

spread, cutting it to bits. When Juliet's father heard her refusal to marry Paris he did not behave in the traditional manner of a grieved high-school principal: he practically knocked her down and kicked her. The costumes—a combination of Elizabethan and Italian styles were beautiful; the tomb scene at the end pictorially superb, and the use of two revolving stages with a free passage between them that led way back to the cyclorama wall, contributed not only to the speed and technical proficiency of the production but added to the sense of a large ebullient world which should always exist in Shakespeare. In the midst of all this we find very spirited and technically expert acting. The Juliet (though a mature actress) had a small figure, a particularly child-like voice and an unusual lightness of step (she seemed always to be flying over the ground) and some charming movements in the delicate, tender scenes in the early part of the play. But she apparently is not a tragedienne so her performance as a whole was not an important or memorable one. Romeo wasn't particularly handsome, but he had plenty of will and energy and a certain freedom from the romantic-heroic manner that prevented him from seeming the terrible fool that Romeo generally appears. The Mercutio was very sympathetic—young and good looking—his death scene, which included a sensational fall, was beautifully staged. The nurse was excellent. . . .

**B**UT generally speaking, there was no attempt to get a maximum of emotional content from the players—and the feeling of the play on its affective side was not created.

In other words, what came through was not the romance or tragedy of love, but the general colorfulness and splendor of the period: the physical dynamics. This may have been the intention of the directors (although I believe it was more their spirit than their idea) but on the whole, it is characteristic of a general defect in production here that they treat the actors much too *instrumentally*. By this I mean that though, obviously, characterizations are worked out for the actors with great care, and though discussions of the parts and their meanings are detailed and full, and though the actors are thoroughly aware of the production problem in general, not enough attention is given to see that the actors really create out of their own complete organism the full image and life of their parts. In other words, the acting tends to have a restricted inner reality—this reality being taken for granted, that is, left to the general "temperament" of the actor. What is the difference one might ask whether there is this reality or not? After all the outer reality, the movement, the characterization, etc., if well done, will convey the meaning of the play. Unfortunately this is not so. The content of the play—the reason for the production generally and for art altogether—is diminished greatly where there isn't this inner life. Even the present *Romeo and Juliet* as a result of this *instrumental* method with the actor remains a little cold. But more than this—and we must never forget it, as I believe even people like Meyerhold himself have forgotten it—an actor directed externally only—howsoever brilliantly, remains slightly *untheatrical*. In other words, true theatricality does not reside only in

"business"—in visually interesting or pictorially dramatic movement, in general stage colors, dances, leaps, etc., etc.; it resides also and perhaps even to a greater extent in the inner life, in the spirit—to put it baldly—in the emotion of the actor. There is a great value for actors and for directors in learning to use acting instrumentally, but beyond a certain point it is an almost fatal error for it strikes the theatrical production at its very heart. In this respect the premises of the Stanislavsky system are unalterably correct. Only it must be further remembered that the object of the actor's emotion—*what he gets emotional about and how*—differ, and the advance made by Vachtangov and the younger generation is really not a change from the Stanislavsky system as such, but a change in the *ideology* of the acting . . . a change of object.

Still this *Romeo and Juliet* is a Soviet event. When we heard that it had taken two years to do, when we saw how elaborate the production was, what immense resources had been put at the theatre's disposal to do it, Cheryl and I began to suffer a little from "inferiority complex." All we can say in defense is that not Russian talent and diligence alone make such a production possible, but social conditions—in other words, the Russian Revolution and the Soviet regime.

*The diary from which this excerpt is taken is a purely informal record of the author's impressions and activities during a five-week stay in the Soviet Union, devoted mostly to a study of the Soviet Theatre.—THE EDITORS.*

# Deportation Special

THEODORE IRWIN

**P**AUL thought, I wish I could paint smells, the different kinds of smells around here, some day I'll try to draw a picture of them. The disinfectant in the air—these men from county jails seem to breathe it out. The smell from our bodies—we haven't bathed for a long time. The foodstaleness—from the stuff some have taken along. The scent of the five-and-ten powder on the women. The baby. The burned coal. The lavatories, open-doored. The peculiar smell from the insane Persian. I would have to find new colors, all of them muddied with a dung-brown smear, thought Paul.

The prison train glided over the Montana isolation. From Seattle toward Ellis Island it kept inching across the broad belly of the continent. At Spokane, at Whitefish, at Glacier Park, at other key cities over the long journey, aliens were being swallowed up; the Deportation Special was gorging itself. To the exit gate of the nation, and the

train would spew what it had swallowed along the way. Then, out with you, go back where you came from, you dago, you hunky, you scoovy, you heinie, you mick, you sheenie, you limey. Get out and stay out!

The out-dated wooden Pullmans chattered with the cold. In the rear car Paul Kobel shrank into his upturned coat-collar, rubbed his numb hands together and dug them into his pockets. He watched the others. A few were slumped tight-mouthed in their seats. Others were reading, mending, gambling, to make the long day end sooner. Some were talking, talking endlessly in halting, faulty English or in glib foreign tongues.

" . . . in this country you got to be in some racket." " . . . arrested me, didn't have a warrant even." "The Revolution will go marching on wherever they send me." "One from Syria who was in America would not want to go back to Syria, would he?" " . . .

ninety-six of us, all in one room." "The inspector, he say, 'Drop your . . . yer, we'll do everything for you.'" "In towns the jails are like sewers . . . no mattresses, just iron cots covered with strips of canvas, double-deckers." "Ten . . . den, ten devils were in his bowels." " . . . ere were bums, panhandlers, dips, coke-hounds, most of them were lousy, they didn't put us in a fish tank for delousing until . . ." "All the two inspectors holler at me was 'We got the goods on you,' and if I do not say what I am told, they will not call my witness to the hearing." " . . . and my hearing it was like a third degree, if my answer was for my good, the typewriter she was told not to put it down." "They keep me in jail for seventeen months and the immigration people forgets all about me . . ." "Uncle Sam, he thinks when he deports me, he deports the depression."

The evening meal was brought in and the

car took on the smell of a cheap cafeteria. The steaming tub of stew—"slumgoolian," the Swede called it—befouled the already sour air. There was a lot of grumbling in the men's section. The doctor came in, looked at Tor turned green and slouched in his seat and gave the boy two tablets.

"It's the beastly grub that's made the lad sick," the Englishman said. "It's rotten to start with, but after the cook's had a chance at it . . . !"

The Bohemian gardener patted a wet handkerchief on the boy's forehead.

Since the day before, there had been increased muttering at each meal. Too many had writhed with stomach pains during the night. At noon they had banged plates on tables in protest. Inspector Lawrence told them the feed was all right, where do you think you are, at the Waldorf? A dozen voices complained that the stuff wasn't fit to eat, so he called the doctor in to testify. The doctor tasted the beef-hash and said, Certainly the beef-hash is very healthy, even though it doesn't taste like fried chicken. At the evening meal, they yelled again for the Inspector. This time he promised they would have more and better food when they reached Chicago. Marcel told the Inspector, Your cellar seems to have run too low—I miss the Sauterne we've been getting with our meals. That remark had eased the situation. But now the boy was sick and they remembered vividly their aches and rumblings of the night.

A few of the aliens proceeded to devour the food hungrily; others started to taste it gingerly; most of them sniffed at their plates, then screwed up their noses in disgust. Napoleon tried to cut a piece of meat. It slid out of his plate, along the table and onto the floor. The food's on strike, said Szuts, it refuses to go into human stomachs, it knows it was meant for pigs.

The Baron rose to make a grand speech. Are we pigs? Does the government of the United States think that because men and women are born in another country they are not human beings? Szuts stood up on his seat and competed. This demands action. The government allows the railroads fifty cents a meal for each deportee and we ought to have something to eat for it. The railroad bosses are making profits on the meals. We should go on strike, a hunger strike. We should eat no more the food that they give us!

Knives and forks and plates clattered and pounded on tables and against windows. Shouts rose to a clamor, a roar. Bertha yelled, "Take back your lousy grub!" and sent her plate sailing toward the forward end of the car whence the food had come in. Her gesture was the signal for a barrage. From all corners the plates came flying up the aisle, some splattering seats and walls. The women at the forward end, scared, ducked to avoid being hit. Even those few who had persisted in eating had their plates grasped from under their noses and dumped

into the aisle. The car looked as though a tornado of slumgoolian had hit it.

Whistles blew, signaling a riot call. A dozen uniformed men ganged their way through the car, using open palms and fists on the aliens, pushing them back into their seats. Szuts, bristling, was dropped to the floor with a left hook that broke a front tooth. The yelling died down. The guards stood over them, searching eagerly for excuse to land a wallop. Inspector Lawrence came in breathless and red in the face. He started to lash them with a stinging tongue. The Bohemian cut in, explained that the food stank, that the boy was sick over something he ate. The Inspector barked, Why didn't you tell me about it? I'd have taken care of it. Hereafter, beginning tomorrow, you're going to get box lunches, it won't be hot food, but it'll be good and if there's any complaint, you come to me with it, don't try to start anything or you'll be sorry. The Spanish danseuse piped up with, There is no more soap or towels, we haven't had any since we left Fargo. I'll take care of that, said Inspector Lawrence, you just tell me about it personally, but don't try to start anything if you know what's good for you. The men nearest him laughed out loud. Lawrence turned on his heel and the guards filed out.

Three porters came in to clean up the mess, but the foul odor of the castaway slumgoolian hung over the car for days. Now the aliens sat glum and ill-tempered, gradually realizing they were hungry. A smile went hunting in vain for a face to rest on.

After a while night walked up on them and with the darkness came a new let-down of spirits. Nothing to do but talk and listen, till you're tired of talking and listening to one man and you go over to another. Or your throat gets worn out trying to beat the sounds of the train, through tunnels, over bridges, the click of the wheels. Accents differing with every speaker, an olio of mutilated King's English.

"There's Australia and New Zealand and South Africa," Mac was saying, "but Christ Jesus, every mother's son of us wants to stay in this God-forsaken United States of America. What the hell for, I'd like to know?"

Szuts started to catalogue all that was wrong with the United States of America. Organized cupidity. Exploitation. Opportunism. A planless social and economic system which has been proved unworkable. Speculating financial pirates. Inequitable distribution of social income. There is no adequate social and unemployment insurance. The farming population is on the verge of peasant servility. Crime costs about one-fourth of the national income. Two-thirds of the national budget is paying for wars of the past, present and future. What is left for civilized purposes?

"You're right, it's a lousy system," said

the Swede. "Look at the way they treat the workers, especially the foreigners. How do you think they broke that general strike in San Francisco? By getting after them who couldn't show citizenship papers. You should have seen the stuff the 'vigilantes' pulled and got away with, raiding workers' headquarters, smashing windows, beating up the men and then trying to deport them just because of strike activities. The government was used to break the unions, it encouraged union employers and state officials everywhere to drive out labor organizations. I know, I was out on the Coast. The Labor Department is nothing but an agency for strike-breaking and Red-baiting, that's what!"

"Sure," said Mac. "What's happening is that the ruling class in America, by appealing to nationalism and pushing the idea of racial superiority, is paving the way for fascism. To keep on ruling, discredited as they are, they have to play off one section of the people against another. They always have to find a goat, just like Hitler's doing in Germany."

And the Bohemian gardener: "Who are the American people to close their doors on the rest of us with immigration quotas and deportation drives? Other countries are crowded, this is not. There are three million square miles of land here which should give a living to ten times the population today. What right have they got to set it aside for themselves? This country can easily feed two hundred million more people—look at the surpluses of corn, hogs, wheat and other products. It's still a land of plenty."

The porter came in, began to unlock the berths and called out, "Get your berths down." It was eight o'clock. Talk died down. They were two to a berth and each had to fix up his own.

Striding through the darkness with its huge unblinking eye, the train was a Cyclops walking in his sleep.

Five thousand miles above sea-level, the cold bit through the paper-thin blankets and their clothes. Few of the deportees could find sleep. It was too easy now to unbraid the big hum which was the train into all the many strands of sound. The creaking and straining of the antiquated tourist-type Pullmans, built for endurance rather than comfort. The tooting of the train-whistle at every grade crossing. The clickety-click of the wheels in their ears. The slam-banging of the couplings. The sound of escaping steam . . . All the windows had been shut, and the odors of ten-day socks and underclothes corked their nostrils. The lights had been doused; it was so dark you couldn't see the face of the man sleeping next to you.

Too worried to rest, they tossed in their berths. All the weeks and months of uncertainty, in jail and detention, were behind them. This was the climax, it was happening right now—they were being kicked out. In the night, each was alone with himself; the others were not there to keep a man's mind off his troubles. In the night, you



battle with yourself, you try to figure out what is going to happen to you and you worry yourself sick. You can't sleep.

They tossed. The bedbugs played devilish games. Here and there strident snores hit the ceiling. Just when some might have dropped off to sleep, the guard came around counting them. At all hours of the night he counted. Either the lights were turned on or the guard shoved a brakeman's lamp into their faces, touching them as he counted.

For hours Ranashad, the insane Persian who believed he was God, kept stumbling along the aisle, humming, moaning, mumbling an endless song like the intonation of a mass. Finally the doctor was pulled out of bed and a hypo silenced the old man. Mrs. Gomez got train-sick and had to spend half the night in the lavatory.

AT FIVE in the morning the guards came around, yelled Turn out! and shook them awake. Someone muttered, What the hell's the use of getting up, we got no place to go. The guards had to come around three times to get them all out of bed, so dizzy were many of them with sleepiness.

A hoarse shout from the rear of the car catapulted them all into the aisle.

The Baron had puked at the door of the men's washroom, his face a white sheet. Pointing over his shoulder, words making no

sense spluttered from his bloodless lips. The guard stationed at the rear was already past him; the guard at the forward end was coming pell-mell down the aisle, pushing the aliens aside as they plunged toward the washroom.

As the second guard reached him, the Baron could only make a sign: a forefinger drawn across his throat. "The Lithuanian," he said, and involuntarily glanced behind him. The sight again was too much for his delicate stomach; he staggered to a corner. The little doctor came up breathless, then hustled around to show off before the nurse.

The word leaped from mouth to mouth in harsh whispers: Kracevich slit his throat, bent his head over the washstand, used a razor, did a good job, cut his throat from ear to ear.

*Obituary: John Kracevich. Age 58. Born in Pompiani, Lithuania. Came to the United States in 1889. Worked in mines in Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Montana, Washington. Was in cage of mine shaft when wire broke; fell, leg broken. Leg poorly repaired in company hospital. While insurance-compensation case pending, mine would not employ him; he was a cripple and too old. Forced to apply to charity. Insurance company, to avoid paying compensation, informed Immigration Bureau he was dependent on charity. Three years before, Kracevich had*

*gone to Canada to visit his son. Now he was considered a public charge within five years after last entry. His son failed to answer letter, two telegrams. Kracevich was crippled, penniless, 58 years old and no longer knew anyone in Lithuania. Kracevich heard an Italian bricklayer on the deportation train say, There is nothing for us where we are going, we might as well die. Kracevich cut his throat.*

An air of morbid hysteria closed over the aliens. Tears rolled down Mrs. Gomez's puffy cheeks and Big Bertha kept shaking her head. Among the men, the first spasm of horror and wild gabble gave way to a subdued unquiet. The Englishman kept muttering, The poor blighter, the poor blighter. The Greek said, The old gent's better off now. But Szuts was vehement: "The old fool, he didn't have the guts, you've got to fight!"

And the wheels of the train kept turning in the brains of the men and women, grinding their rancors and their crumbled hopes. Always intruding was the whistle of steam, the straining of couplings between cars, the continuous tremor of the train.

Mad Anna, down front, began to spit on her hands and wash her face. "That dame's leading a clean life," wisecracked Nick. T laughter had no spine. On this train laughter could stand up against the melody of the wheels.

# Correspondence

## Selling Out a Strike

TO THE NEW MASSES:

The National Guard is often used by the employer and his police and politician allies to break a strike. In the strike now going on at the John Morrell and Co., Packers, a Judas of the labor movement, J. P. McCoy, by name, is also using the National Guard to break it up. The employer threatens the union with the militia and McCoy threatens the militant worker with it. Both are bound to beat the strike.

Have you ever heard of an honest-to-God strike leader who issued passes to scabs? Have you ever heard of one who said, "I don't care how many scabs they got in the plant. I wouldn't care if the whole union went back to work. The boycott will win this strike." These reactionary "innocents" like McCoy (International Vice-President of the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen, A. F. of L.) point out militant workers to the police, and swear in a public meeting that he hates a strike as much as the employer. You bet he hates a strike. He hates it so much, he wants to sell it out in a hurry.

Have you ever heard of an honest-to-God strike leader tell the unemployed and other union men in town to keep away from the picket line? Have you ever heard of such a one refusing to call on the Central Labor and Trades Assembly for help? Have you ever heard one say that the more scabs working the stronger the strike? The real McCoy said all this.

When the unemployed were cut off relief, and the Relief Administrator told them to work at Morrell's, or with farmers who couldn't afford to pay them ten cents a day, there was a huge mass meet-

ing. Sam Twedell, McCoy's henchman and business agent, came down and told them to keep away from the picket lines.

How was all this explained away to the men? These Judases tell them the only way they can win the strike is through the boycott and by keeping the militia off. It took a long time convincing the men. The first day, fifty scabs were sent to the hospital. But from then on . . . 500 were permitted in.

The militia is used by Morrell's to frighten the strikers from being militant, and if they are not militant, the strike is going to be lost.

The boys are fighting for the reinstatement of 29 blacklisted men and for seniority rights. They have a lot of enemies, Morrells, the Police Department, the Chamber of Commerce and the Messrs. McCoy and Twedell.

Sioux Falls, S. D.

GEORGE WILLSON.

## "Excellent Innuendo"

TO THE NEW MASSES:

Enclosed is a letter from my daughter who is attending evening class in public speaking at a large university.

Boston.

Mrs. D. F.

Dear Mother:

I am having a harder time than I thought I would, convincing my class that the sole reason for the last war was profit. I've done my best to show them that we entered the war at a period when Wall Street credit faced collapse from overstretching it in war loans. That a prolonged war under existing conditions, with no knockout blow in sight, would only expand credit even more. That social upheavals (revolutions to you) were becoming dangers in lands

which held Wall Street loans. I praised Wilson, saying that he cheated us, but in the interests of profit, and we should not condemn him, as he had our best interests at heart. I pointed out that German peace maneuvers in 1915-16-17 made stocks drop from 5 to 40 percent every time. I showed the set-up of the National Defense Council so amiably and so completely that the other Communist in the class could hardly keep a straight face. And I ended calmly, "We are forced to wonder whose wars we fight. We are even forced to wonder whose government it is." And the result?

Prof: Miss F— uses innuendo very well. Hers is a method of understatement rather than overstatement. Her voice was much clearer, too.

Student No. 1: Yes, I caught every single word for the first time.

Student No. 2: She was confident of her statistics, too. You felt that you couldn't argue without reading a book or something.

Student No. 3: But she prejudiced us. She made it seem that profit was the only reason for entering the war. We know of course there were many other reasons for entering, and it wasn't as simple as Miss F— made it out.

Prof: That's true. But as far as it went it was very good. And the innuendo was done excellently.

Student No. 4: Well, I of course don't take much stock in speeches of that nature. You hear a lot of that sort of talk these days—about war, the utilities, capitalists and all that. But as that type of speech goes, I like it better than the kind that picks on the individual firms. I'm not so unsympathetic to it because it is so generalized, rather than applying to one person, like J. P. Morgan or the like.

Prof: Well, most of us are capitalists at heart, of course. Why, I have a cousin who. . .