THE Nation

November 13, 1937

SOVIET ANNIVERSARY

Twenty Years of Progress

BY MAXWELL S. STEWART

Escape from Propaganda

Six Books Reviewed by Edmund Wilson

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The Shape of Things

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THE EPISODE OF THE ALGIC RAISES ALMOST every issue in the complex relationship between the United States government and marine labor. The crew of this ship, members of the National Maritime Union, struck in Montevideo in September against working cargo in that port with scab labor that was very incompetent as well. When the bristling captain, an ex-navy man, called up Washington, Joseph C. Kennedy gave him the extraordinary instruction to put the strikers in irons. In the face of this and other threats the men went back to work. When the ship arrived in Baltimore, fourteen of the crew were arrested and are now on trial before a casualty board of the Bureau of Marine Inspection, charged with "conspiracy to deprive the captain of control." The final item is that the A. F. of L., through Mr. Green, is supporting the Maritime Commission in what amounts to an attack on the N. M. U. In the Algic case several assumptions have been made, none of them settled by law and all of them extremely dangerous to labor on land and sea: (1) that a crew has no right to strike during a voyage even though a ship is in port; (2) that the Maritime Commission has jurisdiction over the crew of a ship that is government owned though privately operated, and, concurrently, that labor has no right to strike against the government, directly or indirectly; (3) that Daniel Roper's Bureau of Marine Inspection—which is famous for having failed to explain, let alone prevent, half a dozen major air and sea disasters—has jurisdiction over marine-labor disputes.

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IN VIEW OF THE FORTHCOMING REPORT OF the Maritime Commission, the case of the Algic, with all the attendant propaganda against seamen who "strike against the government," takes on particular significance. We have heard disquieting rumors about the commission's majority report in so far as it pertains to labor. The most ominous is that it will advocate a training school for all seamen working on government-owned or subsidized ships. The commission is said to have received thousands of authentic complaints of inferior service on American ships; it can argue plausibly that if we are to build up our merchant marine we must make sure that it measures up to competing lines. What is likely to be emphasized lightly is that such men as Admiral Wiley, a member of the commission, look at maritime labor in

the context of national defense and the next war. In that picture the right to strike is a troublesome element. The establishment of a government training school could and would be used to cripple freedom of action among seamen—the union hiring hall could hardly survive. It is one thing to face the facts of inefficiency in our merchant marine. It is another to place all the blame for it on labor when the subsidized companies and the government inspection service are mainly responsible; and then to use labor's fight for decent conditions as an excuse for lashing it to the mast.

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IT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT the coming special session of Congress will be the regular second session, off to a start six weeks ahead of time. And judging from the legislative log-jam already in prospect, the extra six weeks will be none too wide a margin. The House Agricultural Committee has already had to make five drafts of a new farm bill, and more are due to come. The cotton, tobacco, corn, and wheat groups have their separate problems; and each is split on whether the production and marketing programs shall be voluntary or compulsory. The chances are that some form of compulsory program will in the end be adopted, but not without considerable struggle. The wage-hour legislation is also in doubt. Senator Berry is reported as active in drawing an A. F. of L. bill that differs sharply from the Black-Connery measure, and unless the two labor camps settle their difficulties soon, the C. I. O.-A. F. of L. feud will be transferred to the halls of Congress. The government-reorganization plans will once again bring the cry of "dictatorship." The Senate bill, sponsored by Senator Byrnes, provides for a new Cabinet post of Public Welfare and six new executive assistants for the President (both passed by the House in the last session), and for important changes in civil-service and accounting administration. It is on the latter two provisions that the fiercest fighting is likely to take place, because they reach the patronage nerve of Congress. The financial agitators are continuing their pressure for tax revision, concentrating now on the repeal of the undistributed-corporate-profits tax. A House subcommittee, under Chairman Vinson, has been holding conferences with Undersecretary Magill and Treasury experts, and the outlook can only be described as cloudy in every way. The most significant single Washington item is the probability that Senator Wheeler is tired of his railroad-finance investigation and will not ask for further funds. There is every indication that Wheeler is again being groomed to lead the Democratic opposition to the New Deal. He wants to keep his energy for that job, and he does not want unpleasantness with railroad and banking heads to interfere with its effective performance.

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THE PROPOSED EXCHANGE OF COMMERCIAL envoys between Great Britain and the Spanish insurgents has probably eliminated whatever possibility still existed of a withdrawal of Italian troops from Spain. For months the recognition of Franco's rights as a belligerent has been held back as a concession to be granted only if a substantial number of volunteers should be withdrawn. The present proposal, which was made with no demand for a corresponding concession from the fascist nations, would obviously mean more to Franco than the granting of belligerent rights, and the offer thereby destroys the one bargaining point remaining in the hands of the democratic powers. Such an action can only be explained on the ground that the Foreign Office is convinced that Franco is bound to win. In this, however, there is no evidence that the Foreign Office is any better informed than it has been throughout the conflict. Except on the diplomatic front, recent developments have not been unfavorable to the Loyalists. Government troops have made slow but significant progress at a number of points. The widely heralded rebel offensive against Madrid has not materialized, and with the anniversary of last year's offensive already past there is little possibility of a concerted drive before spring. By that time the government expects to have a half a million well-disciplined soldiers to throw against from 100,000 to 150,000 Italians and a few thousand Moors and conscript Spaniards.

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THE KILLING OF OVER A THOUSAND HAITIANS in border towns of Santo Domingo and the invasion of Juana Mendez, Haiti, by Dominican troops has raised serious questions regarding the plans of Trujillo, the Dominican dictator. Although the official reports describe the massacre as the result of popular resentment against Haitian immigration, the fact that no Dominicans except Trujillo's well-disciplined army possess arms suggests that the affair was officially instigated. Trujillo, who speaks of himself as "the inspirer of strong nations," meaning Italy, Germany, and Japan, comes up for reelection in the spring. While he has no reason to doubt his ability to control the vote, he is known to fear a coup d'état staged by his own ostensible supporters. When in extremity dictators have been known to divert attention from their shortcomings by precipitating an external crisis. Whether this is actually the situation in Santo Domingo has not yet been definitely established because of the rigid censorship. We believe, however, that a careful investigation by R. Henry Norweb, American Minister to Santo Domingo, will reveal ample reason for withdrawing Washington support from Trujillo.

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LABOR SEEMS TO BE FINDING A NEW BASIS for peace. The conferees from the A. F. of L. and the C. I. O. who have been meeting in Washington are, as we write, closer than they have been before to discovering a common basis of agreement. Considering the uncompromising attitude that Mr. Green had shown and the belligerent statement by Mr. Lewis on which we commented last week, the new optimism that prevails at the conference is striking. Three sets of factors account for it. One is the continued pressure of the rank-and-file in both camps, which wants labor unity at all costs. The second—a new factor—is the business re-

cession, which now promises to be not just one of the transitory ups and downs of business but part of a long-run future trend for which labor must sternly prepare itself. The business recession means that the old cycle of labor lay-offs and wage cuts is starting once more. It means hard sledding even for a united labor movement, and a split movement will find the employers playing one group off against the other to their own advantage. The third factor, which has been emphasized by recent events, is political. The recent local elections have shown that when labor is split, as in Detroit and Akron, it becomes politically ineffective. The handwriting on the wall for 1938 is distinct enough for labor leaders on both sides to discern. The path of compromise that the peace conference is following—the allocation of certain industries for organizing along industrial lines, and the assurance that in others the dominance of the craft unions will not be challenged—is the only intelligent path. Whether unity can be achieved depends now on the breadth of view of the negotiators.

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THE DUKE OF WINDSOR'S CANCELATION OF his American trip has relieved everyone concerned, including the British government, the United States government, and American labor. It has undoubtedly dashed the expectations of American society circles, but they may be trusted to find substitute diversions. Many Americans will continue to regard the Duke as an innocent and well-intentioned blunderer. But a dispatch from P. J. Philip in the New York *Times* of November 7 gives a clear indication of the message the Duke, innocent or not, would have brought to America. Mr. Philip, who is close to the Duke and to British circles in Paris, reports that Windsor was impressed by the contentment of German workers under the Nazi regime and by their enthusiasm. This statement reinforces what *The Nation* has several times declared was to be the burden of the Duke's proposed visit. It is the connection of the Windsors with the Nazis, more than their relation to Charles Bedaux's labor stretch-out system, that made them look to most Americans like thoroughly undesirable guests. When William Green declares that the Duke's severance from Mr. Bedaux is all that labor asks for, he is short-sighted. There is an inner logical connection between the stretch-out in America and the destruction of trade unions in Nazi Germany.

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THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR HOLDS IN ITS hands the lives of two men, Domenick Sallitto and Vincent Ferrero, who have been law-abiding citizens of this country for sixteen and thirty-one years respectively. They have been living for more than two and one-half years under a threat of being sent back to Italy, where they face a fascist prison. The charge against Sallitto is that he is a member of an "organization which believes in, advises, advocates . . . the overthrow of the government of the United States by force and violence"; Ferrero is charged with having been associated with an anarchist publication which went out of existence years ago. The law which would make these men liable to deportation should never have been passed and should now be repealed; but in the case of Sallitto the Labor Department's own board of review admitted that "there was no direct proof of membership," and the case against Ferrero seems to consist of the fact that he was working as cook in a building which was used as a mailing address by the legal if anarchist publication *Man*—with which he had no connection. The evidence in both cases is so flimsy that they should be dropped on legal grounds; from a humane point of view their continuance is nothing less than brutal.

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AS WE GO TO PRESS WE ARE INFORMED that another refugee, Hans Goepel, a Socialist, who escaped from Nazi Germany, tried to commit suicide when he heard that the Department of Labor was about to issue a writ of deportation in his case. Goepel was formerly in the German navy, where he carried on underground anti-Nazi work. When he was about to be arrested he stowed away on a boat bound for America. A year and a half later he was picked up and held for deportation. His case has been pending for about six months. It is part of the record that Goepel is a Socialist who deserted from the Nazi navy. Surely that should be sufficient evidence, if his attempt at suicide were not, that he faces certain death in Germany. A bill guaranteeing the right of asylum is now pending in Congress. The Department of Labor could well afford to grant Goepel what amounts to a stay of execution at least until that bill comes to a vote.

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CIVIL WAR HAS BROKEN OUT AT LAST IN the American Medical Association—a very civil and respectable war but for that reason perhaps the more formidable. A group of 430 doctors, many of them leading figures in the profession, has openly rebelled against the do-nothing group, headed by Dr. Fishbein, that controls the association. They have published a manifesto much like one that was sidetracked in committee at the last A. M. A. convention. The patient public will welcome any open revolt against the reactionary medical machine. *The Nation* congratulates this democratic medical "four hundred" on furnishing the leadership which the profession so badly needs. At last the public can look to a responsible professional group for help in solving the problem of paying its doctor's and hospital bills. But it must be said that the manifesto seems designed to help the doctors even more than the public. While it declares the health of the people to be a national issue with which the federal, state, and local governments should be more actively concerned, and calls for a national health program, the principal objective seems to be to pay the doctors for their care of the "medically indigent." We have no objection to this worthy aim—especially since it undermines the doctors' case for higher fees to those blessed with an income. But unless the four hun-

dred will help us budget our health costs, they will forfeit the public hope and confidence which their action has aroused.

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NEW VOTE FRAUDS HAVE CROPPED UP IN the wake of the introduction of proportional representation in the council elections of New York City. The vote counters, who were almost wholly chosen by political district leaders by a non-competitive civil-service examination, and who had to be registered Democrats or Republicans, are not showing great zeal in ending their ten-dollar-a-day jobs. Even greater than the danger of tampering with the ballots, which is to be officially investigated, is this sabotage and delay of the counters. It is to the interest of the Tammany and Old Guard Republican leaders, who appointed them, to discredit the whole mechanism of P. R. by emphasizing its cumbersomeness. Fortunately, the whole incident can only serve to strengthen the movement for keeping P. R. while mechanizing it. Machines are now available both for the balloting and for the tabulation of the votes. When they have been installed, P. R. should be safe even against sabotage.

Unholy Alliance

WITH unprecedented audacity the fascist powers have succeeded in stealing the spotlight in a week that was supposed to be dominated by the Nine-Power Conference at Brussels. The acceptance of Hitler as mediator in the Far Eastern conflict, while denied in both Tokyo and Nanking, appears to have been a definite fact and was only sidetracked at the last minute when Japan became too greedy in its demands. The moment is a particularly strategic one for mediation. Japan has completed its conquest of the four northern provinces, except for parts of Shansi. It has finally succeeded in driving the Chinese back in Shanghai, and is threatening by a new maneuver to force the evacuation of Pootung and Nantao. Although far from exhausted, China is faced with a temptation to yield before the rich region between the Yellow and the Yangtze rivers is invaded. The presence of several hundred German military advisers in Nanking and the known bias of the powerful Kung family toward Germany have not lessened that temptation, while the pro-fascist clique at Nanking would like nothing better than to obliterate by compromise or out-and-out surrender the recent popular-front agreement between Chiang Kai-shek and the former Chinese Red Army.

Even more audacious, under the circumstances, was the signing of the three-power anti-Communist alliance at Rome. Like Hitler's announcement on mediation, the fact can only be construed as an open challenge to the Brussels conference. And while it is scarcely the kind of action which would be calculated to convince Nanking of Hitler's impartiality, it was a superb example of fascist contempt for world opinion. The classic instance had been the recognition of Franco and the signing of the original anti-red pact a year ago. But at that time it was not nearly so apparent that under the guise of opposition to communism the fascist states were actually banding together against the democracies.

In contrast, the Brussels conference, hailed at its outset as an effort to create a common front among the democratic states, has slowly been fading into futility. As was expected, no country has taken the leadership in formulating a policy to check aggression. On the contrary, there is little indication that anyone remembers why the conference was called into being. The opening address of Norman Davis, the American delegate, contained not a single reference to the fact that China had been invaded, that the Japanese were aggressors, or that a treaty had been violated. Nor did it suggest that penalties might have to be adopted to restore peace. The joint resolution asking for Japanese participation in the deliberations was little better. While reference was made to an alleged violation of the Nine-Power Pact, it was not even implied that the signatories would take any steps to uphold the agreement.

In a crisis of this sort it is customary to call for "strong leadership" from the so-called democratic powers. Leadership would, indeed, be helpful; but it is evident that the source of our difficulties lies much deeper than mere absence of courageous leaders. Democratic governments can move only a certain distance ahead of the voters on whom their existence depends. And the spirit of fascism, unfortunately, is to be found not only within the boundaries of the signers of the anti-Communist pact. It is strong in France; it has penetrated the British Foreign Office; and it is not wholly absent from our own country. Confused counsels and conflicting interests prevent the governments from taking a stand. Leadership, if it is to come at all, must come from the people themselves. Once before, on the occasion of the Hoare-Laval plan to sell out Ethiopia, world opinion rose up against a cowardly retreat in the face of aggression. Unfortunately, the effects of that outburst were largely lost because of the weakness of the Ethiopian defense. In the present situation there need be no such worry. China has shown that it can hold its own almost indefinitely against Japan, provided it can obtain an adequate amount of munitions and other supplies.

Without support from the so-called democracies, it may be assumed that the fascist forces within China will sooner or later compel Chiang Kai-shek to capitulate. This support will not be forthcoming unless those who are in earnest in their desire for peace make themselves heard. Congress is scheduled to open next Monday. Before that time every Congressman, every Senator, and the President himself should be deluged with telegrams asking that the United States take the initiative in sponsoring collective measures to quarantine aggression. By an embargo on scrap-iron, cotton, and oil this country, acting with Great Britain, France, and the Netherlands, could cut off the supplies which are most essential to Japan's war machine. Congress should also

take emergency action to check the inflow of silk and other Japanese products, the sale of which makes possible the continuation of the war. The recent Gallup poll indicated that the American people are overwhelmingly opposed to Japanese aggression in China. If this sentiment can be made articulate within the next week, by protests to Washington and by refusals to buy Japanese goods, the Chinese people will be vastly strengthened in their own defense.

Russia and the World

TWENTY years after its founding the Soviet government has a new job on its hands. New forces, unthought of in 1917, have profoundly changed its status and function. Too often this change is ignored by those who discuss the present position and behavior of the government of Stalin. They are apt to assume that Russia is or could be or should be still primarily the focal point of world revolution. But this is not the case. The Soviet government has been impelled to engage in a different enterprise—the leadership of the anti-fascist forces of the world. Twenty years ago when Soviet Russia emerged as the first socialist state it was a center of revolutionary action and propaganda; today it has become, above all else, a great power. There are those who consider this change a treasonable surrender of revolutionary purpose and principle. There are others who refuse to accept it as a fact. But there are more, we believe, in every country, who look upon the present international role of Russia, not only as historically inevitable, but as the chief element of hope in a world from which order and sanity have almost vanished.

It is a simple truth that the civilization of the world is threatened with extinction. Normal people shrink from a concept so sensational, but the fact remains. We have watched, year by year, the successful encroachments of the forces of violence and barbarism: upon Manchuria, Ethiopia, Spain, and now all of China; upon long-established institutions of humanity and enlightenment in the fascist countries themselves. We have seen primitive tribal loyalties and superstitions darken modern minds. We see trade languish and international finance resort to makeshift forms of barter. We are witnessing what may be the beginning of an end. The anti-Communist pact, uniting Italy with Germany and Japan, presents this major threat in concrete and detailed terms; the fascist international is organized and prepared for united action.

But the non-fascist countries are at odds with one another and within themselves. They fear the collapse of the fascist states almost as much as they fear their power; Britain's imperialist interests clash with its class interests; the League machinery creaks and stalls, and new, even more futile, diplomatic devices are set up. Among the non-fascist states, Russia has displayed the largest measure of realism and courage. M. Litvinov has become a sort of international touchstone of sanity, although his directness and common sense are so shocking to his fellow-diplomats that they are generally attacked as deliberate provocation. The one who points out the king's nakedness is these days all too likely himself to be accused of indecent exposure. But Soviet foreign policy continues to concentrate on the fascist menace and to utilize all its resources of power, persuasion, warning, and diplomatic skill to align the democratic nations on its side.

Unfortunately Russia, too, is divided, although the lines of division are obscured by censorship and the lack of open political discussion. For more than a year the purge of Communist Party members and state functionaries has continued. Official explanations are unconvincing because they are inadequate. "Trotskyist," "diversionist," "wrecker"—like "red" and "Bolshevik" in other countries—are tags rather than descriptions or indictments. Bitter opposition to the government's policy undoubtedly exists among thousands of unreconstructed Bolsheviks. They have seen the world revolution sidetracked to make way for collaboration with anti-fascist groups and non-fascist governments. Many must have refused to follow the new line or have accepted it without conviction. And some may well have translated their resentment into active opposition to the regime. Add to these elements of honest dissent the army of actual fascist spies and plotters, agents of Germany and Japan, of Poland and the Baltic states, at work in government agencies, in industry, in the army; add the most potent ingredients of all—suspicion and intolerance and fear, the inevitable mood of a country faced with the threat of imminent war—and you have an unstable domestic brew.

Sympathetic outsiders have watched the progress of the purge with an anxiety born of the new dependence on Soviet power. Only the integrity and strength of the Soviet Union can reassure the faltering elements of opposition to fascism in Britain and France and the rest of Europe. If Russia is weak or believed to be weak, Hitler and Mussolini are strengthened in the same degree. Naturally the fascist powers are doing all they can to create distrust of Soviet strength even while they organize an alliance to fight the alleged Communist menace. The rest of us would do well to judge events in the light of the available facts rather than to consult fascist hopes or our own fears. The Soviet Union has survived twenty years of intermittent purges; never has the government tolerated the existence of serious opposition. But the objectives of socialist control and construction have never been lost sight of even when they have been blocked by such major obstacles as war and famine and internal resistance. Impressive gains have been made in industry and agriculture, as Maxwell Stewart's article in this issue so clearly shows. The largest standing army in Europe has been built and equipped—and events in Spain have testified to the quality of its equipment. Above all, the people and their government are united in two things: a passionate opposition to war—knowing well that the future of socialism in Russia depends on continued peace; and a still stronger determination to resist fascism even if resistance means war—for the success of fascism would spell the end of socialism and the Soviet government and the essence of Western civilization as well.

Labor's Long Road

THE recent elections have succeeded in being all things to all men. The Republicans are elated over New York State, the Democrats are pleased about New Jersey, the labor groups point with pride to New York City and Pittsburgh, and the anti-labor conservatives are having an orgy of rejoicing over Detroit and Akron. All of which may create a general sense of concord and well-being, but does not bring enlightenment as to the direction for the future.

One thing is clear: 1937 does not mark a retreat from the progressive trend of 1936 but a continuation of it. We speak now not in terms of parties but of the basic prestige which broad social views continue to possess. Today no less than in 1936 it is smart politics to be a liberal. The Democrat who made the most impressive showing was the New Dealer who won the governorship by a five-to-one vote in Virginia, the home state of the arch-tories Byrd and Glass; while Harry Moore in New Jersey, despite the backing of the powerful and corrupt Hague machine, just managed to squeeze into office by a margin greatly reduced from his previous victories. The Republicans who were successful in New York were the Dewey-Barton-Morris type, all of them either liberals or posing as liberals. And labor's considerable successes in a score of cities mark a new phase in the development of American progressive politics.

But while the future direction promises to be liberal, neither labor nor its opponents can afford to be content with a vague sense of the general drift. Detroit and Akron are both examples of the danger of relying too heavily on labor's forward surge. While the union forces piled up impressive votes in both cities, their candidates were beaten by conservative coalitions; where hopes were raised so high, the immediate result could only be disillusionment. There is no doubt that labor's political potential is high, but to estimate it properly one must learn from defeats as well as victories.

The lions who roar daily in the editorial pages and signed columns of the big city newspapers reveal an uneasy note in their roaring. They are worried about the part labor will play in the elections of 1938 and 1940, and to assuage their fears they are building up a comfortable rationalization of the half-million votes labor rolled up in New York City. They point out that labor lost the election in cities where there has been the greatest strike militancy and violence—Detroit and Akron—and won in New York, where labor struggles have been relatively peaceful. The moral to trade unionists would seem to be: if you seek political power, do not be too militant on the economic front. We can understand how such a moral would be wholly satisfactory to some of the employers, but that does not make it true. New York labor has not had to come up against the feudal power of the automobile, rubber, and steel barons, but anyone who has watched the brilliant and militant organizing job done in the maritime unions and the transit unions—both powerful political factors—can scarcely say that labor in New York City lacks dynamic force. It is true also that in the New York campaign the labor slogans were played down by LaGuardia and some of his followers in the American Labor Party, and the good-government slogans played up. But realists know that civic virtue does not triumph in politics without vigorous group support, and they know that while the Republicans voted against a Tammany that rifled the city treasury, increased taxes, and made bond prices precarious, labor voted for slum clearance and a lawful police force. The C. I. O. candidates in Detroit campaigned articulately for labor interests and lost; yet the labor candidates in Akron, who adopted the New York tactics of repudiating anything smacking of the "reds" and campaigned in broad and neutral middle-class terms, also lost.

The real lesson that labor should draw from the elections is that it cannot hope to stand on its own feet politically unless it can first achieve unity. In New York there was no open dissension between the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. forces, except for the defection of the ineffable Mr. Ryan. Both labor groups united behind LaGuardia. In Detroit, on the other hand, the A. F. of L. leadership, after losing to the C. I. O. candidate in the primaries, broke away to support the reactionary Republican candidate. The coalition in New York was a coalition of the labor forces; in Detroit, the labor split allowed a coalition of the conservative forces. In both cases the coalitions won. By themselves the reactionary industrialist forces in any community or in the nation as a whole will be powerless to defeat a candidate who has the unified support of labor. But if to the money that business contributes to a campaign, one adds the votes that conservative labor and the frightened middle class contribute, the result can only be defeat for progressive labor.

It must be evident also that, even if it should achieve unity within its own ranks, labor will not be able to stand on its own feet for some time, but will have to operate as a balance-of-power party. The American Labor Party saw this clearly in New York, and threw its weight to the more progressive of the candidates, adapting its entire strategy to its balance-of-power role. Whether even in New York labor will soon be able to win a victory against the combined opposition of Democratic and Republican conservatives is open to serious doubts. For the fact is that middle-class sentiment, clinging to all the idols in American life that are part of the fetishism of property, is still the deciding factor in any election. For that reason labor must not look to any overnight conquest of political power. Neither, on the other hand, should it use—because it does not need—the technique and the language of the pressure group. Pressure-group politics is only for minorities, which must operate through lobbies because they have not the strength to operate openly at the polls. A labor party will, in the long run, build its program on the fact that it represents the interests of the vast majority, and in a democracy it is the majority will that counts. This is a long road for labor to travel, but it is the only road that will reach the goal.

Twenty Years of Progress

BY MAXWELL S. STEWART

FOR the outside world the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution has been seriously overshadowed by the executions, political trials, and mass arrests which have occurred in recent months. It is generally believed that the Soviet Union is in the midst of the most severe political crisis of its history. Political observers have commented on the decline of Soviet prestige and suggested that Russia's failure to embark on a war with Japan is an unmistakable indication of Soviet weakness.

Yet it is doubtful whether the average Soviet citizen is conscious of any grave crisis in the political life of his country. While the foreign press has been filled with tales of trials, shootings, and sabotage, Soviet papers have carried enthusiastic reports of industrial and agricultural progress and of brilliant achievements in Arctic exploration, and have emphasized the social advance promised by the new constitution. It is true that Soviet citizens have been kept fully aware of the Trotskyite trials, as well as of the sabotage and purges in the army, the political bureaucracy, industry, and agriculture. But spectacular political trials have been too common in Soviet history to be regarded very gravely, while purges of more or less severity have been almost annual affairs. The average citizen is far more likely to be impressed by the increased quantity and improved quality of the food that is now available, by the tremendous increase in the supply of consumers' goods, and by the gradual decline in retail prices. For the first time since October, 1917, he has begun to receive substantial material dividends for the years of privation he endured during the development of a socialist industry and agriculture.

Nor is this the first time that an anniversary has been celebrated under a cloud. The chief milestones of Soviet history, almost without exception, have been marred by trying circumstances. The fifth anniversary came while the country was still prostrate from intervention and famine. Industrial and agricultural production had just begun to recover from their lowest ebb. By the time of the tenth anniversary economic conditions had notably improved, but there had been a letdown in revolutionary morale as a result of the NEP. The Trotsky-Stalin feud, moreover, had rocked the entire country, and, finally, unemployment and rural backwardness loomed as apparently insoluble problems. The fifteenth anniversary coincided with the darkest period of the First Five-Year Plan. As a result of the depression, forced exports, difficulties with collectivization, bad harvests, and military preparations, consumers' goods were almost unobtainable, and the country faced the threat of famine.

And yet throughout this period the Soviets have registered many spectacular achievements. Even the most virulent critics of the Soviet regime will admit that the Bolsheviks have built a large and, compared with previous periods, efficient industry. They will grant that Russian agriculture is more productive than at any period in the past, that the Red Army is one of the most formidable fighting forces in the world, that workers' living standards are higher than ever before, and that great advances have been made in spheres of education, public health, and general social services. But they will insist that in spite of this progress industrial productivity is still low, distribution is chaotic, quality is poor, and that the average Russian pays a heavy price for his economic and social gains in the form of fear of political terrorism.

Industrial Development

The most recent issue of the *Monthly Bulletin of Statistics,* published by the League of Nations, shows the volume of industrial production for the U. S. S. R. at the close of 1936 to have been somewhat more than four times the 1929 level and nearly seven times that of 1927. Preliminary figures indicate an additional 15 per cent increase in the first six months of the current year. The development of the heavy industries has been particularly spectacular. During the four months ending in August, according to the League statistics, pig-iron production maintained a rate of 15,000,000 metric tons annually. While slightly under the plan, this is 7 per cent better than for the corresponding period of last year, nearly two and a half times the rate of production of five years ago, and five times the output of 1927. In 1913 the total production of pig iron in Russia was only 4,200,000 tons. Although the output per worker remains low as compared with the United States, it showed an improvement of more than 25 per cent in 1936 as compared with the previous year.

There is probably no branch of Soviet industry which has suffered so many and such serious breakdowns as coal. Repeatedly during the last ten years this industry has been subject to drastic overhauling and reorganization. It is somewhat surprising, therefore, to find that according to League figures coal production during July and August, while well under the plan, averaged 10,190,000 tons a month, which is 5 per cent higher than in the same months of 1936, nearly double the 1932 output, and approximately four times the average production of ten years ago. Pre-war production was at less than one-fourth the present rate. In many respects the coal situation is typical of Soviet economic life. Production rarely moves smoothly according to plan; innumerable obstacles are constantly encountered; and the press incessantly harps on the shortcomings of various industries. Yet amid all this furor, progress is steadily made, and the plans

somehow manage to be fulfilled ahead of schedule. So much attention has been paid to the difficulties in a few industries that the outside world is scarcely aware that the Second Five-Year Plan was completed on April 1, 1937, fully nine months ahead of schedule.

Viewed in retrospect, the fulfilment of the First and Second Five-Year Plans may not seem particularly notable. Yet when the terms of these plans were first announced they appeared as unapproachable as those of the Third Five-Year Plan, just made public, now seem. By 1942 the U. S. S. R. hopes to surpass the United States in pig-iron production, with 32,000,000 tons—more than double the present output. The quantity of paper is to be increased threefold, while the production of aluminum—non-existent before 1930—is expected to reach 200,000 tons annually.

To one who has traveled much in the Soviet Union the description of the projected improvements on the railways sounds almost fantastic. We read, for example, that "express trains should attain an average speed of seventy-two miles an hour," that new railway cars will be streamlined, that floors will be made of a new composition material, and that "a large number of passenger cars on through trains will be provided with air conditioning." Small advances, perhaps, in terms of American standards, but almost unbelievable in a country where but yesterday transportation was on the verge of complete breakdown.

No discussion of Soviet industrial production can afford to omit a consideration of the Stakhanov movement. Since the day late in 1935 when Stakhanov, a miner in the Donbas, startled the country by exceeding his normal output several times by organizing his work on a scientific basis, Stakhanovism has become almost a national religion. Every industry has its "Stakhanovs" who have set phenomenal records of individual productivity. Whether Stakhanovism has actually increased national production or, as some have charged, has so disorganized industry as to reduce total output cannot easily be determined. We know that production has increased, though at a somewhat slower rate, and in view of almost equal evidence pro and con, we may assume that Stakhanovism has proved much more adaptable to some industries than to others. There can be little doubt, however, that the attempt to speed up certain types of work has caused considerable damage, both through injury to machinery and a decline in the quality of output.

Living Standards

The failure of Soviet industry, particularly the branches producing consumers' goods, to attain even reasonable standards of quality has considerable bearing on the difficult question of living standards. Despite the tremendous increase in industrial production in recent years, living standards are admittedly low for the great majority of the population. The Second Five-Year Plan, like the first, was largely devoted to laying the foundations of the Soviet industrial structure. To a larger extent than in any other country energies have been concentrated on the building of factories, the output of machinery, and the development of transportation rather than on the production of shoes, clothing, and household goods. As a result, it is possible for anti-Soviet writers to point out that the cheapest pair of shoes costs nearly a month's salary for a low-paid factory worker, while the purchase of a suit of medium quality requires the equivalent of four months' wages. This is not a fair indication of living standards. Soviet rents are exceedingly low and are usually fixed at a proportion of the worker's wages. Bread is very reasonable in price and excellent in quality, while vegetables have never been expensive. Traveling, too, is cheap. Finally, it must not be forgotten that Soviet workers obtain many forms of indirect subsidy which materially affect their standards of living. Meals in the larger factories are substantial and inexpensive. Medical care and education are free. Social-insurance funds provide free vacations for a large number of workers annually, and older students obtain financial aid while attending school. Substantial assistance is given to families with six or more children, as well as to the sick, the disabled, and the aged. Since most of these social benefits are non-existent outside the Soviet Union, it is virtually impossible to compare living standards.

The Revolution in Agriculture

Perhaps the most outstanding failure of the Soviet authorities during the first fifteen years after the October Revolution was their inability to solve the farm problem. In the middle 20's the so-called "scissors crisis"—high prices for consumers' goods in contrast with low fixed prices for farm products—caused serious alarm. Although the crisis was overcome temporarily through somewhat higher prices for farm products under the NEP, the basic disparity remained in effect for years. While the poorer peasants gained relatively in the struggle with the kulaks, the position of the peasantry as a whole was little, if any, better at the beginning of the First Five-Year Plan than before the revolution. In contrast to the workers in the cities, where the Bolsheviks were constantly gaining in prestige and popularity, the peasants tended to be apathetic or hostile.

The first steps toward collectivization only accentuated the difficulties. Many peasants actively resented the change in traditional methods; organization was bad; over-zealous grain collections discouraged even those normally friendly to the Communist leadership. The forced deportation of kulaks greatly increased discontent. In the summer of 1932 peasants in the north Caucasus and the Ukraine allowed a large share of their crops to rot in the fields rather than deliver them to overbearing local officials. That fall the area sown to winter grain was even less than in the disastrous 1931-32 season. This, however, proved to be the turning-point in the entire agricultural situation. On January 19, 1933, an order was issued replacing the system of grain procurements by an obligatory, fixed grain tax. The quotas were in each case set extremely low, averaging about 15 per cent of the small 1932 harvest. In addition, 25,000 picked Communists and Komsomols were dispatched to the tractor stations and state farms for organization work. These two meas-

ures succeeded beyond all expectations. In the summer of 1933, despite inadequate preparation and only average weather, the Soviets harvested 89,800,000 tons, the largest grain crop that had been gathered up to that time in Russian history. Unfavorable weather conditions in the next three years kept the crop at practically the same figure, but a new record of 107,000,000 tons was established in the season just closed, nearly 20 per cent above the best previous harvest. More than 98 per cent of the 1937 crop was gathered from collective or state farms, whereas ten years ago only about 2 per cent of the output was obtained from socialized units.

A primary factor in the success of collectivization has been the rapid growth in the supply of tractors and combines. In 1932 there were only 125,000 tractors at work on Soviet farms, nearly half of which were unfit for service. There were about 6,000 combines. Four years later the number of tractors had tripled, and the number of combines had increased nearly eightfold.

Most important of all is the fact that for the first time in history Russian farmers are obtaining a fair reward for their work. At present prices and productivity the more efficient collectives are enjoying genuine prosperity. While reports of family incomes of from thirty to fifty thousand rubles are to be discounted as exceptional, incomes of from three to five thousand rubles appear to be not unusual. The peasants as a whole have swung from indifference or hostility to active support of the regime.

Changes in Psychology and Social Conditions

Against this somewhat optimistic picture of conditions in agriculture must be set certain disquieting aspects of urban social conditions. As a result of Stakhanovism the inequalities in income, which had become more marked each year, have reached serious proportions. Although the average income of urban workers is approximately 250 rubles a month, a favored few—Stakhanovites, authors, engineers, and actors—earn from one to three thousand rubles a month. How serious these inequalities are from the standpoint of Communist objectives is a matter of dispute. While the range in income is less than in most capitalistic countries, many persons fear that a new privileged class is being developed. Others point to the relatively high cost of luxuries as compared with necessities as a protection against too great a disparity, and claim to see no fundamental danger in inequality as long as no individual is allowed to exploit the labor of another. Most foreign observers are agreed, however, that, like Stakhanovism, monetary rewards for unusual ability have been carried to an unnecessary and unwholesome extreme.

These inequalities of income have undoubtedly contributed to the growing emphasis on aspects of life which a few years ago would have been roundly denounced as "bourgeois." During the last two or three years proletarian Russia has suddenly blossomed out with dance halls, fashion shows, carnivals, and an unprecedented emphasis on the family virtues. Communists explain these changes as the natural development of a classless society. They insist that the Soviet population is entitled to all the good things in life that the well-to-do have in other lands. To the extent that better living conditions are spread over the entire population, this explanation would appear to be entirely justified. But here again there are exemplifications of the Russian trait of carrying new trends to unwise lengths.

Perhaps the best indication of the general health of the Soviet system may be found in the steady extension of protection against the risks of modern society. Unemployment has been virtually unknown since the early days of the First Five-Year Plan. The budget for social insurance has grown from one billion rubles in 1927 to more than five billion in 1934. Social insurance in the Soviet Union is much broader in scope than in any other country. In addition to providing the usual protection against the financial effects of disability, sickness, old age, and death, the Soviets have developed an elaborate system of rest homes, sanitariums, and cultural activities; these are made available to workers without charge and paid for out of the social-insurance funds. Large sums are also spent on housing, feeding of new-born infants, camps for children, and students' stipends. Thus the Soviets have developed a positive concept of social security which should ultimately reduce the need for remedial measures of the type found elsewhere.

The New Constitution and Civil Rights

Critics of the Soviet Union will concede most of the material and social gains listed above, but will insist that they have been attained by the almost complete destruction of individual liberties. Interpretation of the rights of the individual in Russia is rendered difficult by the seeming contradiction between the terms of the new constitution and the ruthless house-cleaning carried out during the past year. Many of the provisions of the constitution are the most democratic in the world. Elections are to be direct by secret ballot, and there is to be no disqualification on grounds of race, sex, class origin, or religious belief. The right to work for a living is assured to all citizens. Personal property, such as income from work, savings, dwelling houses, and domestic articles, is protected by law. Citizens are guaranteed freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly and demonstration. These liberties are assured by placing public buildings, printing presses, and supplies of paper at the disposal of workers and their organizations. No one may be subject to arrest except upon the decision of a court or with the sanction of the prosecutor.

Yet the events of recent months seem to falsify the belief that individual liberties are gaining greater respect. No purge in the last ten years has been carried out with such ruthlessness. It has even been charged that Stalin seized the opportunity before the new elections, scheduled later this year, to rid himself of all persons who might lead an effective opposition. That spies, anti-Soviet elements, and conspirators have actually existed in great numbers cannot be doubted; but it is difficult to believe that all the persons convicted have been guilty of these crimes or that their activity constituted a serious menace to the Soviet state. In fairness it must be pointed out,

however, that foreigners have always tended to underestimate the depth of the hatred which the former bourgeoisie bore for the Soviets, and have failed to make full allowance for the strength of terrorist traditions in Russian life. The recognition of individual rights in the constitution cannot be turned aside as mere hypocrisy. Other countries, too, have found it difficult to close the gap between theory and practice in such matters.

The Soviets in World Affairs

The outstanding position of the Soviet Union in world councils today makes it difficult for us to recall that only a few years ago Russia was treated as a pariah among the nations. American recognition was not granted until late in 1933—sixteen years after the revolution. Entry into the League did not come until September, 1934. And it was not until the signing of the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance on May 2, 1935, and a similar agreement with Czechoslovakia a few days later, that the end of Soviet isolation in Europe was really achieved. Although the growth of international fascism in the past year has intensified the danger of war, the threat of a joint campaign against communism on the part of all the capitalist nations has evaporated in the face of this greater menace to democratic complacency. Even Russia's bitterest enemies have come to recognize the sincerity of its desire for peace.

Whether the shift in the policies of the Third International which has accompanied the changing role of the Soviet Union in world affairs represents a gain or loss to communism is a matter of sharp dispute. It cannot be said, however, that the prestige of the Communist Party in Spain, China, or France has diminished as a result of the new Soviet line. What losses there have been in Soviet influence in recent months can be attributed solely to the foreign reaction to the executions and mass arrests within the Soviet Union.

No brief summary of post-revolutionary developments can do justice to the complexity of Soviet life. It has proved impossible in these few pages even to touch on subjects of such profound importance as education, the new role of women and youth, social and economic planning, housing, the advances in science, technology, and the arts. Nor is space available for discussing the Polar flights and the significant reclamation and use of the Arctic regions. Soviet achievements in these diverse fields have become accepted by even the regime's worst foes. It is significant, moreover, that although the Soviet Union has been made the victim of an unprecedented campaign of vilification and misrepresentation in the past year, there is no longer anyone who predicts the early overturn of the world's first socialist state. Although its future may not be as bright as its most ardent supporters would suggest, no one today will deny that the Soviet Union has a future, or that this future will greatly influence the entire world.

"Purged" from the WPA

BY PAUL SANN

LAST April the United States Chamber of Commerce in its twenty-fifth annual meeting adopted a resolution declaring, "Employment has progressed to a point where private enterprise will require workers now on work-relief projects. Work relief (better known as WPA) should be brought to a close." The second sentence was a pious wish; the first an attempt to justify it. Mr. Roosevelt recently said that "returning prosperity" would cause the federal government "more and more to narrow the circle of its relief activities." The uncomfortable similarity between his statement and the chamber resolution has been anxiously noted in relief circles. Does this mean that the WPA is going to be junked in the not-too-distant future? Time alone will tell, but indications are plentiful.

The process of demobilization started last April when the President in a special message asked an appropriation of $1,500,000,000 for "recovery and relief" for the fiscal year ending July 30, 1938. When Congress voted that sum, it meant the WPA rolls would have to be slashed. In September, 1936, there were 2,481,516 persons on the WPA rolls. One year later the number stood at 1,456,000—a reduction of more than a million. The drop was partly accounted for by placements in private industry, but the great bulk of the cut—and no one denies this—was achieved by wholesale firings carried out irrespective of need.

The purge officially began on June 30. Two months later in New York City alone 37,000 WPA workers had been lopped off the rolls. Did private enterprise "require" them to such an extent that the majority are now happily earning their keep without the help of a benevolent government? Or have they been forced back on to home relief? One attempt has been made to find out. The New York *Post* sent questionnaires to 1,000 dismissed workers, a cross-section of the 37,000. The questionnaire was sent out almost three months after the firings began, giving the victims that much time in which to find the jobs so glibly promised by the Chamber of Commerce and the other apostles of "returning prosperity." The names had been selected at random so that all types of workers would be reached—skilled, unskilled, semi-skilled, clerical, professional, and so on.

The answers were collated early in October, by which time 271 replies had been received. This was a small percentage of the total, but its representative nature was

established through comparison with the official figures then available, as will be shown below. In any event, this is what the *Post's* statistician, Charles F. Uhl, found:

Of the 271 who replied, 146, or 53.9 per cent, were on home relief.

Four, or 1.5 per cent, had obtained full-time jobs.

Twenty-six, or 9.6 per cent, had part-time jobs and were not receiving relief in any form.

Eighteen, or 6.6 per cent, had part-time jobs but reported that their earnings were so low that they had been certified by the Emergency Relief Bureau for supplementary relief.

Eleven, or 4 per cent, had been reinstated by the WPA.

Sixty-six, or 24.4 per cent, had obtained neither jobs nor home relief and were living with friends or relatives or "struggling along."

Using these figures as a basis on the assumption that the survey was representative, Mr. Uhl arrived at the following estimate of what had become of the 37,000 dismissed workers: 19,856 had been forced on home relief; 544 had found full-time jobs; 3,536 had part-time jobs; 2,448 were existing on part-time earnings plus supplementary relief; 8,976 were in the no-job, no-relief class; and 1,496 had been reinstated.

How did this compare with the actual facts? Checks were possible in only three cases—the home-relief figure, the reinstatement figure, and, to a lesser degree, the no-job, no-relief figure. The Emergency Relief Bureau revealed that on the date the collation of replies started 19,946 dismissed workers had been certified for home relief. Thus the survey was within about 7 per cent of accuracy in that category. Paul Edwards, administrator of the four federal art projects, which accounted for 3,000 of those fired, reported that he had reinstated about 500 workers. Lieutenant Colonel Brehon B. Somervell, who has charge of all New York City WPA projects exclusive of the arts, refused to reveal how many of his 34,000 dismissed workers had been reinstated. The number was assuredly as high—quite possibly higher—than the arts figure, for WPA spokesmen admitted freely during the purge that a considerable number of veterans had been dropped contrary to the provision of the relief-appropriation act, not to mention citizens dropped as aliens because they could not produce their citizenship papers in the short time allowed for the purpose. Add to these the number reinstated for miscellaneous reasons, and the total number of reinstatements rises to well over 1,000. There again the survey figures closely approximate other estimates. Finally, the ERB reported that something like 75 per cent of the dismissed WPA workers who applied for home relief had been admitted to the rolls, leaving 25 per cent in the no-job, no-relief class. Mr. Uhl found that 24.4 per cent of the 271 who replied to the questionnaire were in this category.

It is interesting to note that a survey published in the Scripps-Howard papers shortly after the purge revealed that in several large cities the vast majority of those fired by the WPA had applied for home relief. Apparently there were few jobs to be had. Remarks appended to many of the replies to the *Post* questionnaire indicated the same thing. One man reported that the employment agencies would not even consider his application because he was an ex-WPA worker and "there weren't any jobs anyway." Many of the other remarks were to the same effect. The four who obtained jobs, incidentally, reported average earnings of $21.10 a week, with a doctor receiving the highest wage, $25 a week, and a laborer the lowest, $13; the other two were clerical workers. One of the questions asked by the *Post* was, "What kind of job are you seeking and at what salary?" The answers to this indicated that the average salary asked was $18.91 a week; it was less in many cases than what the person had received from the WPA. Half of those who replied had two or more dependents.

When the last Congress adjourned, it left one faint ray of hope—the Schwellenbach-Allen joint resolution prohibiting WPA officials from dropping workers who are unable to obtain jobs in private industry at salaries equivalent to their WPA incomes. The resolution is certain to be introduced when Congress reconvenes, but its chance of adoption has been considerably lessened by the President's recent utterances. On October 22 he said he was confident the $1,500,000,000 relief appropriation would be sufficient for the current fiscal year and that no deficiency appropriation would be asked. The meaning of this is clear: the White House will probably oppose the adoption of the Schwellenbach-Allen resolution if an effort is made to push it through, as its success would make a deficiency appropriation absolutely imperative. It is well to note here that the entire $1,500,000,000 appropriation was not for work relief; $175,000,000 was earmarked by Congress for the Resettlement Administration and the National Youth Administration.

Harry Hopkins, national WPA chief, estimated last April that the reduced sum available for work relief would allow for a relief roll throughout the year averaging 1,500,000 persons. The figure has fallen below that now, but Hopkins has said that the rolls will have to be increased to about 2,070,000 by January to take care of the usual rise during the cold months. Without a deficiency appropriation this means that in the spring another purge will have to be instituted in order to make the relief fund last through June 30.

Thus between January and July of next year, if Mr. Hopkins carries out his announced plans, the nation will witness the spectacle of a spurt in WPA employment followed by another sharp drop. The outlook is dark, especially in view of the fact that if the relief fund falls low enough, Mr. Hopkins may find it necessary to cut the rolls even below 1,500,000 after the winter expansion.

It is true of course that since March, 1936, there has been a steady upswing in private employment, with the first drop felt this fall. Despite improved employment conditions, however, New York City's home-relief bill threatens to rise to a new two-year high, although the case load dropped steadily from March, 1936, to June, 1937, when the effects of the purge began to be felt. Other principal cities, meager reports indicate, are having the same experience: the WPA's forced purges are wiping out the economies of the recovery years.

Swastika Over Brazil

BY NATHANIEL WEYL

A FEW weeks ago Getulio Vargas, Dictator-President of Brazil, ramrodded a bill through the Brazilian Congress which once more places that South American republic in a "state of war." The official excuse was the discovery of a vast Communist plot to seize power. The details of the plot were elaborated in penny-dreadful style by the high command of the Brazilian army, but it can be dismissed offhand as a pure fabrication, running completely counter to the world line of the Communist Party. A return to the "state of war" which obtained from November, 1935, through June, 1937, means that special military tribunals backed by the secret police are once more the supreme authority; that the arrest of congressmen and senators in violation of the constitution again becomes possible; in short, that democratic rights are suspended throughout the largest country of South America. The timing of the martial law pointed to its real purpose: to prevent the holding of the presidential election scheduled for January and to destroy the rising progressive movement which had been revitalized by the release of Senator Abel Chermont, Mayor of Rio de Janeiro, and other imprisoned leftists.

The rapid strides which Brazil is taking toward fascism can only be understood in terms of the Nazi drive for economic and political control in South America. "After the fascists win in Spain, they will start here in Brazil," was the warning issued a few months ago by Congressman Cafe Filho. And there is much to support his contention.

The Brazilian press has discovered that large shipments of arms—many of them made in Germany and transported on German vessels—are being smuggled into sections of Brazil already under fascist control. Brazil's fascist party, with a membership running into the hundreds of thousands, is being transformed into an efficient military force, and fascism is making serious inroads in the army. The Vargas government has even been charged with deporting Spanish republicans to the insurgent-held port of Vigo, where they are shot on arrival. The relation between President Vargas and the fascists of Brazil is indicated by the Hitler salute with which he greeted marching Integralistas in a demonstration in September, 1936.

The fascist nations have been making strenuous efforts to gain control of Brazil's agricultural and mineral resources, which are so extensive that they might conceivably spell the difference between victory and defeat in a European war. Gustav Schlotterer, special envoy of the Reich's Ministry of Economics, has proposed that Brazil make huge shipments of coffee, cocoa, beans, chilled and frozen meats, raw cotton, and hides to special points in Europe where they can be used by Germany in the event of war. Potentially even more important are the mineral resources. So eminent a geologist as H. Foster Bain estimates that the iron-ore deposits in Itabira are the richest in the world, and Brazil also contains abundant supplies of ferromanganese and nickel—two key materials in modern war.

The iron reserves of Brazil are supposedly dominated by British and American interests. Yet when the Itabira Iron Company applied for a new contract, giving it virtually a monopoly position and authorizing construction of a railroad and private port in the state of Espirito Santo, congressmen charged that the German steel magnate, Thyssen, was involved in the deal and that the Krupp works were planning to launch a Brazilian subsidiary. They also maintained that ten iron mines and a number of nickel mines are today openly or secretly controlled by German capital.

German commercial penetration—subsidized by the Reich through a compensation-mark agreement—has made terrific inroads in the Brazilian market. Last year German trade outstripped American, and the Reich moved into first place. The American Chamber of Commerce in Brazil issued a blast against this subsidized competition, describing it as "unscrupulous and unfair," and adding that German merchandise was undercutting American by from 10 to 40 per cent. Alarmed by German encroachment, the State Department negotiated a new Brazilian-American trade agreement and obtained an assurance from Finance Minister de Sousa Costa that United States trade would be protected against the subsidized competition of other nations. Despite this assurance, Germany's share of the Brazilian market during July broke all records.

Almost as active as Germany in the exploitation of Brazil is Japan. Dependent on the United States for key raw materials and aware that American hostility to its plans of empire may result in embargos, Tokyo is building a powerful economic base in South America. Every third bale of Brazilian cotton is grown by Japanese settlers, and over half the Japanese emigrants from Asia migrate to Brazil. An agreement between the Brazilian government and the Japanese colonization corporation which gives the latter 2,500,000 acres of land in the state of Amazonas provides for the establishment of a quasi-independent political and economic entity of Japanese colonists.

Colonization and subsidized trade play a large role in fascism's drive to control raw-material areas, since the dearth of capital prevents its reliance on penetration by investment. But the economic drive is now being reinforced by vigorous political measures. Germany realizes that its anxieties about Brazilian raw materials would

come to an end if the Integralist Party seized power. The triumph of fascism in Brazil would mean that a puppet government controlled by Berlin and Rome would rule a nation larger in land area than the United States and having within its borders more than half the population of South America. A fascist Brazil, moreover, could expand its political system outward into the dictator-ridden adjacent countries and smash to pieces President Roosevelt's ideal of a Western Hemisphere living at peace and in democracy. A "nationalist" rebellion in Brazil, which is clearly in preparation, would be in effect a European invasion of the Americas, though there would be no German, Italian, or Japanese soldiers on Brazilian soil. To all appearances it would be simply another Latin American civil war, and our State Department would be accused of dollar diplomacy and imperialism if it attempted to intervene. Menotti del Picchia, a well-known Brazilian writer of Italian descent who recently broke with the fascist movement, is quoted as follows in the newspaper *A Ordem:*

> Fascism in Brazil is led by Germany. The Reich's Department of Propaganda does not even attempt to hide it. Germany has sent 25,000 Mausers and a large quantity of other munitions which are being stored in Rio Negro and Porto Uniao. . . . Former war veterans from the German army are there in large numbers. They give the Germanic population military education. German ships visit the ports of Itajahy and São Francisco unexpectedly and unload arms.

The Brazilian War Department was recently informed that a large number of machine-guns were being smuggled into Brazil from Hamburg on the steamship Campos Salles. It announced its intention of confiscating them. And according to Congressman Filho, a certain "Herr von Cossal, an official of the German government and the representative of National Socialism in Brazil, . . . pledged the support of one million Brazilians to the Hitler cause" at a Nazi congress.

Although the Integralist movement wears the garments of rabid nationalism, it is in reality a hot-house product of German official intrigue. German firms compel their employees to join the Integralist movement, and German banks bring pressure on reluctant tradesmen. The German-owned slaughterhouse in Rio de Janeiro, Cortume Carioca, sees to it that all its workers join the fascist ranks. There is even a slogan written in huge letters on the wall of this factory: "Unser Land ist ein Stück von Deutschland" (Our land is a part of Germany).

Despite its foreign origin the Integralist movement has enormous strength. Italian and German colonists numbering more than 600,000 give it a broad base in the urban middle class. Claiming a membership of a million, the fascists have elected 450 state deputies and 20 mayors. In addition, the Integralists have penetrated officer groups in the army and have the active support of the police. This is a factor of almost decisive importance because Brazil's government since 1935 has been a police dictatorship.

The Vargas government and the Brazilian press have shown open favoritism toward the fascist rebellion in Spain. While the unofficial representative of Franco basks in the sunshine of governmental approval, workers who raise money for the support of the Spanish Loyalist government, which Brazil still recognizes, are arrested and the funds raised are confiscated by the police. According to Brazilian exiles here, the Vargas government has not permitted Spanish Loyalist vessels to touch at Brazilian ports.

Germany and Italy offer military scholarships to the young cadets of the South American armies. After a year or so abroad these students, now convinced fascists, return to their own countries to take high positions in the army. Nuclei of disaffection are formed around them, and very soon the armed forces are permeated with explosive elements. These young officers play a role of the utmost importance in the political life of South America. The situation in this respect is comparable to that in Japan, and in both instances the cause is the concentrated industrial growth superimposed on a primitive peasant society.

Washington is by no means oblivious to the threatened fascist domination of South America, nor is it accidental that President Roosevelt recently declared: "If those things come to pass in other parts of the world, let no one imagine that America will escape, that this Western Hemisphere will not be attacked and that it will continue tranquilly and peacefully to carry on the ethics and the arts of civilization." The conversations this summer between the Brazilian financial mission and Washington officials resulted in two agreements which are of importance in this connection. By the first Brazil committed itself to make no more trade agreements with Germany which would permit government-subsidized merchandise to drive American commodities from the Brazilian market. The second permitted Rio de Janeiro to lease certain obsolete American war vessels for training purposes. Since these ships would be under the command of American officers, the proposed program would tend to offset fascist influence in the armed forces and would furnish the Brazilian government with vessels which could be used to quell a fascist rebellion. While Argentina attacked the destroyer program, Chile was enthusiastic over this proposal to arm its neighbor. Perhaps this can best be explained by the theory that Washington is considering a similar deal with Chile, thus forming the nucleus for a pan-American navy. Nazi penetration has reached enormous proportions in Chile also, and that country's mineral resources would be of paramount importance in the event of war.

The weakness of any such plan is that it rests on the assumption that the Vargas government is economically compelled to side with the United States, while in fact the political trend toward fascism in Brazil results strictly from that country's economic orientation toward Italy and Germany. The present Brazilian policy of playing Germany against the United States in the grand manner of Mexico's Porfirio Díaz involves the ominous possibility that South American General Francos may turn another continent into a shambles.

Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

WITHOUT communicating with me a New York City radical newspaper announced that a radio station was giving time to Fritz Kuhn, the Nazi leader in this country, and that I would introduce him to the radio audience. A suggestion that I make the introduction was forwarded to me by the Civil Liberties Union in the hope that I would take the air and say what I thought about Nazis in general and Fritz Kuhn in particular. I flatly declined. It may be narrow-minded and intolerant of me, but I refuse to go on the air with a man whose professed beliefs run completely counter to every American institution and all the principles of our democracy. If this is intolerant I wish to be intolerant. "On this subject I do not wish to speak or write with moderation"—and I never have done so. Back in 1915, when the German-American Alliance was taking money from the German government through Count Bernstorff and the German embassy in Washington, I delivered an address at Stockbridge, Massachusetts, denouncing these fraudulent American citizens. Their program at that time included, among other things, the introduction of the German language into every school in the United States and the setting aside of time for the teaching of German *Kultur*. I did not know then that the German-American Alliance was taking German money or I should have used much stronger language than I did. As it was I won the bitter opposition of the professional pro-Germans. I still desire their ill-will.

The fact that I have German blood in my veins makes me boil over at the suggestion that that should influence me in my loyalty to the United States or in my devotion to democratic principles. I am an American and not a hyphenate, and I deny that any intellectually honest or sincere person can have a divided allegiance. This talk of Baron von Neurath and Adolf Hitler and General Göring about once a German always a German is the most scandalous nonsense. It presupposes that every German who has taken the oath of allegiance to the country to which he has emigrated—to the United States or to Brazil or to Switzerland—is ready to lie and to cheat and to perjure himself; Secretary Hull was right in immediately denouncing Baron von Neurath's statement that Germany would never allow any other country to interfere with its contention that a German is a German whether he takes an oath to serve another country or not. If this doctrine of a double allegiance and double citizenship were put in practice generally, it would certainly produce a chaotic condition in those countries—and there are many of them—in which there are large numbers of citizens of foreign birth or ancestry. No country with any self-respect would tolerate this situation for a moment.

The interesting thing is that it is only the Germans who take this position. France does not, Russia does not, and not even Mussolini has announced this doctrine in precisely this crass form. I regret to state that this confirms me in a judgment that I have been very slow to admit—that there is a grave ethical flaw in the German character. I know that it is impossible to indict a whole people, and yet I am overwhelmed by the piled-up evidence that Germans have no ethical standards when it comes to what they call serving their country. When I was a boy in a German school, the teachers extolled to us the cheating and falsification of the German statesmen and military leaders who got around Napoleon's disarming of Germany. With the exception of Von Ossietzky and a few others, I have not found a German who had the slightest moral reaction against the similar deliberate violation of the Treaty of Versailles, which the Germans had pledged their national honor to observe. Likewise I have not found a German who has adopted the Nazi philosophy who has ever shown any moral disapproval of Hitler's slaughter of 1,254 Germans in one night—not 77 as he told the Reichstag in assuming "complete responsibility" for that horrible deed.

As for Kuhn, I do not consider him a loyal American. He wears a foreign uniform, marches under a foreign flag, and upholds doctrines entirely inimical to the American republic, although he is apparently an American citizen. I believe in the right of free speech as much as anybody, and I approve of Mayor LaGuardia's permitting the German-American Bund to march in Yorkville on the Saturday before the election, but I am hoping that the Civil Liberties Union will join some of us in the effort to get a law through Congress at the next session forbidding the wearing of a foreign uniform and the carrying of a foreign flag in the United States. This may work hardship perhaps on certain honest American citizens of foreign extraction—for instance, the Poles and the Czechs—who like to carry the flag of the country from which they came. But carrying the swastika is a different matter. It is a vile flag; it connotes the cruelest and wickedest racial prejudice; it is stained with the blood of many thousands of innocent people; it is an offense wherever it appears. I would no more appear on the same platform with Fritz Kuhn than I would voluntarily associate with a rattlesnake. The Hitler government has announced its intention to work against democracy everywhere. It is the greatest menace to the peace and welfare of the world that exists, and I shall oppose it with every drop of blood in my body and with the last breath that I may draw.

BOOKS *and the* ARTS

RUSSIA: ESCAPE FROM PROPAGANDA

BY EDMUND WILSON

THE first two of these books* about the Soviet Union are of relatively little importance. Lion Feuchtwanger is simply the last of the eminent literary visitors to Russia to be stuffed by the Soviet publicity service. This service seems to have found in Herr Feuchtwanger a subject of ideal innocence and ignorance; and there is hardly anything in his little book which might not have been written by that service itself. Herr Feuchtwanger spent only ten weeks in Russia, and he sounds as if he had passed his whole time, not in getting around for himself—difficult enough during one's first ten weeks—but in being taken at the right time to the right places and having official apologies poured into him. It is curious that this professional novelist should include in his entire account scarcely a single piece of direct observation. He did witness the Pyatakov-Radek trials and does tell us something about them; but his description of the behavior of the accused seems actually to bear out the theory that the trials were a frame-up rather than to support the official version, which he indorses. Karl Radek, he says, "often . . . smote the barrier with his newspaper or took up his glass of tea, threw a piece of lemon in, stirred it up, and whilst he uttered the most atrocious things, drank it in little sips. . . . But most startling of all, and difficult of explanation, was the gesture with which Radek left the court after the conclusion of the proceedings. . . . He turned round, raised a hand in greeting, shrugged his shoulders very slightly, nodded to the others, his friends who were condemned to death, and smiled. Yes, he smiled."

The special purpose in stuffing Herr Feuchtwanger was evidently to refute André Gide, whose "Retour de l'U. R. S. S." registered a gagging against the stuffing operation. M. Gide has now published another small book reinforcing the convictions of his first. The early part of this supplemental report consists of statistical data of a kind which has been collected and presented by other writers in a more complete form. The second part contains further anecdotes of his journey, significant and sharply observed. The last section is largely made up of letters from foreigners who have worked in the Soviet Union and who corroborate Gide's observations; this is perhaps the most valuable part of the book. But Gide himself was in Russia only a few weeks, and his notes are not entirely free from his habitual perversity and malice. He had approached the Soviet Union with something of the unconscious utopianism of one who had been using his conception of the anti-religious morality of Russia as a switch to sting the French bourgeoisie.

But with Herbart, Beal, Lyons, and Serge, we come to a group of former Communists or Communist sympathizers who have lived and worked in Russia and whose testimony must carry weight. Pierre Herbart is a French intellectual who went to Moscow to edit the French edition of *International Literature;* Fred Beal is an American labor organizer who had charge of the "propaganda and cultural relations" of the foreign workers in a tractor factory at Kharkov; Eugene Lyons is a New York journalist who spent the best part of five years in Moscow as correspondent to the United Press; and Victor Serge, a Communist and a Russian, was the editor of the official magazine *Communist International* and a member of the executive committee of the Comintern. Their accounts are all consistent with one another; taken together, they fill in a picture as appalling as it is convincing; and it is impressive that they should all have chosen this moment —the morrow of the Moscow trials—to put on public record their experiences and their conclusions.

Pierre Herbart marks this moment distinctly. He had accompanied André Gide on the latter's Soviet tour, and his impressions had been much the same as Gide's. But he had tried to dissuade Gide from publishing his notes and remonstrated with him publicly after he had done so: one must take the bad with the good, one must wait for the future, etc. Now, however, he says, "Too many witnesses agree for me to allow myself to be longer in doubt or to be silent any longer. It has now become impossible to defend the U. S. S. R. without lying and knowing that one lies. Such a course cannot serve the revolution." The most valuable part of M. Herbart's book is his account of the political terror as it has lately been closing down again on the activities of writers and artists and, in particular, of his own futile struggles in connection with *International Literature.* He says that his work was a Penelope's web, which he would diligently weave every day to find undone by the bureaucrats every morning. He includes a curious document by an old French woman who had spent thirty years in Russia; it is a journal of hardship and delay which has the horror of one of those dreams in which we seem to spend interminable hours in mysteriously frustrated attempts to accomplish something very simple.

Fred E. Beal, on the other hand—his book has already

* "Moscow, 1937." By Lion Feuchtwanger. Viking Press. $2.
"Retouches à Mon Retour de l'U. R. S. S." By André Gide. Gallimard: Paris. 9 francs.
"En U. R. S. S., 1936." By Pierre Herbart. Gallimard: Paris. 13.50 francs.
"Proletarian Journey." By Fred E. Beal. Hillman-Curl. $2.75.
"Assignment in Utopia." By Eugene Lyons. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.
"Russia Twenty Years After." By Victor Serge. Hillman-Curl. $2.50.
"A Medical Review of Soviet Russia." By W. Horsley Gantt. British Medical Association: London.

been reviewed in *The Nation,* but it must also be included here—is an American textile worker and labor leader who judges the Soviet Union from a strictly working-class point of view. A member of the Communist Party, hero and victim of the Gastonia frame-up, he gradually realized in Moscow what he had already begun to feel at home: that an American worker, however able, however devoted to the cause, became in his relations to the party a pawn in the hands of an officialdom not merely indifferent to his fate as an individual but quite remote from and unscrupulously ruthless with the working class as a whole. In Moscow he found the workers getting "thin cabbage soup, black bread, and tea," varied three days a week with boiled fish, because the Soviets were obliged to export their food products in order to buy capitalist machinery, and only the members of the privileged groups were allowed to get the good things at home; he found child labor in Uzbekistan, where the children who worked in the silk mills, retrieving cocoons from "near-boiling water," had their hands turned to "crippled masses of boiled flesh" and where the children who worked in the cotton fields were driven until they dropped. In the Ukraine, during the famine of 1932-33, when the government left the peasants to their fate, the foreigners were besieged by the starving, and one went out for country walks—he has a terrible picture of this—among villages in which all the inhabitants had died and which were officially to be wiped out with fire. When a foreign delegation of tourists were to be brought to visit Kharkov, the Young Communists and the G. P. U. men would round up the wretched famine sufferers, with their scurvy, their bare feet, and their boils, and ship them out into the wilderness to die. In Moscow the visiting radical writers drank vodka, worshiped Stalin, and hoped each "to write a best seller or a popular play about the coming revolution and settle down on a farm in Pennsylvania," while the visiting trade-union radicals bolted themselves drearily into their hotel rooms together and kept themselves as drunk as possible. When Beal tried to call a meeting for the purpose of organizing the foreigners in charge of whom he had been placed, he was at once stopped by the local G. P. U. chief, who told him, "None of your American democracy!"; and when an American worker at Kharkov attempted to bring the current famine to the attention of the visiting Communist at the head of the foreign section of the All-Soviet Tractor Trust, he only elicited the retort: "Where do you think you are—Union Square?"

Fred Beal is, of course, no great social philosopher; and, with all his idealism and his courage, he is evidently a fellow of rather wavering purpose. But his story seems to me important in showing how, in Communist practice, the ordinary Russian or foreign worker, as distinguished from the manipulator of the worker or from the worker who wants to climb into this class, is likely to get the sharp end of the stick.

Eugene Lyons, another old radical, also trained in the theory of the class struggle, describes the same situation as seen from above instead of from below. "Assignment in Utopia" is the best book of Moscow memoirs, so far as my reading goes, which has yet been produced by a professional journalist. Mr. Lyons evidently writes more frankly and he certainly covers more ground than any other newspaperman, with the exception of William Henry Chamberlin. What makes his record particularly fascinating is his method of presenting his subject, not in the form of a treatise, as Chamberlin did, but in terms of month-by-month events, so that we can follow the shifting situations and the variations in the psychological atmosphere. There is too much in "Assignment to Utopia" for me to summarize it easily here; but Mr. Lyons has first-hand accounts of, among other things, the aspect of life during the NEP period, the Shakhty, Ramzin, and Metro-Vickers trials—the most vivid and most illuminating descriptions of these "demonstration trials" which I have seen—the opening of the Turk-Sib railroad, and an interview with Stalin. One of the most sensational features of his book is his chapter, based on first-hand reports by Russians who had been subjected to them, of the tortures practiced by the G. P. U. for the purpose of extorting valuta from persons suspected of hoarding it—persons in many cases perfectly innocent. Mr. Lyons endeavors to estimate the success of the Five-Year Plan and shows that the figures were juggled even by Stalin in the most obvious and unscrupulous fashion to conceal from the people the inadequacies of its results. Like the writers of these other books, he gives a picture of a specialized official class dragooning and terrorizing the population. Like Fred Beal, he had been active back home in the Sacco-Vanzetti defense, and like him he is surprised at the liberals who have championed Sacco and Vanzetti and Mooney but who have had no difficulty in swallowing the conviction of thousands of Soviet political offenders who have been imprisoned or put to death with no evidence, no defense, and sometimes without even public charges. It appears that the Soviet authorities had the sullen and reluctant Fred Beal, who had picketed the Boston State House and fought the police at Charlestown jail, parading past the Palace of Labor on the night of the Ramzin trial and shouting, "Death to the wreckers!"

Mr. Lyons concludes that "the crime of Bolshevism is that it tore down the whole ethical structure, retaining only the economic framework. Because it was born in a land where the democratic and humanist ideals were practically unknown, in a land still feudalistic in its thinking, Bolshevism merely adapted the mechanism of socialist economy to its old slave psychology." And, traveling in Europe, he felt in general that "individual human beings were being degraded, brutalized, tortured, and murdered for the glorification of some abstraction of class or race." From the point of view of either abstraction, "life was plentiful—and worthless." The moral collapse of Europe was, he says, "far more terrible than its economic collapse"; and he returned to the United States "convinced that the immediate task—for those who have the urge to participate consciously in the historical processes of their lifetime—is to defend the basic concepts of freedom, humaneness, intellectual integrity, respect for life."

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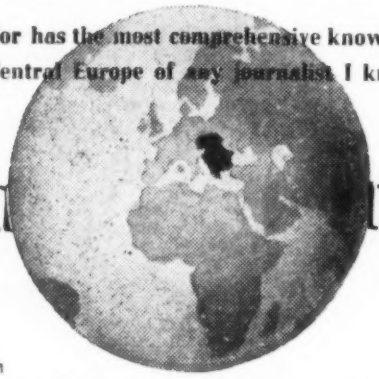

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Plot and Counterplot

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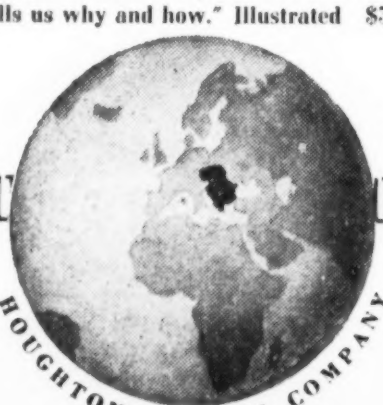
BY MARCEL FODOR

FOR MANY YEARS Marcel Fodor has been Central European correspondent of the Manchester Guardian. Dorothy Thompson says: "He has opened up Central and Eastern Europe for the English-speaking world, and has written or caused to be written practically every important dispatch that has come from this section." And John Gunther adds: "He has the most comprehensive knowledge of Central Europe of any journalist I know. The fate of all of us may be decided in some Jugo-slav village or Hungarian coffee-shop. In this book Fodor tells us why and how." Illustrated $3.50



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What Mr. Lyons does not give us, aside from this brief indication, is an explanation of what has happened in Russia. This we find in Victor Serge's book "Russia Twenty Years After," which is one of the most important works that have yet been published on the Soviet Union. Victor Serge, who is the son of exiled Russian revolutionists, returned to Russia in 1919 and became a member of the executive committee of the Communist International. He was twice imprisoned, after the Trotsky-Stalin split, as a member of the opposition, and was only released and allowed to leave the Union in 1936 as a result of agitation by friends abroad. His book is thus, I believe, the first inside report by a Russian which has reached the outside world.

Mr. Serge confirms these other writers in his account of the valuta tortures and of the stifling of science and art; and he has a series of sickening chapters on the persecution of political offenders. He shows how the bureaucracy got its grip on the party, with the accession of the new non-Bolshevik members, even before Lenin's death, and traces the effects at home of the incompetent action abroad of a bureaucratized Comintern. The Comintern, he believes, was ultimately responsible for the prevention of the 1923 uprising in Germany—in the preparations for which Serge himself took an active part. This discouraged the Russian workers and shut the Soviets in on themselves, with their "economic difficulties aggravated, their morale depressed, their international revolutionary tendencies weakened, and their national bureaucratic tendencies strengthened." The Five-Year Plan accomplished a good deal: it gave Russia an "industrial structure," but the amelioration of the condition of the people did not work out according to the plan—the gigantic feats of collectivization and construction having been imposed on the people not otherwise than Peter the Great had imposed St. Petersburg on the bogs of the Gulf of Finland, mowing down human lives like timber. In the course of the carrying out of the plan, the fear of collapse as the result of an attack from abroad which might precipitate a revolt at home caused Stalin to shift industrial effort to the task of manufacturing armaments. Thereafter the Red Army will become one of the privileged groups, educated and fed at the expense of the rest of the population, and will reestablish within itself the old military hierarchy of rank; and the imminence of war will be used as an excuse for the further suppression of opinion and of any action against the Stalinist bureaucracy—the whole going to prove Trotsky's thesis of the impossibility of building socialism in one country. Not that it is impossible to build something, and even something solid, but that that something will not be socialism.

I am not sure that any of these books gives a properly balanced account of what has been happening during these twenty years in Russia. Fred Beal went to the Soviet Union with utopian expectations and with no idea of what backward countries were like. Eugene Lyons, who spent some of the best years of his life whooping it up for the Soviets, has reacted by venting his smothered criticism in a book entirely negative and sour. Victor Serge, as a member of the Trotsky opposition, who has

spent a good deal of his time in prison, is naturally depressed and embittered. Nowhere in these books will you find much account of the genuine idealism and heroism on the part of the upper groups in Russia which obviously played such a part in the early stages of the revolution and which could still be seen surviving alongside of the bureaucratic vices when the reviewer visited the Soviet Union a couple of years ago. I believe that William Henry Chamberlin probably cast up a cooler account in "Russia's Iron Age," though it is true that that book was written at a time when the Soviet government had not gone so far in the direction of fascism as it seems to have done since.

"What is left of the conquests of the proletarian revolution?" asks Victor Serge, and answers: "Socialized economy, directed by a single plan, whose power proved extraordinary during the period when capitalism was struggling against the slump. A definite frontier in economics has been crossed. The accession to civilization of the backward nationalities of the old empire. The vigorous first draft for a transformation of man."

It is worth while in this connection to mention Dr. Horsley Gantt's pamphlet, "A Medical Review of Soviet Russia." Dr. Gantt is an American pupil of Pavlov, who visited the Soviet Union four times between 1922 and 1935 and who worked there for five years. He tells about the horrors of the famines and of the epidemics of typhus which accompanied them. The famine of 1932-33, he says, was better handled than that of 1920-23, and the authorities were able to avert epidemics by the measures which so shocked Fred Beal, of keeping the starving peasants out of the cities. Mr. Lyons gives a gloomy account, based on his experience in Moscow during the illness of his wife, of the condition of medicine in Russia. But Dr. Gantt says that with all their obstructions and shortcomings—and he neither minimizes the political terror nor fails to criticize Russian methods—the Soviets are making unmistakable progress. The number of beds in city and village hospitals tripled between 1913 and 1932, and increased between then and 1934 from 30 to 45 per cent in the various parts of the Union. The accommodations for tuberculosis cases increased from 300 in 1918 to 40,000 in 1932, by which year 40 per cent of the hospitals and 30 per cent of the polyclinics had physico-therapeutic equipment when only one such institution had been so equipped before the revolution. Between 1913 and 1934 the number of children in crèches increased from 10,000 to 3,700,000. He reminds us that such figures as these do not represent a perfect basis for comparison, because they do not take account of the facilities for private treatment before the revolution; but even so the advance is remarkable. He says that since his first visit to Russia he has seen the plans for medical schools and laboratories carried out on a scale and with a rapidity which almost made it impossible for him to believe that he had returned to the same country.

If this is true—and Dr. Gantt has lived long enough in Russia not to swallow official figures unwarily—his evidence is very important.

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BOOKS

Memoirs of a Fighting Writer

COUNTER-ATTACK IN SPAIN. By Ramon Sender. Translated by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

ONE of the most curious phenomena of this age of rapid communications is the length of time that elapses between the first news of an event and the emergence of it as a fact, complete with all essential details. The news comes with almost no delay—what happens in Spain today is served up tomorrow on American breakfast tables. That, at least, is the illusion that the newspapers foster, and with exceptions and qualifications it is a tenable claim. But a news dispatch is little more than a flash in the sky to show where something is happening. The full, round body of that happening, with its causes, its significance, and its implications, follows with painful slowness.

For that reason alone Ramon Sender's "Counter-Attack in Spain" would be valuable. The Spanish war has been going on for fifteen months, but there are still important pieces missing from the mosaic of its first days, and many of these Sender supplies. His book might well be subtitled "Memoirs of a Fighting Writer from July to December, 1936." It tells with moving clarity just what happened to Sender himself—and it was what happened to any number of sensitive and intelligent young Spaniards—when the first news of Franco's revolt in Morocco reached the mainland. The young novelist and his wife were on vacation in San Rafael, a mountain town north of Madrid, in company with a scientist who bore the pacific title Controller of Forests.

"The radio brought me the news," he says of the first day. "The first explosion had burst in Morocco, as the captain of the Foreign Legion had foretold. . . . The radio appealed to the liberal and republican spirit of the country. But that, I thought, would not get very far. Whole regiments had rebelled in Madrid, and the news from the provinces was confused. All the army in Africa was in revolt."

He went to place himself at the orders of the governor of the province and found that the governor had been shot by the rebels. The Civil Guard of San Rafael went in motor trucks to join them. He and the Controller of Forests tried to organize local resistance. A truck full of civil guardsmen came back and shot the citizens who happened at the moment to be standing in the town square.

The book moves from the terrifying confusion of that first day, when no man knew who was friend and who might shoot him down at sight, to the relatively high degree of order and organization which Madrid reached by late December, when the Franco advance had been stopped at University City and the workers' groups were taking hold behind the lines. Nothing that has been written hitherto gives the picture of the struggle with such clarity and completeness. No foreigner, however good his intentions, could do the job with such authentic reality, for no foreigner could report from within the mind of an intelligent Spaniard. And the importance of this war lies not alone in the fate of international aspirations and the ownership of mines and naval bases, but in its effect on the Spanish people.

The book is alive with people, pictured with quick, sure strokes. It is full of comment on little things and big, so that

one seems to move with Sender and see through his eyes the streets, the camps, the houses. And it adds its bit of testimony to the charge of repeated and habitual mass murder which no amount of emotional denial on the part of friends of the rebels is able to quiet: ". . . the Fascists have assassinated 27,000 persons (more than a third of them women) in Granada, where there was no fighting, and in Zamorra (a little town of 15,000 inhabitants, far from all the fronts) 5,500, and in Pamplona, which has always been at peace, 17,000, among them women for having 'married civilly and not canonically' and men for 'having voted for the Popular Front.' Let us remember also that they have assassinated all the liberal professors of universities and colleges and their women, all the pacific Protestant professors, and the Catholic priests who refused to proclaim the glories of Franco from their pulpits." The record stands.

Sender is known in this country as the author of "Seven Red Sundays," a novel which a *Nation* reviewer described with some disdain as clarifying the character of the Spanish revolutionary, while so "muddying the realities of anarcho-syndicalism that after 439 pages one is still without a decent understanding of the issues involved." As a matter of fact, that kaleidoscopic book gives an excellent picture of the chaos of issues, ideals, and aspirations which then prevailed among most Spaniards. Read as a prelude to "Counter-Attack in Spain," it not only provides background but leads directly into the mid-July confusion with which the latter book starts. The contrast between its shifting, flashing scenes and the quiet determination which grows as the war months pass is a measure of Sender's ability to transmit the reality that underlies the crowding of events.

The translation is the work of Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell, who was resident in Malaga when the revolt broke out, and who is famous in its literature for the concise letter he wrote to the London *Times* telling exactly what happened there. Though there are evidences of haste, he has managed to keep the flavor of the original without making the book too alien for the casual reader. Both as a moving piece of first-hand testimony and as the work of an artist "Counter-Attack in Spain" has a right to live.

MILDRED ADAMS

Poems in Dry-Point

THE LAST LOOK AND OTHER POEMS. By Mark Van Doren. Henry Holt and Company. $2.

IF AN equivalent to these poems could be found in another medium, it would be in the art of etching. There is no music, or at most an abstract music. The tones are delicate grays and austere blacks and whites. Only a few strokes, meticulously and economically drawn, are needed to suggest the bleakness of a landscape or the angularity of a person. The suasion is of the mind and not of the senses, yet the poet is concerned less to develop an idea than to suggest an evaluation.

Many of the poems are portrait sketches of lonely people or dying people, whose life's thread is laid bare in a revelatory incident, simile, or gesture. Sometimes it is a fluttering or an awkwardness of the hands which tells their story. We are shown all that we need to know about a sick woman when we see her healed by watching a wind storm outside her window. In another poem the distant bleat of the amateur cornetist, who was once pitied as a crank, now suffices to give the solitary listener assurance that lives go on and not in utter isolation.

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Although time seems to be arrested in these poems, they are not undramatic. Instead of unfolding the play, the poet gives us the climax in cross-section. The drama is in the situation, in the tension of wills, the clinging to values; so that the outcome is clearly foreshadowed, or does not matter. Eight four-line stanzas, for example, tell us more about the black share-cropper and his sense of life than would an exhaustive sociological survey in verse. Faint from hunger, he dozes by his cold stove, "while white men prowl outdoors in dark disguises" and occasionally fire shots that do not wake him. This is the culmination of his dream, in which he sees himself walking along the railroad track:

> He moves among the low weeds, mute as they.
> The wrappings of his feet are gauze on gravel.
> And when the white, the black men pass him, slow,
> The greeting of each eye is round and civil.

The theme of this poem is a popular one today; Mr. Van Doren's treatment of it serves as a reminder that understatement has its uses.

The melancholy in these poems does not, like that of Eliot, spring from a conviction of original sin or, as with Auden, from contemplation of the world's lunacy. The poet seems to be trying to rationalize it in the opening stanza of the book:

> That any thing should be—
> Place, time, earth, error—
> And a round eye in man to see;
> That was the terror.

This is a marvelous statement of a mood that must often recur to every reflective mind; but an obsession with the prime mystery is not, perhaps, sufficient to account for an outlook that is tinged with a gentle debility. On this score, the author has himself accepted and acknowledged the limitations of his work:

> I sing of ghosts and people under ground,
> Or if they live, absented from green sound.
> Not that I dote on death or being still;
> But what men would is seldom what they will. . . .

When these restrictions in scope have once been noted, it would be misplaced emphasis to dwell on them. The best of the poems, such as Axle Song, Animal-Worship, The Good Fates, The Whisperer, The Bundle, The Breathing Spell, and The End, are flawless after their kind. If there is such a thing as a main stream of letters, they are doubtless not at its center. Yet subtlety and justness of psychological insight, precision of language, and neatness of form are qualities that are not too abundant at any time; they are particularly rare today. PHILIP BLAIR RICE

View of Indian Life

THE ENEMY GODS. By Oliver La Farge. Houghton Mifflin Company. $2.50.

IN 1930 Oliver La Farge became a director of the National Association on Indian Affairs. This new novel of his is a fictionalized account of the problems with which, as a man actively in touch with the governmental side of Indian life, he is familiar. It is quite unlike the simple and romantic "Laughing Boy"—less easily read but containing more information and much more accurate in its Indian psychology.

The enemy gods are the two powers, Indian and white, struggling in the soul of a Navajo schoolboy. Myron takes the "Jesus way," then, returning to his people, finds himself ill-adjusted to their life. He returns to the white people only to be treated as a menial. In the end, because of the love of an Indian girl, he decides to help the Navajos learn scientific methods of sheep-herding, farming, and sanitation in order that they may continue to exist on their desert territory. Obviously Mr. La Farge is against having the Indians treated as charity wards of the government.

The whole book is an argument. As a novel it is too crammed with facts and with characters to be good narrative. Moreover, even the leading character is hardly exciting. He is, in fact, rather inarticulate and pathetic. It is almost impossible for a white writer to make an Indian character understandable. The book has, to be sure, some amusing satirical studies of our greedy politicians, our unscrupulous cattlemen, and the ignorance and red tape that beset Indian affairs in Washington. Actually the white characters are better drawn than the Indians in the book, although—perhaps because—the author is not in sympathy with them and wishes to exalt the virtues of the Navajos. The book remains, I think, a fictionalized survey rather than a novel and might better have been presented as Mr. La Farge's views on Indian life.

When the story ends, we are not sure to what extent its Indian hero will succeed in reconciling his birth and his education, nor are we inclined to believe that the younger men of the tribe will take the lead before the older generation dies. Education and white civilization will in time breed a very different Indian. These people cannot persist in isolation. Already they are using some of the white man's machines to save themselves; and as is often the case with a people in contact with a new culture, they are acquiring the worst aspects of American civilization. But today many writers and thinkers are concerning themselves with the problem, and possibly progress is being made. EDA LOU WALTON

Dead Letters

A LETTER TO ROBERT FROST AND OTHERS. By Robert Hillyer. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

MR. HILLYER'S most recent book of verse is in the form of seven letters, as intimate and cozening and coy as anyone would want them to be. At first glance they really seem intended for the eyes of their addressees, so free are the clichés, so unselfconscious the forced rhymes, so unrestrained the metaphoric gaucheries. But as one continues carefully one discovers sly reference to Spain, to bolshevism, to T. S. Eliot, to "refined and thrifty" Louis Untermeyer, to "rusty" Gerard Manley Hopkins, to Ezra Pound ("whose absence should make Idaho rejoice"), to gin and war and Queen Nefertiti.

One discovers—except in the invocation to Nefertiti, which seems extraneous to the formal purpose of the volume—that Mr. Hillyer's letters are merely a pretext for publicly airing somewhat private and postscripted opinions and generalizations ("Men . . . must rise with crocuses, not fall with Spain"). However, the letters rhyme and scan and have various obligations to poetry which remain unfulfilled. Aesthetically, they are on the level of gossip; imaginatively, they extend no farther than the attic with its sentimental tokens and broken, half-remembered things. Mr. Hillyer is at his best in the letter addressed to his son, which has a pleasant hearthside quality, a folksy kind of philosophy, and is generally worthy of comparison with such a classic as "The One-Horse Shay." As for the other poems—one feels they will disappoint the large audience which follows the

careers of literary prize-winners. Mr. Hillyer seems to have lost his lyric "touch" and sense of verbal delicacy. True, he has simply attempted to be both frivolous and sage, but his play is too often kangaroo-footed, and his observations on society, traditions, and his contemporaries at large are pretentious and personal. As a device the letter form is in itself ingenious; more likely than not the reader, instead of experiencing a critical reaction, will merely find himself embarrassed at having read someone else's mail.

CHRISTOPHER LAZARE

DRAMA

Two Legends

AT THE Shubert Theater the ushers will offer to sell you a short course in Greek mythology. You will not, however, be likely to need it, for "Amphitryon 38" is explicit enough even for the unlearned, and no one will go home still believing that Jupiter paid a visit to earth merely for the sake of having a heart-to-heart talk with the wife of a hero. The author, Jean Giraudoux, has taken no more liberties with the story than some of his thirty-seven predecessors took before him, but he has managed to give it some original twists and he has turned out a philosophical dialogue upon the subject of adultery at least as witty as any previously achieved by his assiduous countrymen during the course of some centuries of almost monomaniacal devotion to that particular topic. "Amphitryon 38" might, indeed, very well have been called "Forbidden Fruit 38,000."

The production is, among other things, very good fun. It is amusing to see Alfred Lunt reclining upon a cloud, just as it is amusing to see him enter toward the end in the full majesty of a beard falling in hieratic ringlets upon his breast. Incidentally, also, it should be remarked that the whole business of parodying gently the daily life of the Greeks is managed with delicate moderation and that Mr. Lunt and Miss Fontanne have never been better suited than in these roles which exploit the most distinctive of their talents—that for the kind of acting which involves an almost imperceptible wink to the audience and which establishes what was called long ago the paradox of the comedian. Neither should one fail to remark that Richard Whorf as Mercury is almost as good in much the same way. But "Amphitryon 38" is more than a lark. Behind the wit and the mere spoofing alike lie the Frenchman's profound conviction that the charm of variety in love is a mystery at least as important and inexhaustible as any suggested by metaphysics or theology. If the gods themselves seek erotic adventures, that does not imply that the gods are trivial but only that amorous curiosity is, after all, very nearly godlike.

As Giraudoux tells the story—and as S. N. Behrman translates it with a grave archness very near to perfection—Jupiter is not satisfied with a triumph through deceit which after all affords little satisfaction to the ego. He is even more dissatisfied when he learns that his partner has discovered nothing during the course of the twenty-four-hour night which struck her as more than familiarly connubial, and so he must try—and fail—to win in his own person the privileges which before he had merely usurped. How he fails, and just why the virtuous wife will not grant what she does not regret having been tricked into, is the real subject of the play, and it is less

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GOLIATH

by G. A. Borgese

The Viking Press, 18 E. 48th St., New York

the wit than the sentiment which is unmistakably French. Your American, I think, is seldom sentimental except when he does not recognize his own sentimentality; your Frenchman on the other hand, prefers the sentimentality which is completely aware of itself. He is not ironical, for irony suggests sincerity and mocking in nearly equal proportions; there is only the faintest possible hint that he knows he does not quite mean what he says; but the suggestion is there nevertheless. Such, at least, is the tone of the sentiment in "Amphitryon 38," and it is sentiment which gives to the play its most individual flavor.

In "Golden Boy" (Belasco Theater) Clifford Odets has written what is certainly his best play since "Awake and Sing." To say this is to say that the piece exhibits unmistakable power and genuine originality, even though it is not, unfortunately, to deny that there is still in his work something which suggests imperfect mastery of a form he will probably have to invent for himself if he is ever to become completely articulate. There are moments when "Golden Boy" seems near to greatness; there are others when it trembles on the edge of merely strident melodrama.

Ostensibly the play deals with the career of a young Italian boy who abandons the fiddle for the prize ring because "you can't pay people back with music," and because he wants the money which will make him forget an embittered youth. Actually the theme is the same as the theme of "Awake and Sing," and the power which Odets exhibits is again the power to suggest the lonely agony of souls imprisoned in their own private hells of frustrated desire and inarticulate hate. No one that I know can more powerfully suggest the essential loneliness of men and women, their inability to explain the varied forms assumed by the symbols of their desire, and the powerlessness of any one of them to help the other. His dialogue is often brilliantly suggestive, especially when he puts it into the mouths of ignorant or uncultivated people; even the vulgarest of his villains rises to the dignity of the tortured; and he involves the spectator in the agonies of his characters until the palms sweat and one goes out of the theater tense with an emotion which the author has been unwilling or unable to resolve.

I suppose that the interpretation which Mr. Odets puts upon his own play in obvious enough. It is, I assume, that suffering like this "is inevitable under capitalism," and that the fiddler turned prize fighter is the type of those in whom rebellion assumes a merely symbolic instead of an effective form. But this time, at least, Mr. Odets keeps his political theories in the background where they belong and writes a play which does not depend for its appeal upon a concern with his economic opinions. The agonies of his characters are real and affecting whatever one may think of the reasons for their existence.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

RECORDS

In their search for unfamiliar music not recorded by the major companies the small independents have dug up works that I for one have found boring—one of these being Bach's motet, "Jesu, meine Freude," which Gamut has issued on three records made by the Madrigal Singers under Lehman Engel ($5). But there have been occasional exceptions which have provided exciting experiences; and Gamut is responsible for two of these. One is a Toccata of Purcell (twelve-inch, $1.50)—boldly improvisatory in style but integrated in form and magnificent in substance, with these qualities of the work heightened by the dynamic quality of Ernst Victor Wolff's performance, its continuity of line and shape, and the magnificence of the sound that he produces from the harpsichord. Then there are two sonatas of Domenico Scarlatti (twelve-inch, $1.50) which are among the finest of these superb works that I have heard; and here again the rush of high spirits, the sharpness and bite of the one in G major (Longo No. 486) are heightened by Wolff's dynamic performance, while the increasing tension of the continuous line he draws in the extraordinary F minor (L. 382) is breathtaking.

In addition to the Toccata on Gamut there are two fine works of Purcell on single Decca records (each twelve-inch, $.75): the Golden Sonata and the Sonata in A minor (a third work, Ayres for the Theater, is uninteresting). They are played by Jean Pougnet and Frederick Grinke, violinists, who are excellent, and Boris Ord, harpsichordist, who thumps along à la Pessl. But I must add that Decca's surfaces are noisy and afflicted with the loose residue that spoils first playings—this in contrast with Gamut's surfaces, which are excellent in both respects; and there is no excuse for Decca turning out such bad surfaces when Gamut can turn out such good ones. These Decca records were among a large number that I received a few days before I left New York last summer; but I found that a few days were not enough for the repeated playings they required. Now I find that they vary: all have to be played more than once, but some are bad the third time. Decca (and for that matter Columbia) may be indifferent to a reviewer's loss of time, but it should not be indifferent to what a buyer would think and do when he heard a pressing like mine of Debussy's "Afternoon of a Faun" the first, the second, and even the third time.

Surfaces aside, there are things on Decca that are worth having: Haydn's delightful little Symphony No. 95 (two records, $1.50), well played by the London Symphony under Harty, except for a minuet taken at a pace that has the solo cellist panting for breath; Harty's transcription of some music of Händel (two records, $1.50); Vaughan Williams's beautiful Fantasia on a Theme of Tallis, in a good performance by the Boyd Neel String Orchestra (two records, $1.50); and a number of vocal records: Beethoven's "Ehre Gottes in der Natur" sung by Hüsch ($.50); arias from "Der Freischütz" ($1) and Nicolai's "Merry Wives of Windsor" ($.75) sung by Lotte Lehmann with her lovely voice of several years back; the Card Aria and Habanera from "Carmen" ($.75) and "Che faro" from "Orfeo" ($.75) sung (in German, unfortunately) by Kerstin Thorborg; Brahms's "Wie Melodien zieht es" and Schubert's "Forelle" ($.50) sung by Lotte Schöne; Bach's "Mein gläubiges Herz" and "Nun beut die Flur" from Haydn's "Creation" ($.75) sung by Lotte Leonard.

There are also two excellent records of "Der Rosenkavalier" ($3) made by Meta Seinemeyer, Grete Merrem-Nikisch, Elisa Stünzer, and Emanuel List. The first side gives the music leading up to Baron Ochs's entrance in Act 1; the other three give the music of Act 3 from his "Bin mit soviel Finesse charmiert" through the trio. "Der Rosenkavalier" is usually referred to as Strauss's masterpiece; actually it provides an entertaining evening, and it is von Hofmannsthal who does this rather than Strauss. The play could stand alone and still be amusing; but to hear the music on that first Decca side is to realize that in this scene the text does in effect stand alone, for the music is only a pretense at music—mere notes that have no significance in themselves or in relation to the

words. Some of the music in the opera has characteristic Straussian prettiness; that is the best one can say of the opening of the third-act trio, which then falters and has to be pushed to its climax. To speak of the "great trio of 'Der Rosenkavalier' " as one speaks of the great quintet of "Die Meistersinger" or of some of the ensembles of "Falstaff"—not to speak of some of the things in Mozart—is absurd.

B. H. HAGGIN

DANCE

The Monte Carlo Season

THE recent offerings of Colonel de Basil's fall season are a good springboard for both dismal and hopeful considerations of the state of traditional theatrical dancing at present. There were two novelties—one entirely new, Lichine's "Francesca da Rimini," the other half-new but remounted, Rimsky-Korsakov's "Golden Cockerel" as set by Fokine.

This is the era of the "symphonic" ballet. The symphonic ballet is a danced work arranged to underscore or illustrate a fairly familiar piece of symphonic music. Tchaikovsky, Liszt, Berlioz, Brahms, and other pictorial romantic composers have been assailed and captured by our symphonic choreographers. This idea is scarcely an innovation, but the scale on which the Basil company operates calls for a special consideration. It is a large scale. "Francesca" is in itself such a short piece that Tchaikovsky's overture for "Hamlet" preceded it. Oliver Messel, who designed Irving Thalberg's "Romeo and Juliet," set it. David Lichine, the youngest of Colonel de Basil's ballet masters, arranged the dancing. The décor was Italian Renaissance, represented by the superimposition of early Ghirlandaios, Botticellis, and English pre-Raphaelites. The dresses were versions of Piero di Cosimo and Melozzo da Forli. The dancing was like a mixture of animated freshman-art-course slides, combined with the more crowded portions of Massine's "Présages," "Choreartium," and "Fantastique." Part of it looked like "Scheherezade" in Renaissance clothing, and there were moments resembling the Degas painting of the ballet of frightened nuns in "Robert le Diable." It is impossible to describe it any more clearly—one must give these visual references. The resurrection of a past epoch and one already in comfortable "good taste" is a workable enough policy. It was all right to ignore both Dante's and Tchaikovsky's program calling for the whirlwind of guilty lovers, but unfortunately nothing else was substituted. The audience could not translate the nervous groups into even a symbolic reality. The love interest—the only interest one could detect—was uninteresting. I can see no point in doing such a work. "Francesca" received a bad press and was forthwith withdrawn in favor of the season's great hit, Fokine's version of Rimsky-Korsakov's "Coq d'Or."

It was probably a good idea to revive the "Coq d'Or" because in its lavish mounting it can represent to us who did not see it the early Russian-nationalist epoch of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes. It is a long work. Tcherepnin has "arranged" Rimsky's opera by eliminating the voice and doing other discreet pruning, leaving a couple of bars of each aria and repeating the Hymn to the Sun almost as frequently as in the original. Gontcharova's color is primary, so brilliant that it makes your eyes water. Many supers hold spears and march in

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Edmund Wilson, James T. Farrell, William Troy, Pablo Picasso, Sidney Hook, James Agee, Wallace Stevens, Dwight Macdonald

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twos and threes. The stage is nearly always full. All is conceived in the spirit of a cheery gift-book naivete, which on first sight or for children or in one's early acquaintanceship with ballet may seem charming. This is the spirit of the "Chauve-Souris," Russian tea-rooms, and émigré shops. The production is suffused with that kind of muted operatic pantomime in which a fat man laughingly holds his shaking tummy, whereupon a delicious chuckle of discreet amusement runs through the auditorium. I found it infantile, tiresome, and old-fashioned. John Martin loved it, called it "fine, healthy, full-blooded art," and found it "expansive, lusty, colossally humorous." There is very little dancing as such. What there is consists of familiar symmetrical entrées and group arrivals punctuated by solo variations and trimmed with the movements of half a dozen buffoonesque male dancers such as are seen in all Fokine's work from "Igor" and "Scheherezade" to "Thamar" and "Don Juan." Nevertheless, audiences adore it, and my dissent seems trivial. It is so obviously one's money's worth. But even practically speaking it is a silly piece for the repertory of a traveling company, since there are only five towns in America with sufficient accommodations for it. Those of us who love the ballet and who believe it has a future in spite of its past—as I fear Mr. Martin does not—deplore and detest such retardative, crass, and boring work. It is uncreative in its rich trappings, and only gives another chance to those perennially helpless, middle-aged-minded enthusiasts who still think the early epoch of Diaghilev—which God knows he came to loathe—is the only province in which ballet can operate. These people accept only what they already know, the first visual pleasures of their lives. They defend and praise it as part of their own timid taste and inert interest. But Fokine as a dancer and choreographer has his niche in ballet history with Noverre, and what he has done here, in its genre, was neatly done and conceived for the great theatrical success which it received.

After two such warmed-up dishes it was a pleasure to watch again Massine's "Choreartium." This was brilliantly danced. It is true that its décor is negligible, that the use of the Brahms music is doubtful, that it lacks the consecutive sense of a meaningful or pointed subject. But somehow its rhetorical atmosphere, its big rhapsodic groups appeared more effective than ever, perhaps in contrast with "Francesca" and "Coq d'Or." Primarily it uses dancing, and it uses it for the most part in an intelligent, constructive, and positively creative way. Except in the third movement, still its least successful, it disdains the comic genre and is based on noble movement and a grand pattern. It does demonstrate its name—the "Art of the Dance," not the whole art perhaps but at least a great fragment of it. Massine's intelligence, his knowledge of climactic effects, his sensible arrangement are ever apparent, a real academy for our young choreographers. One only wishes he would use Hindemith, Markevich, or Copland in music written for him on a contemporary theme, something that has meaning for us as well as something that merely continues to look well.

The ballet is enjoying a large success now. Basil can cash in twenty years later on Diaghilev's pioneering and on his repertory. But unless some creative vitality, some basic interest, is pumped into his mechanism, which is going on its own accrued inertia, it will not be long before the public taste will grow restive and turn against it as it has done before. Ballet today has a tubercular flush. The production of a "Coq d'Or" makes it harder for new work to get a hearing. Ballet does not need rest to revive it but work, ideas—subjects from the present and music to fit.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN

Letters to the Editors

Wobblies in the Northwest

Dear Sirs: "Maybe the words 'direct action' still hovered on the air of the Pacific slope, left over from the days of the Wobblies," wrote John Dos Passos in "In All Countries." Recent developments in the Northwest prove conclusively that the ideas of the I.W.W. have influenced all Western workers during the upsurge of unionism that has taken place since 1933. These ideas have found their fullest expression in the Idaho logging camps, where Lumber Workers' Industrial Union 120 of the Industrial Workers of the World has experienced a phenomenal growth; they were translated into action in the Idaho short-log strike of the I.W.W. in June, 1936.

No sooner had this strike got under way than the employers, the Potlatch Forest Company, a subsidiary of the Weyerhaeuser interests, requested troops to quell non-existing disorder. After an ambush of an unarmed picket detail in which five pickets were wounded by gunmen, martial law was declared. Police arriving on the scene almost immediately arrested ten pickets and removed the wounded to the hospital, but allowed the gunmen to go free.

Five of the pickets, arrested for an attack supposed to have taken place previous to the ambush, were fined $200 apiece. When the ten gunmen were eventually arrested and tried this August for "assault with deadly weapons," they were fined but $250 apiece. Dalton Gentry, one of the pickets, a youth of twenty-two, was wounded in the back and is still in the hospital in Orofino, where he lies paralyzed from the hips down. His fellow-workers are contributing to a fund necessary to move him to a hospital near his home in Sikes, Louisiana, or to place him under the care of a specialist. Those who wish to aid may send their remittance to James Whalen, Box 1836, Spokane, Washington.

The militia immediately ordered a mass deportation of all strikers but canceled it on the protest of the business men of the community, the A. F. of L. unions, and liberal groups throughout the country. However, two strike committees and a member of the general executive board of the I.W.W. were deported. A third strike committee was functioning when the strike ended. The refusal of the I.W.W. to give a guaranty of no further stoppage of work or to discuss a contract stipulating this prolonged the strike, but finally the conditions demanded by the strikers and an increase in wages from $3.80 to $5 as a minimum were assured. They became effective when the men returned to work.

Before and since the strike the companies have been bringing men in from the South and East to check the industrial unionism of the I.W.W. To some extent the companies have been successful, but the educational program of the I.W.W. is influencing these newly arrived workers. R. M. K.

Tacoma, Wash., October 30

Planning in Denmark

Dear Sirs: I was a little surprised to learn from Mr. Lore's article on Scandinavia's New Democracy in your issue of September 25 that since 1932 "a systematic effort has been made toward centralized planning of the [Danish] nation's economic activities." It is true that the raising of pigs (owing to British restrictions on the importation of bacon) and the production of sugar have been planned, that the prices of other agricultural products have been raised by means of processing taxes, that subsidies have been granted to the farmers, that the volume of imports is controlled to prevent the rates of exchange from rising, and that public works have been introduced —on a moderate scale—to reduce unemployment. All these measures, however, have been taken to cope with emergencies. Some of them have been repealed already, and no attempt at planning for the long run has been made. (The uncertainty which lingers around the agricultural policy of our best customer, Great Britain, makes it difficult to do any such planning, at least as far as agriculture is concerned.) As to manufacturing, no planning has ever been proposed. We are certainly very far from having a planned economy in the socialist sense.

According to Mr. Lore, the control of our "planned" economy is not exercised through the parliament but "is in the hands of an extra-parliamentary commission composed of representatives of the labor unions, the cooperatives, and the political parties." I am still puzzled by this remark. It is true that an "Economic Council" was formed some years ago to advise the government in economic affairs, but the idea was dropped, and the council never holds any meetings. Various committees have been in charge of supervising the control of imports, but none of them—except, perhaps, a *parliamentary* committee—has held the powers attributed to Mr. Lore's commission. The government has cooperated with the farmers' organizations in the framing of our agricultural relief acts; but—to prevent any misunderstanding—I think it should be emphasized that no power is exercised by any extra-parliamentary commission or any branch of administration that is not derived from an act passed by the Parliament, and that no part of the administration of our agricultural legislation, except routine work, is carried out by the farmers' organizations.

On the whole, the course of the Socialist-Radical government has been, of necessity, far from revolutionary. The power of the Social Democratic Party depends to a large extent on the votes of the middle class; in fact, a good many of the skilled workers belong to the middle class. But it is true that we are anti-fascists.

H. WINDING PEDERSEN

Copenhagen, Denmark, October 11

No Putsch in Barcelona

Dear Sirs: In *The Nation* of October 30 Louis Fischer referred to "the Anarchist-Trotskyist putsch" in Barcelona in May. His interpretation is contrary to that of Americans and Englishmen who were there during the May days—for instance, George Orwell, who wrote about it in *Controversy* (London). It is contradicted by the quotations from the Barcelona press that appear in Fenner Brockway's pamphlet, "What Really Happened in Barcelona," and in the last issue of the *Modern Monthly*. Is it possible that *The Nation* would refer to the South Chicago Memorial Day massacre as a "Communist-C.I.O. putsch"?

In the past, while Louis Fischer has not said anything that directly contradicted the Anarchist, Socialist, or Trotskyist press, he has managed, by telling selected parts of the truth, to give a decided anti-CNT-UGT-POUM color to his dispatches. Since I am sure that the

editors of *The Nation* do not require of their Spanish correspondent that he give his dispatches this particular angle, I would like to know who it is to whom Louis Fischer feels he is really responsible. Perhaps he would say that he is responsible to democracy. When you read his last article, you see that democracy means control from above, and "these democracies" means the imperial interests of Great Britain and France.

FAIRFIELD PORTER

Hubbard Woods, Ill., November 1

Aid for Silicotics

Dear Sirs: It seems to me that the articles and letters on the silicosis situation in Illinois recently published in *The Nation* leave the reader rather up in the air. Milton S. Mayer in the April 17 issue described how the Caterpillar Tractor Company of Peoria dismissed 179 out of 1,400 foundry workers the day before the occupational-disease compensation law became effective. Nelson Nuttall in the September 25 issue told how the W. A. Case and Son Pottery Company of Robinson, Illinois, fired 31 employees out of a total of 140 because these 31 had silicosis. Neither suggested anything to be done about it. Yet there must be a workable program which labor can support to correct this situation. It is wishful thinking to hope that companies will take care of employees who have contracted silicosis in their plants.

To date occupational-disease compensation laws have been passed in twenty-one states. Twenty of these states place the entire burden of "accrued liability" —the insurance companies' term for disabled employees who had to be fired before compensation insurance would be issued—on the worker and his family. The twenty-first state, Pennsylvania, has been more civilized. There the burden of "accrued liability" is shared by employer, state, and employee. The state, out of a special fund, assumes the obligation of paying part of an award over a transition period of ten years to workers disabled before the effective date of the occupational-disease compensation act. The employer or his insurance carrier pays the rest of the award. Thus in a Pennsylvania foundry a silicotic worker is taken out of the dusty atmosphere in order to arrest the progress of the disease and is paid a small amount of compensation as his lawful right. The special state fund is built up by compulsory contributions from insurance carriers and self-insured employers, supplemented if necessary by state appropriations.

Twenty-seven states have still to pass occupational-disease acts, and it is not too late to amend some of the acts already in force. Labor groups should support a program based on the following points. First, the silicotic employee must be removed from the dusty atmosphere. Second, he should be physically rehabilitated, which usually requires sanitarium treatment. Third, he should be taught a new trade. Fourth, he should be compensated for the time lost, in addition to receiving treatment and training without charge. If his disease has progressed so far that rehabilitation is useless, the silicotic should be pensioned for his few remaining days and his family should be adequately compensated. This program should be administered and paid for by the state. The state, however, should devise means of passing most of the cost on to the dusty industries.

H. M. LINDNER

Chicago, October 22

The Author Protests

Dear Sirs: Dr. Paul M. Sweezy's review of my book "The World's Wealth," in your issue of October 30, misstates the contents, as it misconceives the purpose, of the volume. The review would have the reader believe that I am behind-hand in ideas and unaware of recent developments in practice. Dr. Sweezy says that things are not in the book which are there, and spelled out at length. He evidently expected to find a work primarily critical. What I tried to write was a survey for the general reader, and this must show the development of economic thought and behavior rather than engage in a series of quarrels. I tried not to scold but to explain.

BROADUS MITCHELL

Baltimore, Md., October 31

Epistolary Animadversion

Dear Sirs: Permit me to call your attention to the misnomer of that section of *The Nation* improperly designated Letters to Editors. The writings therein, composed by persons afflicted with the malady *furor scribendi,* are not letters at all, or hardly belles-lettres, but are actually epistles, and the caption should be changed to Epistles to the Editors. I am amazed that editors of *The Nation,* celebrated for their supposed erudition, should have fallen into such grievous error; that they have not consulted authoritative works of lexicology and orismology to discover there is a distinction between letters and epistles. The latter are distinguished from the former in that they are in the nature of writings meant for publication, or for general consumption, something bearing on matters of general interest to some group, whereas letters are more in the nature of private communications, not composed for public consumption. Your communicants in this section are really epistolaries. For instance, Paul wrote epistles, not letters, to the Ephesians, Corinthians, etc.

I adjure you to rectify this gross error in your captional misnomer, and receive the plaudits of all English purists, lexiconists, and orismologists. And, besides, epistles sounds more dignified and cultured, more euphonious and elegant. Forgive me the reprimand. You are culpable in bad usage of terms, and it had to be done. AL-FORD IBN ROOS

Vanadium, N. M., November 1

CONTRIBUTORS

MAXWELL S. STEWART, an associate editor of *The Nation,* lived in Russia in 1930 and 1931 and has since made two extended journeys in the Soviet Union.

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