

new Masses

OCTOBER 1, 1935

Revolutionary Art

IN DEVOTING this quarterly issue to paintings and prints, THE NEW MASSES does not pretend to exhibit the whole range of American revolutionary art. The committee of artists which assembled our art section was limited in choice by the nature of the works submitted. From some able revolutionary artists nothing was received; from others came works revolutionary in content, but without much artistic energy. The reproductions therefore give only a partial view of the character of the art of American revolutionary painters and of artists who are concerned sympathetically with the same materials, but who are not revolutionary in standpoint. The general level of the work is artistically as high as the best in American painting today, and it is, besides, much more varied, alive and promising, and has already exerted a strong influence on the youngest generation of painters. THE NEW MASSES wishes to thank the hundred or more artists who submitted works for this issue, and particularly those artists who served on the editorial committee. The committee consisted of Stephen Alexander, Jacob Burck, Stuart Davis, William Gropper, Eitaro Ishigaki, Russell Limbach, Anton Refregier, William Siegel.

400,000 Miners Strike

A STRIKE that has been threatening since April materialized Monday when more than 400,000 miners walked out and closed down every bituminous coal-mining area in the country. Mines manned by company unions as well as those under control of the United Mine Workers are affected. After a series of negotiations that occupied the entire weekend, differences between the operators and the miners were narrowed down to less than two cents a ton for piece workers. That the miners were willing to strike because of this seemingly small difference is due to the fact that all of the compromises have been made by them thus far. The original demands of the miners as announced last February led for a thirty-hour week and a minimum wage scale of six dollars per ton. Union leaders are now willing to



"SOMEDAY I'LL MAKE MY MASTERPIECE—AN EVICTION IN PASTELS"

accept an increase of only nine cents a ton, which in most instances would net the individual miner a gain of about twenty-seven cents a day. At present the miners are working under a wage scale negotiated in April, 1934. Meanwhile successive price increases have raised the cost of living far above the 1934 figure, in some cases as much as 20 percent. Miners found themselves working for less than a subsistence wage and the response to the strike call is proof that they are prepared to wage a determined struggle.

DESPITE the long drawn-out dispute the strike caught the operators unaware; banking on the fact that it had been postponed five times they hoped that there would be another de-

lay. Prior postponements were pending the passage of the C. I. Bill, the industry's "little cure-all" widely advertised as a cure for soft-coal ills. Passage of it did not settle the problem. The miners are dissatisfied with the final settlement, and suits are now pending to test its constitutionality. It is admitted that the Coal Board's order under the act is powerless in the situation and that the law cannot regulate hours and working conditions. The failure of the Guffey Bill and the miracles claimed for it by President John L. Lewis of the U. M. W. has thrown the miners' organized strength into a state of confusion. Secretary of Labor Edward D. Tamm, as usual, been try-

promise. "In the name of Almighty God," he prayed before the operators, "don't let this strike take place over the differences of a few cents. The public will not understand it." What the effect will be on the hungry coal miners was no concern of his. He pleaded for haste in the settlement so that he may leave "by airplane tomorrow for the Louis-Baer fight." Now that the strike is on and has won such wide support militant mine leaders are urging the men to press their advantage and to bring forward their original demands.

Still Jockeying

LAST week, the committee of five nations at Geneva handed its recommendations for "settling" the Ethiopian dispute to the Italian government. The report granted Italy huge territorial concessions and amounted to partition of the African State—while "technically" preserving the sovereignty of that country. But Mussolini was dissatisfied: with hundreds of thousands of troops ready to invade Ethiopia he could not very well withdraw them without suffering severe loss of prestige. Italian propaganda has been posited the "all-or-nothing" theory—complete annexation of Ethiopia. Any compromise that did not accomplish this would be unsatisfactory to him, desperately in need of new exploits. Besides, the presence of a British fleet in the Mediterranean would make it seem as if Mussolini had been intimidated by a loss of power. But what for him looked like an impasse was "diplomacy": Mussolini re-examines but did so in a manner that stressed the possibility of negotiations along for a good deal. England hastened to send a message of adoration to Mussolini to intimate that her safety and not over the invasion of Ethiopia. Italy responded with assurances that the invasion would be profitable on British toes, and demands from the League even greater concessions than had been granted: a link connecting Italy with Ethiopia; a link connecting Italy with Eritrea with Addis Ababa; to be used to construct a railway consisting of a band of territory sixty miles deep on each side of the track to be occupied by Italian forces; the Ethiopian Empire under Italian domination; Ethiopia is to have an

outlet to the sea, it must be through an Italian port.

SUCH demands amount to an Italian mandate over Ethiopia; the smaller nation ceases to exist and becomes an Italian colony. Even were the League to grant these demands, Mussolini could not exercise his newly-won "rights" without resorting to force of arms. It seems certain that Ethiopia will not agree to terms which mean complete loss of independence. England has already shown signs of backing down on its former opposition to the aggression of a large League member against a smaller—a desire to retain the status quo and to avoid colonial troubles in its own empire. France is definitely afraid of sanctions which might upset the tenuous balance of power in Europe and precipitate an immediate world war: the imperialist powers wish to avoid that conflict at the present time. The League faces two courses of action: either to relinquish any gesture preventing Italian aggression and openly hand Ethiopia over to Italy or to plunge the world into war for the redivision of imperialist spoils. Only the Soviet Union stands by the strict adherence of the Covenant of the League—the exercise of sanctions *not* for imperialist gains but to prevent the seizure of a small colonial country by a great imperialist power. England and France, on the other hand, are willing enough to sacrifice Ethiopia if they can be sure that their own interests are in no way endangered. The dilemma that they now face is to try to determine which course will bring them the greater profit in the long run.

Mooney Fights On

LAST year the United States Supreme Court refused to grant a writ of habeas corpus to Tom Mooney, America's most famous class-war prisoner. The Court decided that before the federal judiciary could interfere, Mooney must exhaust all basis of action in the California courts. No longer able to refuse Mooney a hearing, the state courts had him transferred from San Quentin to the county jail in San Francisco; his case is once more opened for review. The hearings are marked by the determined efforts of both the judge and the prosecuting attorneys to put every legal obstacle in Mooney's path. The state has refused to allow Billings, co-defendant with Mooney in 1916, to

attend the hearing; Billings threatens to refuse to testify by deposition from Folsom Prison and may even seek to stop proceedings by an injunction unless he be allowed to attend the hearing and so protect his interests. But it is obvious that Mooney can expect anything but justice in the present proceedings. The hearing is a formality which must be gone through before the case can again be brought before the U. S. Supreme Court. The same interests which railroaded Mooney to jail nineteen years ago, still control California's "justice"—the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, the Market Street Railway Co., the Fleishhacker finance-capital regime and all the other reactionary forces. They want Mooney kept in jail: besides, they are too busy organizing the vigilantes, fighting the militant waterfront unions and making plans for a new fascist campaign against organized labor to worry about the liberty of a man who has spent nineteen years of his life in the penitentiary for a crime he did not commit.

Murderers "Unrecognized"

LAST week's newspapers which reported the lynching of Elwood Higginbotham, 28-year-old Negro, of Oxford, Miss., said simply that he was on trial for murder at the time the mob seized him. They failed to report the fact that Higginbotham was an organizer for the Sharecroppers' Union. Trouble developed last summer when he fenced his land to forestall the building of a road across it. The next night a mob of twenty-five farmers led by Glenn Roberts invaded Higginbotham's home. Roberts, who was brandishing a pistol, was shot and the sharecropper escaped while the rest of the mob fled. A wild man-hunt ensued, but Higginbotham eluded his pursuers for several days. Oxford officials took their spite out on the Negro's family; his brother-in-law was arrested, held for a week without bond and released only when he promised to leave the county. Higginbotham's sister was badly beaten and other relatives were hounded night and day. Higginbotham was finally captured and taken home for trial, but the jury hesitated to bring in a death verdict. Members of the mob which seized him are well known to Oxford officials, but a whitewash has already been effected. Trial Judge McElroy announced that the sheriff had told him that "none of the mob was recognized" and "indicated" that the matter might be

ferred to the grand jury when it meets several months hence.

"Liberal" Strikebreakers

THE strikebreaking tactics of the lofty-minded Schlink and Matthews, directors of Consumers' Research, have continued through another week. They have arms and ammunition in the C. R. plant, apparently ready to shoot down the strikers if they can be provoked to violence by hired thugs. The high-priced firm of lawyers, Pitney, Hardin and Skinner, are making lavish use of the funds of C. R. subscribers to break the strike in the courts. The typical big-business attitude of the C. R. management toward the striking stenographers, clerks and engineers has been made a matter of indisputable official record in an affidavit sworn by J. Russell Doyle, the sheriff of Warren County, N. J. Says the affidavit in part: "Soon after the strike commenced, the management of the plant employed four constables to act as guards. These guards paraded up and down with their revolvers showing and were a disturbing element in the strike situation. During the past seven days further armed

guards were employed by the company . . . I greatly feared the presence of the private armed guards, believing that their constant presence would lead to a disturbance which might result in serious injury . . . I noticed a quantity of arms and ammunition in the plant . . . I requested the management to see the strikers and meet with them in an attempt to settle their differences. The management refused to do this . . . I am disturbed . . . over the refusal of the company to remove the private guards. I consider their presence the greatest threat to the maintenance of peace at the plant." The strikers have appealed for funds which are urgently needed to feed the strikers' families. Contributions may be sent to the Strike Aid Committee, 41 East 20th Street, N. Y.

Advance of the Students

RESOLUTIONS approved by the national executive committees of both the Student League for Industrial Democracy and the National Student League favor the immediate unification of these two organizations. This decision is probably the most significant

advance made by the student anti-war, anti-fascist movement since the first nation-wide anti-war strike in the spring of 1934. The new united front, to be known as the American Student Union, will not come into existence until approved by the organizations' national conventions meeting late in December. But the S. L. I. D. and the N. S. L. have cooperated closely for the past two years and will continue to do so in an even more powerful manner until the Student Union is inaugurated. The program of the Union will carry on and intensify the fight against restraint on academic freedom, insufficient educational opportunities and discrimination against Negro students and will renew its resistance to the R. O. T. C. Action on such issues serves to educate and activate students for the larger struggle against war, fascism, insecurity and racial antagonism. Youth vitally affected by reaction and by the danger of war; the Student Union will give them a potent new weapon assuring solidarity and unity of purpose.

Farmers from Missouri

THIRTEEN Missouri farmers who blocked a federal mortgage foreclosure sale have just been sentenced to from one day to three years' imprisonment. In an effort to get light sentences the defendants mistakenly entered pleas of guilty but Judge Reeves was adamant. "You are dangerously near to treason," he said, "certainly rebellion and insurrection." He told the farmers as he found them guilty of a variety of crimes from slander to mayhem. The fact that the men had been arrested to save a neighbor from foreclosure and ruin weighed as a mitigating circumstance with the judge, who, with unconscious irony that was usual solicitude for the defendants, have sought and sought in some ameliorating circumstances. The farmers were goaded into action by the Supreme Court's decision in the Frazier-Lemke mortgage measure unconstitutional. The decision was announced in the Middle West. Rising prices are enhancing the value of the lands and the banks and mortgage companies are anxious to reap the harvest. Other struggles are in the air. The farmers will have to learn that they can expect only defeat if they rely on the mercies of

new Masses

VOL. XVII, No. 1

CONTENTS

OCTOBER 1, 1935

Editorial Comment	3
What Happens to "Unemployables"	6
How Good Is Hearst Stock? .. Bruce Minton	8
Farewell and a Promise to Barbusse .. Josephine Herbst	11
Minneapolis Counts Its Victims .. Meridel Le Sueur	12
Mussolini's Press .. James Carroll	15
Art Section:	
Revolutionary Art Today .. Thomas S. Willison	17
Works by.... William Gropper, Peggy Bacon, Selma Freeman, Gilbert Wilson, Louis Ribak, William Siegel, George Picken, Joe Jones, Arnold Blanch, Russell Limbach, Reginald Marsh, Joseph Vogel, Gilbert Rocke, Jacob Burck, Lil Adelman, Anton Refregier, Eitaro Ishigaki, Georges Schreiber, George Biddle, Raphael Soyer, Jim Guy, Luis Arenal, Nicolai Cikovsky, Mabel	

Dwight, Adolf Dehn, Peter Blume, Mitchell Siporin, Margaret Bourke-White	18 to 32
American Artists' Congress	33
Marching! Marching! .. Clara Weatherwax	34
Correspondence	36
Review and Comment	
Journalism in a New World .. Isidor Schneider	38
Economists on the Way Out .. Marian Rubins Davis	39
There Can Be Laughter .. William Cunningham	40
Turmoil in the Middle Ground .. Stanley Burnshaw	41
Mr. Aiken at a Wake .. Simon Wells	42
In Defense of the Machine .. Robert Forsythe	43
Hollywood as Strike Breaker .. Ed Ray	44
The Screen .. Jay Gerlando	45
The Theater .. H. M.	45
Between Ourselves	46

EDITORS:

MICHAEL GOLD, GRANVILLE HICKS, JOSHUA KUNITZ, RUSSELL T. LIMBACH, HERMAN MICHELSON, LOREN MILLER, JOSEPH NORTH, WILLIAM RANDOLF.

WILLIAM BROWDER, Business Manager

Published weekly by the NEW MASSES, INC., at 31 East 27th Street, New York City. Mid West Bureau, 184 West Washington Street, Room 703, Chicago. Copyright, 1935, NEW MASSES, INC., Reg. U. S. Patent Office. Drawings and text may not be reprinted without permission. Entered as second-class matter, June 24, 1926, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879. Single copies, 10 cents. Subscriptions, \$3.50 a year in U. S. and Colonies and Mexico. Six months \$2; three months \$1; Foreign \$4.50 a year; six months \$2.50; three months \$1.25. Subscribers are notified that no change in address can be effected in less than two weeks. THE NEW MASSES welcomes the work of new writers, in prose and verse, and of artists. Manuscripts and drawings must be accompanied by return postage. THE NEW MASSES pays for contributions.

What Happens to "Unemployables"

NOTHING so clearly points the sheer brutality and deliberate disregard of human need of the President's work program as the carefully planted use of the term "unemployables" in the relief program. An amazing study recently made by the Relief Administration now definitely testifies to the ruthless nature of the decimation of relief rolls by the classification of relief clients into employables and unemployables. What it reveals is that Roosevelt and the relief machine, faced with the problem of caring for more than five million families on relief, deliberately cast out one and a half million families as "unemployables" to be "turned back to the states" without investigating whether the states could care for them. The investigation, in short, reports that the states are totally unable to care for this huge relief burden.

The report, dated August 20, bears the cumbersome title, "Financial and Administrative Responsibility for Various Welfare Activities in the Several States as of August 1, 1935," and is part of the study of transfer of unemployables to local units conducted by F.E.R.A. after it had been decided

to turn one and a half million families back to the states. The report clearly indicates that 40 of these states has an adequate program for the care of unemployables. In other words, first the states are asked to care for a million and a half more to the states and then to find out whether they can legally take care of them.

Most of the families and single persons dubbed "unemployable" by Roosevelt are thrown onto bankrupt local welfare agencies. The states themselves have no legal financial responsibility for general "poor" relief in 40 out of the 48 states. The counties and to a lesser extent, the cities and towns, are responsible for relief under the General Poor Law. In other words, the kind of relief for the "unemployables" will be the same as for the employables. In many cases, it will be the same as for the farm. All 48 states have General Poor Laws, but the state supplementary care in only 13 states and the states help in any way by passing bills for poor relief.

The proportion of "unemployables" among mothers with dependent

children. "Mothers' Aid" is supposed to take care of them when they are cut from the relief rolls, but the report points out that only 19 states provide any funds for Mothers' Aid. There are 45 states with Mothers' Aid Laws, but the report does not indicate how many of these are mandatory and how many optional. In 26 of these states, the counties, cities and towns have to supply all the funds for such aid, which means that it amounts to little or nothing. Alabama, Georgia and South Carolina have no provisions at all.

Another big group of "unemployables" is the aged. The federal government has left it up to the states to enact old-age pension laws to take care of this group. Only 36 states now have such laws and only 29 of these provide any funds for such pensions. The others leave the fund-raising up to bankrupt counties and towns. The solid South—Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Texas — as well as Oklahoma, New Mexico and South Dakota have no old-age pensions in any form.

The third big group of "unemployables" is composed of disabled persons. What provision do we find for them when the F.E.R.A. turns them over to the states? The only special provisions for their care are pensions for the blind and soldiers'-and-sailors' relief. Twenty-eight states have pensions for the blind, again not necessarily mandatory and of these 28, only 15 states supply funds for such pensions. Forty-two states have soldiers'-and-sailors' relief, providing some funds in each state, but there is no indication of the kind or adequacy of the relief given to the veterans. What this means in many states is a soldiers' home available to civil war veterans.

The report does not cover recent emergency or unemployment relief legislation passed by the states, usually providing for raising of funds by means of sales taxes bearing heavily on workers and small farmers. Such laws, however, would not presumably affect the permanent relief load of "unemployables" which has to be taken care of out of existing social welfare services of the states. The government, spurred by its big-business advisers, has many times become indig-

nant that such "unemployable" cases have been carried on F.E.R.A. rolls.

At the same time, in the face of ever-increasing misery and with a full knowledge of the inadequacy of the states in caring for this huge relief load, the government has consistently refused to set up an adequate nationwide program of unemployment, old age and social insurance. The widely-hailed Social Security Act not only falls down in the face of the tremendous load it must carry, but is already bogged down as a result of politics which has cut off its operating funds so that it cannot begin to function even in its own lame way for six months.

The F.E.R.A. relief rolls carried over five and a quarter million families and single unattached persons early in the year. When he inaugurated the much publicized "off relief rolls and on to useful work projects by November 1" program, Roosevelt decided that only three and a half million of these five million were "employable." The rest, more than a million and a half, were "unemployable," brutally cut off relief and turned back to the states with crocodile-tear-statistical reports over the states' inability to care for them. "Careful case work" has been pruning these unemployables from the relief rolls. But that process is too slow. It can yield, by even the most savage case work of the F.E.R.A., only 900,000 families. The other 600,000, many of them farmers and agricultural workers, are clearly employables but there is no room for them on the works program. Wholesale relief purges, first in defenseless rural areas, then entire states at a time, now become the order of the day. Long before November 1, the President will again go on the air and point joyfully to official relief figures of much less than the first estimates of three and a half million.

This is the sum of the new relief policy: start with over five million on relief; cut off one and a half million, christen them "unemployables" with blessing and tears; give the remaining three and a half million "jobs" at starvation wages; and with their work build a war machine and smash the resistance of the working class, by driving down wages and standards of living throughout the country.