

PACIFIC WEEKLY

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SEPTEMBER 14, 1936

WAR ON THE WATERFRONT

JOHN BOND

EARL WARREN'S "MURDER" CASE

ROBERT HOLMES

LETTUCE LOCK-OUT

ELLA WINTER

WANTED:

AN AUDIENCE

REDFERN MASON

SOVIET CONFESSIONS:

AN EDITORIAL



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NOTES AND COMMENT

CORRECT news from Spain is still difficult to get, and the liberal magazines are kicking at its inaccuracy. However, it is fairly easy to read between the lines in the Hearst papers: if they say something in favor of the loyalists you can be pretty sure its true. And if they use language reluctantly intimating that the Moors and Foreign Legionnaires of General Mola are vicious fighters, looting, sacking, burning and murdering, you can also be pretty sure that's true. It is breaking through the news in even the most reactionary newspapers that the fascists are violent and bloodthirsty, and that to embrace fascism will not be the "lesser evil" some liberals in America have half-heartedly hoped and claimed. What Mr. Chester Rowell did not state in his now notorious editorial championing the rebels in Spain, is that whatever the outcome at present, the workers can never give in: they are fighting for everything in the world that makes life worthwhile. The rebels, assisted by mercenary barbaric troops, fighting their own flesh and blood with the money of international industrialists and Spanish traitors, assisted morally if not materially by tyrants such as Hitler and Mussolini, cannot in the end win the sympathy or the support of the conscience of the world.

The French workers are already showing this; impatient of international neutrality agreements, they see themselves and their principles threatened in Spain: even the needs of international politics cannot hold them from mass demonstrations, vociferous demands for munitions for the Spanish government, and threats of strike against their own popular front government if it does not assist their Spanish comrades. The dilemmas of capitalist nations grow increasingly intense.

THE Nazi Party congress of Hitler meets under a grave shadow. Poland, with its semi-fascist government, has been a barrier against Bolshevism for Nazi Germany. Now, with Hitler threatening the Polish corridor, with the free port of Danzig already in Nazi hands, Poland has concluded her pact with France. Soviet Russia has never threatened Poland's possessions as has Nazi Germany. Nations which thought Bolshevism the greatest enemy are now beginning to realize that fascist aggrandisement, with its threat of war, is more dangerous. Even great Britain has been facing this realization. With Czecho-Slovakia on the side of the popular front countries, the imperialist aims of Hitler have had a set-back. On the brink of war, the nations shudder at the prospect.

THE Newspaper Guild strike in Milwaukee was settled last week. The Guild did not win recognition but it made substantial gains in working conditions and meanwhile has shown reporters that they can make gains in the same way as other unionists. In Seattle the strike is still solid and the *Post-Intelligencer* is still closed down. The *Seattle Times* and *Star* have made a united front with their erstwhile rival Hearst, overwhelmed at the specter of labor solidarity and the prospect of not being able to count completely on the allies they have always been able to count on in the past, such as mayors and other public officials. It is rumored that the Hearst paper in Seattle had been losing money and that they were not sorry to see it closed up. However that may be, a great fillip has been given the organization of the new united front paper planned for Seattle by Anna Louise Strong and a group of progressives. And meanwhile the *Guild Daily* appears and is building circulation.

And sixty Newspaper Guildsmen walked in the Labor Day Parade in San Francisco—which was the greatest and most impressive in the history of that union town.



IT is not often that news of William Randolph Hearst is predominantly comic. This fact ought therefore to be rolled on the tongue with the cherishing care of the tea-taster. For Mr. Hearst has committed himself to the sponsorship of a series of communist radio broadcasts over ten of his stations in the near future. His contracts with NBC won't let him weasel out of it unless he wants to put on rubber shoes and

tiptoe through the broadcasting studios stuffing cotton in microphones. At any rate, William Randolph may, for the time being, be called Comrade Hearst by his many, many friends.

PACIFIC RELATIONS

ADDRESSING the Commonwealth Club after attending the Yosemite conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations as Soviet representative, Dr. Motylev neatly summarized the role of the Soviet Union in Far Eastern affairs by asking his audience to consider what the situation would be today if Imperialist Russia existed rather than the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. He made it plain that while the Soviet Union does not by any means refuse economic connections with the United States, China and Japan, even though the trade balance favors these nations, the Soviet Union nevertheless is not a competitor for Pacific markets and has no imperialist aims whatsoever. On the contrary, economic development in the Soviet Far East trends toward technical and economic independence from foreign countries, toward increasing internal consumption and continuous adjustment of supply to demand due to the socialist basis of society. Just the contrary would be true of Czarist, Imperialist Russia.

Dr. Motylev's address merely summarized briefly the substance of data supplied to the Sixth Conference of the Institute of Pacific Relations in papers, forming the basis for round-table discussions on the role of the Soviet Union in the Far East. Observers and commentators, often against their will, admitted that the Soviet Union "stole the show" by sheer weight of evidence and proved its pacific policy as against Japan's outspoken aggressiveness. Precise, scientific, honestly outspoken while carefully avoiding charges of "propaganda," Soviet spokesmen, substantiated by other nationals who have made a special study of Soviet organization and policy, established the internal health of the Soviet system as against Japan's social and economic difficulties that express themselves in imperialist aggression and internal suppression.

Chinese spokesmen, on the other hand, denounced Japanese aggression in reserved fashion, undoubtedly reflecting some of the uncertainties and differences in the present regime with regard to the correct policy to be pursued. Direct discussion of Soviet China and the fight of the Chinese Red Army for unification of China against Japan was avoided, although the effect of this campaign was implicit in the guarded statements of several of the delegates.

It is worth noting that while the conference was carried on in an atmosphere of academic discussion, Paul Scharrenberg, late member of the Sailors' Union of the Pacific, indulged in his usual pastime, red-baiting, and was promptly answered and silenced by non-Soviet delegates.

The Institute of Pacific Relations is completely unofficial and draws no published conclusions. It serves to clear the air, however; and to make known to wide circles its findings and discussions through publication. Without doubt, the Soviet Union gains in prestige more than any other nation from the proceedings of this Sixth Conference, and contributes greatly to efforts to maintain peace.

THOSE SOVIET CONFESSIONS

SO many people have been honestly puzzled at the "exhibitionistic" confessions of the Soviet plotters recently condemned to death and shot that some kind of explanation is not amiss. Anglo Saxons particularly have insisted that "only Russians" could behave like this and have appealed to Dostoevski as proof of the "difference" of the Russian temperament.

Dostoevski's ghost, it seems, still walks through the new Russia, particularly at the back of old Bolsheviks, and apparently prompts them.

How else can we explain the detailed statements that, regarded with calm appraisal, involve treachery punishable by the most extreme measures? Why do these men blacken themselves so eloquently unless given to theatrical fatalism?

Without attempting to deny a certain difference in the Russian temperament, we offer an alternative explanation: Zinoviev and Kamenev, together with most of their co-defendants, were revolutionaries of long standing, accustomed to thinking and acting in political terms. It surely is no secret that politicals condemned to death, whether nihilists, anarchists or Communists, have gladly made lengthy statements explaining their views as well as defying the courts. Sir Roger Casement and Irish revolutionists differ not in the slightest from Germans and Russians in this respect. Also, many famous criminals of all descriptions and nationalities have dramatically unburdened themselves without their confessions being attributed to any particular national "temperament."

It must be remembered that many of the sixteen prisoners were in prison several years, with their source of anti-Bolshevik inflammatory material cut off, and the facts about Soviet progress undoubtedly made available. They had plenty of time to ponder on their mistakes: faced with almost certain death, they chose to achieve the satisfaction of honesty rather than experience an unnecessary, tedious piling up of evidence against them.

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STRUGGLE IN THE VALLEY OF GREEN GOLD

ELLA WINTER



WHEN the agreement between the lettuce packers, growers and shippers and the Fruit and Vegetable Workers' union came to an end on September 1st there was no intention to strike on the part of the workers. They were willing to go on working while they negotiated a new agreement. But the Shipper-Grower association posted placards in the sheds stating their terms, and notified the workers that if they worked for three days under these terms the terms would automatically become a contract binding on union and non-union workers alike. This was an ultimatum which closed the doors on any negotiating and could of course not be accepted by any self-respecting organization. (Imagine a union doing that to an employer organization; conjure up the outcry of "dictation," "un-American coercion," the employers would raise.) On September 4th at a mass meeting in the Salinas Armory a strike vote was taken and the workers voted 1,968 to 121 (and later 550 odd to 10 in Watsonville) not to work under such duress. The employers' terms did not even consider the preferential hiring the workers have demanded, and left the door open to employ and deal with non-union men—the very thing the workers consider the greatest threat to their security. Since the employers refuse to allow work in the sheds except under their own dictatorial terms, the union very properly terms this a lock-out.

All union members are now members of the peaceful picketing army and the local press cannot but show its admiration at the efficiency and discipline of the organized pickets. Meal tickets are distributed and all pickets can get three meals a day free. Donations are coming in from friends, merchants, even shed foremen; other unions are pledging help. The Teamsters and the Boxmakers, who at first pledged sympathy, have now raised their own demands for higher wages and preferential hiring also.

Charles S. Brooks, secretary of the Shipper-Grower Association, computes that the Salinas Valley is losing \$75,000 dollars a day in the lock-out; but he does not add that the Shipper-Grower Association could stop that loss without the surrender of anything vital to the efficient carrying out of work in the lettuce industry. The workers could not stop that loss without surrendering one of their most vital needs: the need not to be undercut by non-union, lower-paid labor. The threat of this had already appeared in Salinas (see *PACIFIC WEEKLY* September 7).

So much for principle. It is simple, and is well-understood by all sides. The "impartial" Citizens' Association, whose secretary, Cruse Carriel, is now "spokesman for the employers" (and only employers are members of the Association) ran another page advertisement in the *Salinas Index-Journal* September 8th "solely in the interests of the general

community" and after mature consideration decided since it was "committed to the furtherance of American principles" that it opposed "closed shop." [The very paper which printed the ad, as every paper in America, operates under closed shop (Typographical Union)]. All through, the advertisement so obviously was stating the employers' side that the Citizens' Association should, for the sake of clarity, change its name to Employers' Association. Mr. Carriel is an ex-Hearst reporter, but even so he should not drag in that old, tired, smelly red herring. He showed he knew a thing or two by referring rather archly to "the Party's organizers," all the available ones of which he claimed had moved in to Salinas. (San Francisco shipowners, please copy.) But no one in Salinas is influenced by this any more.

In the same newspaper there is a neat little one-eighth page advertisement from the Fruit and Vegetable Workers' Union 18211, a **NOTICE TO INDEPENDENT FARMERS**, which states: "If you are interested in harvesting your present lettuce crop, and have no entangling alliance, we are making arrangements to handle about 30 cars a day."

And actually that is what the union is doing: handling, cutting, packing and trucking the crop of a number of small farmers. These independents control about one-third the lettuce acreage in the Salinas-Watsonville area. This action blasts forever the growers' claim that a strike or lock-out wreaks hardship on the small, independent farmer, and it shows that the workers have no quarrel with them. Those who control the remaining two-thirds of the crop are numerically a much smaller group; and they are working with outside reactionary organizations, such as the Associated Farmers of California, who are not interested in the welfare of the lettuce industry of Salinas but mainly in stamping out unionism in America.

The employers have had bad luck though. They were double-crossed—by the weather. They had prepared for "trouble" by stacking up enough lettuce to be able to sell it at a handsome profit; but very warm weather matured the lettuce in the fields a week or two early, and unless this is cut and packed soon it will be wasted. The Grower-Shippers must make peace quickly or face heavy losses. And the contractors must surely be pressing for peace, lest it become too obvious that they are entirely unnecessary parasites in the industry since the Union is now showing it can do the work of the contractor without fleecing the small farmer. The employers have already granted the full wage increase demanded; both sides agree this is not the main issue. We repeat, the main issue in Salinas, as for workers and the middle class the world over, is security.



WAR ON THE WATERFRONT

JOHN BOND

EVENTS on the waterfront march steadily toward a climax. Efforts to negotiate peaceful settlements, to avoid bitter, probably bloody, battle go for naught while the shipowners drive determinedly toward a lockout of 37,000 maritime workers and the destruction of their unions as the spearhead of an employers' offensive against organized labor.

On September 30th the agreements and awards which grew out of the 1934 Maritime Strike expire. In the thirty or forty days prior to the deadline, the shipowners and the various marine unions will confer on each other's demands, presumably in an effort to smooth out the kinks in the agreements and to provide for necessary adjustments.

While the unions may have entered this period of negotiation in such a frame of mind, the actions and demands of the shipowners clearly reveal that they operate under no such motives. They have, apparently, one goal and they are driving straight for it. Of this there can be no clearer demonstration than the events of the past several weeks.

First, there was a series of letters to the various marine unions. Stripped of meaningless protestations, the shipowners' position was that the unions must accept their proposals or, failing that, a blanket agreement to arbitrate. If the unions fail to accept either of these alternatives, the shipowners will inform them of the conditions under which future relations will continue. Thomas G. Plant, speaking for the Coast Committee of the Waterfront Employers, put it this way to the longshoremen after five days of negotiation:

"The award hasn't worked. We have disagreed on the fundamental provisions and there is no hope of reaching an agreement through negotiation. If you permit the award to expire, through your failure to accept *our offers*, we shall inform you on September 30th of the conditions under which we will continue relations."

The unions' replies indicated a desire to negotiate a peaceful settlement but a reluctance to accept the shipowners' kind of arbitration, particularly when the demands of the employers were as yet largely unknown.

The longshoremen went further. They felt the employers were misconstruing the award when they took it upon themselves to determine arbitrarily the conditions of labor after September 30th. The I.L.A. maintained to the contrary, that existing agreements automatically would continue after September 30th until superseded by a new agreement or specifically terminated by either of the parties. The Masters, Mates and Pilots, the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association and the American Radio Telegraphists' Association adopted the same attitude.

The Marine Cooks and Stewards, the Marine Firemen and the Sailors' Union, however, were not so cautious. So far as they were concerned, the agreements terminated on September 30th. After that? Well—

Whatever the technical differences between the attitudes of the seamen and the other marine unions, the situation on September 30th will look something like this:

The unions will not have accepted arbitration as proposed by the employers. The shipowners will consider the awards and agreements terminated as of that date. Having clearly stated that they will not permit existing conditions to continue beyond September 30th, they will then announce

changes in present conditions. The unions, despite the present attitude of the seamen, will probably continue to work until forced off the job by arbitrary changes in conditions of employment. Thus will the shipowners accomplish their lockout, the first major step toward their ultimate goal.

These intentions of the shipowners are fairly clear. Their tactics thus far are a complete reversal of form. They are on the offensive; are forcing the issue. They have cloaked each threat by insistence on arbitration, and have given their insistence full publicity in the daily press. To neutralize possible government sympathy for the unions, they have suggested that the President be asked to name the arbitration board. Thus they hope to force the maritime workers on picket lines and rely on public opinion and government officials, blindly dedicated to "industrial peace" and arbitration, to force acceptance of humiliating conditions or a sacrifice of unions in the struggle.

The unions are not content to sit back and wait for the blows to fall. The longshoremen are submitting to a referendum vote the employers' request for arbitration. Confident of the ultimate answer, they are forming their battle lines. Organization of strike committees, gathering of funds, educational mass meetings will shortly get under way. The other unions also are beginning intensive campaigns to make their members and the public aware of the real issues involved. An examination of the demands of the shipowners clearly indicate that they did not approach negotiations in a sincere effort to find common ground with the unions.

The longshoremen, at the moment of writing, are the only group who have received the details of the shipowners' demands but, in their ultimate effect, the proposals made to the I.L.A. will differ only slightly from those made to the other organizations.

The shipowners ask for stringent penalties on longshoremen for refusing to handle "hot cargo" or other "violations of the award," for working beyond the limit of hours, for smoking



on docks or ships, for refusing to work as ordered by the employer. Penalties will consist of reductions in work of as high as 50 per cent for the first offense, permanent elimination from the registration lists for the second offense.

The shipowners ask the substitution of "neutral" dispatchers for the union dispatchers now employed in the hiring halls and an essential part of the hiring system established by the National Longshoremen's Board. They ask the establishment of a wage rate based on a ratio between the present "rate of efficiency" and that of some base period, the establishment of two six-hour shifts with the extension of the straight time period by five hours; finally, the prohibition of individual dock or ship strikes. Such demands mean only one thing to the longshoremen: a bold attempt to wipe out every gain made as a result of the 1934 strike and even to reduce conditions to a level not reached under the company unions. They would mean, the longshoremen claim, the pre-strike speed-up, the establishment of a virtual piece-rate of wages and the twelve-hour day. They would wipe out conditions of twenty-five years' standing, load the waterfront with surplus men, thus diminishing each man's opportunity to earn a decent living, and destroy their rights, as free men, to select or to quit a job.

They would inflict severe penalties, even to the extent of depriving a man of his right to follow his trade, without providing similarly harsh punishment for the employer who violates the award. They would restore the possibility of favoritism and discrimination in the distribution of work.

Early in their negotiations, the I.L.A. made a statement showing what they felt about the employers' good faith. They said: "Your proposals are of such a nature that we, as the representatives of your employees, are in doubt at this time whether you are honestly and in good faith trying to arrive at an agreement."

The longshoremen unquestionably will not agree to submit to arbitration the basic conditions on which they participate in the industry, any more than will the other marine unions. Harry Bridges told the San Francisco Labor Council that the longshoremen would reject arbitration and rather than accept the employers' proposals, vote another strike.

More than all this, however, the demands of the shipowners are directed at the unity of the maritime unions so striking during and since the 1934 strike. The persistent refusal of maritime workers to pass through the picket lines of other striking unions, to handle or move "hot cargo," has earned the hatred of the shipowners. Hence the demand for penalties on longshoremen for refusing to handle "hot cargo" or "to work as ordered, under police protection, if necessary." Repeatedly since the 1934 strike, the shipowners have attempted to split this unity. In September, 1935, more than 1,500 longshoremen were blacklisted because they refused to handle "hot cargo"; again, in April, 1936, the employers locked out all 4,200 members of Local 38-79 San Francisco in a dispute over a ship, which, the longshoremen believed, carried strikebreakers in its crew.

Within the maritime industry, as stated, every indication points toward an employers' offensive. Other events point to ramifications of the shipowners' plan. Job action, which has been conspicuous by its almost complete absence, suddenly recurs in almost every port on the Coast and in the Hawaiian Islands. Some instances may be legitimate but union leaders suspect agents provocateur in the majority of cases. The S. S. President Hoover is tied up in a dispute over the discharge of a sailor. The employers make an issue of it and break off

relations with the Sailors' Union. Earl King, secretary of the Marine Firemen, is suddenly arrested for murder just as his organization is preparing to enter negotiations. Voyages on vessels sailing after October 1 are cancelled by the shipowners. I.L.A. 8-44, the Warehousemen's Union, attempting to establish itself in several industries in San Francisco, uncovers a citywide plan, fostered by the Industrial Association, to deny, under any circumstances, all-important union recognition.

Thus the way is open for a return engagement of two giant economic forces. The shipowners, in the one corner, will find ample support in the bankers and industrialists, with the Industrial Association of San Francisco, the Industrial Council of Seattle and the re-organized Merchants' and Manufacturers' Association of Los Angeles; The Hearst press, along with the Los Angeles Times, the Portland Oregonian, and the Seattle Times, will see to it that the public is correctly misinformed as to what actually is going on.

The unions, in the other corner, though only a little beyond their second birthday, have organized virtually the entire maritime industry. In the past two years, they have acquired funds, they have fitted themselves into the labor movement of the Pacific Coast, and they are aware of the real intentions of the shipowners. In some instances, they might expect somewhat better treatment in the press, though there is no particular ground for optimism on this score. Moreover, the Maritime Commission, which will administer the government ship subsidies, has not yet been appointed. In an election year, such a fact may go a long way.

Basically, the attack of the shipowners is against the existence of unions in the shipping industry. In view of the support which will come to the shipowners, it will turn again, as it has in the past, into a general attack on all organized labor. To such an attack there can be only one answer and the whole of organized labor must supply it.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

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THE POOR LITTLE PROSTITUTES

A. I. BEZZERIDES

I WAS in need of gas and I was in a hurry. I stopped at a station, copies of which are all over the country. The attendant, a young man, sprinted from the office and stood at attention at my elbow. "Yes, sir," he said in a voice that was sweetly catering. "May I fill up the tank with 999?"

It happens that I am a poor man and can not afford to buy 999. "No," I said; "give me one gallon of Speedo."

"Yes sir," he said, and he pumped Speedo into the tank. After he had measured out the gallon and replaced the cap, he grabbed up a piece of cloth and proceeded to check the oil. But before he had raised the hood, I said, "Oil is okay."

"Check your water," he said, but I stopped that too: "Water's okay too." He went away from the hood then and picked up still another cloth and a bottle with jigger on top and began to jig liquid onto the windshield.

"Never mind the windshield," I said. "How much do I owe you?"

He thought a moment: "Sixteen cents, sir."

I gave him a dollar and he sprinted away, returning a moment later with the change.

I was in a hurry and I wanted to go, but I paused. What was this creature doing now, standing beside the car? He was bowing and scraping: Everything all right, sir? Thank you, sir; come again."

Such courtesy, such devotion to duty. One question I decided to ask. "How much do you get for being so polite?" I said.

"Pardon?" (craning his neck)

"How much does the company pay you for working so hard?"

"Sixty dollars a month," said the attendant. "I'll get a raise some day." He said it as if he were proud about it, about the business of being a fly speck in a big organization, a cog in a wheel, keeping the gears turning.

Imagine, I thought, for sixty dollars a month this company can purchase young men like this, rugged individuals all, and make them leap like a bunch of jumping jacks, make them bow and scrape and beg for business; his attitude was precisely one of begging, nothing less.

He's being underpaid, I thought. Just look how he excites himself for such a small sum of money. Really, he should be getting twice the pay.

Then I thought of the poor little prostitutes: how they sell themselves and they earn only three dollars a throw, sometimes less. And the hours are lousy. They walk all night down the dark streets, looking for men, or they sit in some cheap beer joint, making eyes at some guy half swacked and stinking with rot gut.

He's getting enough, I decided. In fact, he's getting too much. And I decided that there was more money in being a young man, prostituting yourself to a corporation, than in being a young woman, catering only to sex starved men.

As a matter of fact, you can stay in business longer, if you are a man: the pension age is fifty five for most companies, if you get to live that long. But the girls do not last long. The other day one of them gave me a card. COME TO THE CIRCUS, it said; SOME FUN, DASH-DASH BEVERLY BOULEVARD.

"What's this?" I said.

"Oh, it's a sporting house," she said. "We got some swell girls, three new ones, just came in last night. Ever play around with women?"

"Not much," I said. "I'm getting kinda old. But I might come if you're there. Do you work?"

"No," she said. "I just solicit. I'm getting too old for the bedroom athletics."

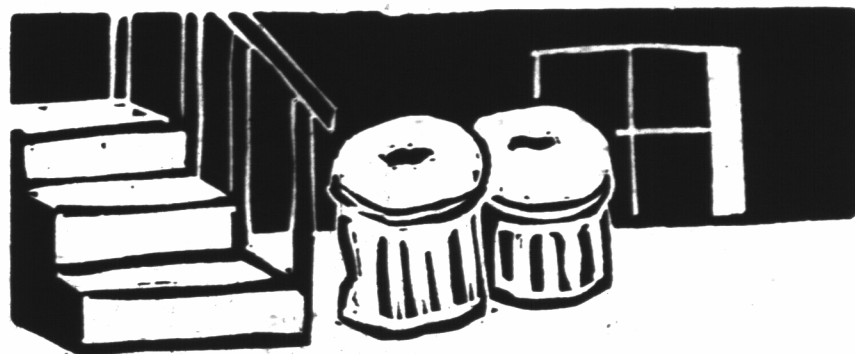
"How old are you?"

"It's nona your business, but I'm twenty eight."

"Don't get sore, sister," I said. (She was very respectable.)

The gas station attendant was still smirking and fawning at my elbow. "Please sir, let me get that windshield. Only take a minute."

"No," I said, "really, I'm in a hurry." Suddenly I could not be in too much of a hurry to get away from the place.



ONE WHO DIED

They tell me I am dead.
That they are, too.
I am not sure.

I must have slept
A dreamless slumber.
I do not know.

Here is a desk
And here a pen.
How strange!

Today I rest;
But tomorrow
I write again.

Am I dead?
I can sleep and write
And wonder.

If I am dead,
And these are dead about me
Then I live.

ELIZABETH VON SEGGERN

EARL WARREN'S "MURDER" CASE

ROBERT HOLMES

CALIFORNIA is faced with another Mooney case. The similarities between that case and the present Alameda county maritime "murder" case are so compelling that this statement is not an exaggeration.

Earl King, secretary of the Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Water Tenders and Wipers Association, and Ernest G. Ramsey, patrolman for the union, were indicted August 31 by the Alameda county Grand Jury for the alleged killing of George W. Alberts, chief engineer on the S. S. Point Lobos on March 22. The two men were indicted on the testimony of George Wallace, a sailor, whose confession charged that King sent him and another sailor, Ben "Wimpy" Sackowitz, "to get" Alberts. Wallace was also indicted, and Frank J. Conner, who District Attorney Earl Warren alleges "put the finger" on Alberts.

Wallace's story told in fantastic detail how he was sent by King with Ramsey and "Wimpy" and an as yet still missing sailor to "take care of Alberts, who was riding the black gang," that is, making things difficult on board ship for the firemen. Their first trip was fruitless on account of a passing policeman; they returned next day, however, and enlisted the aid of two sailors from a nearby ship. They boarded the Point Lobos; Wimpy and the still missing sailor went below; Wallace and the others stayed on deck. Wallace then heard groans, a man saying "ugh, ugh, ugh." Wimpy and the other sailor came running up on deck, Wimpy with blood on his hand. Wimpy said "You better beat it." All the men scattered.

Wallace went to his hotel. Later the unidentified sailor came to him with a message "Wimpy wants to see you." Wallace met Wimpy who gave him \$10 which he said came from King, and Wallace was told to leave town. There followed weeks of travelling in freight trains and hiding out, Wallace went to Salt Lake City, Chicago, Detroit, New York City. In all of these places he met Wimpy, and the other sailor. Finally in New York, Wallace met an old friend, McCracken. Wallace had by this time discovered Wimpy was a Communist and Wallace didn't like Communists. McCracken urged Wallace to leave Wimpy and go down to Fort Worth, Texas where McCracken lived. Wallace did this, but lost McCracken en route to Texas and came back to San Francisco.

In San Francisco he met A. M. Murphy, assistant secretary of the Firemen. Wallace told Murphy he wanted to see King. King was in San Pedro. Murphy promised to help Wallace, and took him to see a Communist. They met in a beer parlor. The Communist talked about sending Wallace to Russia or Mexico, but nothing was done. Murphy gave Wallace \$10 and told him to go to New York. Wallace departed, but soon returned to San Francisco. A sailor met him on the street and said, "Get off the street. King don't want to see you or nothing." The sailor took Wallace up to a hotel where Wallace hid out for several days. Then the sailor brought him \$50 and told him to go to Texas. Wallace again left San Francisco. He failed in several attempts to get into Mexico.

Finally, Wallace was arrested in Brownsville, Texas by Alameda county officers and returned to Oakland.

Wallace's story was corroborated by Murphy. Murphy told how he received letters from Wallace asking for money. Murphy told King about the letters and said King was fright-

ened and told him to destroy the letters. Murphy roomed with Matthew Guidera, an official of the Marine Cooks and Stewards. Guidera told the Grand Jury that he found out about the letters, and used them as a club over King's head to force King to give up his "communistic" practices. However, Guidera changed his mind and told all to Earl Warren. The arrests and indictments followed.

When Tom Mooney was arrested and tried in 1916, San Francisco was beset by labor troubles, including a waterfront strike. Tom Mooney was a militant organizer. He was convicted not because he was guilty of any crime, but because he knew Alexander Berkman, the anarchist, because he wrote for Berkman's paper, the Blast, and because he was considered a menace and a dangerous radical by the "responsible" people of San Francisco.

Today, waterfront unions are negotiating new agreements with their employers. Organization of heretofore unorganized workers is gaining rapidly. The Industrial Association charges that Harry Bridges is "marching inland." The labor situation in San Francisco is more critical than it has been since the 1934 strike. Employers would like to remove Harry Bridges from the labor front, but knowing that any such attempt would meet with opposition from the workers that would be difficult to withstand, the San Francisco "economic royalists" have set upon a less prominent, though no less militant trade unionist, Earl King.

King is a rank and file leader. If he can be convicted of a Communist murder plot, can be made out a "dangerous radical and agitator" bent on "stirring up trouble," the employer interests believe they can discredit the maritime unions and restore pre-strike conditions.

Why has this case broken now, at a time when negotiations are in progress, particularly since authorities claim to have had their information for some time? Guidera, the informer and employer provocateur, claims to have known of the purported crime for several months. Does it seem likely that he would have kept his information secret until now? No: the coincidence is too obvious.

Matthew Guidera has for a long time been suspected of being an employer's agent. He tried to join the Communist



Party, but was refused. He tried to induce the Maritime Federation District Council to pass a resolution to picket the Soviet Consulate in protest of the trial of Kamenev and Zinoviev, but his proposal was turned down. In the course of his testimony before the Grand Jury, Guidera told of receiving a letter from the Soviet Consul relating to Soviet maritime laws. What place this testimony had in an asserted murder case was not revealed.

Guidera also sought to involve Harry Bridges. This testimony concerned a Maritime Federation Council meeting at which Bridges presided. Guidera said that "Bridges was anti-everything but Communist." Here again, there was no connection even stated between Bridges and the alleged murder; the only purpose was to get Bridges' name injected into the matter.

When Earl Warren first announced the "solution" of the case, he implicated Murphy in the plot. But when Murphy corroborated Wallace's story, Warren failed to seek any indictment against Murphy, although Murphy confessedly harbored a criminal. Murphy claims to be anti-Communist, and he said that it was known that this was his state of mind. Yet Murphy says that he took Wallace to see a Communist, Lawrence Ross, editor of the *Western Worker*, to arrange for Wallace's escape from the country.

From the first day the case broke, Earl Warren has been trying it in the newspapers. Newspapers carried sensational stories of the "Communist murder plot involving Ross. Ralph Hoyt, Deputy District Attorney, announced that two police officers had been dispatched to arrest Ross. Later that day Ross walked into the Oakland police department and asked what the charges were against him. It developed there were no charges and Ross was permitted to go. Ross issued a statement that the Communist Party was opposed to individual acts of violence and sabotage, and that the Communist Party believed in the right of labor to organize and fight for improved working conditions.

Earl Warren long has been pictured as the perfect District Attorney, fair, just, and incorruptible. But he held King and Ramsey incommunicado for hours, in violation of the law, refusing to let them see either attorneys or members of their immediate families. He accused Murphy of complicity in the crime, then failed to ask for Murphy's indictment. Earl Warren has gubernatorial ambitions. He headed the California delegation to the Republican national convention, he hopes it may be assumed, to ride into the governor's chair on the basis of this case. Charles Fickert thought he would do that in the Mooney case too. And what is Fickert now?

Warren claims he has a fool-proof case. If that is the fact, why didn't he bring his witnesses before a committing magistrate and give defense attorneys a chance to cross-examine them? Instead, Warren used the Grand Jury which is under his thumb, a Star Chamber secret proceeding. That this is the fact is indicated by the Grand Jury's returning first degree murder indictments after only five minutes' deliberation. Certain jurors asked leading questions of witnesses that indicated the jurors already knew what the witnesses were going to say, or what they were supposed to say.

The witness Frank Connor confessed to being "finger man," according to Warren. Later Connor repudiated his confession. Connor was suffering from injuries sustained in an automobile accident when he made his purported confession. Defense attorney Henry Levinski, said that Connor was not taken to a hospital until he had signed the confession. "You can interpret that for yourself," said Levinski.

The defendants will have to fight vigorously for a fair trial in the Alameda county courts. When King and Ramsey were first arrested, George Andersen and Aubrey Grossman, associated defense attorneys, sought their release on a writ of habeas corpus. The hearing was set for the morning of August 31, but was postponed to the afternoon by Judge Tyrell on the request of Warren. The postponement was in direct violation of the law, which provides that the hearing on a writ of habeas corpus must proceed at the time set. That afternoon the Grand Jury returned indictments, and the petition for the writ of habeas corpus was accordingly dismissed.

The maritime unions realize that this is an attempt to discredit them, and to break maritime unity. A Maritime Defense Committee has been set up. A large and enthusiastic mass meeting of marine unionists was held on September 1 to solidify defense ranks. Resolutions were sent to the La Follette Committee asking for an investigation of stool-pigeons and spies in waterfront unions; assessments are being levied to raise funds for the defense. Waterfront labor, and labor and progressive forces in general, are determined that California shall not have another Mooney case.

HOLLYWOOD WEEK

LOUIS NORDEN

PICTURE YOU'LL BE WANTING TO SEE: R.K.O. Radio's "The Plough and the Stars," based on Sean O'Casey's play of the Irish Easter Rebellion. It has the Abbey Players, John Ford's immaculate direction and a screen play by Dudley Nichols.

Paramount has purchased Llewellyn Hughes' story, "Beyond Sound of Machine Guns," which first appeared in *Century Magazine* and was subsequently reprinted in *Golden Book*, *MacLean's* in Canada, *Strand* in England, and in Edward O'Brien's collection of the *Best Short Stories* of 1935.

Walter Wanger has purchased, for United Artists release, Vincent Sheehan's "Personal History."

"Pickwick Papers" goes into production this Fall for M.G.M. An English cast is to be brought over, to be supplemented by American stars. Negotiations are still under way to get W. C. Fields for the lead.

Warner Brothers are preparing Heinz Herald's story, "The Truth Is on the March," based on life of Emile Zola. Paramount is also working on treatment of the Zola life story, centering around the Dreyfus case.

M.G.M. is now preparing the screen play for Albert Halper's novel, "The Foundry," to star Wallace Beery and Spencer Tracy, with James Stewart supporting.

Max Reinhardt is now preparing the screen play for "Danton's Death," to be released by Warners. Charles Laughton or Paul Muni will have the star role.

New Soviet films to be released between now and January 1st: "Nightingale" (first Soviet color film); "Prisoners"; "Der Kampf" (story of the Dimitroff trial); "Son of Mongolia," (first sound film in Mongolia with native cast); "Seekers of Happiness" (picturing life in Biro-Bidjan), "Generation of Conquerors," "Last Night," "The Return of Maxim" (second in the Maxim trilogy, the first of which was "Youth of Maxim"); "Paris Commune," "Thirteen" and "Your Country Calls." In addition, "Peter the First," produced at a cost of \$2,500,000, may also be ready for distribution. It was based on a story by Alexis Tolstoi. Four cartoon short subjects, using puppets and photographed in three colors, will also be

ready for American release. They were made at the Puppet studio in Moscow, under the direction of A. Ptushko who directed and planned "New Gulliver."

LABOR NOTES: The Radio Artists Club has been formed in Los Angeles with initial membership of 70, to improve pay and working conditions of radio acting talent. Eventual affiliation with Actors Equity Association is planned.

The Screen Actors' Guild is participating in move to unionize Hollywood barber shops under A. F. of L. jurisdiction. Two guild representatives spoke at union meeting, stating Guild membership preferred to patronize shops displaying union cards.

The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers will not be represented this year, for the first time, at the annual convention of the International Confederation of Performing Rights Societies to be held in Berlin in September. States E. C. Mills, publisher and spokesman for A.S.C.A.P.: "The deliberations of the congress in an atmosphere of racial bigotry and religious animosity is alien to the best interests of creative artists."

In Mexico City, Mexican technicians refuse to work on the set with Vilma Idal, actress from Argentina, hired for role in "Ora Ponciano," until she gets card in United Motion Picture Workers Union.



WORKERS GO FORWARD IN SPAIN: Under pressure of film workers, the autonomous Catalanian government whose center is Barcelona, has socialized the film industry in the republic, incorporating all departments of the industry, including exhibition, in the new Commissariat of Public Spectacles. Highlights of the program: (1) Equal salaries for all workers in the same work category; (2) one per cent of gross receipts to cinema authors; (3) exhibitor to be on payroll in worker-category with salary twice as high as that of highest paid technician, projectionist; (4) reductions in rent and taxes; (5) vacations with full salary for all workers, twice yearly (two weeks in winter and four weeks in summer); (6) unified admission prices for all theatres in each of four categories; (7) six houses in Barcelona to have orchestras with minimum of 18 musicians in each; (8) vaudeville acts to play in two houses.

PRODUCERS BACK DOWN: Last week, the Screen Actors' Guild filed action on producers to force employers to adhere to NRA minimum wage scale for "bit" players.

This week, with little fight, the producers have agreed to all demands, will immediately adjust all pending cases, will adjust all future complaints within 24 hours, will set up board to investigate all complaints against any studio, firing any casting director found to be guilty of "chiselling."

Why did they give in so quickly? The answer comes directly from the producers in a concrete admission by the *Hollywood Reporter*, Louis B. Mayer-W. R. Wilkerson trade paper. In a signed editorial, the publication declared, early in the week:

"It might be well to tip the studio heads they are not dealing with a group of writers in their handling of the actors. Far from it. The actors are being guided by tried and true old union heads who have fought many wars and won them all. The demands and threats and news of insurrection from the actor group are not broadcast as were those of the writers. They are too smart, they know what they should have and are going about it in a manner that is certain to win..."

It might be well to save that statement for use at some later date when the *Hollywood Reporter*, under orders from the producers, tries to brand those same "tried and true old union heads" with the red-scare they tried to pull on the leadership of the Screen Writers' Guild.

HERE AND THERE AND EVERYWHERE: Before January 1st, the U.S.S.R. will have 70,000 motion picture theatres ready to show its product. An ambitious installation program is now under way to wire 38,000 new houses for sound giving the Soviet Union more sound screens than any other country on earth.

One reason why Dudley Nichols, author of "The Informer," "Mary of Scotland," "The Plough and the Stars," did not finish the script of "The Robber Barons" before leaving on his vacation was that R.K.O. Radio wanted to make Jim Fiske the hero of the piece rather than the villain.

Sinclair Lewis' "It Can't Happen Here" is to be produced simultaneously in fifteen cities throughout the country by the WPA Federal Theater project. Lewis will write the dramatization himself and will aid in the staging. The New York opening is tentatively set for October 20. In individual cities, however, mass organizations must guard against editing of the script and the direction by local authorities under pressure of reactionary forces. In Los Angeles, for example, script of "Triple A Plowed Under" was plenty edited as was direction of Max Pollack. Mass organizations have been asleep on their feet.

Mussolini representative, Carlo Roncoroni, is now in Hollywood being shepherded by Walter Wanger. Roncoroni is approaching acting, directing and producing talent to start the Fascist film venture in Wanger's company. Latest to be approached: King Vidor to do "Julius Caesar."

Because German censorship has resulted in emasculated films that will not attract audiences in foreign countries, Adolph Hitler this week attempted to form a new corporation, Tobis-Cinema, to produce for the world market in England. It will combine the resources of Tobis-Europa, Tobis-Rota and Berlin-Syndikat. All films thus produced for the world market will be edited before shown in Berlin. Thus, Hitler will have his cake and eat it too, British capital assisting.

PASTORAL HONEYMOON

EDMUND KIERNAN

"DARLING, I can't believe it; we're away from all of them at last. Do you feel any different?"

"You mean from what I did as a bachelor?" Theron Grant looked away from the suburban street along which he was carefully steering the car to smile at the girl beside him. She seemed lovelier than he had ever seen her before—far lovelier in her blue serge travelling costume than in the bridal gown, really. Simplicity became her. This brought out the heavenly blue of her eyes and the gold of her hair. "I'm not so lonely, naturally. Even a minister can get lonely and a minister can feel incomplete. If I were a second St. Francis I should have found my completeness in God; but I realized long ago that I am not a candidate for sanctification . . . I feel as if we belonged to each other, Gloria, and yet I don't feel as if I owned you. Can you understand that?"

"I certainly can't because you do own me, darling, body and soul." She said it banteringly, yet with a substratum of truth in her manner and she slipped her arm about him.

Public affection always made him feel uncomfortable, whether it was exhibited by him or by others. He was aware that it was a silly complex, but he couldn't help it. He stared straight ahead at the street, glistening in a drizzle that had begun to fall and he knew that the line of his jaw must be rather grim.

"You can joke about your work as you like," Gloria went on wistfully. "I know how much it means to you. You don't really know what loneliness means because you've always had the church. It's different with me; I have only you."

He had always known she was a bit jealous of his devotion to his work, but this was the first time she had openly mentioned it.

"Yes. Perhaps you will find something else—the church itself . . . The Women's Committee . . ." Somehow he couldn't quite imagine it. He felt embarrassed, hesitant. Then he brightened, made a sudden decision. There was a man in ragged clothes slouching along the sidewalk a short distance ahead. Slowing down his car, Theron coasted toward the pedestrian.

"What are you doing, Theron?" The question was asked on a rising, querulous—yes, rather an imperious inflection new to his experience of Gloria. He was shocked but he smiled.

"We ought to take him in, don't you think? He's getting wet."

"Really, Theron? Take him in just as we're starting on our honeymoon? He's not clean . . . You promised me, you know, that you'd be sensible—"

"Did I, my darling? I'd forgotten. Sensible is the only way one can be, I suppose. After all, one has to live according to conscience, hasn't one? And besides this man probably works in one of your father's mills. Even if he's one of the strikers he will hardly know who you are." Theron continued to speak calmly although Gloria was paling . . .

"You talk as if it's Father's fault," she burst out at him. "You know very well he can't help himself."

"Not at all, darling. Of course it's not his fault. He was forced to lower wages to save himself. But surely if he has indirectly made many people suffer we should all the more do our best to help them." Theron had brought his car to a stop a short distance behind the man while they were finishing their

discussion about him. Now they moved on and caught up. He had a stolid, sullen face overgrown with several days' wiry beard. The darkness of his skin and the cast of his features suggested a Latin origin. He stopped and stared as the car door swung open and Theron made an inviting gesture.

"You look mighty wet, my friend. Won't you step in?" Theron's voice had changed from its calm undertone to its usual pulpiteering resonance. Gloria found herself smiling at him just a bit. He simply couldn't help dramatizing himself. And people loved him for it. Look at this man, for instance. His manner was changing to grateful warmth from its previous hopelessness.

"I'm afraid I'll spoil your car. I'm pretty wet."

"Of course you won't. Just get in."

The man complied, settling down gingerly on the spotless mohair cushion of the rear seat and not daring to lean back. Gloria essayed a smile at him, but he did not respond.

"Are you on strike, my friend?" Theron asked when they had gone a block. He could see the man's face very well in the driving mirror because he was still bolt upright in the middle of the back cushion.

"Yes, sir" was the quick response but his expression darkened.

"What's your name?"

"Carpini. You're Rev. Grant, ain't you? I seen your pitcher in the papers."

"Oh, yes, I have—Yes, that's my name." Theron began to feel uncomfortable. The chap probably thought he had lost his sympathy for the workers. Doubtless he'd read the accounts of the wedding and knew the bride was daughter to the owner of the mill . . . "I hope my committee has been feeding you well. From all accounts they have."

"Yes, they have," the man replied warily.

"In general the sympathies of our congregation have been very much with the strikers." The moment he had spoken Theron was angry with himself. Why justify? Why be apologetic?

"Yes, sir." The tone of the remark was dead. Or it might have been slightly ironical.

Grant suddenly realized what was wrong. Unconsciously he was being influenced by Gloria's opinion; he didn't want to offend her. Well, after all, she knew what she was letting herself in for when she married him . . . He looked up into his driving mirror again. The passenger on the back seat was looking very stiff and uncomfortable . . .

"Have you a family, Carpini?"

COMING!

UNITED POLITICAL ACTION by James Burr

BLACK LEGIONNAIRES ON TRIAL by Phil McCann

And up to the minute reports on the waterfront and agricultural fronts in California, book, theater and movie reviews, sketches, short stories and poems by California writers.

"Yes, sir—five boys and seven girls."

"That is a lot." The same patronizing tone creeping in in spite of himself! "And we give you enough for them?"

For an instant the Italian's face grew dark and furious; then apathly or something akin to it returned.

"Yes, enough," was the weary reply.

"Lately I have been otherwise occupied; but now I shall have to give my full attention to this matter. We are determined that all shall be fed."

The man on the back seat did not reply. Theron Grant had a moment of clairvoyance and saw himself as he must appear in Caprini's eyes. A hired man to make misfortune the will of God. A man who did not own his own soul. A man afraid to say what he really thought. It wasn't exactly true, but . . . He turned his head to look at Gloria. She was smiling slightly, seemingly unaware of his scrutiny. It was rather a victorious smile . . . Ah, but after all why should she care about the opinions of strikers? What difference should they make? It was simply self-love that made him care—nothing else. And self-love had no place in the character of a minister.

"Say, reverend, will you let me off here?" Caprini sounded plaintive and he looked relieved.

"Ah yes, of course . . . Well, my friend, we will certainly look into that matter of the—yes, of course. We must try to give you more than you're getting. Glad to have talked with you." Grant held open the door solicitously. "Goodbye!"

As Caprini walked away, Theron turned to Gloria with a smile.

"Now, aren't you glad we took him in?"

"Yes, darling! I'm very glad. It helped me to understand you so much better—your thoughtfulness of others. It's made me very happy."

Grant thought bitterly of all he could say to her. He changed his mind. Truth was sometimes impossible. It wasn't her fault that she had her present attitude and in time he might be able to change her. Yes, he might!

"I'm very happy, too, darling," he told her as she snuggled closer.

WANTED: AN AUDIENCE

REDFERN MASON

WHEN Toti dal Monte sang Lucia in San Francisco, perhaps ten years ago, a few of us in the audience knew we were listening to the greatest coloratura of our age. Homer Henley knew it, for he got his ideal partly from his own intuition, partly from what he had learned from William Shakespeare. And Gaetano Merola knew it, and grieved to the heart he must have thought the crass insensibility of our society. And, thank the high gods, I knew it myself.

The question is: how to account for that insensibility? Is it self distrust that makes folk doubt the testimony of their own wits and wait for information from "those who know" before they will trust their own judgment?

Of course I cannot answer the question; but I do know that what America needs is not more musicians, but an audience whose understanding and enthusiasm will inspire musicians. Perhaps indeed, I might leave understanding out, for, after all the good listener, like the poet, is born not made.

Is bad education to blame? We so often mistake education for a pouring process, whereas, in reality, it is a bringing out. In a greater or lesser degree the artist is part of our natural

endowment. Your average schoolmarm—quite contemporary, I assure you—acts on the idea that what we learn is something contained between the covers of books. Sheer imbecility! Walt Whitman settles the question in his own way. "Music," he says, "is what happens to me when I am reminded by the instruments." There is something sacramental about good taste. It is the "outward sign of an inward grace," and we all have it, some more and some less, though your indolent teachers find it easier to follow the "darkness visible" of textbooks than to bid the student seek for inward illumination.

What critic of any standing has not been told scores of times: "I always read what you have to say before I make up my mind"—quite the saddest thing that a scribe can hear. For the words are a token of mental unaliveness. No! these people are not alive; "Non fur mai vivi"; "they never were alive," as Dante says.

It is a terrible thing, to be sure, for a society woman to admit that she does not quite know what she thinks. But is not confessed ignorance greater wisdom than a correct judgment taken on someone's ipse dixit, a clever phrase, perhaps, but not built on inward conviction? But society is full of folk who, like Charles the First

never said a foolish thing,
and never did a wise one.

Ignorance, when recognized, may be one of the doors of knowledge; but pretence is an impenetrable wall of darkness. We shall never be on our way to genuine culture till people will admit their honest reactions.

Folks are afraid of being wrong. They would be shocked if anyone should tell them that Cesar Franck was "incompetent." Yet Charles Gounod, who wrote some things that people still like to hear, said so. Camille Saint Saens told me that Franck wrote "mad harmonies"; yet today musicians of accepted authority revel in them.

What of our present day audience; is it stimulating? Would a Brahms leave San Francisco inspired to compose a masterpiece? If he did, I would say that it was the enthusiasm of the unlearned mob that moved him. The mob it was that recognized the genius of Wagner, when men like Weber and Schumann were so shocked by his daring that they could not recognize "the music of the future." When Stravinski gave his "Sacre" in Paris the musicians were outraged. "Vous appelez ça de la musique?" one of the inner circles exclaimed. But the dear public, which knew nothing of theory and cared less, liked it. So be careful, you musical prudes who think to measure the work of a master by the two foot rule of your borrowed notions; beware lest you do not know the hour of your visitation.

"But," it may be objected, "you seem to be arguing that the less people know of music, the better fitted they are to know a masterpiece when they hear one." Not so, my masters; I am urging that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing, and that it is illogical to judge a composer by any standard than the one which is in his own mind.

"Then how are we to equip ourselves to render a just judgment?" you continue. Be true to yourself I answer and listen to the best music you can hear as often as you can.

In our public schools there are people who teach music appreciation. The right way to do it would be to sing a little ditty, like Schubert's "Heidenroslein," and then tell how Schubert, like most geniuses, had something childlike in his genius. They might play some of Schumann's "Kinderscenen" and tell how Robert used to sit down at the piano and burlesque his friends at the keyboard.

"I am ever the new born child" said the immortal Goethe, and his loveliest lyrics are instinctive outpourings of that inward grace I have spoken of, not the echo of bookish learning.

We talk of musical peoples. All peoples are musical, each in its own way, and no two alike. That is why I distrust those Americans who base their style of unacknowledged Debussy in the Bohemian Club plays—and Debussy might be flattered, though he certainly would not be grateful.

The fact is that our jazz hounds are better Americans than our sedulous apes who copy the idiom of the most cried up contemporary European. All jazz is not bad; some indeed is very good, better than some of the pot boilers of even such a master as Beethoven, though, when he is at his best, there is no greater.

The moral of all which is: let us trust our own judgment, and amend it when we see reason to do so.

THEATER

TRIPLE-A PLOWED UNDER

LAWRENCE BERNARD

AFTER weeks of hurried rehearsals, "Triple-A Plowed Under," a Federal Theatre Production, played before an apprehensive audience at the Mayan theatre in Los Angeles early in August.

The play was preceded by a government film, "The Plough That Broke The Plain." Barred from most commercial houses, and only released to so-called art theatres (the Filmarte in Los Angeles), this documentary film of the drouth situation is now being presented in federal theatres. Distinguished for its musical score, and occasional lovely shots, the film lacks much in the way of suspense and interest, due to repetitive effects that slow the action and lessen the climax. A better scenario would have improved the picture, which is worth seeing, aside from these minor faults.

An impatient audience waited for almost a half hour before the curtain went up on "Triple-A Plowed Under." And when it finally did go up, the impressive staging and nervous tempo throughout kept the first night audience on edge. Little bursts of applause broke out when the intensity of the living drama, virtually a reportage of the current scene as printed in the newspapers, seized the audience.

This is a play that breaks the form of theatre, and borrows heavily from the cinema. In short, staccato scenes, a series of blackouts building one upon the other with tremendous psychological effect, it tells of the farm crisis since the world war. So well does it tell its simple story of poverty, degeneration, and degradation of farmers and workers throughout the land, that one forgets he is seeing a play, and accepts the illusion of reality. It builds up chronologically from 1917 to the present day and ends with a note of defiance against the present social set up, and a plea for a new world out of the present chaos.

The play was directed by Max Pollack, who used a set similar to the one employed in "Formation Left," which he also directed for Contemporary Theatre recently. Improving upon the technique of the latter, he employed a visible screen behind the actual stage, which tried for cinema effects, against

the drama enfolded before it. The result was that of seeing a play in one medium enlarged by another and given greater scope and freedom. For example, when the narrator in the play told of the burning of wheat, the drama took it up at once, and we saw actors portraying this episode, while in the background the large screen showed the wheat on fire. Another instance was the setting of a farmhouse on the screen, while farmers grouped about it on the stage, and enacted their scene on a farm. For a depiction of the suffering in the drouth area the screen held a torturous stretch of clouds that swept back and forth carrying dust, while the actors played before it, and lent reality to the composite picture.

As presented, "Triple-A Plowed Under" was severely mutilated. Entrusted to Edward Lynn, a writer on the project, controversial scenes were given to him to be eliminated. Gone was the scene in which Earl Browder appeared and spoke. Several episodes were toned down and cut. Such censorship is as absurd as it is vicious, but the surprising thing is that the play rises in spite of this destructive attempt.

There are no living characters in "Triple-A." The drama is economics, and there is little need for building of character. The individual is symbolized in the mass, and we have the three classes rising against each other, finally resolving into two classes, simply the rich and the poor.

Almost poetic in part, the play sings, cries, laughs, chants, demands, and terrifies. This it accomplishes through the microphone voice, the narrator, and the stylized movements of its actors against a flood of changing lights. Aside from the fact that the public address system failed occasionally on the opening night, and that the director combined Odets' technique of planting actors in the audience to hoot, shout, plead, and denounce the actors on stage (as in *Waiting for Lefty*), besides borrowing several lines from "Formation Left" ("We want a higher standard of living," "We want—etc."), the Federal Theatre is on the way to big things. Its program will surely evolve into a national theatre movement, if it continues to present such living material as "Triple-A Plowed Under."





URBANE AND POLISHED ESSAYS

DAVID CARTWRIGHT

A VITAL influence upon American literature since the war has been an increasing interest in criticism and in problems of value manifested by the younger writers. The examination of letters is no longer confined to a dusty and scholarly vacuum, but has become a verdant, eager province, to the better attainment of criteria and to the animation of what were static values. A number of comparatively young men, Edmund Wilson, Kenneth Burke, Matthew Josephson, Malcolm Cowley, the Harvard group, the southern regionalists and Granville Hicks, have followed in the path of Van Wyck Brooks in pursuit of the "usable past," have gotten involved in a battle over art and propaganda and are worried whither literature is going. As a result literature has been rescued from the neoromantic, dada, surrealist web to acquire a growing relation to the world in which the men who write also live.

In "The Double Agent,"* R. P. Blackmur, one of the editors of the dead but honored *Hound and Horn*, has written

a group of urbane and polished essays on such literature as Cummings, Pound, Wallace Stevens, Lawrence, Hart Crane, Marianne Moore, Eliot and others, from which emerges a discontinuous but passionate eclecticism, an obvious desire neither to deny the social origins of literature nor to admit the need to evaluate in social terms. As a man of conscience, Mr. Blackmur will concede that Malcolm Cowley may bed down his budding genius with a "political" fertilizer, but he is sure that what both he and Cowley are doing is to become better citizens "whether of God or state!" For him the danger of authorship is that critical attachment to an ideal may set so high a standard that the practitioners of the view may fall short of it in their fervid desire to point to a way of judgment. So Mr. Blackmur, though attached to I. A. Richards' psychology and Kenneth Burke's technique of intellectual and emotional patterns, refuses to go beyond the pursuit of value for the sake of quality, sets about himself as rigid a restrictive sensibility as Eliot's Christianity, and stops short of making literature anything more than a higher form of intellectual exercise.

True, his intellectualism is stimulating, provocative. If his attitude is insular, his approach is not arid. Out of his investigations is gained new insight into the ways of poets. His D. H. Lawrence is the hysterical artist, crushed by his own tortured, puritan sensibility, grasping for expressive form, forsaking craft for frenzied expression, a man who lived too close to life. In an essay bristling with classical erudition he disposes of Pound as an original poet and thinker and labels him a brilliant translator. For Eliot he has respect because Eliot functions within a self-imposed system of a kind which Blackmur seeks to build around his own attitudes. Here he does little more than to corroborate Eliot's idea that poetry may deal with actuality, that criticism is forced to consider the ideal; he shares Eliot's pride in Marianne Moore's de-energized and severely disciplined poesy of minutiae. In laudatory subsummation he outlines the minor features of Henry James' self-critical system, but ignores the larger aspect of his art and motivation. In all, Mr. Blackmur indicates his respect for discipline above the ends of art.

THE fascinating true-story of some highspots of recent California history: tong wars, the Doheny murder, the St. Francis dam disaster, red-baiting, the Gray Wolf boss of Los Angeles, the millionaire love-mart, and many others. Written by a real detective, formerly attached to the District Attorney's office in Los Angeles.



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ME, DETECTIVE

BY LESLIE T. WHITE

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GREAT ARCHITECT

THE ARCHITECTURE OF H. H. RICHARDSON AND HIS TIMES: 1838-1886, by Henry-Russell Hitchcock Jr. (New York: The Museum of Modern Art.) 189 pages, 145 plates, \$6.00

THIS BOOK, the first full-length publication of the Museum of Modern Art, is a recognition of Henry Hobson Richardson's place in American culture. It takes for granted his distinction as the greatest architect of his time, and in a spirit of patient scholarship reviews and details his work. Something might have been said, however, of the things which made Richardson exceptional in his own day. He was a cosmopolitan and a world figure—above all a success, when accomplishing social change peacefully through legislative means. If this is not possible, as many keen thinkers maintain, then, the value of the whole program is destroyed. Mr. Laidler, himself, traces in each field the socially beneficial policy, and, then in analyzing the legislative steps that have been taken, reveals that the administration has compromised itself to the interest of pressure groups; each of the New Deal programs have been so planned that they have no force behind them, and, accordingly, are ineffective—mere sops to the gullible public. Yet Mr. Laidler feels that much can be accomplished through legislative efforts, and he is a man of

*THE DOUBLE AGENT, by R. P. Blackmur. (Arrow Editions.) \$3.00

other Americans who sought to give America a genuine culture, were conscious of neglect and loneliness in a nation so intent on founding an industrial system that it it passed them by. Richardson's friend Henry Adams was bitter and disillusioned; his *Education* expresses the mood of Americans who felt at outs with America: who were no more able to serve America than America was willing to befriend them. The reason for Richardson's self-confidence lay in his attitude of accepting American conditions, sites, and materials and employing them to design uniquely American buildings. His commercial buildings and his cottages are to this day perhaps the most nearly original architecture that we possess. What is more important, he did this with the full equipment of a European training and in a way that continued the tradition of the great architecture of the past. The author of this study calls him "The last great traditional architect." Lewis Mumford, largely responsible for the revival of his fame, says that Richardson had all the elements that make up a great architect.

In spite of his success and his assurance, Richardson's life ended by being tragic because his example was heeded for too brief a time; after his death he was forgotten in the wave of sterile academicism initiated at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. Later on, when building became a matter of solving the problems of steel and glass, it was felt that Richardson, who had dealt in wood and masonry, could no longer be of use. This will prove untrue. What counts with Richardson is what architecture can still use, honesty and a sense of the social needs of time and place.

JOHN HART

PEACEFUL CHANGE?

A PROGRAM FOR MODERN AMERICA, by Harry W. Laidler (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co.) \$2.50

AT a moment when the United States is confronted on all sides with pressing social issues, and moving toward domestic and international conflict, Dr. Laidler's "Program for Modern America" becomes most timely and significant. The book is a survey of all the most vital problems facing America today. Child labor, unemployment insurance, health insurance, old age pensions, the shortening of the work week, collective bargaining, the use of a planned public works program to relieve unemployment, housing, agriculture, conservation of natural resources, taxation, banking, ownership and distribution of electrical power, railroads, civil liberties, the Constitution, and international policy are all dealt with in an unusually comprehensive and sound manner. In each field, the author gives the historical background, the present difficulties, something of the legislative efforts both before and under the New Deal, and—most important—worthwhile proposals as to future action.

Of great value is the objective, open-minded way in which Dr. Laidler approaches each problem. His training and research as president of the National Bureau of Economic Research, director of the National Public Housing Conference, executive director of the League for Industrial Democracy, and other such positions, have excellently qualified him for this type of analysis. And it is only in his closing discussion on social planning that Dr. Laidler allows his Socialistic convictions to crop out.

Ultimately, Laidler believes, we must have a complete economic and social change from the capitalist system of economic cannibalism to a socialist system of co-operative effort; but for the near future the best that we can achieve is the eradication of some of the most glaring evils of our present system. And it is in the hope of relieving the immediate distress that he makes this extensive study.

The whole plan, however, is based on the possibility of



FUNDS FOR SPAIN

The Spanish People's Front government finds itself surrounded by enemies, both of the Spanish nobility and monarchists and of foreign fascist interventionists. Neutrality has officially to be maintained by other countries, lest international war break out. But private citizens can send funds and the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union has set out to collect \$100,000 for a Spanish Labor Red Cross. All funds should be sent to that organization at 3 West 16th Street, New York City.

wide experience. But, while only the future can answer this vital question, Mr. Laidler gives us an excellent survey of what has been done, and what it is hoped may be done, through legislative means.

DONALD A. CRAWFORD

FAIR TO MIDDLING

THE BEST SHORT STORIES OF 1936, edited by Edward J. O'Brien. (Houghton Mifflin Co.) \$2.50

THE O'Brien collection of the year's so-called best stories is by now an institution. You may not entirely agree with Mr. O'Brien's interpretation of the word "best" but at least he never lets us down . . . very far. But he certainly livens up this '36 collection by his introduction in which he takes off his coat and dares you to knock the chip off his shoulder. Of course it's all good clean fun, but Mr. O'Brien is especially wrought up over the fact that certain people have called him a communist and others have pronounced him a fascist. He says: "To the fascists and to the communists, however, I say frankly: 'A plague on both your houses!'" Why, Mr. O'Brien, you old rascal!

Mr. O'Brien obviously favors the little magazine *STORY* because he chooses for acclaim 66 from that magazine, 37 from *ESQUIRE*, 25 from *AMERICAN MERCURY*, and so they fade away.

LESLIE T. WHITE

GROUPS IN ACTION

JERSEY JUSTICE

Michael Elli, recently a prisoner in the West Virginia State Penitentiary at Moundsville, has told the I.L.D. a horrifying story concerning the treatment of two labor-prisoners at that institution. The two men are former miners and union workers, their names Ernest E. Mullins and Charles H. Bock, and their life sentences are not likely to be served if prison authorities can prevent it. Bock is already near death from tuberculosis brought on by "the third degree which preceded his frameup" and by lack of medical care, while Mullins, who is tough in body and spirit, is being subjected to refined torture calculated to break him or to provoke him to some outbreak which will give his guards an excuse for his murder. Elli knows of two men in the past three years who have been murdered helpless in their cells, and swears that this will happen to Mullins and Bock unless pressure from outside the prison is brought to bear on their case. Constant attempts are made to frame Mullins into committing punishable acts. So far no frameup has worked, but Mullins nevertheless has been thrown into the prison's foul "cage-cell" again and again without any pretext at all.

Elli says "The whole prison is used for private industry. The convicts work under the gun for companies that have leased the broom shop and tailor shop, and who supply the work-bosses." Conditions in general are rotten at Moundsville Prison, but political and labor prisoners are in worse straits there than the most dangerous criminals. Mullins and Bock can't get word of their plight out of the prison through the mails because of censorship. As Elli says, "Those two boys are helpless in there. If they were caught writing such a letter they might kill them right off." And according to the I.L.D. Elli's story rings so true that we can have no doubt that Mullins and Bock stand in actual danger of death unless they receive outside help at once.

OF HUMAN BONDAGE

The ridiculous but familiar charge of "rioting" was the pretext upon which ninety men and women who conducted the recent strike for union recognition against the R.C.A.-Victor plant in Camden, New Jersey, were brought to trial. For variety's sake a few charges of simple assault were thrown in, but regardless of charges it is sure that maximum sentences will be meted out wherever possible, because New Jersey judges concerned have openly admitted this intention. One notable exception to this rule of "Jersey justice" is provided by Federal Judge William Clark, who in the case of Powers Hapgood stated in reducing bail from \$5000 to \$100 that "there is not a shred of evidence of rioting" against him. Hapgood was arrested, one suspects, because he is chairman of the defense group and an organizer for the C.I.O.

Police courts have already levied fines in more than one hundred cases tried in connection with this strike, while fifteen strikers were sentenced to from 30 to 90 days in the county jail. The remainder of those on trial will however have behind them the weight of the United Electrical and Radio Workers of America in the region, a score of important locals of the A. F. of L. and of independent unions, the International Labor Defense, the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, and the American Civil Liberties Union.

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THEY TELL ME . . .

THE PRIMAVERA PRESS of Los Angeles issues in booklet form "Everyman," the old morality play dramatized by Hugo von Hoffmanstahl, which is produced by Max Reinhardt every year at Salzburg. The play is translated into blank verse by George Sterling and will be presented in the Hollywood Bowl this month, directed by Johannes Poulsen. The play is also to be made into a talkie by Warner Brothers with Max Reinhardt directing.

ABOUT forty-two writers and artists have signed a manifesto in support of Browder and Ford in the coming election; Rockwell Kent is head of the Provisional Committee for these two candidates. Among the supporters are Robert M. Coates, Albert Bein, Waldo Frank, Kenneth Burke, Horace Gregory, Art Young, Josephine Herbst, Langston Hughes, Isidore Schneider, Joseph Freeman.

A PETITION for the pardon of J. B. McNamara and Matthew A. Schmidt imprisoned in Folsom and San Quentin for the dynamiting of the Los Angeles Times building during a bitter open-shop fight, in 1910, has been forwarded to Governor Merriam by Elinore M. Merrick, formerly New York regional director of the National Labor Relations Board. The petition was initiated by herself, Clarence Darrow (defense lawyer at the time) and Lincoln Steffens. Among the signers are Theodore Dreiser, Bruce Bliven, Newton Arvin, Sinclair Lewis, Warden Lewis E. Lawes, Julia Peterkin, Upton Sinclair, Amos Pinchot, Francis J. Gorman, Sidney Hillman. In point of years served, Jim McNamara and Schmidt are the oldest labor prisoners in the world.

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS received a post card from war-torn Spain from Charles Poore, who is working on a biography of Goya which Scribners will publish early in 1937. Mr. Poore says "There is too much Goya material here—and now history is trying to re-enact his period." Mr. Poore arrived in New York two weeks before his post card, the latter being about six weeks on the way.

WYTHE WILLIAMS, another European newspaper correspondent since before the World War, has written "Twilight of Empire," his inside views and interpretations of European events. Scribner's Sons will publish it next Spring. The book begins with the funeral of Edward VII, which Mr. Williams covered and believes marked the beginning of the end of European supremacy. It ends with the funeral of George V.

RANDOM HOUSE sends word that they have taken over from Harcourt, Brace all rights and existing stock of Gertrude Stein's "Autobiography of Alice Toklas." Bennett Cerf, head of Random House, spent two days with Gertrude Stein in the South of France last month trying to persuade her to write a sequel to "Alice Toklas." Miss Stein was elated over making the *Saturday Evening Post* after all these years; she has just sold Mr. Lorimer three articles. She and Alice Toklas have a lovely villa in the Rhone Valley, reports Mr. Cerf, and spend most of their time managing the affairs of the village folk. Miss Stein hopes to come back to America for another visit soon. She and Alice Toklas drove Cerf and Jo Davidson to the airport in Geneva and made the hour and a half journey in six hours flat. "We got lost at particularly every cross-road," explained Cerf, "and actually went through one village four times. The last time the villagers all recognized us and waved to us as old friends."

WHAT-NOTS: Martin Flavin is going to New York with two plays ready for Broadway production . . . John Steinbeck has written a piece for the "Nation" on "Trouble in California" . . . Ernest Hemingway is in Montana writing a new novel . . . He has also written an introduction for a book of short stories by Jerome Bahr which Scribners will publish this Fall . . . "The War of the Guns" a personal experience story by an English soldier, Aubrey Wade, in the war, will contain 120 photographs released by the Imperial War Museum in London . . . Scribner's will publish it . . . Myron Brinig has sent the manuscript of his long novel "The Sisters" to Farrar and Rinehart . . . he is still in New Mexico . . . Merle Armitage writes that the book on Igor Strawinsky he is editing is already a collectors' item though it won't be published till November. It has articles by Eugene Goossens, Olin Downes, Manuel Komroff, Jean Cocteau and a number of others, also eight portraits by Edward Weston and two portrait drawings by Picasso . . . It sounds like your money's worth for \$5.00 (special price before October 15th.)

ELLA WINTER