

Spain and its steadily gathering strength in France, give a world picture which would be distinctly favorable if it were not for the continued determination of the ruling clique in this country to succor the hard-pressed Italian and German fascists.

Once again let it be emphasized and re-emphasized that the Baldwin government in Britain is Hitler's and Mussolini's last hope and refuge. If the working-class movement in Britain can destroy this government, it will perform an historic service for the working class of the whole world.

Nor must anyone suppose that this is an impossible or even, if our forces are united and determined, a difficult task. Immediately

after the recent elections, when this government returned to office in apparent triumph, it may have seemed to be idle to speak of its early destruction. But today events move with lightning rapidity. Already the present British government has been weakened to an almost unbelievable extent, its Foreign Secretary driven with ignominy from office and its Prime Minister become one of the most discredited men in Europe.

Every week now in the House of Commons important speakers from the government benches get up and speak of the Prime Minister in a way unparalleled in recent English political history. Sir Austen Chamberlain's recent attack was evidently only the

beginning of a determined revolt of a section of the Conservative Party against the Baldwin leadership.

Conservative speakers are now coming out openly for oil sanctions, for an out-and-out support of the League of Nations and a sympathetic attitude to France and the Franco-Soviet pact. Sooner rather than later there must be a showdown between them and the group within the Cabinet which stands for a diametrically opposite policy.

In this situation, where there is a fundamental division on the government side of the House, a determined and united opposition can play a decisive part. The British Labor movement has a great responsibility.

# Smash the Sedition Bills

SEYMOUR WALDMAN

*You who read these lines face the immediate danger that your most elementary civil rights will be abrogated. You have heard of the Tydings-McCormack bill which makes it a crime to criticize militarism; you have also heard of the Russell-Kramer bill which, under the guise of legislating against Communism, will prevent you from expressing any opinion distasteful to the fascists of this country. The object of these bills is to smash the American labor movement and to crush all popular opposition to another bankers' war. The danger is imminent because the Tories are doing everything in their power to rush these bills through the present Congress. President Roose-*

*velt is doing nothing to halt these measures. Certain A.F. of L. bureaucrats frankly told the Washington correspondent of the THE NEW MASSES that they are ready to see the Russell-Kramer bill go through. Are you ready to learn from the bitter experience of the post-war days, from the catastrophes which have befallen the people of Germany and Italy? Only the most determined action by the American people can save them from this fascist assault on their civil rights. Send your protests at once against the Tydings-McCormack bill and the Russell-Kramer bill. Send them to us and we will forward them for you to Washington. Act, before it is too late.—THE EDITORS.*

WASHINGTON.

**R**EACTIONARIES in the House of Representatives are making dangerous headway in obtaining preferential treatment for the Tydings-McCormack military disobedience bill and the Russell-Kramer sedition bill. The Chamber of Commerce considers these measures essential to its anti-labor campaign; there is imminent danger that in the present Congressional set-up these two measures, crushing fundamental civil rights, may be rushed through.

Just how critical the situation is was indicated to me by Representative Emanuel Celler, Democrat of Brooklyn, who wrote the House Judiciary Committee's minority report on the Russell-Kramer bill.

"There are a lot of fascists in the House," Celler said, "who are doing their utmost to get the Russell-Kramer and Tydings-McCormack bills through the House. These fascists are joining forces with those entrenched in power. They will leave no stone unturned to accomplish their ends."

The Tydings-McCormack bill was drawn up by President Roosevelt's Navy Department. It represents the viewpoint of the professional patrioteers and the military clique. The bill seeks to stop all criticism of military expenditures and to punish workers who appeal to the National Guard not to shoot strikers. It provides a two-year prison term

for anyone who dissents from the efforts of Big Business to merge the military and industrial machines of this country.

Initiated by Charles Kramer, Los Angeles Democrat, on behalf of Hearst and the Industrial Association of the Pacific Coast, the Russell-Kramer bill provides a five-year prison term for anyone who advocates the revolutionary overthrow of the government. It is analogous to California's criminal-syndicalism act, under which people are imprisoned for exercising their civil rights. Reactionary courts, controlled by Big Business, interpret such laws so that any disagreement with the Tories becomes advocacy to "overthrow the government."

These two dangerous bills will most likely become law unless immediate action is started against them. Many progressives have been taken off their guard by recent developments. It is true that Senator Tydings no longer sponsors the measure bearing his name. It is also true that Senator La Follette gave notice two weeks ago that he would introduce a motion to recall from the House of Representatives the Tydings-McCormack bill, which was jammed through the Senate last session. This does not mean, however, that Senate approval of the bill has been revoked. It is still officially approved by the Senate. Senator La Follette's delay in putting his motion to recall the bill from the House

gives that much more time to the reactionaries to push the measure through the House.

On March 9, I asked Senator La Follette when he planned to ask for the recall of the Tydings-McCormack bill from the House.

"It will depend on the legislative situation," he replied. "Probably this week."

But every day's delay brings the bill that much nearer to enactment. Similarly, the Russell-Kramer bill is being pushed by the reactionaries without evoking sufficient popular opposition. In the House, half-a-dozen congressmen have knocked the bill off the unanimous-consent calendar. These congressmen will probably be able to muster the requisite three objections for knocking the Tydings-McCormack bill off the calendar the next time it comes up. This has led many people to depend upon a handful of liberal congressmen to stop the assault on civil rights. But Representatives Marcantonio, Scott, Maverick and others frankly admit that in the face of concentrated Chamber of Commerce pressure no group in Congress is strong enough to prevent the passage of the two Hearstian measures.

A powerful, nationwide movement in defense of civil rights has to make it clear to the members of the House and the Senate that the fascist bills must not be passed. Otherwise, the Rules Committee will grant



special consideration to the bills. They will be brought up on the floor for debate and they will have an excellent chance of passing.

Every parliamentary trick is being employed to push the bills through. In regard to the Russell-Kramer bill, Senator Russell, Georgia Democrat, told me that the Senate Judiciary subcommittee considering his bill might dispense with hearings. Instead, it will submit to the Senate Judiciary Committee the extensive report of the House Committee—which recommended passage of the bill!

"Do you know," I asked him, "that the United Mine Workers and other trade unions and the American Civil Liberties Union and many other liberal groups are opposed to your bill?"

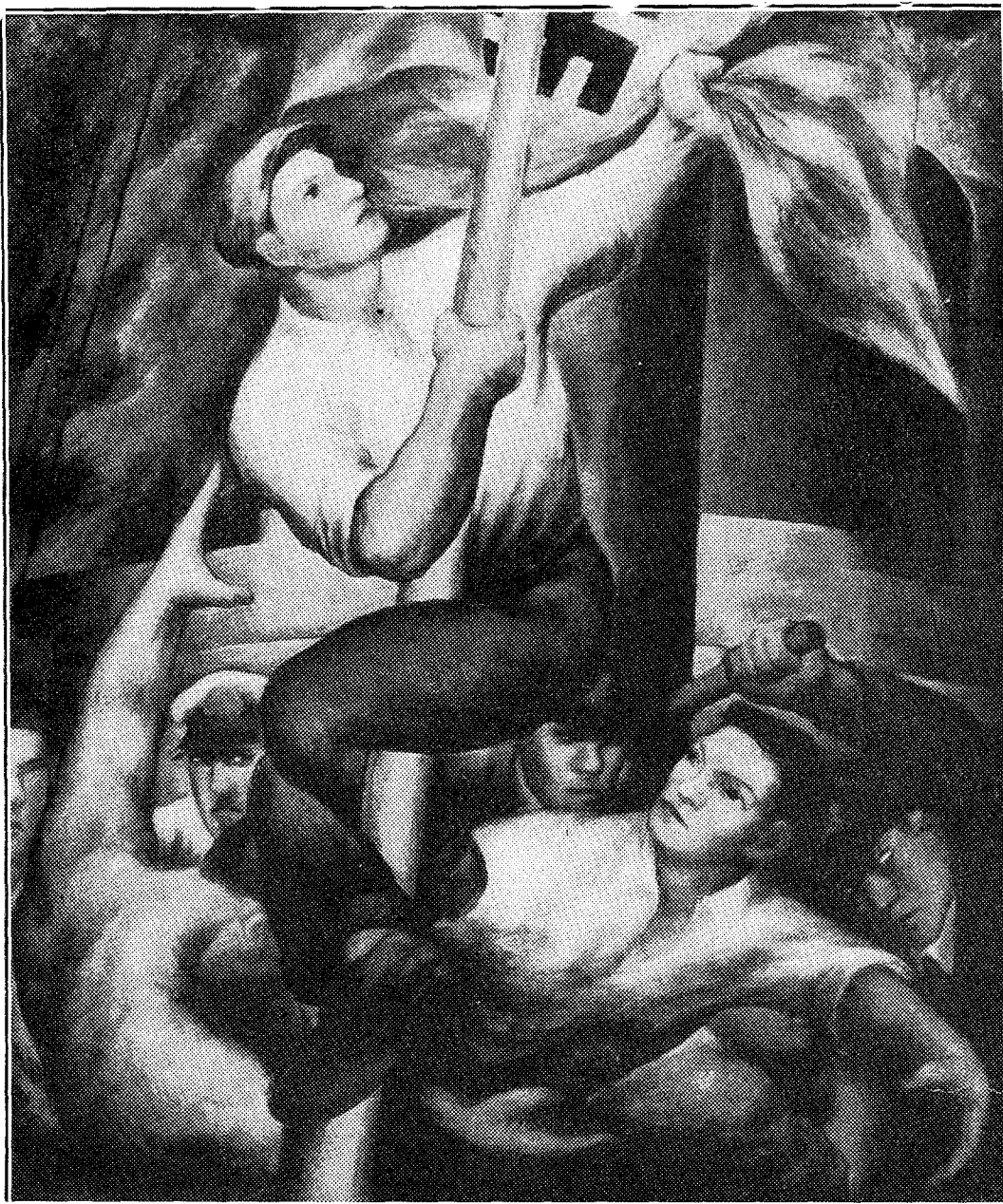
"I didn't know that," Senator Russell said. "But, in my opinion, it doesn't make any difference."

The closely-knit reactionary forces behind the two bills will make every effort to capitalize on the confusion of the closing days of Congress to shoot their bills through. The minority report on the Tydings-McCormack bill, signed by Representatives Kvale and Maverick, said: "A brash piece of Hitleristic fascism . . . an intended suppression of our Bill of Rights." And Congressman Celler's minority report on the Russell-Kramer bill explained why "those who are entrenched in power" want the bill. This measure, Celler pointed out,

would subject the great majority of the American people, particularly the workmen, to the absolute domination of a small minority of powerful and vested interests. . . . The owner of a plant . . . could use the statute for his own fell, selfish purposes. Where he controls local officials, he could claim that strikers at his plant were guilty of sedition and were aiming at the overthrow of Government, whereas in reality higher wages and shorter hours were their goal. Subservient and complacent district attorneys and sheriffs would readily prosecute. . . . There is . . . set up a sort of Fascist concept of law."

At the recent convention of the United Mine Workers, President John L. Lewis, Vice-President Murray and Secretary-Treasurer Thomas Kennedy—Lieutenant-Governor of Pennsylvania—submitted a joint report on the two bills, condemning them as a threat to free speech and as direct aid to employer terrorism. The trade unions officials made a concession to the open-shop Red-baiters by lumping together fascism and Communism. Nevertheless, they vigorously protested against the Tydings-McCormack and the Russell-Kramer bills, as "designed to terrorize free speech and a free press under pretense of suppressing sedition." "These measures," they added, "belong to that category of sedition laws that stifle free speech, breed spies, establish the terrorism incident to uncertainty and are the resort of those who regard strikes and industrial revolts as themselves a phase of treason."

I asked Congressman Celler what he thought ought to be done immediately to defeat the Russell-Kramer sedition bill and the



"DOWN WITH THE SWASTIKA" Eitaro Ishigaki (On exhibition this week at the A.C.A. Gallery)

Tydings-McCormack bill.

"The great necessity," he replied, "is for all the trade unions and liberal organizations and their press to wage a sustained fight against these bills. And, by the way, what is the American Federation of Labor doing? I can't understand their silence in the present situation. During the war, the ones who felt the scourge of this type of bill were the laboring men. The minute the laboring man organized for better working conditions or for higher wages, he was accused of striking at the government. It was argued that he was guilty of sedition and he was jailed."

Senator King, Democrat of Utah, chairman of the subcommittee on the Russell-Kramer bill, "really couldn't say" whether the bill will come out this session, "but," he added, "as to the Bolsheviks in America, I'm for deporting all of them."

The A.F. of L. is deliberately refraining from doing anything on the bills. A responsible A.F. of L. official in Washington stressed this point.

"What are you doing about the bills?"

"Nothing. The Tydings-McCormack bill is dead. Senator Tydings has withdrawn his sponsorship."

"Nevertheless, the bill stands approved by the Senate."

"Well, we agree with the purpose of the bills, but we are afraid it will be twisted."

"Then you agree that the bills are aimed mainly against the trade unions?" I asked.

"No. We think that the purpose of the bills, hitting the Communists, is honest and those behind the bills are honest."

Another A.F. of L. spokesman put it this way: "What are we going to do? Nothing."

The two fascist bills are directly connected with war preparations. They aim to suppress anti-war sentiment before hostilities begin by silencing all who do not share the views and purposes of the Tories. Only the most determined effort by workers, farmers, liberals, professionals and other middle-class groups can stop the present Congress from suppressing our civil rights. No senator or representative can afford to ignore letters and telegrams from his constituents.



# God and the Gorillas

DALE KRAMER

**A**RTHUR BRISBANE, now 73 years old, is going along much the same as ever. Geese will say *too* much the same, but wiser men will consider the forests used in the printing of his columns, the barrels of ink spread upon the paper, the type set, and remember that all this has given employment.

Besides, there is reason to believe that in its helter-skelter this thoughtless generation has failed to digest the philosophy and teachings of the Highest Paid Editorial Writer in the World. Dr. Brisbane comes rather scattered out, of course, and as far as I can discover has never bothered to collect himself into a book. Probably hasn't time for it; certainly not now with a war on his hands, England butting in and only Mussolini and Father Coughlin to lend support. But there should be some place that bright-eyed journalism students can go for quick nourishment, something they can get in large, nutritious bites. And so, without a particularly prominent chin to stick out and having had all oratorical aspirations deflated by an expert on such things, I have endeavored to lend the philosopher aid by straining the soup and dishing up the meat.

The subject matter of Dr. Brisbane's writings can be divided into, roughly speaking, nine categories, namely: (1) Airplanes and how to use them, (2) Life, (3) Mussolini, (4) the Labor Unions are Running Things, (5) Economics, (6) Lynchings, Hangings, Executions and Head Choppings, (7) the Hereafter, (8) Science and (9) Gorillas. These headings are broad, but I feel the choice morsels below will convince the reader of their fitness.

*Airplanes and How to Use Them.* Dr. Brisbane's view of the importance of the flying machine may be gathered from the amount of space he allots it. In fact, it is no secret that he considers many of his opinions and statements of such importance as to bear repeating. For instance, he has recalled to our minds no less than half-a-dozen times recently that when Lord Northcliffe offered a prize of \$50,000 to the first flier spanning the English channel the task was considered so impossible that Lloyd's insured the offer for almost nothing. You can find a moral there. Yet it is true, unfortunately, that certain Boy Scout statesmen in Washington do not appreciate the importance of airplanes, particularly those of the bombing variety, a state of affairs of which Mr. Brisbane recently took cognizance when he spoke dolefully of "millions for unemployed, none for airplanes."

Even England knows how to better order things, having recently spent seven

billions on "warships, airplanes and other useful things." Mussolini, of course, is the boy who really knows airplanes, and consequently there is no stopping him, as Dr. Brisbane has pointed out. The correctness of this view may readily be seen from the revelation that one squadron of airplanes can destroy any European city in a very short time. Later—and despite the possibility of severe reproof for the disclosure of military secrets—Dr. Brisbane informs the world that London, Paris and New York are undefended against airplane attacks. It is true that we often hear patter of anti-aircraft guns halting air attacks and even of sending attack planes aloft to fight invaders, but our instructor has shown the ineffectiveness of such things where a real aviation expert is concerned. He simply ignores them. Yet war, despite the present dark picture, may become a thing of the past if only the world will stop its foolishness and give heed to Dr. Brisbane's remarkable peace plan. His proposal, announcement of which electrified the world on April 4, 1934, is simple in theory, as all great things are, and absolutely sure of success. Under it nations in disagreement would, instead of going to war, compete in Easter egg rolling contests.

*Life.* It is in the realm of Life itself that the depth and worthiness of the philosopher's thought becomes most apparent. While it is impossible to put Dr. Brisbane's views on the complex subject into one short paragraph, a few key notes can be struck. Probably the most ringing of all is the incisive statement that "man is a wonderful creature," a premise running throughout his entire work. But man has his blemishes, dark spots upon which our teacher mercilessly throws the white light of his thought. There are the nudists. Remembering that "one of the symptoms of insane people is a stripping off of the clothes," Dr. Brisbane must hesitate to vouch for the sanity of these people. And, worst of all, we find this business of going without clothes will result in the human body becoming again covered with short red hair (see Science). Consequently it is no surprise that our mentor must reject even half-way toleration of the "idiot nudists." "The Kentucky legislature, which passed a law making it a crime for nudists to cavort except behind high walls, was informed that its action would not protect heaven from offense." Pink toenails and the beauty patch have also aroused the splendid indignation of our master. But there are more optimistic moods when "men can do whatever they imagine and many things more," civilization is better than

starvation and "nothing is as beautiful or as encouraging as the faces of happy school children." Dance marathons are disgraceful, but when we compare them with burning people alive they do not seem so bad. Too, lest we become discouraged, we are told in Dr. Brisbane's own inimitable words that "there are always better days ahead."

And so it is that in the main his themes are calm, thoughtful and direct. We lack space for further exposition, but let us list for the reader's later contemplation a few aphorisms: "Everything has two sides." To illustrate this, Dr. Brisbane takes the case of a dog's ears. If you clip them, it hurts him; yet if you don't, some other dog may bite them. So there you are. Dorothy Dix's stand that "big, strong, silent men are rather useless" is endorsed. "The best occupation is thinking, but it is the most painful." "Never give up." "You need not pity a man who has lost his money if he still has his family." "Crime does not pay." "There is absolutely no time in which to begin anything worth while or to do better except now." "If you do your best, and have the stuff, the world will acknowledge your work." "What would we think if a herd of buffalo put a man into a pasture to fatten and eat, as we do the buffalo?" "Life is a kaleidoscope."

*Mussolini.* "Men believe that they think for themselves, but like wolves, what they want is a leader of the pack." With this thought Dr. Brisbane has prepared us for his proclamation that Mussolini not only is a "constructive dictator" but the "champion dictator of all time." He "knows how to get things done," looks well in a stove-pipe hat and it is impossible to talk compromise to a man like that. He builds his power on patriotism and trains children for war, a program which our mentor compares to the suckling of Romulus and Remus by the she-wolf. In fact, Dr. Brisbane feels so strongly about Mussolini's fascism that he wants 1,000 U.S. school teachers to visit "that wonderful country." We know, of course, that the roar of Mussolini's planes over Africa has stirred our master's fighting blood and brought into full play his military ability. And to Mussolini's greater glory it can be said that on the whole he has conducted the campaign in a manner satisfactory to Dr. Brisbane, although it is true that once or twice our instructor has found it necessary to administer sharp dressings down to the boy with the big jaw. But usually the fascist dictator is top notch. He shouldn't be grudging expansion, and will get it. Dr. Brisbane has said so from the first,