Workers of the world, unite!

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KARL MARX — A Fresco by **BELA UITZ**, *Hungarian painter, for the Krasnozavod Theatre in Kharkov*

Editorial Notes

On the Question of Revolutionary Romanticism

Not long ago I was talking to a prominent Soviet writer who spends most of his time abroad.

"The great fault of our revolutionary writers in the West," he said, "is that they write about the revolution too prosaically."

There is a good deal of truth in this. And the problem is important.

Russian writers knew the value of showing the heroism of revolution even under the Tsar. What a fiery song is Gorki's *Stormy Petrel*; for instance; what a signal to attack is his play *Enemies*. And our revolutionary poets. How flaming their songs, how bold their summons to struggle.

In contrast to these writers, the bourgeois writers only saw the horrors and trials of revolution. There was, for instance, Leonid Andreyev's *Seven That Were Hanged*. Only the horror of the condemned, no heroism here.

Of course, our Western comrades have also produced flaming, militant work. But they tend to neglect revolutionary romantics.

It should not be imagined that the slogan of realism does away with revolutionary romanticism. By no means. It includes it organically because revolutionary realism is deep and broad: it is rooted in the present and forges into the future.

We need novels, stories and poems that are a triumphal march to struggle and victory. We need books that will raise the fighting spirit as did the *Marsallaise*. We know the revolution is difficult. We know the cost. But revolutionists are people of the future. As yet the Red Flag waves only on one-sixth of the globe. The future is ours because we are victors of the present.—*Editor.*

A. A. ZHDANOV

... Comrade Stalin called our writers the engineers of the human soul. What does this mean? What obligations does this title put upon you? ...

To be an engineer of the human soul: this means to stand with both feet planted firmly on the soil of real life. And this also means a break with romanticism of the old type, with that romanticism which depicted a fictitious life and fictitious heroes, leading the reader away from the contradictions and oppressions of life into a world of the unattainable, into Utopia. For our literature, which stands with both feet planted firmly on a solid materialistic base, such romance is alien; it demands romance of a new type, the romance of the revolution.

We say that socialist realism is the fundamental method of Soviet artistic literature and literary criticism, and this presupposes that revolutionary romanticism must take its place in literature as a component part, for all the life of our Party, all the life of the working class and its struggle consist in the union of the hardest, most matter-of-fact practical work with the greatest heroism and with glorious dreams. Our Party has always drawn its strength from the fact that it has united and still unites in a single yoke the combined forces of business abilitiy and practicality with wide perspectives, with a constant striving onward, with the struggle for the building of socialist society.

Soviet literature must be able to describe our heroes, must be able to catch glimpses of our tomorrow. This will not be utopian, for already today our tomorrow is being prepared by systematic work on the part of people who are well aware of the goal at which they are aiming

MAXIM GORKI

The heroism of reality now demands romantic treatment not only with us, but in Europe and China, in so far as in Europe and China the new reality is creating the revolutionary proletariat. This revolutionary romanticism is virtually a pseudonym for socialist realism, whose business it is not only critically to represent the past in the present, but, of first importance, to contribute to the consolidation of the values that the revolution has already achieved, and the illumination of the high aims of the socialist future. —*M. Gorki: "About Glibness."*

... In romanticism it is necessary to distinguish two sharply different tendencies: passive romanticism, which tries either to reconcile man to reality, embellishing it, or turns away from reality to futile delving into the inner world, to thoughts about the "fateful mysteries of life," about love, about death; to mysteries which are not solved by means of "speculation" and contemplation but can be solved only by science; and secondly, active romanticism, which strives to strengthen the will of man to live, to stir him to rebel against reality and all its oppressions ...

In our literature there has never been, nor is there yet "romanticism" as the gospel of an active attitude to reality, as the gospel of labor and culture, of the will to live, as the pathos of the building of new forms of life and as the hatred of the old world whose evil heritage we are wiping out with such toil and suffering. But such a gospel there must be if we really do not want to return

to philistinism, and worse—through philistinism to a rebirth of the class state, to exploitation of the peasants and workers by parasites and plunderers... The worker-authors must understand clearly that the conflict between the working class and the bourgeoisie is irreconcilable; that for the working class it is either complete victory, or death. From this tragic conflict, from the difficulty of the tasks which history has imperatively laid on the working class, must arise the active "romanticism," this pathos of creation, that audacity of will and intellect, and all those revolutionary qualities in which the Russian worker-revolutionary is rich.—*M. Gorki: "How I Learned to Write."*

A. V. LUNACHARSKI

Can there be such a thing as socialist romanticism? If we are satisfied with reality, accept reality, whence romanticism?

We are satisfied with reality, in so far as is represents growth, in so far as the trends of its growth are near and dear to us, in so far as we fall into step with them, in so far as these trends live in our hearts. We accept reality because yesterday and tomorrow are closed in combat in the today, because we are representatives of and participants in the struggle for tomorrow.

But for this very reason we are not entirely satisfied with reality. We want to organize its active forces as quickly as possible, and muster as many as possible. For this, art is a powerful instrument in our hands.

Why should there not be magnificent synthetic images in our art;—if not in the novel and dramas, then in opera, in colossal festivals in which tens of thousands of people are gathered together? This is not realism? True, a touch of the romantic enters here, for elements are combined in an improbable way. But they faithfully render the truth. This truth expresses the inner principle of growth, it offers itself as a banner, and there is no reason for denying our need for such an art.

Nor is there any reason why we should turn away from the path of artistic prediction. Remember what Lenin said: he is a bad communist who cannot dream. We must try to rise to the heights and catch a glimpse of the future. Here imagination and apparent improbability play a big part, here mistakes are possible, but here there can and should be veracity, consistency above all in the fact that the victory of the proletariat, the victory of the classless society and the rich development of personality in an atmosphere of collectivism — these constitute truth.

Thus we see that, along with socialist realism's tremendous task of providing us with images, with entirely plausible accounts, of proceeding from the actual object and describing it accurately, elucidating it, (invariably, however, in such a way that it is permeated with the sense of growth, movement and struggle); along with this form socialist romanticism is, to all intents and purposes, always understood that it is of an entirely different kind from bourgeois romanticism. In virtue of the powerful forward-drive of our life, it draws into activity types of art in which imagination, the cultivation of various styles, and all kinds of free treatment of reality play a very important part.—*A. V. Lunacharski: "Paths and Tasks of Soviet Dramaturgy."*

N. I. BUKHARIN

... Socialist realism can and must "dream," taking as its point of departure the real trends of growth.

Connected with this is the question of revolutionary romanticism. If socialist realism is distinguished by its activity, by its effectiveness, if it does not give merely a dry photograph of a process; if it projects a whole world of passions and struggle in the future; if it raises the heroic principle onto the throne of history; then revolutionary romanticism is a component part of it. Romanticism has been usually contrasted with realism. This is because romanticism was, for the greater part, associated with an idealistic flight into metaphysical regions and "other worlds," and the emotion of the "sublime and beautiful" once stirred, led far away and beyond all earthly things. This is, secondly, because realism gave expression to narrow and contemplative so-called "objectivism." Narrow, because it did not reveal the tendencies leading to the future. Contemplative, because it limited itself to a statement of the actual, though, certainly not "pure and unadulterated." In our conditions romanticism is first and foremost linked with an heroic period; far from directing itself towards a metaphysical heaven it is preoccupied with earth in all its significance: with victory over foes, and victory over nature. On the other hand, socialist realism is not a simple recording of what is, but, catching up the thread of development in the present, it leads, and actively leads it into the future. *N. I. Bukharin: "Poetry, Poetics and the Tasks of Poetic Creation in the USSR."*

N. POGODIN

... As for revolutionary romanticism, I am "for and again for"... ... Romanticism passed through the purifying laboratory of the literature of the 19th century and reached us in the person of Gorki, a romantic singer of the coming storm. The social-histo-

rical significance of these story-songs by Gorki is widely known.

Romanticism is possible in a revolutionary, a bolshevist form.... The epic of shock-work at Dnieprostroi was a romantic epic with a new social quality, but people who look with the niggardly eyes of realists will tell nothing about Dnieprostroi, neither to us, nor to posterity, and posterity will seek this bolshevist romance in figures...

We have known the gloomy romanticism of Byron, we have known the mighty, free and terrible romanticism of Gorki. We are learning the joyous, full romanticism of bolshevism, full of fervor, insight and will.—*Excerpt from the article "World University of Writers."*

L. LEONOV

...Last year at Magnitostroi a pipe for cooling the blast furnace burst. It happened in winter during a frost of 40 degrees. The accident threatened to hold up the work of the blast furnace for a very long time. The repair work had to be carried out immediately, but in absolutely impossible conditions... Some young Party men, udarniks, volunteered. With the cry: "Long live the 17th Party Congress!" they rushed into the icy water and in eight minutes the damage was repaired.

What is it, a realistic or romantic fact? It would be truer to say that facts like these (and it is only in our times that a book can be written on the basis of such material), cannot be bound with any set formula. But romanticism is a hormone, which raises artistry to the level of real art.—*Excerpt from the article "Shakespearean Staging."*

L. NIKULIN

...The conception of socialist realism, the striving for social truth befits our great time and our epoch.

I believe that elements of romantic dramaturgy can be present in every play, even in those which are naturalistic and realistic. There is an idea that themes about defence, let us say, take most kindly to the romantic form. I do not think so. The whole point is to avoid the falsity, artificiality and abstractness in so-called romantic dramaturgy. —*Excerpt from the note "Ideas and Images."*

V. Gerasimova

Tadjikhan Shadieva's Last Contest

A Story of New Life in the Soviet Near-East

Twelve years ago, among the business-like jumpers, jerseys and jackets in the presidium of the Congress of the Young Communist League, one might have noticed a crimson velvet paranja, complete with a black horse-hair veil.

The girl sat in a prominent place in the presidium, not far from the honored guests of the Congress—Nadejda Constantinovna Krupskaya, Mikhail Ivanovich Kalinin and Nikolai Ivanovich Bukharin.

"Comrade," said Nadejda Constantinovna smiling, "the presidium keeps receiving notes from your comrades appealing to you to show your face to them."

A comrade from the Don Coal Basin wrote: "Comrade, take off that rubbish!"

"We, the working girls of the Krasnoholmskaya factory, beg you to take off that instrument of feminine oppression," ran a note signed by thirty young textile workers.

"Go along, Tadjikhan!" whispered an Uzbek communist sitting next to her in the presidium.

There was something in these voices stronger than fear, or shame, or confusion. So she went up to the tribune and through the black horse-hair netting, the audience seemed to move towards her like one great body.

She started and recoiled. Then she caught sight of a group of comrades from her native place. They were looking steadily towards her. Then, with something of the same sensation that one experiences when about to plunge into water, the Uzbek woman flung off her paranja and veil and hung them over the red banner that stood near the edge of the tribune.

A man with a long grey beard approached, carrying a bouquet of red roses in his hand.

"From the Old Bolsheviks, who are happy to welcome the young revolutionary," he said.

The Pioneers lined up on the platform, and deputized their representative to welcome Tadjikhan.

The girls of the Krasnoholmskaya branch of the Young Communist League sent her a small red silk shawl to wear instead of the paranja over her head.

Cameras clicked, the "Jupiter" lights blazed out. She was being filmed.

But when the meeting was over and she came out in to the street again, shading her eyes a little with her hand, for the long forgotten brightness of the colors dazzled her, an elderly man with a face pitted by small-pox and narrow eyes, approached her. He wore a tight-fitting stockinette jersey like the Russians and a tweed cap. In silence he took her hand and led her in the direction of the Hotel Metropole. From time to time, when the encouraging shouts and applause of the Young Communists accompanying them grew particularly stormy, he exposed a row of still strong, good teeth. He knew that this way was the way people smiled. When the building where the Congress had been held was left far behind, his lips closed tightly. He

maintained this silence right up to the moment when the train that bore them away from the capital of the USSR arrived, puffing and gasping at the Kokand Station. Then he took a hasty glance around, told his companion to wait there, and after a few minutes, reappeared with a worn-out paranja and an old veil, which he had bought in a hurry here by the station.

He brought the things to her, and once more a dumb, formless creature walked beside him through the streets of the town.

The first person they met was the old murid, Akmal Tajayev, who stared after them a long time and said at last in a relieved tone:

"There goes Tajikhan and her husband. It was all nonsense—what the people were saying in the bazaar, that she would come back with her face exposed to everyone."

II

When Tadjikhan was eleven years old she was sold for two hundred rubles to the Kokand tabib. He told fortunes on maize grains and cured sterility by means of hares' tongues.

Tadjikhan's family—the family of a collier in the Kizil-Ku coal mines—was so poor that in the time of famine her mother even robbed the nests of the field mice, and most of the time they ate green grass fried in cotton oil. A bad reputation often goes with poverty. When the miners' children went out into the street, the neighbors closed their doors at once. If ever a knife or a pick-axe was missing, the miner's children were blamed. And even the miner himself was regarded as a thief, as the very lowest of creatures. Almost everyone in the village had his own house and garden, everyone attended the mosque.

Why didn't Mirzabayev do that too?

Once they summoned the miner to the mosque, opened the Koran before him and said:

"You are never seen at prayers here. You deserve to be killed, but we have decided to do otherwise: you must leave the village forever."

The miner shrugged his shoulders and said to the people:

"I have eight children, a mother, a wife and a grandmother to keep. And I am the only one who can work. If I spend my time praying in the mosque, my family will go hungry. It often happens I'm away for a fortnight and more; how do you people know then that I'm not praying as I go my way?"

There was a lot of talk and dissatisfaction, but no one ventured to touch this big morose fellow, so he and his family stayed in the village.

But how could anyone refuse the Kokand tabib anything? He entered Mirzabayev's house in a silk coat and a sheepskin cap. He brought gifts of almonds, raisins and rice in a silk handkerchief. He brought Tadjikhan a silk dress and a silk coat. Up to that time Tadjikhan had never worn a whole dress of one color, her clothes had always been made for her out of old worn garments, a sleeve of one, a collar of another.

The tabib had been married nine times. One of the wives he had killed with a terrible kick in the ribs. He was twenty years older than Tadjikhan and his face was pitted with small-pox. But having paid the kalim-money, he was able to take the child away to his house in Kokand. There in the yard she saw some children playing at building mud houses.

"Papa," she said shyly, "will you let me go and play with them awhile?"

"Play if you like," said her husband condescendingly, "only remember who you are now."

When the game was at its most interesting point and Tadjikhan's cheeks and hands shone with mud, a woman with a horrible goitre rushed out of the house and grabbed her by her curly hair.

"Little toad!" she screamed. "I'm the tabib's chief wife and I'm going to put powdered glass in your food!"

"Go back to your place, woman," said the tabib coming out after her. "I forbid you to hurt one another for thus you are damaging my property."

But the fourth day after his wedding he struck the child across the face with such force that her eyelashes stuck together with blood and she fell to the ground.

"A neighbor has just told me that the wind in the lane lifted your veil yesterday and you forget your hands were given you to hold it down," he explained calmly.

After that, whether the wind blew or it didn't, the same thing happened every day. Soon the tabib's first wife, Mansura—the woman with the goitre—gave Tadjikhan a cake of bread to eat that made the little girl writhe on the floor with bloody foam on her lips. The old women, the tabib's mother and her sister, watched all this in silence, motionless. Even if the girl recovered this time, she would only die the next time. For Mansura was a strong-willed woman and knew what she was about.

The tabib understood this too, so he found for his youngest wife a room near the Armenian hotel. He even hired a servant for her, bought her a little bed and set a large-eyed doll bought in the city on the chair beside it. Tadjikhan sat by the window, day in, day out, with her doll; even when her mother came to see her, she was not allowed to go out to her. Mother and daughter wept bitterly and shouted to each other through the window. Only the old servant, Auntie Shura, the widow of one of Skobelev's soldiers, who had come from far-off Riazan to conquer beautiful Ferghana and now lay with a bullet through his skull in the sandy common grave—only this cheerful, tipsy, irresponsible old woman could joke and sing:

Tadjikhan, sits all day,
While her samovar boils away

or:

When a girl is a girl,
She wears a long plait
And everybody loves her, oh!
When a girl is a wife
No one cares for her life
And she's beaten like an old goat, oh!

Sometimes the tabib came to visit her. He received sick women and advised them how to cure children of the "blue" cough and wet sores; more often, however, he played the guitar with them, and embraced them and they would laugh so loudly together that Tadjikhan would wake up several times in the night.

But there was a strain of obstinacy in Mirzabayev's family. One day Tadjikhan put on four dresses, two coats and a shawl, took her galoshes in her hand and slipped out barefoot into the street. Auntie Shura had got very tipsy the day before and started on a flood of reminiscences: how one Shrove-tide she had gone for a ride in the sleigh with the storekeeper, Peter Ivanovich, and the sleigh-bells jingled merrily all the time. They had

gone to the "Maiden's Pond," and the sleigh had fallen into a hole in the ice and one of the store-keeper's fur coats had floated away. Then she recalled that it was not to her but to her sister that this had happened. And remembering what a beauty this Agraphena Ivanova had been, she shed maudlin tears and fell asleep at last. Tadjikhan ran away to her uncle, the baker; at least she wandered around the house for a long time. She was afraid to go in, so she hid.

Soon she heard two people sit down on the bed and at the level of her face she saw two large pairs of boots; one pair she recognized immediately. Her uncle spoke first.

"She's thrown herself into the river, just as my wife's eldest sister warned us," said he. "The women are searching along the river banks, they have found her bodice in the water."

"Oh, if she's dead, to the devil with her," rejoined the owner of the familiar boots. "But the point is that I have a trunk where I keep my money. She's taken the key with her and, I suppose, not left a penny in it."

Then from somewhere beneath them they heard a voice:

"Nothing of the kind! To the devil with the key! It's lying under the cupboard where it always lay. Take it and may it choke you!"

When they dragged Tadjikhan out, she trembled and panted but did not cry.

"Girl!" said the tabib, looking at her intently and with some bewilderment. "Girl! I have done that which the Shariat warns us against. For you I have forgotten the second commandment of the Shariat, which says that he who pities a woman will soon pity himself. Now you will have to live wherever I wish and Mansura will have command over you once more."

He led Tadjikhan back to live in the house with his oldest wife.

"Well, it's time you began your proper life," he said once and ordered Tadjikhan to put on the samovar. "This is the way to do it," he explained. "You pour in the water, then the kerosene, put a match to it and that's all."

Tadjikhan did as he told her. She poured in kerosene and threw a lighted match into it. A tongue of flame shot out of the kerosene. When her master returned, he wondered why her eyebrows and the hair on her forehead had suddenly disappeared.

"What have you been doing with yourself this time, girl?" he asked.

But Tadjikhan was wiser now and she knew that one should never tell what really happened.

"I broke a cup and the boiling water splashed my face," she replied.

That set the tabib thinking for a few seconds and he even forgot to beat her.

"It's really amazing where you learned to lie so artfully," he remarked. The next day he said:

"Today you must prepare pilau for me. Then he told her how to make a good Bukhara pilau. But when she herself tried to do it as he had told her, the result was most unsatisfactory. The pilau was tough and bitter and nothing like the savory Bukhara dish. When the man came home he found his youngest wife hiding under the dry clover in the yard. He beat her until he was tired. From that day on she took her share of the household work, and every day she did it better. Besides, she realized that only thus could she soften the heart of the woman with the goitre.

"Mansura," she would say, "sit still while I grind the maize."

"Mansura, why should you have to go far for water? Give me your pitcher and I will go."

She also learnt to give up her best dresses to the woman with the goitre. She even gave her the brass bracelet with the tender blue eyes of turquoise that she had brought from home. She came to understand that in order to live in this world of terrifying, grown-up people, one must act and speak quite differently to the way one desired. She already knew that women who cover their faces and spend their whole lives in the women's portion of the house learn how to exchange paranjas and veils with each other and thus contrive to go wherever they wish. She knew that though a round cake of bread costs five kopeks, one should say seven, that one could not buy it for less than seven in the bazaar. She already knew that when one's husband was drunk, one might contrive to scatter his money about the floor and keep a few coins back when one picked it up. But she grew weary of subterfuges. She often longed to shout at the top of her voice as she had once shouted from under her uncle's bed. She said to Mansura:

"Listen to me, Mansura. Don't think I want your husband. If I were a fly I would search for even the tiniest crack and fly out through it and away from here forever."

The woman with the goitre believed her. Mansura was seldom visited by anger and jealousy these days, and since she was much older than the girl, she stated her own feminine point of view and gave her advice.

"For fifteen days there is darkness and for fifteen days light. If, out of forty candles one does not burn, still—another will burn, and go on burning. You have bread and tea and raisins and pilau on holidays, and a master. A fly flies into the street where its food is—dung; and then, do you not see how times are changing?"

True enough, times were changing. Firing was often heard in the town, and there were many Russians in military overcoats or black leather jackets to be seen about the streets. A red flag hung over the governor's house. The tabib changed soon. The house was seldom visited now by sterile, blind, scorbutic, goitrous, hunch-backed or over hilarious women. The tabib shaved his beard and hid his guitar where no one could find it. Once he came home in a military style jersey instead of his striped silk coat, and on his head, instead of his customary brocade cap, he wore a speckled Soviet cap.

"I'm a Soviet employee now," he announced, "and anyone who dares to utter a word against me will see their own guts hanging out pretty quick."

But Tadjikhan was in no humor for gossip at that time. Her mother was dying. She had been searching for nests of field mice again, and collecting the grain the tiny things had been preparing for the winter. This year she had collected more than usual, enough to fill two big trunks. But it was already winter and she went about barefoot in the mud and the cold rain, returning from the fields in the evening wet through.

At last she took to her bed. Her body was as hot as fire.

Even the neighbors did not come to visit her. They said she was dying because she had stolen the stores of the field mice. When her husband, the coal miner from the Kizil Ku mines, came home, he sat looking at his wife a long time. He did not know what to do to cool that burning body. At last he went out and returned with a bucket filled to the brim with icy water, for it was very late in the autumn. He made his wife get up. She obeyed him; life and people and events were all mixed up in her weary head and she could not think clearly. When she rose he emptied the big bucket of cold water over her. So the mother of the eight little Mirzabayevs died. The children were of all ages, the youngest only six months old, another four

years old, a third six, a fourth eight, and a fifth eleven. She also left a dress which weighed three kilograms, because it consisted of rents, mended with sacking.

Tadjikhan was only fifteen, but she felt responsible for the whole Mirzabayev family. She cried and begged her husband to help the children, or at least take one of the elder girls for himself. But the ex-tabib had something else to think of nowadays. The elderly woman with the goitre and the young woman who was always crying gave him very little pleasure. Once Tadjikhan's friend, Nazakat, came to see her and informed her that still another misfortune was to befall her.

"What misfortune can that be?" asked Tadjikhan. "Surely nothing worse can befall me!"

Then Nazakat said: "There are many misfortunes in this world, and each one is worse than the last. Listen, Tadjikhan, your husband has got himself a third wife, and all the Soviet employees in the district were at his wedding feast."

Nazakat told her what a grand wedding it had been; eight different dishes had been served. Soup with pumpkin, a stew of young horse-flesh, clotted cream with raisins, and freshly made ale.

Then Tadikhan shreiked. Why should God punish her so, she asked.

"If God is the protector of the poor—are we not the poor? If God is the defender of oppressed women—am I not a woman? Why should he send such a punishment on me?"

The wife with the goitre heard her. She came up to Tadjikhan and laughed.

"Listen, Tadjikhan," she said, "I was once like you. Now you have become even as I am. Never mind, you will get used to it long before the new wife has learned to make your bed for you."

And she went about, laughing and nudging Tadjikhan and humming the wedding song until one evening three carts drove into the yard. Out of one of them stepped the new wife. She wore a silk paranja, and she danced and sang. Tadjikhan was about to throw herself on the girl, when the other women, the tabib's mother and her sister, held Tadjikhan back and whispered in her ear:

"Listen, Tadjikhan—your tears will not help matters. If you want to be the chief wife, you must climb on the roof and stamp your feet hard or else creep up unnoticed behind the new wife and quietly knock her on the head."

Tadjikhan said she did not particularly want to be the chief wife. Although she had lived five years with her husband, she ran, uncovered for the first time, into her husband's section of the house, where many men were sitting. Her husband was squatting by the Uzbek stove, where the pilau for the feast was being cooked.

"Where is your veil?" he shouted. "Clear out of here at once!"

But Tadjikhan moved straight at the men and they recoiled.

"When I was given to you in marriage, I was only eleven years old. I was only a child with my mother's milk not yet dry on my lips. But I thought that as you were my husband and master, you would show me consideration. Knowing what misfortunes have visited me lately, you have brought a new wife to the house!"

Then he picked up a knife and said:

"If you don't clear out, I'll stab you!"

Instead of running away, Tadjikhan moved nearer to him.

"Listen, you," she said, "I am going to tear up my veil. There is no God now, and I'm not afraid of him. I shall wear a Russian dress and do my hair as I like and I'm going to fight against blackguards like you!"

All the men in the room, including the tabib, ran up to her and shouted and spat at her.

"Lie there and rot like carrion now!" cried her husband as he flung her out of doors.

Now, the new wife, although she was young, was by no means light hearted for she knew a good deal about life already. She was the first to seek out Tadjikhan and explain to her that if it were not for the sake of the baby girl she had borne by her first husband, she would never have married the second time. She had only done so because this man was such an important employee; now no one would dare to touch her, and she would have enough to eat and a place to sleep.

"You needn't be afraid of me," replied Tadjikhan. "I was only eleven when I was sold to your husband and I've no love for him, I can assure you."

Then they came to an agreement and behaved as most little captives do. When the "important employee" was not at home, they ran out to a neighbor's, dressed themselves in different clothes and went into the town. In the evening, before the husband was expected home, they returned and put on their own clothes again. They had to beware of the goitrous wife, of course. She was so old that she had no way of holding her husband except by showing her devotion to him. Whenever he visited her, she tried in that one night to tell him all that she had observed during the week. She knew how many buckets of water Tadjikhan had carried and what songs Aidyn had sung to her child. But the two young wives supported each other loyally. Aidyn swore that Tadjikhan had carried the right number of buckets and Tadjikhan swore that Aidyn chanted aloud the sacred songs from the book of Shah-Name. They would laugh heartily together when they saw how their master spat after them.

How amusing it was to tell their dear friends Nazakat, Makharam, Chinakhan, and Suen about it afterwards. How they laughed!

Once the goitrous wife watched Tadjikhan as she ran to the neighbor's and followed her. She saw Tadjikhan's paranja there and, unobserved by the neighbor, took it home with her. Tadjikhan had nothing to go home in, so she stayed at the neighbor's till dark fell. Then the goitrous wife said to her husband:

"Surely Tadjikhan must be playing 'knuckle-bones' in the bazaar, or perhaps, someone is playing with her."

When Tadjikhan came in her husband beat her. When he went out next day, he locked her in, saying:

"A mad dog must be kept on a chain."

Less than a month passed before Tadjikhan found an opportunity of speaking to a friend. She had heard that this friend's mother was a very important woman and occupied a responsible position.

"Little friend," Tadjikhan begged the girl, "will you do just this for me? Ask your mother to come up and speak to me while we are at the bazaar. But no one must know that we were talking to each other."

Many months had passed before Chinakhan, as the friend was called, made her way in to Tadjikhan and called her out with her. They glanced around furtively as they hurried to the house in the chief street where Turukhan Ibrahimova lived. She was a stout woman with gold teeth. She told

Tadjikhan that she had been expecting her long ago. Tadjikhan was alarmed and wondered how she ought to talk to this woman. But Chinakhan said encouragingly that although her mother was the leader of all the women in the place, there was no need to be afraid of her. Then she told her mother how Tadjikhan's husband pretended to be a good Soviet worker, and she had even heard that he once spoke at a meeting, but he had three wives at home whom he ill-treatred.

"Is it true that he beats you?" asked Turukhan Ibrahimova.

Tadjikhan went close up to her and said:

"Is there any government that can defend the poor? If there is, then I shall be its servant. If there is such a government, I will break stones for it by the roadside, if necessary."

"Alright!" said Turukhan. "There is such a government."

Next day the carriage belonging to the Kokand Regional Committee drove up to the house of the ex-tabib. He recognized it, being a Soviet worker, and felt very uneasy.

"Look here, Tadjikhan," he said to the wife who had always caused him most uneasiness. "If you should be offered some kind of work, tell them this: first of all, I'm too young; secondly, I can neither read nor write; and thirdly, the basmachi are close at hand and I am afraid. Now, repeat this after me."

As she stood beside him a few minutes later by the table covered with a red cloth in the big office to which her husband had insisted on accompanying her, Tadjikhan repeated the three reasons in a wooden voice. But behind the black horse-hair veil her eyes said other things. Comrade Sigisbayev was no novice at the work set by the Communist Party, and only the day before he had a long talk with Turukhan Ibrahimova, the head of the Party Organization for Social and Political Development of Women. He could easily distinguish the other inaudible voice under the mechanically repeated words. He assumed a grieved expression, however, and shook his head sadly, as he said to the young woman:

"Well, it can't be helped, Tadjikhan my sister, we shall have to force you to come against your will. We shall be able to do that easily enough; your husband will help us, particularly since he always swears that his desire to die for the Soviet Government torments him like the thirst of an ass lost in the sandy desert."

"You filthy camel-dung!" groaned the ex-tabib to himself.

And next day the same carriage bore his youngest wife to the office of the Regional Committee.

III

That was eleven years ago. Two Russian members of the Women's Party Organization, armed with rifles, kept guard all night on the roof of the house of one of the first Uzbek women to join them. At first she was given very easy work, copying papers. It took her five minutes to form each letter, and she jumped up and ran into a corner every time anyone came in. But her first independent task strengthened her purpose. That year was a hungry one. Tadjikhan was sent as one of the Women's Organization helpers to a public dining room where the women had been complaining of the lack of salt.

"Evidently salt's only allowed to the men for their food," they said.

As Tadjikhan, together with the Russian helper, went into the dining room past the women squatting on the threshold, they called out:

"Shameless creature!"

But when after a few days they tasted salt in their food once more, two of them went up to Tadjikhan and said:

"You are sowing good seed, sister."

The women were not her enemies. They lived the same terrible life that she had led and their enemies, the men, had forced them to lead. Men! What cunning, pitiless, overbearing creatures they were, enemies who would stoop to anything, who knew no mercy. Almost as soon as Tadjikhan began to address the women, she directed the full force of her fury against their common enemy.

While she made her first speeches, a Russian member of the Women's Organization stood by her side and prompted her. For a long time all that Tadjikhan could say was that women should learn to read and write and visit the Women's Club in their spare time.

One day, however, she was quite unexpectedly carried away while she was speaking and cried out to her audience:

"Let us unite, sisters, against these hateful ravishers of little girls, these stupid, lazy creatures who force us to work for them!"

None of the speeches in which she exhorted the women to visit the club had such success as these few words.

The crowd of women was stirred, she heard approving responses and someone burst into tears.

That was the beginning of the great movement which, a little later, spread over the whole of Uzbekistan. It was the beginning of the women's struggle for freedom and one of the leaders of it was Tadjikhan Shadieva. The enemy took up the challenge in various ways. Soon Tadjikhan began to find on her table in the Women's Organization notes suggesting pleasant ways of spending the evening. Men winked at her in the street. A little later the corpses of the first active helpers in the Women's Organization were found in deep ditches full of water, in pits in the ground, or hanging from trees. But all this only strengthened Tadjikhan's conviction that the way she had chosen was the right one. Her ancient enemy had no choice but to fight. And that explained everything. The enemy certainly persecuted her doggedly and cruelly. She was the first Uzbek woman chosen to be social prosecutor at a special trial held to make an example of someone, and her voice was heard throughout Uzbekistan. Then the persecution began in good earnest. Once a bullet flew out from behind a wall and, grazing her cheek, slid down her plait of hair. Another time she detected powdered glass in her pileau. And finally, on International Working-Women's Day, she was killed.

That day -- the 8th of March -- she had to go to the old part of the town, to address the women in the factories there. As she was speaking in one of the villages on the outskirts of the town, a man dressed in the uniform of the OGPU came up to her and said:

"Are you Comrade Shadieva? Come with me to the Central Committee."

Ikramov, Lepa and her other comrades uttered startled exclamations when she came in. It turned out that they had been talking over the preparations for her funeral, for they had heard for certain that she had been killed in a silk mill. Afterwards it was found that another woman had been mistaken for her and killed. In this unequal struggle she acquired more and more women supporters. Another time—it happened on the 8th of March again — Tadjikhan went with another Uzbek woman and a Russian from the Women's Organization to a distant place to organize the celebration of Women's Day. All three covered themselves closely with paranjas and veils,

so as to pass unnoticed. They took a guitar with them for Tadjikhan played it beautifully. This instrument had taken no small part in her propaganda work. She knew that it was easier to assemble the women to the cheerful sounds of the guitar. Having assembled them, she could lay it aside and begin to speak. It was evening when they arrived at their destination, which had the reputation of being a dreadful place. The bassmachi—the counter-revolutionary bands who crossed the frontier periodically to raid the villages—were said to haunt the place. Three women had been killed by them the day before for attending a meeting of the Revolutionary Executive Committee. They had been stabbed near the house Tadjikhan stopped at, and next day their heads had been seen floating in the neighboring ditch. Whose house was this? The president of the Revolutionary Executive Committee, who slept with his rifle in his hands, said it was the most reliable house in the district. Tadjikhan sat down on the carpet with the women around her, she took up her guitar. She has just begun to sing her favorite song:

My heart is a vessel for water, you think
That you boil on the fire for tea?
My singing voice is so sweet, you think,
As the nightingale's in the tree?
But where shall I go and to whom shall I tell,
The life of a spouse forsaken is hell?

when there came a tap at the window pane. Tadjikhan passed the guitar to someone else and slipped out unobserved into the inner yard. A figure shrouded in a paranja approached her:

"Listen to me, my sister," said a woman's voice. "The third woman from the left in the green velvet paranja is the wife of Ibrahim Kurbashi. I can tell you he is only a kilometre from the village and you will hardly have time to finish your song before you are silenced forever. I recognized you, but I shall not betray you. I came to warn you to escape while you can."

The woman disappeared into the gloom of the Uzbekistan night and Tadjikhan returned to the room and sat down once more near the green velvet paranja. While the guitar was being played by Saidkhanova, the Uzbek woman who had accompanied her, Tadjikhan whispered the news to her Russian companion that Kurbashi was near the village and that they must do all they could to escape recognition.

"I'll sing and play," said Tadjikhan, "and you tell them all that we are actresses, and dance for them for your life!"

Then she took up the instrument and sang her second favorite song:

The ram is followed by his ewe,
See their tiny tracks in the dew.
O friend, could I but whirl about thee!
Girls are sweetest in the dance.
O friend, could I but whirl about thee!
Thou, my peach stone, art the best.
O friend, could I but whirl about thee!
Let us then dance with all the rest,
O friend, could I but whirl about thee!
With mallows the stream is overgrown,
O friend, could I but whirl about thee!
Their perfume thou hast made thine own.
O friend, could I but whirl about thee!

Now, Saidkhanova was a young woman and knew how to dance. She writhed and glided with sinuous grace, and her arm movements were a delight. But the other was an elderly Russian woman. In the town she wore high field boots and a man's checked cap over her short, grizzled hair. She was a textile worker from Ivanovo in Northern Russia.

"Dance!" Tadjikhan exhorted her. "Why won't your legs move quicker?"

The Russian flung out her short, stout arms and stamped her feet so hard the women stared at her in silence, astonished at her strength. The woman in the green paranja laughed heartily and begged the jolly dancers to go on with this interesting entertainment. But Tajikhan's fingers grew weary and her comrades whispered that their feet would hardly move and they were losing their breath. It was very late indeed. But still they danced and sang, and the women did not want to go. When they went home at length, the green paranja was the last to leave. When the three women remained alone they discussed ways of escape. They spent the rest of the night in the chimney of the Uzbek stove, and as soon as it was light a cart came round for them. But the driver eyed them strangely and kept refusing to go on; either he wanted to delay until the Kurbashi would come or he was afraid that the bassmachi would kill him along with the women on the road. It was difficult to tell. The three women talked for a while.

"This is the end for us," said Tadjikhan. "Today we are and tomorrow we are not, but many women will become free and that is worth dying for."

Then the Russian woman said: "To hell with us, anyway! It isn't a bad death for us to die. We only live once. But I have a little girl away in Ivanovo. If any of you should escape alive, I'd like you to let her know why she's left without a mother."

"I have children too," said Saidkhanova. "May they live longer and be happier than we were."

The three women said goodbye to each other and kissed each other heartily. They clung together in the cart all day, covered with sacks that had held coal. When they arrived in Chimion, the secretary of the District Committee said:

"I'm sorry I cannot offer you shelter for the night. We are expecting a raid at any moment. But take a militiaman with you and I'll see you off myself to Ferghana."

The women stayed long enough to hold a women's conference in Chimion. It was late at night when they went away.

When Tadjikhan arrived in Ferghana, she fell ill with a terrible fever and had to lie in bed for several days. As soon as she was a little better, she went to Bukhara where a woman has been murdered. Tadjikhan was a "social prosecutor" at the trial. Her enemies were on her track there, too. But the OGPU were able to prevent her being murdered. After that she went to one of the distant villages again. The president of the village Soviet was a woman who had recently discovered a local counter-revolutionary organization. In connection with this a certain "bey" a former rich man, was condemned to be shot. The mob surrounded the office of the village Soviet and shouted:

"Whoever calls himself a Mussulman, let him come out to us!"

One or two members had time to hide, but three of them were not quick enough. The crowd cut off the nose and ears of one. He did not die, but from that time on his head shook as if with palsy. They put out the eyes of the second man and the third they burnt alive.

The men who took part in this crime were tried by Tadjikhan. Of the

seventy-three men in the dock more than half were beys. Many of them were sentenced to death. When the judges and jury left the building an ambush was prepared along the road. But there was a slight delay and the cart containing Tadjikhan slipped by safely. An hour later three militiamen who were following in a cart a little distance behind were trapped and burnt alive.

So the war began by Tadjikhan and her sisters went on. But curiously enough, the more work she had to do, the more she pondered on this work, the more unexpected turns her hatred took. A peasant stabbed his wife; the day before he had been seen talking to the mullah and the knife belonged to the bey. The bassmachi tortured and killed and mutilated women, but Tadjikhan learned that the name of the Kurbashi was that of the richest beys of Uzbekistant. It was borne in upon her that the full force of the blow should be directed at this fearful foe. And when Uzbekistan rose against its enemy for a last decisive battle, and land reform was begun, she went out with the Red Arba as an agitator. When the sound of the horn summoned the peasants of every village, a woman in a red paranja would stand up and say:

"Peasants, comrades, brothers, listen to me! You are the slaves of the land; you who possess no land. You are the enemies of those who are our enemies. We are the same flesh and blood."

It must have been something in that young voice that was responsible for the dead silence, and for the tears trickling down the peasants' mournful faces, tears that they did not even trouble to wipe away. When she returned after a month traveling with the Red Arba, her colleagues noticed her unusual calm. Now she seldom talked to them of the cunning and cruelty of men, and oftener of the necessity for fighting the rich beys. A year later she was a member of the Central Executive Committee and the editor of the newspaper *Yangiul*. At length, she was elected a member of the Central Committee of the Uzbekistan Party.

After the Congress of the Young Communist League, Tadjikhan appeared in her paranja again. Not till a much later date, when she was out on active service for the Women's Organization, did she uncover her face for good.

It was in May, 1926, at a meeting in Kokand, that Comrade Vensen, the head of the OGPU, solemnly took away her paranja and veil. Tadjikhan covered her face with her hand once more. But now, as an active member of the Women's Organization, she could not possibly retreat.

Still, for three days she could not bear to go out unveiled. At last, she called Akhmet the cabdriver and asked him to drive her to work as quickly as he could.

On the way she went into a shop, bought herself a big, wide brimmed white hat, a long coat and white shoes with high heels. Thus, shrinking as far back as possible beneath the broad hat-brim, Tadjikhan drove every day to her work in the town committee and thus she spent her entire month's wages—forty-five rubles. It was impossible to hide forever, though, and one day a woman in a fashionable white hat and a long winter coat, walked through the streets of Kokand with downcast eyes and clenched teeth.

But that was all behind her now. Tadjikhan smiled when she called it to mind. Now she could summon people who occupied very responsible positions and they had to give her an account of all they had done to assist

in the work among women. She was respected and loved, and feared by many.

It was strange under these circumstances that the ex-tabib should be sharing the rations given out to a worker in a responsible post. What hindered her from ridding herself of him forever? Fear! Yes, this woman, who cared nothing for the vengeance of the bassmachi and the beys, was tormented by a fear. It was a very complex and high-minded fear. She was afraid that tomorrow the same rumors might be whispered about her that were always whispered in such cases.

"When a woman gets a new brief-case she doesn't need an old husband! All the members of the Women's Organization are like that—a loose lot of women!"

Once she was a day late in returning from the Congress of Soviets in Moscow. Her husband met her at the station and with his customary assurance struck her in the face with his fist. An arba-driver saw it, and he burst out laughing, saying:

"That's a lesson for these Party women!"

Then Tadjikhan realized as she gasped and wiped the blood from her face that no gossip of the market place could disgrace the Women's Organization as much as this. She ground her teeth, but said nothing until she entered the house.

"From this time on I cease to be your wife," she declared.

"Then I'll kill you," he replied simply.

"But I am stronger than you," she said, and as if realizing this for the first time, she drew herself up to her full height, which was a very fair one indeed.

The ex-tabib yielded unexpectedly.

"Then clear out of my house!" he shouted.

"This is the Central Committee hotel and my home," she replied.

"I'll show you yet!" he blustered as he rushed from the room. But he had a glimmering of the truth—that his house and his wife—yes, and perhaps, everything belonging to that world, was slipping away from him forever.

Yes, others were fighting now for the right to be masters of that world which ceased to belong to him for some time. And the spirit that was still alive, but hidden deep in the souls of some of those who pretended to be progressive, avenged itself cruelly on women for their rebellion.

Next day, when Tadjikhan, member of the Central Committee of the Uzbekistan Communist Party, set out for her work, certain Soviet employees refused to acknowledge her greeting; some even crossed to the other side of the street. It was the realization that such hostility should be hiding itself under the Soviet jerseys and tunics of people that she always regarded as her closest friends that hit Tadjikhan so hard. She turned back to her room, and shut the door and window. She tore a long strip form her new white dress. And then she wrote the following letter:

"I cannot see that I have done anything wrong, I have nothing to blame myself for that I know of. I struggled that woman might be free, and that people who worked might live as people ought. I am no better than other people, I know, but I am the same as they are. I do not want to come to the Central Committee and say that women must be free, and then let my husband beat me at home. That is why I do not want to live with my husband. But now I see that the people whom I respected do not wish to speak to me in the street and even cross the road, as if I was a leper. I am never

afraid of anything, but this frightened me when I saw it and I do not want to live any longer."

Then she pulled the noose of white material round her throat with all her might and lost consciousness.

When she came to herself again, she saw sitting beside her a person whom she was accustomed to believe and to regard as her best friend.

"Tadjikhan," said Ikramov, "that was a very wrong, stupid thing that you did. One meets many rotten people in life, you ought to know that. But are we so weak that we cannot get the better of them?"

At the Uzbekistan Party Congress, the secretary of the Central Committee said:

"Many difficulties arise before Uzbek women who are claiming their freedom. It is not merely a question of the bassmachi. We have caught many of them, they are dying out already. The type that is dangerous now is the bassmach that hides in the soul of certain people, and is waiting to destroy everything honest and growing and loyal. I am telling you frankly that I know of one person who developed under the most difficult circumstances imaginable and overcame what seemed insurmountable obstacles only to find that she still must fight for her rights with people who regard themselves as modern advanced Soviet citizens. The name of this person is Tadjikhan Shadieva. And no matter who tries to besmirch this beautiful name—and some have tried—they will fail. She will win through because she has at her back a powerful friend and protector, and the name of that protector is—the Communist Party."

What was this Party?

It was the voice of the Party that could be heard in the thousands of notes and letters received by Tadjikhan daily while she lay ill.

Here is one of them:

"I, Yeladiyiva Jossa, write to you, Tadjikhan. Sister, you are busy now with government affairs and you cannot remember all those who remember you. I heard you were sick. We women gathered in Nazakat Akdarova's house and talked of you and Nazakat wept. That was foolish. We know that you must be alive and well, dear sister, because all our women repeat all day and every day: 'May you be well and strong, our dearly loved sister Tadjikhan.' " Three signatures followed. It was from the village of Kzil-Ketmen.

It was the Party that awarded her the Order of the Red Banner. "To one who has fought fearlessly for the liberation of women," was written on the certificate accompanying it.

Tadjikhan could not but get well under these circumstances. After she recovered, she suddenly found herself capable of laughing at what had so recently filled her with shame and driven her to despair.

Thus did she learn to laugh at all those who had ancient and prohibited sentiments under a Soviet guise. Thus she laughed when the chairman of the local executive committee (we shall not mention his name here) sent a man to see her in the headquarters of the Women's Organization. The man stood in the office of the director, Comrade Shadieva, and gazed very attentively at the women delegates in the room.

"What do you want?" asked Tadjikhan.

"I'll tell you in a moment," said the man and without taking his eyes from the women's faces, held out a note to her, which ran as follows:

"To Comrade Shadieva, Director of the Women's Organization: I am sending you a comrade who is very poor, a former farm laborer. He is in

great need of a wife, so will the Women's Organization please provide him with one."

(Signed) .....*Chairman of the Executive Committee*

When Tadjikhan read it she was most indignant. "Clear out!" she said to the poor man. "or I'll tell the women about you and you'll find out how heavy their hands are and become poorer still!"

A little later, however, she was able to reply to the chairman without heat. A woman dressed in a torn old paranja, with her bare feet thrust into old galoshes, came to complain to Tadjikhan that it was hard for her to live as she had no husband. Tadjikhan wrote a note quickly and gave her some instructions.

When the woman tried to get into the chairman's office, the militiaman on guard tried to hold her back, as there was a meeting of the presidium going on. But being a determined woman she managed to make her way into the office and lay the note on the table before the chairman.

"This woman has no property," the note ran, "please provide her with a suitable husband at once."

(Signed) *Tadjikhan Shadieva, Director of the Women's Organization.*

The chairman read it, and then told the woman in a low tone that he would give her enough money for a new dress, galoshes and a blanket, if she would only leave the room immediately and take her note with her.

IV

To be able to laugh at your enemies is the first sign that you have grown mature. But now there were new anxieties for Tadjikhan to face. She was a member of the government. She was one of the Party members who guided the destiny of Uzbekistan. Who would have guessed that it was only two years since this woman had learned to read and write? Later on she had attended some courses for members of the Women's Organization. The courses had been conducted in Russian. She had understood very little, and she had only attended them for two months. In preparing her reports, Tadjikhan was constantly coming up against ideas far above any she had acquired in her own experience.

Once at a meeting of women delegates, after giving an address on the International Working Women's Day, she was handed a note asking her: "What is the last stage of capitalism?"

She was at a loss to reply.

Soon after that she went to Ikramov and told him that if he wanted her to maintain her position as the leader of the working women of Uzbekistan, he must give her some opportunity to study. She gave him a detailed account of the things that had puzzled her for so long.

That was how Tadjikhan happened to be present at the courses on Marxism and Leninism in Moscow, and could be seen at the first night performance of *Roar, China,* in the Meyerhold Theatre, and Lunacharski's lecture on "The Art of the West Today," and Jaffe's lecture on the "The Splitting of the Atom." But that was much later. At first she met with overwhelming difficulties. When she entered the brightly lit lecture hall for the first time, what she saw was a man in large spectacles standing on a platform before a black-board writing in chalk the following formula:

Commodity——Money——Commodity

C——M——C

What did it mean? What had it to do with all the things that had filled Tadjikhan's life and thoughts until now?

She had no idea. But it was repeated every day. When Tadjikhan finally realized that it probably had nothing whatever to do with her, she went home to her room at No. 83 Lemlianka, squatted down on the floor and, clutching her black curly head in her hands, rocked herself to and fro, crying bitterly.

Yes, this woman who had been the terror of the beys and the bassmachi, now sat rocking herself and wailing.

When she was called upon to speak on the theory of surplus value, she wound a scarf around her throat and told the lecturer that the Moscow climate was too severe for her and made her ill. She did this two or three times.

The cunning that had been developed during her life in the women's quarter of the house and was dormant for years, unexpectedly awoke again.

She was a healthy, strong, beautiful woman, yet she began to speak in muffled tones and clutch her chest when she coughed.

Her stratagem amused her. Then her comrade, a young Communist named Rakhim came to Moscow to study, too.

This was a man whose life had been no easier than her own. His father had been a laborer at the court of the Khan of Khoresm, his mother a servant. At twelve years of age Rakhim was set to wait on the guests of the vizier, the Khan's councillor.

He served tea, pilau, and noodles to the men's quarter of the house; swept it, carried water, and beat carpets.

But he had joined the Party sooner than Tadjikhan. He had been a member of the Young Communist League, had done a great deal of work for it. This, and the fact that he had received a better education than Tadjikhan, made him much better able to stand on his feet than she was. He had graduated from a secondary school, and then became a teacher.

He opened a book entitled *Imperialism—The Last Stage of Capitalism*, and asked her what was "social patriotism." Tadjikhan did not know.

It was her friend, her comrade, who was asking her this; he was clearly mortified that a woman who was accustomed to answer for everything, could give him no answer now.

At that moment Tadjikhan understood once and for all, that there was no one for her to deceive, that over her there was neither master, nor lord, nor stern teacher.

Next morning she wrote a letter to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, in which she told the whole truth— not sparing herself in any way— and asked for help. Had they, perhaps, been mistaken in her, she asked, and would it not be better to send her back to her native city of Ferghana and give her some inferior position in the Women's Organization? But the reply was quite different to the one she expected.

No mistake had been made about her. Tadjikhan Shadieva was just the type out of which the best Party workers were made. She should not forget that, in addition to everything else, she had to learn a foreign language. There was no reason to despair. She was advised to take the first course again. No one doubted that the results would be satisfactory. She followed this advice.

"Hold your tongue, African!" shouted the irritable neighbor on the other side of the wall. But the gutteral voice could be heard till daylight came.

"The reproduction of the means of production," the gutteral voice read on persistently.

As a result she was at the top of her class at the end of the year, and won

the first prize in the competition for an essay on "The Crisis in Capitalist Countries." This subject had a special interest for Tadjikhan. She had climbed to new undreamed of heights. The world now lay before her as a whole, its details clearly visible, and connected.

The allies of the beys attracted her notice first of all in this new, clearly explained world.

A steel chain of conspirators whose energies were directed against the oppressed, surrounded the world. And it was only one small link in this chain that bound woman.

This was the capitalist world, this was militant imperialism. This young woman's hate had traveled the whole way from the crowded clay kibitka in Uzbekistan—where a husband bullied her—all the way to Westminister.

When she had finished her course her former work no longer attracted Tadjikhan.

She felt she had the strength to accomplish the most difficult and responsible task. She wanted to do Party work. Her old friend and guide Ikramov, listened to her request and then told her he would think about it.

A few days later he summoned her again and said:

"Listen, Comrade Shadieva, I must tell you first of all that you can, if you wish, refuse this work. It's new to you and, as a matter of fact, new to everyone. Well, then—it's like this, things are going very badly in your native place, Ferghana. Only four out of eighty-four collective farms fulfilled their production plan in 1932. The collective farms are going to the devil. People are throwing up the administrative work and clearing out. Well, will you think about it, Comrade Shadieva?"

Shadieva thought about it, and a month later a woman in a jersey, high boots and a cap that protected her eyes from the dazzling sun, could be seen in the fields of Ferghana.

On her arrival, it was all exactly as Comrade Ikramov had warned her it would be.

She summoned the director of the Machine Tractor Station and asked him a number of questions: how did the tractors work? how much petrol did they use? and if the prescribed ratios were observed.

She was told that, although there were shortcomings, the work was not going on so badly on the whole. Then they went out to the fields together.

At the Stalin collective farm she noticed that the ploughed soil was lying in great clods on the surface.

"Why did you plough that way?" she asked the collective farm people. "It's your land—why did you do that with it?"

"Brother Sokol ordered us to do it like that," they replied shyly.

When she returned she demanded additional material on the personnel of the Machine Tractor Station and then summoned the director once more.

"Do you know the people you are working with?"

"The chief agronomist is called Sokolov, the agro-technician, Nesterov, the accountant is—"

"I'm not talking about names, fool!" said Tadjikhan.

"You dare call me a fool? Don't try any of those Women's Organization tricks on us here!" he flared out.

These people have all been arrested: the head agronomist,—ex-Colonel Sokolov, the agricultural technician—ex-Lieutenant Nesterov, and the accountant—an ex-priest.

Under Tadjikhan's guidance an investigation into the M.T.S. was conducted immediately. Thousands of cases of mis-appropriation of funds were

discovered and of contempt for the collective farm peasants. For instance, on the Molotov Farm, where an allowance of cooking oil for the peasants had been received, the leaders, who were former rich kulaks, used it for oiling wheels.

At the instance of the Chief of the Political Department training courses were instituted for future chairmen of collective farms and secretaries of Party and Young Communist League locals. Reliable bodies of men were thus prepared to replace the kulaks, wreckers and spongers.

In 1934, this district, which had been regarded as hopelessly backward, fulfilled its plan a hundred and two per cent, under the guidance of a woman of twenty-seven years of age. A second decoration—the Order of Lenin—now shone on the breast of the Chief of the Political Department, Tadjikhan.

But it was the last test that brought Tadjikhan her final victory, a victory which she would have regarded a few years before as a cruel defeat. It happened as follows:

Rakhim, the comrade who had always been her best friend and helper had, in accordance with instructions of the Central Committee forbidding Party members who had family ties to be appointed to places distant from their homes, been sent to Margelan, adjoining Ferghana.

The situation in this district was considerably better. The only inconvenient part about it was that Ferghana lay nearer to the mountains and upon it depended the distribution of the water in other districts. But not every district observed the same economy in water reserves, and those that remained without, demanded additional supplies.

This was what happened in the Margelan district. While the plan for the distribution of the water was being discussed no one raised any objections. Shadieva alone was of the opinion that there would be a shortage. She proved to be right very soon.

The Margelan district made a big mistake in collecting all the scattered waters into one reservoir. This method demanded a great deal of water, and there was not enough of it in the district. The cotton was in bad need of water.

"Tadjikhan!" said Rakhim, "our cotton is spoiling, give us water."

"You should have been economical with it, and used it properly," said Tadjikhan.

"Give us a little, anyway."

"It isn't as if it was my own property I'm responsible for," replied Tadjikhan. "Let's drop the subject."

"That's all very well," said Rakhim. "It's all very well for the people at the top, who can steal as much water as they like."

"You mean—I'm a thief?" Tadjikhan came up close to her husband.

"Well, what would you call a person who kept public property for himself?"

"It isn't public property, it belongs to the Ferghana district."

"The Ferghana district belongs to Uzbekistan."

"And Uzbekistan—is a part of the USSR? Stop this nonsense, Rakhim It's just playing on prejudices."

"But, all the same, the Margelan district took some water over and above its norm from the Ferghana district. Quite unexpectedly this roused a furious hatred in Tadjikhan. She, who had spent half her own life in the struggle against male domination! She who had surmounted the barriers of prejudice and tradition and thwarted all men's will! For a moment it seemed

to her as if she saw once more the self satisfied, contemptuous masculine face.

"Listen to me, Rakhim," she said in a very low voice. She was pale as death. "Don't imagine for a moment that you can give me orders and bully me. I'd like to know who gave you the right to do that?"

"Oh, I don't know what you are talking about—hissing like a snake."

"Who gave you that right?" screamed Tadjikhan.

A little later Tadjikhan made a furious speech against Rakhim at the congress. Her voice shook, her eyes flashed, she clenched her fists as she spoke; it was nearly the same as twelve years ago when she had first risen against the traditional enslavers and oppressors of women. She felt this so strongly that the bitterness of those terrible days returned to fill her soul again, and it seemed for a moment that her twelve years of struggle had gone for nothing.

Another time an argument arose about the Machine and Tractor Repair Shop. This repair shop happened to be in the Margelan district, and the Margelan tractors were always mended first, while the Ferghana tractors were kept waiting.

"Why do you always get your tractors mended first and keep ours waiting?" asked Tadjikhan. "The M.T. Repair shop is public property, isn't it?"

"That's all prejudice on your part," retorted Rakhim.

Once more Tadjikhan complained of her comrade and husband in the local newspapers.

Then the struggle began for the spare parts for tractors. These had been sent to Margelan. There were twenty magnetoes Rakhim said, all of them had been intended by the Tractor Centre for Margelan.

"Give me four," Tadjikhan said. But Rakhim refused to give her more than two.

By way of revenge Tadjikhan persuaded the best agronomist and agricultural technician from the Margelan Machine Tractor Station to come to Ferghana. Nowadays when Rakhim and Tadjikhan met at dinner-time or late in the evening they were both gloomy and disinclined for conversation.

"Tadjikhan," said Rakhim, "I think that Peter Ivanovich ought to come back to Margelan."

"It isn't two magnitoes we need, but eight," rejoined Tadjikhan.

They both were silent awhile.

"Tadjikhan," Rakhim began again, "the new agricultural technician muddles up the ratios, and the fertilizers."

"Two magnitoes are nothing as compared to what we really need," replied Tadjikhan.

Once Rakhim came home in a high fever. He was evidently worn out with the tension of the last few weeks, and his constitution being far from robust, this told on him. He lay down on the bed and drew his leather jacket over him. His fevered gaze roved about the room. There was nobody in. Tadjikhan had not returned from work yet. It seemed as if he had come home to a house that was strange to him.

At last someone came in. It was the Chief of the Ferghana Political Department. She came up to the bed and adjusted his pillow. Rakhim kept his eyes stubbornly closed, and did not stir. He lay on his back as if mortally wounded. He did not know what to do to improve their relations and restore them to their former state. Now he felt lonely and unhappy. As he lay there, he could feel the heat coming out of him and he was glad he was so ill.

That was the beginning of a serious illness.

When it was over, the first thing he saw was the face that was the dearest and most familiar of all to him. It no longer wore a gloomy, revengeful expression.

"Rakhim," said Tadjikhan with unexpected calmness and steadiness. "Rakhim, what I am going to say now I am not saying because you are sick. But during your illness that fog of fury passed away from me. Yes, I realize now that Margelan is a part of Uzbekistan and that Uzbekistan is a part of the whole great Soviet Union. And I fully realize that the Margelan and Ferghana districts have concluded an agreement to enter into socialist competition with each other, and that if you win, I shall feel depressed. Still, even if you win, it will be a good thing. It will mean that one of the districts of our country has yielded a great deal of cotton. That's how I've been thinking about this, Rakhim. Please don't get up! Lie there and I shall do all I possibly can to make the Ferghana district the best. But I do not want a big crop in our district to mean a small crop in others. Peter Ivanovich is going back to your district tomorrow, Rakhim, and we shall talk about the magnitoes later. Now you have too sleep a lot and think a lot! Get well quick!"

Thus ended Tadjikhan Shadieva's last contest.

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

Yuri Olesha

The Cherry Stone

A Soviet Short Story

I went into the country on Sunday to see Natasha. There were three more guests besides myself: two girls and Boris Mikhailovich. Natasha's brother, Erastus, took the two girls for a sail on the river, while we others—Natasha, Boris Mikhailovich and I—went off into the woods. We sat down to rest in a sunlit clearing. Natasha raised her head and suddenly her face looked to me a shining porcelain saucer.

Natasha treated me as an equal, but with Boris Mikhailovich she behaved as if he was much older; she looked up to him in fact. She knew that I found this very disagreeable, and that I envied Boris Mikhailovich, so, from time to time, she would take me by the hand and, no matter what was said, ask me:

"That's true, Fedya, isn't it?"

As if she was asking my forgiveness in a roundabout way.

We started to talk about birds, because a funny bird-note had rung out just then from the thicket. I remarked that I had never seen a thrush in my life and asked what it looked like.

At that moment a bird flew out across the clearing and perched on a branch over our heads. It did not so much sit as stand, swinging, on the bough. It blinked and I decided that bird's eyes were not in the least pretty, because they had no brows, but the lids were strongly marked.

"What's that?" I asked in a whisper. "Is it a thrush?"

There was no reply. I turned my back to them, so that my jealous glance removed, they might enjoy their tete-a-tete in peace. I watched the bird. Glancing round suddenly, I caught a glimpse of Boris Mikhailovich stroking Natasha's cheek. The hand seemed to say: let the poor slighted young fellow watch the birds, if he likes. But I no longer saw the bird. I was listening. I caught the sound of a kiss as their lips parted. I did not look around, but they knew they had been caught for they saw me start.

"Is that a thrush?" I asked again.

The bird took flight—up through the tree-tops. It was a difficult flight; the leaves rustled as she flew.

Natasha offered us cherries. Following a childish custom, I kept one cherry-stone in my mouth, rolling it about until I had sucked it clean. When I took it out it looked like wood.

I left the country cottage that day with the stone in my mouth.

I traveled through an invisible country.

I returned from the country to the town. The sun was setting. I went in an easterly direction. I was making a double journey but only one-half of it was visible. The passers-by could see a man crossing a deserted green common. But what was really happening to this person who walked along, to all appearances, so peacefully? He could see his shadow going before him, sprawling over the ground; the shadow had long, pale legs. I crossed the common and all of a sudden the shadow climbed a brick wall and lost its head. This the passer-by did not see, only I saw it. I entered as it were a

corridor between two wings of a building. The corridor was infinitely lofty and shadowy. The ground here was rotten and gave like garden soil under foot. A wild, forlorn looking dog ran towards me, sidling against the wall. We passed each other. Then I glanced round. Far behind me the threshold was bright. For a moment the dog formed a dark protuberance in the brightness. Then it ran off across the common, and only then I saw that it was a rusty-colored animal.

All this happened in an invisible country. What happened in the country visible to the ordinary eye was that a man and a dog passed each other, at sunset, on a green common. . . .

The Invisible Country was the country of attention and imagination. Two sisters walked beside our traveler and led him by the hand. The names of the sisters were Attention and Imagination.

Well, then, what about it? It appeared that, in direct opposition to society and the established order, I was creating a world of my own, subject to no laws but the shadowy laws of my own sensations. But what did that mean? There were two known worlds: the old and the new. But what sort of a world was this? A third world? There were two roads, but what sort of a road was this third one?

Natasha makes an appointment with me but does not keep it.

I am there half-an-hour before time. There is a train-clock at the crossing that reminds me of a barrel. They are really like barrels, aren't they, those street clocks? Two faces. Two ends. Oh, empty barrel of time, I might exclaim.

Natasha made the appointment for half-past three.

I wait. Oh, she isn't coming, of course. Ten minutes past three. . . .

I stand by the train stop. All around me people are bustling about. I tower above the crowd. Those who have lost their way espy me from afar. Now it is beginning. . . . An unknown woman approaches me.

"Would you be so kind," pleads the unknown one, "as to tell me if Number 27 car will take me all the way to Kudrinsk Square?"

No one must know that I am keeping an appointment. Better to let them think: "That young man who is smiling broadly has come to this corner expressly for the convenience of other people. He'll tell you all you want to know, he'll direct you, he'll calm your fears. . . . Go to him."

"Yes," I reply, brimming over with civility. "The 27 will take you to Kudrinsk Square. . ."

Then suddenly remembering the right number, I fling myself after the woman, calling out:

"No, no! You'll have to take a 16!"

Let us forget about the appointment. I am not a man in love at all. I am the good genius of the street. Come to me! This way, this way!

A quarter past three. The hands of the clock unite and lie horizontal. Looking at them, I think:

"Like a fly twiddling its legs. The restless fly of time."

How silly! As if there was such a thing! She will not come. She will not come. A Red Army soldier comes up to me.

"Can you tell me where the Darwin Museum is?" he asks me.

"I don't know. . . . Over there, I think . . . Wait a minute, though . . . Wait . . . a . . . min—No, I'm afraid I don't know."

Next. Who's the next? Don't be shy. A taxi describes a curve and glides up to me. You ought to see how that driver despises me. Not out of strength

of mind. No, I should think not. As if he would condescend so far as to waste strength of mind on me. No, no. He shows it by his glove. . .the contempt is conveyed by his glove. Comrade driver, believe me, I'm only an amateur, I really don't know which way to direct your car. . .

I am not standing here for the purpose of directing people. I have my own business to attend to. . . My loitering here is enforced, and rather pathetic. . . I am not smiling out of sheer good nature. If you look closer you will see it is a forced, strained smile.

"Which way to Varsonofievski Lane?" the taxi-driver flings over his shoulder to me.

I hasten to explain: "This way and then that way and then—"

Oh, well, if it comes to that, why should I not stand in the middle of the road and take up in good earnest the work that is thrust upon me?

A blind man approaches.

He simply shouts at me. He pokes with his stick.

"Is that a Number 10 coming?" he demands. "Eh? Ten, is it?"

"No," I reply, almost stroking him. "It's not a 10. It's a two. But there's a 10 just coming behind."

Ten minutes over the appointed hour have passed. Why should I wait any longer? Perhaps she is hurrying to get here, though, flying as fast as she can?

"Oh, I'll be late—oh, I'll be late. . ."

The woman who wanted to get to Kudrinsk Square has caught the 16, the Red Army soldier is wandering through the cool galleries of the museum, the taxi-driver is trumpeting in Varsonofievski Lane, the blind man is climbing in his touchy, egoistic fashion, with his stick held out before him, up the front steps of the Number 10.

Everyone is satisfied. Everyone is happy. Only I remain there with a vacant smile on my face.

More people approach me with enquiries: an old woman, a drunken man, a group of children with a flag. I begin to slash the air with my arms, I no longer merely indicate the desired direction by a jerk of my chin as a passer-by casually inquired of might. No, no. I stretch out my hands, the edge of the palm cutting the air. . . Another moment and a baton will appear in my fist.

"Back!" I shall shout. "Stop! That way to Varsonofievski Lane. Turn. To the right, old lady. Stop!"

Oh, look! here is a whistle clinging to my lips. I whistle . . . I have the right to whistle . . . Children, you may well envy me. Back! Oho . . . look here! I can stand between two trams going in opposite directions. I'm standing, you can see, at ease, with my arms crossed behind my back and the red baton touching my shoulder-blades.

Congratulate me, Natasha. I have turned into a militiaman.

Suddenly I catch sight of Avel standing some way off, watching me. (Avel is my neighbor.)

Natasha is obviously not coming. I beckon to Avel.

I: "Did you see that, Avel?"

Avel: "Yes, I did. You must be crazy."

I: "Oh, so you saw me, Avel? I've turned into a militiaman."

(A pause. I cast another glance at the clock. Ten to four.)

I: "Of course, you cannot understand. My transformation into a militiaman took place in an Invisible Country."

Avel: "Your Invisible Country is all a lot of idealistic nonsense."

I: "And do you know, the most surprising thing about it, Avel, is that I should figure as a militiaman in that enchanted country. . . . By right, I should be marching through it calmly and majestically, as its owner, with the flowering staff of the sage in my hand . . . And instead of that, look here, this is the militia-man's baton I'm holding. What a curious mixture of two worlds, the everyday and the imaginary."

Avel: (says nothing).

I: "And what is still stranger is that the initial cause of my transformation into a militiaman, is—unrequited love."

Avel: "I can't understand a single thing. It's some sort of Bergsonism, I suppose."

I resolved to my plant my cherry-stone in the ground.

I chose a suitable spot and planted it. "Upon this spot," I said to myself, "a cherry tree will grow up, planted by me in memory of my love for Natasha. Perhaps, some day — say five years hence — Natasha will meet me under this new tree in the springtime. We shall stand one on each side of it. Cherry trees never grow very tall; you can touch the topmost leaf if you raise yourself on your tiptoes. There will be bright sunshine and the spring will be a little bare still, for it will be just the time when the running gutters tempt children out to play and the tree is bursting into blossom."

I shall say:

"Natasha, the day is bright and joyous, the breeze blows and fans the light to a brighter radiance. The breeze sways my tree and makes its shining boughs creak. Each of its blossoms will lift and then droop, showing pink and then white. That is a kaleidoscope of spring, Natasha. Five years ago you gave me some cherries, do you remember? Unrequited love has made the memory humble and very clear. I remember even to this day how the palm of your hand was purple from cherry juice and how you made a funnel of it as you poured the cherries into my palm. I took away a cherry stone in my mouth, and I planted it in memory of my unrequited love. It is blossoming now. So you see: I was slighted then. Boris Mikhailovich was more manly than I was and he won you. I was dreamy and puerile. I sought for a thrush, while you two kissed. I was romantic. But you see — a fine, firm, mature tree has grown up from the romantic seed. You know that the Japanese think, a cherry blossom is the soul of man. See, this is a short, sturdy Japanese tree. Believe me, Natasha, romance can be manly, too, you should not laugh at it . . . The whole point is how to approach it. If Boris Mikhailovich caught me squatting on the common planting a puerile little cherry stone, he would feel his triumph once more over me, the triumph of the man over the dreamer. And it was just about that time I planted the kernel. It has burst and sprouted into a tree of dazzling beauty. I buried a seed in the soil. This tree is our child, Natasha. Bring me the son that Boris Mikhailovich gave you. Let me see whether he is as healthy, pure and aloof as the tree produced by an infantile person like myself."

As I returned home from the country, Avel appeared from the other side of the wall. He works in a Trade Union. He is small. He wears a Tolstoi blouse made of a cotton imitation of covert coating, sandals, and blue socks. He is clean-shaven but his cheeks look swarthy. He gives the impression of being overgrown with hair. One might almost think that he had not two skins but only one, a black one. He has a hooked nose and a black cheek.

Avel: "What's the matter with you lately? As I was passing in one of the

suburban trains today, I caught sight of you squatting on your heels somewhere on the permanent way, scraping up the earth with your hands. What was up?"

I: (I make no reply.)

Avel: (pacing up and down the room). "A man sits on his heels and digs the earth with his hands. What can he be doing? There's no knowing. Is he making an experiment? Or has he got the colic? There's absolutely no knowing. Are you subject to attacks of colic?"

I: —after a pause) "Do you know what I was thinking, Avel? I was thinking that a dreamer should never have children. What does the new world want with a dreamer's children? Better for the dreamers to produce trees for the new world."

Avel: "It's not in the Plan."

The world of attention begins at the head of your bed, with the chair which you draw up to it as you are undressing. To awake early in the morning, while the house is still. The room is flooded with sunshine. Silence reigns. You lie without stirring, for fear of disturbing the immobile light. A pair of socks lie on the chair. They are brown. But in the steady brilliance you suddenly detect among the grown threads tiny wisps of variegated hair—crimson blue, and orange, stirred by the air.

It is a Rest Day morning. Once more I am taking the familiar route to Natasha's. I ought to write *Travels in an Invisible Country.* Here is a specimen chapter; it might be entitled:

"The Man Who Was in a Hurry to Throw a Stone."

Some shrubs grew under a brick wall. I passed them as I went along the path. I caught sight of a niche in the wall, and wanted to throw some pebbles at it. I stooped. A stone lay at my feet . . . Then I saw an ant-hill.

The last time I saw an ant-hill was twenty years ago. Oh, of course, I had stepped over ant-hills many a time during those twenty years. And I suppose I had seen them, but had merely thought, "I am walking over ant-hills," and the word "ant-hills" was all that stood out clearly in my consciousness. All the living image was pushed into insignificance by the word that leapt so readily to my service.

Oh, I remembered now: ant-heaps can only be discovered by a casual glance. One . .. Then .. . here's another. Then—look here—there's another. That was how it happened now. Three ant-hills appeared one after the other.

My height hindered me from seeing the ants properly; all my eye could catch was a certain restlessness in a form that might easily have been taken for immobile. The eye was willing to be deceived. As I looked I was quite ready to think that it was not a multitude of ants swarming round their ant-hills but the ant-hills themselves that were crumbling away like sand dunes.

I stood about four paces from the wall with the stone in my hand. The stone was intended to lodge in the niche. I flung it. The stone flew out and struck the bricks. A spiral of dust arose. I had missed the mark. The stone fell into the bushes at the foot of the wall. Only then did the exclamation uttered by the stone before I opened my palm reach my ears.

"Wait," cried the stone. "Look at me!"

I had been in too much of a hurry. I should have examined the stone first. There was no doubt about it, the stone was a remarkable thing. And now it had disappeared into the shrubs. And I, who had held the thing in my hand, could not even say what color it had been. Maybe it had been of a

purplish tint. Possibly it had not been monolithic but made up of several different bodies. Maybe it had contained the fossilized skeleton of a flying beetle or a cherry stone; maybe—it had not been a stone at all, but a bit of mouldy bone.

I encountered an excursion on the way. Twenty persons were walking across the common where I had planted my cherry stone. They were led by Avel. I stepped aside. Avel did not see me, or rather, did not understand. He saw me without perceiving me; he gulped me down, so to speak, like any fanatic, without waiting for either my agreement or resistance.

Avel detached himself from his flock and turned to face it. His back was towards me. Flinging out an arm with a powerful gesture, he cried:

"Now here! Here you are! Here!"

A pause. Silence.

"Comrades from Kursk!" bawled Avel, "I hope you have some imagination. Imagine as much as you like, don't be afraid."

So Avel was trying to invade the Country of the Imagination? Would he even go as far as to show the excursionists the cherry tree planted in memory of unrequitted love? Avel was seeking a way to the Invisible Country.

He strode along. Then he halted and shook his leg. Then he shook it again; he was evidently trying to free himself from some twining shrub which had wound itself around his foot as he was walking. He stamped his foot and the plant crackled and scattered in little balls of yellow. (How many plants and trees and shrubs there are in this story!)

"The huge concrete works I was telling you about will be set up here."

"Dear Natasha, I forgot the principal thing: the Plan. I acted without consulting the Plan. In five years' time a huge concrete works will have risen on this deserted spot where now you can see nothing but useless walls and ditches. My sister—Imagination— is an imprudent creature. They will begin to lay the foundations in the spring-time and then—what will become of my poor silly little cherry stone? Yes—for a tree planted in your honor will blossom there in the Invisible Country some day. . .

"And excursionists will come to see the concrete giant.

"They will not see your tree. Surely the Invisible Country could be rendered visible. . . . ?"

This letter is an imaginary one. I never wrote it. But I might have written it if Avel had not said what he did.

"The building will be laid out in a semi-circle," said Avel. "And the inner side of the semi-circle will be devoted to a garden. Have you any imagination?"

"Yes," I said, "I have. I can see it, Avel. I can see it all quite clearly. There will be a garden just here. And on the very spot where you are standing now, a cherry tree will grow up."

Translated from the Russian by Anthony Wixley

Friedrich Wolf

Floridsdorf

Two Scenes From a New German Revolutionary Play[1]

SCENE 4

Cellar of the Schlingerhof: illegal rifle range in a long cellar, lit up by two small electric lights. Ferd, Seppl, Rudi, *the rifle men of the Second Platoon, Karl Marx Regiment, all prone on two low wooden pallets with their rifles and a machine gun, breaking in their guns by shooting to the right against a wall, not visible.* Ferd *is lying on the first pallet (front),* Weissel *alongside him giving instructions;* Rudi *on the second pallet (rear), alongside him* Franz. *At the left there is a staircase leading up from the cellar.* Gretl *and* Lene *are standing there in front of a washtub, with basket full of clothes, "washing." One of them is up a few steps as a lookout. In order to drown out the noise of shooting, they sing one of the Austrian folk songs as loudly as they can:*

The Alpinist rules all the world
He towers high in air
And countless are the joyous hours
For him who dares to dare.
Who shuns not danger, shuns not death
To whom fear is unknown, yes all unknown,
Who bravely climbs, though facing death
Into the snow-capped zone.
We gaily climb the mountains, at every time
In rain or shine. (repeat chorus)
Our spiked shoes on our eager feet
A pickaxe in our hand,
We hasten up the mountainside
Above the world we stand.
What though the timid shout to us
"There's danger everywhere!"—yes everywhere,
We will not flinch, but fealty
To mountain-climbing swear.
We gaily climb the mountains, at every time
In rain or shine. (repeat chorus)

The song is interrupted now and then by rifle shots and the tattoo of the machine-guns.

FRANZ (sings out): Cease firing!

They stop shooting. The voice of the target man off stage right, is

[1] These two scenes of a revolutionary drama are taken from *Floridsdorf*, a new play by Friedrich Wolf, whose *Sailors of Catarro* is well known to workers in a number of countries and is now a great success in the production staged by the revolutionary Theatre Union of New York. *Floridsdorf*, based on the heroic struggle of the Austrian Schutzbundlers, has just been completed. It will be produced within this year in Moscow, New York and other centers. Meanwhile, the English version is being published in book form in Moscow by the Cooperative Publishing Society for Foreign Workers in the USSR. American readers can secure copies through the Theatre Union of New York.

heard singing out the scores. The girls keep on singing in a lower voice. . . .

VOICE (off stage right): Right hand gun scatters two marks to the left too high.

FERD (repeats while prone on the pallet): Two marks too high to the left.

WEISSEL (alongside him): Its too high because you're too close; the guns are shot in for two hundred yards; that means you must aim two fingers lower. And keep it steady, a husky fellow like you—you're Ferd, aren't you?

FERD: Uh—um, Schani Höltzel's Ferd.

WEISSEL (prone): What do you do?

FERD: Lathe hand like him, my brother Seppl.

SEPPL (alongside him): We both work in the Gas Works.

VOICE: Left machine gun scatters over the whole wall.

FRANZ (with Rudi on the second pallet): I've always told you: keep them bunched!

RUDI: A machine gun isn't a fire hose.

FRANZ: Stop shooting off your mouth, Rudi! (*again takes aim with him*)

GRETL (to Lene): It won't start right away, will it?

LENE: If they wait until Dollfuss has arrested our last man. . . .

FRANZ: Or until they've gone over to the Heimwehr. . . .

LENE (rushing at him): Even if my father beat it to the goose-feather guys because all this dilly-dallying drove him almost crazy, Lene Gramling knows where she belongs; you can kid me as much as you want! (*sings*)

FERD: Lene's right! Are we going to wait again Franz like a year ago?

RUDI: When Dollfuss, the little runt, chased our deputies.

FERD (violently): That was number one and three weeks later, in April when he dissolved our Schutzbund, that was number two; and again we "waited!" (*whips out his revolver*)

RUDI: The whole butt full of nails?

FERD: Yop, whenever Dollfuss cracked down on us and we waited I'd put a nail into it; here's number three for last October when our *Arbeiterzeitung* was suppressed, and here's number four for December when all meetings were prohibited. . . .

RUDI: And raiding our Party headquarters in Tyrol last week, that was nothing I suppose. . . .

SEPPL: Arresting our officials in Schwechat. . . .

FERD: I'm not putting anymore nails in at the back for that boys; for that we're shooting our bullets out in front!

FRANZ (interrupting): Change guns! Start firing!

Ferd *goes over to the second pallet together with* Weissel, *while* Franz *with* Rudi *and* Seppl *take their places on the first pallet.* Seppl *fires several times from the prone position,* Franz *stands with his gun alongside him. . . .*

WEISSEL (on the second pallet): Don't set up your machine gun like coast artillery; you've got no room to move.

FRANZ (at the machine gun): But Franz says. . . .

WEISSEL: Franz is right for shooting from windows; but whoever said that you're not going to have to use your gun on the street, or on a bridge. . . .

FRANZ (turning to Weissel): Your old tactics, I know. . . .

WEISSEL: The situation can become acute very soon, Franz; Comrades, if it comes to fighting. . . .

FERD: And there will be fighting!

SEPPL: This time we won't bury our guns again!

WEISSEL: But you are burying them. . . .

FERD: Not this time, Comrade Weissel!

WEISSEL: You're burying yourselves and your guns and your apartment houses in your mouse traps! (*with suppressed passion*) Boys, think of the situation! (*takes a cleaning rod, and draws on the back cellar wall*) Here you are in the Schlingerhof in Floridsdorf. . . .

RUDI (has picked up a piece of coal from the floor and gives it to him): Don't you want to make a real drawing; we could understand it better!

WEISSEL (*drawing with the piece of coal*): Well, here's the Schlingerhof. . . .

RUDI: That must have zigzags like a real fortress!

WEISSEL: Or like a mouse trap! (*drawing*) You see, Comrades, here's the Bisamberg, 120 yards higher, ten kilometres in an air line, a marvelous point for the government artillery.

FRANZ: But we'll be there too!

WEISSEL: If we're there *right off,* and only then! Comrades, whoever has the Bisamberg has Floridsdorf as an open target, has the biggest radio station in Austria (*keeps on drawing*). And the second thing we need is Vienna itself: the post-office, the railway stations, the barracks. . . .

RUDI: What about the barracks in Floridsdorf?

FERD: Barracks in Floridsdorf?

RUDI: Police headquaters.

WEISSEL (*looks at him*): You're a smart kid, what's your name?

RUDI: Rudi.

WEISSEL (*zealously*): You're right, Rudi, that's a good question! Look here, Rudi, if the Bisamberg is the head and forehead of our Floridsdorf position, headquaters is its heart; everything is decided there during the first hours of fighting. That is why, Comrades, we can't wait until the headquarters is filled with police and shock troops; we must be the first ones to attack. . . .

FERD (*excited*): Occupy the bridges. . . .

WEISSEL: To attack the inner city. . . .

FRANZ: Let's stop talking, Schorsch! You know our staff has another general plan: defending the Municipal apartment houses. Let's go! (*takes a gun, and starts firing himself*)

The rifle men take up their guns again with Franz *and* Weissel *and begin shooting. The girls "wash" and sing.* Lene *is at the top of the steps,* Gretl *is washing down below; she pulls* Seppl—*who has been relieved by* Rudi—*down front, left. . . .*

Gretl: It'll be a long time coming, if you fellows are still fighting about theories.

SEPPL: This time it won't stop at "theories!"

GRETL: That's madness!

SEPPL: Then why are you in it?

GRETL: Because *you* are!

SEPPL: You're crazy Gretl! You should have your own convictions, Gretl! (*gravely*) If you don't understand what it means to start fighting against the murder battalions of the white bandits, to stand on thundering barricades under the storm banner of freedom. . . .

GRETL: Don't talk through your hat, Seppl! I belong to you and that's that! *(grabs him)* It's just like last year do you remember Seppl! then you also swore by all that's holy that it would "start". And you also had the guns all ready. . . It was nothing but hot air! And our ski trip was a lot of hot air too! But this time we won't let our fun be spoiled, Seppl. *(softly)* I've saved 200 shillings; we start next week!

SEPPL: And if the comrades here on the barricades. . . .

GRETL: I don't see any barricades yet, you fool; there won't be any either (*softly*) Seppl, you know, up in Golm on the Jachalm; we'll take food along for eight days. Up there 6,000 feet high, there's air and snow and sun and pine trees—not a sound only the two of us way up there 6,000 feet high. . . .

SEPPL: (moved) Christ Almighty! And shooting down, afterwards, gee whiz! From Golm through Kogele into the Tyrol; I've got steel edges on our skiis now, Gretl, you slide along like soap!

Lene *has begun to sing up on the stairs;* Gretl *joins immediately while the men stop shooting only clicking the bolt and aiming. The girls sing the last verse of the* Brave Alpinist

And when I die, then bury me
And lay me in my shroud
I always lived a faithful lad
And so I'll buried be.
And by my side, my hob-nailed shoes
A pickaxe in my hand, yes in my hand,
And cross my cold, cold breast entwine
The flaming blood-red band.
We gaily climb the mountains every time,
In rain or shine. . . .

Heinz *comes down the steps quickly;* Franz *and* Weissel *jump up from the pallets as do the rifle men! . . . .*

FRANZ: (reporting) Breaking in 60 guns and one machine gun; no jamming or dead cartridges up to now.

HEINZ: (to Weissel) Hello Comrade Schorsch! I know what you have up your sleeve. *(to the young men)* Keep on shooting! *(takes* Franz *and* Weissel *aside)* Swatosch is arrested.

FRANZ: Our regiment commander?

WEISSEL: And you're next, Heinz!

HEINZ: (laughing) As a prisoner or commander?

WEISSEL: Both!

FRANZ: What's going to happen, Heinz?

HEINZ: They want to provoke us, force us to start fighting, but a few things must be cleared up first. *(softly)* Fiat and Shell want to go out on strike. And you?

FRANZ: The guns are ready in two hours.

WEISSEL: What did the staff say?

HEINZ: The orders and plans are locked with the district leaders. As soon as the staff issues the pass word. . . .

FRANZ: . . ."Karl is sick!"

WEISSEL: Will the staff issue the pass word?

HEINZ: (reluctantly) If the heavens fall, no. *(facing* Rudi) And you?

RUDI: (reporting, looking him in the eye) Rudi Luzatti, rifle man, second platoon.

HEINZ: The whole regiment in readiness at home for the next forty-eight hours; all small arms within reach! *going to the drawing on the cellar wall, softly to* Weisel) careful Schorsch! *(wipes it off; moves to the staircase)*

WEISSEL: (alongside him) "Karl is sick," Heinz, will that come Heinz?

HEINZ: It's coming. *(exit)*

The rifle men begin shooting again; Seppl *is now lying down with the gun in his hands,* Ferd *stands down near front near* Lene *who is "washing".* Gretl *up on the steps....*

FERD: What are you washing Lene, girl?

LENE: A clown's costume.

FERD: For your friend, I suppose?

LENE: You'll see who's wearing it tomorrow.

FERD: What are you so touchy about?

LENE: I know that I'm nobody! But did *I* bring my father into the world? Is it my fault if he deserts to the Heimwehr?

FERD: You're still the same to me—spit-fire!

LENE: (grabs him suddenly) I'd like to be alone with you again, Ferd, have you again, Ferd... but you, you haven't got a minute to spare for the likes of us, with your mobilizations, with your shooting, with your politics. Ferd! Aren't you coming to the Nature Friends' Costume Ball tomorrow night?

FERD: If we can manage it.

LENE: (violently) Why shouldn't we manage it, Ferd? Do you want to spoil our last bit of fun, Ferd? You stand in front of the machine in the Fiat plant all year long, and when Carnival comes along....

Gretl *begins to sing loudly up above;* Max *a young man, about twenty-five years old, jumps down the steps; later* Mali *comes puffing in....*

MAX: *(in a low voice)* Police!

FRANZ: Max?

FERD: (alongside him) The Communist....

MAX: Put the guns away!

FRANZ: Everybody hide in the rear! *(pulls the young men to the right)*

MALI: (coming down the steps) Ferd! Seppl! Where are the youngsters? They'll land in jail, the bums, the loafers, in jail on the gallows!

FRANZ: Quiet! Where do you come from?

MAX: From Brunnerstrasse and Hock Park. *(helping to put away the guns)* Damn shame if the guns are nabbed. *(turning to* Franz) You, comrade, give me five guns; I'll put them in a safe place.

FRANZ: (staring at him) You're a Communist?

MAX: (returning the stare) A worker.

WEISSEL: Let's go! Two of you start running across the yard right away, make a commotion and get the police running after you...Who'll do it?

MAX: I'll do it; we know how.

FERD: So'll I!

MALI: I, I, I, ...you rascals, you crooks, you tramps, is that what I raised you up for? Nonsense! Listen, Gretl and I and Seppl, I'll give the two of them hell so that the window panes'll rattle and we'll bust the eardrums of the Dollfuss cadets. . . *(pushes* Seppl *and* Gretl *upstairs)* Come on you bums, you tramps, you creatures of darkness, hanging out down in the

cellar, that's what I like! I'll pull you lice out into daylight, into the broad daylight, even if the sun stops shining for shame,—you plagues, you creatures of the underworld! *(exit with both)* Silence.

WEISSEL: Search for arms through the block?

FRANZ: Never happened here.

RUDI: Stool pigeon?

FRANZ: Nonsense. You, Lene, the top of the stairs isn't guarded.

Lene *hesitates for an instant, then goes up the steps to her post....*

FERD: (violently) You'll drive the girl over to the other side!

FRANZ: What's the matter?

FERD: (irritated) I can smell your suspicion!

WEISSEL: (alongside him) Quiet, Ferd, be reasonable; the girl maybe all right but she lives at home with her father, the Heimwehr man.

FRANZ: Out with the guns! Aim and call out the score!

Guns are passed in from the right two by two. The youngsters are again prone on the pallets with Franz *and* Weissel. . . .

FERD: (throwing down his gun) I'd stake my right hand for her; it's a god-damn shame!

WEISSEL: (alongside him) Hold on, Ferd! Ferd, don't know what this is all about? Not only a fight between Dollfuss and the Austrian workers; much more, Ferd, much more: it's a signal, a gigantic test whether our working class in the West has self-confidence, again has the strength to smash this giant murder ghost in the teeth! *(all listen; crawl closer on the pallets)* Boys! We in Floridsdorf here can be an example, we can kindle a flame that will spread far over Vienna and Austria. But Comrades, to do this we must polish off the enemy in Floridsdorf in the first 60 minutes, or we are finished ourselves! We must carry the struggle over the Danube bridge, carry it into the inner city, into the center of the city.

RUDI: Let the chandeliers shake for once....

SEPPL: Let a few bullets plop in their soup....

FRANZ: And if the government ropes off the center of town with artillery and infantry?

WEISSEL: (passionately) Of course they'll do that, Franz, of course, if we give them time! That's why, Franz, that's just why we have to take the initiative and attack: the barracks, the artillery, the police! No passivity, Franz, no waiting in the hope that the troops won't shoot. No, we must sound the drums, we must take our arms and attack the government troops, kill the higher officers, and exert every effort to win the wavering rank and file....

FRANZ: To do that we first got to get at the troops.

WEISSEL: That's right! *(they form a small circle around him)* But there are examples of how this is possible. In 1905 the Moscow workers invented the "new barricade technique," the tactics of guerilla warfare. Look *(again making a drawing)* our company and platoon formations are much too clumsy, much too big targets for the enemy artillery....

FERD: Our platoons?

WEISSEL: (earnestly) Yes! For we must fight in the smallest possible formations: in groups, in groups of five, three and two. The government troops must time and again charge ahead and find nothing, time and again we must make a surprise attack and wear them down! *(passionately in a low voice)* Comrades! You're smart youngsters and brave fellows. You will have to decide: do we want to *attack* and win or...

FRANZ: (grabs his hand) Schorsch, you should present your views, that is *(looking him in the eye) our* views before the staff!

WEISSEL: (smiling) If there's time.

FRANZ: (to the others) Continue! There are still 15 guns! *(while the youngsters keep on aiming and firing, turning to* Max) What's the matter?

MAX: I'd like to ask a favor.

FRANZ: Well?

MAX: You have loads of guns here, more guns than men; you could give me a gun and let me in on it.

RUDI: If he's a Communist, let the Communists give him guns!

FRANZ: Quiet! You, Max, I suppose you want to carry on Communist propaganda here?

MAX: (calmly) I want to fight alongside you, comrade.

(Silence—All stand expectantly; Franz *deliberates. . . .)*

WEISSEL: Comrades, I don't think we can spare any fighting worker today.

FRANZ: Let him show us, if he's sincere! *(gives* Max *his gun)*

Fighting breaks out, the workers make a heroic stand against overwhelming odds. Thousands are slaughtered. Others give up the struggle in despair. A small, unconquerable band (47 of them) did not give up their arms. With machine guns still in their possession, they fight their way through to the Czecho-Slovakian border.

SCENE 9

Near the Czech border: wintry field, night of February 14-15, biting cold, pale light from the glittering snow. The platoon of Schutzbundlers drags itself along fully armed, with its three heavy machine guns and its 47 rifles, dead tired, frozen, half starved, and tortured by savage thirst. On his broad back Piwo is carrying an exhausted comrade who has two rifles slung from his shoulders.

One machine gun is carried by two men at a time, all taking turns; another is pulled along on an unusual vehicle—half sled, half cart with very small wheels. Suddenly the exhausted man on Piwo's shoulders begins to sing loudly:

There was bloodshed in front of the Rathaus
At the Rathaus flowed brave workers' blood
And here two young Socialist fighters
Swore that they'd always be true. (Repeat last two lines)

They swore to be true to each other
For each loved the other so well
They vowed that if one should die fighting
The other his mother would tell. . . (Repeat last two lines)

FRANZ: (runs along the ranks) Quiet, what calf is bellowing here!

PIWO: (putting the comrade down) No bellowing Otto!

OTTO: (sings)

Then along came a shattering bullet
Piercing the heart of the first
For his parents a terrible sorrow

FRANZ: (punches him) Wake up!

OTTO: (falls on his neck) Don't cry, mother, don't be sad, don't break your Schutzbundler's heart . . . Yes, tears are water too. Since when do you roll the water into the cellar? I want a drink, water, Christ Almighty, water, mother, water, water!! *(chokes Franz who holds him off)*

FRANZ: He's loony with thirst already. Hasn't anybody got a drink?

FERD: Nobody.

MAX: Franz! We'll have to get to a village if we don't reach the border soon.

FERD: (throws the machine gun away, lies down beside it)

FRANZ: (pulls him up) Crazy! We're marching fourteen hours now; do you want to give up just before the border?

FERD: (laughing out loud) Before the border, you say . . . I greet you, lovely border . . . I'm still wearing the oxfords I put on three days ago to go to work; there are icicles inside, not feet . . . I greet you, lovely border!

OTTO: (starts again)

For his parents, a terrible sorrow
For Dollfuss, well only a joke.
And after the battle was over
And after the end of the fight
So much had been lost, so much altered
I took pencil and sat down to write. . . .(Repeat last two lines)

FRANZ: Get some snow, a handful of snow! *(holds* Otto *and forces a handful of snow in his mouth)*

MAX: Let's go to the village, Franz. We must get something to drink. The boys can't stand it any longer. They're beginning to go batty.

PIWO: Not water, men, water thins out the blood! That's what I think.

OTTO: Water! Into the village! *(wants to start off)*

FERD: (comes with a straw) I need a light for my cigarette, before I go a step further! A light! *(holds his straw out)*

PIWO: (bursting into laughter) Cigarettes? He's got a straw, a straw! *(strikes his cigarette lighter)* Well now, smoke your cigarette!

FRANZ: (knocks it out of his hand with his revolver) The first one to betray our march by smoking and noise, I guarantee I'll shut him up!

FERD: (to him) Give me a light, a light!

OTTO: (likewise) Water!

Two searchlight beams from the right sweep over the terrain. Sound of auto motors on the highway; the searchlight beams now meet at the Schutzbundler platoon; machine gun fire begins at once from the right. . . .

FERD: Police!

MAX: Armored cars!

PIWO: Jesus Christ!

FRANZ: Firing position! Two machine guns on the wings, the third in reserve! Concentrate fire on the searchlights!

The order is passed down the line; the platoon takes up its position in orderly fashion; the Schutzbundler's two machine guns answer the firing from the armored cars. . . .

MAX: Bang! The right searchlight's on the blink!

FERD: The second'll be out soon!

OTTO: (has come to) Quiet! The motors are starting again!

PIWO: The right auto is turning back already; let's give them something to remember us by!

FRANZ: Attention! Concentrate your fire on the car on the left!

OTTO: Aim a little ahead of the target; the car's turning around!

The left search light goes out too; the auto motors start up noisily. . . .

FERD: They're beating it!

PIWO: They didn't expect such an answer.

MAX: Keep on! Give them another round!

FRANZ: Cease firing! Good shooting, fellows, clean job. Well, and Otto, how's your thirst?

OTTO: What thirst? *(leans on* Piwo*)*

FERD: Good thing we had our carts with us!

FRANZ: They'd have popped us off like rabbits! Comrades, you still remember what Weissel told us in the cellar that time: Never give your arms away, so long as you can fight, never! Without weapons you're like a dog without teeth, a man without hands! Boys, now we have to cover the few kilometers to the border! You've fought for three days and nights; 14 hours you've been tramping through the snow with your guns, in the face of the northeast wind, always going northeast. The border must be quite near.

FERD: Maybe we've been going round in a circle?

MAX: The March River is at the border; we ought to hear it!

PIWO: Try to hear it, if it's frozen over!

OTTO: Then we'll break the ice and drink, drink!

FRANZ: (quickly) Fall in! Shoulder arms! Forward, march! If the armored cars now give the alarm to the frontier guards and the gendarmerie . . . Ferd, you take the van with your machine gun. Max, you take care of the rear. Close formation, forward march!

The platoon marches off from left front to right front. Exit. Then the platoon appears again right upstage, marching left. Sound like a telephone bell. Nothing is recognizable in the uncertain snow-glare. Telephone bell sounds again. Voice: "For Christ's sake! You can't get a night's rest!" *A light is turned on left. Small room of road watchman. . . .*

WATCHMAN: (in his underwear at telephone) Yes, I'm listening. . . . Yes, road watchman 75 . . . yes, Chief. I keep my eye on the road constantly, absolutely. . . . No chief, not a thing in sight up to now . . . yes Chief! *(hangs up)* Idiot! Wants me to run to the border in this . . . damn . . . cold! *(puts wood in the stove, sets up coffee pot, cuts a slice of bread, takes a newspaper; Meantime. . . .)*

FERD: (turning back to Franz) Stop! there's a light ahead!

FRANZ: (signals with his hand to the rear) Stop!

MAX: (coming up) Road watchman's shack.

PIWO: Watch out, it can also be a village.

OTTO: (has started singing again)

I wrote it with trembling fingers
I wrote it with tears in my eyes
Your son fell in front of the Rathaus
Your son, he will never return. . . . (Repeat last two lines)

Ferd *and* Piwo *grab him and gag him.* Franz *and* Max *steal to the house with their guns, try to look inside through the crack in the shutter. . . .*

MAX: I see a telephone, lanterns, little flags . . . it's a road watchman's shack, all right. Let's cut the telephone wires!

FRANZ: Just a moment, Max! We must be sure of where we are!

He hands Max *his gun and cap, knocks at the door; the keeper opens cautiously; enter* Franz. . . .

FRANZ: Evening! Mighty cold and dark today. Must have lost my way.

WATCHMAN: Depends on where you want to go.

FRANZ: To buy eggs and leghorns in Czecho-Slovakia.

WATCHMAN: You've been running around for a long time?

FRANZ: I've been lost for quite a while now.

WATCHMAN: Be careful. The border isn't far away. *(whispering)* The Vienna Schutzbundlers are suposed to be in the neighborhood—a whole armed battalion!

FRANZ: Go on! That's the bunk!

WATCHMAN: (insulted) Bunk? I just got the report on the phone. They riddled two armored police cars that wanted to block their way and forced them to retreat! Do you understand! *(almost enthusiastically)* Workers put two armored cars out of commission, armed workers! Well, it's all the same to a butter and egg peddler, I suppose. *(to himself)* But if they catch them, good night! Then they'll string 'em up one after another, just like Fire Chief Weissel of Floridsdorf.

FRANZ: (jumps up) Weissel!

WATCHMAN: Sure. They caught him and brought him before court martial. *(Telephone rings. . . .)*

WATCHMAN: (answering) Yes, I'm at the phone, watchman 75 . . . please repeat, Chief, I didn't get it. . . . *(quickly gives* Franz *the second receiver)* What's that? A large troop of Vienna Schutzbundlers on the march from Betzdorf, armed . . . the rebels have at least two heavy machine guns. . . . Impossible Chief, what . . . two armored cars with searchlights, autos were fired on, suffered losses . . . if I notice anything suspicious . . . immediately notify all frontier post and headquarters, yes, Chief, absolutely, Chief! *(hangs up, to* Franz*).* Now you know what's what.

FRANZ: Where's the frontier?

WATCHMAN: Take a bite first!

FRANZ: Where's the frontier?

WATCHMAN: You must be thirsty too; your lips are all chapped. *(has opened a bottle of beer, shoves a glass of beer over to him)*

FRANZ: (takes out his knife, wants to cut the telephone wires)

WATCHMAN: (grabs his hand)

FRANZ: (looks at him) What was your father?

WATCHMAN: Worker in the quarries.

FRANZ: And your mother?

WATCHMAN: Also.

FRANZ: Where's the frontier?

WATCHMAN: (goes to the door, hesitates) If they find out, I loose my job and go to jail. My wife can go begging! *(desperate)* You can go ahead and cut the wires now and shoot me, too!

FRANZ: (calmly) Stop talking hot air. We don't shoot workers. No, Comrade Watchman we won't hurt you! *(pours a second glass of beer)* Here's to you, Watchman, and always remember that on the night of February 15, 1934, forty-seven hunted, frozen Vienna workers lay in the snow in front of your door, workers who are now running into the clutches of the companies of gendarmes, but who won't surrender to be hanged. You'll see their bodies carted past here tomorrow morning with bullet holes in their heads. Comrade Watchman! *(drains his glass)*

WATCHMAN: (takes his glass, hurls it to the floor; silence, then) But you've got to be careful, damn it, God damned careful! They patrol the crossing every half hour here. . . . You can almost spit over to the border, it's only 200 yards away. The March River is at the border. It's a deep river

and 50 yards wide. *(whispering)* But in one spot the ice has jammed up now. .. . .Take care. If I open the door now, just a tiny crack, the ray of light falls exactly on the crossing.

FRANZ: On the ice bridge?

WATCHMAN. Yes. I can let the ray of light out only a few seconds.

FRANZ: Is that straight?

WATCHMAN: (pointing to the telephone) Cut the wires, if you want to!

FRANZ: (looks at him) O.K. But give us the coffee pot and that bottle! *(takes them goes to the door)* Give us that light in five minutes. *(exit)*

Watchman covers the lamp. Outside, Franz *meets* Max, *(softly)* "Get everything ready!" Max *goes to the platoon, reports the order,* "Get everything ready!" *but almost all of them, dead tired have sunk in the snow and are asleep.* Otto *delirious hums his song to himself.* Franz *comes with the coffee pot gives him a drink; then the coffee pot and the bottle travel around. . . .*

FRANZ: Let's go, Ferd, the border's only 200 yards ahead!

FERD: Stop kidding!

FRANZ: Attention!

FERD: (writes, reading aloud at the same time) ". . . and just now, dear mother, our platoon leader was here. It is late at night. Only the grey sheen of the snow gives some light . . . the Czech border isn't far away now, our platoon leader says, only 200 yards, that means we'll be on the other side in a quarter of an hour, or in our graves; for they say a chain of police and gendarmes are guarding it, but they won't catch us alive . . . If I caused you much suffering, dear mother, forgive me! Farewell, dearest mother, farewell my country—and give my regards to. . . ."

FRANZ: (returns) Forward, Ferd!

FERD: (sticks the letter away) I'll take the van again and the machine gun. *(steps up)*

FRANZ: Above all silence, not a sound, only signals! *(to* Piwo *who is digging up the snow)* What're you doing, Piwo? Gone dizzy?

PIWO: Comrade Commander. You say "gone dizzy!" I say Piwo knows whats he's doing. *(shows him)* I'm taking *this* with me.

FRANZ: A stone?

PIWO: (ceremoniously) My native land, Comrade Commander, Austrian countryside. . . . *(A narrow ray of light falls from the left)*

FERD: (sets up his machine gun) Searchlight!

FRANZ: Quiet! Comrades! The river and the border must lie in the direction of that beam; in single file, follow the beam, forward march! *(The beam vanishes. Max comes with his patrol. . . .)*

MAX: Franz! *(Facing him)* The river is 200 yards ahead.

FRANZ: All ready?

FERD: (reporting) Ready.

FRANZ: Comrades! A last salute to our Floridsdorf, our fallen comrades of Vienna and of Austria! Once more, Comrades, load and lock! *(The click of the rifle bolts is heard)* Forward march! *(Black Out)*

Translated from the German by Anne Bromberger

REPORTAGE

Peter Quince

San Francisco General Strike Diary

The Notes of a Young Communist

The author of this diary, a member of the American Young Communist League, took an active part in the now famous San Francisco General Strike. The author writes: "During the General Strike, I kept stamped envelopes and cards with me, jotted down notes as I observed them, mailed them to an undercover address. The day following the return of the masses to work, my home was raided (thanks to a stool), several of us Young Communist League members arrested, were in jail a month (during which, for eight days we went on a hunger strike) awaiting trial. Our cases were dismissed.

"Getting out of prison it was a little while before I got into decent enough physical condition to get back into activity. I had forgotten all about my notes, and it was a month after I got out of prison that I discovered them."

The author adds: "I've had a hellova time getting postage" to send this article to *International Literature*. The editors feel that this vivid record of a Young Communist in the class struggle, will be of great interest to all of its readers.

July 15th Noon

Archbishop Hanna prays
It is like war.
It is war!

The longshoremen have been out ten weeks. They've beaten every attempt at sellout. The seamen came out some time ago. Three days ago the teamsters were out in solidarity.

Yesterday the cry went up: GENERAL STRIKE!

It can't be stopped. Tomorrow it will be an established fact. Everywhere workers are out or preparing to come out. The downtown streets are crowded with people. Papers are sold as never before, appearing every half-hour with new developments, scare headlines. But tomorrow even the newsboys will be out. Carmen, taximen, transportation and building-trades workers, butchers, clerks, waitresses—all out. The auto ferrymen plan to follow suit. It has spread across the bay.

A holiday mood grips everyone. General Strike! The workers are feeling their power. In the few places still open people ask: "When are you coming out?"

Movie-ticket seller: "Tomorrow".

Clerk: "Damn quick."

Waitress: "Tonight, whether the union likes it or not."

They are not afraid to talk.

And policemen walk in pairs. . . .

The streets are deserted of automobiles. Little gasoline is available. Every hour the newspapers, every half-hour, whenever we turn around. come out with war headlines.

Archbishop Hanna prays.

General Johnson cries: "Stop this madness!"

U.S. TROOPS IN READINESS! And six hundred Chinese laundry workers strike! GOV. MIRRIAM TO OFFER CONVOY TO FOOD TRUCKS. GOV. MIRRIAM OFFERS STATE PATROL TO OPEN PORT Headlines. Archbishop Hanna continues to pray.

The newspapers begin to play up the red scare. The strike is being compared to the San Francisco fire. The last headline says: CITY AWAITS ZERO STRIKE HOUR. Front page articles explain how the British General Strike was broken. Secretary of Labor Perkins radios Roosevelt, fishing somewhere in the Pacific. There's talk of Portland coming out. On the East Coast the Marine Workers Industrial Union calls for a General U.S. Marine Strike. In New Zealand waterfront workers refuse to unload scab ships coming from the U.S.

The shelves of the stores are empty. The bakers will come out in the morning, so everyone is trying to put by some bread. We bought some candles, figuring the electricians to come out. Prices on all necessities have jumped, tho not as much as I expected. On the way home a headline yelled: U.S. TROOPS READY and another, MUNICIPAL STREET CARS TO RUN UNDER GUARD. This is the first real threat in the solid front. Except the top-fakers in the A.F. of L., who always constitute a threat. And will, until they are kicked out.

Johnny tells me about Bridges, chairman of the Longshoremen's Strike Board. The papers had called him a red until the workers got to like the sound of the word. Then the papers started to call him Mister. Bridges talks simply, in the longshoremen's lingo. A meeting. Someone'd make a motion to oust the MWIU, a radical marine union. Bridges: "You guys ain't gonna pull that stuff. United front means all of us. The MWIU included." The workers stand to a man and yell: "United front!"

Archibishop Hanna gets on his knees while photographers click cameras. Rabbis fight Hanna for room on the prayer-cushions.

Mayor Rossi enlarges police force by 500 men recruited from the American Legion. In the fields, workers in peach and pear ranches prepare to come out in sympathy with Frisco labor. The growers invite the A.F. of L to come and organize to prevent strike. Governor Mirriam offers protection to A.F. of L.

We're at home now, drinking coffee. Johnny keeps running down to buy up all the papers. MUNI CARS TO RUN UNDER GUARD! Mir lifts her nose out of the second section. "Listen, Chief of Police Quinn established a new bureau known as the 'Anti-Radical and Crime Prevention Bureau.' You know who that's for!" It is a statement rather than a question. Jack reads from the first page: "Throngs milled about the Labor Temple at Sixteenth and Cappe streets during the four hours while conservative labor leaders fought a losing battle to avert mass walkout."

It's impossible to rest. There's gonna be hell.

Tomorrow Johnny and I are going down to the waterfront to try and form a youth S.O.S. group. Save our strike. A sort of educational committee to work on scabs. We want to offer it to the seamen.

The papers report scattered shooting thruout the city.

Someone comes in with a report that Bridges was offered $10,000 to sell out the longshoremen. Bridges said: "I'll have to take the proposal back to the union for consideration."

July 16th Early

Out on the streets early today. No street cars run. Few autos about. Some people on roller skates. All stores, except large downtown department, closed. Butcher, confectionery, beer, cigar, laundry, drug, everything. They carry signs: Closed because of prevailing conditions. Closed on account of strike. Closed. Closed in sympathy with the strikers. And occasional ultimatums: Closed until the strike is won!

By this time Archbishop Hanna ought to have callouses on his knees.

We walk into the Crystal Palace, the largest market in town. Everything but the Green Line Bakery is shut down. Before it a sign, crayoned, says: "Open by permission of the General Strike Committee."

I up and ask the waitress why they didn't have an official strike permit. Workers passing stop to wait for the answer. A crowd collects. The nervous waitress calls the foreman, who, in turn, calls the boss. His face is white. He pleads with us. The permit, he says, is valid. I say: "How are we to know it?" We go outside and see the Green Line trucks carrying official printed permits. Johnny didn't like it. "God damit," he swears, "they'll sell us out with permits."

Down to the waterfront. The National Guards parade like tin soldiers on one side of the Embarcadero while we picket the other. The N.G.s have spread out, taking in more territory. The MWIU headquarters have been cut off from the front. There are rumors of a raid. We empty our pockets of all addresses, then go down to the headquarters. Rube asks us to beat it over to the Lot and get the latest *Fo'c'sle Heads*. We got back without any trouble, our shirts and jeans stuffed with the sheets. The seamen grabbed them up. Committees were formed to pass them out on the front.

On the front the N.G.s were busy setting up machine guns in strategic positions. Boys who should have been playing football. The tin hats look silly over the white, strained faces.

We stop to grab a paper. Headlines say the food convoy is nearing the city. The trucks are driven by scabs. AROUSED CITIZENS DEFEATED BRITISH GENERAL WALKOUT! *The Examiner* and "liberal" *News* feature pictures of a mounted cop, the policeman and horse wearing gas masks. In the cop's uplifted arm is a hand-grenade. The caption under the photo reads: "Ready for War."

The Key System Ferry workers have voted to walk out. All Movie Houses are shut down. The strike committee has allowed 19 restaurants to open. We patrol the front. It is thick with strikers wearing the buttons of their unions. Two seamen just ahead of us were picked up by a couple of bulls for passing out *Fo'c'sle Heads*. A mob of us bunched around. The cops let them go. The seamen continued distributing.

We keep exchanging the latest dope with the guys on the front. We are told that yesterday a resolution was brought up in the I.S.U. to throw out of the union anyone caught reading the *Fo'c's'le Head,* which is the organ of the militant MWIU. The resolution was voted down! We grab a *Daily Worker* from another guy and read that the MWIU on the East Coast is refusing to unload scab cargo coming from here. And the I.L.A. and I.S.U. men keep asking each other why their unions aren't doing the same thing.

Everyone keeps asking: Will the army be brought in?

At Market and Embarcadero Streets Dave told us that he'd heard that twelve National Guardsmen had been court-martialed for refusing duty against the strikers! As we watch machine guns are mounted on the roofs

on either side of the Ferry Building, controlling the streets below. The hatred of the strikers for the N.G. is intense. It blazes on every striker's face. The N.G.s know it. The front is tense as hell.

A seaman comes up to Johnny and, cussing out the I.S.U. (International Seamen's Union) says he's going to quit that union. Johnny tells him to stick with it and fight for rank-and-file control. Johnny looks up and sees a guy carrying a suitcase, gandering past. We figure maybe he is a scab and follow. We bunch around him on a corner. Across the streets are the N.G.s. A few feet away stand a couple of cops. We go thru the guy's pockets. He shows us a railway ticket upstate. We let him go.

At five p.m. a half-dozen motorcycle police escort an empty truck out of Folsom and down Embarcadero. Trying out the militancy of the strikers. It goes thru the lines. "There's nothin' in it," a longshoreman yells. "They'll try to follow this up by bringing in loaded trucks." The picket captain sends a call to all union headquarters for a mass turnout. We wait, hours. Nothing comes thru.

On the long walk home we sight N.G. truck after N.G. truck, rolling belligerently down the main arteries, mounted with trained machine guns and kids playing at war.

July 17th—3:00 p.m.

It's lucky that Johnny and I didn't go down to the MWIU headquarters. Instead, we went to the Single Men's Relief Station on Turk street to try to get a couple of days' work relief per week. While waiting in line Billy, who was walking past, spotted us and drew us aside. He told us that the MWIU headquarters had been surrounded by National Guardsmen and police armed as for war, and one hundred arrests had been made. All were placed in jail on $1,000 vag charges. Vag, hell!

Johnny and I decided to let the relief stuff go to hell and try to contact the marine workers to see how we could help. First, tho, we went across the street to Geld's place to get something to eat. It was already close to noon. I rang the bell. We waited a long time. Finally there was an answer. We climbed three flights of stairs, and were admitted into the apartment only after we had told them who we were thru the closed door. We got in and started going over the newspapers.

The American Legion today offered 1000 of its members to the police for special duty. A few street cars are being run under guard. More National Guardsmen, by the thousands, are being poured into the city. So the papers. While we read and eat Johnny has got to play some records featuring Tito Schipa.

In a little while Louise comes in with some typing for Lil. Louise is the Party Orgsec, so what with the music, we are embarrassed. She kids us a little, verifies some reports we have heard, and then tells us that Oakland Party headquarters have been raided yesterday and that we have a tip that we will be raided today. She has no idea where we can contact the marine workers so we get on the streets again. A block away a crowd had gathered. We followed, wondering what was up. It pushed across Fillmore street and up into our hall, 1223. We raced madly after them. It flashed thru my head that this was a defense group gathered to hold our hall against attack. I thought it was funny I didn't recognize anyone. We bounced up to the top of the stairs. Against the railing lay Thornton, a communist, bleeding from the mouth. Two six-footers wearing teamster buttons were beating him. Johnny

tangled with one. I went after the other. In the confusion I still realized what had happened. The mob coming up the stairs were directed by the vigilantes. We had been caught napping.

I was too busy to see what was happening to Johnny. I shoved a fist into a guy's face, then somebody yelled: "What the hell's this all about?" We stopped fighting. The two who towered way above Johnny and me were scared worse than we. "We're union men," one of them cried. "Hell, so are we," said Johnny. One of the six-footers started to bluster. "Well, for Christ sake put on your buttons or you'll get killed." They patted us on the back. I nudged Johnny, and we beat it down the steps. Men were tearing down the sign over our hall. People milled about, watching. Only a handful took active part. We crossed the street. The crowd before the hall entrance scattered before the swinging clubs of the police. Then the vigilantes came down, dragging our comrades, and delivered them into the hands of the police. Not one of the thugs were arrested, whereas all of our comrades who had not escaped, who had been viciously beaten by superior forces, were thrown into the patrol-wagon.

We decided to get out of the neighborhood, our faces being too well known to the cops. We skirted around the corner, leaving a sullen, muttering crowd behind us, a crowd hostile to the police, but without leadership. A worker who had tried to give them that, loudly raising his voice, had been immediately arrested. On the next block two machines were parked on the curb. Someone called to us. We recognized the vigilantes whom we had tangled with up in the hall.

"Jump into the other car," one of them said. "We're going down to the *Western Worker* at 37 Grove to bust up that sonofabitchen place."

"What the hell do you wanna break them up for?" asked Johnny. "If you want to go for some scabs, okay, but Jesus Christ—" They gave us a funny glare. Johnny waved a stiff hand, and we walked off. We located a phone, which was not easy as most places were closed, and I called 37 Grove. There was no answer. I tried the I.L.D. headquarters. Bishop answered. I told him what had happened and asked if he wanted us to come down and help defend the place. He told us to lay low. They were going to close up, not having a defense squad on hand.

We got going, hoping to locate the place where the *Fo'c's'le Head* was being put out. Harry Jackson, organizer of the MWIU, had asked us to help on it. Johnny and I got into a huddle. We decided that it was no use of us going down to the waterfront. Johnny, particularly, was too well known by the cops for the militant role he had played on Bloody Thursday. Carr tells me the cops are laying for Johnny. We stop near the library, going downtown, and take a squint at 37 Grove. The windows are shattered, the signs hanging from lone nails, the furniture dumped onto the street. The vigilantes work while the cops watch. We scrammed. A little later, we found, the cops had raided the Wailing Wall, a side of the library about which all shades of radicals gathered daily and formed discussion groups. The communists, of course, were the only ones arrested.

On Third and Mission, carload after carload of arrested workers swept past. The Lot, home of the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League, had been raided. The place was wrecked. It was 1:30 p.m. Two stiffs were talking. One said it was a good thing.

"What the hell's the matter?" Johnny demanded. "On Bloody Thursday the reds fought and got shot down like anyone else. No workers kicked against the reds then. If there's gonna be any raids why the hell don't we

raid the scabs?" The stiffs walked away. We took a powder, seeing cops everywhere, and plenty leary. An N.G. truck, loaded with soldiers, passed. A moment later a squad car followed by two motorcycle police went into the other direction, then came a group of motorcycle police, guarding an oil truck. The police carried grenades, sawed-off shot-guns, and, I think, Tommies.

Johnny cussed. We tried to walk naturally, but I felt that we were obvious as hell. We laughed a little at the position we were in. We couldn't act a damn. Going down an alley, like saps, a squad car slowed up in passing us. We kept going. There was nothing else to do. We figured sure we'd be taken. But the car kept going. We circled about till we figured we'd lost anyone on our tail, then shied up to Ro's place. He got us some coffee while we again went over the papers.

REDS BLAMED FOR S.F. CRISIS BY MERRIAM. Mayor Rossi formed a committee of 500 from the ranks of the army, police, American Legion and the Industrial Association "for the business of bringing food into the city." In another article Rossi threatened more raids on the Communists. An article told how aroused Mission District workers raided a store when its owner, a notorious scab, marked up prices 25 per cent in order to profit on the strike. The place was wrecked.

A seaman came in. He had been on an Educational Committee formed by seamen for the better education of scabs. Dozens of committees of this kind were out in machines, striking before the cops could get around, pulling out scab elevator operators, waitresses, newsboys, patrolling the outskirts of town to stop scab trucks, etc. Radio cars dashed madly about seeking these committees. The seaman shows us the latest paper. It features a story of Ole Hanson, Mayor of Seattle in 1919, who boasted of breaking the first General Strike ever called in America.

We keep trying to thresh the thing out. Are these men who are breaking up our halls teamsters? Union men? Or are they legionaires, thugs and dicks parading under strike buttons in an effort to play one group of workers against another? We can't defend ourselves with words when they use clubs. If we do fight and some union men (provided those attacking us are union men) get smashed up the newspapers will play hell out of it. And strike-breaking possibilities, on the heels of this red-scare, are tremendous.

Ro is sure that the fakers in the leadership of the General Strike Committee (Vandeleur, Casey and others) will try to rush thru an immediate vote on the question of arbitration, figuring that the anti-red terror will scare strikers into voting against continued strike. The papers howl: STRIKE WEAKENS and PLANS TO END STRIKE UNDER WAY. Terror has taken the place of demagogy.

Johnny and I can't stay long. Ro gave us directions on how to reach the *Fo'c's'le Head*. No address, just a map without streets being named. We had to remember the streets. The place was way over in the Mission. We were dead tired from walking, but wouldn't take the scab Municipal cars.

July 18—Morning

The fascist rats were thoro enough in their raids yesterday. Our halls were raided in every section of town, beatings administered and arrests made. The Fillmore Workers Center, the Mission Workers Center, the North Beach Workers Center, the Chinese headquarters, 37 Grove, the I.L.D. headquarters, all were raided, smashed. Even the *Western Worker*

printing plant was smashed. But work is going on to get out an illegal *Western Worker*. After the raids half a dozen union printers, who had not at all been close to the communists before the raids, got in touch with the leadership and offered their services without charge. A union official who had been known as a reactionary, also got in touch with the Party and offered the use of his house in which we might carry on our office and technical work.

There is a rumor that Berry, one of the communists beaten up yesterday at 1223, died on the way to the hospital; 340 arrests were made in yesterday's raids. And we finally got the clue as to the identity of the vigilantes from the newspapers themselves. *The Call-Bulletin* admitted that: "Private citizens smashed the offices of a communist paper." The article continued: "Led by Capt. Thomas Hoertkorn and Inspectors G. Dyer and A. G. Mino, a dozen police smashed into a Howard Street meeting and arrested 250 alleged Communists. . . . In Dolores Park, at Fulton and Grove streets, radicals were sent running almost as soon as they mounted their soap boxes by citizens *dressed like workers* (italics mine, P.Q.) who circulated among the crowd." Nowhere did the newspapers ever say that *teamsters or other strikers* took any part in the raids.

We contacted members of the Young Communist League, and met in a park, sprawling around a deck of scattered cards. Manny, who is a member of the Butcher's Union, told us that the rank and file had forced thru a resolution at a meeting, condemning all the capitalist papers for their anti-strike articles and general vicious anti-workingclass attitude. The resolution demanded that the membership of the union and its friends boycott these papers. From the offices of this union the rank and file are wanting to know why the Municipal Car men are back at work, why the General Strike Committee ordered them back, why more restaurants are being opened hourly, why gasoline can be bought, why the ferrymen, electricians, powermen, etc. are not out in this general strike. The officers have a hell of a time condoning the role of the A.F. of L. leaders. The rank and file are burnt up and are demanding action.

Jacko tells us that Morris, Editor of the *Western Worker,* walked into a small restaurant for some coffee. He got to talking to the woman who owned the place. She bitterly complained that she had had to pay $500 in cash for a permit to keep her place open during the strike. Who the hell's getting the graft? It looks like Johnny was right when he said they would sell us out with strike permits!

We reported our connections with the *Fo'c's'le Head,* and it was decided that for the time, anyways, we should continue on that tack. Plans were laid for daily meetings of all Y.C.L. units, and methods arranged to further our activity in aiding the strike. Party units, by the way, have been meeting daily.

I'm knocking these notes out at the house of a friend. Diary hell, it's beginning to look like a book. I keep a bunch of stamped envelopes and blank cards with me. Whenever I get to a place where I can write I jot down a few notes, get outside, address an envelope on the postbox, and send it off.

As I write there is a radio flash: N.G. men are stopping trucks going thru the produce districts and ripping permits granted by the General Strike Committee, from their windshields. General Johnson calls a "General Strike that keeps milk from the mouth of babies and food from citizens" a "bloody

insurrection" and demands that it be treated as such. Senator Wagner is either here or on the way here "as an impartial observer."

While the reactionaries at the head of the Central Strike Board are step by step trying to sell out the strike, okaying the moving of food, allowing the resumption of car service, refusing to call out the electric and gas workers, etc., on the other hand the General Strike in Contra Costa County, which is heavily industrialized, a walkout of 10,000 men yesterday was imminent. The East Bay is out. Portland is on the verge of coming out in General Strike. Seattle threatens to follow suit. Sentiment for General Strike in San Pedro increases. There is a possibiliy of a General Nation-wide Marine Strike! Everything depends on San Francisco, and those god-damned A.F. of L. leaders. . . . they'll sell us out yet. The hell they will!

We're going out on the streets.

Late afternoon

We're at home now. Further raids took place today. Reds and militants were picked out of the I.L.A. soup line in front of the I.L.A. hall. Many were picked up on the streets by cruising radio cars. We took a chance on going down to the waterfront. A police airoplane, directing police activities, droned overhead. The N.G. continues to move up and down the main arteries on trucks mounted with machine guns. The papers say that F.L. Bergoff, private detective, boasts of sending 100 strikebreakers from Chicago to Frisco by air and rail. 4,600 National Guardsmen are in the city. Johnny reads me an article saying that on reaching Italy the crew of the *President Hays,* in sympathy with the striking marine workers of the West Coast, came out on strike!

In Berkeley $130,000 was demanded as bail for four radicals.

The city officials continue their strikebreaking activities. They threaten to operate a bus line to augment the crippled street-car service. And on the East Coast the American Telegrapher's Union ordered its men on vessels arriving from the Pacific Coast to come out! It also announced that it would picket all ships arriving from the Pacific Coast.

The most treacherous thing that has happened today has been smeared over the front pages of all the newspapers. Green, head of the A.F. of L., stated, from back east: "the strike was not authorized by the A.F. of L." and further that it has "no national significance." This knifing has got to boomerang on him! What the hell will the A.F. of L. authorize? A god-damned tea party? Or picketing by remote control?

But this is not all. The newspapers yell in headlines: STRIKE BRED IN MOSCOW, A.F. OF L. AVERS! On the front pages Johnson tells "labor" to purge its ranks of reds, and the A.F. of L., continuing its role of betrayal, "permits" more restaurants "to open."

The raids continue, but are now directed toward private homes. Police break in without warrants, beat us up, and haul us to jail where we are charged with vagrancy! Many homes have been raided. Ours is well known. We can't understand why it hasn't been raided as yet, unless spies are waiting for a group to gather before the raiding begins. We spent all of the afternoon and half the night burning papers, destroying records, moving literature, etc. It is past midnight now, and altho the house is fairly clean, every time we turn around we discover something we forgot. For instance, after the whole place had been pretty well gone over, we found, on a mantlepiece a reading lamp, on the sides of which, wrought in iron, were hammers and sickles! We're sleepy, tired as hell.

July 19th

The General Strike has been sold out! The strikers are slowly returning to work, bewildered, dazed. The vote of the Central Strike Committee to return to work was determined by a small margin, and under conditions the stink of which for months, if not years, will continue to be evident to workers. Many of those voting did not even understand what the vote was about. When Bridges, of the I.L.A., demanded a roll-call vote, he was called out of order. An uproar and the fakers abruptly adjourned the meeting. By this, and similar means, was the General Strike sold out.

"The strike has failed," said Bridges, "because of mismanagement. But the spirit of the longshoremen will continue."

Terror is sweeping over all of California. As Johnny and I went out today to pass out some leaflets, we were followed. We did not dare contact the *Fo'c's'le Head* for fear of exposing its headquarters. We managed to lose the dicks. We are broke and cannot move out of our present place. We spread the word for everyone to stay away.

Captain J. J. O'mara, head of the Police Anti-Radical Bureau, announced that none of the wrecked radical headquarters would be permitted to reopen. "The Communist Party," he says, "is thru in San Francisco."

Oh, yeh? Well, watch us, mister!

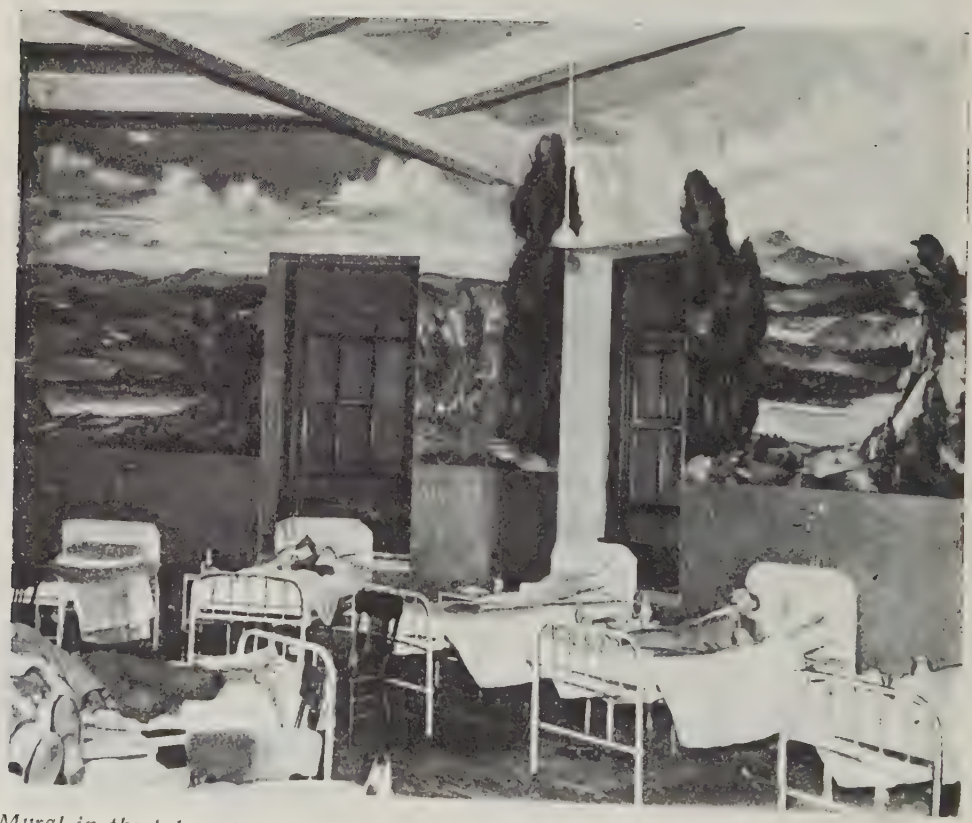
SEVEN PAINTINGS
By the American Artist JOE JONES

Portrait of Jack Conroy, American worker-writer, author of the novels The Disinherited, *and* A World to Win

On the Wharves, St. Louis

Demonstration

American "Justice"



Mural in the tubercular ward of the City Hospital. St. Louis

Red Earth

Battle of Anacostia Flats. Washington, D. C.—Bonus Marchers

LETTERS and DOCUMENTS

Lenin on Various Writers

On Belinski

. . . This is the way the bourgeoisie and the bourgeois intelligentsia talk, think, act. From the point of view of self-interest their behavior is easily understood: to those who lived off the feudal landlords, to the priests and priests' assistants, officials of the type Gogol drew, the "intelligentsia" who hated Belinski, also found it "hard" to see serfdom go.
Collected Works, Vol. 22, p. 162, essay "How to Organize Competition."

On Belinski and Gertzen

The history of the labor press in Russia is inseparably bound up with the history of the movements for democracy and socialism.

The emancipation movement in Russia passed through three stages corresponding to the three main classes of Russian society that laid their stamp on it: 1) the aristocratic period, say 1825-1861; 2) the varied rank or bourgeois-democratic period say from 1861 to 1895; 3) the proletarian period from 1895 on.

The most prominent figures in the aristocratic period were the Decembrists and Gertzen. At that time, with serfdom prevailing, there could be no question of a working class apart from the general mass of serfs—from the "lowest," "mean" estate that enjoyed no rights whatever. The forerunner of the labor press (the proletarian-democratic or social-democratic press) was represented by the generally democratic, uncensored *Kolokol* with Gertzen at its head.

Just as the Decembrists awakened Gertzen, Gertzen awakened the educated representatives of the liberal and democratic bourgeoisie belonging, not to the nobility, but to officialdom, the merchant class, the peasantry. The forerunner of those who pushed the nobility aside in the emancipation movement to make way for those of varied rank, was Belinski, who wrote while serfdom still prevailed. His famous "Letter to Gogol," which summed up Belinski's literary activity, was one of the best things produced by the uncensored democratic press and has retained its tremendous vital significance to this very day.

The fall of serfdom brought the varied ranks to the fore as the principal, mass representatives of the emancipation movement generally and the democratic, uncensored press in particular. The dominant trend, corresponding to the point of view of the varied intelligentsia, was the "Narodniki" [1] movement. As a social trend it could never draw the line between liberalism on its right and anarchism on its left. But Chernishevski, who succeeded Gertzen in developing the views of the Narodniki, made great strides ahead as compared to Gertzen. Chernishevski was a more consistent and militant democrat. The spirit of the class struggle breathes in his

[1] The movement of "going to the people"—to bring them education, etc.—very sympathetically shown by Turgenyev.—Tr.
[2] Constitutional Democrats—a liberal party.—Tr.

books. He drew the sharp line which exposed the treachery of liberalism and which to this day is thoroughly detested by all cadets [2] and liquidators. He was a remarkably profound critic of capitalism notwithstanding his Utopian sort of socialism.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 17, pp. 341-342, essay "On the History of the Labor Press in Russia."

On Gertzen

. . . Gertzen once said that when one sees the "doings" of Russia's governing classes one is ashamed to admit being a Russian. That was at a time when Russia groaned under the yoke of serfdom, when the whip and stick reigned in our land.

Now Russia has overthrown the Tsar. Now Kerenski and Lvov speak in the name of Russia. The Russia of Kerenski and Lvov treats the subject nationalities in a way which involuntarily bring Gertzen's bitter words to one's tongue.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 20, p. 467, essay "That's Not Democratic, Citizen Kerenski."

On Chernishevski

In *Prologue to a Prologue* Volgin (into whose mouth Chernishevski puts his own thoughts) says:

"Let the business of freeing the peasantry be turned over to the landlord party. It makes little difference." And on the basis that on the contrary, it makes a great difference, as the landlord party is opposed to giving the peasant land grants, he answers determinedly:

"No, not at all. It would make a tremendous difference if the peasants were to receive land without having to pay for it. It makes a difference whether you take something away from a person or leave it to him—but when you take and reimburse him—it makes little difference. The landlords plan differs from that of the progressives only in being simpler, more direct. It is therefore even better. Fewer wires—hence probably also less burden to the peasants. The peasant who has money will buy land for himself. The one who hasn't—there is no use compelling him to buy. It will only ruin them. Paying out is also buying."

Chernishevski's genius was required to see the fundamentally bourgeois nature of the peasant reform at the time it was proposed (when its nature had not been exposed yet even in the West), to understand then already that Russian "society" and "government" were ruled by social classes essentially inimical to the toiling masses and unquestionably predisposed to ruin and expropriate the peasantry. And Chernishevski also understood that the existence of a government veiling our antagonistic social relations was a terrible evil, worsening the conditions of the toiling masses particularly.

"To tell the truth," Volgin continues, "it is better for them to be freed without land." (That is, if the serf-holding landlords are so powerful yet, let them come out in the open and speak frankly rather than cover up their serf-holding interests by the compromises of the hypocritical absolute monarchy.)

"The question is so put that I find nothing to get excited about, even whether the peasants are freed or not; all the less so as to who will free

them—liberals or landlords. To my mind it is all the same. The landlords are even to be preferred."

In his *Letters to Noone:* "They are talking about freeing the peasants . . . Where are the forces for such a thing? There are none yet. A thing can not be started when there is no force for carrying it out. But don't you see what is coming: they will start freeing. What will come out of it—judge for yourself as to what can be the result of tackling a job one cannot do. Spoil the thing—something abominable will result."

Chernishevski understood that the Russian serf-holding bureaucratic government is incapable of freeing the peasants, i.e., overthrow the serf-holders, that it is only capable of producing an "abomination," a miserable compromise between the interests of the liberals (paying out—is the same thing as buying) and of the landlords, a compromise freedom while actually ruining them and delivering them tied to the landlords. And he protested, cursed the reform, wishing it ill success, wishing the government would get tangled up in its equilibristic manipulations between liberals and landlords and crash, bringing Russia to an open struggle of the classes.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 1, pp. 178-180. The pamphlet "Who Are the Friends of the People and How Do They Fight Against Social-Democracy?"

To construe the liberal opposition simply as a social struggle against the monarchy is to distort things because Russian liberals *never organized* any revolutionary party for the struggle against and the overthrow of the monarchy although they always could and can now find the necessary funds and representatives of Russian liberalism abroad. And R. M. not only distorts things but involves the name of the great Russian socialist N. G. Chernishevski. "Allies of the workers in this struggle," writes R. M. "are the progressive elements of Russian society, defending their own social interests and institutions, who know what is to their own advantage 'who never forget' (R. M. quotes) the great 'difference whether changes take place at the initiative of the government independently or on the formal demand of society.'" If this opinion is to be applied to all representatives of the "social struggle" as R. M. understands it, i.e. to all Russian liberals —it is a plain falsehood. Russian liberals never made any formal demands upon the government and it is for just this reason that Russian liberals did not and could not play an independent role in the revolution. "All progressive elements of Russian society" could not be allies of the working class and social-democracy—only revolutionary parties built by members of this society could be such allies. Liberals in general can and should serve as *one of the sources* for additional forces and means for the revolutionary workers party (as P. B. Axelrod pointed out). This is just the reason why N. G. Chernishevski mercilessly ridicules "the progressive elements of Russian society"—because they did not understand the necessity of formal demands on the government and looked on unconcernedly when revolutionists from among their own ranks perished under the blows of the monarchy. R. M. quotes Chernishevski just as senselessly in this case as in the second article of "Separate Supplement" where in fragmentary quotations from Chernishevski he tries to show that Chernishevski was not a Utopian and that the Russian social-democrats did not appreciate the full value of "the great Russian socialist." Plekhanov gave a thorough analysis of Chernishevski in his book on this writer (essays in the anthology *Social-Democrat,* published in separate book form in German) and showed the relation

between Chernishevski's and Marx-Engles' theory. The editors of *Labor Thought* only show their inability to give a coherent and all-sided estimate of Chernishevski, of his strength and weaknesses.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 2, pp. 544-545. Essay "Backward Trend in Russian Social-Democracy."

Russian workers should learn to understand this policy if they do not wish to be easily duped. Chernishevski also said: anyone afraid to soil his hands should not go into politics. Anyone taking part in elections and afraid of soiling his hands digging up the filth of bourgeois politicians had better go away. Naive, fastidious people only hamper in politics with their fear to go straight at things.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 10, p. 264. Essay "Social-Democrat and the Duma Elections."

Modern social-democrats of the Scheidemann shade or, what is almost the same thing, like Martov, find the Soviets just as distasteful, are just as attracted by the respectable bourgeois parliament or the Constituent Assembly as Turgenyev, sixty years ago was attracted to the moderate monarchy and aristocratic constitution, as he found distasteful the mujik democracy of Dobrolubov and Chernishevski.

Lenin. Collected Works. Vol. 22, pp. 466-67. "Immediate Problems Before the Soviet Government."

"Historical activity is not a sidewalk on Nevski Prospect," said the great Russian revolutionist Chernishevski. Anyone who "grants" a proletarian revolution only "on condition" that they should be guaranteed beforehand against defeat, that the way for the revolution be broad, free and straight, that it should not be necessary to bear heavy sacrifices occasionally on the road to victory, not to "wait in a besieged fort" or climb narrow, impassable, circuitous and dangerous mountain trails—one of that kind is not a revolutionist, has not gotten rid of the pedantry of the bourgeois intelligentsia, one of that kind will on final test always roll down to the counter-revolutionary bourgeois camp, like our right-wing socialist revolutionists, mensheviks and even (although more rarely) the left-wing socialist revolutionists.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 23, p. 183. "Letter to American Workers."

On Uspenski

"The Narodnik of the seventies," Gurwich very keenly notes, "had no idea of the class antagonism within the peasantry, limiting this antagonism exclusively to the relations between the 'exploiters'—the kulaks and parasites—and their victim—the peasant imbued with communist spirit. Gleb Uspenski stood alone with his skepticism, answering the general illusion with an ironical smile. With his excellent knowledge of the peasantry and great artistic talent penetrating to the very depths of phenomena, he could not but see that individualism has become the main economic relation not only between usurer and debtor but among the peasantry generally." See his article "Equalization."

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 1, p. 157-158. "Who Are The Friends of the People."

On Gorki

Your idea of a fiction department in the *Proletarian* and getting Gorki to take change of it is excellent and made me very happy. I had always

wanted to make the department of literature and criticism in the *Proletarian* a permanent feature and have Gorki run it. But I was afraid, very much afraid to propose it because I know the character of Gorki's work (and his inclinations for work). When a man is busy with some large, serious work, and being taken away from it on trivialities, on newspaper work, on journalism, would hurt that work—it would be foolish, nay criminal to disturb him and tear him away from it! This I know very well.

You are able to judge better on the spot. *If you think we will not hurt Gorki's work* by putting him in harness on regular Party work (and Party work will gain a lot by it!), try to arrange it.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 28, p. 521. Letter to Lunacharski, February 13, 1908.

Dear Alexei Maximovich: I think that some of the questions raised by you on our divergence of opinion are due to misunderstanding. But, of course, I have no idea of "chasing out the intelligentsia" as those silly syndicalists do, or deny their being necessary to the labor movement. On all these questions there can be no divergence of opinion between us; I am firmly convinced of this, and, since it is impossible to meet just now, it is necessary to begin our work together immediately. We shall come to an understanding more easily at work.

Your plan of writing some small things for the *Proletarian* makes me very happy. But it must be understood that if you are engaged on important work you *will not tear yourself away from it.*

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 28, p. 523. Letter to M. Gorki. February 13, 1908.

. . . It could not be said that the real contents of the passage from the platform[1] quoted are entirely objectionable. There is also something positive behind this content. This positive content can be expressed in one word: Gorki.

In fact there is no reason for hiding the fact which (distorted and perverted) has been broadcast by the bourgeois press, namely, that Gorki is one of the adherents of this group. And Gorki is unquestionably the greatest representative of proletarian art, has done much for it and can still do a great deal for it. Any fraction of the social-democratic party can justly pride itself on having Gorki on its side. But to insert "proletarian art" into the platform is to issue to this platform a certificate of poverty, is to confine the group to a literary *circle* which convicts itself of "authoritarianism". . . The authors of the platform talk a lot against recognizing authorities without explaining frankly what the trouble is. The trouble is that they think that the insistence on materialism in philosophy and the struggle against recallism on the part of the bolsheviks is a matter of individual "authorities" (a transparent hint) whom the foes of Machism presumably "trust blindly." Such assertions are, of course, childish. But it is precisely the "Vpered" people that treat authorities shabbily. Gorki is undoubtedly an authority in the matter of proletarian art—no one will deny that. To attempt to "utilize" (in an intellectual sense, of course) this authority for the

[1] Lenin is speaking about the following passage from the platform of the adherents of "recallism" who set themselves the task of "propagating among the masses the new, proletarian" culture, "develop proletarian science, strengthen really comradely relations in proletarian circles, work out the philosophy and direct art in the direction of proletarian aspirations and experience."

strengthening of Machism and recallism is to set an example of how *not* to treat *authorities.*

In the matter of proletarian art M. Gorki is a great *asset* notwithstanding his Machist and recallist sympathies. In the matter of development of the social-democratic proletarian movement a *platform* which sorts out a group of recallists and Machists in the party and sets up as a special group problem a presumably "proletarian" art is a *negative* thing because this platform aims to fix and utilize that in the activities of a great authority which is his weakness, which enters as a negative quantity in the great service he is rendering the proletariat.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 14, pp. 298-299. Essay "Notes of a Journalist."

What your essay has to do with it? you ask. In that at a time when this divergence of opinion was threatening to become particularly keen you begin to explain the views of one trend in your work for the *Proletarian.* I do not know, of course, how and what you might have wound up in the end. Besides I am of the opinion that an artist can get for himself much that is useful to him in any philosophy. Finally, I completely and absolutely agree that in the matter of creative work you should be free to delve in all books and that drawing this sort of opinion both from your literary experience and from philosophy, *even idealistic* philosophy, you may reach conclusions which will be of tremendous benefit to the workers party. That is all very well. Nevertheless, the *Proletarian* must remain absolutely neutral to all our differences of opinion in philosophy without giving the readers the shadow of an excuse to connect the bolsheviks, as a trend, as a line of tactics of the revolutionary wing of the Russian social-democrats, with empirio-criticism or empirio-monism.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 28, p. 529. Letter to A. M. Gorki, February 25, 1908.

For several days now the bourgeois newspapers of France, Germany and Russia, are relishing the most sensational bit of news. Gorki's expulsion from the Social-Democratic Party. . .

The source of this yarn is evident: some hack-writer has heard the edge of a rumor about differences of opinion with respect to recallism and god-building (—a question which has been discussed openly for over a year in the Party generally and in the *Proletarian* particularly) and exaggerating scraps of information "made a fine scoop."

The purpose of this lying campaign is no less evident. The bourgeois parties *would like* Gorki to leave the Social-Democratic Party. The bourgeois newspapers are anxious to stir up dissension within the Social-Democratic Party and present them in distorted fashion.

But the efforts of the bourgeois newspapers are futile. Comrade Gorki has tied himself too strongly to the labor movement in Russia and the entire world with his great literary works to answer them with anything but contempt.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 1. p. 211. Essay "Fable of the Bourgeois Press on Gorki's Expulsion."

. . . The writer had occasion, on meeting Gorki on the Island of Capri, to warn him and reproach him for his political mistakes. Gorki parried these reproaches with him inimitably with a fine smile and frank statement: "I

know I am a poor Marxian. And then all of us artists are somewhat irresponsible." It is hard to argue against this.

There is no doubt that Gorki is a tremendously talented man who has been and will be of great benefit to the proletarian movement of the world.

But why does Gorki mix in politics?

To my mind Gorki's letter [1] expresses extremely widespread prejudices not only of the petty-bourgeoisie but also part of the working class under its influence. All the forces of our Party, all the efforts of class conscious workers must be directed towards a persistent struggle against these prejudices.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 20, p. 41. "Letters From Afar."

On Barbusse

. . . One of the most graphic evidences of the widespread growth of revolutionary consciousness among the masses which can be observed everywhere are the novels of Henri Barbusse: *Under Fire* and *Clarté*. The first has been translated into all languages and has had a circulation in France alone of 280,000. The transformation of an entirely ignorant mass individual who has been completely under the sway of the ideas and prejudices of the ordinary man of the street into a revolutionist under the influence of the war is shown with unusual power, talent, and truth.

Lenin. Collected Works, Vol. 24, p. 396. Essay "Problems of the Third International."

On Sinclair

Sinclair is a socialist from emotion, without any theoretical training. He puts the question "simply," is indignant at the approaching war and seeks protection against it in socialism.

"We are told," Sinclair writes, "that the socialist movement is too weak yet, that we must wait for evolution. But evoluion takes place within the hearts of human beings; we are the tools of evolution and if we will not struggle there can be no evolution. We are told that our movement (against the war) will be crushed; but I declare my profound conviction that the crushing of any revolt aiming, out of motives of highest humanity, to avert war would be the greatest triumph socialism has ever had,—that it would stir the conscience of civilization and shake the workers of the world as nothing in history has ever shaken them. Let us not be too timid about our movement, let us not pay too much attention to numbers and outward appearances of power. A thousand people of ardent faith and determination are stronger than a million turned careful and respectable. And there is no danger for the socialist movement greater than that of becoming a stagnant institution."

As you see this is a naive, theoretically unconsidered, but profoundly correct warning against vulgarization of socialism and a summons to revolutionary struggle.

What does Blatchford have to say in answer to Sinclair?

"It is true war is called out by capitalist and militarist interests," he says. "And I no less than any other socialist work for peace and the vanquishing of capitalism. But Sinclair cannot convince me with 'rhetorical and

[1] The letter in question is one in which, according to the European press. Gorki sent greetings to the Provisional Government and Executive Committee, calling upon them to conclude peace, but not any peace, not peace at any cost.

beautiful phrases,' cannot destroy facts. 'Facts, friend Sinclair, are a stubborn thing, and the German danger is a fact.' Neither we, nor the German socialists have the power to avert war. Sinclair greatly exaggerates our strength. We are not united, we have no money, no arms and no 'discipline.' The only thing left to us is to *help* the British government increase its fleet, because there can be no other guarantee of peace."

Sinclair is naive in his appeal, although this appeal is profoundly correct in the main,—it is naive because it ignores a half century of development of mass socialism, the struggle of trends in it, ignores the conditions of growth of revolutionary acts and the existence of objectively-revolutionary situations and revolutionary organizations. "Emotion" can not take the place of this. The grim, relentless struggle of the powerful trends in socialism—the opportunist and the revolutionary trends—cannot be circumvented by rhetoric.

Lenin, Vol. 18 pp. 141-142. Essay "English Pacifism and English Dislike of Theory."

ARTICLES and CRITICISM

Sergei Dinamov

The Art of Soviet Cinema

An Analysis of Outstanding Features [1]

Beauty, is the first word I want to use in my discussion on the art of the Soviet cinema.

There are words which are so mutilated and mangled from frequent use that their edge has been blunted. There are words muddied by the hands of those who have used them.

We must understand beauty as it was understood by Chernishevski, by Belinski, by Plekhanov, in their best Marxist works. We cannot imagine Soviet art as an art without beauty, as an ugly art, as an art that fails to raise the appreciation of millions to greater heights.

The art of the Western cinema represents only beautiful illusions which throw a mist around the ugliness of life. The beauty of the Western cinema is a beauty of form which conceals a horrible life. With us there cannot be that divorce between form and matter, we have no need for illusions. We need a beauty which arises out of the realities of our time, out of our life. We must raise this point because there is still a wrong sort of realism in our cinema art. In his film *Youth,* for example, Lukov introduces a torture scene. For foot after foot of film these tortures are represented realistically. It is clear what Lukov wishes to do. He tries to instill a feeling of loathing for people who apply torture. But after all it may do something very different.

There is also another trend in our cinema, represented by the manufacturers of "chocolate box" beauty. People who lack the capacity to understand real beauty when they meet it, begin introducing pretty-pretty scenes into their films. In this manner Eggert brings in Semyonova in *Nastenka Ustinova.* Protasanov brings in girls in *Marionettes.* What does he want them for? He assumes that by decorating reality he makes it more interesting for our audience.

Chocolate box beauty is of no use to us. A certain section of the audience may like it. But you have to bear in mind that you are responsible for the taste of the millions of people who go to see your films. And if you inoculate them with false beauty you will be responsible for their loss of taste for real beauty. *(hear! hear!)*

Rococo art is becoming apparent in some of our work. Ornamentalism, beauty that lacks real virility and vitality. It is not our sort of beauty. Our sort of beauty is *Potemkin.* Here we have an heroic picture. It is a film of great events, of a burning epoch of history. It shows the beauty of heroism. Our sort of beauty is *Chapayev.* Here is a picture of beauty from beginning to end. You may take any scene from *Chapayev* at random. The conversation for instance, between Chapayev and Furmanov on the bridge; Chapayev

[1] Excerpts from an address delivered to cinema workers on the 15th anniversary of Soviet Cinema at the First All-Union Conference of Workers in Art and Literature.

sweeping to attack like an eagle. This film relates the beautiful life of a beautiful character, a real hero of the land of the Soviets. That is the sort of beauty we must talk about, that is the sort of beauty we must create.

But in order to produce a truly beautiful art, an art which has an immense and virile beauty carrying all before it, one has to be an optimist. And it seems to me that the second foundation stone of the Soviet style in the film is optimism.

About Optimism

When Pudovkin in *Mother,* makes the old woman, Vlassova, suffer after having sent her son to prison, there is no varnishing of truth, it is real human tragedy.

When Babchenko in *Counter Plan,* through contradictions, advances towards the new, it is daring and it is fine. There is no varnishing of truth here.

Kavyrlya in *A Song of Happiness* is not the sort of person that one is bound to like unreservedly, but his triumph is a joyful one. It is truly a song of happiness.

A picture cannot be effective without contradiction, without it, it cannot be optimistic. And for that reason *Chapayev* is a magnificent example for the whole of the Soviet cinema.

We have no use for an illusory optimism that rocks people to sleep. One has to remember that men have grown up, that even now we have heroes. Be good enough to go the limit in presenting them.

But contradictions must be seen, they must be understood.

Sometimes our film porducers present characters who display emotions that are dying out. Kuleshov, for instance, in his film *According to the Law.* Here the central point is the emotion of fear. People are afraid of killing their enemy, they are afraid of death, they are afraid of life. And here is a film in six or seven reels devoted to a profound, and delicately analysed fear of life. It is a curious fact that Kuleshov saw fear in Jack London. When Nadejda Konstantinovna read Jack London to Lenin he saw something different. He liked Jack London's story "The Will to Live"—about a man who in spite of everything, having lost all, without fire, food or house to live in, crawls like a wild beast. The will to live however, burns on and is not extinguished for a single moment.

That is what should have been seen in Jack London, that is what should have been seen in the life of our day.

If the artist knows life and loves it, if he speaks the truth about it, then he will not create work about dying emotions.

About Being True to Life

One of the chief elements in Soviet film style is its true reflection of life.

What is the reason for the historical triumphs of our cinema? It is the fact that the artist has told the historic truth in a loud and courageous voice. I have Eisenstein's *Potemkin* and Pudovkin's *Mother* in mind. Eistenstein in *Potemkin* takes a subject of universal historical significance, the revolution of 1905. In tackling great historical events and limiting his task to a certain extent (such limitation is essential for the purpose of attaining greater depth) bores down to the very bottom and discloses rich seams of human beings and human processes.

Mother is a work of art of a different type. While with Eisenstein everything is based on the masses, the collective, the ship (the ship is itself one of the characters, the companion-way also), in Pudovkin one finds something else. In Pudovkin one finds character; separate, integral human types, but behind these types there are so many figures, entire generations. Here Pudovkin created the typical character of the 1905 revolution. Truthfulness, thorough soundness of ideology, tenseness of plot and a high level of craftsmanship—these are the factors that account for the epoch-making triumphs of Soviet cinema.

In this respect *The Counter Plan* by Ermler and Yutkevich, began a new stage in the evolution of our cinema.

Those who demand faithfulness to detail, forgetting the main point (and the main point is that the film should correspond to the epoch) are responsible for the fact that our art crawls instead of flying. And we have no need for an art that crawls.

Realism is a universalisation of reality, expressed in characters that are merged and fused with an epoch. We have this in *Chapayev*. Here is historical material, documents, diaries and notes, but the remarkable thing is that all this documentation, all this past epoch has become the very breath of the producer. Sitting among us here are the producers of a number of historical films: Roshal who did *St. Petersburg Nights,* Petrov who did *The Storm*. The reason for the success of these films was that the producers did not approach their material like blind men. The success of *Chapayev* was due to the fact that for the Vassilievs (directors) and Babochkin (leading actor) the epoch was as much a part of them as warm blood is of a man.

About the Passionate Element

Without love and without hatred there can be no art. Pudovkin failed in *The Deserter* because it was impossible to love the hero and one had nothing to hate him for. The result is he passed like someone in a hotel. Art can never forgive such coldness in an artist. And here it seems to me that Eistenstein is to a large extent to blame with his theory of the intellectual cinema. One cannot separate thought from passion, idea from emotion, reason from feeling.

What is wrong with Eisenstein's theory is that he separated thought from feeling. But there are no people like that. People who only think remind one of monsters made in laboratories. They have an enormous head, but they have no arms, legs nor heart.

Party membership is a man's belief in the cause he is serving. Whatever happens to him it never leaves him. I once met a certain German communist. In Germany they tortured him to try to make him betray his organization. At first they beat him on the back with a club with hooks in it. The hooks tore his flesh. He did not say anything. They thought he was dead, but when they put him on a cart with other tortured victims he jumped out and escaped.

That is the kind of Party devotion we want in our cinema, a conviction that nothing can shake, not even death. And a cinema without passion, a cinema that has gone cold and is like a mathematical formula will never carry any weight.

For me *Chapayev* is passionate mathematics, for each part, each scene has a fiery element pervading it, its flame leaps from the screen.

The Artist and His Subject

The Soviet producer is lucky because the subjects of his film are given to him by the life of our time. You have only to go out and pick up plots because they are lying around waiting. We have so many magnificent incidents of the civil war, and so many magnificent incidents since then that we can choose at random. You have an immense space before you. Swim out into any river you like, any sea, or out into the ocean. And then a dreadful thing happens. The artist has created not a plot but an illustration for a plot. He has not worked out the plot himself, it has been worked out for him by events. The artist takes such an enormous quantity of plots, subplots, themes, subsidiary themes that he loses control of them. And in this manner he faces reality perplexed. This is the way the artistic chronicle is produced.

Or take another possibility. Perhaps the artist chooses a tremendous subject, but failing to understand it, vulgarises it. This is how we get a film like *Prosperity* by Zhelyabuzhski. Or the artist takes a huge subject, Dnieprostroi, but makes it so incomprehensible that the subject becomes Dovzhenko's *Ivan* and the audience is repelled from it. This is a terrible thing. It's like bringing up children and never seeing them.

The artist must take the subject that is most dear to him, most personal, most passionate. It may be the most trivial subject. It may be as tiny as a match box; but even in a match box one can put the dynamite of great ideas and passions.

You must take your own subject. Do not take another person's subject. Do not take a subject to which you are indifferent, for such a subject will stifle you and you will not be able to get the better of it. But the lead is given by reality. And when the artist's own subject coincides with the subject presented by reality, we get a work of art.

The problem is to present what you are best able to present. But we also have before us the problem of disciplining ourselves to a choice of subjects which our native land sets before us and which serve that land.

It is no good planting a tree after cutting the roots. If one does, one gets a stick, and nobody ever gathered fruit from a stick. You have to transplant an artist, root and all, so that he may go on growing, and one does not know at first which trees will be the tallest. It was this way that the Vassilievs [1] appeared so "unexpectedly." Unexpected plants also appear in our film art.

In art one must always speak the truth, and the truth about what one knows thoroughly.

I once gave an address at the Academy of Aviation. One of the commandants asked me a question: when will our artists show us the best people of the country? I answered: when the artists themselves are the best people in the country. You will be able to produce good films when you yourselves are among the best people of this marvellous country of ours.

The cinema offers extraordinary possibilities for showing character. You can take from painting the art of design but you make the designs move. You can take from the theatre the wonderful art of the actor. If you have a tear, it can be the tear of a whole world. You can show a hearty laugh as though it were the laugh of the whole of humanity. You have command over a wonderful artistic medium, and you must produce great characters. But for some time characters seem to have disappeared from our cinema.

[1] Two brothers who directed *Chapayev*.

Create Characters

It would be stupid to reject one's marvellous heritage. We still have a fund of gold at the bottom of our films without heroes. These films are only experiment and not the end of our road. Of course, one has to have extraordinary delicate fingers, a termendous intellect and real talent to produce such films. They have been produced: Eisenstein's *Potemkin,* Dovzhenko's *Arsenal.* Then others came who were unable to show people in their films, and took what best suited them. A number of films began to be produced without heroes, then mass films made their appearance in which there were no human beings but only masses.

This may have appeared to be a good revolutionary tendency, but our art fell to pieces.

What is distinctive about Shakespeare's heroes? He always takes great historical events, even in his comedies, but he merges these events in characters and types of people.

Behind the outlines of Shakespeare's plots, behind every scene of his tragedies, one senses the epoch and the author's struggle against feudalism. But the epoch becomes a man, the events of an epoch become the acts of a man, the movements of an epoch become the gestures of a man, the thoughts of an epoch become the brain of a man. That is why one must learn from Shakespeare. That is what our cinema lacks and why one must learn from the experience offered by our best pictures: *The Counter Plan, Chapayev, The Song of Happiness* and others. The voice of the heroes as a voice of the epoch: this is what we need. One must not be afraid of being passionate, for after all true Party art is truly passionate art.

One should not be afraid of following passions to their bitter end. But it is often the case that a man touches the whole gamut of experiences in a film, without stopping at any of them, like an express train. We do not know who is sitting in this train. We need to know the feelings and passions of these heroes. We very seldom have the opportunity of holding their hearts in our hands. There was a theory that the enemy should not be presented realistically. In our country, all sciences study the enemy. It is done by soldiers, scholars, biologists, politicians, economists. We do not know our enemy perhaps as well as we should, but we know him nevertheless.

Why is it that the cinema does not do this? The *Chapayev* experiment is remarkable for the fact that here there is an attempt to present the enemy otherwise than in the hackneyed way. In the presentation of the enemy the gortesque method has stuck. But the enemy is a real live force. Capitalism is something real. You must present the psychology of the enemy, his full mentality. We must know our enemy. Disclose the enemy in such a way that we can see your attitude to him through your picture of him. But the picture must be drawn in such a way that in aiming at him we may shoot him through the temples instead of shooting his shadow.

Theme

Character in action, thought as it unfolds, life expressed as a process, is what is meant by theme. Theme is the connection between events, people and the process of life, expressed through human relationships, that is to say through social relationships. Such a definition of theme, seems to me to be the right one.

We have three types of film. The first is given in *Potemkin* and *October.* This is the swift change of events without any individual heroes being singled out.

The second type is the change to characters. Dovzhenko's *Arsenal* for instance.

Finally, the third type. This type is presented in *Mother, The Descendents of Chingis Khan, The Counter Plan, Maxim's Youth, Golden Hills, The Outskirts, Chapayev, The Song of Happiness.* This is the theme first seen at the beginning of our cinema. I have *Mother* in mind. Later this type was lost due to the ignorance of life on the part of our producers.

There are certain main points, I should say, which give a theme life, breath, growth and passion. The first is when it presents live people.

In *Mother, Maxim's Youth* and other films, types of human beings are shown who come to bolshevism through a life of hardship.

A magnificent type is created by Zheimo in Anuk, a passionate character, full of poetry. Extremely compact forms have been found, restricted forms, and through this restriction flame finds its way, just as though fire was actually there. Then Chapayev. Chapayev's character is developed out of a number of contradictory actions. Here we have real live people, not angels.

The second point is that one must be a scholar, and a research worker.

Kavaleridze's film could be used for illustration by historians. The same applies to *Chapayev.* Producers and artists do a great deal of work in carefully studying material for their productions. Dovzhenko is working this way on his *Aerograd* and Roshal on the material for *The Paris Commune.*

The third point is that one must have real ideo-political and artistic courage. In this connection I should like to give *Maxim's Youth* as an example. In this film one turns to the history of the Party. Taking this tremendous subject producers were running a certain risk, for it was an exceptionally responsible task. The birth of a bolshevik is a subject in which political errors are unforgiveable. But they ventured on this task. And what Kozintsev and Trauerberger attained was attained because their thoughts bit down into real events. You know how many memoirs they read and what endless conversations they had with people who had lived during the period. They worked as scholars and as political workers. That is the sort of ex perience which is so valuable to our cinema.

The fourth point is that one must limit one's subject in order to deepen it. That is what is remarkable about *Potemkin.* The events of 1905, great events, were taken. Eisenstein carved for himself, out of the huge block of events a small piece of marble, the deck of the armoured cruiser Potemkin—and on that narrow field, he let us see the events of 1905. Pudovkin took the subject of intervention. He also chose a small canvas, a Mongol and a small group of soldiers, and on that limited canvas people and events played their role.

In *Outskirts,* Barnet took a small town. Here there was no front, but we saw war reflected in the life of its people. In all cases the artist limited his subject to deepen it.

The powerful effect of Shakespeare's themes consists in the profound way in which the ideas developed coincide with the heights of action. Here we have two parallel lines and when the idea becomes deeper, when the idea lifts up a new layer of passions and feelings, the action does not recede from us, but on the contrary clings to the idea like atmosphere to the globe.

Thought and action are one here. In this way our hero of the screen should think, but his thought must have the effect of an electric current on the audience. Chapayev is plunged in thought at a meeting and the audi-

ence is just as worried as he is. Chapayev wants to know about Alexander of Macedonia and we share his desire to know about him.

The hero must also feel on the screen, otherwise there is no theme. Marx speaks of the effective glitter of matter. This effective glitter should surround every one of our heroes, this effective glitter should be evident in a man's gait, in his gestures, in everything that he does, so that he may be a live character. It is remarkable how Babochkin was able to create a person like Chapayev. It is difficult to realise that he is an actor.

Shakespeare does not overburden his heroes with passionate emotions like a cart with too heavy a load. He has always a main note sounding through everything. But our heroes are too often given a mass of minor characteristics and there is no dominant note.

We Must Move Forward

We have before us an array of artists. With failure and success they treated subjects related to actual life.

The important thing now is to think about the style of the Soviet cinema. for our success has lain in the fact that we have created our own style, the style of the new human being who is hewing his way into history.

The corpse-like odor of decay arises from the art of dying capitalism. The emotions of fear and doom, the ideas of disintegration permeate this unlovely art, devoid of ideas, serving to protect a world and feelings which are dying. There is no inner beauty in such art, nor can there be any. With rare exceptions it is hollow and emasculated: as though carved out of a marvellous fruit, only its shell remains a beautiful shape, hollow within.

Indeed there is nothing fine about such an art for it is an art of the past that holds back the onslaught of the present like a dam.

Our cinema art from the very beginning entered into a bitter and uncompromising struggle with the old and the dying, it dedicated itself to the magnificent idea of freeing humanity. The fire and ardour of the millions in their struggle have warmed its characters: strong, passionate people who are relentless against the old, and who are forging within themselves new feelings and thoughts.

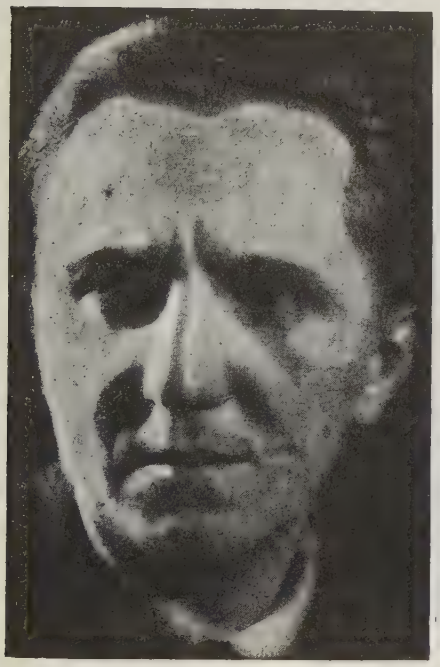
Life has poured out strong characters, life has created real men and women with a great cause. The realities of our time have drawn from the depths of the people such heroes and fighters that their names are on the lips of all Soviet people and serve as an example to all.

You masters of cinema art must present these people in all the fullness of their feelings, in all their simple complexity, in all their strength and power, in all the incomparable colorfulness of their activity.

In order to present these people, to reflect their deeds, a really fine art is required, an art of unprecedented beauty and majesty.

Translated from the Russian by Goold-Verschoyle

SCENES FROM SOVIET CINEMA



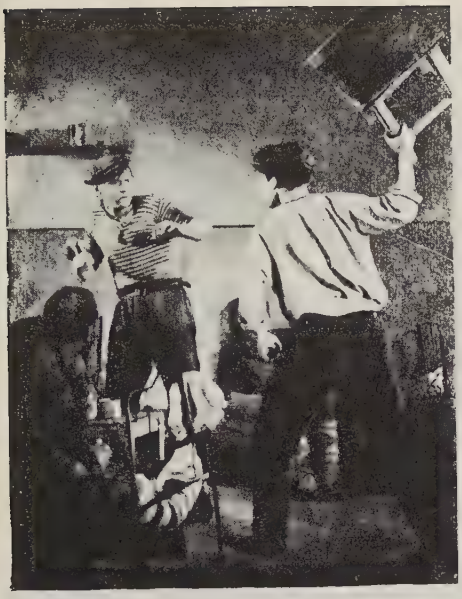
Irwin Piscator, noted German revolutionary theatrical and cinema director, whose picture The Revolt of the Fishermen *has just been issued*

Vertov, Soviet director of Three Songs of Lenin, *a film which is enjoying a tremendous success in a number of countries*

A scene from Piscator's Revolt of the Fischermen

From Conquerors, *directed by Fedorov*

From About Love and Hate, *directed by Gindelstein*



Two scenes from A Song of Happiness

A scene from Three Songs of Lenin, *Vertov director*

Two scenes from the Tale of Tsar Dirandai *directed by Vano*

Edmundo Pel uso

JACK LONDON: American Writer

Notes from a Personal Acquaintance

"What the devil! I am first of all a white man and only then a socialist!"

Frowning heavily and hammering his fist on the table around which we were sitting it was as if Jack London had thus given his final argument in the dispute in which we had all united against him. This was at the Socialist headquarters in Oakland, California, in the early Fall of 1904.

Jack London had just returned from Japan where he had been Hearst's war correspondent on the Russo-Japanese front. Hearst picked Jack London after his novels had made him one of the most popular American writers. Jack London left for the seat of war with all the ardor of a young journalist conscious of the full importance of his mission. He was sure that as an eye-witness of the first imperialist slaughter on the shores of the Pacific Ocean he would be able to paint a vivid picture of the conflict of two capitalist states struggling for supremacy in Manchuria. When he came to Japanese General Headquarters, however, he soon found out that nothing would come of it. The Japanese staff read his letters of introduction, received him with ceremonious politeness, but instead of sending him to the front, held him virtual prisoner, far from the scene where the offensive against the Tsar's army was being unfolded. After a few weeks, seeing that neither his protests nor Hearst's cables had the least effect in getting him to the front lines, and that the Japanese continued to mock him politely, he sent them to the devil and returned to San Francisco. His loathing for the "Japs" was only increased by this.

At the socialist headquarters he was telling us about his misadventures. With evident pleasure he described the wilyness of these "human burnt candles," as he called the officers of the Japanese General Staff, and used stronger expressions with regard to them. But his gorge rose not only at the Japanese General Staff; he cursed the entire yellow race in the most outrageous terms. Some of the comrades present were somewhat embarrassed. The struggle against race prejudice, especially against hatred of the "yellow" races, was part of the daily work of the socialist branches on the Pacific coast and it was hard to conceive of Jack London, one of the foremost members of the branch, evincing rare chauvinism.

Convinced that there was some misunderstanding, one of the comrades began talking to him about classes that exist in Japan as everywhere else. Another called his attention to the slogan decorating the wall over the portrait of Marx: "Workers of all countries, unite!" But all this did not touch him in the least and only served to increase his passion.

"The Japanese military has turned Jack into a chauvinist!" the secretary of the branch exclaimed naively when London had left. But neither he nor anyone else thought of bringing Jack up on charges. Such opinions were then no ground for expulsion from the Party. Besides no one was going to expell Jack, the prize of the branch. The branch was proud of the fact that "a famous writer" was one of its members. They valued Jack London much more than other "guests" not so famous then, like Sun Yat-sen, Kokotu [1]

[1] Kokotu, a physician, one of the first Japanese Socialists, was hanged in Japan in 1911.

Jack London in 1902

and others. And this in spite of the fact that his practical Party work amounted almost to nothing. Absorbed in his purely literary labors, perhaps valuing quiet and solitude too much, he seldom "came to the masses" in contrast to the couple of dozen other members of the branch who were active and burned more or less with the holy ardour of proselytes. Almost every evening, weather permitting they would occupy some street corner for mass agitation.

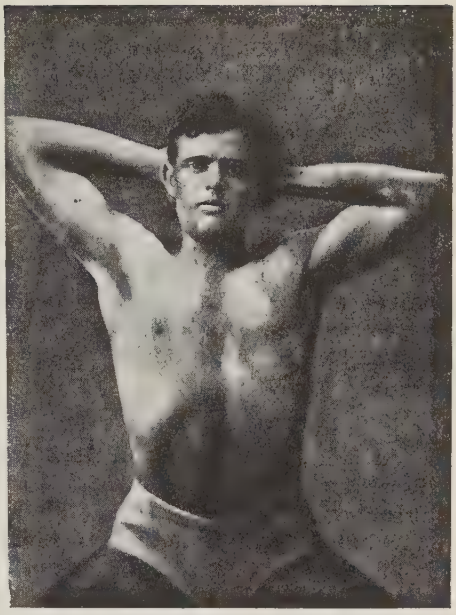
Their Marxian learning to be sure, was not very great. There were no Party schools and few of the writings of Marx and Engels were available in English translation. The only work of the great founders of Socialism which we all studied together under the guidance of an "old" comrade was the *Communist Manifesto.* But the Russo-Japanese war opened up for us a wide field of criticism of the capitalist system and especially of American imperialism just beginning to develop.

2

At the beginning of the Russo-Japanese war Jack London's fame as a writer was firmly established. His latest book in 1904 was *The Call of the Wild.* With this book his stories of Alaska came to a close. In less than five years he had exhausted all his memories of the brief but stormy career of a wage slave and adventurer on land and sea. Hardly having reached adolescence, the capitalist factory had already ruined him physically and spiritually. He became a tramp and together with other wandering American workers rode the rods from one end of the country to the other. He was imprisoned. Returning to San Francisco he read and wrote. He swallowed everything readable that fell into his hands. He read Marx and dove into Spencer. He was particularly attracted to Nietzsche whose love of the "strong man," of the "White beast," of the "superman," so eloquently expressed, delighted him particularly.

His knowledge of the elements of the class struggle which he used later, he got from books on history, especially those of Anglo-Saxon peoples. The Luddite movement, the revolt of the workers against machinery, produced an ineradicable impression on him. Jack returned a great many times to the study of the Paris Commune. His heroes of the "Chicago Commune" in the novel *The Iron Heel* he built out of the heroic exploits and supreme audacity of the heroes of the first proletarian dictatorship. According to his own statements Jack did not know any American writer contemporary or otherwise whose artistic ideals in any way corresponded to his or whom he could emulate. He looked to foreign literature for his models. But while the literary form of, say, Balzac or Guy de Maupassant attracted him, their subject matter did not in the least satisfy him. Theirs was the world of the past

while Jack was interested in the present and especially in the civil wars of the future. Now that his first cycle was finished, he found the subjets, themes and characters which interested him only in Russian literature, especially in Maxim Gorki. He not only admired the fine clear artistic forms of the famous Russian author, but felt a personal sympathy to him, as to a man whose life was something like his own.



A previously unpublished photo of Jack London in 1904

During the first period of his literary activity he became popular by his precise depiction of the bold ventures and primitive instincts of the daring American looking for adventure in Arctic regions or getting lost in search of some new El Dorado. He sang the praises of the physical prowess of the American, of his individual rebellion, of his superiority over people of other races. This glorification of the superman was not so much due to his early partiality to Nietzsche as to a subconscious spiritual picture of himself as the hero of his own stories. This bold hymn to the strong man found a ready response in all North American youth and gave him an extremely wide circle of readers and admirers. So long as Jack could draw on his own adventures or on what he had picked up during his wanderings he wrote prolifically. By the time of his Hearst assignment as war-correspondent to Japan he had practically exhausted these resources. It was high time for him to choose his themes for further work. The trip to the Far East was a resting spell that permitted him to delay the solution of this important problem.

3

The Pacific coast had undergone tremendous changes during those years. The California of the first gold seekers and adventurers was a thing of the past. From a trading post San Francisco had become an industrial center and a first class military port. A ring of ship yards had grown up around old Yerba Buena.[1] Instead of the few gun-boats that once cruised about from north to south chasing smugglers, powerful dreadnaughts appeared. Before our very eyes American imperialism began to put out its long feelers and grasped first the Hawaiian Islands, then the Philippines.

Before the rise of big industry a wealthy trading bourgeoisie had lived on this American Riviera and most of the workmen were skilled artisans whose wages were high compared to other countries. The class struggle was not so sharp and the beginnings of socialism were only a sort of faint echo of what was taking place in the industrial East of America. On the other hand race animosity was very keen in California—a fierce struggle

[1] *Yerba Buena* (*good grass*) was the name originally given to San Francisco by the first Spanish settlers.

was going on against the "yellow" races, against the Japanese and especially the Chinese. The Chinese there were a substantial colony which furnished ready cheap labor competing with the American worker and lowering his wages. This competition was the fruitful soil on which race antagonism flourished along the entire Pacific coast. Now another factor had entered —the period of armed imperialist conflict inaugurated by the Russo-Japanese war. There was no doubt that the Pacific Ocean was to be the center of a future international conflict.

Jack London, a very keen observer, studied this transformation carefully. He noted the growth of social contradictions within the United States enbanced by the growth of trusts and the aggressive policies of young finance capital against the working class. It was at this time Jack London decided to join the Socialist Party.

4

Jack London's house in Berkeley was a very ordinary one but charmingly situated. It was surrounded on all sides by fragrant gardens, drenched with the perfume of eucalyptus, cedar and cypress trees. And over all this the continuous springtime sun in a clear, blue sky.

Jack, one must in all fairness admit, remained the same good, modest fellow he always was in spite of his sudden fame and wealth. Paying no attention to the ridicule of his friends he continued to roll his own cigarettes, and he smoked about fifty of them an evening. That was his regular dose of nicotine as he expressed it. This stimulant was as necessary to him as sun and air, without it he could not work, and he worked very conscientiously. Careful preparatory work together with intense application added to his talent, increased his power as a realistic writer. When writing about animals, for instance, he would go through many scientific works in order to get a more profound insight into the psychology of his heroes.

His methods of work were original. As it was organically impossible for him to remain long indoors he worked in the open air. Early in the morning he would set out on horseback in any chance direction taking along a portable typewriter, a folding chair, a rug and lunch. Picking some place that suited his taste—some meadow flooded with sunshine or some bright cliff over-hanging a valley—he would spread out his rug in the shade of some eucalyptus tree, red cedar, or giant redwood, set up his typewriter and get to work, letting his horse graze at will.

He made it a rule to set himself some task every day and he would accomplish it punctually. He would jot down on a piece of paper the main points he intended to develop and surrounded by beautiful California nature, began hammering the keys of his typewriter pouring out his thoughts and ideas. Only towards evening would he start home.

He was very hospitable. It was a simple hospitality without ceremony. Every evening at the same hour his "constant guests" would gather at his table to share his modest fare. He selected from among his numerous acquaintances an intimate circle of congenial friends who served both as a collective critic and stimulus. These were a set of men and women who worked in the most varied branches of social, political and scientific life. Not all were, of course, of exactly the same political shade of opinion, but all could be called "radicals." There was among them, for instance, the secretary of the Socialist Branch, a workingman profoundly devoted to the proletarian cause, but somewhat timid and simple; there were journalists,

noisy, volatile, always well informed on everything; sarcastic critics; magazine illustrators looking sharply about them; sentimental musicians; radical bourgeois philanthropists, "friends of the workingman," etc. Everyone brought his own individual note into the disputes and critical discusssions that went on in this peculiar literary commune. Although all were Jack London's guests, his tact and simplicity were so great that everyone felt himself at home on the very first visit.

Jack London had divorced his first wife a short time before. He now lived alone with his mother for whom he not only cherished a great affection but also a love uniting two beings who had gone through thick and thin together. Jack's mother was as simple as her son. She was a modest woman of medium height, wore her hair short and had a sad tired look in her eyes. She was always pleasant and friendly to her son's guests.

After dinner, which never lasted very long, all retired to the smoking room. Unless someone played the piano or violin, a discussion usually sprang up on a current theme. But often Jack himself would pose some question that interested him in connection with the book he happened to be writing at the time. Many chapters of his social novels were thus previously discussed in this intimate circle.

A lucky chance brought me into this circle at the very time when the main themes of Jack London's social novels were being discussed.

I made Jack's acquaintance at the Socialist branch headquarters in San Francisco where I was the youngest member. I showed him my first literary effort "California Sketches." We began to go swimming together in the sound and I was soon a frequent guest at his dinners.

Exhausted by repeated swimming contests to which he almost forced me, as he was secretly proud of his great athletic prowess, we would rest by stretching out on the beach flooded with sunshine and Jack would talk about literature and writers. One could feel his eagerness to get more thoroughly acquainted with the European literary world. His views had definitely formed themselves; he acknowledged that the French writers, especially those of the 19th century, were without peer for form. But they did not satisfy him in content. Only the Russians, he used to say, suffering under the yoke of the fiercest Tsarist reaction, are able to breathe the spirit of social rebellion into their literary work; and forseeing the coming events in the United States, he sought his models among the Russian writers. In one conversation, I don't remember exactly apropos of what, he told me proudly that in a recent review of one of his stories he was called the American Gorki.

After some time, in 1927 I think, Gorki visited America. The American bourgeoisie raised a great howl to prevent his entry into the "free" United States. Jack London was one of the few representatives of American literature who rose in Gorki's defense.

5

Soon after Jack London's return from Japan the Russian revolution of 1905 broke out.

The American republic showed the liveliest interest in it. So-called "publice opinon" was entirely opposed to Tsarism and the press supported this general attitude. The feelers of the Tsarist octopus reaching out to the Far East seemed more terrible than the then still young Japanese imperialism. American "democracy" was against Tsarist monarchy. Finally the pro

letariat shared the loathing of the working class everywhere for the Tsar-executioner.

Jack London, a great newspaper reader generally, passionately followed the developments of the revolution as they were reflected in the daily and periodical press. From that moment on the Russian revolution became the constant theme of conversation at his house. Jack London's intimate circle was far from unanimity on the moving forces of the Russian revolution. Menshevism had its representatives there. He calmly listened to the disputes, sometimes rather violent, and formed his own conclusions. At the time he sought for other sources of information. There was a small colony of Russian immigrants in San Francisco. They were "radicals"—petty bourgeois intellectuals. At any rate, when the news of the December armed uprising reached the Pacific coast Jack was all for the Bolsheviks. He followed the revolution of 1905 with all his strength and passion. He saw the growth of the role of the Bolsheviks as the revolution unfolded. The treachery of the Mensheviks he compared with the analogous treachery of the leaders of the American Federation of Labor and when Plekhanov condemned the December uprising Jack had his answer ready. This answer he put into the mouth of his hero of *The Iron Heel*: "Victory over the Iron Heel can only be obtained by the proletariat with a gun in its hands."

A new course in Jack London's literary career begins with this, a course marked out for him by the first proletarian revolution. The period of adventure novels of the Arctic life and about animals was over. He renounced his previous manner, that of glorifying individual rebellion of the hired slave and the oppressed as an erroneous one. He was no longer attracted by the idea of escaping the capitalist yoke by free tramp life; he realized that such an escape does not solve the social problem, will not lead to victory in the class struggle. The heroic example of the Russian proletariat showed him that the only way to social emancipation and consequently to individual freedom of all the oppressed is the armed revolt of the proletariat under the leadership of a firm Party tried and tested in the fires of battle.

From this point on Jack London devoted all his powers to the social novel. From the "Marxian discussions" going on at his house, often very passionate ones, which he listened to carefully, he drew his own conclusions. His best revolutionary story *The Iron Heel* was born, one could say, out of the storm of the Russian revolution, the spirit of which then spread all over the world.

A new historical period was then beginning in America also. The extension of trusts, the concentration of capital were developing apace. Together with this the toiling masses whose exploitation was continually intensified and the petty bourgeoisie, alarmed by the growing power of the plutocracy tried to stem this rapid growth of the trusts. American socialism was making its first timid steps on the Pacific coast. A broad campaign against American finance capital was started in the newspapers and magazines. Enterprising publishers opened the columns of their newspapers to "exposures" of the fabulous profits of the trusts. The sources of the fortunes of millionaires were "investigated." Out of the mass of American toilers only the very top, aristocratic layers of skilled workers, crystallized in the American Federation of Labor, derived any direct benefits from the situation. The treachery of the leaders of the American Federation of Labor now became shameless. They sold themselves to the "Iron Heel." Jack London saw 1905 through the enlarging glass of American conditions. He transferred the lessons of 1905 to American soil. He only added the unbridled savagery which the

American bourgeoisie is capable of in defense of its class interests. He described vividly the pressure of the American government machine, a plastic picture of the counter-revolutionary activities of the leaders of the American Federation of Labor, he rose up against the illusions and opportunism of the American Socialists who covered themselves with mouldy parliamentarianism and democracy. "How can you expect a peaceful victory by means of ballots?" he asked. "The Iron Heel will squash the last bits of freedom that still remain; the Iron Heel will squash us without any mercy." And his hero, turning to the socialists who remain inveterate democrats, exclaims: "There is no way except a bloody revolution."

Jack London outgrew his party—the Socialist Party of America which only concerned itself with increasing the Socialist vote. And every time some socialist in his novels speaks enthusiastically of an approaching parliamentary triumph Jack London compels him to listen to the question: and how many rifles have you? How much lead can you get?

The defeat the heroic Moscow proletariat suffered at the hands of the Tsarist punitive forces only proved to Jack London how difficult the way to final victory is, but he thoroughly mastered the Leninist answer to Plekhanov. He persisted in his optimistic faith in the final triumph of the proletariat. In two sentences in the mouth of his hero he summed up the prospects of the revolution after its defeat: "This time we are beaten—but not conquered. . . We have learned much, tomorrow the proletariat will rise again, stronger, armed with richer experience and greater discipline."

Almost all the episodes of 1905 are utilized in *The Iron Heel,* freely adapting them to American conditions—Menshevism, the Black Hundreds, the passport system, the spy system. The American farmer crushed by the large agricultural trusts which take the place of the large landowners; the gigantic struggle of two opposed social forces by means of an American, not a Tsarist, machinery of oppression and not in Moscow but in Chicago,—all this gives the novel an American stamp in spite of its Russian base. It is a great pioneer in American literature.[1]

The Iron Heel was the culminating point in Jack London's literary career and influence. It was inspired by the revolutionary storm of 1905 and with the recession of the echoes of this storm his talent weakened. His decline was accelerated by the new direction he gave his life.

Collective discussions in his intimate circle were replaced by tete-a-tetes. His friends dispersed. He came to socialist branch meetings seldom. He retired as if to some "magic tower" and soon felt the weight of this solitude. The greater his popularity and literary fame grew—and together with them his literary earnings, the more threatening became that greatest of all dangers to the writer—fruitlessness.

Jack London felt he had exhausted himself as a writer and that was one of the main causes of his untimely death. Personally, I have no doubt that Jack London was a victim of his capitalist surroundings. Part of the responsibility falls on Jack himself: he was too fond of solitude and lost all contact with the proletarian masses. He could have found food for revolutionary inspiration in the industrial regions of the East—in New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh, where the class struggle often takes savage forms. Had he delved into this course he would have felt new energy and creative power. He could not rise to this conception of the role of a revolutionary writer and he sank irrevocably into a spiritual mire. And he was dead at forty.

[1] *The Iron Heel* has just been reissued in English in Moscow by the Co-operative Publishing Society for Foreign Workers in the USSR.

LITERARY PORTRAITS

Walt Carmon

John L. Spivak

The American Reporter Who Laughed

If I had to describe John L. Spivak, the outstanding reporter in America today, in three words, I'd do it by calling him the "Man Who laughed."

Not just a loud, noisy, boisterous laugh that rolls off the walls and around the room, annoying people. I mean a good, healthy laugh from somewhere deep down inside that soon infects everyone around him. What Americans are apt to call "a good belly laugh."

When you read his reportage of the past few years, you will see how natural that laugh is to him. You can hear it in everything he writes now. We like that laugh even more than we did a few years ago. It has become a sharper class weapon. But I am running ahead of my story.

In *The New Masses* office during 1930-31, when the magazine was still a monthly and the swing of the American intellectuals to the Left was only beginning to gather momentum, Spivak often came to laugh with and "at us." The last part of the sentence was his own tantalizing addition. He played the part of the sophisticated bourgeois journalistic super-cynic. A veneer of his recent years on the yellowest of bourgeois journals.

"Damn fools," he would say, laughing. "Slaving away all hours for nothing a week! And here is New York full of fool writers who can't even write English: all of them riding around in fancy cars, drinking fancy liquor with fancy women! *You damn fool revolutionists.*" Then he would laugh. We did not throw him down the stairs, as he seemed to deserve. Spivak laughed uproariously from deep down in his diaphram and we laughed with him

The truth is, we knew that cynical surface. It was put on for our benefit. And our comradeship was close enough. He himself was not "rolling around in fancy cars, drinking fancy liquor with fancy women." He had deliberately left that easy life, its easy money and still easier literary virtue. The gate was open for him. And he knew all the tricks of that shabby trade.

But in those days in 1930-31, he was no longer a reporter for New York's sensational newspapers. He was not gathering clues explaining the murder of a paramour, usually some notorious actress, by a son of some millionaire.

Spivak then was no longer editing "heart throb" magazines which broadcast in millions of copies were read avidly by the almost illiterate clerks, stenographers, housewives and other sex and socially starved souls. (Spivak and his journalistic friends wrote most of the "human documents" themselves.)

In those early days Spivak was a typical American "literary racketeer": blase, cynical, brilliant—always laughing boisterously at a "fool world."

Writing about the change that took place in him, Michael Gold once said that probably Spivak's "healthy stomach revolted at so much garbage." That's very likely. Spivak wrote a number of hilarious articles "exposing" his activities on this literary garbage heap.

In those days in 1930 when Spivak would walk in loudly into our office, he was no longer the cheap purveyor of piffle. He was then working on a book called *Georgia Nigger*. He would work steadily for a week or two, then take a day off to celebrate. of medium height, full of hearty laughter. He'd call us "comrades" with just a shade We began to expect those visits of a figure of good-humored sarcasm. If an issue was at press, or other important matters demanded our attention, he would patiently sit until work was done. Meanwhile he would add his friendly but caustic comments.

Spivak's first book *The Devil's Brigade* was not long off the press then. With his usual veneer of cynicism he inscribed his book to me: "To Walt Carmon, who when he grows older, will appreciate that a good glass of beer is much more important than the revolution."

This was just a pose, of course. A shadow of his earlier days of reporting "love-nests" and editing and writing stories with "heart-throbs."

After all, *The Devil's Brigade* is not only a fascinating book on the clan feuds of the Kentucky mountaineers, who came to America so long ago, that they still speak in

the old Elizabethean English. *The Devil's Brigade* concludes with a narrative of a dramatic miners strike, told with all the cympathetic feeling of a genuine proletarian. Even the applied polish of an American newspaper cynic could not cover the healthy core underneath.

In those very days when Spivak inscribed his book to me, he was working on *Georgia Nigger*. The man's enthusiasm was boundless. He lived in his material. He saturated his friends in it—to distraction. No one can say it was without justification. In *Georgia Nigger* Spivak created a valuable social document. He went into the "Darkest South" of America. From first hand experience he uncovered facts and figures about Negro peonage in the United States. Proved that it was widespread. He secured actual photographs of it. For this he had a few narrow escapes with his life. On occassions, he had the muzzle of a gun pressed into his ribs. But he got the photographs and he secured official records of tortures and brutality of American Negro workers which rivalled the Inquisition.

2

Gone were the days of John L. Spivak "the crazy reporter." (It will be recalled that the very same name was used for Egon Erwin Kisch in Germany.) Spivak now was steadily rising to the heights of revolutionary reportage. With Kisch of Germany and Michael Koltsov of the Soviet Union.

"Stunts" were no longer the main purpose of his work. Facts were all important. As Michael Gold wrote, Spivak, "had all the facts, he always makes sure that he has the iron-bound, irrefutable truth. This the capitalists cannot forgive, for today truth is revolutionary."

This is the re-birth of Spivak of "stunt" days. Of "love-nest" days. Or rather not rebirth, but new beginnings from the basis of proletarian origin.

Here is an amusing episode of his wanderings:

A bourgeois journalist was bewailing the fact that reporting had fallen on evil days. There was no longer any "news." Spivak insisted there was always "news." The reporter told Spivak he was crazy. Spivak said that he could prove it. He wagered he could have himself confined to an insame asylum.

That very night he left New York for a mid-western state. There he registered under an assumed name. He rid himself of all identification marks. He came to the police for "protection." He insisted that all the world's difficulties were born of war-debts. Being a "wealthy" man, he was going to inusre world peace by paying all the debts. He wanted police protection for the billions of dollars he had on his person to solve the world's greatest problem.

The story of how he feigned insanity, how noted "specialists" judged him not normal, is not only tragic but hilariously amusing. (Cold print does not do justice to the story he tells himself) He threatened to kill a cellmate obviously "planted" to observe him. The cell-mate fled in hysterics. He feigned insanity before professors and scientists.

When he was put away into the asylum, he asked the director to phone the newspaper editor with whom he had agreed that he would communicate. Spivak told the director: "I'm not as crazy as you think I am." Which, after all, as the director said, "is what they all say." But Spivak did induce the director to phone the editor and that was how he was released.

The result of Spivak's following series of articles—on how a perfectly sane person can be disposed of for life—caused a sensation. Newspapers throughout the country reprinted the articles. An official investigation of the Medical Board of the state was ordered and resulted in the dismissal of all the alienists on it.

For the country this was a sensation. For Spivak in those days, it was only a good laugh. He was living in a crazy world and he knew it. In less exuberant moments he will admit that he was a bit crazy then himself.

(It is interesting to note in connection with this exploit, that American capitalists know full well how this can be done. Only recently the papers carry news that around the Pittsburgh steel district an organizer of the steel workers and a leader of the unemployed were arrested and then confined to an insane asylum.)

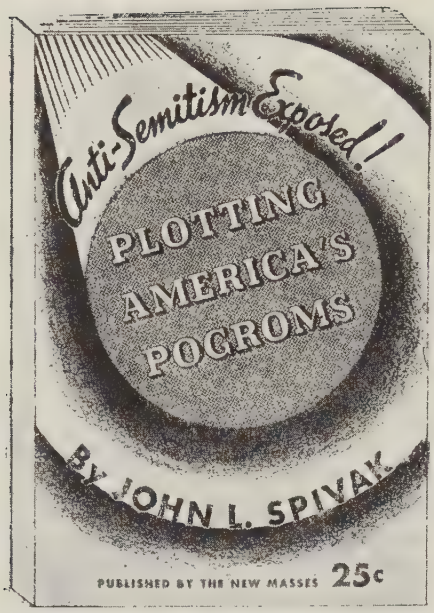
3

In those days when Spivak was already working on *Georgia Nigger,* such sensational exploits as the insane asylum incident no longer interested him. He was still the keen reporter. But he wanted more important matters to report. He found them.

The notorious "Whalen Documents" were being exploited. The press broadcast the "facts" in them. The newspapers bellowed that here was "proof" that the Communists were engaged in "subversive" activities. That they were planning "to overthrow the government." That all activities were being supported by "Moscow gold."

It was the usual "red herring" being dragged across a dirty trail to cover up one of the most scandalous city administrations ever had in New York.

These "documents" were known forgeries. It was said that for a long time no one would buy them. Grover Whalen, chief of police, made them public. Hamilton Fish, Jr., a millionaire politician, heading a con-



Cover of the book by Spivak, exposing Nazi activities in America

gressional investigation of "red activities" allowed these forgeries to be presented as evidence.

Spivak's keen nose for news led him to the real story. He searched the city for facts. He got them. For a newspaper which at the time was hostile to the administration he wrote a series of articles exposing the documents as crude forgeries. He detailed fact after fact: who made them, who sold them,—he even found the little printshop in which they were printed. Pressure was brought to bear on the newspaper and the series of articles was discontinued.

Spivak then literally forced his way into the congressional investigation of the Fish Committe to present the facts.

He was now well on the road of such famous American reporters as Lincoln Steffens and John Reed.

From *The Devil's Brigade* to *Georgia Nigger* is a steady growth of the revolutionary reporter, John L. Spivak. He kept on growing. And laughing. He looked at the capitalist world sunk in crisis, and the son of a proletarian family logically let out a belly-laugh. He saw there was work to be done.

In January, 1934, the monthly *New Masses* became a weekly. In the spring of 1934 Spivak started on a tour of the country. Fifteen millions of workers were unemployed. The middle-class was slowly but surely being liquidated. The so-called "captains of industry" were in confusion. Fascism was raising its ugly head. To John L. Spivak, brilliant reporter this was a "story." As some one recently wrote in an American journal, here was no story that an editor had to discover. The story sat on the editor's front door-step. But there was not a bourgeois journal that would publish it. *The New Masses,* fast becoming one of the important American journals, was printing other sound, informative and satirical comment on the idiocy of American capitalist rule. It was just the magazine for Spivak. History also has a sense of humor of its own. When Spivak was ready for his best work, there appeared a magazine to print it.

So John L. Spivak went from New York to San Francisco. He spoke to workers, gangsters, Nazis, intellectuals, businessmen and bankers. These articles were printed in *The New Masses,* and all were later reprinted in the *Daily Worker* organ of the American Communist Party.

They drew the attention of much wider circles. His "Letter to the President," on the conditions of Mexican agricultural workers in California; his "Wildcat Williams," on the reactionary fascist treachery of conservative labor leadership among the oil workers; his "Silver Shirts Among the Gold," on the growth of mercenary fascist groups in America, immediately became outstanding pieces of American reportage. There was no question about it. Here was an undoubted touch of the unusual.

America has had reportage which runs from the purely bourgeois type up to material of such value that Lenin could endorse it. There was the romantic work of Richard Harding Davis, which did for American imperialism the service that Kipling rendered for the British: there was liberal Lincoln Steffens, the "muckraker," who now past 60 years of age, has become a strong voice for revolution; and there was John Reed, first a "literary play-boy," then reporter par-excellence, finally an organizer of the American Communist Party. For his classic of reportage, *Ten Days That Shook the World,* Lenin wrote an introduction. This is a healthy tradition. There is no reason to be apologetic for its naivete and there is a good deal to be proud of in its best. Jack Spivak rises to the best in this tradition.

4

Spivak, revolutionary reporter, attracted national attention with his articles. He was formerly a New York bourgeois "star" reporter. Now he rose above that class. Leading bourgeois journals recognized his mark of the unusual. He gave them articles in which he utilized the same material told in more brilliant fashion in our own revolutionary press. Meanwhile a bourgeois pub-

lishing house is bringing out a book by Spivak, based on this material. With 15 million unemployed and 18 million on government relief, even the crisis is being recognized. Spivak has helped in this direction. And he has done it so well, he is becoming known to increasing numbers.

Almost overnight his articles marked him as a younger Lincoln Steffens, a new John Reed. A romantic, hilarious reporter who could also put acid in his laughter. After all, John Spivak is a product of American conditions. He sprang from hysterical American jazz soil. He has all its faults and virtues. He has not the political keenness of a Radek—the deep understanding of a Koltsov. His earlier training and his present environment account for many of his faults. Not that he isn't intelligent. He is. And he is revolutionary. If he is sometimes naive, boisterous—and he laughs—even these shortcomings paradoxically enable him to reach more Americans. These very faults are so typically American.

Spivak sees his way clear now. If he had any doubts, his trip through all classes of America, from New York to San Francisco, opened his eyes—and in turn he has opened the eyes of many thousands. Here was the son of a proletarian dispensing some historical justice. I'm sure that Spivak laughed boisterously through all this period. His satire, his caustic comment had a finer edge on it. And Spivak's irrepressible belief in life and laughter I am sure is a healthy tonic for our revolutionary literature. A good deal of it was actually defeatist in its drabness. There was no joy of struggle in it. We have been in need of a writer like Spivak.

(Interestingly, another author of gifted satirical writing has also appeared in *The New Masses*. Robert Forsythe's sharp comment on the theatre, the cinema, and other phases of the American cultural scene are beginning to attract a considerable following.)

After his return from his tour of the United States, Spivak began his investigations on the growth of fascism. In *The New Masses* he wrote a series of twelve articles "Plotting the American Pogroms." (This series has now been issued in book form). He investigated not only American fascist tendencies but the actual organizational steps taken. He discovered that fascism in America was in full bloom. He started out to prove :

1. That Americans, acting as Nazi agents, some of them in high Government positions, are among the secret directors of anti-semitic propaganda.

2. That American 'patriotic" organizations to which rich Jews contribute, are secretly using this money for anti-semitic propaganda.

John L. Spivak, superb reporter, author of Georgia Nigger *and Other Books*

3. That much of this anti-semitic and fascist propaganda is smuggled into this country; how it is smuggled and secretly distributed, and by whom.

4. That Nazi uniforms are smuggled into this country; how this is done and by whom. That Nazis in full uniform drill in preparation for "the day" when there will be pogroms against the Jews.

5. That Ralph M. Easley, head of the National Civic Federation, of which Mathew Woll, vice-president of the American Federation of Labor, is vice-president, distributed anti-semitic propaganda imported into this country by George Sylvester Viereck, paid Nazi agent.

6. That despite the American Federation of Labor's stand in favor of the German boycott, Easley secretly tried to get it stopped.

7. That Easley, head of the National Civic Federation, of which Mathew Woll is vice-president, secretly reported on these efforts to Viereck.

8. That high officials in the State Department worked with Easley while he was reporting to Viereck, paid Nazi agent.

9. That a Pennsylvania Congressman (to be named), who attacked the Jews in Con-

gres, took a bribe of $25,000 and is consequently just a plain crook.

10. That the North German Lloyd and the Hamburg American lines, in violation of their agreements with other shipping companies, often gave free passages, many to anti-semitic propagandists.

11. That German exchange students in this country are organizing Nazi cells in the universities and carrying on anti-semitic propaganda.

12. That the effect of this propaganda has already reached into big business and that at least one insurance company has started to refuse insurance to Jews.

He has proved all this to the hilt. Spivak went after his material and the more he uncovered the more he realized that this was a "story." Now no one could keep him out of it. He risked his neck again and got facts and figures. He went to interview the fascists themselves. He uncovered the holes in which they buried themselves. He wrote:

"There is an air of mystery on the seventh floor of 139 East 57th Street, New York City. Well dressed men and women enter and leave Room 703. Sometimes they carry brief cases and look intent and serious. To the observer who wanders onto this floor, Room 703, the entrance to a suite, is just another office because there is no firm's or individual's name on the glass door. Those running this office do not want any names on their doors, they do not want too many people to know that this is the headquarters of the secret society for spying on 'Jews and Communists,' the Order of '76."

How he gets the fascists to "talk" makes good detective story reading. They really *talk*. They have to. Spivak comes armed with facts and they soon realize it. In the midst of his "interview" things like this happen:

"How did you discover that Communism and Judaism are one?" I asked.

"Oh, we got a barrel of clippings. . . ."

He rose to get a folder out of a file. I noticed a slight bulge on his right hip. I got up and patted it gently.

"What's this—a gat?"

Gulden turned upon me with a startled air. The mysterious and heavy set Mr. Hemple stepped quickly to my side. Gulden returned to his desk without the folder.

"Yes, a gun," he smiled, his washed-out gray eyes boring into me.

"What calibre?"

"Thirty-two, Smith and Wesson—"

He drew the revolver from its holster and placed it on his desk.

"You needn't be afraid," he smiled assuringly. "We don't hurt people—unless they hurt us," he added significantly.

"Maybe I'd better hold it then," I laughed.

Gulden smiled grimly. "I think maybe we'd better put it in my desk." He opened a drawer and deposited the pistol.

"'Got a permit."

He turned upon me irritably.

"Who the hell—"

"Got a permit?" I repeated.

"What the hell—"

"Let's see your permit!"

Gulden looked startled. Without further word he fished a billfold from his coat pocket and handed me his pistol permit: C23609.

There you are. He has uncovered another fact: *the New York police* and government authorities *permit fascists to carry arms!* For this a communist would spend years in prison. To a worker, the argument that fascism is growing in America sometimes sounds hazy—as yet. When John Spivak says that fascists are given permission to carry arms and proves it—*the worker knows!*

Such investigation is not considered "healthy." Gangster methods are developed in the United States to high perfection. The German Nazis could learn technique from them. But this doesn't worry the Spivak who had guns pressed to his ribs when he was getting photographs for *Georgia Nigger*. He is not foolhardy. He is a reporter. He has to get his "story."

Spivak is not satisfied to accuse on principal alone. He gives names, dates, places, telephone numbers. The thoroughness of this man is amazing.

The Federated Press, a labor news agency, astounded at the barrage of facts presented by Spivak in his articles, decided to check up on them. They used the phone numbers and addresses he gave, they interviewed the people he named. They reported that in all instances Spivak was correct.

Some of the people named by Spivak protested in violent letters and telegrams which *The New Masses* at once printed. It was plain that Spivak was smoking them out of their holes. Since they were as yet raising funds and consolidating forces, they did not like this premature exposure of their crooked methods. Meanwhile in the twelve weeks that this series "Plotting America's Pogroms" appeared, *The New Masses* gained thousands of new readers.

Spivak has a keen sense of drama. In a simple, unadorned style he builds up his facts as carefully as a house-builder. Fact upon fact and there at last, stands his evidence complete, convincing. All this: courage, thoroughness, revolutionary understanding—all saturated with that rare gift of satirical laughter—have raised John L. Spivak to national attention.

Spivak has boundles energy. His enthusiasm is always at high pitch. Today it is highest. This is understandable. Spivak is a good reporter and today America is a

great "story." After his trip around the country, Spivak investigated anti-semitic, fascist activities. This accomplished, he followed with an expose of the American Red Cross. This expose was the leading article of the November issue (1934) of *The American Mercury*. The editors found the facts presented of such sensational value, that in an editorial note preceding the article, they called for a congressional investigation.

Here is an example of what Spivak's work means to workers and middle-class members: He went on a speaking tour recently in his fight against anti-semitism. His book was sold at these meetings, subscriptions taken for *The New Masses*. The report from three middle-western cities read:

Milwaukee, 850 present; 125 new subscriptions to *The New Masses;* 125 copies sold of the book *Plotting America's Pogroms*. Chicago, more than 2,000 in meeting; (500 turned away) 500 subscriptions sold; over 600 books. Detroit, 590 present, 243 subscriptions and 100 books.

An average of 1,000 people; 290 subscriptions and 275 books per meeting to expose the growth of fascism.

This of course is only a by-product, so to speak, of his main work: to reach thousands of workers and middle class through the press. Spivak continues with his barrage of facts. He marshalls them in disciplined, fighting order. He marches them through the pages of leading journals, both bourgeois and revolutionary. He presents them again in books.

The Nation, liberal American weekly, points out John Spivak on its yearly "Honor Roll" of outstanding achievements in 1934, for his articles in *The New Masses*. I'd like to have been present to hear his laugh when he read that."

A Final Word: Spivak's laughter must be contagious. I laugh now when I think of those days in 1930 when he came to the office of *The New Masses* to laugh with (at) us. He is now touring the country, writing, speaking, debating, assuring the United States of the inevitability of revolution. I laugh because even in 1930 *Comrade* Spivak never really fooled us!

LETTERS FROM WRITERS

CHINA

A Letter from Shanghai

This year few books have been published in China but the number of periodicals has increased tremendously. Some call it a "year of magazines." These periodicals can be divided into two categories.

The first, issued at the expense of the Nanking government or Kuomintang, or book stores connected with Nanking politicians. Of these six or seven are literary magazines published at Nanking. Their positions are very diverse: one is strong for national literature; another attacks left revolutionary literature and, at the same time, is opposed to national literature; a third externally resembles a left revolutionary magazine but intentionally distorts things; the fourth sort of advocates "art for art's sake." All these magazines sell poorly and find few readers.

The second category of periodicals is published by commercial publishing houses. They can also be subdivided into several categories: some are "liberal," others liberal in appearance but quietly connected with the Kuomintang. Finally, the last group consists of so-called "purposeless" magazines. The most fashionable one of these lately is one printing exclusively so-called *siaoping-weng* (a special genre something like humorous or satirical feuilletons). These *siaoping-weng* are mostly an amusement for idlers and a means of escaping from the realities of life.

During the spring of this year the Kuomintang prohibited 149 books, precisely those that sold well. A number of large bookshops sent a petition to the powers. As a result the formal prohibition on a number of books was removed. But the Nanking government established a "Commission for the Control of the Press" which checks up on all books and prohibits those that are not in agreement with the traitorous policies of the Kuomintang. This is one reason so few books have been published this year.

The circulation of the periodical press is declining and is now insignificant. Here are a few figures: *Man's World* had reached a circulation of 20,000 and it has fallen to 15,000; *Sianday* (*Contemporary*)—a literary magazine of the socalled "third person," of liberal trend—7,000; *Weng-Siu, (Literature)* —20,000; *Weng-Sue-Tzikang* (*Literary Trimonthly*)—10,000; *Chunguang* (*Spring-Ray*) —a revolutionary literary magazine, now prohibited—8,000. The circulation of the others amounts to 1,000 to 5,000 each.

Weng-Yang, Bay-Hua, Dachjun-yu

A wide, animated discussion of language sprang up this year on the literary arena. The thing is that the old Chinese literary language *Weng-Yang* is entirely beyond the broad masses and in 1918-1919 a so-called "literary revolution" occurred: people began to write *Bay-Hua,* a freer, simpler language. But *Bay-Hua* is not a revolutionary written language—it is still hieroglyphic. This is reform, not revolution. Nevertheless the reactionaries do not even want this reform and have repeatedly attempted to reintroduce *Weng-Yang.* The previous rulers of Manchuria openly declared it necessary to prohibit *Bay-Hua* as "Bolshevism is easily spread by *Bay-Hua.*" The Nanking officials do not lag behind: in the spring of this year a certain Wan Mutsu—a fairly well known pedagogue, wrote an article recommending the restoration of *Weng-Yang* in the text books of primary and high schools.

This is, of course, one element of reaction, alongside of "Respect for Confucius," the so-called movement for a new life, etc. Wan's opinion was a personal one. After the appearance of Wan's article the Nanking *Chjun-Yan-Jabao* (*Central Gazette*) published an article called "Movement to Restore *Weng Yang.*" This was response, support and guidance.

In this connection the discussion about language began among the Shanghai liberal writers. Members of the League of Left Writers took an active part in it. The conclusions reached in the discussion can be reduced to two points: 1) the movement to restore *Weng-Yang* is a reactionary one, just as the struggle against *Weng-Yang* is an anti-feudal movement. It is a question of ideology and not just a language problem; 2) it is necessary to create a *Dachjun-yu,* a "mass language."

Language Revolution

About *Dachjun-yu* there were many opinions. Some maintain that although *Bay-Hua* is a reform of *Weng-Yang* it is still no mass language. Others maintain that *Dachtjun-ju* is neither *Go-Yua* (a state language) nor a northern dialect and it is not *Puntuhua* (a common language) as its advocates claim for *Tuhua* (a local dialect). The adherents of *Tuhua* also advocated the slogan of literature in local dialects.

Almost all newspapers and periodicals in China of all shades took part in this discussion. Over 300 articles have already been published on this subject and the discussion is still going on.

How should this question be solved? We must categorically reject *Weng-Yang;* reform *Bay-Hua* in practice; create then a *Dachjun-yu* literature from oral language which should correspond to the live requirements of the masses. *Dachjun-yu* must be based on local dialect and its written form must be latinized. This movement must be regarded as part of the movement against feudalism, against reaction.

A positive effect on the progress of discussion and the struggle for *Dachjun-Yu* was produced by Emi Siao's article in *International Literature*—"On Latinization of Written Chinese." The movement for the latinization of written Chinese is spreading in China, making use of the experience in latinization of written Chinese in the Far East of the USSR. In Shanghai courses of study in latinization have already been organized. The organ of Chinese "Esperantists"—*La Mondo* has informed China of the theory and orthographic principles of latinized Chinese as practised for over three years in the Far East of the USSR and other places there among the Chinese workers. *La Mondo* discusses this question in everyone of its numbers, refuting the opinions of opponents of latinization and explaining its significance.

Finally it is necessary to note the tremendous significance for us of Maxim Gorki's writings on language, correct from beginning to end. Many Chinese writers often quote Gorki on this question.

The "second revolution" in language is attracting the attention of the entire country.

SHIG

Shanghai China

GERMANY

Fascism and Music

All that is left of music in Germany bears the brand of the swastika and only serves the propaganda purposes of the various national-fascist organizations.

The last modernistic trend in composition which developed in the period of "republican democracy" has been abolished as "intellectual" and not corresponding to the spirit of the "renascent nation." "Brown" composers and musicians are engaged in researches in ancient Germanic principles of song: their leader and "führer" is Fritz Jöde of the state institute of church and school music; Hans Pfitzner, the anti-semite and his adherents are also flourishing. Berlin has long ago lost its wonted fame as the musical capitol of Europe. The once customary appearance of foreign soloists and conductors have almost ceased. Berlin musical criticism which used to be of world authority has lost all significance.

At the Berlin-Charlottenburg state academy's musical high school, there are now very few foreign students. When some foreign soloist does come to Berlin it is announced as a triumph for the "Third Empire." A Portuguese student only has to express his opinion in favor of German national-fascism and the entire German press goes wild about it.

Stagnation of musical art in Germany assumes continually more alarming proportions. All the state musical high schools, primarily the large German conservatories like the Sterm Conservatory and the Klindwort-Schorwenka Conservatory in Berlin, have to shut down. The teaching personnel of music schools is cut down to a minimum and the conservatories, although some have been shut down entirely, have no students. Classes are cut down, faculties eliminated or remain unfilled because there is no one to take charge of them. The situation of private music teachers is exceedingly precarious, most of them earn nothing at all while a few have an insignificant number of pupils. For a few marks a month these teachers go to the furthest suburbs (the fare being considerable) to give a single lesson a week; others live on their village relations who send them food parcels once in a while.

Arranging A Concert

There is a tremendous army of professional musicans in Germany united in the General German Musical Union. Once they played at cafes and movie places, now they are all unemployed. The movies have sound pictures and the cafe uses the radio or victrola. Only the more famous soloists permit themselves the luxury, often losing the rental for the hall, of giving a so-called "prestige" concert once a season. This is done partly to keep oneself before the public, partly in the hope of obtaining thus one or two pupils. That the concert should be profitable is not to be thought of. For a concert in a hall of moderate size the soloist has to stand a loss of not less than 800 marks. The concert agencies demand in advance expenses for advertizing, printing of posters, programs and tickets, for lighting and wardrobe service. For setting up the concert instrument an advance of 40 marks has to be deposited even if the instrument is permanently in the concert hall. With modest advertizing a pianist has to have not less than 1,200 to 1,600 marks as an advance to organize his concert,—he may get back in box-office sales of tickets about 100 marks—if a very famous soloist—say 300 marks. A number of Berlin concert halls have been shut down. No one has the necessary money either to pay music teachers or to attend concerts. If some conductor should wish to engage a symphony or-

chestra for one concert he has to make an outlay of from 5,000 to 6,000 marks. Except for the Philharmonic Orchestra maintained by city and government subsidies, Berlin has only the State Opera Orchestra; the famous highly skilled symphony orchestra has dispersed in spite of attempts to maintain it by subsidies. As the conductor has to pay for every rehearsal separately (the Philharmonic Orchestra takes 1,200 marks for one rehearsal) he has to limit himself to the least possible number of rehearsals. The better known things are performed without any previous rehearsal.

Of modern composers only the works of national-fascists are performed. The same can be said of conductors. Bruno Walter, colossal master that he is, has been driven out of Germany's concert halls because he is a Jew and his real name is Walter Schlesinger. Bruno Walter now appears in all countries of the world except Germany, like his Italian colleague Toscanini who has refused to appear in national-fascist Germany and declined an offer to participate in the last Beyruth solemnities. When Walter was removed "for reasons of safety" Richard Straus was the only one who agreed to take his place.

The Rise of Mediocrity

On the radio and in concert halls the mediocre conductors Jochum and Frickhofer reign supreme, as mediocre vocalists like Rosalind, sister of the "führer" of the empire's youth Baldur von Schirach, giftless pianists of the type of Hermann Hoppe who showed his "talent" at affairs of the national-socialist student union, or of the type of Wilhelm Backhaus who enjoys the special patronage of Hitler and has been appointed to the directorship of the new society of "Zealots of National Music." German radio broadcasting ("German wave") is in the hands of Otto Stoffregen calling himself Götz Otto Stoffregen, a police lieutenant during the Kapp putsch and now appointed also chairman of the Empire Union of German Writers.

Evidence of the degeneration of fascist musical culture can be seen, finally, in the wholesale closing of the world famous German factories of key instruments. The Bechstein properties have been sold under the hammer, his shares are in the hands of Swiss shareholders and the excellent sales rooms for key instruments shut down. Grotrian Steinweg in Braunschweig is no longer able to maintain his luxurious place with its concert hall in the old eastern quarter of Berlin. Ibach, Schwechten, Römhildt and many others have just closed down, and Blütner is utilizing his string wire for patented bed springs.

IRWIN BACH

Moscow, USSR

S. Rasumovskaya

A. KRAVCHENKO: Soviet Artist

Notes on the Development of a Leading Soviet Wood Engraver

The artist Alexei Kravchenko grew and developed in the pre-revolutionary bourgeois world.

A pupil of Serov and Korovin of the Moscow school of painting, plastic arts and architecture, Kravchenko began his career as a painter. He passed through all the stages of pre-revolutionary decadent bourgeois art. Apolitical; realistic landscape with a leaning to impressionism; then searchings for decorative monumental forms; impressions of his travels in India, transmitted into a somewhat theatrically exotic stylization; finally immersion in purely formalistic searchings—this was the pre-revolutionary Kravchenko.

Kravchenko was one of those artists that accepted the revolution from the very first days of October. This is comprehensible. Son of a peasant, he began his independent existence of toil at an early age, took part in the student revolutionary movement of 1905 and belonged to the foremost ranks of the toiling intelligentsia that was dissatisfied with and protested against the then existing order.

Not at once though, after October, did "existence determine the consciousness" of the artist. Although active in the artistic political life of the first years of the revolution, he remained for a long time under the sway of his individualistic artistic conceptions. The new themes and forms Kravchenko first approached through the revolutionary poster, and portraits of the leaders on which he worked a great deal during the period of military Communism.

Kravchenko acquired a passion for engraving even before the revolution. His first etchings were: the cycles "War," "Volga Motifs," "Italy" and "India." Etching was to him then only a method of transferring the polychromatic palette of painting to the rigid tonality of black and white, the possibility of transmuting paintings to printable forms.

Through engravings and lithography Kravchenko finally came to wood engraving in which he found his own creative element.

Wood Engraver and Romantic

The NEP period, which coincided with Kravchenko's moving from Saratov to Moscow, was the time during which the artist appeared rapidly and brilliantly as a woodgraver.

The Kravchenko of the NEP period is a pure romantic. The revolution gave rise to a peculiarily strained romanticism among the intelligentsia. The art of the theatre, of letters and the fine arts were all permeated with an abstract romanticism. The still unrealized vague reality of today, the "awful" leap from the customary world into the "unknown"—this is what makes them still shy fearfully and run away into the world of phantasy, romantic dreamings, or to perceive their surroundings in a strained, hyperbolic manner. A peculiar "Hoffmanism" flourishes, fantastic legend, often based on real facts and events. Kravchenko also went along this line of least resistance. His name as an engraver was made famous by the Exlibrists. Their themes were bibliomania. The characters and milieu revive the forties of the previous century. This period attracted Kravchenko as a keen transition point in a struggle between the perishing feudal world and the appearance of the new city culture. Kravchenko saw a certain similarity with the poignancy of contemporaneity in the destruction of the old and the creation of the new. Kravchenko is particularly strong in book illustration. His creative method of illustrating books is exceedingly interesting.

In his early book engravings there is the same romanticism—Hoffman, Dickens, Gogol, the young Leonov.

Kravchenko began with Hoffman, his favorite writer. He is attracted to this writer by the latter's duality and the struggle of contradictions—the fantastics of romanticism and the pure realism of the unveiling publicistic satire. This dualism was due to a definite social situation, due to that impasse into which the German bourgeois intelligentsia was driven in the period of reaction. Kravchenko's wood engravings harmonize with the lyricism, romanticism, fantasy, humor and satire of Hoffman. There is more keen humor in his illustrations to Dicken's *Cricket on the Hearth.*

In his "romantic" engravings Kravchenko seeks a form adequate to the content. His characters are stylized with some mannerisms. Details of atmosphere are engraved with special love, the "past" rendered poeticized and embellished. On account of this

the line becomes ornamentally mannered, at times running to scroll, the composition is effective, beautiful, the treatment finished in the manner of the finest miniature. At times this becomes a somewhat die-cast manner. That is why the romantic heroes of Gogol, Dickens, Hoffmann and Leonov are so much alike, so closely related.

Together with this romanticism, leading to the past, a new romanticism was being born, the romanticism of revolution, heroism, extraordinary exploits, unusual changes, that destroyed everything old to its foundations. His first revolutionary engravings were two drawings dedicated to the Red Army. On the half-tone lines of the background where a fire rages, the simple, grim silhouettes of guns and Red Army men stand out in precise rhythm. In 1924 the mourning "Lenin cycle" appeared: "At the Hall of Columns," "Funeral on Red Square," in three variations. Kravchenko approached this great and tragic theme also as a romantic.

To the Revolution

Via romanticism, however, Kravchenko began to master and accept the revolution. The period of 1925-1928 was a critical one in the life and creative work of the artist. And it is entirely logical that his basic illustrative work during this period was *Till Eulenspiegel.* Here Kravchenko for the first time produces a socially keen image. The centre of the artist's attention has been transferred from the subjective sensations and personal experiences of the hero to the social content of the novel.

For the tenth anniversary of October he made two large colored engravings "Barricades" and "Construction," ordered by the Soviet of People's Commissars. This brilliant work still bore heavily on external effect, decorativness and dressiness more than on seriousness and profundity of subject. In 1928 he executed a series of engravings ordered by the Moscow Health Department on the subject of "Life and Woman," embracing a number of phases of pre-revolutionary and Soviet life.

Together with the transformation of the inner ideologic purpose of his work, Kravchenko paid much attention to the search for new modes of expression, a new graphic language for the new content.

Kravchenko's work during this transition period showed that the artist had entered completely into Soviet reality. On the death of the old romanticism and estheticism, a new logical profundity appeared.

In 1928 Kravchenko went to New York, as the representative of Moscow and Leningrad artists, for the organization of the fine arts department of the Soviet Art Exhibition. Kravchenko looked at New York in an extremely subjective way.

His series of New York etchings should be compared with the series "Construction of Dnieprostroi" which resulted from his trip there in 1930.

During later years Kravchenko did a great deal of work on book illustrations. This was his last tribute to "literary" romanticism. The last romantic series was on a volume by Byron.

Duality on a somewhat new plane is discovered in Gogol's stories "The Goat," "The Nose," "Nevsky Prospect." In "The Coat" social strain is emphasized—the tragedy of the squalid life of a miserable, inoffensive man. Alternate humor and tragedy are characteristic of Gogol's attitude to his heries. The artist seeks various new methods for the graphic expression of inner psychic states. In this illustrations for Anatole France's novels, Kravchenko proceeds along lines of expressive keenness of image.

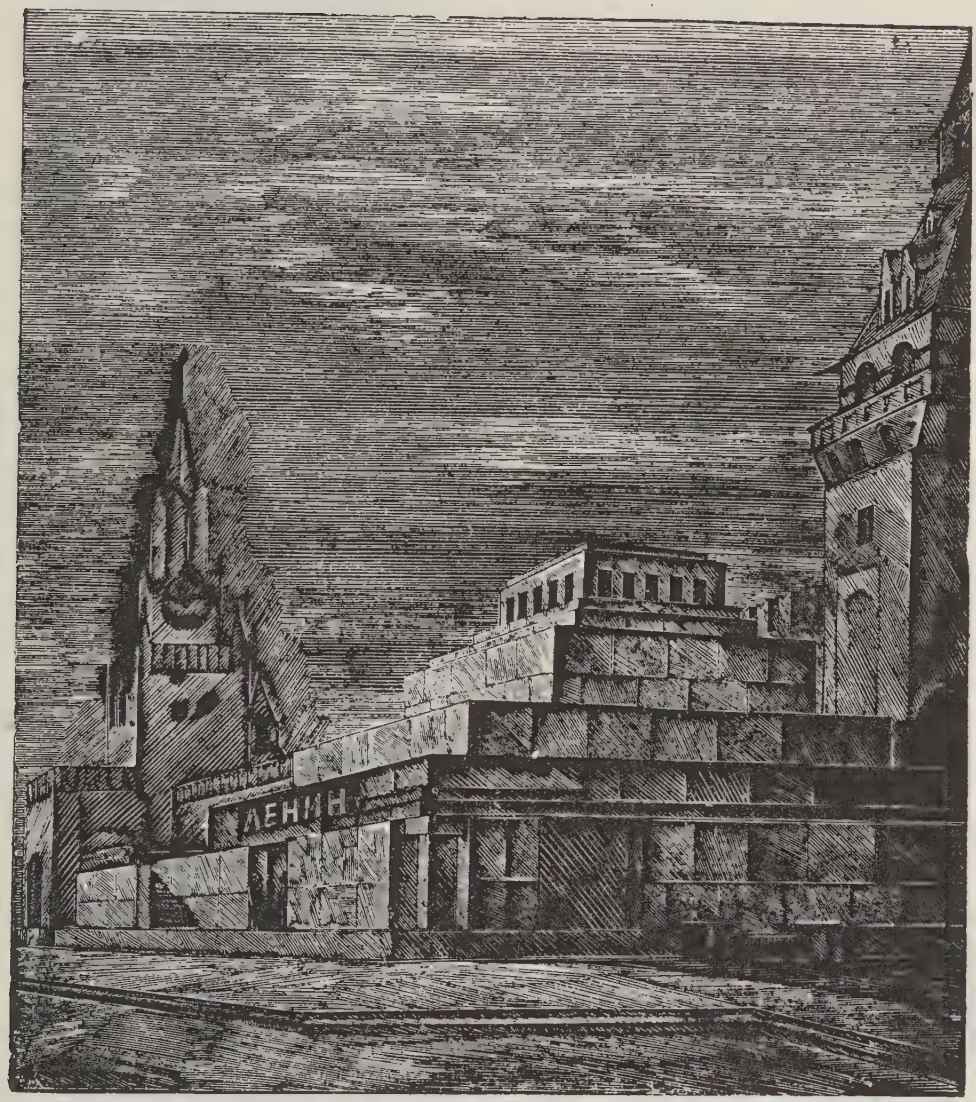
His illustrations of Zweig's stories, are particularly apt. The artist here renounces "expressionistic" methods and produces images of great psychologic profundity, emotionally high-charged and graphically very expressive.

In his latest illustrations for Soviet literature—Leonov's *Badgers* and Sholokhov's *Quiet Don,* Kravchenko is now definitely on the road of realistic conception. He seeks first of all simplicity and precision of realistic form, clearness and intelligibility of graphic expression. His rich black and white picturesqueness excellently interprets the beauty, and imaginative language of the author.

The Soviet Artist

The artist is continually searching for new forms. He has always been seriously concerned with the mastery of his craft. He has at his disposal a tremendous "arsenal" of instruments which he has mastered perfectly. Witness of the virtuosity of his etchings are two small recently engraved postage stamps for air mail executed with the art of the finest miniature.

Kravchenko was for the greater part of his creative life, and has to a great extent remained, a romantic. There are both positive and negative sides to this. Passing by all the drab and commonplace, Kravchenko notices only the heroic and effective. That is why he could not for a long time find the right and necessary language for expressing real characters, types, actions, events of our days. This makes him occasionally pathetic and theatrical, too effective and pretty. Through this romanticism however, he has found his way. Romantic perception has helped him to realize and grasp



Lenin Mausoleum, Red Square, Moscow

the full breadth of our reality. He unfolds. perhaps in an exaggerated and heroicized way, clear and stirring images and deeds in the epic of the revolution and Socialist construction.

As an artist, Kravchenko has gone a long and serious way—from fantastics, lyricism, daintiness and estheticism to the concrete reality of today, to the inner meaning of the image. Kravchenko's creative road led from the narrow, individualistic world perception of the bourgeois artist, to the synthesis of phenomena and the keenly realistic conceptions of Soviet art.

WOOD ENGRAVINGS By A. KRAVCHENKO

End piece for Sholokhov's And Quiet Flows the Don

Illustration for Zweig's Amok

Illustration for a book by Anatole France

Illustration for Till Eulenspiegel

New York, *a drawing made by the artist on his visit to the United States*

CHRONICLE

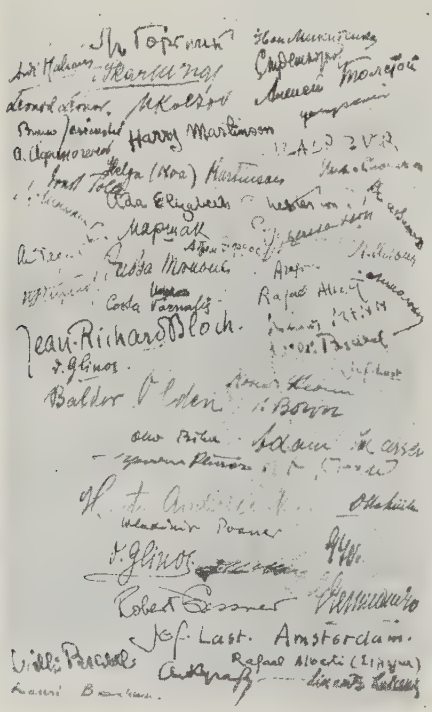
CHINA

The following appeal to the world's intellectuals has been made by writers from many countries: Leonov and Koltsov of the Soviet Union; Martin Anderson Nexo of Denmark; Germanetto of Italy; Bredel and Olden of Germany; Jef Last of Holland; Robert Gessner of the United States; Jean Richard Bloch of France; Rafael Alberti of Spain—and many more from these and other countries.

The full text of the appeal reads:

"To our Friends of the Pen, to all the Advanced Writers, Scientists and Intellectuals of the World, and to all those who defend culture and humanity!

"From Distant China we hear every day of the war which is being waged there by the imperialists and militarists. The Japanese imperialists have torn a great piece from the living body of China—Manchuria and Jehol



Signatures of leading writers from many countries on the statement calling the world's attention to the situation of Chinese workers and intellectuals

—and are not stopping their aggression in China. The American imperialists are spending huge sums for supplies for Chiang Kai-shek in the struggle against Soviet China. The troops of the British and French imperialists are invading China, some from the South, others from the West, preparing a base for the partition of China. The Italian, Dutch, and other imperialists are sending their ships to the Chinese seas. But we also hear how millions of the oppressed masses of China are carrying on a fierce, heroic struggle, a national revolutionary war against these foreign bandits and against their own landlords and bourgeoisie. We are touched with the appeal of the Central Executive Committee of the Chinese Soviet Republic which says: 'Help us in the struggle against those who want to throw us backwards to inhuman conditions of existence, the struggle against those who want to deprive us of life.'

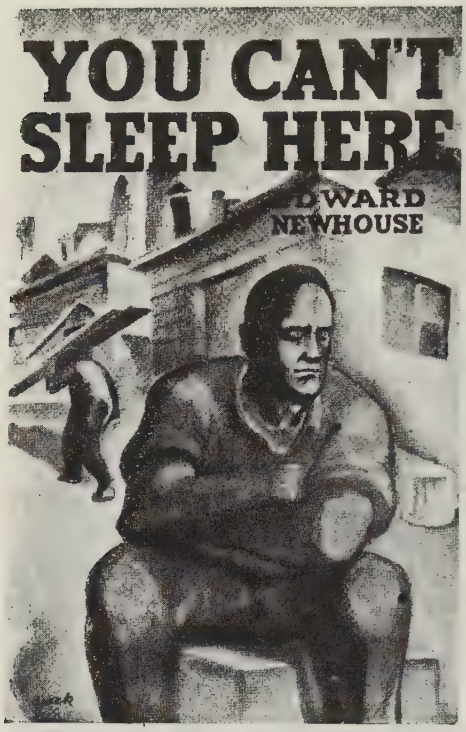
"We, writers, scientists, intellectuals, cannot help responding to this entirely just appeal, to this voice of the representatives of millions of the oppressed Chinese toilers. With the greatest interest we are watching the course of the tremenodus struggle where writers, actors, artists painters are arrested and killed for their words, lecturers, acting or pictures if they are directed against imperialism and are in defence of the people. In China people are arrested and shot because they have read novels of a Chinese revolutionary writer (in Hunan), or of a Soviet writer on political economy (in Szechuan), for red ink (in Hanwhei). Chekhov's novel *The Duel* has been suppressed.

"Writers, scientists and intellectuals of the world! In China war and intervention are going on at the front, but back of the Kuomintang and the imperialist, white terror is raging, most brutal and unparalleled in history. In China journalists and editors are executed for publishing stories about the calamities of the people. Gorki's novel *Mother*, John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World*, Upton Sinclair's *Oil*, and hundreds of other books have been prohibited. The picture *All Quiet on the Western Front* was not permitted to be shown in Nanking and Canton because 'anti-war propaganda is undesirable while the campaign against the Reds is not finished.' *Storm Over Asia* is absolutely prohibited in the foreign settlement of Shanghai. In the Chinese part of the city, it was only allowed to be shown after paying a large sum of money to the local Kuomintang authorities. And, moreover, in

Bela Uitz, Hungarian artist, before his fresco of Lenin, done, with the fresco of Karl Marx (frontispiece) for the Krasnozavod Theatre in Kharkov

the final scene a portion was added with the Kuomintang flag flying.

In China bookstores are closed every month if they sell radical and Left books. Hundreds of Left literary journals are prohibited. As if competing with Hitler, Chiang Kai-shek and his kind burn books. The clouds of smoke from the book burning fire rises in the West in Berlin and in the East in Shanghai. What a brutal spectacle. The Chinese fascist gang, the "Blue Shirts," have formed a list of 90 people who are to be murdered. Among these 90 are many professors, scientists, writers, journalists. And very often these "Blue Shirts" carry out what they threaten.



Jacket of a new American first novel which has attracted much attention

We remember how in 1931 the British police in Shanghai arrested five young Chinese writers, among whom was a woman, and the Kuomintang authorities executed them. We still hear the voices of these five shouting "Long live Communism!" as they died. They were buried alive in the ground. We remember how last year, the "Blue Shirts" killed the secretary of the Chinese League of Human Rights, Yang-kiang. We have also not forgotten the disappearance of the young talented woman writer Ting Ling and two other writers who perished with her. The Anti-War and Anti-Fascist Conference was prohibited in Shanghai because the name of Lo-she-i, the proletarian writer and dramatist, was on the list of the preparatory commission for this conference. He was abducted together with the writer Chan Yokhua in the autumn of last year. We now receive confirmation from Shanghai that Lo-she-i was shot on May 1st of this year.

Friends of the Pen, writers and scientists, actors and artists!

In our world, before our eyes, almost every day we see such shameful sights, such cruelty and inhumanity, the vileness and beastliness of Hitlerite Germany, in the China of Chiang Kai-shek. Can we who stand in the first ranks of human culture be silent about all this? With full voice we protest against this vileness of Chiang Kai-shek, the hangman and betrayer of the Chinese people!

For the Chinese Soviets, the only force able to save the Chinese people! Against the intervention of the Japanese and other imperialists in China! Down with the counter-revolutionary campaign of the Kuomintang and the imperialists against the Chinese Soviet Republic and the Chinese Red Army!

Freedom of speech and press for our Chinese fellow writers!

Down with the arrests and murders of the intellectuals, the writers and the professors—the flower of Chinese culture!

Long live the liberation of the Chinese people from the international bandits and landlords and militarists!

USA

First American Writers Congress

Signed by nearly seventy prominent writers a call has been issued for a Congress of American revolutionary writers to be held on May 1, 1935 in New York City. Among those signing the call are Theodore Dreiser, Waldo Frank, Nathan Asch, Genevieve Taggard, Langston Hughes, Maxwell Bodenheim, William Rollins, Jack Spivak, Lincoln Steffens, Granville Hicks and others. The call for the Congress reads:

"The capitalist system crumbles so rapidly before our eyes, that, whereas ten years ago scarcely more than a handful of writers were sufficiently far-sighted and courageous to take a stand for proletarian revolution, today hundreds of poets, novelists, dramatists, critics, short story writers and journalists recognize the necessity of personally helping to accelerate the destruction of capitalism and the establishment of a workers' government."

Two problems faced these writers who see the necessity for organization:

"First, the problems of effective political action. The dangers of war and fascism are everywhere apparent; we all can see the steady march of the nations towards war and the transformation of sporadic violence into organized fascist terror.

"The question is: how can we function most successfully against these twin menaces?

"In the second place, there are the problems peculiar to us as writers, the problems of presenting in our work the fresh understanding of the American scene that has come from our enrollement in the revolutionary cause. A new Renaissance is upon the world; foreach writer there is the opportunity to proclaim both the new way of life and the revolutionary way to attain it. Indeed, in the historical perspective, it will be

seen that only these two things matter. The revolutionary spirit is penetrating the ranks of the creative writers."

Although the John Reed Clubs, scattered over 30 American cities made the first steps in organizing the writers, they were concerned with all cultural groups and were not completely successful in attracting wide groups of the best American writers. As a result:

"Many revolutionary writers live virtually in isolation, lacking opportunities to discuss vital problems with their fellows. Others are so absorbed in the revolutionary cause that they have few opportunities for thorough examination and analysis. Never have the writers of the nation come together for fundamental discussion."

These writers are aware of the necessity for immediate contact with the revolutionary writers of other countries. They state:

"We believe such a Congress should create the League of American Writers, affiliated with the International Union of Revolutionary Writers. In European countries, the I.U.R.W. is in the vanguard of literature and political action. In France, for example, led by such men as Henri Barbusse, Romain Rolland, André Malraux, André Gide and Louis Aragon, it has been in the forefront of the magnificent fight of the united militant working class against Fascism."

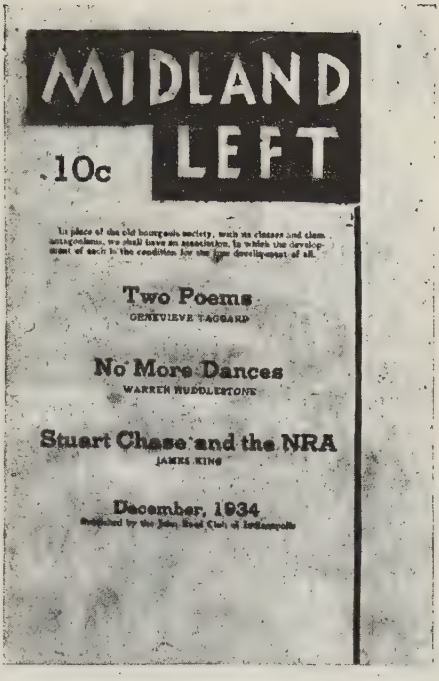
Their program is based on a thorough political understanding of the world situation: "fight against imperialist war and fascism; defend the Soviet Union against capitalist agression; for the development and strengthening of the revolutionary labor movement; against white chauvinism (against all forms of Negro discrimination or persecution) and against the persecution of minority groups and of the foreign-born; solidarity with colonial people in their struggle for freedom; against the influence of bourgeois ideas in American liberalism; against the imprisonment of revolutionary writers and artists, as well as other class-war prisoners throughout the world."

Gaining experience from previous attempts at organizing American writers, learning from past mistakes, this call concludes:

"By its very nature our organization would not occupy the time and energy of its members in administrative tasks; instead, it will reveal, through collective discussion, the most effective ways in which writers, *as writers,* can function in the rapidly developing crisis."

The New Masses, leading revolutionary weekly prints the call in full and announces that it will "publish from time to time articles by well known writers, outlining basic discussions to be proposed at the Congress."

Meanwhile in the liberal weekly, *The New Republic,* Malcolm Cowley, literary editor and author of the recent book *Exile's Return,* writes that at the Congress


MIDLAND LEFT

10c

Two Poems

GENEVIEVE TAGGARD

No More Dances

WARREN HUDDLESTONE

Stuart Chase and the NRA

JAMES KING

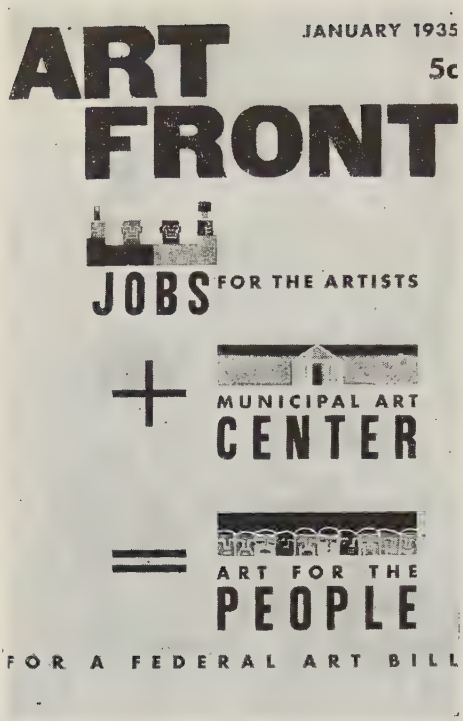
December, 1934

Cover of the first issue of a new American literary journal issued by the John Reed Club of Indianapolis

"there is one literary question that I hope will be considered calmly and at length. It has to do with the nature and scope of what is variously known as revolutionary or Marxian or proletarian criticism. A great many attacks have been made against this type of literary analysis and most of them, perhaps, have been based on misunderstandings. But it is unfortunately true that not all the misunderstandings have been on the side of the attackers. The Marxian critics themselves have been too zealous, have used their methods too narrowly and in some cases have carried it too far, thus lending color to the charge that they have neglected literary and human values for the sake of political tactics. This is one of the reasons why the limits of revolutionary criticism should be carefully defined, as well as its effectiveness within its proper boundaries."

After all, the critic finds,

"Marxian criticism is not religious. It does not have its Bible, its theory granted by revelation and fixed for all time. It does not demand the surrender of the intellect to an ancient Authority that cannot be contravened; on the contrary it requires that the mind be constantly alert."



Cover of a striking journal issued by the American Artists Union, now numbering about a thousand members

Midland Left *Appears*

Swelling the growing number of literary journals of the thirty American John Reed Clubs, the Indianapolis group has just issued the first number of their publication called *Midland Left*. Like other journals of the John Reed Clubs, it contains material meriting serious consideration. Both established and new writers appear. There are articles by James King, H. B. Wiliams, George Hamilton; poems by Genevieve Taggard and Ralph Borden; a story by Warren Huddlestone. The editorial board consists of F. Kaiser, H. B. Williams and Rebecca Pitts (whose article in the *New Masses* on the role of the intellectual attracted so much attention). Albert Pearson is art editor.

A statement from the editors reads: "In presenting *Midland Left* to Indianapolis readers, we feel that the John Reed Club is carrying out an important task. Addressing ourselves primarily to professional workers and members of the middle class, we shall present an analysis of our own city life—reaching through these more immediate facts to an understanding of the crisis as a whole. At the same time we extend a warm welcome to local writers and artists of talent—if only their work is alive with revolutionary spirit."

New Theatre *Again*

The January issue of *New Theatre*, a special Soviet number, is sure to add to the rapidly growing prestige of this publication.

Contributions include an article on the old Russian theatre by Anatoli Glebov; on "The Soviet Theatre Today" by Heinrich Diament; on "The New Soviet Cinema" by Sergei Eisenstein; "The State Jewish Theatre" by the French director, Leon Moussinac; on radio by Sergei Tretyakov. There are also articles on the dance by Chen I-Wan; on the Soviet Cinema by Piscator, noted German director; and other articles by H. W. L. Dana, (American) Marie Seton (British) and others.

The issue is profusely illustrated. It was compiled in Moscow by Jay Leyda, who is a member of New Theatre's editorial board.

A New Novel by Conroy

The New York Times announces the forthcoming publication of *A World To Win*, second novel of Jack Conroy. His first book, *The Disinherited* (from which a section appeared in *International Literature)* has been translated into a number of languages. It is now being run serially in *Humanité* in Paris, printed in book form in England, and in the Soviet Union it has appeared in Russian, English and Ukrainian.

Revolutionary Art Exhibit

Writing in the New York *Daily Worker*, Louis Lozowick, well known American revolutionary artist and critic reviews a recent exhibit of murals by Jack Burck. He says:

"The outlines of a proletarian culture are assuming definite shape with remarkable vigor and rapidity. In poetry and the novel, in criticism and the theatre, in graphic art and the dance, the revolutionary cultural movement can record achievements that compare favorably with the best in contemporary bourgeois culture whose blood is beginning to run this with the years.

"In this movement toward a proletarian culture the American graphic artists were among the pioneers. The work of Minor, Gellert, Gropper, Ellis, Burck and others, known, exhibited, reproduced and admired on both sides of the Atlantic, is certainly more than a match for the capitalist cartoonists even in technique alone; as for their ideology it towers in its assertive, fighting clarity above the confused hesitant liberalism or time-serving obscurantism of the bourgeois cartoonists.

"In painting, however, more particularly in mural painting, the proletarian artists have thus far not been equally successful."

Lozowick points to some successful exceptions: the work of Gellert and Bard in New York; the murals of Joe Jones in St. Louis. Burck's new murals done for Intourist, the critic considers "the most ambitious of all." He writes:

"Burck is best known, of course, as a revolutionary cartoonist. As such he has been engaged in fighting the battles of American labor, delivering heavy blows to its enemies on every front. In the murals he has tackled a new theme, socialist construction in the Soviet Union, under the Five Year Plan.

"The murals show with great clarity the giant strides in the construction of machinery, the industrialization of agriculture, the universalization of education; they depict with emphasis how the study of theory goes hand in hand with practical achievements; they picture the worker, the peasant, the engineer, the political leader (Stalin, Kalinin) all at one in the effort to transform the country.

"The handling of the theme exhibits a firmness, even a certain hardness, corresponding with the clear logic of the conception. The drawing is in most cases superior to the painting with which Burck seems still to be experimenting, and those panels are most successful in which the ideas are the simplest, as the interior of a machine shop and the exterior of a farm collective."

(These murals will appear in the next issue of *International Literature.*)

First American Publication of Revolutionary Artists

Art Front, issued by the American Artists Union is helping to swell its growing organization which now includes about a thousand members. Its program allows for a united front of artists of various political opinions and varying crafts on the basis of immediate issues: relief for unemployed artists, galleries for exhibition throughout the year; free schools for painting, sculpture and graphic arts; circulation department for rental of art works; forum for discussion of art. Prominent men like Heywood Broun (columnist of the New York *World-Telegram*) and Professor John Dewey have added their support to the struggle of the artists.

This new publication prints photographs of the artists in action, in demonstrations, etc., and drawings by various members.

Gorki In America

Writing about the successful production of Maxim Gorki's play *Dostigayev,* produced by the Jewish Artef Theatre of New York, Leon Alexander, theatrical critic says it

"is an artistic triumph for the Artef. It is the first play that I have seen this season in which I find an unwavering unity of conception that extends from the written word to the acting, to the direction, to the settings. The whole is cast in one integrated mood, bearing clearly the mark of a man of culture as well as of a man of the theatre. Under the direction of Benno Schneider, the Artef is the first of our revolutionary dramatic organizations to have at last reached artistic maturity.

"The settings are frankly theatrical, in the best sense of the word; they go beyond the merely representational and realistic to become a carrier of the mood of the play, and at the same time, like all good settings, they never obtrude. The use of color is especially effective: florid like the blotched face of a drunkard and "gourmani" in the first act, which is laid in the Merchants' Club; purple, red and green like a poisonous mushroom in the last act, Dostigayev's drawin room."

A Bezimenski prominent Soviet poet

ENGLAND

Sholokhov in London

The February issue of the English *Russia Today,* prints an interview with Michael Sholokhov, author of *And Quiet Flows the Don,* by Ralph Fox, author of a recent volume on Lenin.

Sholokhov told the interviewer:

"As a writer I am a child of the Revolution." "It has shaped and influenced all my work. It *is* my work, in fact."

A scene from Four Visits of Samuel Wolf, *taking place in an American college. The part of cheer leader was played by Peterson, sports editor of the* Moscow Daily News

"And does the Socialist revolution assist the development of free, creative writing?" I asked. "You may think the question a curious one, but Mr. H. G. Wells is very insistent, after his week's visit to Moscow and Leningrad, that it does not."

"Perhaps I could best answer that by saying that a great part of my time is spent in helping young writers from the factories and farms of my Socialist country who send me their manuscripts for advice. Every Soviet writer has an immense amount of such work. I do not think there is any country in history where the masses take such a direct, enthusiastic part in literary activity. Not only are there circles of young people learning to write in all our big factories and collective farms, but the mass of workers themselves take the liveliest interest in the work of our established writers."

Asked about freedom of criticism in the Soviet Union Sholokhov answered:

"Of course, we should not allow anyone to publish a book directed against our Socialist society of agitating for a return to capitalism. Public opinion would be overwhelmingly against the appearance of such work. However, we not only freely criticise individuals, deficiencies and inadequacies of our work, but such criticism is demanded from us by the workers themselves.

"I, myself, am a good example of the falseness of the ridiculous stories about 'Artists in Uniform' spread by Max Eastman and others. Big extracts from my last novel, *The Soil Upturned,* have been printed on the front page of the Paris White Guard newspaper, *Regeneration,* as anti-Soviet propaganda—of course, out of context and slightly changed."

H. G. Wells About Three Songs of Lenin

"I have had the privilege to see *Three Songs of Lenin* before its release. It is one of the greatest and most beautiful films I have ever seen. Congratulations to Dzigo Vertov and everybody who has had to do with it. I've also seen again that great film *Deserter.* I wish I could sit up all night seeing films like these, but Moscow has so many fascinating things to show...."

Bernard Shaw on the Terrorists

While many "liberals" and reactionaries wailed loudly on the execution of counter-revolutionists, Bernard Shaw did not find it "a sacrificial holocaust." To a meeting held in London by the Friends of the Soviet Union he sent this message:

"My information is that the execution of Russian Terrorists after the assassination of

Kirov was not, as our Russophobe Press represented, a sacrificial holocaust on the dead statesman's grave, but a pure coincidence. A year ago the Russian Government woke up to the fact that there was a terrorist movement on foot; and the measures to stamp this out had just come to a head when Kirov was murdered. The executions would have taken place anyhow; and no doubt the assassination precipitated them and gave them an exemplary appearance which they would not otherwise have had.

"Let us hope that the Russian Government has forgotten that when a British Sirdar was assassinated in Egypt the British Government declared its intention of cutting off the waters of the Nile with the object of exterminating the whole Egyptian population. It would be awkward for us to be reminded of that just now by the Kremlin."

IN THIS ISSUE

V. Gerasimova—is a young Soviet writer, author of short stories and sketches which have appeared in a number of publications.

Yuri Olesha—is a prominent Soviet writer. He is author of many volumes of stories, sketches and plays. *His Three Fat Men*, first popular as a novel, later as a play at the Moscow Art Theatre, is the new success as a ballet at the world known Bolshoi Theatre.

Friedrich Wolf—German revolutionary playwright, whose plays *Doctor Mamloch, Sailors of Catarro* and others are well known in many countries, contributes to this issue from his latest work *Floridsdorf*. He is now on a visit to the United States where his *Sailors of Catarro* has been such a great success in the production of the Theatre Union.

Peter Quince—is a young American worker-writer, active in revolutionary work in San Francisco. A short note about him precedes his contribution to this issue.

Joe Jones—American artist of St. Louis, Missouri, has contributed to *International Literature* in the past year. He leads a class of worker-artists in St. Louis, and is a member of the National Executive Board of the American John Reed Clubs. His work has been shown at leading American galleries.

Sergei Dinamov—is editor-in-chief of *International Literature*. He lectures frequently in Moscow on literature, the theatre, and cinema. His work appears steadily in leading Soviet publications.

A. B. Magil—American poet and journalist, is now in Detroit, active among the auto workers of that city.

Edmundo Peluso—is an Italian emigré, long active in the revolutionary movement. He has lived in the United States, met Lenin in Europe. He is author of novels and memoirs published in the Soviet Union.

Walt Carmon—assistant editor of *International Literature*, formerly managing editor of the *New Masses*, has for years been connected with the American revolutionary press.

D. Rasumovskaya—is a Soviet art critic. She contributes frequently to the Soviet press.

Editor-in-chief SERGEI DINAMOV

NO. 3

SHAKESPEARE IN MARX'S "CAPITAL"

STORIES

MICHAEL ZOSCHENKO, ISAAC BABEL (USSR); PAUL NIZAN (France); SANDOR GERGEL (Hungary); BEN FIELD (American Reportage)

ARTICLES

JEAN RICHARD BLOCH (France); S. LUDKIEWICZ (Poland); ILYA SELVINSKI (USSR); KARL SCHMUKLE (Germany)

DRAWINGS—PAINTINGS—PHOTOGRAPHS

JACOB BURCK (USA); JOHN HEARTFIELD (Germany); VIOLA GÜNTHER (Czecho-Slovakia); N. A. ANDREYEV (USSR)

ALSO

"May Day with Lenin", mass recitation by LLOYD ROSS (Australia); Letters from Norway and Spain; and International Chronicle.

INTERNATIONAL LITERATURE

C O N T E N T S

№ 3 MARCH 1935

Editorial Assistant WALT CARMON

IN No. 4

REVOLUTIONARY LITERATURE IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM

by George Dimitrov