

PACIFIC WEEKLY

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AUGUST 17, 1936

LINCOLN STEFFENS

POEM BY MARIE DE L. WELCH

A STUDENT'S APPRECIATION

TWO CONSTITUTIONS: U.S.A. & U.S.S.R.

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NOTES AND COMMENT

EARL BROWDER, Communist candidate for president, spoke to reporters in San Francisco, and the San Francisco *Chronicle* reported his words as they were spoken. This paper allowed Browder to appear what he is—a serious, thoughtful, honest and highly intelligent political leader. The San Francisco *Chronicle* has been reporting some news as if it were a newspaper in recent months, and its readers are the better off for it. This old "home-owned" newspaper could bring dignity back into journalism, if it were allowed to. It could become a leader of American journalism. This would do more to ensure San Francisco's national leadership than any "victorious" open-shop fight by industrialists.

THE rich and righteous rebels of Spain are getting so close to Madrid that they declare they may soon be able to destroy the waterworks and use thirst, etc., to enforce law, order and civilization. That should teach the women and children to cease their heroics and knuckle under. Conservatives in Spain and everywhere else might remember that they are not only making a desperate fight, they are teaching peoples what strategies to apply and to avoid in the interest of humanity, culture and civilization. It was frequently found in Mexico that the peon troops in revolt made notes of and copied the acts of the best people in war just as they did and do in peace. Strikers learn a lot from strike-breakers in the same way.

THE PRESS DEPARTMENT of the Workers University of Mexico on July 1st, 1936, commenced the issuance of *Mexican Labor News*. To be issued three times a month in mimeo-

graphed form, this news service promises to be a most interesting publication. The first issue contains stories on the railroad strike in Mexico, the strike at the San Rafael Paper Company (perhaps the longest single labor dispute in Mexican history: the strike is now in its fourth year), and other items of the utmost interest. Those interested in receiving *Mexican Labor News* should write to Rosales No. 26, Mexico City.

LIBERALS LINING UP

FOR A DECADE and more, Los Angeles citizens have been able to say that their city supports a liberal newspaper, the *Illustrated Daily News*. During a portion of that period, the *Record*, despite many temptations, stood in the main for a certain measure of decency and relative journalistic truth. But presently there were changes in ownership and hence in management, and the *Record* became the *Post-Record*. A little later, the *Post-Record* was sunk without a trace, but its spirit soon reincarnated as the Los Angeles *Evening News*, under which name it continues to function as the younger brother of the *Illustrated News*, a morning publication edited and published by Mr. Elias Manchester Boddy.

In a city whose only other dailies are two Hearst sheets and the Los Angeles *Times*, a reputation for honesty and even liberalism is difficult neither to gain nor to maintain. Over a period of a half dozen years, a variety of nostrums, each with its accompanying transitory movement, appeared in Los Angeles, and each received its meed of notice. Technocracy, the Utopian Society, Dr. Townsend, an amorphous co-operative movement, were the subjects of more or less favorable discussion in the *News*. From time to time, Mr. Hearst was subjected to the editorial lash, Fascism and Communism were briefly excoriated and dismissed as foreign aberrations unsuited to the pure American political soil, and in a word, a reputation for sound liberalism was achieved. Shortly after the first appearance of the Technocracy bubble, Mr. Boddy was fairly bowled over by the ergs of Howard Scott, and for a brief time predicted wondrous social goods, when and if the Technocratic plan should be installed. But he soon turned New Deal. Up to yesterday, August 6th, the liberal reputation of the *News* remained all but unchallenged.

The editorial policy of the *Illustrated News* is unfolded by Mr. Boddy's front page column, "Views of the News" and on the regular editorial page by one R. R. K., who is Mr. Richard R. Kilroy, sometime of Butte, Montana. Generally speaking, "Views of the News" deals with the lighter aspects of life; Mr. Boddy's prowess as a fisherman; his conversations with people in all walks of life; the probable distance of Betelgeuse, and the like. Mr. Kilroy deals with the more weighty problems of life in a popular manner; he knows the dangers of over-subtlety.

It seems altogether probable that his expressed views have the tacit approval of Mr. Boddy, and therefore Mr. Kilroy's forthright declaration in favor of Fascism assumes a significance it otherwise would lack. Under the caption "In Spain," he discusses the present Spanish situation. "Discounting the censorship of the government at Madrid," says Mr. Kilroy, "late despatches indicate that Spain is about to thrive (sic!) herself of Communism."

This he deems a commendable enterprise, regardless of how accomplished.

"Recurring rebel victories over widely scattered areas show that their forces are daily being recruited from the majority of the population ruled too long by a red group which took possession of the military and civil authority by intrigue. As following all up-

heavals there is sure to be chaos and counter-revolution until the 'strong man' appears. The Leftists refer to the rebels as 'Fascists' but the history of the country during the last year shows that the people have had little to say or do about government. **This is their rebellion.**" (Bold face mine —L. R.)

So then, the cause of the monarchists, the grandees, the industrialists, Generals Mola, Franco and company, aided by the Italian Fascist government, is the cause of the "decent" people of Spain. Strange logic! Mr. Kilroy's aversion to the word Fascist is not shared by those generals who declare that their aim is to set up a Fascist dictatorship in Spain; nay, more, that they already have established such a dictatorship, and have ordered all workers' organizations dissolved. Liberals are lining up.

LEROY RICE

A MAN IS BEATEN

MANUEL ZAMBRANO, 44 years old is an American-born citizen whose mother was of Spanish descent; his father was German. For eight years he was a blacksmith and for two years a manager of a large ranch, now organizer of unemployed union. He tells his story:

"I was standing in front of the strike headquarters talking to some of my friends before the meeting when a police car drove up and one of the officers pointed to me and yelled, 'You, come here.' So I went to the car and he say, 'Get in, the captain wants to see you' and I did. As soon as I got in the car the four officers all started to cuss at me and say, 'You're going to talk when we get you there d'you hear?' I said 'talk what, I don't understand.' He swore again and said, 'you will.' When we got to the sheriff's station they took me in a small room and banged the door. First they asked me my name and address and every time I answered a question they slapped me in the face. They asked me if ever I had taken a beating before and I say no I have always been, what you say, law-abiding citizen, and then they slap hard and swear and say, 'you don't even belong in this country and we are going to send you back where you come from,' and I say that they are wrong. I was born in this country and my mother too, but that made them mad because they both folded their fists and punched me on the jaw and tell me I am lazy and no good and so are all my kind of people. But I say 'look at my hands, I have worked hard all my life.' Next they ask me 'what is this W. P. A. union you run?' but I told them I was elected organizer but I do not run it, all the members do that. Then they swung at me and swore, shouting, 'why do you have a union against the government that feeds you?' Every time I try to answer their questions they cuss me and beat harder and I think I cannot stand it so I hold my hands up in front my face. I am strong man, never get what you call knock-out easy, but one officer hold my chin up while the other swung hard at my jaw till I hardly know anything. Then one officer ask me who the American people were that came to the strike hall. The other officer said, 'You don't love your children, do you?' I said that I sure do just as much as they did theirs, but he cussed and answered with a blow at my stomach and yelled, 'No you don't or you would not be seen with those people, they are dangerous,' but I told him they never had hurt me but lots of time help me. Then all of the officers say at once, 'Oh you are a communist?' Then I said 'Communist, I don't know what you mean.' At that all the officers started to pitch on me at once. One of them was drunk I could see.

One of the officers picked up a short heavy hose with lead on it and swung it in the air and said 'This is what we give them, how would you like it?' One of the men hit me on the

head from behind with something that made me find myself on the floor with that hose thing close to my hand. Then while I was laying there they all beat on me so hard I nearly go mad and I finally say: 'You just want me to say I am, what-you-say? I am a c-communist—it is not true though.' I thought then they would stop beating me but the big one took another swing at my jaw and a big ring on his finger cut through my lip and made the blood run all over the front of me. Only then did they quit and say 'Quick, wash your face in that basin.' After that they make me stand up before one of the officers and tell him that I would not go to the strike hall any more or to the W. P. A. union meetings. They then push me and say, 'Git out, and you better not tell your friends any stories.'

The next week I went with a lot of people to the L. A., what you say, yes, Board of Supervisors meeting, and I told them everything that happened and the people all asked for an investigation, that's right, of the case. Next I was taken to the District Attorney's office to make one of those swear statements. Next two plain clothes deputies went with me in a car out to the Whittier station where I was beat up. These men went in first and talked a long time before they called me in where all the officers were, and told me to pick out the ones that had beat me, but they were not there and they acted surprised. Then they said they would go to the sub-station in the district and see if they were there. When we got there and they told me to pick out the ones that it was, they were not there either. My friends had copied the license number of the car that took me away and I had given it to the officers so I said to them 'Why couldn't you find the names of the officers that were driving that car that night, you find stolen cars that way, don't you?' But they just shook their head and told me that that car was not on duty in that district. Then they said to me before they went if I saw those same officers again for me to copy the numbers from their caps, but I say that is hard to do. Before these men let me out of the car they ask me if I don't belong to a big union, then they say for me to get all the members to vote for that guy, yes, the one that is there now, Buron Fitts, and they say that he is their big boss and they must get him elected again and gave me 50 cents."

BERENICE HOLLAND

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LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--



THE HIGHLY civilized governments of Europe are in fear of the war that is forming in the revolution that is writhing in Spain just now. England is laboring for an agreement on neutrality; France, the realist, says it's that or war and revolution. I say it concerns us. Us and not only our property. In an unprofessional word: I'm scared. The army in overalls may be routing the rebels in Spain and France, but the A. F. of L. is driving the "rebels" out over here.

"We" editors *et al* keep crossing the line that is bleeding everywhere and we Americans don't realize what we are trampling. It is something that the Russians are aware and are working for peace; that is something, but it is not enough. A crisis is on—now. War and revolution are right around the corner where prosperity used to hide.

IT IS as impossible to keep the police from knowing and having business relations with vice, as it is to restrain a public service commission from "corruption" by public utilities, a war department from relations with ammunition makers, playwrights from scandals with actresses.

A GREAT SCIENTIST, a specialist on glands and on rejuvenation, has discovered and announced, after an experiment in marriage, that love is after all the most miraculous rejuvenator. The scientist never knew this before; ordinary people didn't know before that this was news to the scientists. Faust knew it once.

FIND OUT, I advise, if your mistress keeps a diary. And burn it before going on much further. A modest male has some shy rights even in a declining civilization, if taken in time.

SEVEN THOUSAND black and barbarous warriors have died to prove by an attack on Addis Ababa that civilization has not been established even in Mussolini's Ethiopia—yet.

LANDON, the new candidate for president, is showing how to do what has to be done. He recognizes that we all have to take care of, for example, the cattle business. All business men are concerned, not only the cattle men, not only the profiteers on the consequent higher prices of meat. And Landon says so; he asks all to help. But Landon does not merely, like Roosevelt, make the Government pay the price and charge the costs to the "haves" in the enforced form of taxes; Landon appeals to us "haves" for voluntary giving; charity, which we are accustomed to; he leaves each "have" to give and to withhold. He has the whip of a presidential election to snap, but our giving is voluntary, a contribution to a cause; a campaign contribution; a bribe, which is not unusual. Roosevelt behaves as if he were demanding that we do our duty, our mere duty. He runs up bills in the common interest and he taxes us. See? Roosevelt taxes us. Landon acknowledges that our wealth is ours, and he asks us for some of it. I like Landon's way; we hate Roosevelt's way. Personal-

ly I am afraid these voluntary contributions will not be quite enough and will not happen to be fair and evenly distributed. Some mean men will not give willingly as much as some generous fellows.

THESE ARE great days for news, both kinds. The war news, all about the revolution, is so discouraging that the willing, unpropertied editors hit up the news of our civilization to keep the balance. "We" tell about the crooked cops who will or won't peach; about the movie stars and their modest playwrights who shrink from exposure; a murder or two; and so on and so on. Then when "we" have reported enough good news, "we" can slope off into the unhappily good news of the "civil war" of Spain and France with a slighting effect that won't hurt the owner of the paper and the other owners too much. "We" can picture the mob that burned the churches of Spain, the workers, the women and the girls with clenched fists, ruling, winning, laughing. Rude, good, current news! Something for the stock holders, a little for the typesetters. Great news, all pretty well told; even the reluctance is a part of the day's history, if you have eyes to see it. The glacier is moving slowly, heavily down upon us, but by gosh we know it—for the first time in a geological period.

HOWEVER, whatever happens, the Latin Revolution, the fighting by force for what might better be granted, is going right on with what looks like some success, and it looks to me as if it were all a result of a democratic election. It looks as if the people in a solid front united had won and were governing everything except the armies. Perhaps we'd better democratize our army by reducing the officers to gentlemen only.

THE LITTLE CHILDREN whom disagreeing parents call into our divorce courts seem to be having a hard time of it. No Solomons on the bench, the law draws the sword and offers to divide the kid as it does any other property. And the parents say "go ahead and cut." We have more rights than we have children. Wonder how it would be if our children organized against parents and stood up for their own; taking and bringing up all kids summoned into court by loveless grown-ups. Or, we might ask Soviet Russia what they do to make their little ones so happy and laughing. There is nothing so offensive as the pictures of the youth of Communist Russia at play: learning to swim, run or fly. It's just as if those terrible people were saying all the time: "Suffer the little children to come unto me."

I SEE AND FEEL the People's Front fighters as making my war for me and for us. For Malraux, for the French, for all men, women and children. Spain's is the first, the opening battle of man for man; perhaps it is the most decisive battle. Anyway it is ours, as they must know and as we must. I say we do, and that we realize as they fight that we have to finish what they are starting. The Spanish defenders are our world's leaders.

(This column was written early last week. The final paragraph, Lincoln Steffens' last written words, answered a request from "New Masses" of New York, for a contribution to a symposium on Spain.)

WHO IS KLAUS MEHNERT ?

J. A. DEAN

THE termination of summer session this week at Berkeley marks the close of a daring and clever enterprise for spreading Nazi propaganda in the University of California. Regents may be proud of the work performed during the past six weeks by the visiting German lecturer, Dr. Klaus Mehnert, in the education of the school teachers from all over the State, who take summer courses in order to better their chances for advancement.

Dr. Mehnert gave the intellectual rationale of fascism in a seemingly unbiased fashion, created a feeling of hostility to communism by the use of carefully weighted and selected facts—and all with intelligence, grace and charm. The liberal members of the Commonwealth Club applauded him to the echo.

And who is Dr. Klaus Mehnert, against whose appearance on the campus the American Student Union was thought last week to have misguidedly protested? First, he is obviously a member of the German Nazi party. No one in Germany today can hold the important offices which Dr. Mehnert holds who is not a party member. He is general secretary to the "German Society for the Study of Eastern Europe," an editor of "Osteuropa," and manager of the Berlin office of the "German Economic Institute for Russia and Eastern Europe." For the past seven years he has served as Russian correspondent for German newspapers. He wrote a not unsympathetic book on Russian youth; but that was in 1932, while he was still a member of the German "Wandervogel" group, an idealistic youth group with vaguely liberal characteristics which advocated knee pants, picnics, hikes and open-air morality; that was also before Hitler came to power. The young correspondent apparently had to make a choice. Since then he has risen high in the Nazi regime. In 1934 he acted as the personal guide to Major-General Barrows on his German tour; it was Major-General Barrows of the California National Guard, who invited Dr. Mehnert to lecture in Berkeley this summer.

The selection was "good." Dr. Mehnert speaks English well; he was a German exchange student at the University, in 1927. He has none of the outward emotional crudeness which is popularly associated with Nazi propagandists. His prejudices, biases and half-truths could pass the more easily for "facts."

The personal attributes of Klaus Mehnert make him a valuable agent for the German government just now. As Herbert Resner pointed out (PACIFIC WEEKLY July 27) the Nazis have exchanged their cruder attempts to mold America into a National Socialist state for more subtle ones. With a declining foreign trade, decreasing standard of living and the threat of European war, the German government is desperately in need of foreign allies and can ill afford to create hostility in other countries. The party line dictates that lecturers in foreign countries say that each country expresses its "inner soul" through the particular form of government which it adopts. Nazism represents the temperament of the German people, communism that of the Russians, democracy that of the English and Americans. In this way it is hoped that foreigners will regard fascism in Germany not as an insidious menace to the rest of the world but merely as an indigenous growth incapable of export. That was Dr. Mehnert's "line"; that was what he told the Commonwealth Club.

Dr. Mehnert's course bore the mild title "Modern European Political Thought." It was originally called "Communism and Fascism," but that was changed. The course was very popular. Little clue to its content could be gotten from the reading list. Three authors each were assigned for Russian and German political thought, the only subjects treated: Marx's "Communist Manifesto," Lenin's "Imperialism" and "State and Revolution," and Stalin's "Leninism" for the former; Hitler's "My Battle," Moeller van den Bruck's "The Third Empire," and Houston Stewart Chamberlain's "Foundations of the Nineteenth Century" for the latter. The only other books recommended were three untranslated German books by Alfred Rosenberg, Walter Darre (both of which deal with the Jewish question) and Martin Staemmler.

It was in his teaching methods and the use to which he put his material that Dr. Mehnert revealed his influence. He held the "correspondence theory of truth." He compared what he considered to be the actual situation in the two countries with the expression of their theoretical intent as revealed in the readings. Thus, since Russia does not have the communism of its ideal at present, it is not as "true" to Marx, Lenin and Stalin as Germany is to the racial program of Hitler and Chamberlain, for example. So the Nazis have gone much farther than the Communists in applying their theories. The Nazis use widely the writings of that nineteenth century follower of Count Gobineau, Houston Stewart Chamberlain. This "historian" and Aryan mythologist states not only that Christ was not a Jew but that:

"One does not need to have the authentic Hittite nose to be a Jew; the term Jew rather denotes a special way of thinking and feeling. A man can very soon become a Jew without being an Israelite; often it needs only to have frequent intercourse with Jews, to read Jewish newspapers, to accustom himself to Jewish philosophy, literature and art."

Or again:

"Very small children, especially girls, frequently have quite a marked instinct for race. It frequently happens that children who have no conception of what "Jew" means or that there is any such thing in the world, begin to cry as soon as a genuine Jew or Jewess comes near them. The learned can frequently not tell a Jew



from a non-Jew; the child that scarcely knows how to speak notices the difference. Is not that something? To me it seems worth as much as a whole anthropological congress . . ."

And Dr. Mehnert remarked that "Chamberlain's major contribution is his view of history—his stress of race." One of the teachers taking the course was impressed by the fact that she had now found confirmation of the ideas of Madison Grant, Lothrop Stoddard and A. E. Wiggam.

Dr. Mehnert demonstrated that Germany is developing its own indigenous type of socialism, predicted by van den Bruck, the 19th century political theorist who held that Marx, being an international Jew, could not know the fatherland as could real Germans, and so was incapable of offering them a solution. Dr. Mehnert used a table showing the accomplishments in Russia and Germany, as weighed against Marx's proposals. Only on the question of the abolition of private property was any sharp distinction shown between the two countries. Where the Russians have a state banking monopoly, the Germans have "controlled banking." Both countries have abolished child labor, made efforts to abolish the distinction between town and country, improved waste lands, centralized transportation, taxed incomes and inheritances, and confiscated the property of rebels. The only other basis of the comparison was on the question of forced labor, which Dr. Mehnert found existing in Russia but not in Germany.

With the stamp of authority of a University lectureship Dr. Mehnert spread his message to wide audiences in Berkeley. At evening lectures at the University open to the public he told audiences of over 800 that the average wage in Russia was 200 rubles per month, or about \$30.00, neglecting to add the equally important supplementary items to that income in the form of free medical and dental care, maternity benefits, death benefits, annual vacations with pay, old age insurance, free education and payment of stipends to college students. By omitting such information Dr. Mehnert turned facts into falsehood. He lectured to the Berkeley City Commons Club, the Lions Club, and the Women's City Club, telling amusing stories of crowded apartments of unseparated divorced couples, of two weeks' standing queues at railroad stations—the stock situations parroted by the prejudiced.

Before the Rotary Club, however, Dr. Mehnert made a more objective evaluation. In Russia, he claimed, there is a situation more close to capitalism than to communism: a differentiation of wages, living conditions and privileges almost as extreme as in the United States. "The only important difference," he said, "is that there is no private ownership of the means of production." Every other important characteristic of capitalism, he said, remains—the family, the state, the army, religion, and machinery. Further, "There has been a swing back from Utopian theories of the early Soviet Union to a more common-place and business-like ideal of government." Despite this absence of communism, however, Dr. Mehnert could say that "Fascism is Communism's greatest enemy. Fascism is fighting fire with fire and giving Communism its first great set-back."

How much longer can the University of California keep up a pretense of "impartiality?" If it sanctions the appearance of a German Nazi before its students, why has it denied even the use of its facilities to a Russian Communist? Why does it not state he is a Nazi and therefore a biased propagandist, instead of allowing him to maintain the pretense of objectivity? And why did it not invite as a lecturer on this subject a respected and reputable liberal like Dr. Emil Lederer for instance, who is dean of the University in Exile at the New School of Social Research in New York City and

who has been in Berkeley all summer? Surely one of the best known professors of political science in Germany would have been better fitted to present trends of political thought than a Nazi newspaper correspondent. Are all the members of the Board of Regents and the faculty resigned to the spread of anti-Semitic propaganda in the University? Perhaps Major-General Barrows can answer. Meanwhile, all unwitting, almost a thousand school teachers will go out and spread Nazi propaganda in California.

WALT WHITMAN SPEAKS

Why are you under the table salvaging crumbs
Teething old bones that were swept from the plate
Sucking the acrid lees from the heel of the broken glass
After the multitudes feasted and went their way?

Look, the grain is waving, the fields are golden, they shoulder
all the horizons

The bullock is fat on the plains and knows not the knife is
waiting

The grapes are thick in the nostrils, the dreams are asleep in
their juices

Look, the land is in turmoil, the land is calling

The cities, prairies, mountains, forests, under the laughing
and scowling heavens.

Clear and refreshing, the draught original bubbles from the
rocks

And the tongues of the millions cry that are parched from the
long thirsts

So why do you, like a scavenger, ravage my grave

Why do you nose in the mold, the worms and the dust

Sorting with patience the last frayed fragments?

Do you not know my spirit is not there

And has been gone these many yawning years?

For I am not an antlered head, screwed to a wall in a stuffy
room with dead eyes staring

No, I race before Time as a dog runs ahead of his master

I turn my head and look back and fret at his lagging

For I am one thing today and another tomorrow

I change as all things change.

You who would capture me must scan the world from which
I emerged

Must follow that world in its multifarious changes

Must see how Before becomes Now and how Now becomes
After

For that world is gone and another has taken its place

And from this other do I now emerge

So seek not in the old papers for my spirit

They will crack and crumble in your hands

And your mind will be filled with dry and powdery words.

Look, the world is wide and sweet and bitter and there am I
striding now

Among the hungry, the daring, the stricken-down, the always-
rising-afresh

For a world is dying and a world is being born

And I was of the old world and I am of the new world and
always am I of the world to come

For I am ever-changing, ever-renewing, nothing can bind me.

CARLITOS

LINCOLN STEFFENS

A STUDENT'S APPRECIATION

A WISE and understanding, active and graceful man has left us. He left us patiently and slowly, as he had labored to show us the meaning of his generation and the world in which he lived.

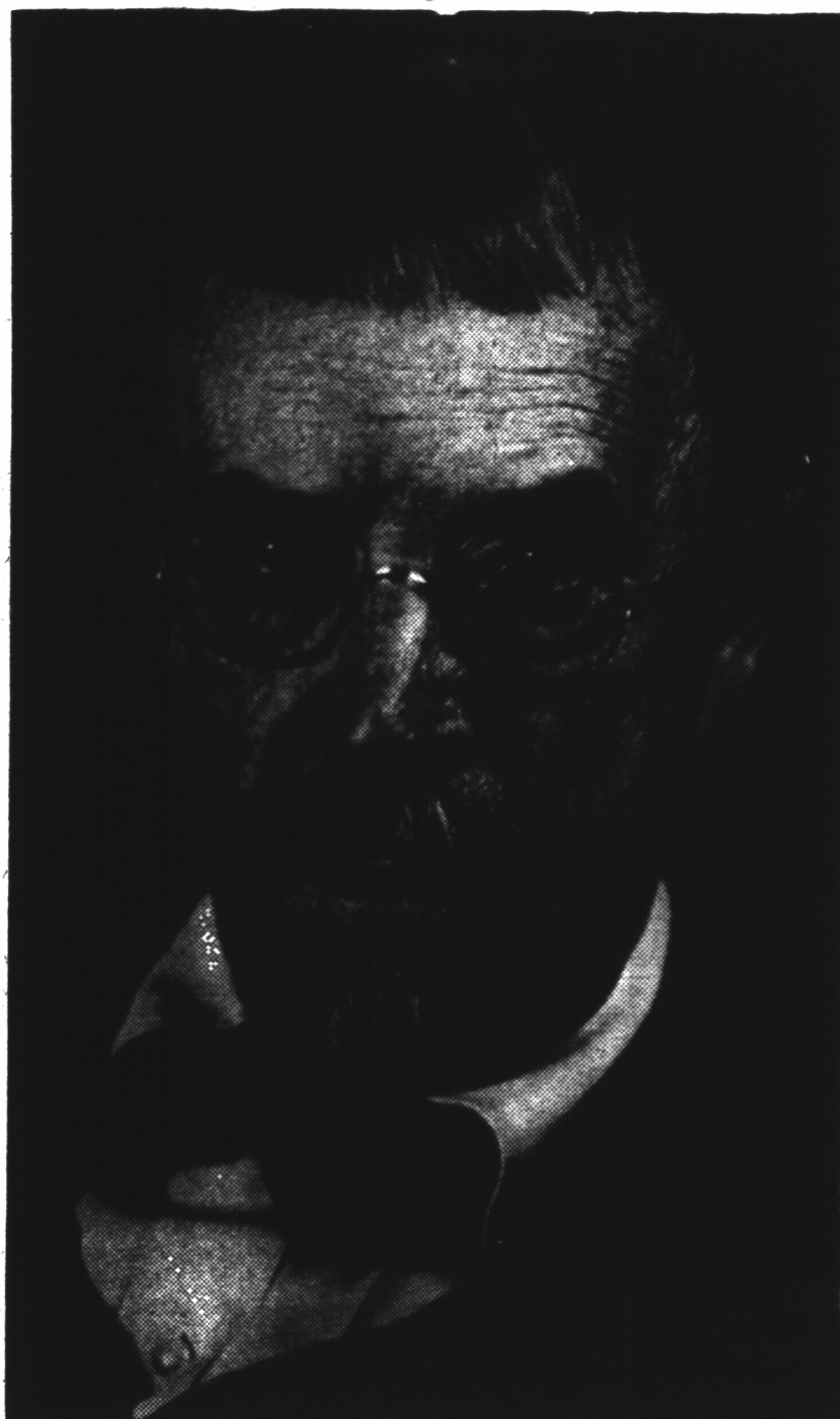
He tried hard, always with a consciousness of time's pressing, to reach us and tell us. It was us young people whom he tried especially to reach. It was to us people from the universities he liked to talk; to the hundreds who came to his bedside in the last years of his life. There he told us things we could not teach, would not teach, could not learn in the universities. Lincoln Steffens made us realize that there was work for us to do in the world; he gave us confidence and hope that we could do it. His generation, he always said, had failed; failed at even the elementary things. They had failed to provide food and shelter for themselves, to keep their banks open, to stop their wars and their plagues and droughts and floods. He wanted to make us ashamed as he did his boy Pete, not of ourselves but of "grown-ups." "Do you see that?" he would ask. "Can you do that?" And we thought we did, and yet were puzzled. He would wonder "Do they get it?" and patiently try once more to tell it.

Out of his rich, full life he would tell stories smilingly, gracefully; anecdotes of the many people he had known. This was his way of coming at theoretical questions. For him, experience threw light on both facts and theory. He rarely theorized abstractly; that surprised us theoreticians, unsettled and disturbed us, but made us think.

They were not only personal anecdotes he told in his sly, ironic way anymore than his autobiography was only the story of one man, whatever he had intended. They were pictures of ideas, classes, societies in conflict as individuals typified and expressed them. They were theories tested by and being changed by action. As he wanted us to be changed, us young people who could be changed, and were, and are.

Lincoln Steffens was an educator; an education. He wanted to be a student, and he was one of us. A student, viewing the world humorously, purposefully.

Like Thorstein Veblen, whom he read for the first time two weeks ago, he made statements which seemed to us odd and shocking. Steffens used in a new way terms which had for us time-honored meaning. He said he was against logic, reason, liberty and sincerity, and we could not follow him. We did not understand, what he well knew, that it was honest and sincere people who used logic and reason to make a "dishonest" living in a grafting, unfree world. It was a world which Steffens had tried to reform by logic and reason and Christianity and love, and he found it couldn't be done. Persuasion did not work. He tried and failed, but where others of his muckraking group surrendered to disillusionment and cynicism and the world, Steffens, with that ever fresh, young, inquiring mind, looked around him, and discovered one society where graft and corruption and privilege had been wiped out. Wiped out by hard, determined, hating, illiberal men, men not of his people; and from that time on he was for them, for their methods, and for their society. They had gotten almost in one blow what he had tried a life-time to achieve: a world where logic and reason and liberty and love could have meaning. We "nice" people had to forego these for a while, he said: they were "flowers" which



1866

1936

FAREWELL

Farewell, dear friend, you who enlightened us
With laughter, would laugh gently that we grieved
In our farewell to one who fared so well
That life itself fares better since he lived.

We grieve because your voice is stilled,
And yet we know that you will speak again
And always—there will be your words, your laughter
Immortal in the voice of man.

Courage is wiser for your life,
And truth is braver;
Farewell! you leave us—but you do not leave
The living, now or ever.

MARIE DE L. WELCH

could only be cultivated in proper soil, or they wilted and mocked us.

Steffens was frequently difficult to understand, I think, because he wrote so simply, so plainly. He said important things boldly and bluntly and they stood out and stared us right in the face and we refused to get them. We were accustomed to understatement and modifications and hesitations and qualifications and when he pruned these we sometimes thought him naive. This was not academic! It could not be true because it was so simple. "Why don't you fellows make predictions?" he would ask. "Cool scientific predictions based on your history and your science and experience. Use

your knowledge to see what is coming." He did, and he wrote in his introduction to Billinger's "Fatherland" that we, the world, had to choose between Fascism and Communism. As simple as that. "That was the choice," he wrote. "That is the choice." And we refused to believe him; some of us still refuse. The decision couldn't be, can't be so limited, so definite. There must be another way. But we have not found it, and events in France and Spain and America are proving that we have to choose our sides, soon.

Lincoln Steffens saw that and made his choice. And because he lived and saw and chose courageously, we too can better see and choose, and live.

HARRY CONOVER

TWO CONSTITUTIONS: U.S.A. AND U.S.S.R.

PATRICIA WORTH

THE NEW Soviet Constitution introduces a new principle of government: that the State owes its citizens a livelihood. It provides for the citizens of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:

- (a) "the right to guaranteed employment" (Article 118)
- (b) "rest . . . ensured by the reduction of the working day to seven hours for the overwhelming majority of the workers . . . annual vacations with pay" (Article 119)
- (c) "maintenance in old age and . . . sickness . . . ensured by . . . social insurance at state expense, free medical service," etc. (Article 120)
- (d) "universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot." "All citizens who have reached the age of 18 have the right to vote . . . and to be elected . . . irrespective of race or nationality, religion, standard of education, residential qualifications, social origin, property status or past activities" . . . (Article 134, 135, 136)
- (e) "The equality of the rights of citizens, irrespective of their nationality or race, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an immutable law . . . Any propagation of racial or national segregation or hatred and contempt, is punishable by law." (Article 123)

The Townsend and Sinclair movements should take note of the above.

As for voting rights in the United States, millions are disfranchised through State and Federal laws which set up residential, economic, racial, and cultural restrictions. For instance: before having the right to vote, in 37 States, one must be a resident of the State for one year or more; in 15 States one must reside in a certain county six months or more; in 8 States one must live in a particular town for six months or more; in 4 States one must live in a particular election precinct six months or more. In California, alone, 250,000 agricultural workers are refused the right to vote because of the migratory nature of their work.

Some economic restrictions: in eight States of the U. S., if one cannot afford to pay the poll tax, he is not eligible to vote; in three States one must own property to be allowed to vote; in one State only employed can vote; in two States, delinquent tax payers are disqualified.

There are strict age and residential qualifications for candidates to the Presidency and Congress set up by the U. S. Constitution in Articles I and II.

Among the sharpest negations of the U. S. Constitutional provisions for unabridged voting rights, are the laws which deny the vote to Oriental and Negro people. In three States, all born Chinese and other Oriental people may not vote at all. Large sections of Negro people are deprived of voting

rights through discriminatory election procedure or open terror. It is not unusual to find in the South, "Jim Crow" polling places where only whites can vote; and for Negroes, no other polling places are provided.

The Bill of Rights of the U. S. Constitution allows many democratic rights and privileges which it behooves the American people to guard jealously. But in view of vicious Criminal Syndicalism laws, vagrancy and anti-picketing laws, ought not the new Soviet Constitution convince us that greater freedom than we have is possible and should be fought for?

In the U. S. A., there are no leading posts in the highest government bodies to look after the welfare of the people (except for some small bureaus in the Department of Labor). The U.S.S.R. constitution provides major government posts to look after health, social welfare, education, and art. (Articles 70, 78, 83).

In the United States, there is no guaranteed right of asylum and foreign born are subject to and do suffer deportation. Persecution of deportees is energetically carried on especially against working class political refugees who are often sent back to Fascist countries and to certain death. In contrast to this, Article 129 of the new Soviet constitution, provides that

"The U.S.S.R. grants the right of asylum to foreign citizens persecuted for defending the interests of the toilers or for their scientific activities or for their struggle for national liberation."

The new Soviet constitution places supreme governmental power in the hands of the people's representatives—the Supreme Council. The judicial and executive organs of the Soviet State are subordinate and responsible to these direct representatives of the people (Article 30, 32).

The control of the U. S. government by the people is stifled by many of the points in its constitution. Of the three branches of government (legislative, executive and judicial, provided for in Articles I, II and III of the U. S. Constitution) the Supreme Court is the most powerful. It has the power to nullify acts of the people's representatives in Congress by declaring them unconstitutional. It has the right to nullify treaties, to declare the appointment of ambassadors null; it regulates relations between the States. There is no control over the Supreme Court. (Article III).

The Soviet Constitution reserves such rights to its peoples' representatives—the Supreme Council—and the functions of the Soviet Supreme Court are limited to "supervision over the

actions and proceedings of all judicial organs." (Article 30, 49 l,m, 104).

The Supreme Court of the U. S. is appointed by the President for life (several judges, in past years, have held office for as long as 34 years). The Supreme Court judges of the U.S.S.R. are elected by the peoples' representatives for five years, thus making them sensitive to the needs of the people. (Article 105).

The executive branch of the U. S. Government (except for the President at its head, and the Vice President) is not elected by the people nor their direct representatives. The Cabinet is not responsible to the peoples' representatives but only to the President (Article II).

The U.S.S.R. constitution provides that the Council of Peoples' Commissars (comparable to the U. S. Cabinet) shall be elected by the Supreme Council and be responsible to it. Decisions and orders of the Peoples' Commissars which are not in accordance with law are to be rescinded by the Supreme Council through its Presidium (Article 63, 65, 49e).

The armed forces of the U.S.S.R. are under the control of the peoples' representatives and they appoint and recall the Supreme Command of the armed forces (Article 14 f, 49 i). On the other hand, the U. S. President is Commander-in-chief of the army which limits the power of Congress over the armed forces. (Article II). This also makes it possible for the President to wage war without formal declaration of war by Congress, as occurred in Nicaragua.

The U. S. President, with the consent of the Senate (to the exclusion of the House of Representatives) makes international treaties, appoints supreme court judges, ambassadors, consuls, etc. He grants pardons and reprieves. (Article II). In the U.S.S.R. declaration of war, making of international treaties, granting of pardons and reprieves, appointments to leading government posts and their recall are powers of the Supreme Council, both houses being equal. (Articles 37, 49 j, h, l, m, 102).

No individual U. S. Representative nor Senator has the power to intercede in the actions of the administrative or judicial branches of government. Article 71 of the U.S.S.R. Constitution provides that

"The Government of the U.S.S.R., or a Peoples' Commissar to whom any question of a member of the Supreme Council of the U.S.S.R. is addressed, is obliged to give a verbal or written reply within a period of not more than three days."

As we have noted above in connection with the appointment of supreme court judges, making of international treaties, etc. both houses of the U. S. Congress do not have equal powers. Under the U.S.S.R. Constitution both chambers of the Supreme Council have equal powers. (Article 37).

Before a bill becomes a law in the U. S. A., it must pass both houses of Congress and go to the President for approval. If he vetoes it, the bill must be repassed by two-thirds of each house (Article I, Section 7). And there is no referendum provision in the U. S. A. Constitution to allow for a direct expression of will of the people, and because of this it has been impossible to pass such an amendment as that prohibiting child labor.

A bill becomes a law in the Soviet Union after adoption by both chambers of the Supreme Council by simple majority vote in each. The law is then published over the signatures of the Chairman and Secretary of the Presidium of the Supreme Council. No veto by any individual over the representatives of the people is allowed (Articles 30, 39, 40) And the

U.S.S.R. Supreme Council, through its Presidium, conducts a "referendum on its own initiative or on the demand of one of the Union Republics." (Article 49d).

In the U. S. A., Congressmen, the President or Vice President, have no legal obligations to account for their work or actions to the voters. Article I of the U. S. Constitution places power to impeach in the House of Representatives itself. Article I, Section 3 and Article II, Section 4, provides that impeachment may be based on conviction of treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors and that no person shall be so convicted except by two-thirds of the members of the Senate. Thus even a majority of the Senate was helpless and failed to impeach President Johnson for corruption, although the vote was 35 to 19 for conviction.

Every U.S.S.R. deputy must render account of his work to the electors and upon his account being proven unsatisfactory to any significant number of his constituency, he may be recalled upon decision of a majority of the electors. (Article 142). The highest government officials can be recalled by the Supreme Council immediately by simple majority vote if their work proves unsatisfactory and not only for "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

Many U. S. newspapers argue that the maintenance of the one-Party system in the U.S.S.R. as compared to the two-Party system in the U. S. is a sign of lack of democracy. Against this the Soviet people feel that their constitution allows so much democratic latitude that the function or critical opposition can be exercised within existing channels. They have not forgotten that the governments of the rest of the world are capitalist governments, hostile to them, it is not forgotten that every large foreign power landed troops on Soviet soil in an attempt to overthrow the Soviet regime.

In capitalist countries the various classes that exist in society each need a political party to represent their interests. In the Soviet Union, classes have been abolished: there is only one class, that of producers. Thus there is no basis in the life of the people for an opposition party.

The new Code of the Soviets as embodied in the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a great historical document. It may be more significant for world history than we think.

The New Soviet Constitution

Hear Professor H. H. Fisher

Director of Russian Research, Stanford University

John D. Barry, Chairman

Native Sons Auditorium, 414 Mason Street, San Francisco

Tuesday, August 18, 8:00 p. m.

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Auspices American Friends of the Soviet Union

PEOPLE'S FRONT IN WASHINGTON

COLE STEVENS

THE FIRST REAL people's front in America—that is the achievement of Washington Commonwealth Federation. Everybody expected fireworks at the federation's first state political convention July 25 and 26. But by the end of the session an amazing unanimity developed. The result was a decision to file a complete slate of Commonwealth candidates in the Democratic primaries, and then to hold a nominating convention on primary day to fill in any gaps which may develop by running an independent state "Commonwealth." Back of this decision is the fighting strength of 250,000 W.C.F. members, ranging from liberal Democrat to Communist.

Washington has sometimes been called the country's most radical state, and never has the political maturity of its radical movement been more clearly shown than at this convention. Out of 460 delegates, 141 were from labor, representing some of the largest and most militant unions, notably the lumber and maritime workers. This is a fine showing considering the "Wobbly" background of large sections of Northwest workers, which makes them suspicious of political action. Even now, several thousand loggers in the yellow pine area of Northeastern Washington and Northern Idaho are organized into an I.W.W. union and are striking for things already gained on the west side in last year's lumber strike. Another handicap was the failure of the machine-led State Federation of Labor to endorse the W.C.F. in its July convention. But the rank and file felt and acted differently.

The storm center of these decisions was John C. Stevenson, King County Commissioner, radio speaker on progressive topics by courtesy of the Painless Parker dental chain, and candidate for governor. Stevenson has been angling for W.C.F. support for a year or more through his followers in the federation, but at no time has he controlled more than a third of the affiliated bodies. His record is rather good; he ran for office in 1932 on a promise to equalize taxes to remove the favoritism shown to big business at the expense of the home owners, and he actually did raise the disgracefully low valuation on downtown business properties, while lowering the valuations on all homes 20 per cent. His attitude toward labor has been fair at all times, especially in the ferryboatmen's strike of a few months ago. He has been outspoken for the W.C.F. Production for Use Initiative. On the other hand, many sincere progressives suspect him of being a political opportunist and even a potential harbinger of "fascism from the left" because of the absolute control he seems to wield over his followers, many of whom he has placed on the county payrolls, not always in accordance with their ability to serve the public.

The Communist Party position taken by its district organizer at a meeting of all shades of W.C.F. leaders preliminary to the convention was an eye-opener to some who still believed that Communists were dogmatic and unyielding. According to M. Raport, the party in his district had been discussing the situation for weeks, arriving at these conclusions: The W.C.F. must not be split over questions of tactics; the reactionary Republicans and Democrats, the latter personified by Governor Martin whose main achievements are the sales tax and the use of state military forces to break strikes, must

both be defeated; and since the majority of people were going to vote in the primary elections, it was up to the W.C.F. to furnish the leadership expected of it. This logic led inescapably to supporting the best candidate in the Democratic field, if he could be forced to take a strong stand on W.C.F. issues—and this meant Stevenson. The Communists make it clear that they were no supporters of Stevenson as an individual; they believed he was merely a capitalist politician, but they had worked successfully with worse ones in the French People's Front, and the Communist Party would not oppose him if the W.C.F. found it possible to support him.

Stevenson, realizing the necessity for this united support if he were to win, in turn surprised many by going the whole road with the W.C.F. He even signed the pledge exacted by the Federation's constitution, that he would withdraw if he were not endorsed by them. He signed affidavits that he would campaign for the Production for Use Initiative which will be voted on in November; that he would unconditionally pardon Ray Becker, last of the Centralia defendants in prison, as his first official act; would work to abolish the sales tax; that he would put the state police back on the highways instead of using them for strikebreakers; would favor the abolition of the criminal syndicalism laws, would appoint a more representative board of regents at the university and would work for the abolition of R.O.T.C. in the colleges. If he fails to keep these promises he will be politically dead with the people who elected him, and he knows it. But if he lives up to expectations, he may realize his ambition to go to the U. S. Senate in 1940, in place of Louis Schwellenbach, who lost his Commonwealth support when he refused to introduce a production for use plank at the national Democratic convention.

When the vote came, the convention recorded only two votes against endorsing Stevenson. Also endorsed were candidates for Secretary of State, Attorney General, and the state supreme court. Stanley Atwood, a member of the Seattle high school teachers' union, was sponsored for Superintendent of Schools, and Alfred Milliken, an Okanogan County teacher who was fired for his liberal views, was backed for Congress in Northeastern Washington. The present Lieutenant-Governor, orchestra leader Vic Meyers, has taken the W.C.F. pledge which may bring his re-election, and the state board of the Federation is authorized to make further endorsements. Local and congressional district caucuses have been held to complete the ticket. In the Seattle district, after Marion Zioncheck decided not to file for re-election to Congress, Howard G. Costigan, popular young Executive Director of the W.C.F. and chairman of its campaign committee, was drafted on August 1. He will face a field split by Prosecuting Attorney Magnusson, a self-styled liberal; but with the rousing campaign he is capable of putting on he is almost sure to be elected.

All this does not mean that a Farmer-Labor or Commonwealth ticket is now out of the question. In fact, it was decided to launch such a reserve ticket on primary day in September, withdrawing these candidates in favor of endorsees who win in the Democratic primaries. It does mean that a new party is not to be launched prematurely, but will be started only when it can get the progressive Democratic

backing that it needs to become a major party in the state. If Stevenson should be defeated and Martin renominated in the primaries because of the splitting effect of Townsendite Otto Case's candidacy, then an independent candidate would get the backing of both Stevenson's and Case's followers, and might be strong enough to split the conservatives between Republican and Democratic banners and win out. This is the strategy that makes the W.C.F. a genuine People's Front—the inclusion of Progressive Democrats, just as the French Front includes Radical Socialists. Washington is an ideal state for such an experiment, for its Democratic convention this year declared for Production for Use and other W.C.F. planks.

This People's Front idea is already the leading cry of the campaign. Nor is it an idle cry, with political reaction threatening and local fascism growing. William Dudley Pelley of Silver Shirt fame, the man who spent "seven minutes in communing with the infinite" and came back ordained by God to set up a totalitarian state like Hitler's, claims a thriving following for his "Christian Commonwealth Party" in Washington. His Jew- and Red-baiting propaganda has cropped up in Seattle, Tacoma, Bremerton and other cities. His following is largely made up of middle-aged small business men and farmers, like those who fell for the demagogic Liberty Party of "Coin" Harvey in 1932. He is telling them to get guns and ammunition stored up, for they will need them this Fall. He apparently is getting mysterious financial backing.

The campaign bids fair to be a festival of red-baiting. But the effectiveness of such tactics has been almost nullified by the prevalent distrust of Hearst and his *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, which is now preparing for a tough fight over the recent firing of two employees. The W.C.F. convention endorsed the committee that is trying to build the new daily paper organized by Anna Louise Strong which it is hoped will soon become an effective tool in the progressive fight in the Northwest.

LET'S CHANGE AUDIENCES

WINTHROP RUTLEGE

THE REVIVAL of "Saint Joan" at the Curran demonstrated a significant fact to alert playgoers; namely that Bernard Shaw's possession of something to say amply atones for his saying it at a physically uncomfortable length. As one acutely aware of Katherine Cornell's magnificence, I still feel that the success of the revival was a large part Shaw's. After all he wrote "Saint Joan" when he still believed things—before he visited San Simeon and became one of the "best friends" of Marion Davies.

"Saint Joan" is more than the chronicle of a mystery maid who inspired men to do battle for God and got herself martyred and canonized. It is a biting commentary upon the British Empire and the opportunists who sold out their own lands to get on the empire's band wagon. And it is a moving tribute to those clear-eyed zealots of history who have had to fight their own natural allies in order to whip them into a battle front against the common enemy.

Shaw has made a splendid symbol of the Maid of Orleans, a symbol of militancy—a militancy armed with far-seeing wisdom, fortified by a conviction that a half a loaf is only valuable if you can also get the other half and animated by an utter disregard for the seeming formidability of the odds on the enemy's side. Saint Joan might have been Lenin, she

might have been Harry Bridges or, with variations, John L. Lewis. Certainly she was the spiritual kinswoman of John Brown and Karl Liebknecht. She exemplified the revolutionary axiom that a thing worth believing must be a thing worth daring for.

Miss Cornell made Joan all of this, a splendid, clean and purposeful figure in the midst of a group of cringing opportunists. To me the soldiery who caught her faith and fought with her represented the rank-and-file of France. The clerics and the statesmen were the fakers who are so adept at selling out the rank-and-file. And so her cause triumphed until the French sell-out forces established contact with the English invaders and dickered her to the stake.

As usual, Miss Cornell brought a superb company and a production to delight the connoisseur of things theatrical. And I think she remains, minority critics to the contrary, the most accomplished actress of her generation in America. All the more pity, then, that she should have been one of the signers of the letter which urged the recent re-election of Frank Gillmore and his reactionary machine to Equity leadership. As a personal admirer of hers, I am perhaps too ready to find the excuse that she spends too much time on her art to be sufficiently interested in Equity politics. I know, however, that this is an insufficient excuse; it amounts to an apology for the Ivory Tower, which has become untenable to the artist who wishes to draw upon the material of contemporary life, as I am sure she instinctively does. She has done fine work in bringing the theater to America; now let us hope she will find it her destiny to bring America to the theater. And by that, lest there be any doubt, I mean capture the color and throb and heartbreak and bloodshed of America's masses and put them behind the footlights. And by rubbing elbows with Equity's rank and file I think she might find the first link in the logical chain between her splendid art and the material that alone is worthy of it.

This, of course, would mean that she must bring the theater to a new audience. The necessity of this accomplishment was

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even more strongly impressed upon me in subsequent visits to "The Russet Mantle" (Geary) and "Reflected Glory" (Curran). These plays were relatively unimportant, save as demonstrations of this need. In the former Lynn Riggs spent much time and verbiage upon what seemed largely an attempt to accomplish the seduction of an idealistic boy by a wayward girl. In the latter George Kelly did likewise in a painfully boring study of the erotic impulses of an applause-drunk actress.

The Kelly play was an insufferable bore; the Curran audience simply loved it. The Riggs opus was tiresome for the most part, but at times skirted dangerously close to vital ideas, and when it did so, achieved a sort of poetic eloquence. This was soon dispelled, however, by the tawdry "gag lines," injected solely for the purpose of handing chuckles to jaded and well-fed showgoers. The important facts of which your correspondent made note were these: that "Reflected Glory" completely delighted its audience and that the cheapest bedroom clinches of "The Russet Mantle" got hospitable responses while the poetic and passionate approach to ideas met with nothing but uncomprehending impatience.

Tallulah Bankhead is an able actress with a lively, if somewhat diffused intellect. She gave grace and finish to "Reflected Glory" but she could never make it a good play. Hardie Albright and Martha Sleeper are talented youngsters who did all they could with "The Russet Mantle," but whose best work was wasted upon an audience seeking physical rather than intellectual stimuli. It was an audience so palpitating to get them lecherously bedded that it actually grumbled with impatience at the nocturnal preludes in which they talked yearningly of hunger and strikebreakers and machine guns and wondered if true fulfillment might not come from trying to do something about them.

The point of all this, my little tangerines, is that what professional showmen look upon as the American stage's audience has gone pitifully to pot. Those who seek an anodyne may find it to the sickening point in the movies and the forty cents to \$2.75 differential in tariff is scarcely sufficient merely for the privilege of seeing some ballyhooed Aphrodite in the flesh, or for hearing "goddam" and "bastard" enunciated before mixed audiences.

So let's quit holding our theater down to the comprehension of our well-fed business men and get it up to the intelligence of our logshoremens, teamsters and mechanics. The latter now avoid it because it seems infantile to them, because where they want adult ideas it offers them only puerile and drooling eroticism. Am I talking through my hat? Ask the San Francisco Theater Union, which has presented "Peace On Earth" and "Black Pit" to throngs of enthusiastic workers, and which is soon to offer a production of Irwin Shaw's "Bury The Dead."

And since the Theater Union has blazed the trail, why can't the Federal Theater follow it up, widen it and show greater audiences the way to the drama of living ideas? It might be the bridge between yesterday and tomorrow. It already has made the worthy start of bringing its prices down to the reach of mass pocketbooks. Let it do as the Theater Union is doing—forget the sleek boys in the stuffed shirts; let them go back to their "Anthony Adverses" and their "Great Ziegfelds."

America today offers a potential audience of breath-taking proportions to the theater that is willing and able to tell it something. And that audience is a challenge to every playwright, actor, director and technician with an ounce of pride in his craft.

THE FARMER'S WIFE

MICHAEL QUIN

IT IS A SERIOUS disappointment to see the fine efforts of the San Francisco Federal Theatre Project thrown away on a play hardly worthy of a high school theatrical. "The Farmer's Wife" depicts the adventures of an English farmer bent on matrimony. Rejected by every other woman in the community, he resorts to marrying his kitchen maid. A series of ludicrous situations enacted by typical rustic "comic characters" succeeds in drawing continuous laughter from the audience.

Although admitting its lack of ideas and vitality, you might say, "Well, what's the difference? It was a harmless little farce and the audience got a kick out of it." The difference is just this; the project workers do not regard their work as a mere meal ticket. They want to build a new, vital, permanent theatre.

Such plays as "The Farmer's Wife" may elicit a certain amount of laughter, but they will not attract and develop an audience that understands the aspirations of the project workers, that regards the theatre as a vital and important part of life which should be supported. This cannot be done by reviving the corpse of the old stock company theatre with its "sure-fire" laughs and standardized characters.

The earlier production, "Chalk Dust," although much can be criticized in regard to its conclusiveness, was a step in the right direction. It drew just as much laughter from the audiences, and it tackled a subject close to the lives and interests of the audience, and appealed to their intelligence.

Who does the selecting of these plays? Someone is handing the project workers rubber ducks to play with in the bath tub. It is time they demanded something they can get their teeth into.

LABOR NOTES

JOHN BOND

"SUSPENDED": The incredible stupidity and stubbornness which marked recent actions of Messrs. William Green, Matt Woll, Hutcheson et al. reached a new low level when they suspended ten international unions comprising the Committee on Industrial Organization.

It was expected that A. F. of L. officialdom would resist the movement headed by John L. Lewis of the United Mine Workers, which threatened to swamp the old line craft unions in a flood of workers, now unorganized, in the basic mass production industries. It was expected that they would fight hard and bitterly to maintain their dead hand grip on the organized labor movement.

Yet when the Green crowd, with a few words, suspended over a million and a quarter members from the A. F. of L., when their action made inevitable a deep, perhaps incurable split in the forces of organized labor, there were a few observers, till then still hopeful, who, on viewing the mess, permitted themselves a shocked gasp.

The reverberations of this last mad act of the craft union officials are just beginning to be heard. When local unions of the suspended international begin to be unseated from

local labor councils, when labor groups who have announced their support of the C.I.O. begin to make that support effective—only then will the true extent of the schism be learned.

To maintain itself in power the executive council has gone to incredible ends. The Preamble of the A. F. of L. constitution, after noting the struggle between "oppressors and the oppressed," between the "capitalist and the laborer, which grows in intensity from year to year," declares:

"It, therefore, behooves the representatives of the Trade and Labor Unions of America, in Convention assembled to adopt such measures and disseminate such principles among the mechanics and laborers of our country as will permanently unite them to secure the recognition of rights to which they are justly entitled."

To accomplish its own ends, the Executive Council has made of this noble beginning "a scrap of paper."

The unions comprising the C.I.O. were suspended after charges of dual unionism and usurpation of the executive council's powers had been placed by John P. Frey, president of the Metal Trades Department. The trial on August 3 was a mere formality for the C.I.O., refused to recognize the council's jurisdiction and failed to appear.

The charges are arrant nonsense. The C.I.O. undertook a task which the convention had ordered the Council to perform. Instead of complying with the convention's mandate, Green successfully sabotaged any attempts to organize the workers in the mass production industries. The industrial unionism resolution adopted in 1934 was reinforced in 1935 by another, sterner mandate. But Green fiddled and nothing was done.

In the Fall of 1935, John L. Lewis, along with the heads of twelve international unions, formed the C.I.O., to accomplish the tasks set by the convention. Its efforts to persuade the council to initiate a steel organizing campaign failed and the C.I.O. undertook the job.

The executive council based its suspension order on rules formulated under Article IX, Section 8 of the Federation's constitution. This section reads:

"The Executive Council shall have power to make the rules to govern matters not in conflict with this Constitution, or the constitutions of affiliated unions, and shall report accordingly to the Federation."

Under this section, according to Green, the council adopted a rule which gave it the power to suspend any international union which violates the constitution or laws of the A. F. of L. or lawful orders of the executive council. This, Green claims, gives the council power to hear the charges against the C.I.O. unions and, if it finds the charges substantiated, suspend or otherwise discipline the offending unions. The suspension order was the outcome.

It requires no great intelligence but only honesty to pierce this shabby attempt at justification. Article IX, Section 12 of the constitution clearly destroys the basis of the council's assumption of power. It reads:

"The Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor shall only have the power to revoke the charter of the affiliated National or International Union when the revocation has been ordered by a two-thirds majority of a regular convention of the American Federation of Labor by a roll call vote."

The tactics of Green et al are obvious. They suspended the offending unions and being suspended, the latter will be barred from participating in the November A. F. of L. convention. Revocation of the charters, then, may be nothing

but a mere formality. Moreover, the objection to the illegal methods will be outlawed along with offending unions.

The obvious fact is that the rule under which the council assumes the power of suspension is in direct violation of the constitution. It may be argued that there is a difference between suspension and revocation but, in effect, it is a difference entirely without meaning.

As a result, the C.I.O. unions are outside the A. F. of L. Forty per cent of the Federation's membership goes with them. But what of the future?

Present indications are that Green has cut off his nose and, for good measure, his ears to spite his face. The steel organizing campaign is going ahead full blast. Response to the invitation to organize has surpassed most expectations. Company unions are joining en masse, thousands of other workers are flocking to get union cards.

Among the suspended unions are those of the automobile workers, the rubber workers, the miners, the men and women's clothing workers.

Thus, the C.I.O. has established its entree into the mass production industries. It has substantial support in the ranks of those unions remaining within the A. F. of L. It is in a position rapidly to expand the base on which it may someday establish its own federation. The strength and militancy of organized labor will be drawn heavily in the future from workers now unorganized. And they are on the side of the C.I.O.

ODDS AND ENDS: Threatening a tie-up of all automobile ferries on San Francisco Bay, the Ferryboatmen's union succeeded in obtaining agreements assuring dismissal wages for workers on the Southern Pacific-Golden Gate and Northwestern Pacific ferry boats. The threat also forced the Key System to grant its employees an agreement. These victories with the agreement obtained earlier from the Southern Pacific, means that in excess of 1000 ferry boat employees will receive protection when the Bay bridges are completed . . . The International Association of Machinists has granted to its representative Walter Nash a charter to set up a new local union in Oakland, thus completing the sabotaging of the machinists' strike in Oakland, and the emasculation of a militant organization . . . The American Newspaper Guild formally received its charter from the A. F. of L. Don Stevens was appointed full time organizer of the A. F. of L. to be assigned exclusively to Guild organization work . . . It is reported that Warehousemen's Union 38-44, I.L.A., has organized F. W. Woolworth and Co. in San Francisco. That the company can afford decent wages and conditions is apparent from a report made by the Securities and Exchange Commission that net profits of the company in the United States and Canada in 1935 was \$31,247,000 . . . The strike against Remington Rand continues, five of the company's six plants being completely tied up. The union obtained an unusual injunction against the company. Issued at Cincinnati by Judge Nelson Schwab, the company is restrained from using newspaper propaganda against the strike, undercover agents, or any other method to induce the strikers to break a mutual pledge made by 1000 workers at the Norwood plant, that no one would return to work until a settlement was made by authorized officials of the union . . . Sherman H. Dalrymple, President of the United Rubber Workers of America, filed suit for \$500,000 damages against the Goodyear Tire Company. The suit is based on an attack made on Dalrymple at Gadsden, Alabama. June 6, which he claims was committed by Goodyear Tire Company agents . . .



ATTEMPT AT CONSTRUCTIVE IDEALISM

THOMAS BRANT

IN A BOOK* that is not lacking in debatable issues, Alexander Meiklejohn, one of America's most distinguished liberal educators, has set forth an approach to the problems of our civilization which should give occasion to considerable hard thinking on the part of many of our present zealots—radical and reactionary.

Essentially this work is an essay on the meaning of liberty, involving an effort to define the spiritual purposes of American civilization. In the prosecution of this difficult enterprise, Dr. Meiklejohn endeavors to attack, from the position of liberal idealism, naturalistic and materialistic approaches to the problems of social change and reorganization. Both naturalism and materialism are guilty of what he calls the fallacy of "externalized thinking," in the sense that they concern themselves with things, events, processes, and desires; and offer no general principles by which our culture and activities can be assessed. Thus the book is an attempt to discern our American ideals and to determine what are the obligations to which men are bound if they would achieve the Good in the United States today.

Fundamental to Dr. Meiklejohn's procedure in dealing with this problem is his use of the dichotomy between the Individual and his world, which leads him, as in the 18th century it did Rousseau, to the conclusion that we have good ideals in America, but that we are corrupted by our environment. As a people we are preoccupied with "external" issues, losing sight of the real bases upon which any social order must be evaluated. Drawing his model from the writings of Epictetus, he urges as the cardinal tenets of all social thinking: (1) we cannot admire or despise anything save a man—thus the impersonal subject-matter of the sciences is of no concern here; (2) judgments of value apply only to the inner life of man, and not to external circumstances; (3) a man's inner life can only be judged with respect to its conformity to the obligations or ideals of American democracy. And so the book represents an interesting recurrence of the Socratic approach to Nature.

The determination of these ideals is the next step in the argument. For Dr. Meiklejohn, freedom is the essential purpose of our culture. But what do we mean by freedom? We don't mean freedom to buy and sell because this is an external activity. Property is the object of desire and not of admiration. What we do mean by freedom is liberty, equality, and fraternity—these are the core of our spirit, these are our great ideals.

To remold our institutions to fit these ideals—the concern of the entire book—there is introduced a good critique of the competitive system. Such an order demands the development of the baser side of human nature, selfishness and conflict, thus producing unworthy individuals. Nor does it realize the ideals of democracy, since all do not share in the control of economic activity. And finally it neglects the consideration

that men must have individual obligation to ideals if they are to pursue activities worthy of admiration and if the qualities of human excellence are to be realized. Individualism, in short, does not produce the right kind of men and thus stands condemned, irrespective of its past success in raising our material standard of living. Radicals, however, should not demand a new social order upon the basis of possibilities of external abundance; they should find their point of departure in the failure of the present order to permit the realization of traditional American ideals.

This leads us to a consideration of the kind of program with which the author emerges as a result of his thinking. (1) We must extend and reorient our system of education, emphasizing training for democratic participation in the realization of the purposes of our culture. (2) Our press must be freed from its present bondage to commercialism, perhaps by attaching it to our universities. (3) Our present economic system must be replaced by one subject to rational and democratic control.

How are we to achieve these things? Not by means of the character-destroying class war, but through "traditional democratic processes." The implication of this sort of reasoning is that reasonableness itself is the guarantor of transition—just demonstrate it logically to those in power and they will submit quietly to the changeover. American purposes are not those of class war, and we shall not employ this method. One might ask: have all of us these rationally determined purposes which Dr. Meiklejohn describes as the "intention of America," or are they merely the convictions of a handful of liberal idealists whose efforts thus far to translate them into action have more than once forced them out of the seats of learning entirely?

And another thing: granting that radicals more than any others are concerned with removing from the human soul the cash-register nexus, does it follow that their acceptance of the class struggle involves a denial of those ideals of human character which thinkers have always cherished? Aren't liberty, equality and fraternity as much the foundation of working class solidarity?

And finally: familiar as Dr. Meiklejohn may be with the terrible effects of poverty and war upon men, which are far more devastating than the class struggle and moreover utterly lacking in meaning or purpose, has he really thought out this matter of transition thoroughly? Does he really assume that there is so much democracy in the United States today that we can persuade everyone of the need of rational change without invoking the violent opposition of those who have nothing to gain from such changes and who have already shown their almost total inability to appreciate or work for any liberal or spiritual ideals whatsoever?

Radicals will find much with which to disagree in this stimulating and often baffling book, but they cannot escape a feeling of respect for the courage and sincerity of this admirable author. Though his thought may be tinged with a questionable metaphysics, though his assertion that his own ideals are the American ideals may take in a little too much territory, and though his assumption that the realization of these ideals is the purpose of American civilization may sound like Socratic anthropomorphism; yet the book is in many respects a notable contribution, mainly because it does revive emphasis upon what should be the chief concern of all programs of change: their effect upon what is looked upon as excellent in human character.

CLASSIFIED ADS

ACOMA POTTERY: Fascinating new designs in Indian pots, ash-trays, plates, etc. At the AZTEC STUDIO SHOP, Carmel.
WANTED: to buy house in Carmel. Modern, 2 bedrooms, give full details. Pacific Weekly, P. O. Box 1350, Carmel, California

*WHAT DOES AMERICA MEAN? by Alexander Meiklejohn, (New York: W. W. Norton). 1935. \$3.00

A MARXIST PRIMER

INTRODUCTION TO DIALECTICAL MATERIALISM
by August Thalheimer. Translated from the German by
Simpson and Weltner. (Covici-Friede). \$2.00

SIDNEY HOOK, who in recent years has contributed so much "toward the misunderstanding of Karl Marx," titled his review of Thalheimer's book for the *Nation* "Revolutionary Mythology." Professor Hook used the review as a springboard from which he could take a mental half-gainer into a muddy philosophical whirlpool kicked up by himself and emerge holding his own gospel of dialectical materialism. He gives us almost no hint of the book's contents, a series of lectures on Dialectical Materialism delivered at the Sun Yat Sen University, Moscow, in 1927, and infers that because Thalheimer has been repudiated by the Communist International, "he easily outranks the official philosophical spokesman" of that organization.

There is reason enough to be critical of Thalheimer's work. Often it is over-simplified to an extent that makes for confusion. The structure of his argument is sometimes so skeletal that only one well versed in the literature of Marxism can fill in the necessary body, and from this standpoint the value of the book as an "introduction" is lessened.

The lectures are admittedly elementary, but they are useful in that they attempt, in simple terms, to examine the origins and development of dialectical materialism as a philosophical and revolutionary doctrine. Thalheimer traces the Marxist "world view" from its origins in early Greek, Indian and Chinese philosophy up through Hegel and Feuerbach, Marx and Engels, to the present. From the standpoint of placing the doctrine of dialectical materialism in an historical perspective, Thalheimer's book is a useful contribution to the literature on the subject.

However, for an exposition of this Marxian philosophy, one had best go to original sources, to Marx himself, to Engel's *Feuerbach* and *Anti-Duhring*, to Lenin's "Materialism and Empirio-Criticism," and at the same time, to an active participation in the class struggle about us.

JAMES CREIGHTON

MORE ROBBER BARONS

RULERS OF AMERICA, by Anna Rochester (International Publishers). \$2.50

IN OUR early school days, history consisted of rulers and battles. We memorized lists of kings of England, the presidents of the United States and what each was noted for. Now, through Miss Rochester's book, "Rulers of America," we must—and the word is used advisedly—direct our attention to a new set of rulers—the economic kings and presidents.

These rulers and their empires have been the subject of a good deal of study. We can trace them as a group through the omnibus works of the types of Myers' "History of Great American Fortunes" and its lineal descendants; or through individual studies of the type of Flynn's "God's Gold" or O'Connor's "Mellon's Millions." Study these as we will, however, there are other questions to be asked, other answers to be found which, in this type of approach, are merely indicated.

Miss Rochester's book answers some of these questions. The volume represents a sort of stock-taking, a critical examination of where our economic development has led us and of the rulers and empires under whom we now live. She is chiefly concerned with the "structure and pattern of finance-capitalist control." The pattern of control, as she uncovered it, is set against a background of the underlying trends from which it developed. Finally, she has chosen "merely to suggest its relation to poverty and workers' movement."

With these guides, Miss Rochester plunges into the maze of our economic structure and emerges several hundred pages later with a picture of the "economic royalists," the claims they have staked out and the methods by which they maintain their control. The House of Morgan, the Rockefellers and the Mellons emerge as the dominant figures in the economic structure, exercising control over astounding portions of the nation's resources and capital equipment.

To trace the extent of the empires, however, is not sufficient. Succeeding chapters demonstrate the control over banking institutions, the separation of control from ownership, the influence on the government of these empires and the foreign entanglements of American finance-capital. Instances of control in particular industries reveal further aspects of the bosses' rule with more attention devoted to the "confused interplay of monopoly and competition." The final chapters "analyze the economic crisis-depression against the background of the general crisis of capitalism."

The total result of the study is important and worthwhile. It is true that these portions of the book dealing with the use of control, as distinguished from pattern of control, are no particular contribution to economic literature. In the main they represent theoretical conclusions without the substructure which adequate demonstration would provide. Among left readers, these theories may not be seriously questioned. But if such writing is to have influence, the wealth of data, which was employed to demonstrate the pattern of control, should be devoted to demonstrating the use and abuse of that control.

In setting out the extent of these economic empires, the book serves a valuable function—so valuable that the shortcomings, confined as they are to a chapter or two, are not particularly important. But such limitations suggest other fields to explore.

JOHN BOND

SHORTER NOTICES

SATURDAY TO MONDAY, by Patrick Carleton. (E. P. Dutton and Company). \$2.50

Much to do about nothing! In case anyone cares, this is the story of Robert Lyster, museum curator, and Peter Kendal, young bank clerk. They come together for a week-end and, of course, there's a girl in both the story and the week-end. Carleton is blurbed as a "brilliant youngster in English letters." Well, I wouldn't know that, but I'm just old-fashioned enough to want to make heads and tails out of what I read. "Brilliant Youngsters" who try to record the disconnected hopping around of the human mind are too strong for this ancient reviewer.

L. T. W.

CAT-CALLS, by Peggy Bacon. (Robert M. McBride and Company). \$2.50

Gives the low-down on all the women you have met at cocktail parties, since and before Repeal. Confirms the worst suspicions of all maledom. It won't wrinkle your brow, occasionally wrinkles your lips. First-class middling book by a first-class authoress and artist.

TOM DAGGETT

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STORY BY LANGSTON HUGHES

THE ORANGE STRIKE

THE WATERFRONT IN SEPTEMBER

LUMBER IN THE NORTHWEST, by Herbert Resner

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In this drawing each little man represents twenty new subscribers and renewals. Thus in June, since the co-operative method of producing the magazine, 100 readers decided to start or continue with PACIFIC WEEKLY, seemingly approving of it. They kept writing in.

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JULY



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THEY TELL ME . . .

LINCOLN STEFFENS belongs to the world and many many friends have sent messages to express their love and their appreciation of him. If my readers will allow me I would like to share with them some of the beautiful words that have come to me and Pete from Steff's friends.

"My deepest personal regrets and sympathy at death of Lincoln Steffens valiant fighter on behalf of labor. All political and labor prisoners have indeed suffered a great loss."

J. B. McNamara, Represa California Folsom State Prison

"Lincoln Steffens was one of my teachers and most valued friends. America will some day be a better place to live in because of what he taught us all even those who didn't want to learn and didn't know they were learning."

Upton Sinclair

"Forces of Progress in America suffered deep loss with passing of Lincoln Steffens. In his long services his was often the role of a pioneer blazing a trail along which liberal and progressive forces could follow. His early championship of the first socialist and workers government in which he never wavered earned him an honored place in history and forecast his complete adoption of Communism in final years of a long and valuable life. Lincoln Steffens' influence will long be felt after his departure from among us."

Earl Browder

"Lincoln Steffens was one of America's finest strongest champions of justice and fair play."

Ruby and Clarence Darrow

"Steff's life and achievements so vital socially and personally they persist down generations. He will always be part of great liberal tradition and dear to American revolutionary movement. His passionate love and pursuit of truth will always inspire us. Entire 'New Masses' staff pays him homage."

Joe Freeman, "New Masses"

"Our beloved Steffie taught me and thousands of others how to begin to learn to live. Millions who never knew him will mourn but we who loved him and knew him will go on from where his narrative halts."

M. C.

"My deepest sympathy and profound regret to yours and the worlds great loss in the passing of your devoted Lincoln Steffens one of mine and the worlds best friends accept these simple words of genuine regard and respect for his great services in the cause of the common good his memory will forever remain green with me and millions of others. Again I offer my sincere condolence."

Tom Mooney

"My friend Lincoln Steffens was the most sympathetic man I have ever known he not only sympathized with the suffering good people but he understood sympathized and in the literal sense of the word suffered with the bad people knowing that environment and ignorance and lack of opportunity were largely responsible for their weakness and with his whole heart and strength he tried to expose the evil conditions which caused them. I did not see eye to eye with him on many problems nor go with him in his radical political and social philosophy but no one who knew Steffens can help but feel how much his insight and sympathetic understanding will be missed in a world which particularly in these times needs so much of these qualities."

Edward A. Filene

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"A deathless wise wonderful man."

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