

know quite well that the American Workers Party exists only on paper in Toledo and as for the Unemployed League, it is not much more than a handful there and is numerically weaker than the Unemployment Council, which includes Communists in its leadership. I do not deny that the Unemployed League has been a factor in smashing the injunction, but was it an oversight that made you fail to mention the fact that it was the Unemployment Council that brought hundreds of workers on the picket line to do the smashing? Was it an oversight that made you fail to mention that among the defendants on charges of violating the injunction were members of the Unemployment Council and Communists?

You will recall that in my report of the trial, published in the Daily Worker (May 29), I, writing for one of those prejudiced, intolerant Communist papers, did not resort to the tactics of suppression that you employ. I did mention that Budenz of the A.W.P. and Sam Pollock of the Unemployed League were among the defendants and even gave the gist of their testimony, though I admit I did not play up Budenz in the prima donna style that you and he would have liked.

Even more significant is your silence on the rôle of the A.F. of L. leaders in Toledo. This is quite understandable since you and your people were hand in glove with them, fraternizing with Ramsey, Myers and the rest. Evidently you were proceeding on the profound theory enunciated by you in your article in the May 1 issue of your organ, Labor Action, of allowing the reformist leaders to "expose themselves."

Here is how you allow the A. F. of L. leaders to "expose themselves." I quote from your article:

"Myers (of the Electrical Workers Union, who was moving heaven and earth to prevent the Toledo Edison workers from striking—A.B.M.) is a highly intelligent, fighting industrial unionist who says he is out to organize all the Edison employees, 'the power plants too'."

This is the same "fighting industrial unionist" who on May 31 told a meeting of the Toledo Edison workers: "Coates (president of the company) is my old friend, and it is to your advantage to wait. You can get more than a wage increase. In fairness to yourselves and to your city, wait for Coates."

And here is more "self-exposure" from the same article:

"The Automotive Workers Union is on the job and announces that it will never give up the fight until the militia is out and the union recognized."

It is too bad that before Ramsey finally put over his sell-out, achieving recognition—for the scabs—he didn't consult you, Mr. Muste. But after all, when a dog decides to wag, he generally doesn't consult his tail.

In the interview I had with you on Monday, May 28, I asked you what you thought of Heywood Broun's strikebreaking column in the Toledo News-Bee which, by one of those

embarrassing coincidences, was published the very day he appeared as one of the speakers at your mass meeting on Courthouse Square. You told me you had "laced it into him." I asked you whether you would *publicly* criticize Broun. You said you would.

You have held several meetings in Toledo since then. *Please state the place, date and hour that you have publicly criticized Broun.*

I also told you that Ramsey, in an interview with me, had refused to take a stand either for or against the general strike (you expressed surprise—why surprise?) and that he had told me the federal mediator, Taft, had been "very helpful." I asked you whether you would criticize Ramsey for praising Taft; you said you would when you saw him. I asked whether you would do so *publicly*. You stated you would do that, too.

You have held several meetings in Toledo since then. *Please state the place, date and hour that you have publicly criticized Ramsey.*

In your article in The Nation you said a few words of mild criticism of the N.R.A. You said nothing about the whole murderous program of the New Deal that was being written in the blood of the Toledo working-class. But you praised the police!

You united with the corrupt A.F. of L. bureaucrats, but rejected the united front offers of militant organizations. You talked general strike, even "immediate" general strike, but did nothing to prepare it—you were waiting for the A.F. of L. leaders to do that

or, rather, since I don't want to insult your intelligence, you were waiting for them to smash the general strike movement. They did.

In every respect you and your group, together with its Trotskyite brain trust, have been the tail to the A.F. of L. bureaucracy. Your article in The Nation proves it, your actions in Toledo prove it. But while you were shielding with radical talk the treacherous maneuvers of the "fighting industrial unionists," the Ramseys and Myers', we, the Communists and other class-conscious workers, went ahead and organized the most militant elements among the strikers into a fighting opposition. And you can take my word for it, Mr. Muste, this opposition is going to cause Ramsey and the bosses more than one sleepless night.

The issue is clear: militant unionism versus A.F. of L. policies. Disguise them how you will, scent them with your most "radical" perfumes, your policies remain what they are: the policies of the capitalist class within the labor movement.

Which kind of unionism will win better conditions for the American workers?

Which kind of unionism will help to destroy capitalism and establish the rule of the workers?

And who represents the greater danger (potentially) to the American working-class; the openly reactionary Greens and Wolls, or the concealed, "radical," pious A. J. Mustes?

A. B. MAGIL.

## Right Things to Write

IN THE June, 1934, issue of the Writers Digest, a "successful" writer of fiction in the "better known magazines" gives a series of don'ts to writers reaching for the American public.

These taboos are what authors are cautioned to observe for good practical reasons. We reproduce the following sections verbatim.

"Don't encourage freedom between the sexes.

"Don't permit any fiction story to carry the moral that the institution of marriage is anything but excellent.

"Don't offend anyone's religion. Only pagans may be disparaged. . . .

"Don't offend anyone's race—only Mexicans, Chinese, Turks, and savages. Since we recognize Russia, magazines are not classing Russians as barbarians as of 1930.

"If there is a controversial question dominant, don't take sides.

"Don't encourage in a fiction story, the idea that capitalism is no good or that the U.S.A. should add another S to its name. The people who have the most to lose if our American system is junked are your employers if they buy your story. As such they are not interested in publishing a story that will lead readers to believe that revolution is sane.

Macfadden Publications actually put out a book called *The Public State of Mind* in which they show prospective advertisers how True Story, by its editorial policy tends to lull any social questioning ideas on the part of its readers.

"Don't use stories based on inter-marriage between black and white. Likewise on the Coast where the Chinese have undermined many small tradesmen there is a hatred of white and yellow inter-marriage.

"Don't speak disparagingly of business. You can't kid an institution that signs your check, and even if you could too many readers would shriek 'red' at the editor. You have got to be 'regular.'

"Don't make anyone discontented with his economic position. Don't agitate to make cow-like people see themselves for what they are. Discontent and clear vision breed revolt.

"Don't regard mothers in any other way except as the National Association of Retail Florists would have you do.

"And last, never infer that opportunity does not exist in these United States. Everything that is sold from correspondence courses in writing to cosmetics is based on the idea of opportunity to better oneself. You can't buck the business office."

# Housing in Two Worlds

SIDNEY HILL

**P**UBLIC WORKS as a solution for crises and depressions has long been a favorite theory with economists and governments. In 1933, the Roosevelt Administration, with a great deal of publicity, embarked on a public works program through the agency of the Public Works Administration. We were told that this was the "missing link" to recovery. The unemployed would be put back to work; industry, especially construction, would be revived; and the pump of business, primed by public funds, would again begin to function in the grand old style.

As part of this P.W.A. program which was to include socially useful projects of all varieties, there was created the Public Works Emergency Housing Corporation. The Administration, through the newspapers, the periodicals, and the radio promised us that in addition to providing work, it would at last be possible to clear the notorious slums and construct "low-cost" housing for those workers who in the past have been unable to afford decent houses.

We know today that from the point of view of benefit to the employed and unemployed workers of the country the P.W.A. has failed. It is now eight months since the Public Works Emergency Housing Corporation was inaugurated but practically nothing has been accomplished. Of the 125 million, a pitifully inadequate 3 percent of the total P.W.A. appropriation, which was set aside for use by the Emergency Housing Corporation only about 25 million has actually been put into housing projects to date. There is certainly something strange in such a situation. On the one hand is the widely admitted need for the housing and the employment involved in its construction, and on the other, the apparent unwillingness or inability on the part of the Administration to do much about it.

In contrast to this unfortunate condition we see that the Soviet Union is really willing and quite able to do a good deal about it. For the purpose of better understanding the reasons for the failure of the P.W.E.H.C., let us examine the housing situation in the two countries.

The question of housing in the United States and the Soviet Union can be approached in several ways.

We know, for example, that in 1917 the Bolsheviks inherited the worst possible housing conditions. Over 80 percent of the entire population lived in small villages, usually in one-room houses which sheltered the whole family and perhaps some pigs and chickens besides.

In the cities, conditions were not much better. Common habitations for workers were long one-story barracks containing large numbers of cots. In small shops, the worker usually slept on his bench. Sanitary facilities in

Czarist Russia were either non-existent or of a most elementary character. Even the homes of the well-to-do were sadly lacking in this respect.

But we also know from recent surveys in the United States that our own housing conditions are nothing to be proud of. What can we say for ourselves when a survey in 1931 revealed that  $7\frac{1}{2}$  million families live in homes which have neither gas nor electricity? The magazine *Fortune* claimed in 1932 that more than one-half the homes in America were below minimum standards of health and decency. And who has not read of the slum conditions of New York where the lowest estimates claim almost a million people living in old law "fire-trap" tenements?

We can also approach the question from the point of view of distribution. We could show that the United States has a greater quantity of modern housing than the Soviet Union. We could easily demonstrate that we have more refrigerators and bathrooms than any other country in the world. But we would also have to say that this fine housing is not accessible to the great mass of American workers, the majority of whom can afford to live only in the cheapest types of shelter. We would have to indicate that because of the crisis there is a growing tendency for American families to double up in one house or apartment, or even in one room, while at the same time there is a corresponding increase in the quantity of vacant housing space.

In the Soviet Union distribution is not so one-sided. For example, before the revolution, the city of Moscow had a population of one and a half million. The wealthiest and most aristocratic portion of the population, about 3 percent, lived in the center of the city in an area encircled by the exclusive garden boulevards. Today, with the population doubled, 40 percent of the people live in this same area. Of course that means overcrowding, for the time being, but it also means a more equitable distribution of the available space.

If we examine the housing question in the United States and the Soviet Union in terms of what has been done in that field in recent years, the honors go entirely to the Russians. The housing facilities of Russia are still far from adequate, but in the first Five Year Plan and now in the Second, enormous strides have been made. The whole nation is a beehive of activity. Not only are new cities being erected all over the land, but old cities like Leningrad and Moscow are being rebuilt in sweeping fashion.

In the United States, we can paint no such picture, although a good many words have been written and spoken on the subject. The announcement of the Emergency Housing

Corporation spurred architects and city planners to frenzied efforts to design projects in a nation-wide campaign. Today, 7,000 plans rest in the office of Administrator Ickes; but less than a dozen housing projects are actually being built in the whole country. Surely this is not due to our lack of capacity to build or, as some profound thinkers claim, to lack of imagination on the part of the planners, the administration or the public. New York City is an excellent example of the failure of the much publicized public works housing program. With a great beating of drums, 25 million dollars were "earmarked" for slum clearance and housing in that city. To date, it has not received a cent of it. But even if some day New York were to get the entire sum, it would build few houses. How few we can see when we realize that Fred F. French's East Side project involving two slum blocks will alone cost 10 million dollars.

The most profitable and illuminating way of studying the housing question is to ascertain what are the probabilities of realizing, say in the next five years, a really comprehensive and adequate, nation-wide program.

What is an adequate housing program?

We have seen that the Roosevelt Administration allotted only \$125,000,000 for housing under the New Deal program. This is in striking contrast to an official news release from Washington on Dec. 7, 1933 which indicated that the U. S. needs \$4,532,000,000 worth of residential construction per year. This estimate checks quantitatively with the housing plans published recently in a number of American publications. They all call for the expenditure of approximately \$5,000,000,000 per year and in one case this expenditure is planned for a minimum of 25 years. The significant fact about these proposals is that they are not based on market possibilities. These plans are based on the provision of high-standard housing for the entire population, including that part of the population which cannot afford decent quarters at the present time.

What are the chances of such plans being realized in the two countries? In order to answer that we must first establish the basic factors on which these plans depend.

The first factor which is indispensable to such a program is comprehensive, far-sighted planning on a national scale. This cannot be carried out by private business because, as we have learned through bitter experience, private business is the very antithesis of planning. Only the government is able to coördinate a great program in a socially beneficial composition. Indeed P.W.A. Administrator Ickes has stated that:

Our experience in the last few months indicates clearly that we may not depend upon pri-