

STUDENT REVIEW

FEBRUARY, 1934

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Spokesmen for Young America, the Student League for
Industrial Democracy and the National Student League*

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A CUBAN DIARY

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Comment

THE presentation of the differing views of Lash, Rodman and Starobin, in the articles about the Student in Politics Conference, affords our readers an opportunity to evaluate the validity of the opinions of their respective organizations. To those of us who participated in that conference it became clear that the theoretical and tactical approach of the National Student League was fundamentally in accord with the situation in which the American college student finds himself today.

UPPERMOST in the minds of the N. S. L. delegates were the issues which we had formulated as the basis of our plan of action for the coming year. Briefly, these centered about the struggle against war and fascism, against educational retrenchment, and for full social and educational equality for Negro students. These slogans had not been plucked from the thin air. Nor was it our object to center our attack on "certain abuses of the capitalist system" while "we ignore the root of the evil." For the students who are forced to leave school because of retrenchment and high educational costs; for the Ohio State, California and City College students who have been expelled for opposing R.O.T.C.; for the Negro students in the city of Washington itself who are Jim-Crowed at every step they take, the fight for immediate demands is not an academic one. To refuse to lead such struggles because prejudices would be aroused is tantamount to perpetuating the system which produces those evils. To tell the students whose problems require immediate solution that they must wait for a new social order (as if the new social order is not the result of the cumulative effect of the everyday struggle for immediate demands) is to refuse to recognize a critical situation.

OF all the organizations which participated in the Student in Politics Conference, the N.S.L. alone came with the idea of welding a unity of action on the basis of those demands which are common to the great bulk of the

student body and which necessitate immediate and unequivocal action. Although its delegates constituted a small minority in the conference, our approach to student problems—and the fact that we had not committed ourselves, as had the representatives of every one of the other organizations, to the policy of conducting a conference in order to listen to speeches and to call a new conference a year later—enabled us to secure the adoption of a program incorporating our original suggestions. But even the agreement of the executive of the conference, belated as it was, to the considerably emasculated program adopted, was never intended as a basis for action. This was shown at a recent meeting of the Continuations Committee, at which the N.S.L. alone voted for a proposal pledging the committee to carry out the program adopted in Washington.

THE events of the conference contradict those who would say that the L.I.D. and the N.S.L. had banded banded together against the rest of the conference. When it had become apparent that those who had arranged the conference did not desire a conference that would decide upon anything, and that discussion from the floor would not be permitted, the L.I.D. and the N.S.L. had banded together in order to secure some measures of democratic procedure and to fight for the adoption of the minimum program upon which we had agreed. It, however, was Joseph Lash himself, when he was chairman of the Sunday session, who mumbled something about "not knowing yet" when asked whether there would be any discussion before the program was adopted. In executive the L.I.D. voted against suggestions to which it had been pledged.

WHY the insistence of the N.S.L. on support of the American League Against War and Fascism? Both the L.I.D. and the N.S.L. had agreed to support the League because we recognized the need for allying the students assembled with the workers and farmers in this fight against war. Support of the American League would at least give a minimum guarantee that a mechanism for executing the program would be afforded.

IT is with more confidence than ever before that the National Student League reiterates its appeal to the members of the L.I.D. to facilitate the amalgamation of both organizations. Having "weighed all considerations in favor of complete unity," Mr. Lash tells us that the L.I.D. is opposed to such a step because the N.S.L. is a Communist student organization and the L.I.D. is Socialist. Irrefutable proof that the N.S.L. is a Communist organization is offered in the praise by Robert Minor of the program of the N.S.L. Mr. Lash and other prominent L.I.D. members have expressed their approval of the existing N.S.L. program. Does that make the N.S.L. a Socialist organization? It is precisely because the problems facing the students and the world at large are constantly becoming more acute, that the necessity arises for one organization and one movement in a common struggle along militant lines. Does the stick of space the N.S.L. gets in the *Daily Worker* (much more is secured in the *Tribune*, *Post* and *Times*) and the stick the L.I.D. gets in the *New Leader* stand in the way of the creation of one student organization which will combat fascism and imperialist war? Sen-

timent for amalgamation is not lacking among the members of the L.I.D. All students will be able to judge who stands in the way of one powerful revolutionary student movement.

A CERTAIN notorious Spinozist and college president has recently gone to the ancient Hindus for his philanthropic affiliations. Dr. Robinson of City College fame, in an address to the members of the Biology Club of his school, advised them not to pursue the study of medicine since the field is overcrowded and they lack the innate refinement necessary to the physician. Dr. Robinson has said and done many foolish things of which even a college president should be ashamed, but this, like every other of his acts, transcends the mere asinine and enters into the realm of the ridiculous. Robinson's statement is a hint to his students to keep their places and not to attempt to scale the intra-class barriers imposed by social standing and wealth. The physician apparently should come from a "good" family and his inbred culture should be of the sort sanctified by tradition and the dollar sign. All this has a faint smack of the Indian caste-system and a decided odor of Robinson's class affiliations and loyalties. At present he keeps on his desk as the pillars of his faith the Bible, Spinoza and his latest manifesto entitled *The Outside Agitators*. If Robinson professes a leaning toward the ancient Indian philosophies we would much rather that he turn mystic or Brahmin than that he continue his exercises in the higher mathematics of mass expulsion.

Howard Must Answer!

WHEN the National Student League was meeting at Howard University, another student group, the National Student Federation of America was at the swanky Mayflower Hotel. Even the conservative press in Washington commented on the marked difference.

Two Howard delegates invited to the N.S.F.A. were asked to leave an informal dance given by the Federation. They were refused tickets to a Federation luncheon. It will be replied that the Federation did admit the Negro students to their formal dance. True—but what were the circumstances? Only after the leaders of the N.S.F.A. had learned that the N.S.L. was planning a protest demonstration before the hotel; only after the Executive Committee of the Federation had learned that the Howard delegates were militant and were determined to force the point to an issue. And only after the question had been raised from the floor and a strong bloc of N.S.F.A. members who are members of the National Student League or sympathetic to its purposes showed that they were prepared to force the convention to take a definite stand. The point is that when sufficient pressure against Negro discrimination is raised in the N.S.F.A., the Federation will capitulate. After all, there are northern dele-

gates who might take unkindly to discrimination. But there are southern delegates too. The Federation will give way not because it so desires, but because good policy dictates that discrimination must be kept as guarded as possible. Mass protests before hotels are effective cures for secret discriminations.

We learn that this is not the first time the National Student Federation has sunken to jim-crow policies. Last year they made it impossible for any Negro delegates to attend their conference, held in Louisiana. Below is a transcript of correspondence received by Edward A. Rodriguez, a Morehouse College student, who was elected to represent Morehouse College at the conference:

"Dear Sir:

I received your letter this morning stating your intentions of attending the 8th annual convention of the National Student Federation of America. I am extremely sorry that all of the hotels in New Orleans will make no provisions to house Negro delegates. I have investigated the matter thoroughly, and made every attempt to iron out the difficulties. Not only is this the case but the Roosevelt Hotel, where all the meetings are to be held, will not allow Negroes to attend meetings or have meetings at the hotel.

I realize that this is directly opposed to all policies of the N.S.F.A. and I have made attempts to surmount the difficulty, but have been unsuccessful.

Since it will be impossible for you to attend this congress I will forward you all the minutes of the meetings.

"I hope you will understand that this is entirely a result of the location of the congress and in no way connected with the N.S.F.A.

Yours truly,

C. B. Odom,
Chairman 8th annual congress
N.S.F.A."

"Dear Sir:

Since receiving your recent letter, I have been to see Mr. Seymour Weiss, manager of the Roosevelt Hotel, to ascertain again what the position of the hotel would be toward a colored delegate. He stated that you would be allowed to attend all the meetings held here, but that it would be impossible for you to have your meals at the hotel, attend any social functions, use any elevator other than the servants, and that you would not be granted the privilege of the lobby.

"When Tulane was selected for the congress' location it was neglected to take this sort of situation into consideration, which has turned out to be very unfortunate.

"I am extremely sorry that all parties concerned have been considerably embarrassed, and only ask that you use your own discretion with the entire situation and

assure you that if you see fit to attend that I will do all I can to make everything as agreeable as possible under the existing circumstances.

Sincerely yours,

Francis Nemeck."

A telegram was later sent telling Rodriguez not to come.

This was the N.S.F.A. in 1932. 1933 saw no change in attitude. The necessity of calling off their convention or changing their meeting place in view of the fact that a part of their delegates were going to be discriminated against never seemed to have entered their minds. What they did was to bow to this discriminatory policy and advise their Negro delegate to accept it. Never was there the slightest suggestion of putting up a fight to compel the hotel to admit Negro students on a basis of equality.

The *Afro-American* and a large number of students have interpreted the action of the National Student Federation of America in voting to hold their conference next year at Boston and to avoid jim-crow cities in the future as constituting a victory over prejudice.

What the careful person will see is that the N.S.F.A. has simply proved its sham liberalism. They have removed their convention to Boston and intend to hold

their conventions only in those cities where jim-crow practices do not exist. What an evasion! It is more than that, it is a determination to keep N.S.F.A. students from meeting the issue squarely. We propose that if they really are sincere, that the N.S.F.A. hold their convention in a jim-crow city for militant protest, that they fight to secure equal rights for their Negro delegates. They had two opportunities. They failed each time.

The constitution implies equal treatment of Negroes. Contrary to the views expressed by some, we do not believe that words on paper are to be trusted. We know that they have not been carried out in the past. The past is a fair instrument for measuring the future.

We call upon the *Hilltop*, the Student Council, and the student body of Howard University to take Howard out of the National Student Federation. We urge that they consider the program of concrete activity of the National Student League. We ask that they investigate our past work, especially our long history of struggle against discrimination of Negro students. We ask that, on the basis of their findings they join us in a united student movement for the solving of student problems. Come with us! Together we are a force. Divided—the future for American students looks bleak indeed. Again we say: *Take Howard out of the National Student Federation!*

MAURICE GATES.

Three Conventions

I. *The National Student League*

THE first national convention of the National Student League at Howard University, December 26-28, had on its agenda no spectacular speakers with well-established reputations. It attracted no headlines in the press (with the exception of a flaming orange scarehead in the *Baltimore Afro-American*). However, to a great number of students, and to their two hundred and fifty-odd delegates it was very important. Some hitch-hiked and came late. Clyde Johnson, our Southern organizer, got his car into a smash-up sixty miles from Washington, and a rescue party had to be organized for him and his fellow-delegates from Atlanta. Most of the delegates, arriving late in Washington, found no accommodations the first night. They walked back and forth in Union Depot or dozed fitfully on the benches. There was remarkably little complaint. The delegates understood the meaning of the convention. We have always been very proud of our program and considered that its approach to student problems marked what was actually the beginning of the American student movement. Every one understood that to make the program effective in daily campus life was perhaps as important as the program itself. This was the task of the convention.

The N.S.L. has no network of field organizers. It cannot even afford to pay the full-time workers in the New

York office. The national convention must plan and organize for the year ahead. Planned activity was the watchword of the convention, activity guided by the common understanding that was hammered out by three days' talk, argument and discussion. Three issues were chosen from the many that face the students as those most important and demanding most immediate action.

The section of our program on the problems of the Negro students had reposed rather peacefully since the day of its writing. At this convention the Negro became for the first time an integral part of the organization; their oppression an integral part of our activity. Howard students attended the sessions and participated in the discussions. There were also delegates from five other Negro colleges. For three days Negro and white students shared the same dormitories, ate at the same tables and worked out lines of attack on common problems. And it was in line with the N.S.L. program not to tolerate any discrimination against Negro students. Negro and white students walked into two of the classiest jim-crow restaurants on Connecticut Avenue and were not thrown out. There were too many of us. It struck some of us that a sizable N.S.L. group could make jim-crow restaurants tremble.

The convention was struck by the surprising fact that it was much easier to organize the Negro students in the South than the white. The former are waiting for organ-

ization. They are ready for action. The latter are hopelessly bound by the traditions of their "superiority" to the Negroes. They may prove fit material for the fascist gang and the lynch mob, and it is all the more important that we make real headway among them. Two members of the New York resident bureau have been assigned to do work among both Negro and white students in the South. They will cooperate very closely with the southern members of the N.E.C. in planning demonstrations and regional conferences against discrimination as well as in conducting the routine work of organization. The center of our activities against jim-crow practices will be Washington.

The anti-war session of the convention, at which Maurice Gates of Miner Teachers College delivered a report of the past activities of the N.S.L. against war, decided that every college and high school throughout the country hold conferences against war. Plans for many of these conferences are already under way and there is no doubt that the next few months will see the crystallization of anti-war sentiments in scores of student conferences throughout the United States. These conferences are to have as one of their objectives a terrific wave of protest against imperialist war on April 6th, the day the United States entered the World War and the day chosen by the student sub-committee of the American League Against War and Fascism for nation-wide student protest against imperialist war. This protest will take the form of student strikes, marches, mass meetings and protest demonstrations.

To initiate its anti-war work for this year, the N.S.L. circulated petitions throughout the country calling for the abolition of the R.O.T.C. and the conversion of funds for military purposes or for the R.O.T.C. into funds for education. One session of the convention was given over to a march and demonstration held before the White House, at which these petitions were presented to the President. The demonstration, called by the student sub-committee, and attended by about five hundred members of the N.S.L. and L.I.D. and by many other students of Howard and Washington schools as yet members of neither organization, was a decisive step forward in the development of united student action against war.

Our perspective for struggle on the issue of retrenchment in education follows similar lines. In Chicago, the convention decided to set up a city-wide anti-retrenchment committee which will have as its job the development of retrenchment fights in every Chicago school and the calling of a large anti-retrenchment conference in Chicago this spring. Similar conferences will be convened wherever a local retrenchment issue is strong enough.

To carry through these tremendous tasks the convention decided to conduct, during its next eleven months, a huge membership drive. This drive, beginning officially February 1st, will be completed at the next national convention of the N.S.L. Our minimum quota is 5,000 nationally in the colleges, one new member for every college N.S.L. member registered in 1933. The quotas for the concentration cities were set at follows: New York City, 1500; Washington, 100; Chicago, 300. The progress of the drive will be shown regularly in *Student Review*.

This is briefly the plan of activity developed by the convention for the coming year. On the basis of the decisions worked out, every college and high school will work out its own plan of activity. The National Executive Committee will guide and direct the organization. But it was the convention that worked out a common understanding of our tasks and problems.

We left Washington convinced that the N.S.L. is not a voice crying in the wilderness. Also at the L.I.D. convention and at the Students in Politics Conference, students understood the immediacy of their problems and the necessity for action. Only the N.S.L. can answer their need, the need of the American student body.

ANNIE STECKLER.

II. Unity and the L.I.D.

THERE were no more than sixty delegates at this year's annual convention of the League for Industrial Democracy. The figure rose somewhat as the convention wore on. Like all things human, student organizations prosper on activity and achievement, not the personal glory of the founders thirty years ago.

The first session opened late Thursday afternoon after a successful demonstration against R.O.T.C. before the White House with the National Student League. That joint demonstration foreshadowed the crucial issue of the convention. After a short, innocuous enough speech by Dr. Harry W. Laidler, one of the directors of the non-student parent organization, discussion followed on the first point of the agenda, "Shall the L.I.D. Be Reorganized?" That the question was at all relevant was confession of a sorry state of affairs. Two constitutions were submitted as a basis for discussion. There were some delegates who believed that the question of a new constitution was not the basic problem of reorganization but that more profound questions were involved which should have been presented at this stage of the conference, problems of policy and tactics, and their relation to immediate student issues. These were entirely omitted from this discussion, and the tendency throughout the session was to table such questions for future decisions by the National Executive Committee.

The Constitution which was adopted as a basis for discussion, was one presented by Bill Gomberg, formerly of City College, merely containing the outlines for any organization's constitution. The name was changed to the *Student League for Industrial Democracy* and a national executive committee was provided for. In connection with the N.E.C., it is interesting to note that despite the newly adopted constitution, in reality little has been changed. The parent L.I.D. still has a controlling power over the student group, except now it is through the legal sanction of a formal constitution.

After a majority vote of the delegates, it was decided to hear representatives of the National Student League at the beginning of the evening session. The N.S.L. speakers stressed the point that when the L.I.D. undertakes genuine activity on important issues its members are increasingly beginning to realize that the only way

cessful policies follow N.S.L. lines. They proposed that both organizations amalgamate on the basis of a militant program substantially like the present program of the N.S.L. This unification was to take place through a selection of delegates from the college chapters, chosen proportionately to membership. These delegates would lay the basis for a new organization at a united convention.

The three N.S.L. delegates were asked to leave as soon as they finished. It was decided to discontinue discussion of the constitution till later and to proceed with the proposals raised by the N.S.L. It is important that every L.I.D. member understand that no united opinion existed in the Washington conference on the unity proposal. Finally, Monroe Sweetland succeeded in delaying and evading the issue with the following motion: "Until the time when the student forces working for a co-operative social order have established mutual confidence to the extent of being able to co-ordinate their struggle, the Student League for Industrial Democracy proposes to the National Student League and similar groups that we together continue our militant fight for a planned co-operative society and for a struggle against war and fascism, and to this end a joint committee of both groups be appointed immediately to examine the possibilities of increased co-operation under specific issues." The subsequent discussion on the part of most of the leaders was not even relevant to the motion. Following suggestions by several delegates that careful consideration be given the NSL proposal before proceeding to "shelve" the matter, deliberate resort to deception and insult was utilized in order to insure the victory of Sweetland's motion. An effort was made to misconstrue the meanings of the speeches by the NSL speakers and invalidate the facts they presented. The theme song of the group, dominated by Sweetland, field organizer; Gomberg, student director of the Young People's Socialist League, and Meiklejohn, later rewarded with an executive position, was "Let us not be hasty."

The militant stand taken by the delegates from Johns Hopkins, Smith, Amherst, Vassar and Long Island deserve emphasis. These delegates throughout the conference supported united action and pointed out that unless action was taken then and there at the conference, or that unless a national referendum was begun by several of the chapters themselves, the National Executive Committee would, in all probability, shelve the proposal made by the National Student League. There is no sincere will on the part of a few (not all) of the leaders to unite. There was and still is a definite will to unite on the part of many delegates at the conference, some of whom did not catch the full significance of Sweetland's motion at the time it was made.

The movement for unity in the L.I.D. has only been temporarily sidetracked.

RONALD H. COHEN

III. Social Note: N. S. F. A.

ONE could see that something important was taking place at the Mayflower Hotel. The management regarded it as important, for they had put up signs, "Wel-

come, National Student Federation." The greyheaded business men and sleekly gowned ladies, affably talking and smiling, regarded it as important: it must have been their sign on the green-covered registration tables which read, "Registration Service by Courtesy Greater National Capital Committee of Washington Board of Trade." A half dozen young ladies sat there ready to sign up students and hand out programs. Certainly the students themselves, slick-haired fraternity men and authentic sorority girls, strolling among the great potted plants and marble and bronze statuary, thought it was important. Up high, on the mezzanine railing, hung a big NRA banner. "We Do Our Part." A huge gaudy Christmas tree, blazing with electric lights, stood in a corner of the lobby. The hotel clerk told me the rates at the Mayflower range from \$4 to \$15 per day.

This was the ninth annual convention of the National Student Federation of America, one learned from the program, expensively bound in blue-gray imitation leather. The annual report, another document, explained—in addition to donations and a neat financial surplus—that the members of the N.F.S.A. "stand ready to lead the way in any project where group action on the part of American students may prove effective." The slight inconsistency of "stand ready" and "group action" did not trouble the program makers who declared that the student now finds that he is "not only concerned with the affairs of his college but also with the problems of a maladjusted society." This was a "challenge," and the Federation had to "develop an intelligent student opinion on these matters."

I entered the afternoon plenary session, held in the grand ballroom, a half hour late, and in my haste opened the door with a quick jerk. The word "—Communist!" shot at me. I stopped in amazement.

There were the 200 or more well-dressed student delegates seated in orderly semi-circular rows about the chairman's rostrum, and a University of Maryland student was speaking:

"There are elements in that Conference of Students in Politics that we cannot approve," he was saying—the "elements," of course were the National Student League—and Robert Minor is announced on the list of speakers. I move, Mr. Chairman, that this convention go on record as refusing to merge with any group now meeting in Washington, and that it will not willingly let its name be used in connection with it. And that we give a statement to the press declaring that we are not cooperating in the Conference of Students in Politics."

This was "standing ready" for "group action!" The motion was passed with but one girl's voice voting a hesitant *No*. ("Was that a negative," asked someone near me, "or just a late affirmative?")

One student wanted to make the resolution "stronger," but he was quieted. A sweet old lady read a little speech on "an idea about something to go crusading about," which proposed, in view of the burden of unemployment, that there should be a governmental staff which would "work

for the country as effectively in time of peace as such staffs do in time of war." I don't pretend to know what she meant. The fat Rotarian-looking president of the Blue Key Men also spoke, saying he was glad there were so many good-looking girls around.

More similar discussion. Then two Negro students walked in and sat down. Just before adjournment one of them arose and briefly, with dignity, invited the N.S.F.A. delegates to visit Howard University. Many of them might not know what Howard, which was participating now for the first time in the N.S.F.A. convention, was like. With a perfunctory and barely articulate acknowledgement of the invitation, the chairman declared the session adjourned.

In the evening began the discussion groups, and I attended the one scheduled to take up "Political Education." Dr. John H. MacCracken, of the American Council on Education, was the leader. Casually, in his opening remarks, he wondered if democracy would give place to fascism, and praised Professor Tugwell, who is introducing changes into government to "fit the social order fifty years hence." He referred to the etymology of the word "crisis," showing that it meant simply "a separation, a turning point in a process" and therefore didn't deserve what people thought about it. "crisis doesn't mean 'crash' or 'panic' at all," he said, and sat down, beaming.

Students got up and told what their professors in their home colleges were doing to train them in right thinking. They were reorganizing the courses in North Carolina; in Minnesota and other colleges the professors were trying to give the students a bird's-eye view of different subjects; in Florida they had upper and lower divisions . . . orientation courses . . . survey courses. A girl from New Jersey said she had *practical* work in her political education course—she visited all the prisons in the State. A Columbia University student ventured to refer to academic freedom, and used the word "Communist" in an indirect and cautious reference to the Donald Henderson case. No reaction. Polite, subservient students continued making pleasantly phrased remarks in the best inane tradition.

This was the character of the entire four-day convention. A "student" convention in which the speeches were made by professors and politicians! It was hailed editorially by the *Washington Herald* as "expressive of the increasing desire on the part of college students to play a part in helping to fashion the changes which are now taking place in the country's economic and social structure"—but even this verbose and obscure statement is over-complimentary to the spineless and mindless delegates who in these deliberations skirted so fearfully the fringes of the "public affairs" they were supposed to be considering.

But this easy conclusion would be a very mistaken one if it merely stopped here. The N.S.F.A. is representative of the Student Councils of 250 large American colleges. It is the official, dean-approved group. President Roosevelt sent them a welcoming message, and Mrs. Roosevelt entertained them at luncheon. Secretary of Agriculture Wallace addressed them in person. They are a source of power over students: they do actually "mould" (as they say) student opinion. They are a source of danger to stu-

dents and workers. Furthermore, not all in the N.S.F.A. convention were naive. Mixed with the general subservience was a slight undercurrent of corrupt cynicism. Some portion of the students participated suavely in the discussions, and even shared honors, consciously selling themselves with a view to future advancement.

At the National Student League convention, the delegates, arriving cold and tired, faced with the problem of providing lodgings for their entire group, were at times worried and almost discouraged, but their discussions, sometimes noisy and acrimonious, were on an infinitely higher plane than the Mayflower meetings, and were guided by an infinitely higher social idealism.

The task of the National Student League is clear. Every time the N.S.F.A. considers activity on concrete issues, such as military training, retrenchment in education and Negro discrimination, it is paralyzed by the fear of alienating important member group. Our task is to force the issue at every step whereby the hopeful elements in the Federation will be brought to see the futility and danger of their organization.

OAKLEY JOHNSON.

AN APPEAL

THE Southern Folk School and Libraries is spreading amongst the workers and farmers of the South at an ever increasing speed. The plan of the school is to establish a library in a worker's or farmer's home in a community, and notify all the people in this community of the existence of the library, its character and purpose. After a library has been established for a period of time, classes are organized for a definite plan of instruction.

At present we cannot supply the demands for our libraries. There is an urgent need for books like *Soviet Main Street* and *Gathering Storm* by Myra Page; *Call Home the Heart*, by Fielding Burke; *Tobacco Road*, by Erskine Caldwell; *Mother*, by Maxim Gorky; *Georgia Nigger*, by John Spivak; *To Make My Bread*, by Grace Lumpkin; *The Disinherited*, by Jack Conroy. These books have been written so the worker and farmer can read and understand them—a real test of proletarian literature. These are the books we are appealing for to our friends. We can establish twelve new branch libraries immediately if our friends respond to this appeal. There are twelve libraries functioning now.

We do not wish to fool anyone into believing this is an ordinary school. We state our purpose boldly—to arouse and educate southern farmers and workers for a society of justice, freedom and plenty.

The members and friends of the National Student League can do a great good for the southern toilers by a hearty response to this appeal. Please send all contributions to Don West, Kennesaw, Ga.

CLYDE JOHNSON,

Co-Director,

Southern Folk School and Libraries.

New Utrecht Students Strike

The very first week that the spotless new building at 79th Street and 16th Avenue in Brooklyn was opened to them in 1925, students of New Utrecht High School complained to one another about the school lunchroom. And in the succeeding eight years, without cease, murmurs of disgust with conditions existing there and of protest against the excessive prices and correspondingly small (reported) profits were always to be heard, if one listened closely enough. But Dr. Harry A. Potter, principal, always turned a deaf ear to the faint murmurs, and was permitted to do so by the student body which did not yet know how to organize a student fight for students' rights.

On Tuesday, January 2 of this year, the New Utrecht chapter of the National Student League circulated among the five thousand students in the Main Building petitions which demanded the eradication of all existing lunchroom evils through the following three moves:

1. An open lunchroom. (Since the opening of the building students had been required by administrative order to remain in the lunchroom during their lunch periods, to buy their lunches there or bring cold lunches from home in the morning to stink up their lockers till lunch-time. Some few students living in the very immediate neighborhood were permitted to run home for lunch. No student was permitted to leave the building and buy his lunch in a neighborhood shop where prices have been consistently lower and the quality of food consistently higher, although the principal of each high school has authority to allow students to go out of the building for lunch. Dr. Potter has maintained throughout the struggle that the "moral responsibility" on him is too great for him to allow boys and girls of high school age to eat lunch together. The school lunchroom is separated into boys' and girls' divisions; boys are not permitted on the girls' side, and vice versa.)

2. Lower prices in the lunchroom. (In 1926 the nation was entering a period of wild speculation and high prices. In 1934 the nation is rotting in the fifth year of the most devastating economic crisis it has ever experienced. But outside forces exert no influence on the isolated New Utrecht lunchroom. For from 1926 to 1934 the same outrageously high prices have prevailed, all the more outrageous because of the adulterated, actually unhealthy food students have been forced to buy.)

3. A complete accounting of the lunchroom books by an impartial C.P.A. (For years the inner workings of the lunchroom have been kept secret from the students. At the end of each semester the Faculty Treasurer of the General Organization would announce that the lunchroom had recorded a profit of such-and-such for that term. Last semester the profit was \$233.10. How that sum is arrived at, how much is the salary of the dietician whom Dr. Potter appoints to supervise the lunchroom, who determines the salaries of the workers in the lunchroom, who pays for the meals that Dr. Potter eats in a little room, where does the unannounced profit from

the lunchroom go—all these are questions which the students, according to the administration, need not bother their heads about. Three years ago students who organized an independent student council and published a Bulletin demanding answers to these questions saw two of their number arrested for distributing the Bulletin, and on September 25, 1931, sent to jail besides!)

Less than three days after the issuance of the petitions more than fifteen hundred indignant students had signed them. The National Student League chapter then called to the students to mass in the main hall of the school before Dr. Potter's office to present the petitions they had signed and to receive Dr. Potter's answer. This was Friday, January 5. The assembling students were met by a horde of service squadders (student police), teachers and uniformed policemen, bolstered by the perspiring presence of Dr. Potter himself. Potter's forces succeeded in driving the students out of the hall, into the adjoining auditorium or out into the street, but not before they had forced him to consent to speak with a committee of five students. The committee entered Dr. Potter's office and made known their demands, presenting the petitions and saying that they represented the fifteen hundred students who had signed them. Potter screamed back, "You represent nobody but a bunch of comoonists." The "red herring" was now officially on the scene, and the service squadders, police and teachers in the crowded office pressed closer, watching to see that the committee did not pull a bomb from under its coat. Potter suddenly announced that the interview was at an end and told the students to leave. Insisting that the interview would not be at an end until their demands had been met, the committee refused to leave. Potter called to a policeman to arrest the committee if it did not leave immediately. The cop and his nightstick ended the interview.

A complete boycott on the school lunchroom was the N.S.L. chapter's reply to Potter's bare-faced defiance of the student demands. Such an action had never been taken before, and the success of the whole fight depended on the amount of support the boycott received right from the start. The main building students jumped enthusiastically into the struggle on Monday, January 8, the first day of the boycott, and welcomed the leadership of the N.S.L. Sales in the lunchroom were few and far between. When the one-day boycott evoked no action from the administration, the students voted overwhelmingly to continue the boycott indefinitely.

Packed with an extra detail of teachers and Dr. Potter himself, the lunchroom on Tuesday during the first of the four lunch periods was set perfectly for the dramatic events which were to occur. Morris Oshatz, a leader in the New Utrecht N.S.L., stood up on his chair and, explaining once again the situation in New Utrecht, shouted to the hundreds of students to carry on the boycott until victory had been won. Oshatz was immediately dragged downstairs by Dr. Potter himself, and suspended. The

angry students booed and hissed Dr. Potter's suppressive action long after he had left the lunchroom with Oshatz. Throughout the afternoon speaker after speaker addressed his fellow-students, calling on each one to support the boycott. And as each finished speaking, he found Dr. Potter waiting at his elbow to escort him from the room, and suspend him. Potter and his teachers could not keep step with the demonstrating students and consequently missed a few. Nine students were suspended.

Potter's attempt to kill the struggle by firing the leaders out of school failed; his action served only to make the students more militant and more determined and to supply new leaders for the fight. Students who had been doubtful about the boycott now joined actively in the fight. The rights of students were not to be abrogated by any autocratic, suppressing administrator. The leaflet issued the following morning by the N.S.L. chapter explained that the fight had now broadened, that the demands must now be not only those previously set forth in regard to the lunchroom, but also: the immediate reinstatement of the nine suspended students, and the right to free speech for students. The fight was now not only for a boycott, but for the right to boycott.

By Thursday, news of the struggle in New Utrecht had spread by word of mouth to several of New Utrecht's most prominent alumni. Those who were free rallied eagerly to the National Student League's call for support. The justice of the fight had never been in doubt, and now from all sections of the city, former New Utrecht students squeezed college schedules or took whole days off from work to aid in the struggle each wished had been developed during his days at New Utrecht. Former editors of the school magazine and weekly newspaper, now members of the N.S.L., former big-shots of New Utrecht now in the Young Communist League, former Arista leaders and major office holders not affiliated to any organization but rejoicing that the rumblings of years had now at last mounted to a roar, all volunteered their services in speaking at the daily open-air meetings, in writing and mimeographing the daily leaflets and in the thousand and one other details that needed attention.

Reinstatement was won for eight of the suspended students when their parents came to Dr. Potter in a body and protested that their boys and girls had committed no crime in leading the boycott. Oshatz, who had been expelled from New Utrecht the previous year for anti-R.O.T.C. activity, and then reinstated because of city-wide protest, was not permitted to return to school.

At the indoor mass meeting on Thursday night sponsored by the National Student League chapter the large audience worked out a plan of action for the continuation of the boycott. During the meeting about twenty-five boys, slightly younger than the rest, entered the hall and ranged themselves along one wall. Their spokesman introduced them as students of Annex 180. (Annex 180 is one of the four auxiliary buildings from which New Utrecht feeds its main building. About 1100 boys are in attendance there.) The spokesman, invited to speak, told how one of the leaflets issued in the main building had been picked up by an annex student, how the news spread

throughout the annex about the struggle in the main building, how the annex students realizing that they were faced with the same conditions in their lunchroom had resolved simply and immediately to go out in a protest strike. The teacher-in-charge at the annex, the boy continued, heard of the impending strike and called a fire-drill just before the time set for the walk-out. The students marched out of the building in orderly lines, and then refused to go back. Four hundred of them refused to enter the building until the hastily summoned riot squad combined its efforts with the teachers to drive them back forcibly.

The meeting, excited by the unexpected militancy of the annex students, was on the verge of calling a main building strike—even the most conservative of the students in the fight were swayed by the emotion of the tense moment. But realization that student sentiment had not been sufficiently organized to insure a powerful strike as yet and that they were then not sufficiently prepared for a wholesale walkout kept the students at the meeting from making what might have been a fatal error. Instead, a broad General Boycott Committee was to be chosen to guide the work inside the school building. Non-N.S.L.-ers volunteered, and were elected along with Student Leaguers.

At 8:20 a.m. Friday morning the Annex 180 students held an open-air meeting and decided to organize a similar General Annex Boycott Committee to carry on a thorough boycott of the annex lunchroom. The open-air mass meeting at the main building held after school showed increasing student militancy. The Boycott Committee reported that the boycott was increasing in effectiveness. Besides a student mass meeting Friday night, a meeting of parents, alumni and representatives of thirteen local organizations was held, at which a permanent group, the Supporters of Students' Rights (S.S.R.), was formed. Plans were made for the holding of a mass S.S.R. meeting the following Thursday night.

Metropolitan papers picked up the story and ran daily accounts of the struggle after the *New York Evening Post* had splashed an exclusive account of the fight thus far all over the front page of the Saturday afternoon edition. Newspaper publicity gave a valuable impetus to the fight. Meanwhile the administration refused to act, claiming that nothing would be conceded to this "small group of Communist agitators." The executive committee of the General Organization (supposed student governing body) sabotaged the fight by insisting that *it* was the real leader of the student body, that Oshatz, Berenson, Ross and the others therefore were not playing fair when they led the fight, and that therefore (what logic!) the fight was all wrong and should be dropped immediately, while a G.O. committee would straighten out everything with Dr. Potter. That the G.O. executives themselves did not step into the real fight was shown clearly when they confined their activity to sending a committee to Dr. Potter who threw them out, to holding a secret meeting on Sunday to which no student representative was invited, and to appointing a committee to investigate the lunchroom when it saw finally that the students were going to win anyway.

(Continued on page 21)

Peace on Earth

By GEORGE SKLAR and ALBERT MALTZ

THE FACULTY ROOM SCENE

A room in the University Faculty Club. Music of a dance orchestra can be heard from an adjoining room. In the room are Professor Anderson; George Murdock, a man of thirty-five, and Dr. Kelsey, a man of forty.

ANDERSON.

And that's what actually happened.

KELSEY

It's a good story—if it's true.

ANDERSON.

It is.

(OWENS comes in.)

MURDOCK

Hello, Pete.

OWENS

Where's Mr. Andrews?

ANDERSON.

What? Oh, I guess he's around somewhere. Last time I saw him he was in the library.

OWENS

(Turning). Thanks.

ANDERSON.

What's the rush? Come on over. Where's your friend McCracken? (Owens suddenly leaves the room).

MURDOCK

What's the matter with him?

ANDERSON.

I don't know.

MURDOCK

Mr. Anderson, I didn't see you in your class costume this afternoon.

ANDERSON.

No, I'm afraid I don't fancy myself in a cowboy outfit.

KELSEY

By the way, Mr. Murdock, I saw President Howard buying a copy of your new novel, yesterday.

MURDOCK

He must have decided to find out why they're giving me this honorary degree.

ANDERSON.

As a matter of fact, President Howard knows your work quite well and has always thought very highly of it.

MURDOCK

Well, an honorary degree's worth something if it makes someone go out and buy a copy of one of my books.

KELSEY

I hope President Howard doesn't feel obliged to read on me. My last paper was concerned with the chemical lysis of the endo-toxin of the borde-zengoud bacillus.

MURDOCK

Well at least you'll never have to worry about the sort of movie they'll make out of it.

(President Howard and Miss Bancroft enter.)

HOWARD

Good evening . . . (ad lib.). Miss Bancroft, I want you to meet Dr. Kelsey—and Mr. Murdock . . . and you've met Professor Anderson.

MURDOCK

I visited your settlement house last year, Miss Bancroft. I was very interested in what you were doing there.

HOWARD

What I've always appreciated about Miss Bancroft's work is the emphasis she puts on educational activities.

MISS BANCROFT

Yes, I take a great deal of pride in the experimental school attached to our settlement house.

KELSEY

(Listening). I wonder what that is.

MURDOCK

Sounds like an army.

ANDERSON.

It is, more or less. The town's just been put under martial law.

KELSEY

What for?

HOWARD

The strike. There was some trouble this afternoon.

MISS BANCROFT

Just the sound of that marching sends a shiver down my spine. There's so much war talk in the air it frightens me.

MURDOCK

From the looks of things in Europe, there doesn't seem to be much question about a war.

HOWARD

Well, Lloyd's is betting four to one on it—that seems to be fairly indicative. (Andrews and Bishop Parkes enter.)

ANDREWS

What's that you were saying about Lloyd's?

HOWARD

I was saying that Lloyd's is betting four to one on the possibility of war.

MISS BANCROFT

It appalls me to think there could possibly be another war so soon after the last one.

ANDREWS

It is appalling.

MISS BANCROFT

It seems to me there can never be any excuse for ever resorting to war.

ANDREWS

Well, I lost my son during the last war and I don't want to see another. But whether we like it or not I'm afraid there are moments when nations feel they've got to resort to war.

MURDOCK

Well, if the United States goes to war, I know I'm not going to be involved.

HOWARD

What'll you do?

MURDOCK

I think I'll go to jail rather than go to war.

KELSEY

I disagree. None of us wants war—but once your country is at war, it seems to me, one must support it.

MISS BANCROFT

Mr. Howard, you're president of a university. What attitude would you take if the United States went to war?

HOWARD

Well, I don't know. I'm against war, of course. But it's not as simple as all that. It's a hard thing to decide.

MISS BANCROFT

But you might very well be faced with that question and have to answer it. What would you say? (*To the others*) What would you say? What would you say, Mr. Andrews?

ANDREWS

Well, if our government was forced into a war, I'd support it. I'd support it a hundred per cent.

OWENS

(*Who has been standing in the doorway.*) Why?

ANDREWS

It's the only thing any patriotic American would do.

OWENS

(*Coming into the room.*) That's one reason. I have a notion you might have some others.

ANDREWS

Such as?

OWENS

You're surely in a better position to say than I am.

ANDREWS

What makes you think I have other reasons?

OWENS

Oh—offhand, I'd say you were too good a business man not to have other reasons.

ANDREWS

What do you mean by that?

OWENS

Just that.

ANDREWS

I'm afraid I don't follow.

OWENS

Nothing very mysterious. You're an industrialist, aren't

you? You have, for instance, a controlling interest in a good many steel mills.

ANDREWS

That's right.

OWENS

And in other industries as well—chemicals, rubber, nitrates, textiles, rayon—

ANDREWS

Well?

OWENS

Well, that's what I mean. In supporting the government you'd naturally supply it with some of these products.

ANDREWS

Yes, I'd consider it my duty.

OWENS

I'd consider it good business. (*There is a pause.*)

ANDREWS

I don't think I know your name.

OWENS

My name's Owens.

ANDREWS

Oh—you're the professor who was arrested for reading the Declaration of Independence, yes.

ANDERSON.

Pete, you've interrupted a rather exciting discussion.

MISS BANCROFT

I'd like to know what Mr. Owens would say about the war question.

OWENS

I'd say that I was opposed to war under any circumstances. I'd say that it was criminal for men like Andrews to convert textile mills into mills manufacturing munitions.

ANDERSON.

Pete . . .

ANDREWS

Owens, suppose you let me talk for a moment. When rayon mills don't pay for themselves you have the choice of shutting them down, or turning out a product that does pay. That's common sense, isn't it?

OWENS

Yes.

ANDREWS

Well, I built those mills. It means a great deal to me to keep them going. I have a responsibility to the fifteen thousand workers employed in them. I have a responsibility to the twenty thousand people who hold shares in them. That's why I'm manufacturing munitions, Owens. That's why it isn't criminal.

OWENS

I don't balance the employment of fifteen thousand workers or the dividends of twenty thousand shareholders against the lives of millions of men. Maybe you can.

ANDREWS

The manufacture of munitions doesn't cause Owens. You ought to know that.

OWENS

If they weren't manufactured there couldn't be any war.

ANDREWS

But they are being manufactured, Owens. If I didn't make 'em somebody else would. Why shouldn't I? That's just the way things are done.

OWENS

If that's the way things are—then perhaps they ought to be changed.

ANDREWS

Well, Owens, I suggest you do something about it.

OWENS

I think I will.

ANDREWS

You're pretty young, Owens. (*There is an uncomfortable pause.*)

OWENS

You're a chemist, Kelsey. If we went to war, would you turn out poison gas?

KELSEY

I'm afraid I'd have to.

OWENS

Would you want to?

KELSEY

No.

OWENS

Then you're opposed to war.

KELSEY

Of course.

OWENS

You're a novelist, Murdock. Would you pound out rape stories for the propaganda department?

MURDOCK

Hell, no. If war comes, I'll probably head for the Canadian wilds.

OWENS

What about you, Bishop?

BISHOP PARKES

No. I'm opposed to war. I'm opposed to violence in any form whatsoever.

OWENS

Bishop, when I was a senior in college, you stood up in the university chapel and called on us in the name of God to go out and fight. What'll you say in the next war, Bishop?

ANDERSON

Pete, don't you think—

MISS BANCROFT (*at the same time*)

Mr. Owens, I'm afraid you—

HOWARD

Bishop Parkes isn't the only man who was misled in the last war.

OWENS

No, President Howard, I know that.

PARKES

I regret deeply what I did in the last war. I regret it more than you can realize.

OWENS

I believe that. I believe that most of you are opposed to war. You've said so. I accept it. Well—there's a strike against war going on in this town; a strike against the manufacture and shipment of munitions. Support that strike, spread it, and you check the means of carrying on a war. That's what the workers in this town are doing. They've walked out on their jobs. They're being clubbed and beaten and thrown into jail—because they're against war. You say you're against war. You're people of influence—leaders of professions—some of you are receiving honorary degrees tomorrow morning. Are you willing to throw your influence into this strike? Are you willing to come out openly and support this strike against war?

(*Silence.*)

(*The dance orchestra finishes a number. There is applause from the other room. Marjorie Howard, a girl of nineteen, runs into the room.*)

MARJORIE

C'mon, Dad, I'm dancing the next one with you.

HOWARD

No, dear, I—

ANDERSON

I'll tell you what to do, Marjorie; take out Pete Owens here. A little dancing'll do him good.

MARJORIE

All right. Want to? (*There is a pause.*)

OWENS

An hour ago I saw my best friend, an alumnus of this university, shot in the back. It doesn't call for dancing on my part. (*He pauses.*) Walter McCracken was interested in stopping war. He was shot and killed by a gunman hired by that man. He was killed because he was helping the strikers stop a shipment of munitions manufactured by that man. I came here to ask this university to protest against the terror and violence instigated in this town by John Andrews.

ANDERSON

Pete, for God's sake—

MISS BANCROFT

If you knew Mr. Andrews as well as I do, you wouldn't be saying the things you have.

ANDREWS

That's all right. Go on, Owens.

OWENS

President Howard, I ask that this university refuse to give an honorary degree to John Andrews.

ANDERSON

Pete—

OWENS

I also ask that those of you who are to receive honorary degrees refuse to accept them on the same platform as John Andrews.

PARKES

Mr. Owens—I'm in sympathy with any move against war. But I'm not in sympathy with this strike for the simple reason that it's being led by Communists. If there's been any violence I blame it on them. The Communists are trouble-makers—they always have been—and before I insult Mr. Andrews, I'd like to know who provoked this violence.

OWENS

All I know is: John Andrews called in the militia. John Andrews called in his gunmen. If they hadn't been there, there wouldn't have been any violence. If John Andrews hadn't paid his salary, that gunman wouldn't have killed McCracken. I'm no Communist and I hold no briefs for Communism. But I know this, that if you don't make trouble, you keep quiet, and if you keep quiet, you let things happen—you let war happen. *(There is a pause.)*

HOWARD

You have no right to talk this way, Owens.

(There is a long pause, during which Owens looks around the room.)

OWENS

All right—don't protest. Don't protest, Howard, the university needs its endowment fund. Keep your art pure, Murdock, protest is propaganda. Don't protest, Bishop; Christ needs a new cathedral.—Keep quiet, all of you. There are too many people in this world. Let some of them die. What do you care? Hold tight to your honorary degrees. Keep quiet. Don't protest. Let another war come—I won't keep quiet! *(He goes out.)*

THE LIGHT FADES.

From the published version of "Peace on Earth," to be published shortly by Samuel French, Inc. By permission of the authors and publishers. Copyright, 1933, by George Sklar and Albert Maltz.

The Expulsions at Ohio State

Seven pacifists were expelled from Ohio State University in the middle of January. Here are the bare, eloquent facts.

Back in 1873, the University opened with compulsory military training because the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1861 required a land grant school to offer, though not necessarily to require, courses in agriculture, the practical arts, and military science. The Board of Trustees promptly went the whole hog by ruling that "The policy of this institution is that all students shall receive military training." In 1878 that old Ohio legislature passed a bill making drill optional. Two years later the act was repealed when it was discovered that too few elected to "study" military science. The question was sent back to the Trustees and military training became compulsory again. Since then, in 1926, a Faculty Committee recommended that the status quo on this matter be maintained and, in 1931, the Board of Trustees endorsed that decision when the question was advanced again. Newton D. Baker is today a member of the Board. The University administration has thus maintained a perfect score for sixty years. And this, although there are four other state-supported colleges and universities in Ohio where drill is not required, and where nobody seems concerned about it.

Still, the University granted exemptions from time to time if you pleaded conscientious, principally religious, scruples vigorously enough. When so pressed, exemptions were allowed certain notoriously pacifist sects—Dunkard, Quaker, Mennonite, and Church of the Brethren. Other denominations, however, had to swallow whatever scruples they could afford. Since the repudiation of war and all its

including military training, by certain religious communities, it is not surprising that Jews, Methodists and

Presbyterians now sit with the peaceful as well as with the godly—when they choose.

Last year, about fifteen conscientious objectors were excused. As a result of agitation by these students together with several church groups during the past summer, applications for exemption reached a new high with thirty-one the first quarter of this semester. At the end of October, President George W. Rightmire of Ohio State appointed a committee of three to determine the sincerity of the applicants. One member of the committee was a commissioned officer—Col. Townsend. The other two had high positions in the University—Vice President Morrill and Dean Parks. The committee announced, in effect, that a Communist could save his soul as well as a Republican—political affiliations did not count. Belonging to a church or sect did not count. As a matter of fact, three or four were not objecting on religious grounds at all. That was all right because the committee said the grounds could be religious, social, humanitarian or economic, or any combination of these. The interviews lasted forty five minutes on the average. Two had a ten minute, one a ninety minute confessional.

Sixteen were rejected. They had lied. They were insincere. Such was the finding of the committee. The exempted were told to schedule alternate courses—one each in political science, international relations and physical education. The rejected were to report for drill. This separation of the wheat from the chaff took place during the Christmas vacation. One of the verdammt—Robert R. Hare, states that, in general, the non-exempted had the shorter interviews, and mildly, the more radical opinions and no church affiliation.

After the vacation, ten or twelve of the rejected wrote to the President protesting, affirming their sincerity, b

ging reconsideration of their case. Some wrote they would rather be expelled. On Thursday, January 4, the President called the authors of the first five letters he received and gave them the works—drill or expulsion. The five stuck to their pacifist guns, and the President expelled them orally. Several other students sent similar letters. A meeting of the Board of Trustees was hurriedly called four days later. They passed the buck to President Rightmire. He could do as he pleased.

The expelled pacifists were treated with a calculating duplicity and a callous crudeness that will shock those unacquainted with the standards of other University administrations. Eight of the sixteen recalcitrants soon capitulated. Then the President called the remainder for a final showdown. One by one, he offered them suspension or drill. At this point, one backed down. He gave the other seven a day to think it over. Next morning, Thursday, January 11, all seven came in again. What happened is officially described by the statement issued by the official University news agency, which reads in part: "All of the seven students declared their refusal to take military training and the President thereupon ordered their immediate suspension with the statement that they would be automatically reinstated without prejudice whenever they were willing to comply with the University rules." Technically, the seven were thus *suspended*. In actual fact, the seven were *expelled*—unless they would confess to having lied in claiming conscientious scruples right at the beginning. In any event, the fact that they have stuck it out to the end should be proof enough of their sincerity.

This is not all. Everything that took place was conducted orally. After being "suspended" orally, the seven students immediately met. They decided that Rightmire was trying to ease them out of the University without having to suspend them officially, since nothing was in writing. Quite firmly but politely, the seven continued to attend classes though their spokesman, Charles B. Hart, assured everyone interested that attending classes was, "not to be considered as an act of defiance or insubordination." They were only seeking something more tangible—something in writing. Hart is quoted as saying: "The practices of society demand such evidence." In any event, the Columbus (Ohio) press carried headlines such as "Suspended Students Defy Orders to Quit Classes." On Friday, January 12th, a beneficent God so ordered things that written notices of "suspension" were received. Thereupon the seven actually stopped going to classes. The practices of society mean all things to all men, and the boys are undoubtedly out for good.

To date, the expelled students have put all their faith in church groups. The Ohio Council of Churches has agreed to back them. A group of Columbus ministers are at present engaged in raising money with which to finance the seven at other Universities. The expelled students have even discouraged united action with student organizations like the National Student League. During the week before expulsion, meetings were held, two with ministers attending. They have issued an official statement of their side of the story entitled "Our Case." Nothing better than this three page appeal characterizes their whole approach to the problem of compulsory military training in

the colleges, and what to do when expelled. The very second paragraph reads: "The estimates of conscience by the President's committee, based as they had to be on personal reaction, rather than understanding of the individual's real background, have shown the essential weakness of the present system. *We feel that neither the President nor his committee is necessarily responsible.*" (Our italics). Their tone is notably different from that adopted by the expelled New York students during President Robinson's umbrella escapade at the City College Jingo Day exercises. It is even very notably different from the tone of the telegram received by one of the seven, Donald Leach, which is almost incongruously printed in "Our Case." The telegram reads: "Michigan students back your courageous stand against war and subsidized militarism. Whatever your President's decision is, carry on as you have begun. In event of dismissal we invite you to the University of Michigan, where such resolute action is much needed to complete the elimination of R.O.T.C. on this campus." The telegram was signed by the Vanguard Club, the Socialist Club, the Methodist Student Guild, and the National Student League chapter, all of the University of Michigan.

This difference in tactical approach emerges from an underlying conflict in fundamental philosophy and outlook.

As pacifists, they are concerned exclusively with the momentous problem of keeping their personal consciences undefiled. They are satisfied to say, "We have had no part in your war preparations"; they do not say, "We have waged relentless struggle against your war system." The difference is critical. Those who adopt the first view attain Nirvana when they have succeeded in withdrawing themselves from the scene of conflict; they will joyfully go to jail where men suffer but do not kill. Literally, they are conscientious *objectors*. Their heroism and hate are dedicated to the task of staying out of the sinful institution. Essentially, their outlook is theological.

On the second view, militarism can and must be fought from *without*—but also from *within*. Students in the R.O.T.C. must not be given up as lost sinners. They are made of the same stuff we are made of. They have been criminally misled—led into what must ultimately be a death-trap. The revolutionary answer is: Struggle against the R.O.T.C. as an institution, as an instrument of capitalist militarism. Always, fight to root it out. But the method is the broadest mass pressure on two fronts: as circumstances dictate, snatch as many as possible from the jaws of the war-dogs while at the same time fight the war makers in their own camp. The two are complementary, not opposed. What binds them is the end in view: the abolition or disintegration of as much capitalist militarism as is possible short of the elimination of capitalism.

That is why a revolutionary student organization can only feel that the actions of these seven pacifist students showing no greater militancy and realism than raising funds to escape to another University, than to discourage united action on the widest possible scale, are not only to be deplored but—with all due recognition of their personal sincerity—condemned.

THEODORE DRAPER.

A SYMPOSIUM: THE CONFERENCE

For the Student L. I. D.

By JOSEPH P. LASH

Editor, *The Student Outlook*

I WAS somewhat puzzled by the invitation of the *Student Review* to a member of the Student League for Industrial Democracy to write an account of the Washington conferences. For a while I wondered whether it was done on the same basis that we invite Hamilton Fish and other reactionaries to speak at our meetings because we know their own words will expose them. However, I finally concluded that what the readers of the *Student Review* wanted was an L.I.D. justification of its answer to the N.S.L.'s offer of unity, and secondly, an L.I.D. explanation of the split that occurred in the National Conference on Students in Politics.

To the request of the National Student League that our present organizations be dissolved and a new national student organization be set up, our answer was considered and virtually unanimous. For the present a program of joint activity was alone feasible, and to that end we set up a committee of five to negotiate with the N.S.L.

After hearing representatives from the National Student League, we weighed all considerations in favor of complete unity such as the existence of a reactionary student movement and the threat of a fascist one, the growing similarity in tactics and program of our two Leagues, and glowed with the vision of one powerful, revolutionary student movement. But one unfavorable factor outweighed these. Despite all its protestations the National Student League has been and still is the student wing of the Communist movement in this country. All its day-to-day activities bring its members closer, and finally, into the Communist movement. If any proof was necessary, Robert Minor provided it Friday night at the National Conference on Students in Politics with his praise of the program of the N.S.L.

On the other hand the Student League for Industrial Democracy has always been sympathetic to the Socialist movement. For every stick of space the N.S.L. has gotten in the *Daily Worker*, we can match one in the non-Communist press. For every time that an N.S.L. Chapter has picketed with a T. U. U. L. union, our chapters have picketed with A. F. of L. unions. It seemed to us, therefore, that so long as these allegiances persisted, any newly merged student movement would soon split. These loyalties were the germs of future schism. We could see no way of separating a student movement from the wider political and economic movement in behalf of which it was organized. But sensing the instability of existing radical groupings, we left the way open for joint action and future unity, and in doing so exhibited a sounder practicality than the issuers of the invitation for complete amalgamation.

We undertook such joint action at the National Conference on Students in Politics and what happened there

does not augur well for future cooperation. The National Student League still seems intent on substituting acceptance of slogans for forward movement and activity. And even before our honeymoon had gotten under way, the N.S.L. relapsed into detraction and denunciation of the L.I.D.

Believing that we would be in a minority, our two organizations agreed to center our activities around as complete as possible an acceptance by the National Conference of our five point program. Three of these points were actually incorporated in the Continuation Preamble, and two others—affiliation with the American League Against War and Fascism and a criticism of the N.R.A.—were omitted.

To our surprise, when we went into the Conference, we discovered ourselves to have, if not actually, close to a majority. In other words we could have gotten the official adoption of as radical a program as we desired to push through. The problem then was, what sort of program should be offered on the basis of which all the groups participating would continue to cooperate, and yet which would not be innocuous or meaningless. At the urging of the representatives of the L.I.D. and the N.S.L., the Executive Committee of the Conference which had been instructed to formulate a program, took a stand against the R.O.T.C. and against war preparations. It opposed discrimination against the Negro student in political, educational and social affairs, and it favored federal aid for education. By tacit consent neither the representatives of the N.S.L. nor of the L.I.D. said anything about a plank on the N.R.A.

A similar understanding seemed to have prevailed about affiliation with the American League. But at about one o'clock Sunday morning at the meeting of the Executive Committee where the program was being formulated, the weary representative of the National Student League turned to us and said that the American League ought to be mentioned. Which he did.

By the next morning, however, the American League had become a *cause celebre*, and the N.S.L. was insistent that we back inclusion of the American League in the program, no matter the consequences. In what way did the N.S.L. want the League incorporated? In the following wishy-washy fashion: that under Organization, we recommend that groups represented on the Continuation Committee cooperate with the activities of the American League. The representatives of the Student L.I.D. pointed out that at the first meeting of the Continuation Committee cooperation with the January 29th activities of the League would be urged before the full committee. And that would be better we said than having the American League placed in the program now and thereby forcing several of the groups to drop out from continuation work, as they plainly said they would do.

But by that time, Sunday noon, it was no longer a matter of arguing comparative strategies that two radical student groups could use against the inert masses of stu-

CE OF STUDENTS IN POLITICS

dents, but strategies for putting one radical student organization on the spot by another radical student organization. Possibly the sudden insistence on Sunday of the National Student League that the American League be included in the permanent program was just a confusion in N.S.L. strategy, not realizing that: "Every step of actual movement is more important than a dozen programmes," or possibly it was a deliberate desire on the part of the N.S.L. to kill continuation work, because of a disbelief in its value. Whatever the motives, there was no excuse for Joe Cohen's running to the platform and de-

nouncing the L.I.D. for violating agreements, for his thunderously and with brandishing of fists announcing that our two organizations had secretly banded together against the rest of the conference.

Either the National Student League is convinced that our two organizations can work together harmoniously, in which case it will try to avoid situations in which the two organizations are pitted against each other; or it too, like its parent body, can only see a joint action as an additional opportunity to disrupt the Student L.I.D.

The National Student League

By JOSEPH STAROBIN

Member, Conference Executive Committee

OF the origin of the conference, we know only that several representatives of various organizations some time last fall envisioned a huge gathering of perhaps a thousand students to discuss their problems with particular reference to off-campus politics and perhaps, to set up a glorious "clearing board of youth associations." Of the eleven organizations participating nominally only four have enrolled student membership, the L.I.D., N.S.L., Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. Of the others, there is that unique "united frontier" the International Student Service, nothing more than a travel bureau interested in liberal movements because of the clientele they offer. "We do," Mr. Holland confided to me, "occasionally send groups of students into the camps, to live among the depressed classes." There are also such ubiquitous "mass" organizations as the American Student Union, the International Committee for International Cooperation or the National Council of Student Christian Association, letterhead groups with a great deal of money and dignity. Groups like the War Resisters League and the League of Nations Association have influence in middle class politics but are without following. In fact, all these organizations including the Ys had not student delegates in any number of local areas. They were represented by their professional agitators, men and women, who because they are hired by their national offices, or else, remuneration being of no consequence, devote their time to snob hobbies.

We do not know where the money came from for the confab. Most of the arrangements were made on the q. t., including the promise to the spacious U. S. Chamber of Commerce that no voting or resolutions would be tolerated. We do not know on what basis the speakers and leaders of the study sessions were chosen; nor for what good or bad reasons, that fox-terrier of a man, and maestro of parliamentary procedure, Professor Clyde Eagleton of N.Y.U., was invited as permanent chairman of the conference.

One thousand students were expected and about three hundred came, of whom about a half were L.I.D. and

N.S.L. members. Since our leaders felt no need to elect, say, a Credentials Committee and go through that Communistic and un-American procedure of reporting back to the conference, it is impossible to analyze the composition of the other students.

The Executive Committee met on Friday afternoon before the opening session. As substitute for the N.S.L. member who knew these people from New York, I felt it necessary to tread easily. It did not take long to discover that everybody had agreed there was to be no discussion after any of the speeches and no resolutions. I was a trifle bewildered. Turning to Mr. J. P. Lash of the L.I.D., "Suggest Ed Stevens of the N.S.L. and I'll propose Monroe Sweetland of the L.I.D.; let's see what they'll do." Mr. Lash, a veritable dormouse of attention and cooperation, whispered to Miss Caples. That was the last we heard of student chairmen.

The N.S.L. and L.I.D. had had a joint meeting just prior to the political symposium in the evening session. J. P. Lash had delivered a report of the afternoon executive meeting and said he had little hope for this conference, expected it to do nothing more than call a better one next year. It was here that the famous slogan "Joe Lash should be kicked in the teeth" was coined. By an L.I.D. member I was told.

The following morning found the committee of eleven assembled to work out a concrete plan of action, against R.O.T.C., against race discrimination, against retrenchment in education and for cooperation with the American League Against War and Fascism. The L.I.D. accepted this and suggested a criticism of the N.R.A. labor codes and action against fascist trends in the government, which the N.S.L. agreed to. It was decided, however, that if the N.S.L. and L.I.D. representatives at the executive meeting at noon could secure a promise that resolutions would be allowed, and that the evening session would be devoted to discussion from the floor on matters of program and continuation, the leaflet would not be distributed but rather presented as an N.S.L.-L.I.D. statement of position.

The conference had spent the morning listening to no less than six consecutive speakers, ranging from Dean Donham of the Harvard Law School to Jay Lovestone. Reconvening after lunch (the gentle clatter of knives and

forks, words dribbled off the tongue like sweet peas) we discussed the proposals to allow resolutions and discussion from the floor. No less a gentleman than Rodman threatened to leave the conference if it legislated anything. Professor Eagleton swore we were breaking pledges to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. They rambled and refused to discuss concrete motions on procedure. Not until it was made very clear that there was a huge sentiment for concreteness did the executive agree to the evening discussions from the floor. In view of this we decided not to publish the leaflet.

The fifteen Saturday afternoon round tables really indicated the sentiment of the students. People felt that fresh air had forced its way into the conference halls.

Despite an adult chairman and an invited speaker a good deal of student discussion took place. The round tables on Nationalism, Fascism, War Resistance, Trade Union, Control of Armaments, went on record in favor of supporting the American League Against War and Fascism. Everywhere the solid, concrete attitude of the N.S.L. prevailed over vaporous, nodding ambiguity of other groups.

Refreshed by this experience, the conference strode into its pivotal session, the discussion of program and continuations. The astute Professor Eagleton ruled that there would be no points of order, procedure of information. He decided that organization would be discussed before program. Of course, the students howled. Speaker after speaker lashed into this tactical waste of time. The professor gasped and reversed his decision. Here, George Abernathy, Wisconsin, of the Y.M.C.A. presented a program very similar to that of the L.I.D. and N.S.L. but less specific and much weaker.

Immediately thereafter Joe Cohen presented the joint N.S.L.-L.I.D. statement. Speech and counter speech. Rodman, of the A.S.U. insisted on maintaining the need for a united front without a program. Professor Eagleton saw his chance. He posed the vote not on the N.S.L.-L.I.D. position but rather a motion of his own allowing the executive to formulate a program on the basis of the discussion on the floor. I voted along with Lash and other L.I.D. leaders in the affirmative. The floor was confused. The N.S.L. began to shout "Down." It was too late. It was Donald Henderson, criticizing me sharply, who predicted that the leaders of the L.I.D., despite their agreement with the N.S.L. would grow faint of heart in the executive; that whereas there was a real majority for a militant program on the floor, in the executive the N.S.L. would be hopelessly outvoted.

The prediction came true. The Y.M.C.A. presented an emasculated program including such a gem as "favoring a good government operating equally for the benefit of all." As for the leaders of the L.I.D., Lash, Miss Caples and Sweetland, they were as changed people. No amount of prodding could get them to fight for a militant program. They developed a theory, that although they were heartily behind the American League, it would split the conference. They hemmed and hiccuped. Caught between Scylla and Charybdis, they tried to tread water.

As a concession I proposed that the executive recommend cooperation with the American League *not as a matter of program* but as a part of the Continuations activity.

Not a murmur of support. Realizing my error earlier in the evening, I resolved to fight for a fuller program and to thoroughly expose the L.I.D. two-timers.

The sober quiet of the Sunday morning allowed every group to reconnoiter. Many were sarcastically recalling Norman Thomas' plea for "integrity in maintaining agreements between student organizations." The Committee of three assigned by the Executive Committee wrangled for every clause and could not agree.

After a radio speech by Secretary Wallace and a talk by Eichelberger of the League of Nations Association, the reports of the study sessions were read. I asked that the formulated program be read to the audience. Professor Eagleton faltered and passed the ball to none other than our own fullback, J. P. Lash. The latter considered that it would be inadvisable to do that at the present time. I called for the minutes of the Executive which had expressly provided that the program be presented to the floor in the morning. The secretary, Miss Shoemaker of the L.I.D., declined to read the minutes. When Professor Eagleton ruled me out of order and several guards approached to throw me out I appealed the decision of the chair, but Frank Olmsted of the War Resisters League and assistant secretary of the conference, refused to take the chair. When I called for Henson to produce the program, it transpired that he was safely in one of the corridors.

This is what Mrs. Eunice Clark Rodman in the *New Republic* of Jan. 17 refers to, in her gentle way, as our "annoying habit of jumping up on the floor when someone was making a speech and insisting that the conference support the American League Against War and Fascism." Another meeting of the Executive took place Sunday noon. On the concrete motion that the Executive propose cooperation with the American League, the vote was twelve to two. It was decided twelve to one to read the program and decisions of the Executive the very last thing on the order of business, without comment or discussion. "It will be more fitting" said Mr. Holland, "merely to have applause!"

The afternoon was devoted to a monologue by the philosopher M. R. Cohen on "the Good Life," and to a uproaring militant speech by Reinhold Niebuhr, largely an attack upon the Communist Party. Mr. Rodman, in the *Nation* of Jan. 17 says, "The audience was visibly stirred. The delegates had almost forgotten their factionalism. . . . The continuations plan was read. . . . Opposition had pretty well died out. . . . Suddenly the leader of N.S.L. jumped to the platform, interrupting the concluding words of the chairman . . . and announced that . . . the program had been emasculated . . . that the meeting in Washington signified nothing."

As a matter of fact, Joseph Cohen did the most reasonable thing under the circumstances. He criticized the proceedings in intelligible English, pointed out the breach of faith by the L.I.D. and announced that the N.S.L. *would stay in the united front and hold each organization to activity on the basis of even an emasculated program.* Which brought applause, Mr. Rodman, not the cry "Tar and feather the agitator!"

For Young America

By SELDEN RODMAN

Editor, Common Sense

I AM very glad to accept the courtesy of the National Student League and express my opinion of the *National Conference of Students in Politics* in the *Student Review's* symposium. I say "courtesy" because it is well known in advance that my views will differ sharply with those to be expressed by the leaders of the N.S.L. and the L.I.D.

To make my own position clear at the outset I will briefly summarize the objectives and its methods of the organization which I represent. New America, of which Young America is the youth section, is an educational and functional organization whose sole aim is to abolish completely the profit system (capitalism) and replace that system with a planned and democratically controlled social economy which will enable all the people to enjoy the highest possible standard of living and the fullest possible cultural development. It is "functional" because it intends to effect that change in no haphazard fashion, but rather to train a nation-wide disciplined personnel which will be ready to take over the machinery of government and production when sufficiently powerful to do so. It will appeal to all those whose economic interest and social necessity leads them in the direction of destroying the old order and building the new. These, we feel, are the people who perform tasks essential to the development and maintenance of society—industrial and distributive workers, farmers, the professions, and particularly youth, since young people have no stake in the old order and are largely free from the dogmas and disillusionment of those who have witnessed the failure of the American radical movement in the past.

It is probably because we propose to commit the unpardonable sins of speaking the American language and concentrating on the job to be done in our own country, that the orthodox sects are beginning to call us "fascist." It is very easy to sling that word around. Easy, and dangerous—for the slingers. An absurd article in the *New Masses*, purporting to give an account of the Washington Conference, refers to the small part we took in this manner and draws the conclusion that we demonstrated our failure quite conclusively.

I was a member of the Executive Committee of the conference from its inception. With the exception of the N.S.L., which took little interest in our plans and sent a representative to only one of our many meetings, all groups agreed that there would be no legislation or resolutions whatsoever at the conference. The L.I.D. was particularly insistent on this point. I myself was opposed to this in the beginning, but since the matter was so important to see the policy carried out. I have been myself quite unpopular with both the N.S.L. and the L.I.D. (which had changed its mind

at the opening of the convention) by speaking in behalf of the agreed purposes of the conference from the platform.

The adoption of a definite program for the future has two disadvantages. First, it alienates the already participating groups which do not agree to that platform. Secondly, it makes it practically impossible to bring in the neutral and conservative students (i.e., the average students) to future conferences. For example, the average student does not regard the R.O.T.C. as a menace. Some are even dependent on it for their financial support while in college. The student must first be convinced that it is a menace. Such a conference would be a good place to begin convincing him. But presumably the N.S.L. and the L.I.D. do not feel that it is important to convince this average student. If he does not agree, he is a "fascist." It is also possible that some students might take a more radical position than the Marxists: namely that the R.O.T.C. should be encouraged and won over to a revolutionary role.

As for the program itself, I would object to it as being too conservative. It centers about certain abuses of the capitalist system and ignores the root of the evil. It may be necessary to appeal to backward and ignorant elements of the population on this basis as a starter, but I submit that the student is more intelligent. A large proportion of the students might conceivably agree to a resolution demanding public ownership of industry, for instance. They might even organize to achieve such an objective. When such an objective is achieved, the abuses will be automatically eliminated. Meanwhile an appeal on such questions as nationalism, the Negro problem, etc., only serve to arouse the prejudices of some and to deflect the interest of the many from the real enemy (capitalism) and the real objective (social ownership and control of the means of production).

When I went down to Washington I felt that a "united front" on such issues was of doubtful value. I came back convinced that it is positively harmful. For what was its result? The groups whose members take such minimum policies for granted (N.S.L., L.I.D., Y.M.C.A., Young America, etc.) leave as they came. The others, neutral or conservative students, are immediately alienated by the tactics of that element which tries to force the unwelcome program down their throats. At the close of the conference when the leaders of the N.S.L. were on the platform, shouting against the chairman's voice about the "American League Against War and Fascism" (an organization probably never heard of by the average student outside of New York), the effect achieved was, of course, quite contrary to the one desired. The delegates were antagonized; the "united front" ceased even to be a united front of Communists and Socialists; and the conservative students departed, no doubt thinking that fascism would be a great improvement over such a demonstration of rampant individualism.

The Canadian Student Movement

THE Student League of Canada is now one year old.

It grew out of a vague organization known as the Student League for Social Reconstruction in the University of Toronto. The original guiding spirits of the latter group limited membership to only the rarest of pure Marxists. They shuddered at the fate of the oppressed masses. Meanwhile, they were not workers, but students. Students, according to them, have no problems of their own—workers alone have problems. The result was that a $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent increase in fees was put across during this period but the League was impotent. Not a murmur was raised. No wonder then that its membership fell to about twenty. The Student League of Canada had isolated itself from the student body as a whole, and was regarded as a sect of impossible "revolutionary" theorists.

There followed a semester and a half of discord within the League. During this period a majority of the members were convinced that only by rooting ourselves primarily in the schools on student problems could growth and strength follow. However, in that first year, only one genuine activity was undertaken. An anti-war mass meeting was held during the final part of the year and it was rather well attended. The local press came out the next day with headlines "STUDENTS MOCK THE WAR DEAD". We immediately issued a leaflet not very temperately suggesting that the latter-day activities of the capitalist class were the real mocking of the war dead. Quite a bit of student opinion was aroused on the campus. Then came the summer months.

During the summer our orientation became clearer. Conflict between us and the off-campus "revolutionists" became sharper. The latter were finally ousted. The internal difficulties thus safely put away, the League could settle down to become a student organization, without neglecting working class activities and perspective.

The Student League came to the campus this fall with a rather disheartening heritage. It had no record of struggles (excepting the incident of the anti-war meeting, which was not followed up). The majority of the student body had been antagonized. At this time, a curious incident occurred which sheds light on the university, if not the League.

In the University College Parliamentary Club (a mock parliament based on the federal House of Commons) a party under the name of "The Communist Party of University College" was set up. Incidentally the Communist Party of Canada is illegal, but the Speaker ruled that the Communist Party of University College is legal. Within a week after its formation, the Communist Party found itself His Majesty's Most Loyal Opposition, on a program of "real Socialism." It succeeded in defeating the so-called Radical-Socialist government (which advocated "socialism with guts" and repealed the Sunday Blue Laws) and became His Majesty's (Dis-)Loyal Government. The situation had now become serious. All press

reporters, including those of the campus paper, were excluded from the sessions of the House. The officials of the Club were warned from above that the Communist Party of University College must be defeated or the Club would be dissolved. At the next session, the House was packed by the cautious controlling clique. Nevertheless, a bill providing for non-contributory social insurance was passed. But a resolution of non-confidence was pushed through at the last minute by a narrow majority and the C. P. U. C. was relegated to the back benches for the time being. Scholastic and social disaster had been averted.

At about the same time a feeling that an organization advocating "active pacifism" should be founded on the campus was being built up by a feature writer in the undergraduate newspaper. The Student League took the initiative in calling together a number of the more prominent students and a Provisional Anti-War Committee was set up. We proposed the foundation of an Anti-War Society, and put forward the program of the British Student Anti-War Council. Some of the members of the Provisional Committee who were also members of the Movement for a Christian Social Order, objected to the word "Imperialist" on the grounds that it was a "Communist" word, although they said they agreed with the principle behind it. They conceived war as due to the hate of man for man and a departure from the Word of the Lord, and little headway could be made. However, we decided to shelve our differences for the time being, and a meeting attended by more than a hundred students was held. At this meeting, an Anti-War Society was set up. As yet this organization has done very little, beyond holding another meeting at which J. F. White, editor of the *Canadian Forum*, a liberal publication, spoke. The fight against the C.O.T.C. is so far carried on only on paper. The membership greeted the proposal for an anti-war demonstration on Armistice Day with considerable coldness. Still, the possibilities for activating the organization are fair, depending largely on our ability to convince them of the necessity of carrying through some concrete activity.

The League carried on its first economic struggle during the latter part of last semester. The University authorities decided, for the first time, to enforce a ruling requiring that all fees due in the first term must be paid up before proceeding with the work of the second term. They set the deadline at December 21st, and threatened expulsion for all students who had not paid up by that time. The Student League immediately took up the issue, charged discrimination against the poorer students, put out a leaflet and called a mass protest meeting of students. The undergraduate newspaper immediately ran an editorial on the question in which it was stated that there had been no discrimination since letters of the contemplated action had been

who were in arrears of fees. It accused the Student League of sensationalism. The whole action was characterized as a "gesture of contempt for authority." The humour column of the paper dug up all our past. To quote: "Reports were denied that the new Student League Administration is run from Moscow. Moscow is run by the new Student League Administration, stated Mr. Forsook, the new dictator."

The mass meeting was attended by about thirty students, nearly all of them League members. However, a Student Committee was set up and a petition was circulated on the campus. Other campus organizations were approached. The reformist Co-operative Commonwealth Federation Club claimed that they were a purely political organization and could not take part in the economic struggles of the students. However some of the rank and file Federationists united with us on the issue. The Executive of the University College Literary and Athletic Society, representing about eight hundred students, endorsed the petition and forwarded a protest resolution to the Registrar. By getting behind the scenes of the undergraduate paper and writing our own "news items," interviewing popular people on the campus and making sure the interviews were published in the campus paper as we wrote them, we managed to swing the opinion of the campus paper definitely in favour of the issue. Great popular support was won. But owing to our own inactivity in collecting signatures after opinion became favourable, only some two hundred names were collected on the petition lists. These were presented along with a long letter explaining our stand to a special committee meeting to reconsider the question. This committee decided to postpone the last date for payment to January 5.

It was found that three to four hundred students had not paid up. The downtown press ran scathing editorials and screaming headlines "VARSITY FEE CHEATING LAID TO REDS," intimated about three hundred Communists invading the school, and so on.

The date was further extended to January 10. By this time, most of the students who were in arrears succeeded in borrowing or stealing enough money to pay up. About thirty students were finally expelled. Very little had as yet been done towards reinstating them. It will be seen that even on such a fundamental issue the Canadian Student League is too weak to act swiftly and effectively.

On a national scale, the Student League is still weak. The group at Toronto has only twenty-five members. There is a good foundation for a group at the University of Manitoba, but they have only about ten members as yet. In two or three other Canadian universities, we have good contacts, and if these can be built up, a broad national organization will arise. Our publication, *The Spark*, is distributed fairly widely and will be a major factor in building the organization.

Our first real struggle resulted in a victory from the point of view of material gain; we have exploded the "red bogey"; we have built a firm foundation for future victories.

M. WAYMAN

New Utrecht Students Strike

(Continued from page 10)

most obvious consideration in a discussion of the G.O.'s reactionary conduct is the fact that at no time did the G.O. executive come out openly in full support of the struggle and offer to lead the student struggle further in accordance with the students' own militant program.

The fight was brought to a head Tuesday morning when Potter had the police detail arrest four students who were handing out leaflets before the school. Students rushed from classes to the open-air meeting which was waiting for them. A mass delegation of over fifty was chosen to visit Mayor LaGuardia and present the demands of the students, which now included: Free Lunches for Children of Unemployed Parents, Immediate Release of Four Arrested Students, Immediate Reinstatement of Morris Oshatz.

LaGuardia refused to act. He listened to the case as presented by Joseph Greenspan, a New Utrecht alumnus, and heard that a woman who had previously worked three years in the New Utrecht lunchroom had come forward to aid the students win their fight. "Mrs. Kelly"—thus she prefers to be known for the present—was ready to tell a city investigating committee that only the cheapest grade of meat and eggs was purchased for the students, that two sandwiches were made from one egg and sold for 15 cents, that salmon was watered to spread over thirteen 8-cent sandwiches from a single can. LaGuardia heard that apples were bought six for 10 cents and sold to the students for 5 cents apiece; that the cocoa recipe was four cans of evaporated milk to a large container—and the rest water. LaGuardia heard that Potter ate in a private room where he was served porterhouse steaks and whole chickens—sometimes two if entertaining a guest, that three cigars (at 3 for \$1) bought at the corner candy-store are on his table-cloth every noon, and that all this is paid for by the lunchroom fund, by the students. LaGuardia referred the delegation to Paul Blanshard, Commissioner of Accounts, and to the Board of Health. He refused to act.

The quality of food in the lunchroom had been noticeably improved by Thursday. But students still refused to buy, determined that continued struggle should win for them every demand. A parents' delegation called on Dr. Potter Friday morning and asked that their sons' and daughters' demands be granted. Potter had his police throw them out!

A major victory was scored on the demand for lower lunchroom prices and better quality of food. Defeated by the students' refusal to abandon the boycott despite the coming Regents and finals, despite the suspensions, arrests and threats, the administration cut prices in the lunchroom. Now it offers a "lunch-box" containing two sandwiches, a piece of pie, a piece of fruit and a piece of pickle for 15 cents. But Potter still refuses to admit that the boycotting students had forced the change. He hung a little sign in the lunchroom to the effect that the new lunch-box system was instituted at the request of the (of all things!) G.O. executive committee!

HERBERT WITT,

Former Editor, *New Utrecht Nuhs*.

Utah Students See For Themselves

WHEN "Sparks" decided to see for itself, the Sheltered Life turned strained and hectic. "Sparks" is the club devoted to the study of contemporary problems formed by seven undergraduates in the University of Utah this semester. In mid-November we held our first open meeting; our faculty sponsor spoke on "Russia's challenge to students." "Sparks" multiplied. A week later, fifty came to hear a prominent downtown clergyman analyze "The Menace of Hitlerism." Among the fifty were several members of the faculty. Something new was happening on the Utah campus. Last year a liberal-minded student club had been dissolved because it invited one of the city's radical labor leaders to address its members. The radical did not set foot on the campus. We hoped that times had changed, for our next speaker was to be Paul Crouch, National Miners Union organizer. There had been a devastating mine strike in Carbon County in our own State; it had been broken just a short time ago. The newspapers had printed the mine owners' side of it, and little even of that. We wanted to hear what one of the strike leaders had to say.

We learned of a coal field in our own State which was richer potentially than any other in the United States, yet which was owned by men who paid its miners so little they could not live through the summer slack season without seeking government relief. We heard of men who toiled dangerously months on end, yet were forced to keep their children home from school because they could not buy them shoes to walk with. We heard, many for the first time, the ancient tale of "Company towns," where miners are paid when and if the company pleases, in company "scrip" money—good only in the high-priced company stores or to pay the exorbitant bills for company water, company light, and even the company coal they themselves mine each day.

Is it any wonder that Paul Crouch had scarcely stopped speaking when a girl student sprang up and said: "I move we go down to Carbon County and see for ourselves!"

The resolution passed unanimously. Fifteen volunteered. Our faculty sponsor offered chaperonage and a car. More cars were promised. But with dawn came reaction. Instructors of history, political science and economics developed sudden passions to spend the week-end in the family bosom, or on mysterious trips elsewhere, or to write important research papers. "Liberal" professors objected that it was 120 miles to Helper, Carbon County. But many had been known to drive 750 miles to see a football game in Los Angeles.

Ten of the fifteen remained after all sorts of wavering. By late afternoon they had fixed their plans. Then, for the first time, and after students had safely scattered for Thanksgiving, we heard from President George Thomas. Ignoring the faculty sponsor, he summoned the club's president, Lois Smith, into his office and fulminated. The

idea was preposterous, juvenile, the club was suspended, the trip was off.

Forbidden to go as students of the University of Utah, as members of "Sparks," we decided to go as American citizens with Yankee curiosity and Yankee stubbornness.

The delegation drove into Helper with early darkness. Miners are trudging home down the windy main street. We ask one the direction and then casually:

"Are you a union man?"

"Sure, I belong to two."

"Two?"

"I had to join the scab union to hold my job."

The investigation is on!

First, we must find two respectable hotels, one for three girls with us, one for the men. It is no easy task to discover even one in a strange town which lives from the earnings of three thousand miners. We decide to lose no time. We proceeded directly to the office of the National Miners Union.

Soon the little hotel bedroom which served the organizer and his wife as both office and home is filled with men.

They are as anxious to tell as we to listen. So many begin talking at once that we must take control. Tony Bonacci, laughing little Italian, is allowed to speak first, from his seat on the floor. Last summer, because he was an ex-serviceman, Tony had gone with an N.M.U. official to ask Mayor Rollo West of Price if the National's men could join the American Legion's Fourth of July parade. The United Mine Workers of America, A. F. of L., had been invited, so why not they. But the Mayor told them both to get the hell out, had, in fact, seized Tony by the throat and given him two minutes to leave town.

"What did you say, Tony?"

"I tell him it always take five minutes to start my car."

But they had to hold their own parade, 4000 strong, in Helper. When the strike came, Tony was one of the 200 arrested without warrant. If he had gone fishing that day, as he wanted, instead of listening to his wife and setting off for work, he wouldn't have spent the next night in the "bullpen." Now he can't get a job. Blacklisted. Why? He had spoken once at a strikers' mass meeting.

A husky, white-teethed man speaks from the crowded doorway. Because he had been on the strikers' defense committee and rented rooms to N.M.U. officials, the mayor and a squad of deputies had three times broken into his house at night, all armed, without a warrant. His wife was struck down in the hallway by the gun-clasping fist of a swearing deputy. He had to sit in a chair while his wife lay groaning and bleeding on the floor. The mayor held a gun in his face and promised to bl-

head off if he stirred. Nothing was found, no explanations made. The N.M.U. officials were already in jail, so that searching for them could not provide an excuse. After waking the kids and setting them crying, the law withdrew.

But why hadn't the miners waited for the NRA? Half a dozen tell us at once. The NRA codes fix wages, hours; the miners had wanted the removal of conditions so unfair that the NRA took their absence for granted. Laws were already in the statute books of Utah forbidding abuses they still suffered from. But laws are made in Salt Lake, and we are one hundred and thirty miles away, in Carbon County. We are face to face with men who had been fired because they had asked for the legally required check weighman, or because they had agitated for safety devices, regular pay days, payment for dead work and in legal tender. The code which has been signed since the strike between the operators and the UMWA men (one of whom, we are told, has never been down a mine in his life), makes no mention of dead-work. On the contrary, it outlaws the strike, the one tactic by which these miners have been able to get payment for such work assured. In place of the strike, the code sets up the closed shop and the old infamous "check-off." A miner must join the U.M.W.A. and the U.M.W.A. only; just to make sure, his heavy initiation and monthly dues are automatically deducted from his slim check if he is working, or accumulated until he is, and then deducted. U.M.W.A. leaders, they say, are not working for their health; there must be regular dues to pay their fine salaries. The new code, by the way, actually means a twenty-cent reduction in the average day's pay. And even its authority ends before the slack season. The threat of lay-offs in February looms as large now as in the past years.

A tall Yankee with a soot streak down his chin gets the floor. He has been told, this very morning, to join the U.M.W.A. in three days or quit. And he's pretty sore. What kind of a country is this anyway? And now the checkweighman they got after the strike has been taken off again. Most of the men in his mine are a lot of sheep; they won't do nothin'.

These men would talk the night through. But some of us want to visit a "youth meeting," and the rest to meet miners in their homes before their early bedtime.

We drove on to Rosey Pozun's. Rosey was the girl knocked unconscious while holding the American flag in the picket line. She brings us in to a clean hot kitchen; she has just come home herself from the day's table-waiting in a Helper restaurant. The girl is perhaps eighteen, beautiful, with slow, abundant European beauty. She tells her story simply, almost coldly:

"They wouldn't let us up the Canyon, so we picketed a mile out of Helper. A truck full of deputies drove up . . . One of them stood up in the truck, put on a mask, said 'Let 'em have it, boys,' and threw something . . . I stepped back off the road. There was smoke in my face and I couldn't see anything. Suddenly something hit me hard on the head. I came to in a doctor's office; doctor was sewing stitches in my head."

pa Pozun comes from the bedroom, where, we learn,

four of his eight children are already sleeping. He is in dungaree and undershirt. Red-faced and bristle-haired, an Austrian by birth, he has Rosey's sense for realities but none of her calm. He stutters with indignation as he tells us what Rosey could not see. A deputy had swung a rifle from his vantage on the truck, caught Rosey's head with the butt. Many in the picket line saw it happen, despite the blinding tear gas. The man who did it lives in Carbon, a poolroom loafer. He still boasts of clubbing "that goddamned hunky." Pozun's red face grows purple. He has worked in Carbon County mines for twenty-seven years, married, raised a family. He paid dues in the U.M.W.A. from its beginnings here until 1929. Then it ceased to hold meetings, though officials came regularly to collect money. He dropped out and when the new union came this year, joined it, followed it out on strike. Now he can get no work, unless he gives up the N.M.U. and returns to the old union, recently revived. His oldest boy, Chris, slides in and nods agreement. He, too, is a miner and blacklisted with his father. Both are "machine men"; for each block of coal, twelve by fourteen feet, which they cut and drill, they have been getting four dollars (once they got ten); out of this they must buy tools and powder, at high prices, from the company store. Many a day, when their drills cut through hard barren rock, they made nothing at all. Often they worked in chilling water—"up to our belly buttons," says Papa Pozun.

Out once more into the brilliant desert starlight. More narrow roads, the debris of mine towns showing untidily along their sides as the car's rays search the ruts. It is midnight before we reach our hotel. It is three before many of us, tired of talking with officials and with miners in the night restaurants, tumble into bed.

In the morning we drive down and up another canyon to another camp, where the August strike had been 100 per cent strong. Here we are introduced to the superintendent. He poohpoohs the thought of our going down a dirty mine. Why soil our clothes? He will tell us all we need to know. We are herded into his little office.

Small, energetic, positive, he fills us with warnings against the "Communist" NMU; he piles documents upon us to prove its leaders were deepest red, its rank and file "foreigners and ruffians." Armed bands of them had terrorized his staff, even chased his own family up to the door of the mine offices. It had been necessary for him to appear himself, with two guns, and chase the rabble away. (An N.M.U. official had been prepared to swear this superintendent had been so drunk the day the strike was at its peak here that the sheriff had been forced to take his guns and deputy's badge away from him on complaint of his own men. But we do not think it wise to ask him about that.) All is well now, though. The N.M.U. has been driven out. He had fired the last dozen a week ago. If there were others left he will find them, and out they'll go. He wishes he could do more than that to them, he says, his face venomously thoughtful. There is a pause. Then he grows brisk again. It is all over, and the U.M.W.A. is 100 per cent here. They are putting out more coal than anytime in the last seven years.

Morning and half the afternoon have melted magically away, and at four we are due back in Helper, there to

interrogate miners at an open "mass trial" called by the N.M.U. We gently remind our guides. The square face of the superintendent lengthens a full inch and for a round minute his speech fails. If he had known of this before, he would have had nothing to do with us. We protest that we are merely trying to hear both sides, and that we had taken it for granted he knew of the meeting. Handbills have been out since early morning, even his fellow guide has one. But he has been too busy showing us everything to read it. He had trusted us; and all along we had it in our hearts to listen to that bunch of Reds, that union that was no union. There were no words for it, and the superintendent pounded his knee with a great red hand. There was a telegram he was expecting back in town; would we drive him right back without delay? We did.

N.M.U. officials are gloomy. The mass trial is soon to open. Blocks away, hundreds of miners are standing in long lines to get their Saturday paychecks before the window drops at five. We will get no crowd. Saturday afternoon is the worst day for a mass meeting anyway. If only we had been here two days ago, they say, when two thousand assembled to hear an NRA administrator tell them if section 7a of the coal code, giving men the right to bargain through unions of their own choosing, meant anything for them. (At the last moment a telegram had come—the administrator had been suddenly "summoned to Washington.")

Despite fears, however, nearly two hundred men and women, tall girls in blue overalls, and even some children—many pinch-faced, some coatless on this December day have pushed in to sit on the rough benches of the Roller Rink. By five o'clock there are at least three hundred, and the numbers continue to swell. The meeting had been called so suddenly, many are just hearing of it.

Our faculty sponsor takes charge and asks all who have anything to say to come up. He interrogates while the rest of us sit behind him on the platform, scribbling frantically, stopping only to add other question to his. There is an endless stream of testimony. When we had asked Geo. Yager, Salt Lake A. F. of L. official, to put us in touch with the N.M.U. here, he had bawled over the telephone: "You don't think there's any other union down there, do you? You don't think the N.M.U. is a union, do you?" Perhaps it wasn't; but here in Helper were hundreds of miners, working and workless, desperately loyal to it.

Ten-year-old Carl Nemenich tells of a score of deputies breaking into his father's home suddenly at night, terrorizing the household, threatening his little sister with a revolver, and, as they left, trampling the garden and turning loose hens and rabbits to be killed by the dogs. Next morning there were whiskey bottles in the yard. Carl is alert, confident, not the least disturbed by the rapid cross-questions we fire at him. He knows what he has seen. A dignitary of the Mormon Church led the raid; he is also a mine foreman at Castle Gate.

A tall American, his arm trussed in splints and new bandages, climbs the platform. He is a "nipper," a man who couples coal-cars in mine shafts. His story is unrehearsed. It happened only yesterday. Rails get slippery,

he explains, so that clean sand must be thrown on them regularly. No sand was available when he went to work in his mine in the morning. He told the pit boss, but no sand appeared. Hours later, a car jumped the track and crushed his arm against a prop. He was the fourth man to be hurt in that mine that day.

Man after man testifies to blacklisting, firing, intimidation of all who will not join the "company union." Others tell of violence dealt them during the strike, or of being forced to pay rent for company shacks whether they lived in them or not. Several told of getting fifty-five cents a ton for coal which sells in Salt Lake for \$8.50. There are men who have to carry their own drinking water into the mine with them, for none is supplied.

Six, seven o'clock came and still we listen, question, write. The miners would stay all night, and so would many of us if we could. But all except two must be back in Salt Lake that night. The two stay on, the rest of us take hurried leave.

In a little Jap restaurant we snatch our first food since seven that morning and rapidly compare impressions before setting off. Notes have still to be made readable and correlated, of course; and many of us will not agree, now or later, on several minor points. But of this all of us are certain: there *is* an N.M.U., and it *has* been fighting for the legitimate rights of miners here. Some of those rights it has established; for others it is still campaigning. But its existence is in peril. There is an open agreement between the U.M.W.A.—which seems to have become if not a company union at least very much like one—and the coal operators and owners to force a closed shop and one union in Carbon County, in direct violation of the NRA code. NRA officials seem to be doing nothing about it. As for the strike, there is much that will never be known now, but the weight of evidence goes to show that the striking miners had used peaceful means and been broken by warlike ones. It was the State of Utah and the County of Carbon which had suspended civil liberties, broken laws and given sadists violent weapons and the excuse to use them. As for the "Communism" of the N.M.U., we noted that 85 per cent of Carbon had voted for Roosevelt in the last election, and about one-half of one per cent for William Z. Foster. But, unless those in authority in our alleged republic move quickly to aid those men whose stories we had listened to so often in the last two days, the next vote will be very different—if, indeed, the miners elect to endure until another vote.

We chug out of town in the darkness, under the looming cliffs, with real unwillingness. One does not listen for two days to countless tales of human suffering, heroism and endurance, and not grow into kinship with those who lived them.

And now once more we are "Sparks," reinstated by solemn conclave of the Dean's Council, forbidden further expeditions, editorialized and written-to-the-editor-about. Our superficial flighty little publicity jaunt is ended and the President's peace is restored. But for eight of us, Carbon County has been more genuinely educative and maturing, in two days, than all the profound textbooks and the brilliant lectures of all our college days at University of Utah.

DAVID BROWNSTON

A Cuban Diary

This is the second account sent us by Walter Relis. Originally sent to attend a general student conference in Havana, he remained to take active part in the liberation movement. He was twice arrested. This article was received before the second arrest. The telegram on the first page, sent by the new Cuban President in response to our cable, communicates his second release.

December 14th.

On December 12th our delegation presented a protest to Grau. Shephard, the spokesman, pointed out the difference between the government's promises and its deeds. He protested against the shooting of workers and students, especially against the Havana massacre on September 29th, when workers gathered to honor Julio Mella. Shephard denounced the fifty per cent law as dividing the working class. We left the palace and separated.

Early in the evening I was told that my comrades had been arrested. No one knew the reason because it was impossible to contact the arrested. I went to the central police station and demanded information. I was informed that the chief of police had just left and that I could not see the prisoners. This is a famous policy of the Grau government. No one responsible is ever around. And if someone is, he is not responsible.

I learned the police version of the story at the offices of the newspaper *Ahora*. "Arrests were made because of illegal participation in a meeting at which banners denouncing the Pan-American Conference and calling for a general strike were found." The editor mentioned to me that delegations from twenty-five organizations have already registered their protests with the paper. The Ala Izquierda led 100 students to the newspaper offices. En route, they were fired upon by soldiers. The chief of police and a member of the Student Directory handled the firing personally. The leaders of the Student Directory have become direct agents of the State in suppressing revolutionary activity.

The next day I received permission to visit the interior of Principe Fortress. On reaching there, once more I found the "responsible" officer absent. However, before evening I was permitted to see Shephard, Runge and the two Cuban comrades.

I was led into the subterranean section of the prison—reserved for revolutionary workers and students. The upper sections are allotted to bourgeois political prisoners. Only these are provided with cots for sleeping.

Here I learned what had really happened. They had arrived at the Melian home after the interview at the palace. There were twenty men and women waiting for them in this house. The Melian family was mourning over the death of their Communist son recently murdered by the A.B.C. Soldiers surrounded the house and placed under arrest.

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the day of the raid it was announced that the government had shifted to the "left." Guiteras had forced the student to take a non-mediation position. With this, nced, "The revolution begins today." At the time

the press carried this statement, the Melian home was being raided.

Later I received Grau's answer to our protest in reply to our question, "What is your stand on the legalization of all working class organizations?" Eighteen hours after my comrades had been imprisoned, Grau informed me: "Absolute freedom has been granted all labor organizations."

December 22nd.

A demonstration of nearly 4000 students of Havana effectively contradicted the illusion fostered by the bourgeois press of the United States that the Grau government is supported by them. For the first time since the closing of the colleges three years ago, student opinion found opportunity of expression. The shouts raised were: "Down with the Grau government!" "Death to Batista!" The direct cause of the demonstration was the arrest and detention of eighty students of the Normal School of Havana yesterday when they attempted to remove the reactionary director of the school. The attempt was unsuccessful because of the company of soldiers stationed across the street.

Students of the Normal School met at their building. They determined to free their fellow students. About 1500 marched to the Institute of Havana to call out the students there. The doors had been barred by members of the Directorio Estudiantil, and no delegates were allowed to enter. At the very time, heated discussions were taking place in every class in the Institute. Members of the Ala Izquierda rose in the rooms and called upon their classmates to gather in the center of the school. Agitation went on in every cranny of the school; in the hallways, on the stairways, in the student organization offices. Soon all students gathered on the main stairway. The director came immediately to the bottom of the stairway. With outstretched hands he appealed for order. He was allowed to speak and asked for a return to class rooms. He offered to intercede on behalf of the imprisoned students. Then a member of the Ala called for a march to the palace to demand immediate release. An ocean of youths swept down the stairs, past the pleadings of the stout director, who stood with his hands upraised. On to the street they went, 200 strong, shouting: "Freedom for all student prisoners!" "Give us the head of Carbo!" As they turned the corner to the back of the palace they caught sight of the Normal School demonstration. A roar of greeting and the two columns dashed toward each other. The students cheered and embraced as the groups mingled. With the students from "Artes and Oficios," the San Alejandro School and the Industrial School—they were now 4000 strong.

At this moment, the employees of the "Henry Clay," American tobacco trust, hung a banner from their windows opposite the palace. It was inscribed, "Tobacco workers support Grau—long live the eighty per cent law." The students raised a shout of "haul it down." It remained in position until the demonstration surged upon the building. Hasty hands released it from the fourth floor and when it reached the crowd it was ripped to

pieces. Then back to the palace they went just as eighty striking Woolworth girls rounded the corner with placards: "Down with the imperialist Woolworth! Boycott the ten cent stores! Free student and worker prisoners!" This group had been attacked by police while picketing a Woolworth store. The students greeted them and joined them in their slogans—"Down with the Yankee imperialists!" Students and workers mingled. A member of the Ala pointed out that the Grau government was defending American imperialism when it broke up the picket lines of the Woolworth strikers. Cheers greeted him and individual shouts against American imperialism became the roar of the entire mass.

Civil and military authorities looked on from the balcony of the palace disregarding the shouts of "porristas," "assassins," hurled from below. The soldiers seized some students but were forced to release them. Grau appeared on the balcony, smiling. He began his prizefighter handshake in the air, but was stopped cold by the jeers from the crowd. He waved a sheet, ostensibly an order for release. "Now, now!" shouted the students, "we don't believe you!" Grau retreated into his machine gun-guarded palace. Even an armored car could not pierce the ranks of the demonstrators. Word came of the jailing of two more students in the central police station. The crowd stormed the building past the unresisting soldier guards. The police turned the students free. They then moved to the offices of the "brain trust," of Guiteras. All along the way windows opened and shouts of encouragement came down to them. The officials in the Department of Interior and War pleaded for patience. A girl member of the Ala addressed the students from the top of a new Packard parked there. Others chalked buildings and sidewalks with slogans. Within a half hour, soldiers began to fire at the demonstrators. The fire was intense and lasted five minutes, but with no casualties. The firing was intended only to disrupt the crowd. The students assembled again. Two sailors had been standing nearby waving to the students, their guns on the ground. The students rushed to them and raised them on their shoulders. Shouts of "Long live the soldiers and sailors who do not serve the exploiters," "Long live the Agrarian Anti-Imperialist Revolution." The two sailors distributed their bullets among the students.

The demonstrators then returned to the palace. This time they demanded also the release of the two members of the American delegation who have been in Principe Fortress for eleven days. A committee went to the Institute to inform the afternoon session of the events. 1200 were gathered there discussing the question and decided to remain in assembly until they received word of the release of the prisoners. An officer came from the palace and asked for a list of those to be freed. Among the first names were: Henry Shephard, Alfred Runge and Leonardo Sanchez, leader of the Cuban Communist Party. The officer promised release in twenty-four hours.

The eighty Normal School students were released with the leader of the Ala Izquierda, Ladislao Carvajal. It is expected that the two Americans will be released tomorrow.

January 12th.

I was prevented from speaking at a public meeting in the city of Caibarien on January 9th by order of the

military. The officer in charge stated that he had orders to prohibit all mass meetings. I was allowed to deliver a censored speech over the radio for five minutes. Two soldiers stood guard at the microphone.

I was arrested yesterday while taking pictures of the demonstration of the striking teachers. A student delegation from the Institute of Havana demanded my immediate release and threatened a demonstration. I was released immediately.

On January 10th I came back to Havana to take part in the Mella celebrations. The Ala commenced its demonstrations which joined that of the workers. There were about 200 students. The slaughter on September 29th (Mella ashes received) has intimidated the populace. The workers' demonstration had only 500. Before we had gone ten blocks, a policeman came running toward us discharging his pistol over our heads. Pandemonium, but ranks reformed. The cop lost nerve and retreated. Ten students ran after him, caught him and beat him up. They relieved him of his badge and gun. (Almost every day a soldier or a policeman loses his gun. That is how the Cuban students and workers are arming themselves.) The demonstration continued. We passed soldiers who raised clenched fists in greeting. The protest march was finally broken up by leveled rifles of a detachment of soldiers with five officers at the head.

WALTER RELIS.

Notes for Law Students

IT is safe to say that no one, barring bankers and politicians, has been subjected to more continued maltreatment than the lawyer. Veblen cut him with the compliment of having "no taint of usefulness." The pathos of his plight is equaled only by the inarticulateness with which he submits to abuse.

Swivel-chair talent cries for culture, reminding us in querulous tones of our lack. Chafee, of Harvard Law School, had his anguish telegraphed all the way from Chicago, during a convention of the Association of American Law Schools this past December, because two law students were unaware of the genealogy of the Montagues and Capulets and the feud existing between them. Llewellyn, of Columbia Law School, hesitated stating the precise character of the deficiency, but believed that "ability to read and write," among slightly more formidable requirements, would satisfy him.

What is significant, though subtle, in these and other exhortations to culture, is their source and target. They always originate among older members of the bar, and are intended for the younger or prospective counsellor. The fact is notorious that requirements, as late as 1911, for admittance to the study of law in New York (where requirements are among the strictest in the States) were comical in their laxity, less than the present high school course having been required. Yet, there was not the concerted call which one hears under our more stringent requirements. And while the pre-requisites of college education place no exciting premium upon culture, it is a measure of study which aging observers were not required to fulfill.

The position and prominence of the critics has caused confusion. I may be unduly suspicious in doubting them; still I believe the elementary impulse toward self-preservation lies behind the cry for culture's dear sake. Older practitioners are daily jolted from the notion of exclusiveness and dignity which prevailed in their day. A non-human age, with neither head nor health, with an insatiate lust for profit alone, has despoiled the profession of this dignity and placed it on a par with the trades. As early as 1848 the warning was sounded that the bourgeoisie had robbed of their haloes various pursuits hitherto regarded with awe and veneration, and had placed them in a class with wage-labor. Criticism should, therefore, be viewed as it was by the journeymen, toward the close of the feudal era, when the master-craftsmen closed the guilds to them. The charge, then as now, was against the skill and training of the younger men: a charge not prompted by fact, but by actual or threatened economic interference. Whether characterization as skilled tradesmen suits one's tastes and feelings for distinction is, at this moment, immaterial. Rules of economics which function in clear disregard of wishes have placed that imprint upon the professional.

I. In moments of prosperity our bar aims "to advance the science of jurisprudence, promote the administration of justice, uphold the honor of the profession of law, and encourage social intercourse among members of the bar." One might think the clique which speaks for the bar were composed of self-martyred altruists! When incomes are threatened, one may expect to hear a voice like Supreme Court Justice Thomas J. Cuff's: "Be selfish for your own pecuniary advantage, and don't be too anxious to advocate legislation that will take clients and fees from you." (Referring to the repeal of the 18th Amendment and the *Workmen's Compensation Act*!)

Germany had her Jungnordischer Bund before the ascension of the recent line of dictatorial chancellors. Gunther & Co. were filling volumes with that conceited myth, nordic superiority. It remained for Hitler, at the moment of Germany's turn to right, to betray the economic character of the nordic legend. Dr. Dix's frank statement of the condition of the legal profession, coupled with the 1500% increase in the number of German lawyers over the 1914 quota, is clear proof that Jewish lawyers were to be disbarred not so much because they are non-aryan or incompetent, but because it is sound for a state in the throes of crisis to declass one group of workers, and thereby win the support of another. When the bourgeoisie becomes morbidly fearful that a revolutionary movement will wrest from it its impoverishing hold upon the State, it is by clear-cut action that it defines those class-concepts: justice, law, order, national self-preservation. Whether of men or of commodities, the anarchy of production faces us at every turn. Exclusion is a life-death need to the continued existence of the bourgeoisie as the whip-hand of the State.

II. A moderately careful reading of cases on constitutional law will surely impress one with the puppet-like role which the American judiciary has played. At present, even in the instance of a slight remedial measure, such as a mortgage moratorium, the court sighs the routine cadences on the impairment of the obligation of contract,

and due process, and kisses the frayed edges of an ancient Constitution. The merger of corporations for the purpose of cutting overhead, i.e. reducing the number of jobs, etc., is not deemed to be against any anti-trust law nor against public policy. A basic realignment of economic power is impossible within the existing judicial framework. It is noteworthy that the Dred Scott decision would be sound law today were it not for the bloody price paid by a rising northern capitalism to crush southern feudalism—euphemistically, to make the thirteenth amendment part of the "supreme law of the land."

Legality—no matter what cogency the chimera assumes in theory—in effect, has nothing to do with the right of toilers to eat, of black men to be free, or of the oppressed to assemble and seek relief. It is a congealed mass of property-prejudices that yields to the most stirring human needs only after rigid reluctance.

III. The transition in our economic life from the untrammelled laissez-faire of the early industrial era to a manner of regulation in our present stage of finance capitalism, is clearly traceable in the decisions of the Supreme Court. It would be error to assign any benevolence to the change. The glaring contradiction between an increasingly socialized process of production and private appropriation which approximates piracy can be subdued only by a freer construction of the police power. Capitalism's will to live, even at the price of compromise, may yet prompt such construction.

The history of restrictive legal requirements runs consistently parallel to the history of industrial regulation.

Though the preceding analysis may be sketchy, its main outlines reveal the bench as the unfailing ally of American capitalism, and the bar as a scribbling, arguing artisan subjected to all the hurts of a wage-earner. The culture of which so much is spoken is safely embalmed in libraries and museums. Modern life, in actual fact, with all the sporadic culture-mongering, is weird, rapacious, and collectively insane. Why, then, their talk?

Remedies will, undoubtedly, keep "culture" alive; they will not save the bar from that arid, commercial distemper which afflicts the trades. So long as the state continues as an expression of class antagonisms, the bar will retain its commercial character. While both persist, it would be well, therefore, within our necessarily limited sphere, to guide its activities in a social direction. If a cultured bar is to have meaning other than as topic at banquets and conventions, its perspective must, henceforth, be definable less in terms of property and more in terms of humanity. Let us go back to the people out of whose innards we have sprung, to learn their hopes, their deprivations, their mass of potential greatness. If possible, let us place all incoming lawyers in the vortex of poverty or criminality, so that direct observation will teach what professors have somehow forgotten. Let them be drawn into the life of workers, farmers, jail-wardens, poets, etc., to serve a period of study supplementing the college routine. Until that is done, all pretensions to culture are false. Not until it is done will the sincerity of the search pass unquestioned.

JOHN POWERS.

BOOKS

Radetzky March. By Joseph Roth. Translated by Geoffrey Dunlop. The Viking Press. \$2.50.

The Kaiser Goes: The Generals Remain. By Theodor Plivier. Translated by A. W. Wheen. The Macmillan Company. \$2.

Time, Forward! By Valentine Kataev. Translated by Charles Malamuth. Farrar & Rinehart. \$2.50.

These foreign novels group themselves interestingly. In the form of chronicles they space off roughly the three significant phases of social change: decay, revolt, and development; and taken separately, each has the flavor and consistency peculiar to its historical *milieu*. In a season marked by an unusual number of distinguished novels, these three together with Brungraber's *Karl*—reviewed in the last issue—stand above the rest and impart an unmistakeable artistic validity to the modern revolutionary process.

When you read Roth's subtle and bitter novel you begin to understand the reason for the gay uniforms and rigid social amenities of the Dual Monarchy; for the symbolic significance of the beloved Emperor Franz Joseph, whose "elastic gait" set the style for a horde of sufferers from the gout; for the boredom and tawdriness behind the fleeting eyes of partners in a Viennese waltz; and for the inhibitions of feeling and action imposed by the tradition of the family, which reduced all and everything to a dull endless stasis benignly presided over by the monarch of divine right. A "liberal" sounds the warning: "Nitroglycerine . . . Not gold any longer! And in Francis Joseph's palace they often still burn candles. You see? Nitroglycerine and electricity will be the end of us. And we can't last much longer—not very much longer."

Roth writes simply, out of a knowledge of life that is full and diverse and unassuming, and he succeeds in achieving a deepening mood of decay in objective terms. He is of mature stature and his next novel will be hurriedly sought. What he can do with dynamic subject matter still remains an interesting mystery.

In Plivier's novel there is a tightening of tempo in keeping with the theme of revolt, a burst of virtuoso-like vigor in contrast to the stately and unruffled and more "symphonic" rhythms of *Radetzky March*. Here is writing that echoes pictures, for Plivier functions as a newsreel camera, eschewing "arty" effects, concentrating upon the black and white, knowing what to photograph, when to "shoot," and when to "cut." This is no novel in the fictional sense, but a novelization of events already in their historical pigeonholes. Dealing with the German crisis of October-November 1918, with the army sagging on the battle fields and the people girding themselves for revolution, he shows how the Social Democrats rode into power and squelched the workers' revolt led by the sailors of the fleet, barely averting a dictatorship of the proletariat.

The workings of the inner councils, of the High Command met to combat the crisis, are revealed with the authentic flavor of brilliant biography, and the details of

the sailors' uprisings are meaty, oozing with the controlled hysteria of revolutionary energy. What courage the sailors had, and how clearly they saw the implications of their use as cannon fodder! Lacking knowledge of revolutionary theory, they nevertheless realized the necessity of protesting against the continuance of a war which was sending them to their destruction. With inspired journalistic brevity Plivier has made the revolt live again, and his cool irony in dealing with the maneuvers of the Social Democrats is implicit proof of his revolutionary insight. It is to his credit that he does not indulge in Tolstoyan political asides but concentrates on the events themselves, thus clearly indicating their continuity and significance. The pictures follow each other with increasing dramatic power—first the hectic scenes behind the monarchist shield of imperturbable confidence, then the meeting of the revolutionaries, in which are given thrilling glimpses of Liebknecht exposing the weaknesses in the organization. Now we see the mutineers at Kiel, the patterns of action which culminate in their refusal to stoke the ships when the command is given to advance to the attack; after a successful mutiny they begin marching inland and actually force the Duke of Brunswick to "renounce the throne for myself and my heirs, and put the government in the hands of the Soldiers' and Workers' Councils"!

The marchers arrive at Berlin to meet a deepening crisis. The Government is imploring the Emperor to abdicate to save the country from falling into the hands of the workers; and at this moment the Social Democrat Scheidemann announces the German Socialist Republic, which stems the tide. Later, when he hears of it, the phlegmatic Ebert becomes enraged at Scheidemann for making a "premature" statement! This book makes clear that had Liebknecht's criticisms of the Barth revolutionary policy of "all staked on one stroke" been unnecessary, the people might have been led away from the tempting "security" of Social Democratic control, and consequently from the black fascism of today.

Plivier has illustrated a crucial period of working class history and takes his place in the first rank of revolutionary artists.

It is in Kataev's novel that the concept of time is seen in its most dynamic aspect—as a factor in a socialist competition to break the world's record for the number of concrete mixtures made on one shift. The action takes place in the one day when news is received of the Kharkov workers' surpassing of the record for concrete mixtures, of the plans to break the record, and of the actual breaking of it. Kataev concentrates on the routine of socialist development as seen in one small section of the whole, the Chelyaba construction, and he succeeds in making shrewd and amusing comment implicit in his portraying of the ideology, handicaps, and utter humanity of workers struggling for themselves. His writing has the enthusiasm that comes from the ingestion of simple things, of complex factors and motives welded into one simple and thrilling motive. He spares neither persons nor opinions; as in *The Embezzlers*, he demonstrates the

human all-too-imperfect viewpoint towards an attempt at perfection. The sum total is precisely the development, the growing pains of a precocious child fast leaving adolescence. His talent for characterization reveals the dialectic nature of the successful attempt to break the record, since the feat was made possible by the clash of persons (contradictions) on the construction, and the subsequent molding of the technique. Trivial as this may seem in the world of "art," the successful attempt symbolizes the entire process of socialist construction and therefore takes on a deep significance. In stressing the factor of time Kataev has squarely hit the hammer of materialist dialectic on the head of the humble unresisting nail. Nalbandov, the engineer, says: "We shall attain the speed of light and we shall become immortal!"

PETER MARTIN

A Nest of Simple Folk. By Sean O'Faolain. The Viking Press. \$2.50.

Here is the first novel of a new and powerful Irish writer. To understand what this means it is necessary to know that the modifying adjective brings with it a number of historical complexes—a low economic productivity, a love of the land, a hatred of English domination, a stubborn individualist-nationalism, a highly developed clan-nishness, and a sentimental absorption in national culture which is a rationalization of historic failures to achieve autonomy. An Irishman writing of his own people may, if he is a conservative of the type of Tom Moore or Samuel Lover, close his eyes to the sad reality of the national plight and concentrate on the natural beauty of the country and of the picturesque qualities of the people, or he may, like Shaw and Wilde, run off to London and try to forget his race heritage; but a writer who tries to stay close to home and write with some degree of objective truth is faced with a problem which is entirely his own to work out. James Joyce has never written a word which does not breathe a hatred of the sentimental inertia which has kept his country chained and backward, a hatred so outspoken that in his own country he is definitely disliked. ("History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake.") O'Flaherty has tried to merge sentiment with revolutionary melodrama which is effective as storytelling but leaves something to be desired on the score of sincerity of purpose; while Francis Stuart has very successfully transposed the surge and flow of the traditional race-poeticism to concrete events in Irish life.

A Nest of Simple Folk is a stirring attempt to bind up the land struggles of the nineteenth century with the revolutionary spirit evidenced by the Fenians and their illegitimate descendants, and to show how these struggles have become part and parcel of the national daily life. The story takes in the time from 1854 to 1916.

O'Faolain's style is saturated with the ooze of his native turf and bogs, with the simple homely virtues and vices of those close to the land. The people, like all country folk, live spontaneously and with almost animal unconsciousness in the realm of simple desires, but when acting as economic factors they betray every last sodden capitalist vice. The unjust hegemonies of property rights, the bit-

terness and hypocrisy in blood relationships, and the sad decay of generations of bright sensitive youth are all interwoven in O'Faolain's brilliant and easy pageant. He has the power of manipulation and interconnection of great masses of detail, a sure grasp of the technique of the chronicle novel that goes more than a little beyond the studied roughness of Hardy and the sketch psychologisms of Bennett. There is solidity as well as a certain fluid ease of motivation, and a quick pungent drive in the dialogue.

There are shortcomings in the book which proceed more from O'Faolain's Irishness than from artistic considerations, although there is something to be said of the latter; and these shortcomings consist in the classic Irish diffuseness of emotion, in the lack of a unified attitude toward the subject matter, in the lack of real indignation against the conditions described. It is not enough to paint people and to evoke sympathy for them on the ancient grounds of pity and terror. What is needed is the exposition of the class basis of the pity and terror. This is not to be construed as an attack on O'Faolain for not being "class conscious," but as a reminder that a fine piece of art is not always true, and that the finest in art approaches the broad truth of material existence as the determinant of individual and mass consciousness.

In the writing itself there is too much detail, however smoothly connected, and a not always clear dramatic line of action, but on the whole there is a sustained drive producing a cumulative effect. As an artist O'Faolain is perhaps fully mature; and should his personality come to a comparable state of integration it is possible that we may have a very great proletarian novelist.

P. M.

Poems, 1924-1933. Archibald MacLeish. Houghton Mifflin.

MacLeish has written many different kinds of poetry during the past ten years. He has treated different materials in different ways. However, when he writes in his foreword "my development as a poet is of no interest to me and of even less interest, I should imagine, to anyone else," he shows himself as either unaware of the content of his poetry or consciously trying to evade the problems raised in his new book.

By far the best poems in the collection are those written early in the ten-year period. He reproaches the dead poets for having given us only the "kings names and hills remembered for battles." He says,

Were there not leaf sounds in the mouths
Of women from overseas and a call
Of birds on the lips of children and strangers.

These are the things that MacLeish sees and here MacLeish has succeeded within the limits in which his predecessors failed. He deals with the shadows of the tangible emotions and sensations. He retells in a few simple lines the story of the death of Roland and manages to communicate a personal sadness. The sounds of weather and grass and trees speak the language of nostalgia and memory. He walks the edge of all the well-trodden poetic roads. In his precarious lyrics he is at home. Here no one excels him.

His later poems are eloquent testimony of his dissatisfaction with his limited materials and scope. MacLeish seeks new worlds to conquer. Most ambitious, of course, is "Conquistador." Here is all the machinery and trapping of heroic poetry; here is the grand sweep of terza rima and the steady tramp of his accents and beats; here is all the elaborate carelessness of assonance and dissonance. In the Mexico of the 17th century MacLeish sought a symbol for his own age. He found there much beautiful scenery, even a sturdy soldier who would speak his lines. "Conquistador" lacks only heroes and heroic deeds.

At about the same time that MacLeish became interested in Mexico, he developed a powerful nostalgia for America. He began to write about American scenery and American history. Concomitant with this new interest came also the development of his politics, which was succulently described in the *New Masses* as "ur-nazi."

MacLeish knows how to say that America is beautiful. He also wants to say other things. He wants to say that America is a hard land, that she has "wincing the eye of the soft Slav" and that "she has tried the fat from the round rump of Italians" and woe to those who try to change her. He wants to annihilate Lenin and the Communists and the foreigners. And he gets into trouble.

How can he argue with Lenin in terza rima? He doesn't. He resorts to childish hocus-pocus. He writes:

and the corn singing millenium
Lenin — Lenium! Millenium!

He attacks the foreigners in vulgar dialect. When he writes about his political road

past dialectical hope
and the kind of childish Utopia
Found in a small boy's school

he is forced to sign pretty much as did the school boys' favorite, Joaquin Miller, of Columbus. MacLeish exhorts:

You have only to push on
To whatever it is that's beyond us.

Though the old MacLeish denies that there is a new one, it is evident that there has been a transition both in form and content. What MacLeish is doing lately is both bad politics and bad poetry. A. L.

The End of Our Time. By Nicholas Berdyaev. Sheed and Ward. \$2.50.

MORE than one strand of Western culture join in fantastic pattern in this book. First, there is the pretty worn Spenglerian despair. The eternal cycle is ruin and regeneration. The rhythm of history is rise and fall, the alternation of successive types of civilization. But this notion of historical periodicity is set in a theological context, which of course, makes all the difference. Man's earthly existence is a testing time. This circular rhythm; this succession of movements and ideals are ways in which God sets formidable tasks. Everything comes to nothing, Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment. Defeat is fated, though failures may be epic and beautiful. Mixed with these notions, is a more concrete history, entirely Catholic in origin. Berdyaev argues that modern history began with the Renaissance. The man of the

Renaissance is defined by his indifference to divine sanctions. He "wanted to be the maker and master of life, without help from on high." Today, we have reached the end of the epoch begun in the Renaissance. And everything not in Catholic litany—even positivism, Socialism and anarchism—is but the outcome of the rotting flower of the Renaissance—humanism.

The latter part of the book is devoted to a violent criticism of Marxism. This is, after all, what Berdyaev has been gunning for. Marx represents the pinnacle of humanism in its collectivist form just as Nietzsche dominates the individualist form. Marx is the lineal descendant of Da Vinci. The end of the Renaissance is consummated in both. The liberal johnnies have attributed to Berdyaev an intimate and authentic knowledge of Marxism. At those infrequent intervals when Berdyaev actually writes something lucid on Marx, the vilest sort of statement is made. Witness: "Socialism indicts all the best manifestations of Humanism; its art and sciences, its morality, the whole culture; the humanist structure is pulled down, its foundations laid bare. And these foundations discovered to be simply economic class-interests." Notice how critical the word *simply* turns out to be.

But Berdyaev has a Renaissance of his own to sell. Hope and cheer, comrades and brethren. We are approaching a new historical epoch. It will be a new middle age. It will resemble the first Middle Age, the obscure seventh, eighth and ninth centuries. We are the last Romans. Back to the mediaeval, the eternal. But, perhaps, you are asking, "Yes, but concretely. . ." Well, concretely, this Catholic paradise turns out to be familiar reaction. The new world "will be obliged to revive rural economy and return to trades. . ." (page 94). "The principle of private property will be kept as an eternal foundation, but it will be limited and spiritualized in application. . ." (p. 95.) There will be wars "but the wars will not be so national and political as religious and spiritual." (p. 101). And "it is by no means impossible that the unity of societies and states in the middle ages will express itself in monarchical forms." (p. 114). But this priest is not without humanity. After saying that women must return to the family and the domestic life, he writes: "Day is the time of the exclusive predominance of masculine culture; at night the feminine element reaches her rights." (p. 117).

T. D.

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