

I pointed to the cards and the sheets with columns of figures.

"What do they tell?" I asked. "Things picking up?"

He shook his head.

"I don't see it from these figures. Looks to me like things are getting worse. Millions spent and only two and a half percent of the unemployed registered with the government agencies for work given jobs—many of them temporary."

"What's the average wage for those who do work?"

"I don't know. Anywhere from 30 cents an hour up. We have no records on that. I don't believe there are any. Things are too upset. Just in a muddle. No one knows just how bad things are."

The government does not know some of the basic facts, the Association for Commerce

does not know, what's left of organized labor officialdom does not know. No one seems to know or care. They give one the impression of just rushing around in dizzy circles.

"Now that the C.W.A. is being liquidated and more added to the unemployed, what'll happen? I've been to the charities and they say they simply can't take care of the increased number of applicants."

"I don't know what we'll do except that there'll be hell to pay, that's all," he said quietly. "You can't throw millions of people out of work just like that—even if that work brings only a few dollars. If those politicians know what's good for them, they'd better not stop it."

"You mean the people will rebel, start a revolution?"

"No. No revolution. You can't organize these people and you have to have an organization for a revolution. But you'll have

fight, riots, plenty of bloodshed. These people are going to eat—and so am I.

"I wouldn't join a revolution against the government, but I'll sure take a rifle against those politicians in Washington. And there's a lot more like me."

"What good would that do?"

"Lynch a couple of those politicians and shoot a scoundrel like Morgan and throw their bodies in the river and you'll find the rest of them singing a different song."

"Is that the only solution you have to getting out of this mess?"

"There ain't no other solution. It's the millionaires and the politicians that are back of this depression and if you finish them, you can get a real new deal."

And what John T. Wentz says is being said all over New Orleans, more by the white collar class than the utterly destitute unskilled black and white workers.

# Princeton Revisited

MICHAEL BLANKFORT

Time was when I and others bore into the night,  
bore into the speckled pages, sunk our eyes in them,  
sucked up the canny and most subtle scholarship.  
In those days I walked the college lanes,  
benumbed by beauty and narcotized by quiet.  
I thought. I read. I played with books.  
Pale, old faces, portraits of benign  
and understanding saints were soft with human love.  
Young, overeager, concentrated faces intent on the good  
and their science, and the majesty of learning.  
Stalwart minds, new and old, possessed and passionate,  
stripped and hungry, strained for truth.  
Then I was so much a man.  
But  
This is the time of men.

And the lone dynamo, college plant, hummed, drummed,  
beat unceasing in the night, in the day. Dynamo  
massed the air, flushed the ear, gave College light,  
created the soft incandescence  
under which I read and studied, learnt new talk.  
And once I closed my books and slowly shut the door  
upon the laboratory, and switched off the lights.  
Only for a little while, I said, and I'll return.  
The lab, the library, Nassau and Grad College, dynamo  
and the hundred odd angles of delight will be there  
when I return.  
Then I was so much a man.  
But  
This is the time of men.

Was the world the same? or was it that I saw  
with eyes that had not seen before? Was the anarchic  
music, streets and planes, subways, autos, voices,  
presses, liners bellowing to sea, the same?  
Or did I hear with ears that had not heard before?  
And had all my senses been indulgent, fat with sleep,  
or did they never live until I heard the bugle call?  
Call it was. The clearest, blood-swooping cry I ever heard.  
Call like a full, polyvoiced choir but crystal, sharp, precise.

THE HISTORY OF ALL HITHERTO SOCIETY IS  
THE HISTORY  
OF CLASS STRUGGLES.

Bread became grain, and grain, farmers and poverty.  
Ships became steel, and steel, stokers, blastmen and poverty.  
Chairs, tables, walls, desks became wood, and wood, lumbermen,  
and lumbermen, trainmen, freighthandlers became poverty.  
And money became greed, and greed became war, and war  
became  
death and became poverty and terror and revolution  
of the workers and of the farmers of all the world.  
I heard the trumpeting:  
YOU HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT YOUR  
CHAINS!  
I heard the horns: WORKERS OF THE WORLD  
UNITE!  
I heard the marchers sing, and the starving plan.  
I unfurled with their banners, and yearned with their cries.  
INTERNATIONALE opened my organs and stamped  
upon me  
and my blood sang, and they answered, and I sang.  
I was no longer so much of a man.  
This is the time of men.

And I went back for my books, my formulae, my notes.  
And the pale, old faces were flaky like blistered paint,  
and the young, intent, concentrated faces were  
foetal, albino, blank faces intent on grubbing  
a little selfish, scientific corner for themselves.  
And I sunk my eyes into their minds and they seemed  
the smallest shred of nothingness, a wasted  
miniscule of time ten thousand years before.

And only the dynamo drummed and I patted it saying:  
tomorrow, TOMORROW when men are here, not man,  
the light you birth will open up the books to eyes  
worthy of the books and the truth and the light.  
This is the time of men.

# Correspondence

## Torture in Belgrade

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In connection with the review notice, in your issue of Feb. 27, of my pamphlet *Struggle* (published by Arthur Whipple, 6119 N. Virgil Ave., Los Angeles), may I be allowed to say, in fairness to all concerned, that neither Dr. Canby nor anyone else connected with the Book-of-the-Month Club had anything to do with my omitting the material contained in the pamphlet from my book *The Native's Return*?. It was all my own idea.

After the first-hand account of tortures of political prisoners in Yugoslavia originally appeared in the September NEW MASSES, I received letters from radicals who told me they had never read anything so horrible. One woman wrote that it made her sick for days. A man said he had been unable to finish it, it was so awful. I saw then that if even radicals could not stand reading it, it certainly was not, in that form, for the general public: and, frankly, I aimed *The Native's Return* at the general public—for very good reasons which would take too much space to state here, but which I am sure most Marxists would approve. Had I included this narrative of tortures in the book, I believe thousands of readers now reading it would have recoiled from it, or would ultimately have remembered nothing contained therein but this story; and thus some of my reasons for writing *The Native's Return* would have been defeated.

But actually my compromise was only in the matter of presentation. I omitted the story in the form in which it appeared in THE NEW MASSES, but the main facts therein are all in *The Native's Return*, scattered through several chapters; see index under "Terror." I scattered the material in the book so that it occupies what I think is proportional importance—proportional to other things, as important as terror, that I wanted Americans and others to know about Yugoslavia.

I published my translation of the horrible story as it appeared in NEW MASSES separately in this pamphlet entitled *Struggle* because I thought it worth putting it into more permanent form. The story, I think, is an important contribution to the revolutionary literature of the modern world.

LOUIS ADAMIC.

## American Wealth

TO THE NEW MASSES:

In his review of Doane's *Measurement of American Wealth*, Fletcher, it seems to me, might have rendered greater service to the readers of THE NEW MASSES if he had listed more of the pertinent statistics, gathered by Doane, instead of dwelling so much on the theme that the "author gives his moral approval to the present order." This is a book in statistical accounting, not in economic theory, and unless there is reason to believe that his statistics suffer from his theoretical bias, which Fletcher does not claim, we should be concerned with what his statistics mean to us rather than with the conclusions he himself draws from them.

Here are some of the statistics brought together by Doane which seem to me might prove of no slight interest to NEW MASSES' readers:

1. The total wealth of the United States just before the present crisis set in amounted to nearly \$425,000,000,000,—or to about \$3,500 per man, woman and child living in this country at the time.

2. In 1893, corporations held 20 percent of the total profit-bearing wealth of the country; in 1929 they held 75 percent.

3. In 1918, 90 percent of the corporate business of the country was done by 12.3 percent of the corporations; in 1928 this proportion of the corpora-

ate business was done by 6 percent of the corporations.

4. In 1929, the 1.7 percent of the total number of corporations that filed consolidated financial statements, did 45 percent of the total volume of all corporate business of the country and netted 54 percent of the total corporate profits.

5. In 1929, 56 percent of the total wealth of the country was in the hands of individuals. By 1932, this portion had dwindled to less than 33 percent, and of this one-third, fully a third represented claims on corporate and non-corporate wealth,—rather than by free ownership. This shift in ownership of American wealth in a matter of 36 months, the author characterizes as "the most rapid, drastic and gigantic dissipation, redistribution and transformation of capital that has, in all probability, ever taken place in so short a period of time in any individual economy in the history of modern times."

6. Wages continue to make up about 55 percent of the total national income. That is, of every \$100 that labor produces, only \$55 is returned to the worker. The other \$45 are distributed: \$15 in "rent," in payment of the permanent capital equipment; \$10 in interest on bonds, etc., and some \$20 in profits, although the last two items show considerable fluctuation between themselves as times change from periods of prosperity to periods of depression.

7. A commentary on the workings of the profits system is the huge amount of the national income that is derived from "illicit activities" as Doane calls them—from liquor, rackets, bribes, vice, etc., running up to a total of some \$5 billions a year, half of which the aut or labels plain "fraud." This income from "illicit" activities averages about 10 percent to 12 percent of the total annually paid out in wages.

8. Total profits, according to Doane, have been increasing at about 6.8 percent per annum. This is about the rate of growth of total business and the growth of the debt burden, "but at a rate a full 1 percent above that of individual total income and of total wealth."

9. During the twenty-year period, 1909-1929, interest payments grew at the rate of 9.3 percent a year; rents, at the rate of 7.8 percent a year; dividends, at the rate of 7.1 percent a year, and wages and salaries (including the high salaries of top executives), at the rate of 6.5 percent a year.

10. Between 1860 and 1932 agricultural wealth has declined from 48 percent of the total national wealth to 8 percent; agriculture's portion of the national annual business (producer expenditures) has declined from 2.9 billion in a total of 9.7 billions in 1860 to 12.0 billion in a total of 277.6 billion in 1929, that is, from 29.6 percent to 3.7 percent.

11. Of the "liquid" wealth of the country 83 percent was owned by less than 1 percent of the population in 1929; the other 17 percent was owned by 99.03 percent of the people.

12. Finally, there is the fact, which the author thinks a "curious phenomenon," of the almost continuous decline in the rate of profit of American industry, whether measured on the basis of gross receipts, gross sales, or capital invested. Taking the latter as the more pertinent base, we find that since 1909 the rate of profit has declined from an average of over 16 percent during the first five years of the period to slightly over 11 percent during the most prosperous five-year period, 1924-1928. It has declined still further since 1929.

Here clearly we have a factual proof of Marx's analysis of the inevitable results of the growth of the organic composition of capital—under the capitalist-industrial system. The ever-increasing use of machinery and other fixed capital in modern industry results in a decrease in the proportion of total man-hour labor power used, and as the man-hour

labor power is the sole source of surplus value,—profits, interest, rent,—and as rents and interest remain more or less stationary for long periods of time, profits as a percent of capital investment, that is the rate of profit, declines. At the same time, the increased productivity of labor power applied to larger amounts of capital makes possible an increase in the total amount of profits. JOHN IRVING.

## Justice in the Philippines

TO THE NEW MASSES:

There are now in the Bilibid Prison, Manila, P. I., 20 Filipino young men who have led the Filipino masses for a fight for better living conditions against wage cuts, for freedom of speech, assembly, and the right to organize. These men were branded "criminals," and after they were beaten and put through mock trial, they were thrown into the jail where they are now being tortured. The Filipino Anti-Imperialist League, in conjunction with the I. L. D. and other organizations, have formed an Action Committee to carry on a fight for the unconditional release of these men. Mass meetings and conferences have been held to elect a delegation to protest to Pres. Roosevelt and to the Filipino Resident Commissioners at Washington. Such a delegation has been elected at a mass meeting held at Irving Plaza, Feb. 4th, 1934. The delegation expects to leave for Washington, Saturday March 3rd, to present its demand for the release of the men (Crisanto Evangelisto, Capaducia and others) in the medieval jail in the Philippines. The delegation is composed of representatives from the Filipino Anti-Imperialist League, the I.L.D., the Civil Liberties Union, the TUUL, the Communist Party and other organizations. B. SCHOR.

## Books for Workers

TO THE NEW MASSES:

The Harlem Workers' School library is badly in need of books. This is of course a serious handicap in the school work, and to the movement in general in Harlem. We are making an appeal to the readers of THE NEW MASSES to send us any books on Communism, Marxism, Negro Problems, etc., that they are not using. There must be many readers who are letting such books get dusty on their shelves—why not put them into use for the working class? Send or bring any books that you can spare to the Harlem Workers' School, 200 West 135 Street.

THE LIBRARY COMMITTEE.

## The CONTRIBUTORS

BILL DUNNE, formerly editor of the Daily Worker, is writing his autobiography which will also comprise the history of American labor in the twentieth century.

MARGARET WRIGHT MATHER is making an intensive study of American millionaires.

LISTON N. OAK is the editor of Soviet Russia Today.

G. F. WILLISON, author of various studies in sociology, teaches in an experimental school in the East.

MURRAY GODWIN is a frequent contributor of articles and book reviews to leading periodicals.

ORRICK JOHNS, author of several volumes of poetry, has recently completed a novel.

WILLARD MAAS contributes poems and reviews to various periodicals.

MABEL DWIGHT has recently exhibited lithographs in the Whitney Museum of New York City.

KENNETH FEARING is the author of a volume of poems, *Angel Arms*.