

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

OCTOBER 12, 1936

**"MARIA, SHE
TAKA CARE"**

Elsa Gidlow

**TOMORROW'S
WAR**

Winthrop Rutledge

THAT COMMUNIST

A. I. Bezzerides

**INDIVIDUAL OR
AUTOMATON?**

Rena Morris

RED BANNERS

Poem by Helen Hoyt



\$3 A YEAR

VOL. V NO. 15

10 CENTS A COPY

PACIFIC WEEKLY

VOLUME V NUMBER 15

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NOTES AND COMMENT

ON ALL SIDES, the effort is being made to consolidate, strengthen, and enlarge the military and espionage forces of the state for the benefit of the large financial interests. There is, for example, the "Auxiliary Police Force" in Los Angeles, the personal creation of James E. Davis, Chief of Police. There is no authority in the city charter for the creation of this unit; it is entirely extra-legal; it has no official standing. Each week, in an elaborately staged ceremony at the police pistol range in Elysian Park, Chief Davis harrangues an audience of invited guests on the menace of communism. After this pep talk, those of the audiences who are interested in suppressing communism are enrolled in what the chief calls his "auxiliary force." They take an oath of allegiance; they promise to serve in suppressing communism; and they agree to "make immediate reports to division commanders of any individual or happening which appears to you to be dangerous to peace and safety." Thus, the Chief is creating an army of private amateur sleuths. These same individuals may be surprised some day in the future to find that they have been mobilized into action. To date, the Chief has steadfastly refused to answer such questions as: by virtue of what authority or at whose suggestion have you created this force? how many individuals have been enrolled? The practice of enrolling citizens in the force has been going on for over a year and, conservatively, the "auxiliary police" must number several thousand. Why is it, one wonders, that the liberal and progressive forces in Los Angeles take no action on this vital issue. It is further evidence of the necessity of amending the city charter so as to make the office of Chief of Police an elective post.

EVERYONE saw the screaming headlines, "Dynamite In Salinas," and everyone read a very short time later of midnight explosions around Salinas. That the explosions were of black powder, not dynamite, and that no dynamite was ever found in or near Salinas are facts which seem worthy of further analysis. We have no eye witness accounts, no documentary evidence to go on. We can only ask a few rhetorical questions. Why were those headlines printed? Were they deliberately intended as a preliminary to something that was to follow? Can it be that the actual explosion of harmless blasts of common gunpowder were staged in the hope that they would have some effects definitely not harmless? Did those effects require the preceding headlines? After all, the first announcement in the Hearst newspapers did their best to implicate Salinas workers in a mysterious dynamite plot (so mysterious that no connection with the workers could be shown). Actual explosions then would be logical consequents of such a plot on the part of the striking vegetable workers: they would be consequents demanded by the very persons and powers who were interested in publishing the dynamite story. Are we justified in hazarding the guess that the only "plot" concerned was a plot to turn public opinion against the Salinas workers by printed suggestions of their implication in some terroristic plan for which, except in veiled allusions and mysteries, there was never a shred of fact offered in evidence? The drastic anti-picketing ordinance was passed next day.

APUBLICATION of considerable interest to Californians is the excellent bibliography of "Agricultural Labor in the United States, 1915-1935" issued some months ago by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The articles, documents, and books mentioned are summarized in each instance, thus affording a rather comprehensive statement of the whole field. Many interesting items appear. There is, for example, an article by J. A. Stromquist, which appeared in March, 1921. From this article it appears that, in 1920, orange pickers in Southern California were paid wages of 40 cents an hour, with a nine-hour day, and free transportation to and from camp and work. In 1921, this rate was cut to 35 cents an hour, and no transportation. The same article contains an interesting statement on working conditions in the citrus industry. It would appear that workers in the citrus industry have been steadily beaten back to a pre-World War status; obviously, conditions are worse now, with reference to wages, and hours, than they were in 1921. The Department of Agriculture is to be congratulated on a fine piece of work. The bibliography belongs in the hands of all students of the problem of farm labor.

NEW (secretly anti-union) papers spring up like mushrooms on the waterfront. The latest is the *Maritime Mirror* whose first issue came out last week. Its editors claimed membership in the American Newspaper Guild before they had applied, so anxious were they to appear pro-union. It is generally believed that the paper is backed by the Anti-Communist League. Union men openly laugh at the paper and its antics; they have learned a good deal from "Colonel" Henry (Goebbels) Sanborn and his stupid *American Citizen*, which

the Industrial Association is generally believed to be supporting.

This is all part of the desperate attempt being made by the shipowners, the Industrial Association, the Chambers of Commerce, the Associated Farmers and other organized employers' associations to weaken the unions and embarrass the Administration before the election by bringing on industrial trouble. As we go to press the Salinas grower-shippers, acting for the united front of banker-growers of the State, flatly refuse Governor Merriam's proposals for peace, and offer the union individual bargaining (specifically stating that union leaders are not to be consulted) hours and wages obtaining before the strike and retention of strike-breakers.

Employers should read the Biblical story of Pharaoh.

THERE were two major anti-fascist victories in Europe last week. In England Sir Oswald Mosley planned a parade and mass meeting through the East End of London: the "slum" inhabitants turned out by their thousand and lined the streets in a furious and determined gesture that such a demonstration should not take place. So militant were they that the police prevailed on Mosley to give up his plan.

Anyone who knows the British knows that they are hard to rouse, and thus this action takes on greatly added significance. Mosley is only the spectacular outer side of the fascist menace: if the people can be taught in time its more insidious menace—as we are meeting it in anti-union action, suppressions of speech and meeting, in anti-picketing ordinances and arrest of political candidates in the United States—there may still be time to defeat it. Even liberal commentators are beginning to realize the importance of calling fascism by its right name in the "democracies."

The other victory was in France, where Colonel de la Rocque's organization, the Social Party (late Croix de Feu) did not prevent the monster United Front demonstration of 200,000 workers and intellectuals in Paris, although the fascists came out on the streets and engaged in much violence.

The police in Paris arrested fascists and monarchists; for a change!

WE PAY FOR VIGILANTISM

(This item is reprinted verbatim from the *Monterey Peninsula Herald*.)

"SALINAS, October 6—More than \$2,000 in "lettuce strike bills" submitted by Sheriff Carl Abbott were approved and ordered paid yesterday by the board of supervisors. The bills also carried official approval of Auditor Anna E. Johnson, District Attorney Anthony Brazil and Purchasing Agent I. B. Cornett.

The bills included such items as:

A. J. Price (special account F. E. Heple) seven boxes shells, \$7.21.

Frazier Hardware, shells, \$13.65 and \$25.65.

Montgomery Ward, 200 cots and 400 blankets, \$1,236.58.

Central Hardware, shells, \$55.10.

Myrtle Printshop, 1,000 deputy arm bands, \$42.49.

Miss K. Cree, Jeffery hotel, assisting sheriff, \$141.65 (at the rate of \$250 per month.)

Salinas Hardware, pick handles, cord, rawhide, shells, \$56.22.

Hotel Jeffery, rent 10 days, \$300.

Meals (several restaurants) \$426.21.

Miss Cree was identified as a switchboard operator for Hotel Jeffery law enforcement "headquarters."

The Montgomery Ward bill was believed to have been for cots used by citizen deputies mobilized early in the strike.

City Manager Vic J. Barlogio of Salinas said he could not give any definite figures on city expenditures for strike law enforcement but that some salary bills, all lumped together, had been paid by the council last night.

Barlogio said financial matters connected with the strike were being taken care of on "the sixth floor of the Jeffery" and promised to give newspapermen figures as soon as they are available."

Imagine strikers asking the community to pay in taxes the cost of their loss of their jobs! Yet just as one-sided is the paying of scab-herders' meals and arm-bands. The profits made by growers on their tear-gas-protected lettuce do not even for the most part get spent in Monterey County, and are certainly not distributed among the taxpayers. The taxpayers are asked to pay for the insolence of law-breaking private detectives and their employers, the fun of the Sheriff and Police Chief playing at "defeating revolution" and for spies and strong-arm repression they thoroughly despise. The growers were cowards in 1934 when they didn't foot the bill for the burning of the Filipino ranch-house and again they are arrogant and insolent.

HEARST DID IT BEFORE

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST's recent diatribe against President Roosevelt recalls his incendiary outburst against President William McKinley, whose assassination was laid to Hearst's abuse. It aroused nationwide hatred against the publisher just as his recent attack on Franklin D. Roosevelt is doing. Hearst's tactics have made him the worst hated man in America.

When William Goebel, elected Republican governor of Kentucky in 1901, was shot and fatally wounded, Hearst

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Published every Monday by Pacific Associates, Box 1350
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PACIFIC WEEKLY subscription rates: \$3.00 a year, \$1.75 for six months in the United States, its territories and possessions, and Mexico; \$3.50 a year, \$2.10 for six months in Canada and foreign countries. Single copies ten cents. Rates for advertising, display and classified, will be furnished upon request.

PACIFIC WEEKLY is not at present able to pay for contributions, but welcomes fact and opinion reporting, particularly in the Pacific region. No responsibility can be taken for any Manuscripts, and only Manuscripts accompanied by stamped, addressed envelopes can be returned.

Entered as second-class matter October 25, 1934 at the Post Office at Carmel, California, under the act of March 3, 1879

published in his New York paper this quatrain, suggesting the murder of President McKinley:

"The bullet that pierced Goebel's breast

"Can not be found in all the West;

"Good reason, it is speeding here

"To stretch McKinley on his bier."

Not many months after this slur was published McKinley was fatally wounded by the assassin Czolgosz.

This wanton shaft created intense indignation throughout the nation against Hearst and his publications. In many places his newspapers were boycotted. They were barred from many public libraries and club reading rooms, and thousands of subscribers quit the papers in disgust. The assassination of McKinley was charged directly to Hearst. The resentment caused by this verse lingered and in many clubs the boycott lasted for years.

Hearst had bitterly attacked McKinley in editorials, cartoons and departments on nearly every page. In the New York Journal on April 10, 1901, appeared a scathing tirade against President McKinley in which appeared this sentence:

"If bad institutions and bad men can be got rid of only by killing, then the killing must be done."

This sentence and the verse were widely quoted and used as chief points of assault on Hearst and his papers. The

popular flame against him was so fierce that thousands of his newspapers were torn from the hands of newsboys and burned in the streets of many cities.

Elihu Root, sent by President Theodore Roosevelt after he became President on McKinley's death, on a speaking tour of New York to oppose Hearst in his race for governor of that State, used these lethal references in Hearst papers against McKinley as campaign ammunition. Hearst was defeated.

McKinley's assassination so aroused the entire country against Hearst that in many communities he was hanged in effigy from trees and telephone poles. In frequent instances two effigies were hanged handcuffed together, representing Hearst and Emma Goldman, the anarchist.

John K. Winkler, Hearst's biographer, records: "It is doubtful if any American ever faced a wilder storm of abuse. Hearst was denounced everywhere as a 'murderer, anarchist and scoundrel.'"

Ambrose Bierce, who worked for Hearst twenty years and had written for his papers many of the attacks on McKinley, in a review of these matters discusses Hearst at length and expresses dislike and contempt for him.

Bierce calls Hearst a "misleading light" for the thousands of readers of his publications.

ISOM SHEPARD

ROVING WITH THE MIGRANTS

CAROL GRISHAM

I BEGAN my summer with the fruit workers at the peak of apricot season. The fruit was coming in big to the canneries. I could feel the thrill the sight gave people who were looking for work. Often one of them remarked to me jubilantly that it was the biggest crop this year they'd ever had. I don't know if it was or not; but it thrilled them to think so. This excitement I saw more than once or twice—workers standing about outside the plants counting the truck-loads—cops walking around to keep them from swarming in over the steps to storm the foremen—then the sound of whistles, old faces vanishing inside and new ones appearing to watch the fruit come in. I saw it everywhere. Every man, woman and child, it seemed, had a job in the fruit or was here to beg for one.

Before long I was caught up by the feeling and stood in line. In a while, I, too, was pleading with a foreman for an initialled white slip. He said it was impossible; he couldn't take any more on. I went back to him twice. If I hadn't happened to have a "friend" I'd be standing outside that cannery asking for a job yet. Because of the persistent pressure of my "friend," the foreman admitted me to the night shift as a peach pitter. I hurried to the supply room to buy my uniform and gloves—failing to learn until afterwards that the company charged about one-quarter more than the store in town. Then I had to find a place in the company's camp.

This first day I had but brief, scattered bits of conversation. I began to note even then a trait of the people in this work which I was to observe again and again—a marked dislike on their part to say how long they had been at it. Almost always they told me, smiling away their embarrassment, that this was "the first time" they'd been in the fruit; that they'd never known what it was like inside a cannery before. They

were ashamed to say how long it had been since they'd had a house to live in. They had been touched by the legend of shiftlessness built about them in their most deplorable state—when the harvest is over, the canneries closing down, and they have no work. Evidently they were afraid they would be set down as having no importance in themselves, as part of a rugged set of people of little worth—wandering, shiftless, a detriment to a community. Their faces, kind, brutal-looking, intelligent, dull, were like the faces, however, I had seen about me long before, perhaps only a little more worn by wind and sun.

The foreman told me, when they took me on in the cannery, that, obviously, someone had to pit peaches, and someone had to be a nightshift pitter. In other words, not everybody could get to work on the pears or fruit salad, where all you needed to make thirty-three and a third cents an hour were strong arches and rubber gloves to keep your skin from the salt water. I discovered that once you got going on peaches, you never worked on anything else. The reason, too, became plain: peach pitters are a special race. A peach pitter has only to work faster and faster and faster, to push herself harder and harder and harder. Endure is her law. "Keep up with the peaches." "Watch the split pits." "Speed up." "Work faster." This is all.

While I was learning to pit peaches a woman everyone called Rosa, who worked next to my machine, became the object of my awed admiration. She was Irish-Italian, young, placid and powerful. She pitted fifteen fifty-pound boxes of peaches an hour, hour after hour, standing over her pitter from early evening until early morning, when the fruit lasted, with half an hour for supper at midnight.

"Don't you get tired, Rosa?" I asked her. "Don't your hands and shoulders kill you? How can you keep going?"

She leaned over to hear me in the roar, then grinned. She turned her grinning, sweat-beaded, peach stained face back to her lug of fruit. It was almost emptied, and in a few seconds she pulled down another fifty pound box.

"You waste time!" she shouted at me as she did so—we were paid by the piece on peaches at the rate of three and a quarter cents a fifty-pound box. She looked at me curiously for an instant. Then, with a shrug, she was back to the rhythm of those three movements of the peach pitter again—one with the left hand to pick up the fruit, one with both hands to push it down between the blades, one with the right hand to depress the lever.

Because of my awkwardness, every few minutes I was getting my pitter "out of order." The first night I earned just eight cents an hour. Rosa averaged fort-eight cents—or a total of twenty-four cents for me and a dollar forty-five for her. She came over and talked to me, looking down on me with pity.

"You get along?" she asked.

Often I have thought of her endurance. During the hot, quick ripening period she worked a seven-day week. Her ten-hour shift was stretched to eleven or twelve hours. I used to see her coming from the plant limping with the aches in her feet, stiff and lame in her swollen shoulders and fingers—joking and being pleased over her day's work, and pleased especially because tomorrow there would be more peaches.

In a hot, noisy camp, where every little lean-to held four or five or six workers, she got her rest for brief intervals. Then she was up, washing and pressing her uniform and calculating how much she could earn today. As the afternoon wore on, she became restless waiting for the siren to blow. It was a time of great excitement. It was a kind of gold rush for her—at the rate of three and a quarter cents for fifty pounds.

One oppressively hot night the long rows of pitters whirring stones out of peaches, their hands moving ceaselessly, the fruit coming down to them red and gold, dropping away from the blades in halves, ceased to fascinate me. When I turned back to my work I could not bear to pick up a peach to begin again. My feet weighed a thousand pounds. My fingers would not function. Unexpectedly, the forelady appeared on her round. She shouted in my ear, "Can't you speed up? We have to get the fruit through faster. They're layin' 'em off if they don't do minimum."

I had worked at top speed. I couldn't believe I hadn't made the minimum; in fact, I'd been thinking I'd exceeded it. When I had a chance, I went over to check with Rosa. Fifty-four boxes were scored for her. Pushing myself as fast as I could, I had done twenty-nine.

I decided I was fed up with it. I had torn my thumbs, and peach juice that had splashed over my neck and arms, in my face and eyes, burned and itched like poison ivy. I was hot, sticky, and my feet begged for rest. In almost four hours I had earned ninety-four cents—my sides and shoulders and wrists could take no more of it at this rate. Besides, the pain in my cut hands was making me unbearably miserable.

Four or five hours more of this? For some reason or other I laughed, but it was at myself. I turned and started walking out. I looked at Rosa, working in perfect rhythm, never pausing, only going faster, faster, faster. Her head was bent over the fruit pitter; her arms and neck and face glowed.

Shouting, the forelady dashed after me, waving me wildly back to my machine.

"You can't leave here without my say so!" she shouted.

"You want a hell of a lot for three and a quarter cents a box," I said, using language a good deal milder than she used for us.

She commanded me to go back to my machine, though, to be sure, she was non-plussed at my remark for a moment. Not knowing what to do, she shouted to a super-forelady to come over, and pointed to me.

"You shouldn't feel that way," the super-forelady said. "Anyway, you can't leave here unless the nurse gives you a note."

"I'll go to the nurse," I said.

"It won't do you any good," she replied. "They told her not to give any more notes. We have to get the peaches out."

I stood there, unutterably weary. I was no longer playing a role. The only weakling in the crew, too tired to work, mortified to have to flop. When I looked up I saw Rosa standing between me and a peach lug.

"Go tell the big boss to put you on pears, please," she said.

"Tell him you aint no Jack Dempsey."

I shook my head and said I knew they weren't taking any more on pears.

"Oh, well, you do better here tomorrow. It gets easy after a couple weeks or so. You get strong," she said.

"Oh, sure, Rosa," I answered. She went on to say that I ought to be sure to come back, for soon they'd be working twelve to fourteen hours.

RED BANNERS

HELEN HOYT

QUICK was the kindling of those hills!
The earth and the sky are on fire,
On fire the furthestmost chasms!
Each ridge is a flame-tongue;
The slopes hold up torches;
Signals and beacons
Swinging and swaying,
Dazzling the valley, flashing defiance,
Beckoning, calling, from hill-top to hill-top
Torch crying to torch
With utterance of flame!

Now flame shall be banners,
They wave, they are flaunted—
Flags of revolt, livid pennons of anger,
Driven and twisting, hollowed out by the wind—
Tatters of banners shot out in wild reaches;
Slashing the sky with turbulent yellow,
Vermillion and orange, screaming of red!

Flames upright like boulders, threatening as crags;
As ruin of waves they lean from the slopes—
Awaiting no answer, no consent of the valley,
No compliance of mountain; rebellion exultant,
Banner growing and bulging with might of the wind;
Louder than wind, too loud for remonstrance,
The cries of the valley scorned into silence.

MR. POPE TO WRITERS' CONGRESS

TIS hard to know what counsel to impart:
 To write for money, or to slave for art;
 If money talk, forego the classick myth,
 And sink your Genius low as *Street and Smith*;
 Keep *True Confessions* always in your sight,
 Read them by day, and imitate by night.
 But if to art your inspiration tends,
 The rules of writing pay no dividends;
 Tho' classick *Homer* may approve your muse,
 Will that persuade the *Rocky Mountain News*?
 And what if *Vergil* to the rules adhere,
 In *Collier's Weekly* could his song appear?
 Think how uneasy mighty *Milton* sits,
 At *E. E. Cummings'* typographic fits;
 Or pondered *Dryden's* clear, satyrick line,
 Then the last portrait penn'd by *Gertrude Stein*!

But to our theme: if mobs of men must write,
 How fill their purses, yet keep fame in sight?
 On the one hand, the Judgment would restrain;
 But on the other, Need impels to gain.
Maecenas aiding, *Horace* may refine,
 But journalists must scribble ere they dine;
 And if art ask the nine-years-ponder'd lay,
 The publisher demands his proofs to-day:
 E'n the slow clock lags after, tired and old,
 When ev'ning papers at high noon are sold,
 And magazines, a multitudinous rout,
 Rush to the stands a month before they're out!
 Not *Pegasus*, altho' he soar'd on wings,
 Not *Puck*, the swiftest of sublunary things,
 Not lovers to their beds, nor thugs to crime,
 Can speed as fast as does *The March of Time*!

Of old the *Muses* walk'd with stately tread,
 Counsel'd the living and consol'd the dead;
 Today, with compacts, in a motor car,
 They neck, with sexual skill, from bar to bar;
 And Wit, of old on epick themes employ'd,
 Now flirts with fornication and with *Freud*.
 Speed, speed and sex, the printing press demands—
 Proclaim it, *Clio*, through your scribbling bands!
 Let giggling girls in college courses be
 Skill'd in disorders of *Psychology*;
 And ere young genius on his book embarks,
 Prepare him, not with *Milton*, but with *Marx*!
 What tho' his paragraphs like puppies sprawl?
 One proletarian purpose covers all!
 When copy-readers will correct his page,
 Why punctuate? Let revolution rage!
 The masses rise, tho' authors may sink low:
 Not to mis-spell is all the art they know!

But even amid this tumult, still a few
 Strive to untie the Old World, and the New;
 Not backward turning, blind to modern need,
 Nor rushing forward, deaf to ancient creed,
 Nor thinking that all earlier art was wrong,
 Nor yet denying sense to modern song.
 Witty, yet prudent; skillful, yet serene,
 They mark the fault, and moralize the scene;
 Kind, but not careless, without pretense, sage,

In large discourse they speak, and limn the age.
 The wisdom which a *Santayana* shows,
 Shames the mere paint of meretricious prose;
 Nature an *Ellen Glasgow* still can give
 To teach imperfect man how he may live;
 In phrase and frenzy be the poet's boast,
 If *Communism* be the critick's toast,
 In *Robert Frost* true genius still combines
 Sense in the thought, and beauty in the lines.

O then remember, that, ere *Coughlin* came,
 Ere *Roosevelt* sank, and *Townsend* rose, to fame,
 Genius, by gen'rous *Nature* freely giv'n,
 Raised speech to sense, brought beauty down from heav'n.
 Fascist or communist the state may be,
 But *Nature* is the same eternally;
Nature, that, tho' an *Ethiopia* fall,
 Prescribes one common human fate to all,
 Decrees the cradle and demands the grave,
 Tho' *Hitler* rant and *Mussolini* rave.
 Therefore from *Nature* learn the forms of art,
 And for the substance, scan the human heart;
 Marxists may rise, and humanists may fade,
 The rules of sense are still the writer's trade;
 Tho' *Calverton* be cross, and *Gold*, annoy'd,
 Better be wrong with *Frost*, than right with *Freud*!
 Among the froth, and fashions of the day,
 Keep clear your course, and steer a middle way:
 Let some proclaim the sexes cannot sin,
 While others usher revolution in;
 Since these proclaim that capital must go,
 Their poems not a capital can show;
 Since bourgeois ideology must fall,
 Those have no ideology at all;
 In proof the proletariat are oppres't,
 Some shed their commas as they would a vest;
 Others on streams of consciousness float by
 Where endless paragraphs appall the eye;
 And some in search of form are so profound,
 That grammar dies, and syntax strews the ground;
 Let those who will in various error roll,
 Yours be the task to scan the reasoning soul;
 If others to vain meaning make pretense:
 Wit be your trade, your platform, common-sense!

ANON.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

- CAROL GRISHAM** is a young writer who has been following the migratory workers in California.
HELEN HOYT is a well known California poet whose work has appeared in many national magazines.
ELSA GIDLOW is a short-story writer and poet now living in San Francisco.
RENA MORRIS, a young graduate of U. C. L. A., has appeared in "Pacific Weekly" before as a literary critic.
A. I. BEZZERIDES has written short stories for "New Republic," "Esquire," "Scribner's," and other magazines.
JACK LE FLORE is a worker on a WPA project in Los Angeles.
L. E. CLAYPOOL is an editorial writer, book reviewer, and columnist on the San Diego "Sun," an old friend of "Pacific Weekly."
ERNEST ALBEE is an editorial associate of "Pacific Weekly."
EDWARD LIVINGSTON is a research worker and literary critic living in Northern California.
GEORGE SUMNER ALBEE is a novelist whose work has been published both here and in Europe.
LESLIE T. WHITE, ex-detective, is "Pacific Weekly's" crime expert.

"MARIA, SHE TAKA CARE"

ELSA GIDLOW

"I WAS feeling kind of blue, not about anything in particular but about everything. Newspapers get me down sometimes, that's the way I am, and when you have been a public health nurse for 7 years you don't laugh as easily as when you started, or if you do, it isn't always the right kind of a laugh. I wouldn't have gone back to it, only Phil found it so hard getting his practice started. He finished his interne work and opened his office in 1931 and it was months before anyone seemed to notice the sign, 'Phillip Birk, M. D., Physician and Surgeon.' All that first year he didn't make enough to pay his office rent. We had to borrow quite a bit. Then I got my old job back. One of Phil's patients who had a store used to pay in groceries, and a couple of times Phil came home with oil paintings and heirlooms people brought because they couldn't pay money. One old lady brought a Chinese porcelain vase.

"How about this fixed up with a good sauce for Sunday dinner?" he said, putting it down on the kitchen table and not smiling. 'If we get good and hungry, maybe we can roast up one of those paintings.'

"Just the same, we got along, and Phil is crazy about his work. The year after, there was some improvement. At any rate, there were a lot more patients, and Phil said, 'It's better to have patients and keep busy even if they don't pay you than to sit in an empty office wondering if you hadn't better have gone into the undertaking business.'

"Well, I was feeling blue. Millions Appropriated for New Ships, kept running in my head from the morning paper, then there were still some of those Community Chest posters, One Neighbor in Four Needs Your Help, that I had been seeing all winter.

"I felt better after I came out from seeing Mrs. Veccio, but I was kind of mad too, she is so full of life, laughing all the while and having the grandest time, but wouldn't you think she would know enough not to go and have another baby when she's got five already and her husband hasn't had steady work for years? Half the time they are on the city and there is always one of them sick or in trouble. Phil and I know we shouldn't have babies till we are out of debt and we can give them the sort of life children should have, but Mrs. Veccio just goes right on having them.

"Don't you ever worry about their futures?" I asked her.

"She shook her head, laughing the way she always laughs, pointed up towards the sky that was a blazing blue that day, and said, 'Maria, she taka care.' I suppose she meant the Virgin Mary. Then she told me that America was a big country, lots of room in America, and with a great spacious gesture she spread out her arms and her breasts shook when she laughed. You couldn't help feeling better after talking to Mrs. Veccio and watching her four eldest tumbling about in the sun outside the door; but even if she didn't worry about those black-eyed, curly-haired bambinos, I had to. Angelo, the next to the youngest, has rickets, and if it isn't the eyes of Rosa, it is the teeth of Francisco, or Louisa's tonsils that have to be attended to. And now she's got another.

"Mrs. Veccio looks at me in a funny way sometimes, as though she wondered why I made so much fuss. Although I have told her over and over how dreadful it is, she picks up the rubber comforter from some place where flies have been walking on it and sticks it into the baby's mouth, looks

at me half laughing, half afraid of a scolding, and says: 'Maria, she taka care.'

"What are you feeling blue about?" Phil said to me that night at dinner. I thought I had got over feeling blue. When he said that, I knew I hadn't, but I didn't want him to see I was having a hard time swallowing the meat. 'Nothing,' I said. He told me some funny stories about one of the patients who is always complaining about his feet, and another one who gets pains in his stomach every time the stock market goes down.

"What will the bank do if we can't start repaying the loan next month?" I asked.

"Is that what you are worrying about?" Phil said, and tried to laugh. 'We've got two weeks yet. Maybe somebody will pay up. The Dawson confinement ought to bring in something, though I'm afraid the Dawson's are pretty hard hit.'

"Maria, she taka care," I said.

Phil lighted a cigarette and brought it over to me. I took a few whiffs and began to crush it out. I guess I wasn't paying attention to what I was doing. 'We are going to build some more warships,' I said, 'Did you see it in the papers?' Then I began to talk about the 'One Neighbor in Four' poster that they pasted all over San Francisco for the Community Chest Drive, and about Mrs. Veccio's going and having another baby, and pretty soon Phil was looking at me as if he had his white smock on and I was in the patient's chair; so I started to laugh and pretended I was joking.

"Listen," he said, "We're going away for the week-end."

"It was quite a while since we had been away anywhere because we were saving every penny to pay something on the loan, and I told Phil I didn't think we ought to be so extravagant.

"Where shall we go?" he asked 'up the peninsula to the Santa Cruz mountains, or somewhere over in Marina?'

"Have we got enough money to buy gas as far as the mountains?" I said.

"I guess Mrs. O'Connor's liver will supply us with gas," he said. Phil talks that way sometimes, but there isn't anybody with a bigger heart. He is too big-hearted, that's the trouble.

"Has Mrs. O'Connor paid up on her liver?" I asked, being funny too.

"She's paid up on part of it," he said, 'I guess we can blow ourselves to some extra gallons of gas.'

"Well, we did, and you never saw anything like the way the country looked. The orchards in the Santa Clara Valley were so full of blossoms you couldn't see boughs or twigs, only a white glory wherever you looked, and when we got further into the hills the slopes were flaming with golden poppies. All you need to do is put water on this California sand and let the sun pour down on it for a while, and things burst out of the ground like you had opened a prison door and you almost feel they are shouting and laughing—like the Veccio brats.

"Phil and I found a place to stay and in the morning we took a walk further into the hills. There were even more poppies there than we had seen on the way. Sometimes you would see a lot of blue lupin mixed in with the poppies and lower in the grass there were all kinds of little flowers I

didn't know the names of, but when we got tired and lay down behind a clump of madrone bushes, every breath we drew smelled like some special kind of honey. It was one of those clear, dry days when you feel the heat of the sun but don't get too warm. I hated to crush the poppies when I stretched out there in the sun, but they were so thick I couldn't help lying on some.

"Did you ever see anything like it?" said Phil, "Such an intensity of growth, such exuberance."

"They are just like Mrs. Veccio," I said without thinking. "How lucky they are, they can grow and grow, America is a big country, they don't have to wait to pay back loans before they can have buds, they just grow. Maria, she takes care."

"For the love of heaven, what are you talking about?" said Phil, "What's all this about Mrs. Veccio?"

"She's like the poppies," I said, "She doesn't have to carry the world around the way we do."

"That's something to think about," said Phil.

"But I was tired of thinking about it."

"Phil took off some of his clothes and so did I; it's grand to feel the sun on you. The air was so clear you could see the redwood trees on the mountains away across the valley. There were two buzzards floating high up and you couldn't hear a sound anywhere. It sure makes you feel wonderful to lie in the sun like you were a poppy. When the sun has soaked into you for a while you don't care about anything. . . . Suppose we didn't struggle all the time, suppose we never did anything about Francisco's teeth or Louisa's tonsils, suppose we didn't get worried when all the nations were building bigger fleets and more planes, suppose I had babies the way Mrs. Veccio does and never thought about how they were to be looked after, suppose Phil and I and most of the people we know who seem to be different from the way people used to be, stopped thinking we had to carry the world around? We feel tense and responsible and worry about everything, not only bombing planes, but germs, and whether we'll lose our job and what will happen to us when we get old or if we were sick, and where we're all heading for. When I was lying there in the sun it all looked kind of crazy."

"I wanna be a contented poppy," I said when Phil turned over to get the sun on his back. He put his hand on me and stroked me. Then we began talking about what I had been thinking and Phil said, what was the matter with us, we had broken away from the tyranny of nature to a certain extent,



we had begun to study her laws and so have power over nature and over ourselves, but not enough yet, and too few of us were conscious, most of us were only half conscious, and as a race we hadn't learned to use what freedom we had. 'I think we are in a transition stage between sort of superior animals and whole human beings,' Phil said, 'I guess some terrible things will happen before we grow into real human beings. But we have to go on being more and more responsible. When we are doing the job properly, the responsibility will be evenly divided like the stresses of a suspension bridge, not all lopsided the way it is now. Then we'll be able to acquiesce in human laws the way these poppies acquiesce in the laws of nature. Only we'll know we are doing it.'

"It sounds grand," I said, "but wouldn't it be just as grand being a poppy, and not having all the fuss?"

"It is pretty marvellous being a poppy, or even a typhoid germ," Phil said, "only remember what I said just now, they don't know they are poppies or typhoid germs."

"Lying there among the honey-smells with the sun soaked into me and that sky as blue as a dream all over everything, I didn't know any more if I was Lola Birk or the sand those poppies were growing out of. Maybe that is how Mrs. Veccio feels."

"This sun is immoral," I said, sitting up suddenly.

"It has made you look lovely," said Phil, and he picked one of the poppies we had crushed and threw it at me. I threw one back at him and pretty soon we were having a sort of poppy fight and laughing like two loons. It is funny what the sun does to you.

"You're drunk," Phil said.

"So are you," I said to him. Then he caught hold of me and started to kiss me.

"Watch out, someone may come," I said, but in a little while I forgot to think about whether anyone might come. The madrone shadow had been on the other side of the tree, but when I looked at it again it had come round to our side. I didn't want to talk or move, but I thought of what Phil had said about the poppies not knowing they were poppies. For a while, I wanted not to know I was Lola Birk; and lying there with Phil, I didn't know and I guess he didn't know he was Phil; but now all of a sudden I knew I was Lola Birk and it was grand to know. I can know the way poppies feel and know the way Lola Birk feels, and know I am feeling that way."

"While I was thinking that, feeling happy and strong and looking up at the sky, I felt a shiver go down my spine, and there was another buzzard wheeling quite low. The little birds that had been cheeping, stopped dead still, but the buzzard floated away and in a few minutes all the birds were talking again."

"I guess the larks don't know about dying," I said to Phil.

"Not the way we do," he said.

"And the poppies don't know. If Mrs. Veccio knows, I guess she says, 'Maria, she takes care.' But we can't say anything like that, can we?" For a minute I wasn't so sure I liked knowing I was Lola Birk.

"No, we can't say that; but we will find something new to say," said Phil, starting to button his blue shirt over his chest that was getting burned.

"Do you think we will?"

"I am sure we will," he said, "we have to keep on knowing more and more, and we have to keep on living and making more people live until the planet cracks. We have to find something new to say."

INDIVIDUAL OR AUTOMATON?

RENA MORRIS

A CHARACTER in a short story I have just been reading describes Russia as a place where "the state runs everything and a man can't even spit without getting the written permission of some high and mighty dictator." The editors of our leading papers should be congratulated for their fine work. If, by way of testing their influence, they were to take a nation-wide poll in order to find out what the most frequent charge made against the Soviet Union was, it would surely be found to be this one: that in Russia the individual is so suppressed that he is no more than a cog in a machine, and that this mechanistic social order pays not the slightest attention to human values, but expects to bring down all aspiring spirits to one uniform level of mediocrity.

But for all our current talk of individuality we are rather vague about what the term really means. According to Webster, a "distinctive character" is the mark of an individual; that is, he must be original, no duplicate of anyone else. To shrug one's shoulders and question the good of mere originality is to under-estimate the importance of keeping one's identity. A set of given names and a birth certificate do not insure it. Unfortunately, just the feeling that one is a superfluous element in an undifferentiated mass of like elements is enough to warp an entire personality.

Babies, of course, are too much alike to be individuals except to a limited extent. As they grow older they tend to become more and more unlike each other. The degree to which they become so depends mainly upon the society into which they are born. Simply the will to be "different" does not make for true individuality. Personality is a social product. The personal eccentricities affected by whole colonies of would-be bohemians only prove that social conventions cause even revolts against social conventions to become a standardized affair. Naturally, in any consideration of personality the role of heredity is important as a determining factor, but it consists of potentialities capable of being directed rather than fixed patterns of conduct. Every society, therefore, consciously or not, either encourages the potential individualities of its members or restricts them.

How about America? Are we a nation of free individuals? For more than two decades our poets, dramatists, and novelists have been shouting in unison—"No!" Possibly the most common theme of modern American literature centers about the discovery that the American spirit is the very antithesis of individuality, that it is, instead, one of blind conformity to the most superficial standards, the conventions of the hour. The protest that shocked a former generation has become a familiar complaint to this one. New writers still caricature our Babbitts, share Ludwig Lewisohn's indignation at our American hostility to the "other-thinking one," and like H. L. Mencken flaunt their contempt for the "eternal mob." But the tenor of the protest has been undergoing a profound change. The writers of the new generation are no longer content merely to record as detached observers the already commonplace phenomenon of a nation starving physically and spiritually in the midst of plenty. They are writing now from a growing awareness of the causes of the conditions against which they are in revolt. *Bury the Dead*, for example, looks forward to the triumph of individuality asserting itself dramatically in the face of an organized conspiracy of suppression.

Of our older group of writers perhaps none was more appreciative of the plight of our civilization than Edwin Markham. His farseeing indictment of human greed comes from the realization that the "man with the hoe" has been robbed of his individuality, that he has been deliberately thrust down to the level of animals, made "solid and stunned, brother to the ox." The discovery is not a new one. For centuries it has been a literary convention to refer to the masses as the "herd." They will probably remain one until Markham's "man with the hoe" belongs to an extinct species. At present he is still our contemporary, and one good place to look for him is along Tobacco Road.

Evidence of the loss of American individuality is not exclusively literary. Since "Keeping up with the Joneses" has never ceased to be our national slogan, we need not move from our doorsteps to see it in practice. Nor need we remind ourselves of the old complaints about American homes looking alike and their inhabitants thinking, talking, and acting alike when before our eyes we can see the transformation of numerous little girls into flesh and blood copies of Shirley Temple. Why look in Russia for ruthless violations of individuality? Charity begins at home. Incidentally, it is no wonder that we demand personalities of our stars instead of acting. We ourselves are so drained of personality that we must go to the movies to make up for our lack by vicarious experience.

What has happened to American individuality that none of the exposures of its precarious state has prevented its decline? That the root of all conformity is fear and that we move in herds because we are afraid to move like individuals is the theory agreed upon by most critics. But there they balk. Few are willing to go further, to admit that the fear itself has an economic basis.

People no longer pretend that America is a classless society. And obviously, when any society is divided into classes, it becomes an ideal mechanism for casting human beings into one of a set number of traditional molds or human types. The individual is nipped in the bud. As long as he lives he must either conform to the group pattern or pay the price which is social ostracism. Rather than pay the price, many a home has gone in ruin via the installment plan. The fear of losing caste is an ever-present one and is inevitable while we live in an unstable society based on the uncertain swings of economic cycles. It is also a highly competitive society which smothers individuality by dooming its members to a life of sterile imitation. To repeat the successes of their rivals they must know what is "selling" at the moment, whether it be gangster pictures, dude ranches, or novels about the south sea islands.

The conclusion is inescapable. American individuality has declined in the exact proportion as American individualism has made it possible for the few to prosper at the expense of the many. The converse is equally true. Only under some form of collectivism can individuality flourish. This is no contradiction in terms and seems paradoxical only because we have become accustomed to the confused reasoning of propagandists. At microphones all over the country politicians are now paying tribute to our non-existent individuality, exploiting at the same time the myth of equal opportunity. "The American people will never exchange their personal free-

dom, their hard-won liberties for the "guarded security of slaves" they are assuring us as eloquently as when twenty years ago they persuaded us not to accept peace without honor. We burnt children are suspicious of high-sounding phrases. We are inclined to agree with Anna Louise Strong when she says: "Economic slavery is the basis of all other inequalities, the keylog in the jam which must first be loosed that all others may rush free."

A society based on co-operation instead of competition does more than remove the economic worries which crush the individual. It frees him from the neuroses which accompany those worries and distort his personality. One such neurosis is the familiar inferiority complex, acquired not so often by a lack peculiar to an individual, as by the subordinate position endured by racial minorities and whole classes of individuals. Since the nineteenth amendment women are finding out that the vote alone cannot change their inferior status as long as they remain in economic bondage, forced to work on a lower scale of wages than men.

The virtues of this new society are positive as well as negative. The Soviet Union is actively interested in cultivating the individuality of its citizens, and the new constitution is the most recent step in this direction. The arts, sciences, and education are also becoming increasingly democratized in Russia in order that they may be turned into

effective instruments for the enrichment of the every-day life of the masses. And released from all ties to tradition and convention, the individual is given the opportunity to discover the life for which he is best adapted and in which he can be of most service to his fellow-men. The members of this society know that by definition an individual cannot exist as an entity, but only in relation to other individuals; they know, then, that the well-being of one depends on the well-being of all. In an individualistic society such sentiments are considered lofty and noble—and therefore impractical as they most assuredly are. Such a society fosters selfishness in the individual, and without taking up the romantic theory of the natural goodness of man, we can see that the selfishness of human nature has been taken for granted too long. The collectivistic society does not change human nature. It just provides the kind of environment that calls out man's so-called "noble" traits. In generations to come they may be considered only the natural ones.

Any anticipation, however, that a well-regulated Utopia will at once spring up from the practice of collectivistic principles is bound to end in disillusion. There are too many diseases left to fight, planets to explore, and most important of all, new depths of understanding to be reached regarding the relationship of human beings to each other. Here is the work for which the individual of the future is being liberated.

THAT COMMUNIST

A. I. BEZZERIDES

I HAD HEARD about the guy time and time again (and time again) and I began to wonder what he looked like and if he had a beard (the big black bushy kind all made up with marcelled bomb fuses) and if he had mad eyes and twitching hands and if he used the word Comrade indiscriminately, the way real Communists are said to use it. I want to see this guy, I said.

The United Clothing Manufacturers and the Amalgamated Sock Works and the National Pants Association were all complaining about the guy. His name was Lewitsky and to hear Bandy and Urey and Johnson talk about him, he was designing to bring about the end of the world (or better conditions for workers). He was always making trouble, shooting off his mouth and raising hi-de-ho in general and the impression they gave of him, he was a bruiser, ten feet tall with yellow teeth lapped over his lips.

So naturally I was curious and wanting to see him, I began to walk around, but no one knew where he lived. You know, I said, Lewitsky, that guy, he's a communist, capital C, been causing a lot of trouble, putting ideas into the heads of workers. Do you know where he lives?

Lewitsky? No. Better try the gas works.

I went down to the gas works. That's where most of the Communists live: the poorest section of town. It's funny how people who have nothing, who live on nothing somehow gravitate to the Communist section. You don't know how hard the Government is trying to better conditions of these slums, but there is no competing with Moscow Gold. That guy Stalin sure knows where the seeds of unrest grow and he don't want the Government to destroy his fertile fields.

So I went down and walked around, trying to find Lewit-

sky. I asked people on the streets if they knew him. One guy I asked just looked at me.

Who? he said.

Lewitsky, I said, you know, the Communist.

Which one? he said.

The one that is pulling down the clothing manufacturers.

Oh, that guy, No, I don't know where he lives.

I walked around some more until I came to a grocery store. Maybe he knows, I thought, and I walked in. The proprietor, a fat fellow (after all, he did have a stock of canned goods on the shelves) came out.

Do you know this man Lewitsky, the worker? I said.

He looked like he would like to answer, but he was afraid. I doubled up my fist and stuck it up, Communist style, one brother to another. I winked. Get it? I said.

Get what? he said.



I pulled my fist down. Nothing, I said. Just tell me where Lewitsky lives and we'll call it square. I'm a brother of his, a long lost brother.

Oh, he said, looking at me close.

So you know him? I said.

Oi, am I knowing him? he said. He is owing me the grocery bills for a long time. Always broke, never can pay. Wait a minute, I put on my coat and take you to him.

That's all right, I said, never mind the coat. Just come the way you are.

We walked down the street, turned up an alley, up another alley, went through a barn and walked up a flight of stairs. The fat man knocked on a door. Joseph, he said, your long lost brother is here.

Who? said a mild voice.

Your brother, long lost, he is here. I brought him.

Oh.

The door opened.

I smiled at the face. Will you take me to Signor Lewitsky? I said, figuring the signor would get him, but he got me instead.

I am Lewitsky, he said.

I am John Smith, I said, just call me captain. Can I come in?

He stepped aside and we went in. There were seven kids in the room and one wife and one bed with a stove and a table and a couple of chairs thrown in. Everything was clean and on the wall there was a picture of Roosevelt.

Are you a Communist? I said.

What's that? he said.

Don't you know what a Communist is? I said. That's what they're calling you behind your back.

His wife smiled. That's nothing, she said.

Aren't you a Russian? I said.

Hell no, he said. I come from good old American stock.

Why, my parents came over on the Thomaso di Savoya thirty years ago. Russian! Why, I'm a blue blood, belong to the order of the cinched up belt and the rag garter, one of the four billion. America for the Americans, that's what I say.

But everybody says you are rooting for the Soviets, I said.

Nuts, he said. All I asked for was a little raise so I could get another bed.

Another bed?

Yes, he said. Look at this one. Take a good look. We sleep on it and the kids are growing up and it's getting tough. The room I don't mind, the place I don't mind, but the bed. His jaw took on a determined thrust. We got to have another bed.

But Hearst says that you are trying to Unionize the plants, I said.

Who is Hearst? he said, a skunk, only a skunk is polite: it smells and lets you know. Can I help it if all the other workers want beds too? Make your own bed and lie in it, they say, and some of us haven't even got one.

Then you aren't interested in the Revolution? I said.

How do you spell it? he said.

I spelled it for him.

No, he said, I'm not interested in revolutions. All I want is a bed, and after the bed, a nice house to put it in, and a new table, and then my wife wants a dress. I sew dresses all day and she aint even got one to wear.

What does she want a dress for? I said. She aint going no place.

But Jeez, he said, she can't walk around in a blanket.

So this was the guy Lewitsky who was supposed to be a Communist? He didn't even have a beard, and by gosh, he looked a little like Andrew Mellon, yes sir.

Democracy is safe, I said.

How do you spell it? he said.

STAY HOME AND STARVE

JACK LE FLORA

WEDNESDAY noon when I showed up at the U. S. E. D. for work, there was a lot of commotion over a small slip of paper tacked on the bulletin board. It read: "At 4 p. m. today this job will be officially closed and all workers will be dismissed." With no other reason why it was being closed. There had been no other warning. Men were standing around cussing, and plainly wondering how they were going to feed their wives and kids on the short pay check that they had received the day before. The average pay check was around \$22.00 for an eighteen day period. Others said that when they had been shanghaied off the WPA they had been told that this was going to be a two year job.

You wonder what I mean by saying "shanghaied?" Well, the U. S. E. D. has revived the old practice of shanghaing workingmen. They have made the process up-to-date with fascists' methods, and here's how it's done.

The employment man for the U. S. E. D. goes over to a large WPA project and consults with the head man in charge of the project. Then he goes down the line with a good sales talk like this: "Boys, we want a few of the best workers to go to a better job. \$65.00 a month! Two years work! And it may be permanent." "Where? Compton Creek, U. S. E. D.

You know, boys, \$65.00 is better than \$55.00, besides it will be permanent, no shut downs every two or three months. What? no volunteers? Nobody wants these jobs? You fellows are just a bunch of lazy relief bums who won't work when you're offered better jobs. We'll see about this refusal to work!"

The employment man comes back re-enforced with the time keeper: "You, there. Come here! What's your name? Come on, speak up! Listen, I'm going down this project picking out men I want and any man that don't take this U. S. E. D. job will be fired off this project and cut off relief forever."

This is present day relief shanghaing.

Most of the men around the time shack were men that had been forced off other jobs already and had been here less than a month. Moreover they had lost half a month in the transfer to this job and the differences in pay had worked great hardships on them financially. Many had borrowed to exist till the next pay day, so that they had very little money left from yesterday's pay check. They had no choice but to be shanghaied and like it.

Well, we all went to work laying rocks on the sides of the flood control. These rocks are quarried in the Santa Monica

hills in the most inefficient and dangerous method under the guidance of supposedly competent army engineers, who show their army training by their utter disregard for the safety of human life, their negligence in the usage of dynamite and explosives. Scores of men have been killed in these quarries and nothing said or done about it.

The rock is then loaded by hand into steam shovels, put on to trucks and sent miles away. The rock is dumped at the top of the levee and thrown down the side by men. Sometimes the rock is moved two or three times. These men are paid \$55.00. The \$65.00 men come in a crew and lay these rocks. This rock is being laid like paving stones as smooth on top as possible. Each man lays about two or three square yards a day which when the cost is totaled up amounts to about \$14.00 a square yard. Concrete, which is superior, can be layed for one tenth the cost.

The general superintendent, who called for a "speed-up" everytime he came around, told our foreman that people in California on relief were expecting too much from the government: "Back in Arkansas where he came from," people went out and gathered greens and fruits and nuts, used coal oil lights, and generally lived in primitive style, so they didn't expect much from relief. But in California, here it was disgraceful how relief clients wanted the government to pay their electric light bill, gas bill, live in good houses and own a car. It was disgraceful, the extravagance of them. They were too lazy to get out and get the fruit that was all going to waste because nobody would come and pick it.

Around four o'clock the foreman said: "All you men work till six then go get your dismissal slips."

Dismissal? From our new job, that was to last maybe for

two years? Anyhow the written orders officially signed by head officials in charge of the U. S. E. D. stated that at four o'clock the job was to be closed. Some of the men walked off at 4 p. m. and went to the timekeeper to turn in their badges but the timekeeper refused to take them until six o'clock. After enough men had congregated around the time shack, he decided he would take the name and the badges (badges being charged up to the men at 50 cents a piece.) of the men around the shack. After taking your badge and name he gave you a printed slip stating that you were fired off the U. S. E. D. and new WPA work orders would be sent you (by mail). As a final slap was the request that you were not to report to the U. S. E. D. or WPA offices, but remain at home. To starve? perhaps!

Yes, exactly that, and here is the printed notice which told us that the job was over. What it really told us was that we could go home and starve!

Wednesday August 12, 1936

This Is A Notification That You Are Separated From The U. S. E. D.

WPA will mail a work assignment for a local project to you within the next few days. You are advised to remain at home to receive this order.

Please do not report to any U. S. E. D. or WPA office to ask about a work order for at least one week. Such a visit by you will cause extra work and slow up your reassignment.

If you have a new address send a post card to Employment Division, 1206 Santee Street, Los Angeles, giving your name, case number and correct address.

U. S. E. D.

WPA Employment Division

C R E D O

L. E. CLAYPOOL

AS ONE who stands centrally upon that bridge that serves as a liaison between adolescence and senility I believe my perspective is a fair one.

From that perspective I have achieved certain opinions which I believe the future will change, if at all, from physiological and possibly psychological reasons rather than from objective or factual causes.

In the grip of that mood or condition or position I return after some months absence from your hospitable pages to perform what is usually regarded as a reprehensible act: I propose to give advice to the people on both sides of the bridge.

It is customary to give advice to the young only. They need it perhaps less than the aged. On the whole they have, I believe, conducted themselves better under existing conditions. Assuming—and I do assume—there is need for revolt, the young have engaged in that revolt as an intelligent reaction to conditions. The old, who have been giving all the advice in the past, have wobbled, wavered and finally flopped.

I do not believe that things are either so exact or so inexact in this world as we have been taught. For example I think the law of gravitation, the behavior of light and the motion of the planets are not closed subjects. The laws we have deduced concerning them will be amended in the future.

Among the semi-exact sciences, including those of economics and social psychology, I think we are nearer to

accuracy than some will admit. Because Roger Babson and other capitalist illuminati haven't recognized this fact—or admitted it—is not sufficient reason for us any longer to doubt it. Since Marx we have better avenues of approach.

Having them there is no excuse, save two, for any one past forty not knowing about them. The first excuse is so only by courtesy. Its other name is indolence. The second excuse is that the masters of America haven't let the facts be known.

If any literate adult will read Lincoln Steffens' "Autobiography" and then go on to Lewis Corey's "Crisis of the Middle Class" and then to Strachey's "Coming Struggle for Power" and then replenish his reservoir with "Partners in Plunder" by Matthews and Shallcross, continuing with "Fascism and Social Revolution" by Dutt, following with "The Nature of the Capitalist Crisis" he will be able, then, to approach the source of wisdom and make such later forays into collateral reading as he elects to make. By source I mean, naturally, "Das Kapital."

It isn't easy. And I understand the frame of mind of the man of late middle age whose life, speaking economically, has gone to pot. He is distressed beyond compare. He is sour and fit material for exploitation by fascists. The man who offers the best nostrum gets him. He is usually incapable of taking the long view: he is concerned with what can be done not for the race and the future, but for himself right now.

It is saddening to see men with A. B.'s and even Ph.D.'s

after their names tinkering with the cults, grasping at panaceas, chasing Coughlins, Townsends, Longs, when there is genuine succor near at hand.

What is that succor?

For those who are hopeless and helpless in the evening of life there are two kinds or rather two departments of one kind. First, there is the immediate prospect of social security by means of adequate old age pensions—but not \$200 a month—and relief for the victims of industrial accidents and misuse, as well as anti-child-labor laws and aid for mothers before, during, and just after child-bearing.

There is the latter relief that comes from a fundamental readjustment of human society—a readjustment that will socialize it, make it classless and graftless and povertyless and hence, warless.

Toward both objectives the aged can work effectively and in so doing restore to their lives the joy that capitalist abuse and nonchalance took from them, for the zest of striving for an ideal is a very old and very simple ideal that Time has strengthened.

Thus, my advice to the aged is to forsake the folly of chasing fantasies and settle down to the scientific and wholesome and vivifying task of helping build a new society, whilom getting back some of their earnings that went as swag to a regime of racketeering.

To the young I should say: Take it a little more seriously. Be intellectual radicals rather than just emotional radicals. Left wing radicalism—the extreme sort that is merely idealistic and impracticable—is a form of infantilism. The thud of its failure—and failure is inevitable—usually resounds to a tune played by fascism, or at best a form of cynicism that is defeatism at its worst.

Have your fling. Be radicals. Wear your hair long, if you wish, shun neckties, make hot and ringing speeches, even from soapboxes, but—and please remember this—don't linger too long with this way of life for it dissipates energy and accomplishes little. The purpose of radicalism today is not exhibitionism or any other form of self-expression, except as that may come as a later by-product of a rational socialist culture.

Society is in a state of transition from finance-capitalism to socialism. It is in the ultra-imperialistic stage and whether it must go through fascism and other war depends as much upon how well the youth of the world understands what is going on and how well it conducts itself in the light of that knowledge as it does upon anything else I know of.

Your job, youngsters, is to know the score, to work humbly and effectively and to forget individuals and think of principles in what is, more than anything else, a class struggle. If you do not grasp the fundamental point of the whole business, namely that it IS a class struggle, you have erred somewhere in your reading and in your observations and reasoning.

The fact that it is a class struggle that faces you and that the crisis is nearer to you than it has been to any preceding generation, sort of checks the answer right smack up to you.

Organization, education, sacrifice, loyalty and orthodoxy—these are the watchwords. Reformists, who are the advance agents of fascism, will try to fool you. Trotskyites, disgruntled and failing to realize the true objective of revolution, will seek to detour you into counter-revolutionary paths. Be aware of them, but do not be beguiled by them. Had Trotsky had his way there would not be today a single socialist commonwealth on the face of the earth—merely suppressed

fires of revolution—and victory would have been delayed a generation if not indefinitely.

What happened in China bears me out. I was there and saw its inception. If a war does not break out beforehand I shall go to Europe soon to see how it works there. We all know so well what is happening here. But those of us who understand know how to wait.

TOMORROW'S WAR

WINTHROP RUTLEGE

THE Theatre Union of San Francisco has added to its well-won distinction by its presentation, over the last two weekends, of Irwin Shaw's "Bury The Dead," in the Oakland City Club theatre. The group, which is rapidly approaching professional ease of portrayal and which has the advantage over the ordinary professional group of a passionate devotion to the ideas it pretends on the stage, offered a production that gripped its audience and won spontaneous applause.

Shaw's play is a splendid diatribe against war. It is full of angry poetry, and of shocking realism which is excitingly paradoxical to the fantastic theme which it finally engulfs. Bitterly mocking the ineffectual Pirandello, Shaw has with the driving force of an idea presented six characters in search of an answer to a burning question. The six are war victims who stand up most disconcertingly (to the generals) and refuse to let dirt be shoveled into their faces. They are still young, they declare, and too much unfinished business was overlooked when their lives were fed into the maw of Mars. The subterranean abode of the horizontal is vastly overpopulated and they refuse to lie down and be buried.

This presents a situation from which Shaw has distilled the last drop of grim and biting comedy. The captain, then the generals, plead with the men to lie down and be buried. They refuse. Press, radio and pulpit, that crawling trinity of the vulture-ethic, then rush into the breach. Still the six corpses remain doggedly vertical. Then the pestilential and dying social order plays its trump card—sex. The women of the dead men, wives, mothers, sisters, sweethearts, are sent to the scene to plead with them to assume the horizontal decorum of the dead.

The interviews between the dead men and their women-folk bring out their reasons for defying the traditional law of robber warfare: that the dead must be still and silent. The young farmer says he has not yet smelled the perfume of enough black moist loam turning away from the plow steel. The mechanic has not been able to get his wife out of their cheap flat into a place with some semblance of a cheerful home. Another corpse wants to walk the earth because he is not yet weary of seeing long-legged girls striding its surface, and of watching the wind curve their dresses about their strong breasts and thighs. And so on, until the last, Private Driscoll, who wants to go on living because he has heaven in his two fists and wants to plant it on earth for all toiling men and women to enjoy.

A magnificent polemic, made for the theatre and done to the hilt by the Theatre Union players. In the end the six men stride out of their graves, blandly ignore the machine-gun fire turned upon them by the generals, and stride forth to give the world the startling truths and visions which are to make the society of tomorrow.

It is difficult to pick outstanding players in so uniformly

worthy a production. But if one must, then Laura Jane Heller, as the wife of Corpse Webster, Peter Svane as Corpse Schelling and Florence Cohen, as the beloved of another of the dead men, stand out for their sincerity, understanding and dramatic force. Close on the heels of these were Irving Predde, who gave a biting caricature of a Hearst city editor; James Eagan, with an intelligent and well-paced performance as the sergeant in charge of the burial squad, Julia Nieto, with a sincere and moving portrayal of the woman of one of the dead men and Ileana Schuchett, who shone in a bit-part as the lady who boasted she could "lay 'em." Space forbids proper recognition of the work of such tried and proven Theatre Union troupers as Joel Coffield, Sam Gisnet, Louis Gonick, Peter Foisey and the others who helped make the production of "Bury The Dead" a memorable event.

There was a prologue and a mass-chant epilogue written by a member of the group who preferred to remain anonymous. He needn't have done this. The prologue, it is true, was much too long and the epilogue a little too long. The latter, however, was a fine piece of theatrical poetry as encountered outside the Greek drama, which it obviously took for its model. I hear that it was removed after the first performance. This is great shame, for besides being a demonstration that the Theatre Union can compose notable works within its own ranks, it was definitely a brilliant and worthy contribution to the lore of the socially conscious theatre of today.

The University of California Little Theater, I am informed, also presented "Bury The Dead" with a student cast on the night of the opening of the Theatre Union production in Oakland. Edwin Duerr's production, my information says, was finished and moving. I hope this information is correct. The play, presented to an audience of college students and the people who attend college productions, should be seen at its best. They are the ones who most need to see it—and "get" what it has to say.

ALL GENERALS SHOULD DIE AT DAWN

ERNEST ALBEE

● BOOKS

UNSPEAKABLE STUPIDITY, infamous brutality, puerile deceitfulness, gutless braggadocio, strutting vainglory: these terms, to whomever has read Liddell Hart's history of the world war,* must be mild descriptions indeed of the "military" mind and character.

Suspend judgment if you choose, but read then "The War In Outline" and meet the military mind. Meet General Joffre, and watch him slaughter a hundred thousand poilus in a campaign which would have signified nothing even if it had been victorious. Watch General Douglas Haig nurse a little stratagem—the Passchendaele Offensive—for one year past the time when it might conceivably have been an effective plan of action, then see him lie and sulk and bluster until, against the advice of all sane minds on the Western Front, he can begin the campaign. Its result? 400,000 men ripped and gassed and smeared into the mud of Flanders . . . and Haig "was in a practical sense no nearer . . . his goal than when he started."

*THE WAR IN OUTLINE, by Liddell Hart. (Random House) \$2.

And if by this time you still have reservations, and think the Generals untypical, I ask you only to go on further in the book. Meet Foch, Nivelle, Cadorna (who dealt in millions of dead rather than hundred-thousands); perhaps even our own General Pershing will seem worthy of his colleagues. I for one cannot see how even a military mind, reading the Outline, could fail to cringe appalled before the record, before this chamber of horrors. Surely some graduates of our war academies have honesty, and sanity, and honor? Some must be at least competent at their own craft, even though Liddell Hart tells us that characteristically they are ignorant of all else? Yet there is no evidence for these nor in truth any other saving graces among the Generals of the world war.

The Outline is really a history of Generals, and no doubt that is why the book has the effect of a deliberate exposé. Being an outline it must treat soldiers as a species only—as armies, divisions, or battalions—or as herds which are driven to and fro at the will of the herdsmen, who are Generals. A million men fight and die and are nameless and soulless to the history; but that is just why the General, who has a name, a mind and a character which exhibit themselves in every action, takes the spotlight in such a book as Hart's. Haig and Foch and Nivelle loved the spotlight in the war years: now they are focussed by the beam of moving history whether they like it or not, and they are apt not to. If we once saw them as they saw themselves—as heroic figures, as great patriots and wily warriors—we see them very differently now, and perhaps even they see something of what history has done to them. What has happened is not the fault of Liddell Hart, who presents his facts as objectively as a man may, and often to avoid censure for bias quotes the British Official History. It is not the fault even of the reviewer, who in beginning urged you to suspend judgment until you had read the Outline.

No, the facts are there which prove all we have said of "the military mind"; the facts are sole criterion of our judgment. When Captain Hart says of the military mind that "there is only one thing harder than getting a new idea into it, and that is getting an old idea out," one has only to learn for himself how this mind, and the character that goes with it, defined themselves in blood twenty years ago: then he can understand what Hart and history have written.

AND WHEN IT DOES HAPPEN HERE

FIRES UNDERGROUND, by Heinz Liepmann. (Lippincott)
\$2.00

THE HISTORY of most political movements is illuminated by the character of their opposition, but nowhere is this more strikingly illustrated than in the history of German fascism. The story of those who opposed the Nazi movement, how their opposition was organized and led, is one of the great chapters in modern history. Accounts of the Nazi prisons and concentration camps in all their blind brutality are, horribly enough, no longer new, but the story of the fighters for human freedom and decency who did not go to prison—at least not for a while—who lived "underground" and who organized and led the workers' opposition from day to day, this story we have for the first time, outside the special radical journals, in this book.

There is something extraordinarily moving in that opposition. It is not only that the fight had to be carried on secretly, in the face of tremendous odds; fights have been carried on that way before, and not always for worthy causes. What makes this one so important is the sense of solidarity of all the working class, the emotional importance of letting all the friends of civilization know that the workers' movement still lived. It is amazing, in a world of cynicism and disillusionment, how that purpose can get hold of men and women who

have had no "cause," who have believed in nothing.

Liepmann here tells a story, not, he insists, autobiographical, of a man caught up in that stirring struggle. The narrator's part is little more than simply to be the narrator, to tell of Otto, the organizer and of how his confused and tragic wife betrayed him; of Nickel, the son of a "good" family, a successful distributor of illegal literature; of "The Duke," hoodlum and dope peddler, who has learned that "there must be those who beat and those who are beaten," and who gets to fight on the side of the beaten as an undercover man in a Storm Troop.

The social demonstrations and devices of working class defiance are not played up in and for themselves, but the importance of those demonstrations in order that baffled and isolated workers might know that their Party still lived is made more moving here, perhaps, than any other account has ever done. The description of the illegal meeting in the motion picture theatre on May Day is as stirring as any battle scene ever painted.

"Outside S. A. men were marching, their holsters at the ready. In the cells of the Secret Police ten thousand men lay groaning.

Hitler was speaking to an audience of two million in the Tempelhof grounds.

'Comrades!' said the man in the picture-house in the Steindamn.

... The American pushed past me ... I asked if he was going back to his office. He said, 'No.'

One wonders what he thought about when he got home.

EDWARD LIVINGSTON

OUR AMERICAN SLAVES

REVOLT AMONG THE SHARE-CROPPERS, by Howard Kester. (New York: Covici Friede) 50¢

THIS is the little book which is responsible in great part for the widespread publicity given to the Southern sharecroppers in recent weeks in the newspapers, on the screen, and at Washington. Howard Kester is not a writer but the Secretary of the Committee on Economic and Racial Justice. His pages are crammed with first-hand observation. "A few rickety chairs, a table, a bed or two, a few ragged quilts, what is left of a dresser or wash-stand, some broken boxes, a few broken dishes, a pig or a dog and once in a great while a few scrawny chickens usually constitute the sole possessions of a sharecropper." "When a New England woman who had just purchased a plantation began to furnish her tenants with out-houses, she raised a flood of protests and disapproval from her planter neighbors. 'You,' they said, 'are making our tenants dissatisfied. If you build out-houses, we will have to build them too. After all, Miss, all that a sharecropper needs is a cotton patch and a corn cob.'" "There is only one way," writes a Georgia planter, 'for a planter or farmer to make money with the use of hired labor, and that is to have a grab or commissary and keep books—always careful that no laborer exceeds his account, and making sure that at the end of the year he has gotten it all, and his labor has just lived, as one would say.'" "The Children's Bureau found that nearly seventy per cent of the children of white farmers in North Carolina worked in the cotton fields ... In Texas seventy-five per cent were found to be employed in the cotton fields between six and sixteen years of age. Nearly thirty-five per cent or more than one third of these children were under ten years of age." Every fact, every figure Kester brings forward is thoroughly documented. The sum total is an array of evidence against which not a planter or politician has dared to raise a verbal protest.

Concluding with a plan to do away with the abominable situation, the author suggests the establishment of a National

Land Authority with power to purchase land and sell it to the tenants, the removal of the sharecroppers from marginal land ruined by merciless planting, and the inauguration of large co-operative plantations wherever they are practical. Here, again, he has consulted the sharecroppers themselves. And his suggestions are bearing fruit. The next Congress will consider a bill drawn by Senator Bankhead of Alabama and Representative Marvin Jones of Texas, committing the Government to the purchase of large tracts of land for re-sale. At the present time a certain amount of resettlement on model farms is going on. Only one fly remains in the ointment, and Mr. Kester puts his finger on it. "Men do not freely relinquish power and control over the lives of other men," he remarks. "Particularly is this true in large sections of the South where landlords and planters completely dominate the lives of the people."

The condition of the tenant farmer is hideous, the necessity of doing away with it is obvious, the means of improvement can be simple and direct—but what is any of that, if the landlords are to resist? Resist they will. As it is, they have dozens of murders to their credit. "Whatever rights sharecroppers and tenant farmers achieve they will win by their own efforts. They will enter the Good Life when they are in a position to wrest it from the greedy hands which now withhold it from them." On this note Kester closes.

"Revolt Among the Sharecroppers" will make an excellent Christmas present for your Liberal friends, if you specify that they read it after dinner.

GEORGE SUMNER ALBEE

CRIME DOSSIER

MURDER OFF MIAMI, by Dennis Wheatley. (Hutchison and Company, England)

THIS IS THE most entertaining fare offered to detective story addicts in a long time. It is a stunt, pure and simple, but the novelty of it will intrigue those readers who always want to associate themselves with the detective hero. This can hardly be called a "book"; it is more of a dossier, or file, of the crime. A murder has been committed on a private yacht while cruising off Miami. Detective Kettering of the Florida police is assigned to the case. He makes frequent reports of his progress, takes detailed statements from the witnesses and various suspects and send them in to headquarters along with photographs and bits of evidence, such as hair, match stubs, etc. These reports, statements, etc, are all tied together into a file, or dossier, as they call it in England. Well, that's what this "book" consists of—the dossier of the case. It is done up in regular police fashion, the reports all appear to be typewritten and there are telegrams and postcards included.

Morrow and Co. are planning to bring out an American edition of this "file."

Aside from the novelty of the thing, the plot is pathetically trite. In fact is so trite that it may fool a lot of those fans who believe they know all the formulas of the detective story writer. I frankly admit I was fooled—I just didn't dream anyone would revive that old one again. Still, I had a lot of fun with the dossier and it is something fresh in the method of presentation.

LESLIE T. WHITE

CLASSIFIED ADS

RATES for these effective classifieds as follows: 40¢ per line; 3 lines for \$1.00; 35¢ for each additional line. 6 insertions: 30¢ per line; 4 lines for \$1.00. Copy deadline is Tuesday for the issue of the following Monday.

FOR SALE: Special Jeffers number of "The Carmelite," December 28, 1928. Selling now for ten dollars. Only a few copies left, signed by Robinson Jeffers. Apply Box HH "Pacific Weekly."

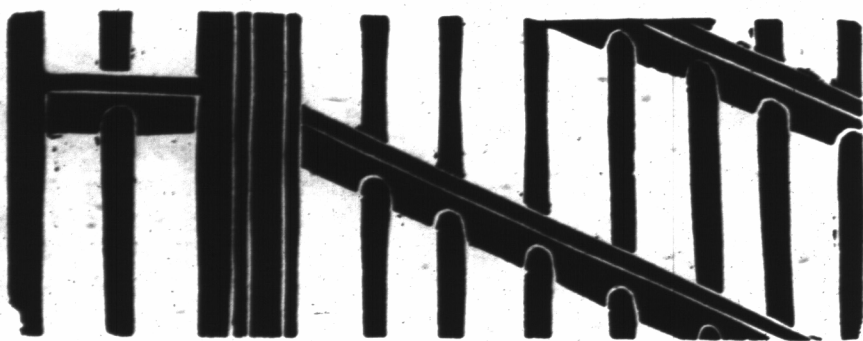
TO OUR READERS

WARNINGS and rumblings have been heard by you . . . Now we have what may be news. This will be the last issue of **Pacific Weekly** unless a miracle happens between this week and next. It was hoped to make **Pacific Weekly** a voice for the Western Writers' Congress; to publish pre-Congress papers and articles, have pre-convention discussions and round tables foreshadowing those that will take place in mid-November in San Francisco. This can only happen if \$400 is collected before the end of this month. If every subscriber will, when he receives this issue, put \$1.00 in an envelope and send to **Pacific Weekly** the magazine will be assured for several months. If those who can will send five or ten dollars, this anti-fascist journal can continue, putting courage into the hearts of liberals and bringing dismay to the camp of the fascist-minded . . . Already the conservative press of America is obliged to call the oppressors and the suppressors of our liberties fascist . . . Intellectual clarity is being achieved which can only lead to united front progress . . . the press is becoming more than ever important. A voice for the middle-class, the intellectuals, the workers and the professionals, a voice such as **Pacific Weekly** has been, is a weapon for freedom, a stone in the dyke against reaction. Please send your dollar and help keep this voice being heard! If the magazine does not go on your dollar will be returned.

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THEY TELL ME . . .

THE WESTERN WRITERS' CONGRESS is rapidly taking shape, with many dinners and committee meetings being held in Los Angeles and San Francisco, in San Diego and Hollywood. Several hundred writers have expressed their enthusiastic willingness to participate and consider problems of the writer both as an individual creator and as a social being. It is expected that among the visiting lecturers this Fall some will attend and speak; among these possibilities are Thomas Mann, Andre Malraux, John Gunther, T. S. Eliot, Erskine Caldwell . . . A large number of poets are participating and it is expected that the Poets' Session will be one of the most interesting: the West provides the greatest number of America's poets. There will be one special pre-Congress issue of **Pacific Weekly** which will print the entire program and some papers, poems and discussions.

One of the many suggestions pouring in on the Congress committee is that an annual prize of \$1000 be set up, to be awarded for the best piece of social realism, or journalism that is literature.

Among those invited to read papers are John Steinbeck, Upton Sinclair, Martin Flavin, Nathanael West, Edwin Justus Mayer, Sara Bard Field, Myron Brinig, Charles Erskine Scott Wood, James R. Caldwell, John D. Barry, Marie de L. Welch, Irving Stone, Professor T. K. Whipple, several newspapermen and columnists as well as the visiting writers.

There is also a possibility that there will be an auction of manuscripts of well known writers, to help cover the cost of the Congress. All enquiries should be addressed to: Room 214, 604 Montgomery Street, San Francisco.

JOHN STEINBECK has shown that he can do it again. He did it in some novels; gave a picture of the lives of simple people that was true to the bone. Now there is running in the San Francisco News a series on the California migratory workers called "The Harvest Gypsies," which in unadorned prose tells what manner of people these are, how they live, what happens to their dignity and their spirit in the conditions under which they exist. Steinbeck has just met these people face to face, and he writes with a pen sharp as a copper etching (as Ernest Hemingway did when he saw the veterans unnecessarily drowned in the Florida hurricane).

If California agriculturists, growers, shippers, bankers, can still read and understand what they read, they might read Steinbeck's series and perhaps wonder. Here is one sentence, describing the typical migrant family:

"Dignity is all gone, and spirit has turned to sullen anger before it dies." Steinbeck writes of the American "dust-bowl whites" who have come to California from their ruined farms—not the foreign races who heretofore made up the majority of nomad harvesters. His articles show once more how journalism and literature can be one.

"AN AMERICAN TESTAMENT," Joseph Freeman's narrative of rebels and romantics in the last two decades in America is off the press. For years Freeman had this book in mind, long before other newspaper men's histories appeared, but active work kept him from finishing it. The first draft was about twice as long as the present book which is 668 pages. Freeman covers the changes in the liberal intellectual life in these years, bringing in such figures as Upton Sinclair, Floyd Dell, Charles A. Beard, Dos Passos, Walter Duranty, and many Soviet leaders including the author Boris Pilnyak and the film director Sergei Eisenstein. The book will be released October 19th and is eagerly awaited by all interested in America's intellectual life.

ALBERT RHYS WILLIAMS has sent the bulk of his manuscript off to his publishers, Harcourt, Brace and Co. It is at present about 300,000 words, and its title will be "Twenty Years of the Soviets." Williams has been very busy bringing his facts up-to-date and he still hopes to have a section on the new constitution when this shall have been adopted next month.

WHAT NOTS: The Mid-West Writers Conference have issued the first number of their magazine "Mid-West" . . . Leslie T. White spoke on his autobiography "Me, Detective" at Paul Elder's gallery last week before a fascinated audience . . . Joris Ivens is making a Negro film and also a film of Paul de Kruif's "Why Keep Them Alive" . . . Commonwealth College of Mena, Ark., is asking a number of writers to join their board and help them with advice; among these are Grace Lumpkin, Heywood Broun, Hillel Bernstein, Scott Nearing, Mary van Kleeck . . . A new book of D. H. Lawrence's posthumous papers will be published shortly by Viking Press under the title "Phoenix." It contains an unfinished unpublished autobiographical sketch, and the book is 836 pages.

ELLA WINTER