

# THE STUDENT REVIEW

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## UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF AND THE STUDENT

an editorial

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## BEGINNINGS

by MICHAEL GOLD

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## THE WAR DANGER

by BERNARD REINES

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## GHANDI AND THE INDIAN PEOPLE

by ALEC BARNETT

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## LOOKING FOR A JOB?

by SCOTT NEARING

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## THE TRAGEDY OF A LIBERAL

a review of Lincoln Steffens' Autobiography—  
by RUFUS HALE

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## The Student Review

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## Role of the Student-1931

**T**HE HISTORY of the American University is the story of an institution serving the interests of the economically favored. But it is also the story of an institution which despite its valuable service to the upper classes has lent itself unwittingly to exposing one of the deep-seated ills of our economic order.

So long as the American university admitted within its gates only the sons and daughters of the landed and industrial aristocrats, and taught them the political and moral theology of a laissez-faire economy, it was hailed and rewarded as a faithful servant. But it is characteristic of our economic order that it must have literate human instruments, both because of the demands for clerical work, and because a political machine which insures privilege requires, in a "democracy", a public receptive to printed propaganda. Democratic education, therefore, opened the university gates to the middle classes and, to a large extent, to the sons and daughters of the less impoverished workers.

While the American university continued its fealty to traditional institutions, it was obvious that something had gone wrong. Graduates of law schools discovered that there was not room for them in their profession in this profit economy, although the number of persons in need of legal advice had certainly not declined. Students were discouraged from studying for the "overcrowded" profession of medicine, although the poor were dying without medical attention, especially negroes in the South. And since, in periods of economic competition, the first recourse of our social order is an appeal to race prejudice, many medical schools took the easy step of restricting or excluding Jews. The problem, however, went further, and the schools of journalism, business, engineering and education recognized that they were training young men and women for jobs which they could not obtain. At each successive spring, the ranks of the trained professions were swollen by the host of young people seeking jobs and livelihood.

When the depression came, it was no longer a case merely of "overcrowded professions." Youth which had been trained for leadership was unable to earn a livelihood

in any capacity. The years which had been spent in universities preparing for useful careers, were, for society and for students, only wasted years. The energy, the hope, the labor of youth, these things which could be society's most valuable asset, were thrown into discard like an obsolete machine.

A social order which involves this waste and this conflict is sick. It stands indicted by the very ideals it has fostered, and it says, in effect, that we as young men and women by fitting ourselves for usefulness to ourselves and to society are unfitted for use by society as now constituted. "Go to the bread-lines," it says, "or to some lonely back-room, and in your hunger and misery, let your trained intelligence contemplate the wretchedness of idle bodies and unemployed minds."

Many of us who are still students have only recently come to a realization of what awaits us when, diploma in hand, we turn to the world of affairs to find our task and our livelihood. Our awakening is at the historical moment when the economic arrangements under which we have been reared are crumbling beneath us. And upon us devolves a role more important than has ever been played by students.

As long as we are students, our role must be primarily that of study, but our studies must be invested with a new sense of the forces at work in the world. We must bring a new, critical, realistic insight to our work, recognizing that in a class society such as ours, the university is on the side of perpetuating old authorities. With this in mind we must be wary of the facile reform programs which leave the system fundamentally unchanged. We must guard against those academic positions which represent, in their final analysis, only an attempt to escape from the reality of a disintegrating social and economic order.

If we are not preparing ourselves to stand in bread-lines, we must prepare ourselves to build a new social order. This is the essential revolutionary role of the student. It means that we must overlook no opportunity in lecture rooms and libraries to learn both the causes of the disintegration of this economic order and the technique of building the new. It means that, developing among ourselves a sense of this common purpose, we must organize for the necessary work. The New York Student League has been organized to serve this purpose.

Organization calls for group meetings in which we must supplement the work of the classroom by discussing social problems, by listening to speakers with messages often considered heretical by our university authorities. But organization calls additionally for a decisive program. We must stand for academic freedom because academic freedom will hold open channels of information. We must support the workers in their fight for better conditions, a living wage, and unemployment insurance, because our interests are identical with those of the workers in building a new social order. We must oppose race discrimination as a factor designed to divide us against ourselves, even as it has been used to divide workers against each other.

To keep this purpose and this position before the students, the Student League is issuing this magazine as its official organ. It is hoped that this magazine will carry the message not only to members of the league but to many more New York students, and eventually to students distant from our organization.

For ours is not a solitary position. Students in all cities and towns in America, and in all parts of the world face an identical fate under this outmoded economic order. It is only for us to unite with this common purpose before us. Like the workers, we have nothing to lose.

*Executive Committee, New York Student League*



# Unemployment Relief and the Student

## *An Editorial*

ACCORDING to Mr. Rybichi, head of Tammany's employment bureau last winter, there are some 1,000,000 jobless in New York City. This is somewhat confirmed by Miss Perkins of the State Dept. of Labor who says that there are 1,500,000 unemployed in the whole state. Adding up N. Y. City's 15,000,000 dollar appropriations, the State's 20 millions for public works, and the special relief of Gibson's 18 millions (if he raises it) you have the story of what the unemployed are supposed to get to live on this winter in order that they may not revolt. The first item was subject to such corrupt distribution that the local press pleaded that it be distinguished from Mr. Gibson's enterprise. The Seabury investigators found many fictitious names on the payrolls and very many well-off people receiving "relief". The 20 millions for public works had to be appropriated anyhow. These jobs are the normal order of a business of any commonwealth. This year Governor Roosevelt chose to call it "relief". No doubt many state contractors and politicians were "relieved" to learn that the state would not economize on its road programs this year. Public contracting jobs have always been a reliable source for patronage and contributions to the campaign funds. What are the wages to be paid on these jobs? The law has it that "the prevailing wage rate" will be paid. That this rate may well be below the union scale was illustrated in the strike last week on the school construction in New York City. The Board of Education justified its lower than union rate by maintaining that this fell within the meaning of the "prevailing wage rate".

The local unemployment relief of 18 million dollars, initiated by Hoover's activity, is the most insidious of all of them. The purpose is clear. Congress convenes early this month and the administration will attempt to show that the needs of the poor have been taken care of, thus obviating the need for unemployment insurance, and incidentally avoiding higher taxes on the rich. One of the most prominent opponents of these community chest drives is Prof. John Dewey of Columbia University and president of the People's Lobby in Washington, D. C. From the September issue of the People Lobby Bulletin we quote the following: "The whole force of the concentrated wealth of America is being exerted to prevent additional taxes upon large incomes. This appears to be the real purpose in the creating of the President's Organization on Unemployment Relief.... it would have been no more inappropriate to finance the last war by passing the hat, than is the proposed method of raising funds to care for an army of 10,000,000 unemployed or part-time employed, plus their dependents.... Great pressure will be brought upon those of you who are of moderate means to support the Hoover policy, conceived in the interests of the wealthy, and to substitute private charity for public taxation. You will render a .....service if you resist this pressure, and co-operate with the forces which are bringing pressure upon the Government to perform its duty." That this statement of Prof. Dewey is true can be gleaned from the fact that the leaders in the private relief enterprise are leaders in the fight against unemployment insurance as was well illustrated in the speech made during an intermission at an evening performance of the Philharmonic, in which the following was said: "we are faced with two possibilities: to give to the relief fund or to pay higher taxes. And we don't want higher taxes—" this, to the boxes. Is it true

that the rich are as much affected by the depression?

"Opera begins with \$2,000,000 subscription: No sign of depression in brilliant opening." That was a headline on the front page of the New York Times of Nov. 3. Similarly the N. Y. Post of the same date, in its Chicago 'society' column tells us that, "No signs of depression as Chicago Opera Co. opens its 25th season.... most of city's leaders were present." We know that the capitalists have plenty of money; they have told us often enough about the period of prosperity between 1923 and 1929. In the World-Telegram we find the following figures: "While the total volume of wages was increasing from 1923 to 1929 only from 11 billion dollars to 421 million more, corporation dividends were increasing during the same period from almost a billion dollars to the sum of nearly 3½ billions; net additions to bank profits doubled and interest paid to bond holders increased from 2½ billions to some 7½ billions." If anyone ought to be "trimmed" by the relief business, it's the wealthy ruling class. Instead, businesses do their utmost to compel workers to "donate" portions of their wages to the funds. One clever little messenger boy for a telegraph company, upon meeting a friend of his, similarly employed and wearing an "I have shared" button, remarked that the wording on the button ought to be changed to "I have been shorn".

The theory behind the type of jobs given out at the Gibson Unemployment Relief office is that men and women be placed in non-competitive jobs such as hospitals, colleges, etc. As a matter of fact a "non-competitive" institution is fiction. For example, it is known that hospitals now obtaining free help from the relief fund workers would ordinarily have had to hire these men to do the jobs which the emergency men are performing and what is more would have to pay wages higher than the relief workers are getting! How, therefore, is unemployment being relieved? Men who might be ordinarily getting jobs at colleges or at hospitals doing important technical work are now out of jobs; if they are lucky enough (of 70,000 registered only 7,000 were placed) they get jobs at reduced wages, the money coming out of a charity fund, at least one-third of which is directly given by workers, and the institution for which they work is getting free help!

What happens to those student movements which are actually working with the working class? (Those other clubs who invite Yiddish comedians to give themselves a good time and then disturb the mirth just long enough to ask for money for the poor, are on about the same level as the rich "society" women who treat themselves to a good dinner at a hotel and discuss "three cans of condensed milk" for the poor.) At N. Y. U., down at Washington Square the Social Problems Club this summer tried to raise money for the poverty stricken miners. The democratic Chancellor Brown, who recently introduced Dino Grandi to the city, refused permission to the club to make a campaign on the grounds that he wanted to be impartial! Being "impartial" of course meant that the suffering miners and their families would have just so much less relief! Yet, during November the Red Cross—the same organization which refused relief to these same Pennsylvania miners, was given complete school co-operation in the fund collection. In other words, impartiality consists in not doing anything which might hinder the employers from breaking a strike.



## The Student Month

To the Editor:

I wish your venture every success. The young people of the U. S. A. must have their own publications, uncensored by Presidents, Deans and Faculty advisors.

Yours truly,  
SCOTT NEARING.

WHEN Mr. Nearing says that the American students must have a publication of their own that is uncensored by a timid or reactionary faculty, we feel that he is telling only half the story. Real censorship is much more subtle than that. It lies in the fear of the press of stepping upon the toes of any of the financial interests which support it; which accounts in part for the quixotic attitude of the liberal press in their vigilant pursuit, at different seasons, of petty, minor reforms. The press finds itself of necessity defending the monied interests in order to exist. The STUDENT REVIEW has no fear of vested powers, it is independent of them and therefore in a better position to express the views of the NEW YORK STUDENT LEAGUE. And we are here to stay.

\* \* \*

The economic crisis has come to the schools and from all appearances, is here for a long visit. It has taken some very unique forms, one of them being an unforeseen rise in registration for courses in economics while other departments dropped with the normal decrease in registration due to lack of funds. Obviously, the student is taking less chances and wants to learn how the economic system is carried on and incidentally how he can adjust himself to it.

It is clear that these odd jobs we students used to take away from the regular worker at a lower wage are hard to get to-day. A day's work is much rarer than that, "day in June". Just as the North could afford to abolish slavery when it could conduct its business as profitably thru wage-labor, so too, now when employers can get regular wage-labor as cheaply as student-labor, only sentiment can give the student the preference. As a typical expression of American sentiment we might take the liberty of quoting Rev. Mills of Union Theological Seminary, who said that America's interest in Manchuria was a sentimental one.

In the N. Y. Times of Nov. 2, we read: "... there are 75 per cent fewer jobs this year at Columbia University than there were in 1930, and what few are available to students pay little and are not as important as they have been in the past. She (the employment director) said that the students this year were 'in desperate straits' and needed money more than ever before as the economic depression had affected many parental incomes." Nor can apologists fall back on the alibi that college students are "too educated" to get the available jobs. First of all they work, according to this same report, "as cooks, maids and bakers". Besides, in the World-Telegram of Nov. 2 there appeared the following: "How difficult it is for high school graduates to get and keep jobs during this year of depression is illustrated in a report to-day by Charles M. Smith, director of guidance and placement in the high schools."

Our German colleagues, both students and professionals are certainly no less unfortunate. At a rather belated date they are attempting to meet the situation squarely. Thus, in a decree affecting two-thirds of Germany, all the normal schools were shut down for a three year period. A. H.

Ross. Berlin correspondent for the N. Y. Evening Post reports that "further teacher training in Germany is merely treachery to candidates for teaching posts." The Board of Education of New York City and out of town papers please copy. Mr. Ross adds: "There are in Prussia 20,000 fully trained teachers with experience who are unable to find any place in the school system, not as the result of any weakness of their own, but because of the few posts available . . . Germany is flooded with wouldbe artists, designers and architects. The surplus of candidates for academic, higher scientific, literary, editorial and like posts is greater because of bad business, but there would have been too many of them anyway". The ethical implications of shutting the German schools are very significant. It means that society, as Senator Watson of Indiana and some great men have maintained, owes every man an opportunity to get a job. It means that when he is thru with his teens or so he will have been trained to perform socially desirable work and that he will be able to express this training. This might sound rather annoying to those college graduates who are at present doing menial or unskilled labor work, but that's not our fault. However for honest students in the social sciences this criterion of 'training and job' might be of some value, when classroom discussions try to hide behind the vaguenesses of catch-words like "democracy", "freedom," etc.

As a good objective proof of the validity of asserting that college students are suffering from the depression we submit the following from the N. Y. Times of Nov. 2nd. "A study of one month's registration of more than 6,000 persons, mostly young men, new comers to New York whose stay at the Sloane House branch of the Y. M. C. A. disclosed that not in many years had college graduates found their services so little in demand.... After realizing the difficulty of finding work here, most of them soon returned to their homes".

\* \* \*

WHEN there is a rising discontent, the powers that be will do their utmost to try to suppress it or divert its expression. It is a fact that there was no Hindu-Moslem problem as we know it to-day until English imperialism saw fit to foment it, so that now the British justify their continual hold on India in part to Hindu-Moslem hostilities. So too are the students of Poland the instruments of the ruling class when they engage in their anti-Semitic riots. Poland is seething with discontent, a rather natural consequence of 17 years of intensified misery. Reactionary mob action is a variable of poverty. Polish capitalism uses the good old trick of blaming ills on a minority group so as to pit the different groups against each other while the government itself remains in the saddle. Machiavelli wrote about that a long time ago and the Romanoffs were rather skilled at it. The Southern Commission on the Study of Lynching in a report in the N. Y. Times of Nov. 10, asserts: "There is a direct relation between the lack of education, the low economic status and the prevalence of lynching". Governments will engender antagonisms between groups whenever it is to their advantage to do so. That something real and beneficial to the Russian masses has been performed by the Soviets is evident if only from the absence of the infamous pogroms which once prevailed in the old Russia. In fact a Rabbi Margoshes recently caused no little excitement at a convention of Jewish clerics when he maintained that there is no anti-Semitism in Russia to-day. Since the people are the same, is it not plausible that the social and economic arrangements under which people live has a direct relationship to pogroms and the "Jewish problem"?



# BEGINNINGS

## *A message to Students from Michael Gold*

**B**EGINNINGS are the most important and difficult part of any task. It is not easy to arouse the students of America. They are victims of a colossal environment that stupifies the mind and feelings, that destroys every honest and passionate impulse.

I mean, of course, the capitalist environment of America. The pressure on every student is to be the getter of tomorrow, the eager lackey of Big Business, the money-hunter, the competitor in the mad scramble for what is called success.

Yet what is happening today is that great masses of thoughtful people in America begin to perceive, in the gloom and breakdown of the great economic crisis, that a bourgeois career is no longer such a satisfactory goal for one's life. Businessmen have been ruined, engineers are to be found in the breadlines, college graduates can be hired for fifteen dollars a week, the world of the middle-class is in collapse. Its values are not so firm any longer. It is a time of revolution and change and the re-appraisal of values.

No one today, least of all the men and women under thirty, can escape this great transvaluation of values. It is in the air, it is in every book, magazine, newspaper. It must be faced and understood. The world situation forces every person into an attitude.

The last generation of youth found the solid ground taken under their feet by the World War. There was no compromise or hesitation or subtle hair splitting open to them. They were DRAFTED into the war, they were ORDERED to lay down their lives, their careers, their poetry and science for the sake of the rival businessmen of each country.

It was a war of economics, a war for world markets and world imperialism, as every historian now admits.

And the young penniless poet died to protect J. P. Morgan's investments in France and England, the young struggling chemist died to extend the Kaiser's lust for iron mines and textile markets. That generation was wiped out, physically and morally; it has been called the lost generation.

The present generation will be a lost generation, also, unless it begins to understand. The lost generation was lost because it did not understand. We must know our enemies. We must know where the world is going to. What can be made out of this storm of blood, horror and imperialism? Shall we be passive slaves of the money kings, or shall we ally ourselves with the great working class revolution that is building a new and better world?

Shall we be conscripts or volunteers? Shall we be the architects of a new society or the dumb, driven victims of the old? We are living in a great century, the century of beginnings. Shall we be the pioneers of the beginnings, or the futile dregs of the old?

The youth of America is confronted with the greatest choice ever presented to youth. It must prepare itself to make a great decision. It must become the leadership of opposition to imperialist war, to race oppression, to capitalist encroachments on the rights of the human race. It must become the leader of a new world, where there will be no caste, no exploitation, no war or classes, the society dreamed of by Shelley, Heine, Marx and Lenin, the world for which Maxim Gorky, Romain Rolland, Theodore Dreiser and all the great spirits today are working—the world which has

been ushered in by the Russian Revolution.

Do not be modest in your youth. Do not underestimate your power. To youth belongs the future. The revolutionary youth of China, Japan, India, Germany, Soviet Russia, working hand in hand with the workers and peasants, are one of the great forces in the revolution. No one calls them a lost generation or takes them lightly. Let us build a revolutionary students' youth movement in America—it can be a national force, also.

Youth is the time of beginnings, and this is the century of beginnings. Let us face our age and master it, let us build and grow.

▽ - ▽

## The War Danger

**W**E THE youth, cannot afford illusions. Today, more than ever before. For us in the schools and colleges, as well as for the young workers of the farms and factories, the question of the next war is a question literally of life and death. This is expressed cold-bloodedly enough in the speech of Major General John F. O'Ryan, reported in the New York Times of March 30, 1931:

"The next war means the killing of boys and more boys—for wars have always been fought by boys. These boys who are to be killed are not the boys of statistics, they are the boys everywhere, now living in their homes, at schools and colleges, your boys and other boys who if there is to be a next war will operate the machinery of war on the battlefields and furnish the battle casualties."

*"If There Is To Be A Next War"*.

There is much talk now of peace. And there is the Kellogg-Briand Pact, the League of Nations, the World Court, Locarno, the Nine-Powers Pact, and dozens of peace and disarmament conferences. Peace talk and peace apparatus are even more extensive than they were in 1914.

But here, too, we must be realists. The World War was overwhelming evidence that modern historians are right when they hold that wars are fought essentially for economic gains—that war is only the intensified political expression of the economic conflict for markets and raw materials—that back of the "holy myth" banners ("war to end war"—"war to make the world safe for democracy"—"war to save our civilization", etc.) that are flung before the eyes of the masses to whip up the war-frenzy, back of these stand the grim faced figures of the masters of the dollar, the pound, the franc, and the mark. The Treaty of Versailles, rather than ending war or making the world safe for democracy, transferred certain markets and raw materials in the form of colonies and "spheres of influence" from the dominance of German, Austro-Hungarian and Turkish capital to that of English, French, Italian, and American capital. Instead of ending economic struggles, it intensified them.

And the struggle becomes more fierce every day. British capitalism suspends the gold standard and cuts the wages of its workers tremendously, in order to produce goods more cheaply and thus be able to compete more effectively



with its rivals for the world's markets. France, Italy, and other countries answer with increased tariffs to keep out British goods. The United States Steel Corporation decrees huge wage-cuts in order to reduce its own production costs and thus meet the sharper competition of the British. Hard-pressed Japanese capitalism thrusts forward with guns into the rich Manchurian market—ignoring the feeble flutterings of peace pacts and the League of Nations. Armaments and armament expenditures pile up, already in 1930 more than doubling the figures of 1913. In every country, one industry flourishes in the midst of the crisis—the armaments industry.

Schneider-Creuzot, the gigantic French armaments firm is working at full speed. So is the Skoda Works, great Czecho-slovakian armaments institution, also French-controlled, with branches in Poland, Yugoslavia, and Roumania.

United States capitalism is making thorough war preparations. Witness a New York Herald-Tribune report of January 27, 1931:

"In the economic portion of the country's preparedness program, it was revealed at the War Department, are included plans for the swift manufacture of munitions and for the mobilization of industry into a co-ordinated unit. In the development of this program, the assistance of over 14,000 manufacturing establishments has already been enlisted. On paper the task of producing munitions is being apportioned to the various sections of the nation in accordance with their capacities. The war equipment to be turned out by the various plants is also being assigned."

#### "WAR—AGAINST WHOM?"

War preparations everywhere—against whom? The rivalries of the various capitalist powers are intensifying rapidly. Everywhere there is conflict of interests. United States and Great Britain—United States and France—United States and Japan—Great Britain and France—France and Germany—France and Italy—Germany and Poland—Hungary and Italy—these are some of the sharpest conflicts.

These antagonisms become welded with the great fundamental antagonism between the whole system of these capitalist powers and the new system which is taking shape in the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics. The Soviet Union abolished capitalism and bases its system of production for use by the workers. The rest of the world is ruled by capitalists and its system is based on production for profit. The fundamental nature of this antagonism is sharply presented in the statement of Representative Hamilton Fish of New York, addressing the militaristic American Coalition of Patriotic Societies, on January 9, 1931: "A house divided against itself cannot stand, nor can the economic structure of the world long endure half communist and half capitalist."

The world powers dare not risk another war among themselves now for the revolutions that burst forth from the last war are still fresh in their memories, and they expect that new revolutions would find ready support in the Soviet Union. In the recent words of a prominent politician, Senator David A. Reed of Pennsylvania: "I believe that if it were not for the apprehension of Bolshevism, the countries of Europe would be at each other's throats this very minute." European politicians have said substantially the same thing.

The direct positive result of the growth of the Soviet system is a tendency towards unity on the part of the capitalist powers "against the common enemy." A press dispatch at the time of the London Naval Conference (1930) put the case frankly enough: "Hovering over the London

To "our" diplomats:

"Would that we could see ourselves as others see us."

"things turned the right side up sometimes make a great difference."

—O—



Conference is the shadow of the Soviet Union, driving the representatives of the different countries to agreement, at least on common measures to meet this common danger. This doubtless is one of the principal subjects of discussion behind the scenes." A pleasant little peep at what goes on "behind the scenes" at arms limitation and disarmament conferences.

"Behind the scenes", it is well established that there are secret military treaties aimed at the Soviet Union made by France (and Briand its Foreign Minister) with Roumania, Poland, Yugoslavia, Czecho-slovakia, Lithuania and the other Baltic countries. The French General Staff, as is common knowledge in military circles, maintains permanent missions of military officers in each of these countries. France has made loans to Poland and other countries for the building of railroads towards the Soviet border.

That this united front against "the common enemy" means war, is the open creed of many of "our" leaders. Hamilton Fish we have already heard from. And do you remember former Ambassador Gerard's anti-Soviet outburst a few months ago at a mass meeting in New York City: "We are at war, with a nation of murderers and atheists!" In the light of this attitude it becomes easy to see the significance of "religious persecution", "dumping", and "forced labor" propaganda campaigns.

It is natural to expect further a deluge of "atrocities" stories against the Soviet Union. It is easy to appreciate the full import of Secretary of the Interior (and former President of Leland Stanford University) Wilbur's statement: "One of the great peoples of the earth is deliberately trying to work out large social and economic programs for the mastery of its vast terrain along new and untried lines: Our economic, social, and political philosophy inevitably must wage a gigantic and fundamental struggle with theirs."

War is coming—and, by all the signs, coming soon. What must we do about it?

\* \* \*

Since this article was written, there have been many developments in Manchuria which bring the war closer and closer; out of the complex welter of events and statements; three significant *real war events* are evident.

(1) Daily Japan issues a statement that she is taking new steps towards peace—and daily Japan sends more forces and advances further into Manchuria; always in the direction of Soviet territory.

(2) The consultations among the various imperialist statesmen become steadily more frequent and in spite of brief fluctuations a growing unity among the imperialists is



resulting—in spite of various American-Japanese clashes. Thus, we see the United States selling 6,000 tons of munition nitrates to Japan. And Japan has been shipping large deposits of gold here; in order to secure the purchase of war supplies as needed: Certainly the two countries would not act this way if they were expecting to be on opposite sides in the war. France is admittedly "friendly" to Japan. And Great Britain has moderated her earlier hostility until now the press reports her leaders are ready to lend Japan a sympathetic ear.

(3) Every day the headlines and dispatches in most of the capitalist press attain a slightly more anti Soviet tone either directly or by implication. This increase of anti-

Soviet propaganda takes place in such a gradual manner as to be an almost imperceptible process—unless you keep on the alert for it. Most of these dispatches so far emanate from Tokyo. One of the features of the propaganda is confusing Chinese and Korean Communists, who fight to free their own territory from Japanese imperialism, with soldiers of the Soviet Union. Another is the tendency to confuse the Soviet soldiers with the reactionary White Guard Russians who are on the side of the imperialists against the Chinese masses and viciously against the Workers and Peasants Republic. The way seems clear for the development of the "atrocities" lies. Watch for them.

BERNARD REINES *Harvard '30*

## ON DISARMAMENT

THE economic pattern of capitalist society places the large holders of wealth inevitably upon the side of armament and thus the opinion of these economic overlords is the final determining factor in keeping modern nations armed to the teeth. Provincialism and racial antagonism and religious superstitions are all contributory causes of war, but the cause is capitalism and the world will not disarm until capitalists are stripped of their power to use armed workingmen to protect and increase their private profits.

The easiest way to prove this thesis is to inquire into the way in which the United States has become the greatest military power in the world today. Who pays for our army and navy? Indirectly, of course, the masses of consumers who are milked by the tariff through higher prices, but directly the bulk of American revenue for armaments comes from American business. Taxes on corporations and incomes and certain "questionable" products like tobacco build up the navy and put the fear of God into the hearts of our enemies. Behind this support of armaments, of course, is an immense reservoir of provincial hate and conceit known as patriotism which is created in our schools, churches, and movie places, but even this gargantuan slop-jar of bitter emotion would not keep us armed unless the capitalists were willing to pay the bill.

CAPITALISM favors armament for the same reason that it opposes unemployment insurance, because capitalism is operated for private profits—and arms help to secure profits. The particular profits that armaments protect are the profits on international investments, but in this allegiance to armaments the interests of all capitalists are bound up together, and the domestic investor stands with the international investor in a class-conscious defense of special privilege.

The steps by which capitalism leads to armament and war are quite clear: (1) Under capitalism a few investors control the basic wealth of the nation and identify their country with this wealth rather than with the lives of soldiers and sailors. (2) The machine process under private ownership is constantly producing a surplus of capital and goods which is not distributed to the workers; the capital seeks foreign investment and the goods foreign markets. (3) The machine process likewise calls for quick and sure access to raw materials, and many of the basic raw materials of modern capitalism are not only scarce but are monopolized by particular governments. (4) Armies and navies are developed as a result of the demand to give foreign investments "security" and standing, to extend markets, and to guarantee access to raw materials. (5) The great investment and

trading interests of the country (United States, Great Britain, Japan) attain armaments directly by purchasing the leading political parties through campaign contributions and the ownership of the press.

EVERY GREAT government in the world today, except the government of Soviet Russia, uses armaments to extend and secure the profits of its leading capitalists. "We" have American gunboats 500 miles up the Yangtze River in China today and we have had them for a generation not because the American people hate the Chinese or primarily because the gunboats protect human life (actually I think that American life would be safer in China without them) but because our government entered into a general pact to divide up the trade of the Orient with other great militarist powers and our gunboats are pledged to their part in securing Western capitalism's stake in the East. We use our navy to assert the Monroe Doctrine over the people of Latin America, protecting them against their will because "we" have five billion dollars invested in Latin and South America. Our relations with Mexico for many years were controlled by the investments of American millionaires in Mexican oil.

Today the half-hidden fear behind all armament propaganda in the Western world is the fear of Soviet Russia. When all other bugaboos—Christianity, your wife, your sister, your national honor—fail, then Bolshevism will wring one more battleship from a reluctant Congress. And, in spite of all ridiculous exaggerations there is something to this fear of war between the two social systems of capitalism and communism. Unless we of the West win the fight to disarm, our armaments may someday be used to destroy the Soviet experiment.

PAUL BLANCHARD.

*\*Excerpts from Mr. Blanchard's article in DISARM, an L.I.D. publication.*

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The Graduate Branch of the N. Y. Student League, an organization of graduates and students not affiliated with any liberal or social problems club, held its first meeting on Sunday, Nov. 22. The Graduate Branch will be able to do valuable work for the League, thru its regular meetings and also thru other activities. Those students who are interested and are not affiliated with another branch of the Students League, can join our organization by sending their names to the Secretary, Miss Liza Gottlieb, 55 Morton St., N. Y. C., who will send notices of the date and place of the next meeting.



# Ghandi and the Indian People

INDIA'S revolution which flared up recently and then was blotted out of the political stage by such events of world-shaking importance as the complete rout of the reformist Labor government of England and at the present time the events in Manchuria, had its background in the long bloody struggle for freedom waged by the Indian people since their enslavement by the British East India Tea Company. It is obvious, then, that this struggle that was carried on against heroic odds and which at times took the form of desperate armed resistance has an underlying motive older than, and distinct from, the personality of Ghandi. The world has grown too much accustomed to associating the Indian revolution with Ghandi; whereas Ghandi represents at best the Indian National Congress whose whole platform leaves untouched such fundamental problems, as the struggle of the masses of workers and poor peasants against economic slavery imposed by both English imperialist and native bourgeois exploiters, the ancient and rotten caste system and the liquidation of the religious strife between Mohammedans and Hindus.

In 1918 Ghandi served as a recruiting agent for British militarism. This same saint who today is again serving British imperialism by trying to behead the independence movement of his country urged the Indian workers and farmers to murder Germans and Austrians on the pretext that as a reward for such bloody infamy, India would be granted freedom! Apologists for Ghandi plead that in 1918 the Mahatma had not completed his "spiritual evolution" but Americans will remember that Eugene Debs and Charles Ruthenberg fought against the imperialist blood bath from soap boxes in American cities. Ghandi at that time was 49 years old, he was no child and understood perfectly well that he was delivering the Indian proletariat to the slaughter house in order that Indian textile manufacturers might have freedom to develop their industry without imperialist restrictions.

The Indian revolution, is only entering its second and decisive phase, the phase in which the Indian proletariat will awaken to the treacherous role of the Congress and carry on the struggle to the finish against both foreign and native capitalism, is part of a world-wide colonial revolution which is shaking international capitalism to the roots. China, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Indo-China, Java are in the throes of revolution. In these countries there are no Ghandis, yet the age long struggle for bread and freedom goes on with as much sacrifice and heroism. The example of the Russian masses who purged their country of exploiters and are successfully building socialism is an inspiration to the oppressed colonial people of the whole world. It is only in relation to these considerations that a true perspective of the Indian revolution can be reached. Today the leader in this move for colonial freedom is the Chinese proletariat whose Red Army defeated the pick of Chiang Kai Shek's troops and who were prevented from completely defeating the parasitic war lords and agents of foreign imperialism by the combined navies of American, British and French imperialism. The gigantic growth of the Communist movement of the whole world, sounding the slogans of unity between the workers of the imperialist countries and the proletariat of the colonial countries, leading the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism which apparently has only mass misery and starvation to offer to the working class, has had tremendous effect on the masses of India and China.

The Ghandi saltmaking movement disregards the metaphysical fact; that time is irreversible. They want to bring all industry back to the handicraft stage.



In India the degradation, the hopeless enslavement of the workers and poor peasants has resulted in a wave of strikes which swept the country a few years ago. This reaching out of the Indian proletariat for relief from the crushing burdens of capitalism was betrayed by Ghandi in the interests of his bourgeois masters. The wave of struggle that had for its object only a little more bread, a little more of the means to life was smothered by the impotent, belly-crawling tactics of the non-resistance movement. Ghandi promised greater freedom, misled the as yet politically unawakened workers of his country and the strikes were abandoned. This elemental struggle of the working-class was exploited by the Indian middle class, twisted to serve ends that meant only continued misery for the workers. The resentment and revolutionary tendencies of the Indian workers was cleverly used to further the political and economic ambitions of the Indian bourgeoisie.

Every colonial revolution seems to pass through the same process. The American workers and farmers who fought in 1776 against British imperialism, learned the same bitter lesson after the smugglers and plantation owners of this country who were leading figures in the American revolution, seized power and excluded three quarters of the male population of this country from the right to vote on the basis of property qualifications.

The traitorous role of Ghandi was made manifest by the calling off of the passive resistance movement at a moment when the Indian masses were beginning to feel their great revolutionary strength. What answer has Ghandi to the demand for bread on the part of the great masses of India? Perhaps he will advise them to take to goat's milk, or to starve to death quietly, quietly, so that they may not disturb his holy meditations.

In this connection it may be illuminating to recall the conversation between Rabindranath Tagore, another holy compatriot of Ghandi, and some American reporters when he visited this country lately. He said that during his trip to Europe he had been struck by the amazing progress of the Russian peasants along cultural lines. Ten years ago, he said, the Indian peasant and the Russian peasant were equally slow witted and illiterate. Today the Russian has far outstripped his Indian brother. On being asked a moment later on the chances for Indian independence, he replied that not until the Indian peasant was more educated could any independence movement in India be successful. What the holy pundit forgot to mention was that the Russian peasant won his freedom only by fighting shoulder to shoulder with the Russian working class in the struggle to



establish communism. Ghandi's passive resistance has broken, not the British empire, it has temporarily paralyzed the revolutionary movement of the proletariat! It is drugging the Indian masses at a moment when they are likely to be called again to defend the Empire in a holy war against the "Red Menace."

Between the Soviet Union and India lies Afghanistan. How will the Indian masses react to a Red Army rolling through Khyber Pass, calling on them to unite with the Russian workers in a final struggle against exploiters of all nationalities? India and China are on fire. In the revolutionary wave that will shortly sweep through both countries, imperialists and their non-resistance tools will be swept into oblivion.

A. B.

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## Rewards for the Writer

LITERATURE thrives in the individualist state and sickens in the socialist state, we are told, because today, only in the former case is there a leisure class to provide for the writer the financial support and the appreciation his genius deserves. From comparison of the purely economic advantages under the two systems, the following quotations from the public prints are pertinent.

\* \* \*

The New York Herald Tribune Books of Sunday, October 18, contains an article entitled "The Writer and His Daily Bread" by Roy Temple House, editor of "Books Abroad", which is illustrated by a large drawing of a starving author staring disconsolately from his papers at the opulent theatre-goers beneath his dismal garret window. The article closes with the suggestion that readers who may be inclined to offer financial assistance to German or Austrian writers who are in financial straits may do so at such-and-such an address.

"Books are a luxury, and everybody in central Europe who has lived from the making or selling of books is living narrowly at present," writes Mr. House, mentioning the head of a publishing firm in Germany who for the first time since his childhood cannot afford a summer vacation. Mr. House mentions also the case of a French novelist who died of starvation a year or two ago, and a once-famous Czech dramatist who is subsisting on charity.

He quotes a letter from the Frenchman, Leon Lemonnier, author of "La Vie d'Oscar Wilde" who says that not more than twenty French authors are able to live from the sale of their books. "The majority of them pull through with the help of journalism.... The only solution for imaginative literature, as is already the case with poetry, to cease to be a profession and become an avocation."

"But it is from Germany and Austria that the most touching letters come," says Mr. House. "Old Gustav Frenssen, known to two generations of Americans, writes bravely if a little caustically from his Holstein village." Herr Fransen is quoted as saying that a very good story-writer can earn a modest livelihood, but because very few persons buy books nowadays, he dare not get sick but must work on into his old age. "This is how things are today. Since they are steadily growing more desperate, it may be worse next month. Before the war probably 60 per cent of our population were able to buy books and go to the theatre. Now not 5 per cent can do so. Who knows how it will be by another month?"

From Robert Neumann, author of "Mit fremden Federn" and "Die Pest von Lianora,":

"Economic crises always hit the writer particularly hard. He belongs in the category of luxuries, with champagne manufacturers, light ladies and hotel porters. No one has any money now for any of these categories. There is the additional difficulty that since the war we have an entirely new literature, and some of the most distinguished personalities of pre-war literature have been unable or unwilling to adapt themselves to the new conditions, and are as a result living in the direst need. Some of them are literally starving. The only way to help them is with money—and more money."

W. E. Suskind, whose letter is also quoted by Mr. House, regards the problem as very serious, and adds that "the artistic and spiritual standard of the production is lowered by the necessity of meeting the requirements of the popular taste..... The economic enslavement of the writer is no longer a prospect to be feared. It is a fact."

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HELEN Bennett, returning a little more than a year ago from Soviet Russia where she had gone as a special representative for McCall's Magazine, wrote an article on the status of the writer in Soviet Russia which was printed in the *Bulletin* (October, 1930), organ of a writers' association in this country, the Authors' League.

Miss Bennett visited the International Bureau of Revolutionary Literature and the Federation of Russian Writers in Moscow. The Bureau has offices in the same building as the Foreign Office, while the Federation has the whole of a big white building which had formerly been the residence of one of the nobility. She writes: "The offices and both buildings were, I understand, given free by the government to the writers for that use. In addition the government gives to the writers the sum of 150,000 rubles each year to meet conditions that approximate those we try to meet through our Authors' League Fund."

Since an author may work long for no results, he must be tided over, she was told. The Federation provides loans and scholarships, the scholarships for writers who must study subjects that cannot hope to bring immediate returns. "The government has reserved and even built houses where writers may live in comfort. For these rent is paid, but in the housing shortage they have been set aside for writers."

All members of the Federation are members of the Printers' Union and as members may go to any clinic for free medical treatment.

At the Writers' Club in Moscow, Miss Bennett was conducted through an old building remodeled for writers. "It was a delightful old house set in gardens now more or less dilapidated, and words fail me when I attempt to describe the conveniences especially designed for writers. There were in the first place a number of cabinets, intended to be loaned on request to writers who need quiet and solitude for work.... There was a wonderful and lovely library, a number of offices, a gym with showers, a big reception room...."

William Henry Chamberlain, writing in *The New Republic* of November 25, 1931, says:

"Authors in the Soviet Union, as in other countries, are dependent for compensation on royalties from books and plays and on the fees which they may receive from articles published in periodicals. ....An average writer in the Soviet Union earns from five hundred to a thousand rubles a month.

"Journalists, like authors, are relatively well paid in the Soviet Union. Average earnings of two or three hundred rubles a month may increase considerably if the journalist contributes special additional articles."

R. F. H.



# The Army Looks at Capitalism

## Some of the Advantages of Being a Soldier

1. The soldier's paymaster never fails in business, or fails to pay the wages of his employees.
2. The "factory" does not shut down and lay off its employees when times are dull.
3. He never has to quit work and go "on strike."
4. He doesn't have to worry about "getting a job."
5. He doesn't lose any time because of bad weather or sickness—the pay goes on just the same.
6. He doesn't worry about the cost of clothing or of beefsteaks or of rents. No matter what the cost he gets his clothing, his three square meals a day, and a comfortable, healthful home to live in, just the same.
7. Neither does he worry about doctors' bills or dentists' bills—Uncle Sam pays them.
8. If he wants to see the world he will sooner or later have the opportunity, on full pay and with travel expenses paid by Uncle Sam.
9. If he wants to return to civil life at the end of an enlistment, he may prepare for it by learning a trade, without loss of time or pay. With this and the discharge that testifies to good character and faithful service, his earning capacity and ability to get a job will be greatly increased.
10. He may also expect to return a much stronger and more capable man, physically and mentally.
11. His service will take the humps out of his back, broaden his shoulders, deepen his chest, develop and train his muscles and his mind; in brief, it will make him a more capable and useful man.
12. If he desires to remain in the service, there is room at the top for the capable and ambitious; the service offers exceptional facilities for advancement.
13. Enlisted men, of any grade whatever, may compete for commissions, or for appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point.
14. Ask about these things and become informed of the great opportunity that the United States Army offers to young men.

### RECRUITING STATIONS

RPB—1-17-30-400M

THE United States Government thru the War Dept. has recently taken the most radical step of its career. In its diligent efforts to obtain recruits for the army it has come out in most certain language, condemning the hazards to which the worker, both employed and unemployed, is exposed under the capitalist system of economy.

Yes, fellow students, this government of the United States of America, has unwittingly, unintentionally, and with malice towards none of the 57 millionaires who control its policies, declared war on the institution of capitalism. It is true that the War Dept. Bulletin hasn't told us

what to do about it, but with most remarkable insight and conscience, has in its "some of the advantages of being a soldier," (thirteen of them, at that,) given us some of the disadvantages of being a worker..

What follows is what the War Dept. thinks about the worker's condition under capitalism.

1. The worker's employer will sometimes fail in business, meaning a loss of job to the worker, but not necessarily any loss to the employer. Nowadays very few businessmen do not know how to manage a bankruptcy. Or, the paymaster simply "fails to pay the wages of his employees."
2. Factories will shutdown and lay off their employees when times are dull. The employer meanwhile will live on his accumulated surplus, while the worker, by definition and based upon demonstrable statistics, has hardly any or no surplus to fall back upon. His job was his only "property."
3. The worker often has to quit work and go on strike, that being the way in which he must struggle.
4. The worker very often has to worry about getting a job because no one else will help him get it. Great numbers of workers are continually displaced by the introduction of speed-up methods and new machinery.
5. The workers on out-door jobs lose pay because of bad weather. Nor can the worker afford to be sick. The pay does not go on just the same.
6. The worker must always worry about the cost of clothing, beefsteaks, and rent. No matter what his salary, his living conditions are always worse than that of his employer. He seldom gets what clothing he needs, nor three square meals a day, and surely has no comfortable healthful home to live in. Employers get rich because they pay workers not as much as the worker needs, but only by paying workers as little as the workers can be forced to accept.
7. The worker must always worry about doctors' and dentists' bills,—or else he never worries about them because he cannot afford to incur them,—for he himself must pay them.
8. When the worker travels, according to the law he becomes a vagrant. Tho no one pays his expenses he is sometimes thrown into a "concentration camp" where the overseers can concentrate upon watching him all day long, seeing that he is worth to them the 25c per day he gets for his labor.
9. If the worker is dissatisfied with whatever job he might have, he is unable to retain his pay while learning a new trade. If he could spend enough money to learn 10 new trades, he might get one job and thereby increase his earning capacity.
10. After the worker has been used on a job, he may expect to return a much weaker man, both physically and mentally. Decent working conditions might reduce profits.
11. Workers get humps in their backs, narrow-shoulders, sunken-chested, and develop into automatons; in brief, it will bend his back and break his spirit, making him useful to those who can use him.
12. If the worker desires to hold on to his job, he should know that there is no room for him at the top, even tho he is capable of ambitions. Calvin Coolidge's son, when he went to work on the railroad, found "exceptional facilities for advancement," as do other millionaires.
13. Any worker, whether he has 19c in his pocket or \$1.25, as the doctrine of equality has it, may run for president of the United States of America; or better yet, may



nominate himself for a director of the Standard Oil Co. (Pardon me, but,—he hasn't got a chance.)

14. Fellow students, "ask about these things and become informed"! Where are these "great opportunities" that exist for young men? Ask those who graduate a term ahead of you. The old maxim, "Seek and thou shalt find" is going back on us; where are the jobs and who is getting them? Those with a reverence for tradition might blush to learn that in order to retain the old maxim, it is necessary to get a new society. We need a social order where those who look for jobs can find them, and not to be compelled to join an army for the protection of American millionaires, because as the War Dept. Bulletin so aptly told us, there are no advantages in being a worker. Ideas have no fatherland, and we as students will be loyal to that which serves our interests.

The trick is a slick one. A man is told that conditions are terrible for a worker. He joins the army to escape ill circumstances and finds himself a paid watch-dog to defend the present miserable conditions from which he ran away, by shooting his fellow sufferers, the workingclass, when they, as a unit, attempt to remedy their bad lot.

SYDNEY PETYIAN.

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## Individual Initiative

ANY attempt to justify, on the grounds of social benefit, an organization of society based on free private enterprise and pecuniary gain, must usually center around the efficacy of these institutions as providing the strongest incentives to social as well as individual gain, and as allowing the greatest scope in making these gains effective. Assuming, then, that the defenders of private enterprise accept the same criterion as do the proponents of other modes of social organization, namely, the economic and social welfare of the society as a whole, it might not be fruitless to consider more carefully this question of incentives, and perhaps to compare, under the two prevailing institutional schemes, the stimuli to which men and women react in their economic endeavors.

The validity of the concept that personal gain affords the strongest possible incentive to the application and development of the received technology of producing and distributing goods, rests on several premises. The first of these, that personal gain is instinctive, and that material well-being is the sole end of life, unalterably set by biological conditions, is perhaps the most insidious idea ever to have dominated a leading nation of the world. No doubt it is a heritage of the pragmatism which our more civilized forbears had to develop in wresting some part of their accustomed level of material comfort from a totally undeveloped environment. That this material pragmatism should have developed into a national philosophy was perhaps inevitable, but that we may impute this characteristic unto all mankind, as one of our fundamental and immutable instincts, is by no means scientifically justifiable. What seems to have happened, is that a tropismatic aptitude for self-preservation, stimulated by a hostile environment, has become a predominant psychological trait, to the extent that the level of material comfort is conceived as the main object of human life. Thus we end by mistaking for an instinct, what is probably no more than inflation of a tropism for which we no longer have much use.

A second premise of somewhat doubtful validity is that the rewards for devising and instituting improvements, either in the ways and means of applying the received

technology, or in the technology itself, actually do go, under the system of private enterprise, to those who are responsible for them. An examination of the organization of industry would doubtless show that those who reap the large rewards are in most cases those who are strategically situated for a successful manipulation of the financing and control of industrial operations, and that the technicians, inventors and scientists occupy the position of salaried employees. The control of industry is being taken over by increasingly larger and more powerful corporations and groups of bankers, as is shown in Harry W. Laidler's recent work, "Concentration of American Industry", with the result that innovations can only be made through these huge companies, and on their own terms.

A third premise, which seems self-evident until examined in the light of actual conditions, is that it is to the personal interest of those few who control industry to institute these improvements, and to maintain the output of the productive mechanism at the highest possible level. While it is almost impossible to bring factual evidence to bear on the first point, it is widely known that the large corporations which dominate their respective industries, are extremely loath to improve their products, or their productive processes, beyond a minimum enforced on them by the anaemic competition which exists. Those who are in the saddle have more to gain from financial maneuvers and inside rake-offs than they have to gain from increasing the efficiency of the productive mechanism. As to maintaining a high level of output, the continual attempts, in nearly all industries, at price-fixing agreements, evasion of the anti-trust laws and of utility regulation, and even wasting of surplus production, are evidence only of the desire to make a profit at any social cost. Thus, it has been estimated by economists, that due to this intentional restriction of output, and to the inefficiency of an uncontrolled economy, our economic machine turns out approximately half of what might be produced under different conditions of ownership of the means of production.

In conclusion, it is evident that the philosophy of *laissez-faire*, which preaches that individual gain coincides with social welfare, has long since ceased to fit our complex economic structure, and that it is time we examined our institutions in the light of social justice and the abolition of economic oppression and exploitation.

"Individual Initiative under Socialism" will be the topic of a future article by Stephen Cross.

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ALL STUDENTS, whether or not they are members of liberal and social problems' clubs are invited to contribute articles of their own on all subjects pertaining to the purpose of the NEW YORK STUDENT LEAGUE and its magazine. Criticism of any article in this issue, or of the magazine as a whole, by students or faculty members would be greatly appreciated. Theoretical expositions of any important phase of political, social, and economic philosophies—of all shades—would be welcomed. Detailed studies of special problems, which relate preferably to contemporary events, e.g. a study of the 'overhead' expenses in administering relief in any given city, factors in the price of milk, anti-trust law agitation, etc., is highly desirable.

Contributions should be limited, if possible, to two thousand words; typewritten articles would save the editorial committee's time.

Subjects for forthcoming issues include a series of articles on "Some College Presidents"; an analysis of the moves as a war propaganda factor, by H. A. Potamkin.



## On the Manchurian Front

**NATIONALISTS**, a communist and a missionary to the Far East presented divergent and contrary views of what is happening in Manchuria at a meeting held on October 3 by the New York Student League. A large crowd attended the symposium which was held at the N. Y. U. Playhouse at Washington Square and which was presided over by Mr. Donald Henderson of the Economics Department of Columbia University.

The first to speak was Mr. Y. T. Yong of the Chinese Association of New York. Mr. Yong dwelled at length upon the legal issues involved. As a student of international law, he saw Japanese intervention in Manchuria as a violation of the Kellogg peace pact as well as of the Nine Power treaty which guaranteed the territorial integrity of China. China according to him was guilty of no treaty violations and had always respected Japanese rights. She was merely the victim of Japanese imperialist designs and her inveterate desire to dominate the Far East. If Japan's ambitions were not curbed, by peaceful means, Mr. Yong asserted vehemently, war would be the only possible outcome of the present situation. As a Chinese nationalist, Mr. Yong made a passionate appeal to the Western powers to intervene and come to the defense of China, reminding them of their interest upon which Japan was treading, and reminding them also of the spirit of the Covenant of the League of Nations and of the Kellogg Pact. Mr. Yong closed with an appeal for the peaceful settlement of the conflict and for a better understanding between nations.

Mr. Yong's speech was received sympathetically.

The next speaker was Mr. B. Omura, a Japanese nationalist, who began by analysing the growing need of Japan for an outlet for her surplus population and the need of her factories for the raw materials which Manchuria had to offer. Japan's position in Manchuria, Mr. Omura stated, was impregnable from the legal standpoint. He drew the attention of the audience to China's continuous resistance to Japanese protection and upon the boycott which China had declared on Japanese goods. China, he asserted, was guilty of countless violations of Japan's treaty rights, by not respecting either the life and property of the million or so Korean Japanese subjects in Manchuria. China should willingly accept Japanese protection, for is that not better than dismemberment among the Western powers? Furthermore, Mr. Omura continued with a smile, Asia as a whole should be glad that at least one of her peoples was strong enough to make itself heard in the counsel of nations. Mr. Omura made no attempt to justify Japan's action on moral grounds. "After all," Mr. Omura said pointing to the audience (composed mainly, of New York students), "you Americans have done the same thing in Latin America."

Mr. Omura closed his speech with the hope that a peaceful settlement of the conflict would be forthcoming.

The third speaker was Paul Porter of the League for Industrial Democracy, who has been recently making a special study of Far Eastern questions. Mr. Porter devoted most of his time to an analysis of the economic and social problems involved in the Manchurian dispute. He repeated much of what Mr. Omura had already stated in respect to the Japanese need for expansion. After a brief survey of the historical forces making for the present conflict, Mr. Porter went on to analyze the railroad and population problems in Manchuria. The only possible outcome of the present conflict, he asserted, was war, and the only possible solution was some form of socialism peacefully arrived at.

The Rev. Mills, former missionary in China and Japan and a Y. M. C. A. organizer, followed Mr. Porter on the stand. Rev. Mills made a lengthy appeal for peaceful cooperation among nations and for international justice. United States interests in China are comparatively small, her investments there being only about \$400,000,000. He omitted the fact that American exports in China during the last decade averaged well over \$100,000,000. America's interest in China, Rev. Mills concluded, was above all sentimental and her duty was to bring about a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

The fifth and last speaker was Mr. Kuo of the Workers' School. He made a Marxian analysis of the situation in the Far East. He explained capitalist Japan's imperialist designs on Manchuria and on China as a whole. He then drew attention to the struggle that would inevitably arise, sooner or later, in view of the conflicting interests of the Western powers in China. He pointed out that the capitalist nations, in the throes of the present depression, would reap immense profit from a war, which would not only absorb the unemployed but also revive business. However, with the help of the international machinery which the capitalist powers have set up, Mr. Kuo continued, it was probable that they would succeed (to iron out their differences) and direct their energies towards a war with the Soviet Union, whom they consider as their common enemy. Such a war would serve the double purpose of destroying the Soviets and of restoring prosperity for the capitalist governments. Russia had, up till now, skillfully averted such a calamity but events were rendering this task increasingly difficult. The only solution to these problems, he concluded, lay, from the workers point of view, in a proletarian revolution which would put an end both to capitalist oppression and to imperialist wars.

Mr. Kuo's speech was received with much applause.

GEORGE D. HERRON.

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## Looking for a Job

The U. S. A. is on the verge of a sharp struggle for power. The grind of the economic crisis has roused millions of wage workers to the need for action; has bankrupted a great section of the farm population and has intensified discontent among small tradespeople and professional people. Here is a force of chaotic discontent tens of millions strong. Will this discontent be led off by clever politicians into the by-paths of minor reform, or will it be utilized to bring about major social changes?

The inability of American business men and politicians to handle the economic crisis that broke over the country in October, 1929, and the terrible need felt on all sides for some effective leadership opens up a line of opportunity such as the young men and women of America have never before faced. The present social system is plainly inadequate to meet the needs of the 1931 world. A transition must be effected from the present system to a more workable one. The workers and farmers of the United States must work hand in hand in the upbuilding of that new social system. This whole process must be carried through with minimum losses and maximum gains to the broad masses.

Are you looking for a job? No more important or complicated or dangerous task has faced the youth of America since the birth of the Republic. And the work is *now going on*.

Are you ready?

SCOTT NEARING.



# The Tragedy of a Liberal

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LINCOLN STEFFENS. *Harcourt, Brace and Company*. \$3.75.

Muckraking is distinctly an American phenomenon. It arose during the closing quarter of the last century, partly from the desire of some clever editors to increase their circulation and partly from a popular notion that all that is needed to correct the evils of our social order is to expose them. The latter idea persists in unaccountable ways but in not such unaccountable places. We find *The World-Telegram*, for instance, exposing Mayor Walker by the columns. We find the *American Mercury* shedding intimate and compromising light on the personnel of the Senate, or Harpers discussing education or domestic government in a spirit of mild, gentlemanly iconoclasm. But Mayor Walker is returned to office, as are the senators, and the old education and democratic government jog along just as if there had been no Harpers or *Mercury* or *World-Telegram*.

For this reason it is good to turn to Lincoln Steffens who, with Ida Tarbell, Ray Stannard Baker and a few others, began it all, to discern just what are the limitations of the muckraking aims and methods. Steffens, as well as his colleagues, have been known variously as dangerous radicals, passionate reformers and sensation-mongers. Actually they were none of these things. Coming from middle-class backgrounds and reared with certain illusions as to the respective functions of business and the state under representative government, they were embarrassed and a little shocked that society did not keep its house more in order. They found what to most people in these days is a commonplace, that business can buy laws and concessions favorable to its interests, and that failing this, it can buy protection from restrictive or unfavorable laws. They found the whole political system honeycombed with graft and corruption and learned that representative government in any real sense was a myth.

At that time, the muckrakers went further. Neither did they have any sense of the forces which were producing this graft, nor did they realize until many years later that graft was only one means to the end, the domination of government by the employing, investing classes. Steffens explains towards the end of his autobiography how the election of business-minded representatives (such as Herbert Hoover, Andrew Mellon and Dwight Morrow in the high places and others of this ilk down the line) obviated the necessity for the former cruder methods of graft and yielded the same results. Although Steffens does not phrase it this way, he was aware of the trend of big business towards a class-consciousness.

Steffens betrays a growing realization that corruption was inevitably at the core of the system, and that an expose or a temporary reform went, in the end, for nothing. In this respect he was far ahead of ordinary muckrakers. He saw that business and government could not exist side by side, that business inevitably swallowed the political machine and made the government its servant. He had a prophetic vision of a trend in all the states of the world away from dual authority to the single authority vested in business. He had become now more the scientist and less the journalist. He was working in the spirit of Comte, and it is likely that he would have found himself paralleling Marx, in some respects, if he had not been blinded by the far-reaching influences of his upper class background.

Failing to recognize the importance of class interests

and class antagonisms, he watched without disapproval the trend towards a fascist, direct, dominion over the state by business interests. Thus the liberal idealism which allowed him to see no important differences between the worker and the employer as human beings allowed him to believe that the trend in modern Italy and the trend in Soviet Russia were in the same direction. He closed on the optimistic note that here in America we are traveling along a different path but to the same goal as the Russians, toward a sane and just planned economy.

The fallacy of this position hardly needs elaboration here, but it is a fallacy which illustrates the limitations of modern liberalism. It should underscore the danger which confronts youths today of having their social ideals, their warm-hearted constructive aims, betrayed into perpetuating the economic order which they seek to change.

The case of Lincoln Steffens is not untypical and it is here, of course, that the importance of his case lies. A protagonist of social justice, a hater of war and oppression, it is nevertheless obvious that his liberalism has carried him in the direction of a sort of fascism which will accentuate wars and oppression. It is poignant tragedy because Steffens who went everywhere, Russia during the Revolution, Italy, France, Mexico, and the far corners of the United States, had eyes and saw not. As a journalist, as a writer of memoirs, he saw in fact a great deal, and he tells the story of three important decades with skill and charm. He describes the Russian Revolution with sympathy for the aims of those builders of a new social order, and with some insight. But obviously, back in the recesses of his mind, the real message of the Revolution failed to penetrate.

The muckrakers have their function, of course, and Steffens, who became something more than an added usefulness. The *Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens*, which is well worth the reading, indicates not only the necessity of a social philosophy, but also the necessity of critical evaluation of that social philosophy.

R. F. HALE.

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## Liberty in the Bronx

ALTHOUGH the N. Y. Student League is an organization of college and university students, recent happenings in the city high schools relate to problems similar to our own and demand our attention.

Evidently in order to impress on her mind the benefits of free speech, press and association, a student of the Morris High School, Miss Rose Tekulsky, was expelled from school because of membership in the Young Communist League and because of the "Communist" activity she carried on in school. Miss Tekulsky's "communist" activity consisted of an attempt to organize a club of students to demand of the authorities lower prices in the lunchroom, free G. O. membership for children of the unemployed, and other demands of similar nature.

In the New Utrecht High School, Brooklyn, the students have long been receiving a practical lesson in the inalienable rights and privileges of the American student. Quite some time ago, the History Club in that school was disbanded by the authorities because the members of the club voted down by an overwhelming majority the motion of the faculty advisor to prohibit any discussion of socialism



or communism. Thriving under persecution the club continued its existence outside of the school building and grew very rapidly. This club, calling itself the New Utrecht Student Council has been issuing a mimeographed Bulletin to the Students of the school. In the bulletin appear articles criticizing the very inadequate lunch room facilities, protesting the suppression of free speech, and voicing the grievances of the students generally. Recently two members of the New York Student League, Jack Dubitsky and Louis Joel were arrested in front of the school for distributing copies of this "dangerous" publication. At this writing the school authorities are pressing charges against these two students and their trial has not yet taken place.

Apparently the school authorities believe very much in the power of the written word. And in New Utrecht they became frantic in their attempts to prevent the students from reading the Bulletin. All copies were confiscated. Nine students were suspended from school for a day because they refused to surrender the Bulletin regarding it as their personal property.

In New Utrecht an earnest attempt to preserve the honor of the Arista Society was made. Several students who attend meetings of the Students Council were asked to choose between the Arista and the Students Council. One exceptionally bright but impecunious student was told that she would not be eligible for a scholarship if she did not resign from the Student Council.

It would be erroneous to believe that these events are of exceptional nature. On the contrary, the suppression of the most elementary rights of free speech, press and association is a customary procedure in all high schools. Students are simply not permitted to express their ideas openly if these views are not in accordance with accepted orthodox opinions of the higher authorities.

Constant dread of the voice of omnipotent "59th St.", office of the Board of Education compels the most liberal teachers to participate in the daily suppression of opinions of independent or critical nature.

On top of all this, the American Legion is taking a very active interest in our education. Thus, the B'klyn Daily Eagle of Nov. 13, informs us that "A campaign will be started soon by the Kings County American Legion Americanism Committee to 'stamp out student participation in communistic rallies...'. Of course participation in military demonstrations and parades by children bearing guns larger than themselves is not at all objectional to the American Legion.

In view of these things it is gratifying to learn that students from 15 different high schools have formed an Interscholastic Students' Rights League, to lead the fight for the reinstatement of Rose Tekulsky and for right of free speech, free press and association. Prof. Cox of the School of Education at New York University has written considerably on secondary education and we wonder why he and some of his colleagues are not concerned with this case. For, Prof. Cox maintains that any student self-activity in extra-curricular activities is good. In other words, it is educational. Hence, the squelching of such a student and her work, is besides being unconstitutional, very bad pedagogy. Many clubs at colleges affiliated with the NEW YORK STUDENT LEAGUE have sent telegrams of protest to Mr. E. Bogart, the principal. A similar expression from some faculties would find itself backed by a large student body.

Ed. Note: As the issue was going to press, we learned that Joel and Dubitsky received 5 and 2 day sentences respectively in the Coney Island Court, for having "littered the street".

J. C.

## Militarism at College

THE college student, because of his reading and varied studies is potentially able to take a broad, international view of events and ideas, and can thus shake off the vast amount of prejudices and stupidity deliberately fostered by the rulers of society in order to keep the masses shackled to their chariot. College authorities, however, have made every effort to "protect" the student from the problems of society today. Ancient and medieval society may be discussed to the fullest extent, but the modern social and political conditions in New York today are taboo, except, possibly, in a simon-pure academic fashion in the classroom. By means of various regulations the authorities hope to build up a high wall about the student body to shut out all the vital problems of the mass outside, from which the student is by no means free. By means of curricula designed to make of the student a purely academic, vacillating dilettante they hope to build up a wall about his mind, to prevent the entrance of any ideas arising from the concrete questions of the day. Patriotism and reaction are, however, given their opportunity to penetrate by means, such as military training courses.

The Social Problems Club of the College of the City of New York was formed precisely for the purpose of stimulating in the student body an interest in the great problems facing society.

And because the club realized that military training in the college was an influence for fostering narrow prejudice and stupid jingoism it decided to start a campaign against the course.

The struggle against military training was inaugurated in 1926-27. As both a direct and indirect result, several students were expelled from college, some to be reinstated after vigorous protest from members of the student body. In its fight, however, the club made a serious error. It called for the abolition of compulsory military training, and was willing to agree to military training in a voluntary form.

In this way, the attack was directed merely against the compulsory aspect of the course, whereas the basis for the struggle was the desire to get rid of military training as such. The club, however, backed by the student body, did succeed in having it made optional—in name.

Last term the club renewed the fight. This time it raised the slogan of complete abolition of military training from the curriculum. The grounds for its doing so were twofold. In the first place, there were the reasons which applied in the former fight. It was pointed out to the students that those who took military training were regaled with anti-Soviet, anti-workingclass propaganda; that they were filled with jingoism and a militant patriotism which was calculated to instill in them the "proper" attitude when a war situation, as exists at the present moment, arose. Secondly, the club showed that the so-called optional feature of military training was a farce; that when a freshman enters the college, he is immediately met with speeches by such august personages as President Robinson of the college, Col. Lawis, head of the R. O. T. C., and a visiting general or two, all of whom try to convince him that he should take military training, and then he is made to sign up at once. He is not even told that it is optional. The writer has spoken to many freshmen, and even sophomores, who hadn't the slightest idea that the course was not compulsory. Furthermore, those who know that an option exists are not very enthusiastic about refusing to take military training. For if they do so, they are compelled to take a year of civilian drill. This course comes in the Junior year, when students



wish to be free of all compulsory, minor courses, and is always given in the late afternoon, whereas third year courses usually come in the morning. Also, the authorities point out the great difference in grades between the military training course and the extra year of civilian drill. And miracle of miracles! It turns out that the grades of the former are higher than those of any other subject, while the grades of the latter are the lowest in the school!

Such are the methods used to prevent students from escaping the benefits of military training.

In its recent campaign, the Social Problems Club managed to get the Student Council of City College to agree to a student referendum on the question of complete abolition. But for some very lame and queer reasons, the council called it off, after postponing it several times.

The club did succeed, however, in getting the "Curriculum Committee", a student committee which suggests curricular changes to the faculty, to recommend the abolition of military training. And it is indeed a wholly expected tribute to student democracy that the suggestion was acted on—negatively!

In the course of the struggle, the Club published "Frontiers", the first issue of which was entirely devoted to military training. Suddenly without any warning, the issue was confiscated on the second day of its appearance; the paper, the club, charter and the president, suspended. The reasons given were technical, but the rapidity of action, the drastic measures taken, plus the open existence of other papers under similar circumstances, seem to indicate another and not so hidden, motive. For putting out a leaflet protesting against the action of the president, ten members of the club were suspended. Quick and energetic protest, however, from the student body of City College, and from Social Problems and Liberal Clubs throughout the country, and the threat of more drastic action, compelled the school authorities to legalize "Frontiers" and to reinstate the club and its members, with the exception of the president, who was suspended for the remainder of the semester.

This incident revealed to the members of the club, the existence of a whole mass of by-laws and rules concerning club activities which, if the authorities wished to enforce them, had the effect of limiting narrowly the scope of any club's work. Therefore the club has decided to enter upon a campaign to have these regulations eliminated, or at least so modified that clubs will be free to choose whatever form of activity they think suitable to their purpose.

D. M.

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"Industry in this country has made an attempt to apply the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount on a scale unparalleled in history during the present economic depression," is what the N. Y. Times on Nov. 20 reports Mr. Uteley of the Detroit Steel Casting Ass'n. to have said. The manner in which they have done this, according to Mr. Uteley's own statement, is as follows: Industry has seen to it that there was no increase in real wages for the workers; both he and the rest of industry have fought against old age pensions and unemployment insurance.

We didn't think the Sermon had been that bad.

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# The New York Student League

## OUR PURPOSE:

To arouse in students an interest in the fundamental questions of social justice and social organization; to bring home a realization of the active part the student must play in the economic order by critically evaluating and reorganizing the social environment of which he is an integral part; to make students conscious of their intellectual obligations and sensitive to all the duties involved.

## OUR PROGRAM:

1. Large meeting will be held at which speakers of national and international importance will address the clubs at their own colleges on topics of vital interest, such as 'militarism in the colleges', 'academic freedom of both students and faculty', 'discriminations against minority groups' e.g., Negroes, Jews,—thus inviting all members to stimulative discussion with consequent action. The clubs will take up all student issues and demands which have social and economic implications.
2. City-wide symposia, mass meetings, and debates will be held on mooted questions of the day at which representatives of various social and political groups will present their views.
3. Central study courses will be organized devoted to the intensive investigation of specific social problems, e.g., 'literature and social reform', 'relation of labor to law'.
4. Active participation and aid to all workers struggle, to better their conditions, regardless of political affiliation of groups involved.

## ORGANIZATION:

THE NEW YORK STUDENT LEAGUE is a federation of college clubs interested in social problems.

THE NEW YORK STUDENT COUNCIL is composed of authorized delegates from college clubs which constitute the NEW YORK STUDENT LEAGUE.

Membership in this organization is possible by joining the local group of the college at which one is a student. A special unit has been organized for recent graduates.

## ORGANIZATIONAL DETAILS:

Each college group may send from one to three delegates to represent them on the NEW YORK STUDENT COUNCIL.

The COUNCIL is composed of an executive committee of five of its own members. Chairmanship of the COUNCIL rotates among the five of the executive committee.

I am interested in the N. Y. Student League and would like further information concerning its activities.

Name .....

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