously. Since they didn't get their intended victims and it was necessary to make good their boast to the papers, they just went out and rounded up some known Communists and vented their spleen on them. The newspapers' story about Green is fairly accurate except that they infer that he led them to the others. He didn't. They carried him along with them and beat him almost continuously. When they got to Nitzberg's they told him to call Nitzberg out on the pretext of paying a taxi bill for him but instead he shouted: "The vigilantes are here." Nitzberg's wife handed him a shotgun and they barricaded themselves in and tried to hold out until the noise of the shooting would bring help. The vigilantes got there at 1:30 a. m. They hadn't looked for a situation of that type so were unprepared for it but didn't dare leave as they knew Nitzberg would organize some opposition and spoil their party in Santa Rosa, so they sent a squad for tear gas to get him out of the house. We don't know whether it was furnished by the police, the sheriff or Co. M., National Guard. Those are the only authorized sources of it. The squad got back at 3 a. m. and of course the gas drove them out. Some of the neighbors had heard the shooting but were afraid to investigate. Nitzberg was seized and the vigilantes went back to Santa Rosa with him and Green.

The rules for picking hops are so stringent this year that the best pickers can only pick about 150 pounds at one cent a pound in ten to twelve hours of good picking. A green hand in poor picking can't pick 75 pounds. The SERA was shut down to force people to take jobs picking fruit. The case workers openly stated that those people who refuse to go into the fields will be discriminated against. Slowly the workers here are learning how

to struggle against this rank oppression and are being politically developed by their economic struggles. Some are bound to suffer as individuals because of efforts on the behalf of the working class but this is a struggle which will never cease until the old order of rich and poor, oppressor and oppressed, has been abolished.

NOW THE BANKS ARE AT IT

PACIFIC WEEKLY's exposé of the method by which directors of the California State Chamber of Commerce are endeavoring to frighten business men into subscribing to a fund for the continuance of the "eternal vigilance" which stained the record of the state at the election last November when Upton Sinclair was defeated for governor, has brought hundreds of complimentary messages to us. Our publication of the letter from Almon E. Roth, comptroller of Stanford University and a director of the state chamber, resulted in many congratulatory expressions.

We probably broke the ice on this sort of thing. Now comes information that California bankers, business men and ranchers are "leaping into the breach".

The operations of a secret and heavily-financed apparatus set up by bankers and business men to control the California State Legislature and courts, and large-scale preparations by the California Chamber of Commerce to launch an anti-union drive, are revealed by a confidential letter of the Chamber, made public this week by Harry W. Laidler, chairman of the National Sacramento Appeal Committee, 41 Union Square, New York.

The letter, dated August 7, on the official stationery of the powerful Stockton, California, Savings and Loan Bank, and signed by fourteen leading industrialists, financiers and ranchers of the Golden State, after taking credit for the defeat of "many radical and unsound tax measures", goes on to boast that the Chamber, by securing the enactment of legislation enlarging the powers of the Attorney General, "proved perhaps the most important factor in winning the recent trial" of eight Sacramento unionists.

The signers characterize the low-paid agricultural workers who organized unions as "agitators who are fomenting strike and trouble", declare "the problem is costing us all money",

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W. K. BASSETT, EDITOR AND PUBLISHER

ASSOCIATE EDITORS:

LINCOLN STEFFENS DANIEL T. MACDOUGAL
DOROTHEA CASTELHUN HARRY CONOVER
WINTHROP RUTLEGE SARA E. REAMER
SARA BARD FIELD
ELLA WINTER, LITERARY EDITOR

CONTRIBUTORS INCLUDE MARIE DEL. WELCH, ROBERT CANTWELL, TOM KROMER, DOROTHY ERSKINE, PETER QUINCE, TILLIE LERNER, ROBERT WHITAKER, JEAN WINTHROP, L. E. CLAYPOOL, HILDEGARDE FLANNER, JOSEPH BARAS

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and "must be stamped out". They propose, therefore, that "the only effective means to combat the situation is state-wide leadership for training community leaders in this work", and then refer to the Sacramento convictions as an example of the kind of work the Chamber wishes to push throughout California. The letter concludes with an appeal to the rich Central Valley district to "subscribe its pro rata of the funds necessary to carry on this fight", since "the need for immediate, organized, united effort on our part is obvious".

The letter thus involuntarily substantiates the charges made by the National Sacramento Appeal Committee in its pamphlet, *Union Smashing in Sacramento*, by Herbert Solow, that the Sacramento convictions were part of a state-wide conspiracy of anti-union employers to use the criminal syndicalism statute to destroy the trade unions.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

TOM MOONEY says he's a Red. In the first place, he isn't. In the second place, it will hurt his case to establish it as a fact that he is one. His attorneys know this and have wiped his declaration from the record; it has nothing to do with the case—in the law. And the upper judges can ignore evidence that is off the record. But the whispering attorneys who represent the businesses that "got" Mooney and want him can "get" the judges to "get" Mooney to soak the Red, to show the Reds that a labor leader can never "get" justice; never. Mooney is in the penitentiary for ever and ever.

MUSSOLINI CAME into power despising the government he displaced. I saw him right after he became the Duce of Italy and I have never seen such contempt for "our" institutions, manners and constitutional ideas. He had power and he had it by force; and he believed in force. How he did believe in force, ruthless force. As if he knew that men are cowards. He had just seized the legislature, when I interviewed him and I shall never forget the brief, hot sufficiency with which he met my grinning question: "But will the legislators obey?"

"The members of the Parliament will take orders from me."

His scorn for diplomats was in the same key. It IS in the same key. He may be bluffing England and France and Europe now, but he is firm on his feet in the knowledge that their governments, their diplomats also are bluffing. They are afraid of war. He and they all are imperialists, out for conquest, graft, but they all have got theirs. They are cowards when they come up against a man and a country who have nothing to lose, everything to win—like the Duce and his dagoes. I wish Mussolini would write a book; maybe he will from a peak in Africa.

I like to remember that Benito Mussolini WAS a Red.

I WISH our schools and colleges would allow our boys to be taught the realism of the Red philosophies. I wish I had got young the Red view of our world; it would have saved me years of muck-raking. I can remember well the scorn of the radicals who watched me "discovering" the facts which they

knew so well. Of course, I had the advantage of discovery, the shocked surprise and the outraged sensation of the discovery and I was able to transmit the sensation to readers who had been brought up in my ignorance. But it was a long slow process, mine, and I never got through it. The Reds took my revelations as a matter of course. As they take Upton Sinclair's. All old stuff! But just suppose that Thomas G. Plant came out into life knowing what he was doing in the shipping business; he would be a Mussolini on the waterfront, not just an honest dub. He still would not be a Bridges, not so intelligent as that, but like Mussolini he would be aware of what he is doing and saying. As it is he and his crowd can walk around the corner into a revolution and be as innocent and amazed as I was when I ran into bribery and corruption.

MR. TED KUSTER has a theatre. So has Carmel. It's a nice little movie house, pretty, modern, comfortable, with modern equipment. Kuster must be proud and contented. He has plans, too, almost unbelievable; he plans for all sorts of modern plays, the movies we have missed at the commercial houses. And, with his sense of the theatre, he is going to have them good; professional and smooth, correct and a satisfaction. We can go to them for pleasure, not as a duty.

THE NEWS is getting into books. Books are bringing the new. Our authors are alive, literature is a living thing.

HENRY GEORGE's single tax is going over in this state. Now that it is late, that fine old philosophy that offered to cure capitalism is being entered into our tax laws where it will work from within. It's a philosophy and it is late, if not too late, but there it is on the way via an election to the legislature. Don't tell anybody, please.

HUEY LONG'S power in Louisiana was personal, his own, his very own. Therefore, it went when he went. It died when he was shot. A knowledge of history would have cured that, but Huey Long, no American would have known that history was of "use". Even the teachers of history don't know that. History is a record of experiments in politics, sociology, etc., but students think of it as "a course" that leads up to a degree and Huey was hardly even a student.

THE CHRONICLE is reporting the news. Wonder whether the business men can take it; it's in their interest, really. They can fight better if they know what they are up against. But they lie to themselves as sincerely as they do to their opponents and to the public. The *Chronicle* is tending to keep the public aware. Some distance to go yet.

THE NEW Labor Party has stepped out well by nominating for Mayor a scholar and a gentleman, Redfern Mason. He is a gentleman who knows what few gentlemen know, enough to prepare him to understand what the workers have to get—somehow: a look in on the Constitution. The business men and employers think it is their instrument, and it pretty near is. It is almost private property. Well, the Mayor of San Francisco might give them their share of it and still keep some for the workers. The Constitution has two sides, you know; or don't you? Business men and gents often forget that. Redfern Mason is the kind of man who won't forget it. The voters of San Francisco can form behind this scholar and gentleman a united front good against Fascism, War or—anything.

LABOR'S LOVE LOST

BY L. E. CLAYPOOL

SAN DIEGO's Rotary Club has what it calls a "bolshevik table". Once in a while the members who sit at this table will don caps, red blouses and false beards and pretend to be very "Rooshian", while all the other big, fat, well-fed Rotarians, including myself, split their sides laughing.

You know, of course, that these Rotarians are just "funning" and are in reality about as "red" as Dr. A. H. Giannini.

California has a State Federation of Labor. When you see it in session and pretending to be reactionary you do not laugh. You weep, or bite your finger nails or sink into your press table chair in despair and disgust. That's because the laborites are not playing. They are serious.

Through six days I watched the antics of the California Federation of Labor in its thirty-sixth annual convention in San Diego. I wish I could tell you that at all times the admitted radicals were wise and alert and on the firing line. I can't because it isn't true. But it was not the radicals or the ultra-conservatives that pained me so much as the so-called middle-of-the-roads who could have done something and didn't.

A small clique of politicians dominates the federation. The spearhead of this clique is Secretary Paul Scharrenberg. He is the labor leader who was kicked out of the Seamen's Union because he sold the union out to the shippers and sought to bring reproach upon the organization. Of course, he wasn't a seaman and hadn't been for a generation. To hang on to his federation job he got himself elected to the Office Workers' Union and obtained credentials with a questionable majority.

Back of Scharrenberg are such men as Labor Fakers Ed Vandeleur, Sen. Dan Murphy, Ed Nolan, Andy Gallagher and Hugo Ernst of San Francisco and J. W. Buzzell of Los Angeles. Every one of them is a politician and suspected of being a tool of the big employers. They ran the convention.

The first act on arrival was to send out a lot of propaganda to the newspapers about "reds" planning to capture the convention. "Americanism vs. Communism" was the cry. The police were asked to send men to surround the hall and be prepared with tear gas guns and clubs.

Chief of Police George Sears wisely refused. He said he would assign one man to watch the convention occasionally to see that no disorder was created, but that otherwise he would take no notice of the meeting.

Not that radical leaders always resorted to the best tactics. It was only after Kasper Bauer, veteran labor leader of Santa Cruz and another militant unionist of San Diego, had talked to him for a long time that Harry L. Bridges, leader of the Longshoremen and chief spokesman for the liberal wing at the convention, agreed to state his side of the situation. I think Bridges should have shot back his counter-charge before the public had time to decide that the direct charge was correct. However, Bridges distrusts the "capitalist press" and not without reason.

The first division of the convention came on the motion to spread on the federation records the vote of Musicians' Union No. 6 of San Francisco endorsing the action of the officers and the executive board in "their vigorous and militant efforts to combat the insidious, destructive and subversive efforts of the so-called Red element of this country to destroy the

legitimate organized and wholly American labor movement as exemplified by the American Federation of Labor".

The proposal carried 43,749 to 14,373. On its face it seemed sound enough to the innocent bystander. In reality it was a gesture to discredit rank and file labor union members who are disgusted with the reactionary politics of Scharrenberg and his clique.

All through the convention on every dividing issue the vote stood about like that. No matter how worthwhile the proposal, it was turned down if it came from the minority side. The reactionaries tried to get through a resolution to bar from membership any person who is not an American citizen, hitting at Bridges and others unfortunate (!) enough to be born abroad. But it failed. It was amended to recommend that no non-citizen be allowed to hold office in a union.

When the anti-Hearst proposals came before the convention the old stalwarts, led by Murphy, came on the floor to defend the ogre of San Simeon. Men who could hardly read became suddenly concerned for the freedom of the press.

The denunciation of vigilantism, such as that perpetrated at Santa Rosa, also was namby pamby. Even the pro-Mooney resolution had no vitality. Chief of the constructive achievements was the vote for a defense fund, but even that will be used at the discretion of the bosses and it's safe to wager that no radical will benefit by it.

Ironically and very logically Eureka was selected as the next convention city. I am surprised it wasn't Santa Rosa.

One good lesson came out of the convention. The true Liberals and Progressives learned what they must do if they are to save the labor movement in California. They must throw into the local unions more vim and better organizers. More unorganized workers must be brought into the unions. The unions must become conscious of Labor's real problem. More enlightened delegates from the rank and file must be sent to the conventions. Otherwise organized labor in California will be nothing more than a sort of left-wing of the capitalist movement and not too leftish by any means.

Young A. C. Rogers, secretary of the San Diego Federated Trades and Labor Council, and a true Progressive, made a valiant fight against Scharrenberg and moreover a clean one. But he had no chance.

With all of the old guard re-elected and some sturdy red-baiters replacing some of the less reactionary vice-presidents, the California Federation of Labor will be, during the coming year, as safe as the Y. M. C. A. or the Boy Scouts and no industrialist or employer need to worry. The big boys can take to their private yachts and pent houses and leave their worries behind them.



I SAW A UNITED FRONT

BY PHILEMON CASSIDY

IF MAYOR ROSSI failed to send an observer to the United Labor Convention in the Civic Auditorium last Sunday, then he made his first important error in his campaign for re-election. There were things said and done at that huge gathering—things too portentous to be ignored by Mr. Rossi. The 8,000 to 10,000 people who gathered in the Auditorium that afternoon saw and participated in a United Front—and that United Front worked.

Only a few months back they were saying you can't have a United Front that includes Communists, because the Communists won't unite with anybody but themselves; they'll try to dominate any United Front and make it a Red front with a few bewildered liberals trailing along behind. Well, last Sunday I saw Communists, union men, Liberals, Epics, Progressive Democrats—all shades of anti-vigilante opinion—sitting together on the same platform and getting along famously. They were confining themselves to an issue on which they agreed, opposition to fascism and its politicians.

There were as many shades of opinion in the audience as on the platform. And the most portentous phenomenon of the meeting occurred when Chairman Ben Legere introduced the candidates. All were cheered with enthusiasm, but the most thunderous ovations went to two of their number. They were Anita Whitney, the Communist, and Redfern Mason, the Liberal. This has a significance which Mr. Rossi, if he wants to continue being mayor, should ponder well. It means that more and more people are getting weary of being bluffed out of doing something for themselves by having the old red herring dragged across their paths. It may even mean that out of six years of depression there is coming a change which is a little too swift and a little too sweeping to be properly grasped by Mr. Rossi's none-too-agile mentality.

Chairman Legere sounded the true keynote of the campaign in his opening address. He pointed out that there have been "labor" campaigns before, and added that some of the employer politicians now in the city government got there on the votes of San Francisco's working population.

"There is as much difference between this campaign and the one which elected Schmitz and McCarthy twenty years ago," he told the audience, "as there is between Harry Bridges and Paul Scharrenberg."

He told the Convention that the United Labor Campaign had grown out of, among other things, the determination of thousands of San Franciscans that there shall be no repetition of Rossi's disgraceful "Bloody Thursday" on the waterfront. Referring to the Communists represented in the campaign he called to the audience's attention the fact that the current vigilante tactic is to seek to separate Communists from all rank and file popular movements and to break those movements up by building up Red Scares.

"We cannot isolate the Communists from the United Labor Campaign," said Legere, "because they are a part of the opposition to vigilantism. We must show the vigilante elements that they cannot attack the Communists without attacking all of us." This from a Communist? Not quite. Legere is the campaign's delegate from the San Francisco Council of the Democratic Party. Of such stuff is a real United Front made.

William Moseley Jones, youthful and clean-cut Epic-Democrat floor leader in the state assembly, came up from Los

Angeles to bring greetings to the convention.

"I am happy," said Jones, "to see that you are aware of the constant threat of fascism. I am happy that you have gone on record for the freedom of Tom Mooney."

He amused the audience by recounting the antics of "Hearst, the unconscious comedian" and told how he, Jones, and his colleagues had naively tried to have a ruling of the United States Supreme Court enacted as a California State law against the opposition of the "friends of labor" in the legislature. The crowd liked young Jones, it cheered him heartily as he left the platform to hurry back to Los Angeles. "When your United Front captures the city government, come down to Los Angeles and show us how to do it," were his parting words.

Evan Wattles of the Carpenters' Union, candidate for supervisor, spoke on the vigilante "Disaster Plan", which is now before the Board of Supervisors, seeking to legalize a committee of one thousand and give it extraordinary dictatorial powers. The plan, he declared, seeks to create disasters rather than relieve them.

Miss Tanna Alex, supervisorial candidate, described the relief racket in San Francisco and told how little the politicians in power care about the fate of the city's unemployed thousands.

One of the high spots of the meeting was the appearance of Anita Whitney on the speaker's stand. When she was announced, those in the audience who had not yet seen her prepared to vision a personification of the Red menace. Instead, a neatly-tailored, mild-mannered, cultured-looking little woman stepped up to the microphone.

"I suppose," she told the audience in college-modulated tones, "that I represent the Red scare."

Then she spoke briefly on vigilantism, the breaking into workers' offices and homes by bands of Red-hunting hoodlums, the slugging of waterfront workers by employer-hired "beef squads", the use of police to break strikes by using gas and bullets against strikers struggling for the right to live decently. She called upon all people, radical, liberal, labor, progressive—or merely decent old-fashioned believers in constitutional liberties—to rally to the support of the United Labor campaign and restore San Francisco to human decency. This was the "flaming" Red, the "disrupter" on the United Labor slate! This quiet, cultured little woman who looked as though she might just have come from teaching a class in the appreciation of Victorian poetry at Mills College!

The Rev. Robert Whitaker voiced the appeal of the campaign for funds to carry on the fight which will elect its slate on November 5. "Only the rank and file of labor can save the world," said Whitaker. "The kings have tried it and failed. The priests have done the same and so have the politicians. There's no one left to do it but labor's millions."

His appeal resulted in the gathering of some \$2,800 in cash and pledges, sinews of war for United Labor.

A message from Tom Mooney endorsing the United Labor campaign, and Rena Mooney, standing on the stage, got a standing ovation. The meeting passed a resolution demanding Mooney's pardon and another urging all workers to refuse to handle munitions intended for Mussolini's imperialist raid on

Ethiopia. (One couldn't help thinking of *Peace on Earth* and how timely its message is.)

Then Redfern Mason spoke. The audience greeted him with a thundering cheer. San Francisco knows its Redfern Mason. Music lovers honor him for his fight to bring the symphony to the masses. Longshoremen respect him for his support of their cause. "I've been asked if I'm a Red," he told the audience, "I don't think I am, but I'd like to serve notice that there's no streak of yellow in me." He told how he proposed to democratize the city hall, kick out politicians and fill the place with people willing to work for the interests of the city's broad masses.

"I believe," he said, "that the police should and must be the servants of the entire city and not of a few wealthy employers of labor." He promised symphonies and operas for the masses at movie prices and revealed the very practical plan he has for fulfilling the promise.

He announced that when elected (he did not say "if" elected) he will go on the radio twice a month or more frequently if necessary, and tell the public what is going on in the city hall. He drew a cheer when he added, "And when a newspaperman comes to the city looking for news, I shall demand to see his paid-up Guild membership card." Mason's loyalty to the Newspaper Guild is well known. He was fired from his twenty-year post as music critic of the *Examiner* for becoming chairman of the *Examiner* chapter of the Guild. The Guild replied to that challenge by electing Mason its president.

There were talks by John D. Shaw of the I. L. A., William Sanders of the Ornamental Iron Workers, and Lawrence Ross of the campaign committee. The final speaker was Harry Bridges, re-elected president of the local I. L. A. Bridges, whose union is facing a crisis on the waterfront urged support of the campaign as a means of consolidating the gains made by labor on the picket line. He told of the seriousness of the situation on the docks, with the longshoremen seeking peace and the employers determined to blacklist and break the organization.

He told of his visit to Mayor Rossi's office on the morning of "Bloody Thursday" (July 5, 1934). "I went before the mayor with a delegation of fifty," said Bridges, "and told him that we were in for a tough day. I asked him to do something to prevent bloodshed. His answer was, 'You've had your chance to settle this peaceably—the police have got their orders.' By 'settling peaceably' he meant accepting the employers' terms, which were later overruled by the arbitration board.

"Now we face a serious situation again. The employers are giving us the choice between the blacklist and the role of organized strikebreakers. They are asking us to sell our souls—to give up all the things that self-respecting union men must keep."

It may be that the employers are placing too much faith in their vigilantes. If they are, they may come to grief. A committee of a score or so, one of whom admitted being a member of the Cincinnatus order, attempted to make a disturbance in the rear of the hall during Bridges' speech, but left when confronted by a squad of husky sergeants-at-arms drawn from the ranks of the ranks of the I. L. A. The planned offensive to break the I. L. A. and put on the docks a thousand strikebreakers (now being housed in San Francisco hotels) may prove a boomerang to the Industrial Association. It may elect Redfern Mason and the entire United Labor ticket.

Yes, San Francisco may yet belong to San Franciscans.

BABSONIAN DEMOCRACY

BY MARION RAY

MR. ROGER BABSON, in his recent trip to the Coast, came out strongly for a property qualification for voting as a means of bringing back that "prosperity" which resulted in the past six years of misery for so many millions of citizens. Doubtless he would be cheered to know that the high schools of California long ago adopted that principle.

"Training for citizenship" tops any list of educational objectives, and the avowed purpose of a student body associations in practically every high school is, through nominating candidates, conducting campaigns and holding elections, to prepare the students for the responsibilities, duties and privileges of self-governing free men.

In most high schools in San Francisco the fee for membership in the Student Association is fifty cents a term. Membership entitles the student to reduced admission to football and basketball games and free admission to a very few minor athletic contests. But what is significant is that only Student Association members can vote in student elections or attend school parties. Ballots for the elections and programs for the parties are distributed in the roll rooms to members only. Anyone who can recall even slightly the sensitiveness of adolescence, the agony of being shut out, will appreciate something of what most non-members suffer on election and party days. In one San Francisco high school more than fifteen per cent of the students belong to this socially and politically disqualified group.

Apologists for the system will say that poor students are permitted to work for a membership. But on what terms? First, a note from home stating inability to pay; then submission to cross-examination by the roll teacher and an administrative officer; finally washing of blackboards or scrubbing of desks until, in the opinion of those in authority, the amount is earned. A questionnaire submitted to a fair cross-section of one school revealed that less than four per cent would be willing to go through the ordeal could they not afford to buy membership.

The teacher who complains of the time and energy devoted to the activities of the Student Association is piously informed that formal instruction is only a small part of education and that the school must seek to educate "the whole child". What of "the whole child" who cannot afford fifty cents? What of his training for citizenship if he is not allowed to vote, to sign nominating petitions, to run for office?

That these activities develop leadership is another defense offered. But do those who so vociferously declare that in America there is equality of opportunity and no need for a class struggle wish it generally understood that our public high schools forbid leadership to the economically underprivileged? The deification of Lincoln's poverty becomes bitterly ironic under such circumstances.

One principal defended the fee by saying that taxes were necessary in any government. Even the most reactionary governments give lip service to the theory that taxation should bear some relation to ability to pay, and a poll tax is used very effectively in the South to disenfranchise certain citizens. If the activities of the Student Association play a vital part in education, then they should be financed in the same way as classroom instruction.

RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS OF COLLECTIVE AGRICULTURE

BY ROBERT MERRIMAN



(This is the seventh in a series of "bulletins" being written from Moscow to friends in California by Mr. Merriman who was until going to Soviet Russia a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Economics in the University of California. PACIFIC WEEKLY is publishing these bulletins on the suggestion of Mr. Merriman's friends who believe, as we do, that they will throw desired light on what is really happening in the country which is attempting the greatest social and economic experiment in all history. Mr. Merriman will be glad to answer any questions our readers desire to ask about Soviet Russia. Send your queries to this office and they will be forwarded to Moscow.—Ed.)

THE reports of this year's splendid harvest led us to undertake a trip into some of the more important wheat regions to observe actually the way in which a Soviet harvest is carried out. The area selected was the Kabardino-Balkarian Province in the North Caucasus. This area, which previous to the Revolution was neglected and poor, provided a splendid opportunity to see the extent to which collectivized farming can increase the agricultural wealth of a region.

We made our headquarters in Nalchik, the beautiful and progressive capital of the province. An idea of the progressiveness of the whole district can be obtained from an observation of Nalchik itself. The large number of new, up-to-date buildings form a decided contrast with the single-storied structures which were formerly characteristic. In the period of the next five years this city of 40,000 plans to expand so that 75 per cent of the city will be entirely new. This city, which formerly boasted of the only doctor in the whole province, now has a hospital unit of six good-sized buildings with a staff of 184 people, 18 of whom are doctors specializing in some particular branch of medical service. In addition to the hospital there is also a very large, recently completed polyclinic to which the residents may go for minor treatments. Every service performed by these two large institutions is absolutely without charge. The fact that these services are free to the workers and collective farmers was quite a surprise in itself, but to find that they refused to charge for a private call to our hotel room was almost unbelievable inasmuch as we were foreigners.

While on the topic of medical care, it is interesting to note the figures for the province as a whole. Formerly the whole province was served by a small clinic-hospital which consisted of three small rooms. At the present time the province has fifteen modern hospitals, 73 medical units and ten consultation points which provide information on diet, maternity care and home hygiene. The doctors here work a five-hour day, receive 550 rubles a month, are furnished with apartments without charge and receive a month's vacation with pay each year. The nurses work a six-hour day, receive 225 rubles a month, get their board and laundry without charge, and also receive a month's vacation with pay each year.

Leaving Nalchik, which is situated at the base of the North Caucasus, and going out onto the steppe, one is impressed with the immense stretches of land under cultivation. Being

further interested in this, I questioned many collective farmers concerning the way the present cultivated area compared with the amount under cultivation before the period of collectivization. In all cases the increase was tremendous, and in a few cases the total area under cultivation was three times as much as was ever cultivated under individual farming.

Even more important than the difference between present cultivation and the cultivation previous to collectivization is the fact that this year's total area in cultivation is much greater than last. This difference is due to better organization of work and to the use of agricultural machinery. In this year alone 99,000 new tractors have been put into use in Soviet agriculture, while 25,000 new combines have greatly expedited the harvest. The increase in acreage is well shown by the figures which I obtained from three collective farms in this province: one had an increased acreage of 1,090 acres over last year, a second had 2,230 acres, and a third an increase of 3,018 acres.

During the winter months it is required that each collective farmer study a certain number of hours in the farm adult school. A good portion of this study is devoted to scientific agriculture, and all are taught the importance of autumn plowing, fallow and early sowing for increasing the size of the harvest. They even make a study of the different types of weeds which grow on the fallow land, inasmuch as best results demand an entirely different treatment when, for example, it is infested by sweet clover than when it is infested by pigweed. I mention this only to give an idea as to the thoroughness of their study.

In every kolkhoz I visited tangible results can be noticed by comparing the yield of wheat per acre in 1935 with that of 1934, two having an increase of six bushels per acre, a third having an increase of nine bushels, and a fourth with the very high increase of eleven bushels per acre.

Each kolkhoz is organized into brigades, each of which has its own summer quarters in the fields. Inasmuch as the large size of some kolkhozes makes it impossible to go back and forth from the village each day, living quarters are now being built to accommodate the collective farmers during the busy months. A great deal of emphasis is being placed upon this work and in most cases the new quarters are even better than those occupied during the winter. Each brigade point becomes a complete unit, carrying on its own cultural life, having its own nursery, its own vegetable garden, poultry, club with a radio and library, and often steam baths. The collective farmers usually live in one large building and eat in the brigade dining room. During the time in the fields it is not necessary to pay for either the room or the food, since such expenses are met by the kolkhoz general fund.

While I gathered a great deal of purely economic data, the thing which impressed me most was the tremendous advancement in cultural life. In order to appreciate this phase, it is necessary to know a little about the background of this region. Before the Revolution the Kabardinians and the Balkarians were two of the most suppressed and consequently two of the poorest of the national minorities. The

population was 95 per cent illiterate; women were nothing more than serfs, being forced to remain indoors, except when accompanied by husband or father, and even then it was necessary for them to cover their faces; some of the feuds between members of these two different nationalities were even wilder and more prolonged than the traditional Kentucky feuds.

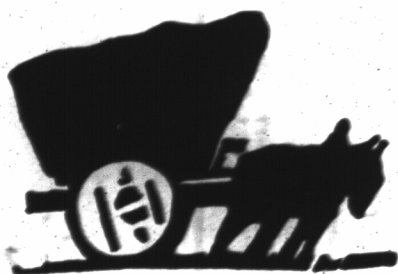
At the present time the villages in this area are among the most progressive in the whole Soviet Union. They were given their first written language in 1924, and the Balkarian country was first penetrated by a road in 1926. They are now 90 per cent literate, and teachers in the adult school assured us that within another two years the region would be 100 per cent literate. The women are now fully liberated, and take their place as teachers, collective farmers, and share every possible advantage. Feuds are a thing of the past, although many still bear the scars. The ability of these two nationalities to cooperate explains in great part their present progress.

These people responded quickly to collectivization, which first started in this district in 1930, and they soon developed a strong economic base upon which they are building their present cultural life. After a certain stage in the increase of economic wealth, the collective farmers are no longer satisfied with that alone, but demand new values of a higher type.

A tremendous amount of building construction has been devoted to clubs, schools, community bathhouses, central radio receiving stations, hydroelectric stations, and hospitals. Building materials in this area are very plentiful, and only needed collective organization to result in their proper exploitation. Pink tufa rock is obtained in the mountains, as well as lime and cement, while on the steppe many small brick factories supply their vicinities. The possibilities for electrification are unlimited, and we visited one large hydroelectric station which when completed will supply more than six of the villages in this valley. Electrification is becoming a reality here, since the swift-flowing rivers provide a basis and since the collective farmers are at a stage where they, under the guidance of experts, are anxious to build the necessary stations.

Four collective farms here have reached the highest stage of development yet to be found in the Soviet Union, that of rebuilding the entire village. We visited two villages in which this reconstruction was under way. In one of these the first eight buildings nearing completion will be finished by October, and another 22 will be completed by January 1. At the end of four years' time there will be 1,200 new buildings, 1,000 of which will be exclusively for living quarters.

The collective farms are in all stages of development, and it is an occasional glimpse of the next step forward makes one realize the goals toward which the agricultural population of the Soviet Union is moving under this new organizational form.



JOURNAL FOR THE NIGHT

The S. E. P.

Let's go away from here,
the steam of gravy's in our eyes,
the basting of the goose
is a too loud hiss for our ears.
The cinnamon on the apples
sheathes the scent against the sharper
blades of rotting morsels
in an alley's guts.
Let us go away from here,
go hand in hand among the colored ads
to the last page;
let's toss it in an ash can, choose

The Times, Eagle, Oregonian,
Examiner or Blade.

Tonight the fog comes in (we need a quilt
of other's guilt) to squat in the low places,
to squat like hunger in the low places;
comes in like Hearst unto the higher rostrum,
leveling the sky.

Let's make our beds,
arrange the lies to cover us,
tuck a headline beneath the chin,
then let the fog roll in;
let truth sleep its oldest sleep
beneath its eldest covering,
plotting a new awakening
into a newer dawn
when truth shall shuck the old lies off
as one shucks corn,
revealing a kernel-solid front against the morn.

—WALKER WINSLOW

CORRESPONDENCE

NEEDS CHALLENGING

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

Holy, holy, holy! Apocalypse by Comrade Broughton—America's Bethlehem—all Villagers wearing halos, drinking milk, waxing dialectic. Lyric outburst worthy of the local realtor . . . And to hell with history!

Infidel and heretic though I may be, I believe that Mr. Broughton's heaven-sent unawareness does need challenging. His bland dismissal of older and far braver (because more alone) rebels is annoying to those who consider that cultural ideas are not fatherless.

His hosannas over the fact (?) that nothing but proletarian literature is being read are more alarming than glorious. His parable of the hungry, cold, bewildered students of Weidman and Graham is but an echo of his even more adamant brethren's statements in *New Theatre Magazine* concerning the undeserved success of these two un-social-conscious opportunists, misled, bad examples who dare to dance such non-exist-

ent frivolities as a universal lamentation, instead of the dirge of the I. L. G. W. U.

Long before this new decade, even in the dark ages when Hart Crane, in better verse than any proletarian has yet achieved, flipped off a little thing called *The Bridge*—even then the “chiffon whirl” was questioned. As to Writers’, Dancers’, Artists’ and Theatre Unions, no one can deny that they should have existed long ago. But perhaps they would have, if the ancient and terrible art-for-art’s sakers had not been so busy learning to write, dance, paint and act.

But alarmed, confused, annoyed, one becomes quite wild—in the quaint old-fashioned way—at holy damning denial of Greenwich Village’s past importance. It was the haven of the rebels who, though not entirely political-proletarian-minded, did fight for freedom—the very germ of the present fight. And though many there were who contributed nothing artistically but atmosphere, and who died as they lived—imitators or traitors—there were immortals who knew of action and work; just as now, though many will talk and quarrel and furnish crimson lighting effects, and pale at labor—a few will survive, political leaders Amen!

Berkeley, California.

Janice Brooke

BRASS CHECKING THE P.F.U.

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

I read with a great deal of interest the “Sinclair Brass Check” comment that appeared in your very fine PACIFIC WEEKLY of September 9 in which you suggested “Upton Sinclair is Brass Checking the P. F. U. because it threatens his Epic”; also the evasive reply of Mr. Sinclair of the 16th that more than confirms the point you so well established.

Any school boy could see the tactics employed in that instance by Mr. Sinclair was “brass checking” and a deliberate attempt to boycott the P. F. U. Unfortunately for Mr. Sinclair, most of the Epics DID NOT pay heed to their leader as Mr. Sinclair would have you believe and the P. F. U. Congress was a success. Some sixty-three Epic groups and ninety-six Democratic groups were represented with other organizations at the Convention; and such notable Epic leaders as the following were also present: Senator Culbert L. Olson, Epic head of the California Democratic Party; Assemblymen Paul Richie, John B. Pelletier, Gard and Voight; L. A. City Councilmen Will Kindig and Christenson; Rube Borough and Oliver Thornton, prominently associated with the *Epic News* during the last campaign; Stitt Wilson, Attorney John C. Packard, Ben Legere, Jerry Voorhis, Dr. A. Briggs, Paul Bruns and many other notable Epics. Even Upton Sinclair’s own voice penetrated the sacred portals of the Convention Auditorium. So much for Sinclair’s claim that “most of the Epics did forget the P. F. U. Convention”.

Again in spite of what Mr. Sinclair says to the contrary, you were correct in your statement that “Mr. Sinclair’s *Epic News* made no mention of the P. F. U. Congress”. Mr. Sinclair knows very well that “his” *Epic News* was a “muzzled press” as far as the P. F. U. Convention “proper” was concerned and that his remarks were confined to advocating a boycott of it; not only that, the End Poverty League Board of Directors was called in session on the most important P. F. U. Convention day, in an attempt to withdraw from the P. F. U. Convention, those Epic Board members who were in

attendance as delegates; again a State-wide Epic Picnic was arranged on an identical P. F. U. Convention day, in an obvious but very unsuccessful attempt to weaken the attendance; lastly the *Epic News* Reel’s high lights that were taken at the P. F. U. Convention, mysteriously disappeared from general circulation. So “there was no brass checking”! Judge for yourself.

In spite of the tactics employed against the P. F. U., the P. F. U. Convention Chairman, Stitt Wilson, refused to entertain a motion proposed by indignant Epics who wished the Convention to go on record, condemning Sinclair’s attempted boycott; and like the true gentleman he is, Chairman Wilson then called an adjournment of the Convention, out of consideration for the End Poverty League, in order to permit Mr. Sinclair’s radio talk to be heard in the Convention Auditorium. What a difference in conduct?

In “Upton Sinclair’s” *Epic News* of the 16th, which also contains his reply to the PACIFIC WEEKLY comment, we are told that “the Board of Directors of the End Poverty League, unanimously reaffirmed the Epic ban against political groups favoring a dictatorship”. Mr. Sinclair fails to mention in his reply to your comment, that the “dissatisfied persons” who, he claims, “organized the P. F. U. Congress”, were dissatisfied on account of the “Dictatorship” of Mr. Sinclair, that he himself thought so necessary and vital to maintain, during the late Epic Campaign. The dissatisfaction was caused because Mr. Sinclair who talked so much about democracy, failed to permit it in the operation of “his own” movement and because the movement was built around Mr. Sinclair’s own idol “Upton Sinclair”. We hear a great deal about “democracy”; it is “Upton Sinclair’s” Production For Use Plan; it is “Upton Sinclair’s” Epic Movement; it is “Upton Sinclair’s” National *Epic News* and so on far into the night.

If there is any difference existing between the Epic Movement and the P. F. U. Federation, it is a Difference created wholly by Mr. Sinclair himself; to put it plainly as I see it, the real difference between the “Upton Sinclair” Movement and the P. F. U. Federation is: one is “Upton Sinclair’s” Movement (page a halo) and the other (P. F. U.), is a rank and file Movement, for the people as a whole, dependent upon the support of the liberal progressive organizations, who have common sense enough to know that we can only bring about “Production For Use” and the end of the Profit System, by the UNITED efforts of ALL. When Mr. Sinclair comes down from the clouds and realizes that real leadership is dependent upon the “would-be” leader “being the servant of the common people” and not the common people the servant of Mr. Sinclair, then, and only then, will he know and be capable of demonstrating real statesmanship.

“Production For Use” was in operation long before Mr. Sinclair was ever heard of; however, it is only just and right that we should give credit to Mr. Sinclair, for giving the “Production For Use” Movement such an impetus during the Epic Campaign.

In closing, let me call Mr. Sinclair’s attention to a resolution adopted by the End Poverty League Board of Directors last September the 7th; “to advise Epic forces in each community, to cooperate and sponsor conferences with representatives of various progressive organizations to obtain a closer relationship with “all” (my quotation marks) liberal organizations that believe in a democratic form of government”. The California Progressives have a vast task ahead of them in order to defeat the real enemies of the common people, the Reactionaries, and I am confident the P. F. U. Federation will cooper-

ate to this end as soon as Upton Sinclair demonstrates he is in accord with the substance of the above resolution, that the rank and file Epics so heartily concur in.

As you have so often told the common people, Mr. Sinclair, "IT IS UP TO YOU."

San Diego, California

Sept. 21, 1935

John H. Pratt

Member of the Executive Committee, The California Federation for "Production For Use"

A WORD FOR HUEY

Editor, Pacific Weekly,

Sir:

To brand as dictator the only man who ever gave the poor of Louisiana a taste of democracy is like our prostitute capitalist press. Huey Long was dictator, as his foes were forced to acknowledge, with the consent of the majority vote of a sovereign state.

He was one of the defrauded poor whose voice he became. He suffered their hardships and shared their deficiencies and their delusions. He shocked, shamed and infuriated his aristocratic enemies because he was just what their system of oppression had made him—an ignorant country boy.

He knew only enough of economics to see that the concentration of a nation's wealth is a social blight and a denial of the rights of man. To find the remedy was beyond his grasp of economic law.

He has been arraigned as being just as insincere and corrupt as his opponents. True or false, it is the most terrible accusation an enemy could indict. Whatever his motives, he used his crude, amazing power on behalf of the exploited. He must be respected for the enemies he made.

Los Angeles

Will Dobson

MUSIC

MOST American singers have not the courage to include characteristically American songs on their concert programs. Lawrence Tibbet did a brave bit of pioneering in recently opening a concert with Deems Taylor's *Departure of the Soul*, but Tibbet stepped into fame in his role of the King in Taylor's Opera, *The King's Henchman*, though this opera has received far too few performances.

Perhaps no American composer has more successfully caught the essence of an American poet than Ernst Bacon with his group of songs, *At Parting*—set to Walt Whitman's poems.

Steen Sconhofs, baritone, will close his Carmel concert, October 5, with a group of four songs from *At Parting*—*Grand is the Seen*, *The Last Invocation*, *One Thought Ever at the Fore* and *Darest Thou Now O Soul*. Sconhofs has had the good fortune to work with the composer on these songs and one may expect a sympathetic and musicianly interpretation. The songs vary widely in their moods, the first

being triumphant, the second tender, the third meditative, and the last, mysterious and questioning.

ENCOURAGED by the appreciation and support given her first series of *Chamber Music Concerts* last season, Carolyn Ware is this winter bringing a second series to San Francisco. This series will be held at the cozy "Community Playhouse" and will open November 21 with the Roth Quartet from Budapest. February 4 brings the Hart House String Quartet whose personnel has remained unchanged in over a decade. Enthusiastic reports come from the British Isles where the Hart Quartet have been performing in celebration of Jubilee Year.

BARTLETT and Robertson will give their "Recital for Two Pianos" on February 25. The work of these English soloists has been acclaimed both in America and abroad.

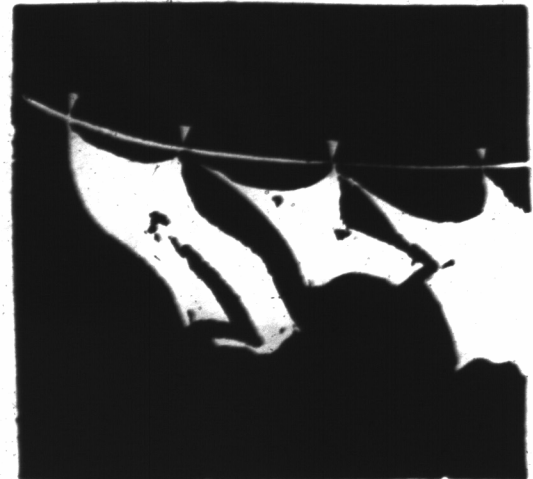
During March the incomparable Pro Arte Quartet will give a performance. Their fine concerts at Mills College, many of which were broadcast, have endeared them to thousands of chamber music enthusiasts.

Those who were fortunate enough to hear the Paris String Quintet last season will certainly want to hear the Barrere, Salzedo, Britt Trio April 28. The combination of flute and harp with strings is all too seldom heard. Barrere, virtuoso of the flute, is famous also for his quaint "Little Symphony and Woodwind Ensemble". Salzedo, harpist, has discovered a hundred precise and differentiated types of tone possible to obtain from the harp, previously undiscovered. Horace Britt, cellist, has concertized all over Europe and both Americas.

Season tickets for the five concerts are most reasonable, ranging from \$9 to \$3.

GUNNAR JOHANSEN, young Danish concert pianist, whose recent triumphs in Northern Europe were repeated during his many appearances along the Pacific Coast last season, will give a double series of "Twelve Historic Piano Recitals", opening October 1 at the Berkeley Piano Club and the following night in San Francisco at Steinway Hall. The opening program (Pre-Bach) will include works by Frescobaldi, Padre Rossi, and Rameau, while the final program will include compositions of Reger, Bloch, Schoenberg and Prokofiev.

—ALAN CAMPBELL



BOOKS

A FABIAN TURNED FASCIST

DICTATORS AND DEMOCRACIES TODAY, by John Martin. Introduction by Ray Stannard Baker. (Rollins Press. \$2.50)

(Reviewed by William Millis)

THIS book is another collection of academic lectures, but in this case the lectures are stodgy, dull and distorted. The author, John Martin, is a former Fabian and English Labor Party official who has lived in the United States since the first of this century. In recent years he has been Professor of International Relations at Rollins College, Winter Park, Florida.

The first part of the book is a discussion of the breakdown of the machinery of peace—the League of Nations, Kellogg's Pact, World Court, and disarmament conferences—and a plaintive plea for "A New Strategy of Peace". Unfortunately, Professor Martin has no concrete ideas about any scheme which would unite the imperialist rivals of the present day in a program which would make for peace. Perhaps he has no definite proposals because he knows, but is afraid to admit, that there is no scheme which will prevent war as long as you have capitalist trade rivalry between nations.

The second and remaining part of the book is a study of three dictatorships and three "democracies": Russia, Italy and Germany; France, Great Britain and the United States.

Before discussing the Soviet Union as such, Martin tries to dispose of Socialism and its theories of the Economic Interpretation of History, Surplus Value and the Class Struggle by a lengthy diatribe of three pages. After so easily demolishing Socialism, Martin goes on to tell us the truth about what has happened in Russia since 1917. The only comment needed is to state that "the truth about Russia" consists almost entirely of quotations from press reports sent out by Mr. William Henry Chamberlin.

Since Martin views Italian fascism entirely as "the expression of the personality and experience of Benito Mussolini", he says nothing about the subservience of Il Duce to Italian Capitalism, nothing at all about the failure of the mythical "Corporative State", and nothing about the extremely low standard of living forced on the Italian people. Professor Martin is a great deal more hostile to Hitler than he is to Mussolini. Nevertheless, his chapter on "Germany and National Socialism" is nothing impressive.

When he starts reporting France, Great Britain and the United States one is forced to say that Professor Martin becomes somewhat pathetic. Although he makes no mention of the French People's Front, he refers to Colonel de la Rocque—head of the fascist *Croix de Feu*—as "an old soldier of ability and character". As an old Fabian Prof. Martin finds much to praise in the "inevitability of gradualness"—or, rather, "the gradualness of inevitability"—which he finds in the "muddling through" policy of the English National Government.

Professor Martin is not an ironical man, but he subtitled his chapter on the United States "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness". This chapter presents the last stand of a Fabian turned Fascist. He comes out definitely against Socialism, even in the distant future. He comes out definitely for

the company union as the "American way", as opposed to independent, militant unions. In the concluding chapter, "Youth and Dictatorships", Martin is no longer the fascist unconscious; he becomes an avowed one. There are a number of references to "The Leader" and to "Americanism". Consider these quotations:

"America needs a leader who will embody, as did Mussolini, in the idea of the State, the suppression, determined and ruthless, of organized crime (and communism), the final establishment of the supremacy of justice."

After urging forced labor for the youth of America, Professor Martin says:

"Each year young Americans could make as brave a display as Hitler's Nazi camp workers did at Nuremberg . . ."

NOT IMPORTANT: NEVER DULL

THEY SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH, by Morley Callaghan. (Random House) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Ella Winter)

THIS novel is past master of the art of telling hardly anything important and never being dull. There is little action but it isn't mere stream-of-consciousness introspection. It is evidently meant to be a "depression" novel, showing the effects of the depression on a number of people; to this reviewer it doesn't seem to be that at all, but rather a story of life as she is lived.

Mike Aikenhead left his father's house because he didn't like his father's second wife; he was an engineer, but couldn't find a job. The novel is about him, his girl, a sweet, simple, Polish maiden who is earthy and natural; about his sister Sheila who, when told her mother died mad, refuses to have a child, but nevertheless lives fairly happily with her simple doctor husband; Mike's father, Andrew Aikenhead, an advertising man who is somewhat confused by all the human currents and cross-currents in his life; and for the first part of the book, about Andrew's second wife and step-son, Dave Choate.

Here the puzzle, or perhaps, confusion in Callaghan's purpose enters. Mike and Dave—who is a helpless and drinking young man—quarrel on a lake, and Mike won't let Dave land; a while later he hears him call for help but doesn't go to his aid. Thus he morally, if not physically, murdered his half-brother. The father is suspected, but not arrested, and while there is talk, nothing happens. The father, however, feels badly and bit by bit drifts into melancholy; his wife leaves him, his partner boots him out and he is left alone. Mike has nervous fears and reactions but comes out all right in the end.

The short and simple annals of the depressed, you might say. But why all the story of Dave Choate unless it be symbolic; and if so, did one need symbolism in this story? The book is almost a *Cranford* in its simple recounting of every day emotions, sounds and smells, the country, the shops at night in a crowded street, a father's feelings as he waits for his child to be born, a girl's delight in secure love.

Mr. Callaghan has a trick of underwriting what another novelist would have melodramatised; this gives an even tone to the whole that some may find monotonous, but that also leaves one a little puzzled at the end. He has not really dealt with the implications of the events that form the basis of the novel. He leaves unanswered the question of how a man

lives and eats and pays his rent on no income at all, and when the wife and child are added . . . two weeks' work would hardly keep them. One might expect Mike and his wife to be worrying about that rather than to be feeling happy about having a child. This seems to be why the novel as we know it cannot last. In real life the bills have to be met; in a novel the subject can be blithely disregarded while the swaying walk of a girl is described.

The bewilderment of our present world is mirrored in the way Mr. Callaghan mixes up his threads. There is the father-son relationship thread; the "meek shall inherit the earth" thread; the moral murder and doubtful repentance motif; the depression thread. They do not make up a unified tale nor are they woven together in a compact pattern. They remain loose ends, wandering alone, meandering into detail, getting lost and starting somewhere else again as a stream in a desert. But Mr. Callaghan writes a cultured, smooth and handsome prose. Perhaps he will work out his confusion and then—make a book.

WARM AND WISE

RUSSIA LAUGHS, by Mikhail Zostchenko, translated from the Russian by Helena Clayton. (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard) \$2

(Reviewed by Lincoln Steffens)

A SURPRISING book, this. Mikhail Zostchenko is the son of an actress-mother and a poet, and he comes down into his own day with laughter in five hundred forms which the people and the Government love and indulge. A comedian he is, a writer of short stories, very short, and his vogue in Soviet Russia is as great as any popular jester our people ever had, Mark Twain, Ring Lardner—any of them. It is statesmanship to let him laugh at home. It is good politics to let us see him and his great audiences laugh. It is warm and wise to note that Russia laughs at Russia and the Russians, or smiles. For, as foreign critics don't seem to realize, the brunt of the criticism of this popular comedian is often at the cost of the Soviet holy of holies. Such a relief to know this. The bureaucracy, the new officials who are the pest of every new government, get it hard and every foreigner is comforted to see them get it. Some of our travelers need not become so "het up" as they do now while they think that they alone have seen and resented the "busyness" of these bureaucrats. All Russia is onto them, all Soviet Russia is biding its time. The fifty years' plan, unannounced so far, includes an item to put the bureaucracy, the whole government in its place.

Well, Zostchenko is evidently in on the "know" of this and is preparing the millions for the future. Anyway, this genial comedian is cultivating a public opinion for the next step. He knows that very little of the present is "constitutional" and permanent. He knows and he lets you know that Soviet Russia recognizes evolution. There is some tragedy in the man's comedy, *The Last Nobleman*, for example. That's funny, but also it shows what the revolution cost the aristocracy who stuck to their old ideas. To get quickly a line on the book, flutter the pages till you come to the short short story about *The Man Who Saw Lenin*. Lenin is in Russia now about what Lincoln is in this country, he is revered and lied about piously. The jester begins his story of how he saw Lenin by the well-taught and pretty well-learned caution; "In this matter it wouldn't be right to lie. If you have seen Vladimir

Ilyitch, say so, but if you haven't seen him—keep still and don't blow about it. It will be better for history." And then he tells about seeing Lenin. He saw his chauffeur, tells exactly what the chauffeur said—nothing worth saying—but when he ran off to get a pencil to write down just what Lenin's chauffeur said and came back the chauffeur had disappeared, had gone to his car and in the car "sits the dear leader with his coat turned up". Three pages for a sample of the smiling fun this comedian has with all Russia in his hundreds of columns in the daily papers of the masses who, remember, laugh and laugh and laugh. You kinder get a sense that Soviet Russia will laugh out of her troubles.

SOME BORING

WINTER ORCHARD, by Josephine Johnson. (Simon & Schuster) \$2.50

(Reviewed by Robert Coffin)

LAST year's Pulitzer Prize winner illustrates in this book of unimportant sketches just how inferior a writer of ability can be who chooses to ignore reality.

Miss Johnson writes about trivial, inconsequential problems of living, in a tired way that will give delight to those who go in for candle-light and other forms of sensitivity far removed from the hunger and misery of life in 1935.

Some of the sketches are boring because of excessive description of unimportant detail. The author takes the view that the part is always more important than the whole; that "Perhaps, after all, the meaning of life is written along the margin, and not on the page itself . . ." Miss Johnson attempts a few times to deal with social problems, and although she is a clever writer, she is not clever enough to hide her ignorance. *Stefan the Baker*, for instance, is a perfect example of muddlement, combining a delicate-sensitive-quivering style with trite remarks about starvation-midst-plenty; it ends with some hints about money and prices which lead me to believe that Miss Johnson's next volume may be a treatise on money and banking in the tradition of our best pre-Depression economists.

I hope Miss Johnson wakes up. It is a shame for so good a writer to be slumbering away back with Katherine Mansfield, when there is so much today that needs writing about. We'd like a little less "art" and a little more honest thought and feeling.

ONE OVERLOOKED

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR, by Lillian Hellman. (Knopf) \$2

(Reviewed by Eleanor Evans)

THIS is the play which most of the New York critics picked as the best drama of the year. This is the play which the Pulitzer Prize Committee overlooked, awarding their palm to *The Old Maid*, a saccharine tear-jerker about an unwise Victorian maiden and her illegitimate child, and withholding it from the more questionable subject of rumored lesbian relations between two teachers in a girls' school. We side with the critics and make no compromising bows to the Pulitzer Prize Committee and its sense of morals. *The Children's Hour* is as technically excellent and as theatrically effective as any

play that has come to Broadway for half a dozen years.

Yet it is not quite the "stinging tragedy", not the "fine, brave" drama that the critics would have us believe. Within its own limits, the play carries dramatic conviction, but it is sharply rather than deeply drawn. The material, dealing with the tragic results of a little girl's lies, is interesting but hardly important. A fourteen-year-old female bully gets her own way by inventing a scandalous story about her teachers. Unjustly accused of lesbian relations, these two young women bring a libel suit against the child's grandmother. They lose the suit together with their reputations and their school. One breaks her engagement to a young man because of the barrier of scandal between them. The other, made conscious of her own incipient lesbian tendencies, is driven by an inner feeling of guilt to suicide.

Throughout, Miss Hellman manipulates the action with a view to audience emotion, rather than any revelation of the underlying springs of character. But her dramatic construction is so tightly knit, so firm, so clean, and her dialogue so terse and hard-hitting, that the play is neither sensationalism nor melodrama, but quite genuinely gripping. Her sure, ungloved handling of a so-called "difficult" theme proves her a first-class playwright, if not an important dramatist. God help her now! The play has been sold to Hollywood and Miss Hellman is to rewrite it for Will Hays and the movie public, omitting all reference to the subject of lesbianism.



CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

L. E. CLAYPOOL is a San Diego newspaper columnist.

MARION RAY is a San Francisco school teacher.

PHILEMON CASSIDY is a San Francisco newspaperman.

WALKER WINSLOW is a western poet now living in Honolulu.

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