

# NEW MASSES

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## The Boycott Brings Results

FIGURES released by the Department of Commerce show a decrease in Japan's export trade with the United States of 22.5 percent and in import trade of 31 percent for June 1938 compared with June 1937. Though the boycott movement certainly cannot be given entire credit for this drop, it did play a notable and ever growing role.

Examining the figures more closely, interest naturally centers on the decreased purchases of Japanese raw silk. In the first five months of 1937, the United States imported 23,664,000 pounds; for the same period in 1938, the figure was only 17,622,000 pounds, a drop of more than six million pounds, or more than 25 percent. Since this is Japan's biggest money crop, it was inevitable that Japan could purchase only 466,000 bales of raw cotton in 1938 instead of the 698,000 of 1937, or almost exactly 33 percent less. The same declines are shown in scrap steel, iron and steel plates, aircraft, and motor vehicles, but the trend is distinctly reversed in the case of oil.

This report should give renewed impetus to the boycott movement, as well as to the drive now getting under way for a government embargo on Japanese trade, especially products necessary for the continuance of the aggression. Boycott and embargo are two sides of the same coin. In their own ways, both will prevent Japanese militarism from getting its war materials in this country. The boycott is an effective method for enforcing Far Eastern as well as world peace.

## Fascism vs. Catholicism

ONE of the deadly sins in a fascist country is to impugn the originality of the dictator. This deadly sin was committed by Pope Pius XI when, in a recent address before students of the College of

Propagation of the Faith, he expressed his wonder that Mussolini should have felt the need to imitate Hitler in this whole business of Aryan racism. First it was the goose-step, now it is Aryanism. The accusation of being a mere imitator drove Mussolini into a frenzy of anger. What? "Fascism imitating any one or anything? Absurd! I wish you and everyone to know that also in the race question we will go straight ahead."

Thus, "the issue between the Vatican and the fascist state is now squarely joined," reports Arnaldo Cortesi, of the *New York Times*. "The Vatican has repudiated all racist theories, not excluding the Italian ones . . . and has condemned them as contrary to the very essence of the Catholic faith. Mussolini . . . has brusquely announced that he proposes to go straight ahead. Everyone in Rome is sitting back to watch the sparks fly when an irresistible force meets an immovable body."

In view of these sharp clashes between Mussolini and the Pope, and the enthusiastic support Mussolini received in Hitler's official press, what will be the position of sincere Catholics who have been misled into the belief that the puppet of these two anti-Catholic dictators in Spain, Generalissimo Franco, is fighting for the Church? Franco's fighting strength is based on Moors (not Christians), on Italian fascists (anti-Catholic), and German Nazis (even more bitterly anti-Catholic)! How can any Catholics consistently maintain that Franco fights for the Catholic Church? How can they persist in their utterly unjustifiable opposition to the loyalists? How can they fail to join hands with all progressive anti-fascist forces, including, of course, the Communists, in the common fight for jobs, security, democracy, and peace?

## Across the Ebro

THERE is not the slightest doubt that the republican offensive across the Ebro is one of the major actions of the war. It could not have been undertaken by a beaten army. Its vitality, speed, and tenacity carry the ring of victory, not an easy victory, not an imminent one, but a certain one because Spain cannot be conquered while Spaniards remain on its soil.

The primary objective of the republican advance has already been fulfilled. Franco and his "advisers" have had to withdraw troops from the Levante front so that his offensive there seems to have been completely stalled. The latest dispatches report an important republican victory below Teruel, near this very front. If this materializes into anything of substantial importance, Franco will have to rush troops to defend Teruel, another peril to his Levante drive.

What now? It would be folly to suppose that the fascists are not preparing a major effort to recoup their losses and their prestige. They are still greatly superior to the republicans in arms and munitions, especially in planes. Mussolini and Hitler will reluctantly recognize that the war is far from over and increase their intervention. The coming weeks are therefore critical. International aid to Spain and the struggle against "non-intervention" and "neutrality" are more urgent than ever. With the Spaniards fighting so valiantly and so well, can we remain satisfied with anything but our best?

## Danger in the Far East

THE Japanese militarists have again brought the situation in the Far East close to the danger of a major war, with all its possibilities of a world holocaust.

Japan was in desperate need of a diplomatic triumph to compensate for its loss of prestige in China. It tried to gain such a victory at the expense of the Soviet Union. Grasping at a minor border incident as a pretext, the Japanese government brusquely denounced the Soviet Union as an "invader," demanded the immediate withdrawal of the Soviet troops from a hill which belonged to Russia since 1869, and threatened, in case of Soviet refusal to comply with its demands, the "application of force." Litvinov, the Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, rebuked the Japanese ambassador in Moscow for his undiplomatic language, assured him that threats were the last thing to go over in Moscow, and flatly refused to accept the ambassador's protests. Now it was Japan's turn to act.

Rumors, emanating from Tokyo, of clashes between the Soviet and Japanese troops around Changkufeng filled the papers. Simultaneously news dispatches from Tokyo indicated that "the Japanese public was unanimously opposed to taking steps that might lead to war with Russia." By July 22, the Japanese government, "fearing that the public was reaching a dangerous state of alarm," ordered the press to "minimize the alleged invasion of Manchukuo by Soviet troops." It was obvious that the Japanese government was ready to retreat from its intransigent position and settle the incident amicably, even though it would be an obvious loss of face. Then, after a few days of quiet, again reports of clashes near Changkufeng poured out from Tokyo. The Japanese troops were winning, chasing the Soviet troops, killing hundreds, capturing tanks and guns and ammunition. Tokyo was now ready to glory in the achievements of its military in Manchukuo. It had almost regained face. Almost, for according to the latest official

reports from Moscow (August 2), the Japanese, who had actually retaken the Changkufeng Hill on July 31, have been definitely dislodged by regular Red Army detachments. They have not only lost the territory under dispute, but "the number of killed and wounded Japanese reached 400; the Japanese left on Soviet territory five pieces of artillery, fourteen machine guns and 157 rifles with ammunition. Soviet casualties were thirteen killed and fifty-five wounded. One Soviet tank and one piece of artillery were disabled."

## The Business Outlook

**T**HE last month has seen a hesitant upswing in business. The Labor Research Association points out that though consumers' incomes declined during the present depression, the drop was much smaller than that experienced during the last crisis period, 1929-33. Far more disastrous was the fall in production of consumers' goods. Now, as the stock market pushes upward in anticipation of improvements, buying of textiles, leather, and metals has increased, automobile sales went up in June, and steel operations have mounted.

During the present depression, when consumer incomes remained at a relatively higher level than production of consumer goods, demand was for the most part satisfied by the reduction of inventories. Today the stocks of consumer goods in the hands of retailers, wholesalers, and manufacturers are substantially reduced. In consequence, an increase in production can be expected to a point more in line with retail sales.

Substantially the same outlook is arrived at by the American Federation of Labor in its monthly survey of business. The upturn has undoubtedly been speeded by the administration's recovery program which began at a critical moment. However, the full effect of the program is still to be felt because of the delay in putting recovery measures into action. Nor can recovery be expected to continue without expansion of the New Deal program, expansion that will widen WPA and raise relief wages as well as enforcing the Wages and Hours Act and strengthening it, launching a realistic housing program greatly increased over the present allotments, and showing more generosity to farmers and to small-business men in need of credit to pursue more profitably their activities.

At the moment the business outlook improved, the monopolies started a wage-cutting drive, especially in the railroads. If business recovery is to prove of any real benefit to consumers, and if it is not to be halted by lack of purchasing power, the wage cuts must be defeated. The implications of pre-

serving wage levels leads to nationalization of the railroads. And in addition, the need for credit which the monopolies and their bankers have steadfastly refused, necessitates the immediate mobilization of sentiment in this country to nationalize the banks and so to facilitate the flow of credit.

## Badge of Dishonor

**H**ENRY FORD once contributed greatly to man's mechanical progress, and for that the world has not only honored him, but has also compensated him vastly in material goods and powers. Under ordinary circumstances, therefore, the fact that on his seventy-fifth birthday this American was decorated by a foreign power might have been proudly regarded as little more than a fit tribute to a distinguished fellow citizen.

But the circumstances are not ordinary. The decoration has been awarded by Hitler, a man who persecutes, imprisons, and exiles distinguished people in his own country, whose entire life and activity are the very antithesis to progress and learning and culture and humanity and democracy. And when we recall that among the other three people who were awarded by Hitler the Grand Cross of the German Eagle was the unspeakable Mussolini, we, as Americans, feel deeply ashamed. For we realize that it is not Ford the mechanical inventor, the excellent organizer, the industrial wizard, who is being honored, but Ford the political reactionary, the economic tyrant, the anti-Semite, the enemy of labor, the supporter of the Black Legion and various other fascist and Nazi organizations at home and abroad. What was genuinely and typically American in Ford is anathema to Hitler. It is the shameful, un-American, dictatorial, fascistic essence of the politically stupid and socially vicious latter-day Ford that Hitler admires.

## The ALP and the Elections

**T**HE Democratic Party machine in New York considered the American Labor Party in the bag. And having safely tucked it away, the Democrats officially refused to make concessions to the ALP in platform or when it came to selecting candidates.

The ALP has reiterated time and again that it is not an adjunct to any political party, but rather an independent political voice of the state's progressive forces. In a practical manner, it foresaw coalitions with other political groups in order to advance the ALP program. Hence, with Tammany out to knife the ALP and with major sections of the Democratic machine in New York dominated by Tammany, the ALP looked round for allies that would enhance its political effectiveness.

The Republican Party in New York is by no means a monolithic party: it contains Fusionists, progressives, middle-class liberals, side by side with reactionaries. It was possible for the ALP to agree with the progressive elements on candidates for state and local offices in the coming elections. The agreement specified that in certain districts the ALP will endorse progressive Republicans who in turn will reciprocate in favor of ALP candidates. In no way is the ALP wedded to the Republican Party. The best indication of this is the coalition of New Deal Democrats and the ALP in other localities, as well as the cries of horror and protest that went up from the reactionary Republicans at the thought of cooperating with the ALP—and endorsing the New Deal program—anywhere.

The election will find the progressives lined up against the reactionaries. It doesn't matter much if the die-hards call themselves Republicans, Democrats, or just ordinary Tammany ward-heelers.

## What Is Martin Hiding?

**H**OMER MARTIN has abruptly adjourned the "trial" of the four suspended vice-presidents of the United Automobile Workers. He did so when Maurice Sugar, attorney for the suspended officers, forced a Martin witness to admit that the pogrom against what Martin calls "Communist influences in the union" was also aimed at John L. Lewis. He did so when Wyndham Mortimer (who more than any other individual was responsible for the growth of the auto union in its early days) charged that a Martin supporter had received \$20,000 from an Eastern insurance company to arrange for a lucrative group-insurance plan for the union—which, incidentally, would have meant \$5,000,000 profits a year for the insurance company.

Martin did more than postpone the hearings. He arbitrarily changed the procedure of the trial. Henceforth the defendants must present all evidence in the form of affidavits. "This unheard of evidence-in-affidavit procedure," commented Attorney Sugar, "is an attempt to prevent our disclosures from becoming known to the UAW membership and the public. . . . No one has yet thought up a way to cross-examine an affidavit." The reason for Martin's sudden desire to keep the hearings secret was clear enough to any observer. "The verdict is 'not guilty,' as everyone can see," Sugar declared. "The action of Martin's followers in adjourning the board is as clear as crystal. Today we intended to bring out the details of the insurance deal and the stool pigeon on the executive board."



## Howland Spencer

IN REPORTING Howland Spencer's sale of his Ulster County, N. Y., estate to Father Divine, the capitalist press left unremarked the most significant part of Spencer's career. For several years the Squire of Krum Elbow has been known to residents of the countryside as an open, blatant anti-Semite and fascist. A few years ago he bought out the *Post*, the only newspaper in the town of Highland, and opened its columns to men like William Dudley Pelley and Robert Edmund Edmundson. At the top of the front page the paper carried a standing ad for James True's "Kike-killer." Spencer himself conducted a pseudonymous column. On several occasions Jewish residents of the nearby towns of Kingston, Newburgh, and Poughkeepsie found that they had acquired, gratuitously, subscriptions to the paper Spencer hoped would strike fear into their hearts. Aroused public opinion, a boycott by advertisers and subscribers, and threatened legal action, however, put the Highland *Post* on the skids. Hence the note in last Sunday's papers that Spencer had "given it to the printers."

## Mexico Cleans House

MEXICO continues to smoke out its fascist enemies with gratifying alertness. Following ex-Governor Cedillo's downfall, Governor Yocupicio of the state of Sonora has emerged as the potential leader of another anti-government uprising. But Mexican labor has not permitted him to plot in the dark. On July 16, at one of the sessions of the Seventh National Congress of the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), a delegate from Sonora made a number of public charges against Yocupicio. He accused the Sonora strong man of sabotaging the distribution of lands to the peasants, of inspiring clashes between the state authorities and the Agrarian Federation, and of bringing undue pressure to bear on the local labor Board of Conciliation and Arbitration. Sec'y.-Gen. Lombardo Toledano of the CTM added that Yocupicio's secretary was a well known legal representative in labor disputes of employers and has been arrested for complicity in the Cedillo rebellion. In addition, Yocupicio's supporters have been engaging in various anti-Semitic activities.

At a conference of governors in Mexico City called by President Cárdenas, Yocupicio showed that he was worried, by attempting to reply. He declared that he was opposed to experimenting with "imported" political and social ideas "not conformable to our mode of being," and he passed off fas-

cist activity in Sonora as a figment of the labor leader's imagination. Nobody expects Yocupicio to stop with these words but his future course is still a matter of some speculation. Fortunately the leading party of Mexico, of which President Cárdenas is a member, has taken equally prompt action against reactionary disrupters within its own ranks. Three of the main figures in a scheme to form a new, pseudo-democratic opposition party have been expelled and the whole plan thoroughly discouraged—for the time being.

The threat of a fascist uprising in Mexico is still a real one though it is diminishing in the face of the government's energetic progressivism. All the more reason, then, for a more consistent and genuine good-neighbor policy towards Mexico by our own State Department. Secretary Hull's note proposing arbitration in the claims of American landowners whose Mexican estates have been divided for the benefit of the native peasants was a clever move but it is a departure from that policy. The Mexican government is in the midst of a magnificent effort to liberate the majority of its people from peonage: this cannot be done without breaking up the huge estates. Mexico cannot give American landowners a privileged position over Mexican landowners. Both will be paid but both will have to wait. The issues are well known and the proposal to arbitrate was but a subterfuge, ultimately intended by the State Department to cover the oil claims as well. It does us no credit and should be forgotten.

## Monopoly in Medicine

THE report of Assistant Attorney General Thurman Arnold reveals that medical progress in this country is being obstructed by a group of reactionaries within the medical profession itself. According to a preliminary investigation conducted by the Department of Justice, the American Medical Association and the District of Columbia Medical Society are engaging in monopolistic practices contrary to the Sherman Anti-Trust Law. The report charges that these organizations, controlled by die-hard opponents of group-insurance and socialized-medicine plans, have resorted to boycott, intimidation, and expulsion of liberal doctors connected with the Group Health Association of Washington, D. C. They have gone to shocking lengths to suppress "competition." They have blacklisted eminent surgeons; they have denied doctors access to hospitals. The opponents of "regimentation" have themselves presented us with a model of regimenting activity.

Mr. Arnold is to be commended for the

realism of his report. For he ties up the economic conditions of medical practice with the general situation in the profession. He points out that medical care has not kept pace with technical proficiency because millions of Americans cannot afford to pay doctors. Forty million people in this country are in families with annual incomes of less than \$800. Acute illness of all kinds increases as one goes down the economic scale. These facts are relevant because the American Medical Association is fighting lower costs by fighting group health projects. Their attempt to monopolize the profession has the effect of excluding millions from any possibility of medical care. This is a social problem of the first magnitude, and we hope the Attorney General's office prosecutes the case up to the hilt.

## Gentlemen Bourbons

THE record of the convention of the American Bar Association, which closed at Cleveland, July 29, makes clear that the bourbons of the American Bar have forgotten nothing and learned nothing. With one single exception, every resolution adopted or defeated by the convention was in line with the general policies of the anti-New Deal, big-business group.

The single exception was the adoption of a resolution to form a committee on American civil liberties. Lest that proposal ruffle the stuffed shirts unduly, the delegates tacked on a soft-soap qualification: "for rich and poor alike." No undue skepticism is required to question when and how the rich have ever been deprived of civil liberties in this country. Was it Mr. Weir or Mr. Girdler or Mr. Henry Ford or, maybe, Barbara Hutton for whom this solicitude was shown?

This liberal front was more than offset by a resolution attacking the National Labor Relations Board, an attack which perhaps furnishes the clue to the meaning of civil liberties "for rich and poor alike."

It is true that a resolution calling on the Supreme Court to investigate the appointment of Justice Black received a substantial vote, but in the end, it too was defeated. The one progressive note was the resolution to condemn the Nazi government for racial persecutions. It was a flickering flame that died when it reached the House of Delegates, where the resolution was held to exceed the purview and scope of the association's activity.

Despite these old-guard tactics, an uneasiness could be sensed among the gentlemen of the bar, who were conscious of the progressive forces lined up in the newly formed National Lawyers Guild and of the danger that soon the guild may well overshadow the importance of the American Bar Association.

# Forsythe's Page

## Early Spring and Summer Voluptuary News

S. J. PERELMAN BATTLING FOR ROBERT FORSYTHE

**H**AD you been loitering at the intersection of Vine Street and Hollywood Boulevard in Hollywood, Calif., on the morning of January 17 last, you could not have helped but notice a rather striking individual. Below the average in height, his piercing eyes peeping out from beneath a firm but humorous mouth, he was dressed with an elegance at once so careless and exquisite that it wrung a gasp of envy from the movie stars and career diplomats streaming past him. His spotless neckcloth put the snows of the distant Sierras to shame and occasionally he allowed his hand to toy languidly with the magnificent bunch of seals depending from his nankeen vest. Lest he be mistaken for some frivolous buck out of the pages of *Esquire*, he carried under his arm a copy of Eliot's translation of St. John Perse's *Anabasis*, bound in crushed oscar levant. To the street Arabs who fought to brush his clothes and the tipsters besieging him with sure things in the sixth at Santa Anita he distributed largess from a pocketful of loose diamonds, but without ostentation. The man spoke rarely, but when he did, his witty and profound comment on the foibles of his time evoked peals of laughter from his auditors. Withal there was such a kernel of hard sense in his shrewd estimate of the international and local situation that many a citizen went his way a shade more thoughtfully, determined to do his part in eliminating civic corruption should it ever appear in Los Angeles County.

At roughly eleven o'clock, the person described bought himself a copy of the Los Angeles *Herald-Examiner*, and pulling on a pair of rubber gloves, began to thumb through it. His quick eye instantly absorbed the essentials of the morning's news, detected a fallacy in Prudence Penny's latest recipe, ferreted out a parvenu in the Princess Conchita Pignatelli's society column, and started to idle through the motion-picture gossip section conducted by Louella O. Parsons. It froze on an item halfway down, and (need I say?) has been frozen ever since:

Hollywood will talk a long time about the party Virginia and Darryl Zanuck gave at the Joseph Schenck home to celebrate their fourteenth wedding anniversary following the premiere of *In Old Chicago*. John Harkrider really outdid himself on the decorations. Tulle curtains hung from all the windows, pale green satin murals of the Zanuck family, and a bridal bouquet that filled one whole side of the hall, greeted the guests. The ceilings were a mass of gardenias, silver leaves, and pink camellias, while in one corner six white cockatoos lent a deco-

orative note. The windows on one side of the Schenck home were removed to look out on a garden which resembled Versailles with its white statuary and flowering trees.

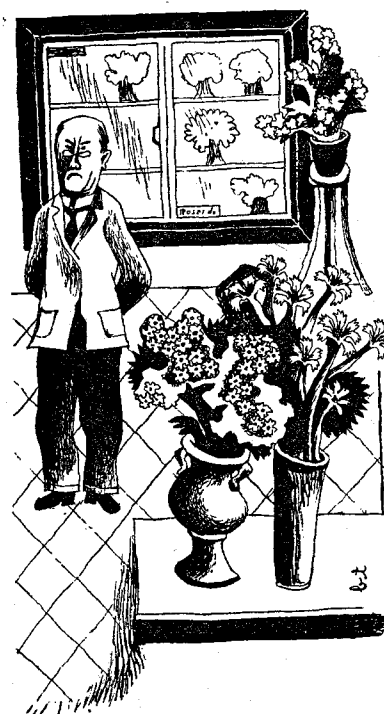
I hope Miss Parsons doesn't think me too horrid if I pat my barrettes girlishly back into place and submit that her party sounds like pretty small punkins for Mr. Harkrider. Far from outdoing himself, you and I who saw the old Ziegfeld shows know that at the Zanucks' he was only bunting out flies. It is apparent that all one has to do to start Louella of the High Heart whimpering with excitement is to remove a few windows. You don't even have to remove a few windows.

There is a general belief that this sort of soiree is typical of the movie colony and that when day is done along El Camino Real, the canyons resound with the gurgle of vintage wine and the soft entreaties of extra girls. I could cite any one of ten or fifteen clambakes I have attended which is much more characteristic, but the most recent will serve. It was held in a house in Alta Yenta Canyon high in the Hollywood hills, and from its windows you could see the myriad lights of Los Angeles sparkling like a veritable five-and-ten-cent store. Outside the house were drawn up twenty or thirty cars supplied by the Universal Credit Co., which, as a special favor, were not to be repossessed until the following morning. On entering, each guest was helped out of his coat by a onetime package thief posing as a Filipino butler and was shown into the living-room where the other unemployed were congregated exchanging alibis. Specially poisoned Martinis helped to loosen tongues, and all eyes were glued impatiently on the stairs down which our hostess would make her entrance as soon as she and her husband finished brawling in the bedroom.

As a graceful tribute to the early Franciscan padres, Fray Zukor y Balaban and Fray Sheehan del Metro, who had made the community possible, the décor was Spanish. Amber sidelights and rich wine-colored drapes, held aloft by an antique Mission safety-pin, suggested the cozy warmth of the Masque of the Red Death, and an empty sherry bottle peeped from the folds of the Spanish shawl trailing off the rented piano. The ceilings had been done over for the occasion by the recent rains into varying pastel shades of brown, and a charmingly informal breakfast tray littered with old toast indicated that here was no austere architect's blueprint but a gay and practical machine for living.

A moment later our hostess ricocheted into view, skidded slightly on a canapé someone had negligently left on the stairs, and landed in the arms of the present writer: an adagio nicely timed to attract the attention of the husband, who immediately deduced an affair and demanded satisfaction under the code duello. The scuffle was interrupted by the announcement of dinner. A truly Lucullan repast consisting of three barreled chickens and ten cents' worth of water ices soon had the thirty-odd guests sated, and the whole golden company retired to play parlor games. A nominal fee for pencils and papers was extracted by the host, and in a twinkling heads were bent over knotty sums, rebuses, and palindromes. Many a merry-eyed maiden sought out her swain with a gentle pressure of the hand and urged him to sneak off to the Trocadero, but few were in a mood to leave, particularly since their wives were watching. With the fun at fever heat, the host threw caution to the winds and produced the remains of a bottle of brandy. Hollywood will talk a long time about the orgy which ensued, but suffice to say that it was ten o'clock before the last drunken reveler wove unsteadily toward his car, chanting snatches of coarse doggerel. Fifteen minutes later a velvety stillness had fallen over the house, unbroken save by the gnawing of termites and that infinitely plaintive sound heard only in the tropics, the random snore of a hostess. Sleep, knitting up the raveled sleeve of care, had come to Alta Yenta Canyon; but across Los Angeles, in the bustling city-room of the *Herald-Examiner*, a green eyeshade slanted over her forehead and a corn-cob pipe clenched between her teeth, the motion-picture editor of International News Service—oblivious equally to the thundering presses and the laws of grammar—wrote on tirelessly, passionately, beautifully.

S. J. PERELMAN.



Beatrice Tobias