

any railroad to (1) deny or in any way question the right of its employees to join the labor organization of their choice; (2) interfere in any way with the organization of its employees; (3) use its funds in maintaining 'company unions'; (4) influence or coerce its employees in an effort to induce them to join or to remain members of such 'company unions'; (5) require any person seeking employment to sign a contract or agreement promising to join or not to join a labor organization." Note that according to Mr. Eastman's summary the last stipulation bars the closed shop.

The railroads hastened to "comply" with the law. Company unions were so reorganized as to give them an appearance of legality and "check off" systems were even set up to force workers to pay dues into the yellow unions. Some roads blandly informed their workers that Eastman had declared the company unions were legal. One road in the Southwest ordered members of a bona-fide union, on pain of dismissal, to hand over their membership books to the master mechanic for destruction.

At least two roads required workers who had joined regular unions to sign form letters notifying union headquarters of their "resignation" from membership. The Pennsylvania, with its usual bluntness, declare it would maintain its old company union, hired an expert criminal lawyer as counsel for the union and practically told the government to "come on and fight."

The railroads have supplemented their militant company unionism with equally militant anti-union activities. Active unionists in the shops have been transferred to disagreeable jobs or to jobs with which they were not familiar. Naturally, they are slow at the beginning, but before they have a chance to learn the job they are fired for "not turning out the work fast enough." Two organizers for the Railway Carmen and the Boiler-makers on the Lehigh Valley were given their choice by gunmen of leaving alive or being "shipped out in a box" and the Brotherhoods Unity Committee can testify that the railroad spies have not relaxed their activities.

The roads are aided in their campaign against labor by the divisions between the unions—divisions which are carefully nourished by union officials, jealous of their jobs, and the railroads. The Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, for example, does all in its power to harm the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen & Enginemen because the latter claims jurisdiction over engineers. The B. of L. F. & E. retaliates in kind. Railroad officials foster this enmity by encouraging now this organization, now the other, to secure the contracts on the various roads—usually at the expense of the rival brotherhood. The brotherhoods are thus kept snapping at each other and prevented from uniting for improvement of conditions of engineers and firemen alike.

It has even been discovered that the railroads are helping the Railway Employees' Na-

tional Pension Association, which looked at first like a bona-fide rank-and-file movement, in its assault on the pension bill for railroad workers presented in Congress by the regular brotherhoods. So effective have they been that the ranks of the workers are badly split and the pension movement hasn't got to first base. But the Association did get across a lot of propaganda against union officials which caused many unthinking workers to draw out of the unions—which was what the railroads want, of course, in addition to wanting the pension movement wrecked.

The union officials are hardly aware of all this. When they are not fighting each other and hunting down radicals in the unions they are hobnobbing with bankers and railway officials on how to finance railway bond issues and how to fight the trucks, buses and the St. Lawrence Waterway. They allowed the surrender of basic union rights on the Loree and Couch roads without firing a shot—and now, under pressure from the aroused rank-and-file, they are taking strike votes with the end in view of preventing strikes. They want the appointment of emergency boards so that

they can have further time in which to calm down the workers; and they want these boards to put over the railroads' policies so that they themselves shall not bear the onus for such action. They aided the roads in putting over the 10 percent cut, and they are helping the roads to maintain it at a time when other workers, through strikes and militant organization, are forcing up their wages; at a time when rising prices are cutting wages even more drastically than 10 percent. To call them labor lieutenants of capitalism is not a polite form of vituperation—it is to state a fact.

The outlook would be black indeed were it not for the energetic work carried on by the Brotherhoods Unity Committee, a rank-and-file group which is attempting to unite all rail workers, regardless of craft, on a program of taking control of their unions and transforming them into militant organs of the masses of railway workers. The success which has attended the committee's efforts so far indicates that the union members are no longer content to be sheep led to the slaughter by their bellwether Judases.

The Hands of Old Man Martin

MIGUEL OTERO SILVO

To Gustavo Machado

Look at your hands, old man Martin,
Their wrinkles are furrows
And their horny fingers growing buds.
They gripped the hatchet
And every stroke on the trunk of the tree
Ran through the branches
Like the shudder of a frightened bird.
And the falling tree
Was like a blow on the breast of the field:
Wood of the tree that went far away . . .
Wood of the tree that you will never see again.

Look at your hands, old man Martin,
Your fingers grew out of
Your sturdy heart . . .
They gripped the hoe
And the father furrows opened
And the dry soil felt in its womb
The tender waiting of the sweetheart . . .
The seed fell in the furrow
And fed itself with soil, sun, and life
The dry plain turned green
The play of the exploiters was covered with
light and birds.

Look at your hands, old man Martin . . .
They are seed that was sown
To spring up in flowers.
They gripped the sickle
And the heads of wheat bent themselves
Like a woman,
And through the wounds of the cane
Ran the white sweet blood.
Your hands went to the vines,
And they came back full of green tears;

And the coffee trees scattered their rubies.
Coffee, sugar, bread and wine:
These are missing in your home, old man
Martin.

Look at your hands, old man Martin,
Smelling of ripe fruits,
And of ripening fields . . .
They harvested the flowers,
And the prairies burned with clover.
The radiant roses opened,
And the silken lilies lifted themselves. . . .
The wandering wind
Stopped one night
And went away in the morning
Laden with perfume.

Look at your hands
For they harvested these flowers wasted in
mansions
Or on wooden altars,
Glorifying cardboard saints.

Look at your hands, old man Martin.
Let the seed fall,
Every comrade is a furrow
And every word a living seed.
Harvest your flowers:
With blossoms of blood and steel
The light will come.
Harvest your flowers:
You are building the world.
Grip the hatchet:
Reap, reap in plenty,
And then, what is yours
Will belong to you, old man Martin.

—Translated by Albert N. Sanchez
and Fielding Davidson.

Correspondence

At the Consulate

TO THE NEW MASSES:

On Feb. 17th a delegation headed by Corliss Lamont left the office of the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners for the Austrian Consulate. Newspaper men were awaiting in the lobby of 500 Fifth Avenue where the Consulate has its offices. The press boys must have tipped off the police, for a large, severe lieutenant, several cops, and some mean-looking plainclothes men acted as an unwelcoming reception committee and blocked the way to the doors. (Some day an imaginative Police Commissioner will make a name for himself by organizing a theatrical school for dicks. Those in the lobby tried hard to appear to be plain citizens, but they succeeded only in looking restless and conscious of the guns and blackjacks in their pockets.)

Allan Taub, being a lawyer and aware of the rights a plain citizen is supposed to have, asked the large lieutenant if he had a warrant to stop peaceful citizens in the lobby of a public building. At first the lieutenant's resolution was equal to his physical bulk, but after Allan Taub took his name and the numbers of the cops with him and read the law to them, his resolution began to shrink, and the cops looked nervous.

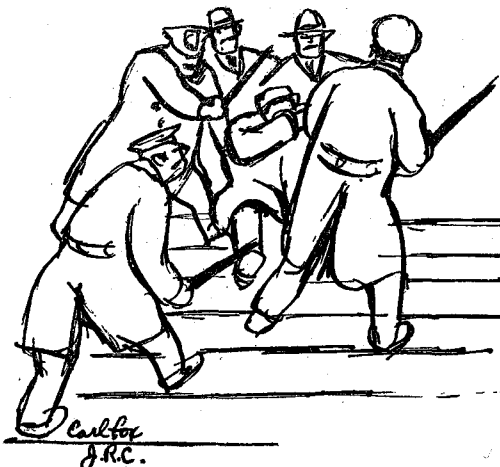
The lieutenant who had given his name as Quinn then left the delegation still herded in by the cops, and went upstairs to see the Consul. People, going in and out the big swinging doors, stared at the delegation. The crowd, containing some big shots, and office help shining in their blaze, look "respectable." Their glances are curious and not unfriendly, for this delegation looks respectable too. It is different, afterward, when a workers' delegation arrives.

Lieutenant Quinn comes down to announce that the delegation will be received. He grins self-consciously, for as is later discovered, he has probably played a part in a cheap trick. The delegation is taken up in a reserved elevator, and the faithful dicks accompanying are admitted into the consulate offices.

There a soft and pink and blond and helpless Teuton, Herr Otto, receives the delegation with nervous disclaimers of knowing anything or being responsible for anything. At first he says the Consul is in conference; then a darker Teuton, one with a liverish complexion and an irritated look and announcing himself as a member of the Austrian Embassy in Washington, comes in to pinch hit for Otto. He explains that the Consul has been in conference—an hour or a week ago, he doesn't say—but he is out now. He has gone home for the day.

This gave the delegation something new to deal with, an obvious collusion between the police and the consulate, to escape giving hearings to protesting groups of citizens. No doubt the memories of the demonstration at their doors the preceding Wednesday, and the stream of delegations that had gone in and out before and since, and the large file of telegrams and letters of protest, were at work in the disturbed brains behind these agitated faces. If there is any one who still questions the effectiveness of mass pressure, who is unconvinced by the fact that Mooney and the Scottsboro boys are still alive, and that the delegations to the Warden have won the fight for political prisoners at Sing Sing to receive and read *THE NEW MASSES*, Labor Defender, Labor Unity and other workers' publications, he should accompany such a delegation as this one and watch the strained and nervous faces of officials, listen to their tremulous and evasive answers.

Corliss Lamont read the protest for the delegation and summed it up further in three demands: amnesty for the imprisoned Austrian workers, resto-



Carl Fox

ration of civil rights, and condemnation of executions without trial.

After considerable exchange of words the meeting was over. As the doors opened the departing delegation had an opportunity to greet an incoming one, a delegation of workers. One of the cops in a tired voice said, "What, another delegation!" Lieutenant Quinn looked weary. The cops looked weary.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Chauvinism in School Books

TO THE NEW MASSES:

The New York Teachers Anti-War Committee is preparing to launch a campaign against chauvinism in the text-books of the New York City schools. Readers of *THE NEW MASSES* can co-operate by calling our attention to any objectionable passages in text-books with which they are familiar. We urge them to write down the name of the book with the number of the offending page, and send it to Room 1610, 104 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Sincerely,

IRVING ADLER, Secretary.

"The Only Way Out"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

I have been reading every number of *THE NEW MASSES* since it has become a weekly, with intense interest, and the mere cold cut documentation of the articles has made me realize, more than ever, that the revolutionary program you are projecting is the only way out of the mess and wreckage which our statesmen still insist on calling civilization. Your magazine is getting better all the time, and I think will reach out to more and more people who, being left without being sharply aware of it, will swing over to your side. I heartily endorse your editorial policy and will be glad to send you material in the future.

ALBERT HALPER.

The Return of Emma Goldman

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Emma Goldman appeared in Mecca Temple Feb. 13, 1934, in her first lecture since her deportation from the United States. She spoke before a mixed, politely cordial, all-class audience, consisting of anarchist-liberals, liberal-anarchists (the Civil Liberties Union seems to be one of the last strongholds of anarchism in this country) die-hard rank-and-file Wobblies and anarchists, and curious Communists.

She voiced the following sentiments: 1) Affirmed her belief in the tenets of Anarchism. 2) Denied

that she was disappointed in the Russian Revolution. 3) Declared that she recognized the distinctions between a Communist and Fascist dictatorship, but that both were to be condemned for their use of force. 4) Affirmed her faith in and sympathy with the Russian masses but denied that they had any voice in the Soviet government. 5) Declared that Franklin D. Roosevelt was the first American President to take an interest in the welfare of the working class.

The prevailing impression was that Emma Goldman was a tired radical. Perhaps not in a physical sense but most certainly in a political and intellectual sense. Much proletarian blood has been shed under capitalism since her active anarchist days in this country, when being an anarchist meant being a militant revolutionary fighter in the ranks of the working class; for the rotten reformism of the Socialist groups instinctively repelled the sincere, heroic spirit of such fighters, and the revolutionary Communist Party did not yet exist to welcome them. But the lessons of the many years since the War have not served to develop her political awareness. When she was deported to the Soviet Union, she slipped into the gigantic mechanism of the Russian October, but a warping, reactionary romanticism prevented her warm sympathies for the oppressed from flowering into an ideological comprehension of the need for the dictatorship of the proletariat. Now Emma Goldman uses the word, dictatorship, as a bogey man to frighten away the timid. Perhaps she has never read or fully understood Lenin's brilliant pamphlet, *State and Revolution*.

The pathos of Emma Goldman that night was her woeful isolation from the workers for whom she had fought most of her life. That isolation seemed to be due primarily to her hostility to the Soviet Union and the Communist Party. The tragedy of her life consists in that she failed to learn any lessons from the huge strides of the Russian Revolution, the tremendous world-wide crisis of capitalism, the radicalization of the masses, the growth of Fascism and the immanence of war. Emma Goldman is a tired radical. The rapid flow of historic events has not refreshed her flagging mind nor rectified her myopic political vision.

B. BENGAL.

The CONTRIBUTORS

MARGUERITE YOUNG is a Washington correspondent of *THE NEW MASSES*.

R. PALME DUTT is the editor of the *Labour Monthly* of England.

ALBERT ALLEN is a New York newspaperman and cartoonist.

JAMES STEELE is a newspaperman who has made a close study of the railroad situation.

BORIS ISRAEL is a labor organizer in the South.

MIGUEL OTERO SILVO is a young Venezuelan poet active in the revolutionary movement, who was imprisoned in the LaRotunda frame-up.

ALICE WITHROW FIELD is the author of *The Protection of Women and Children in Soviet Russia*.

O. FRANK is a university instructor who, in view of the dubious outlook for the C.W.A., uses a pseudonym in order to keep his job.

DAVID PLATT is a member of the Workers Film and Photo League of New York.

ESTHER KRIGER is an artist, housewife and mother. She lives in Brooklyn.