

since the series of exposures and arrests in the halcyon Walker era.

A prominent member of the Brooklyn judiciary can book a cell in Sing Sing prison, for he is certain to make his residence there as a result of his misconduct in certain bail-bond cases.

Another judge, a state senator, and a prominent Democratic leader may keep him company there. This trio is alleged to have accepted a bribe from a robbery defendant who was to plead guilty and receive a suspended sentence.

Of course there are countless other cases of this kind of corruption, many of which have found their way into the metropolitan press. But, as is usually the case with rackets and graft in municipal politics, there is a side to the story that has not been told anywhere, and is not, thus far, on the investigation. It is the story of anti-union reaction, the handmaiden of political corruption.

The previously cited murder of Anthony Corbo is but one of a long series of events which will show, when aired, that the agencies of public protection function against organized labor in Brooklyn. The grand-jury system, the lower courts, the police, the district attorney's office—all have delivered the goods to anti-labor employers. A Brooklyn injunction is as easily obtained as a Reno divorce, and if a struck employer is hard put for scabs, he need only look to certain allies in the police department—who will either provide the strikebreakers or dispatch a corps of cops to take over the strikers' work.

Bail is used against labor. What is intended as a guarantee of the defendant's appearance has been used, by raising the amount out of all proportion, to penalize strikers and unions with slim bank accounts.

Take the grand-jury system, for example. A grand jury, supposedly, is a picked body of citizens—picked, in typical capitalist fashion, from among landowning burghers—whose proper business it is to examine evidence and grant or refuse indictments. Obviously, it is in the public interest to see that a grand jury is chosen from as widely representative a body as the law will allow. But in Brooklyn a grand jury is almost a standing body, and certain men make jury duty a profession. Thus we find that one man has headed five grand juries, another four. Both men, Fred G. Schafer and Edward J. McCarthy, president of the large florist firm of Weir's, have time and again acted against labor, and both, oddly enough, happen to belong to the same Elks Lodge—No. 22, which boasts another politically distinguished member, District Attorney William F. X. Geoghan.

In April 1937 there were widespread marine and shipyard strikes. The additional grand jury for April pronounced labor unions a racket. By another coincidence, the foreman of this grand jury was Irving E. Jakobson, son of the owner of Jakobson & Peterson, ship-builders.

Brooklyn grand juries can be counted on

We Shall Love

Can we sing these days
purely of love and nothing else?
no hard word dropped in the simple song
like a stone in a quiet pool?

When the names of oppressors are gone
and their ways are forgotten,
and there is no shadow
that goes with a man through life,

we shall sing, using the same old words
with a sure joy in the sound,
there will be love with the singing,
the shadows be made by the sun
or the natural night.

We shall sleep unafraid in the world
and gladly arise in the morning.

This, my own girl, wife of the digger,
girl of the sailor home from the sea,
will be life in a world made over
by such as we.

ALEXANDER F. BERGMAN.

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to do the dirty work of the employers and employer-minded politicians with a consistency too great to be accidental. On numerous occasions they have commended the office of District Attorney Geoghan when Geoghan's attorneys have been attacked. During the famous strike of workers on the Brooklyn *Daily Eagle*, a grand jury put aside its proper business, which was to investigate current rackets, to issue a Girdlerian statement recommending that the restraint of pickets no longer be a matter for "the discretion of the police." The police had been doing very nicely, but the jury, foremanned by repeater Fred G. Schafer, felt that even stronger measures should be taken to make Brooklyn "a safe place for children and adults." That jury finished its term of racket investigation with the discovery of only one racket—organized labor.

An example of what does happen when an honest juror finds his way to grand-jury duty was seen recently, in a story which did make the press, when a union cab driver who refused to ride with other jurymen in a scab taxi was thrown off the jury and reprimanded by the presiding judge.

Late in 1937, during the course of the guild strike against the *Eagle*, the waiters of a large Brooklyn restaurant, Joe Sartori's, were on strike. The owner applied for a writ of injunction to Justice John H. McCooey, Jr., whose father, it is interesting to note, was formerly widely known as the Democratic boss of Brooklyn. At any rate, the injunction Sartori asked for was granted immediately.

It has since developed, in affidavits signed by waiters, that Sartori had issued orders

never to bill the Judge McCooey or members of his family for food or liquor.

The strike that turned up the greatest mess was one conducted by the employees of the affiliated firms of John Mullins & Sons and the Mason Furniture Co. Signed affidavits, in the possession of the business agent of the United Retail Workers local which conducted the strike, give a fair example of the methods of cooperation. Police were assigned to ride the firms' trucks during the strike; police were seen moving furniture and in other ways doing the jobs normally handled by regular employees; an electric refrigerator was delivered to Capt. Michael Richter, who supplied the strikebreaking cops, and a suite of furniture to the particularly cooperative Police Inspector Bishop, both items accompanied by the stipulation to "forget the bill."

The strike against the Brooklyn Jewish Hospital, early in 1937, provoked national discussion and was finally investigated by the La Follette Civil Liberties Committee in Washington. It brought forth an exceptionally repressive injunction, which held that no strike could be called against a charitable, educational, or religious institution; strikers were enjoined from picketing or establishing headquarters within three blocks of the hospital.

At the time it was held, as one of the chief points of the management and the Brooklyn officials who prosecuted the strikers, that because the elevators were not in service, a baby patient had died. That was the sworn and accepted testimony of Dr. Benjamin Kramer, the hospital's chief pediatrician and the dead child's attending physician.

That baby did not die while the strike was in progress, but afterward, when the strikers had been arrested and the hospital was functioning normally—with all elevators running.

Thus far the labor side of the corruption in Brooklyn politics has not seen the light of print or official investigation. What will come of the Amen inquiry, aside from a few arrests and appointive changes? If the labor side is properly exposed, as Brooklyn progressives are urging, the whole case will take on a far different complexion.

As a rule the exposures of Tammany thieving and racketeering means jobs for Republicans by the next election. In this instance, however, with a labor angle more sordid than even big-time graft, the Republicans have little to hearten them, for their own labor record is far from sweet. The obvious answer to the problem is the American Labor Party, which can commit itself both to honest municipal government *and* to a square deal for labor. It is stronger in Kings County than anywhere in the state, and with the increasing aid of the Transport Union—which can, if it wants, take the strong Irish vote away from reactionary Democrats—the ALP will have its best chance to commend itself to voters.

Why Kluckhohn Left

The Inaccurate Gentleman from the *Times*

HU WILLIAMSON

Mexico City.

LAST week Frank L. Kluckhohn, correspondent of the New York *Times* in Mexico, was deported from a country he cordially disliked, because his conduct was "in every respect incongruous with the most elementary journalistic etiquette." The deportation took place under Article 74 of the General Law of Population which provides that "... the secretary of the interior may bar the entry of undesirable foreigners."

In a dignified explanatory statement, the government's Department of Press and Publicity charged the *Times* correspondent with refusing to document his dispatches and printing "inaccuracies and alarming prophecies as to the supposed paths of national policy." The department explained that Mexico had no intention of abandoning freedom of the press, but that Kluckhohn had been guilty of "malevolently misconstruing the doctrine of the Mexican government, causing animosity among foreign people toward us, and so contributing to the placing of obstacles to the friendly relations between Mexico and various governments—such as that of the United States."

As these words are being written, Mr. Kluckhohn is issuing statements that he has become the focus of a general attack by the Mexican government against foreign correspondents. Frantically searching for instances of government repression against honest journalists, Kluckhohn charged that a certain news agency had been fined 5,000 pesos. As a matter of fact, this "fine" was simply a three years' back-tax assessment on the United Press. William Lander, the UP correspondent, repudiated the Kluckhohn accusation categorically. "This assessment," he stated, "is in no way a fine and has nothing to do with any intimidation of myself for sending news out."

For over a year, high officials of the Mexican government have been protesting to the New York *Times* concerning the tendentious and inaccurate character of Kluckhohn's dispatches. Last summer the *Times* made an investigation. It now asserts that the results completely exonerated Kluckhohn.

The *Times*' decision to keep Kluckhohn in Mexico left the government with two clear alternatives: acquiescence or deportation. The latter course gave this erratic correspondent the painless luxuries of martyrdom to the much abused principle of freedom of the press. It permitted sinister editorial writers to charge that Mexico had gone the way of the totalitarian countries. However, it eliminated Kluckhohn's more or less fanciful edi-

torials, bearing a Mexican dateline, from the news pages of the *Times*.

There is complete freedom of the press within Mexico. Fascist sheets circulate with impunity. Attacks are made in the local press against prominent government officials which, if made in the United States, would land their authors in jail on criminal libel charges. When a Mexico City magazine accused Damaso Cárdenas of grafting on the Guadalajara highway contract, the president immediately ordered a thorough investigation of his brother's conduct. Damaso was exonerated, but no legal action was taken against the magazine which published the libelous charges. Foreign correspondents are free to write and wire what they will. The Cárdenas government imposes no censorship whatsoever on Western Union dispatches, and mail crosses the border unopened.

In the case of Kluckhohn, the issue was whether Mexico could tolerate the presence of a newspaperman who published continual misstatements of fact, refused to verify wild stories, and showed a degree of irresponsibility in his writings which should have led to his recall. The second issue involved was that Kluckhohn tended to dramatize his position as a reporter. He evidently considered his mission to be that of "exposing" the Mexican government at every hand, laying bare imaginary fascist plots to oust United States influence from the country, and cabling a false report to the effect that the Latin-American Labor Congress was seeking to raise wages here to United States levels.

First, as to pure journalistic blundering. Kluckhohn once characterized the notorious fascist organ *Novedades*, as a "left-wing" sheet. The day before the oil expropriation, he reported that Cárdenas was bluffing. The day before the Cédillo revolt, he wired that "If the government hoped to prod General Cédillo into action, it had failed, as was a foregone conclusion."

If accurate prediction is one of the measuring rods of good journalism, correct reporting of fact is its first essential. When Cárdenas took over the important Nueva Italia and Lombardia plantations in Michoacan, Kluckhohn wrote that the owners had been reimbursed although dispossessed American landlords in other parts of the country were getting nothing. He hinted darkly that the fact that these proprietors were Italo-Mexicans (and therefore under the protection of the world fascist alliance) explained this singular decision to pay compensation. After the

story had been printed, the former plantation owner, Cusi, issued a statement that he had not received a cent and that the Kluckhohn dispatch was manufactured out of whole cloth.

To send a story which is damaging in the extreme to a foreign government, with absolutely inadequate verification, is bad enough. Moreover, no reporter who knew Mexico would have placed any credence in the report. During Cárdenas' presidential campaign, several workers were killed in a labor dispute on the Cusi properties, and the young candidate immediately wired a request that Cusi turn his haciendas over to the workers. Thus the Italian landlord was the last man whom Mexico would wish to pay. Besides, Italian influence in Mexico is negligible, and even if the German ministry were in a position to dictate to Cárdenas (which it emphatically is not), there is little reason to believe it would intervene on behalf of Italian nationals.

The Kluckhohn attack on the Mexican government has been ramified and adroit. It has been guerrilla warfare with continuously shifting positions. As a defender of American property, the *Times* correspondent appealed tearfully for an embargo on silver purchases from Mexico—a decision which, had it been taken at the time, would have resulted in profound economic crisis and possibly the armed overthrow of the Cárdenas government. As a "radical," the same Kluckhohn assailed Mexico for economic relations with Nazi Germany and exaggerated the political implications of these relations. As an economic "expert," Kluckhohn published misleading reports concerning the Mexican Treasury's position which convinced American business men that financial conditions here are most unsound. Characteristic of Kluckhohn the economist was an item that government aid to cooperatively operated mines would increase production and hence damage the competitive position of American-owned silver mines. Since the U. S. Treasury buys silver at a fixed price, this was arrant nonsense. As a labor "expert," Kluckhohn published reports that oil workers were ruled by an "iron dictatorship"—consisting of their trade-union leaders. Did the correspondent believe that Standard Oil and Royal Dutch Shell were citadels of proletarian democracy?

The background of Mexico's decision involves the scurrilous R. L. Martin articles in the New York *Enquirer*; the mendacious vaporizing of Henry Allen in the New York *Herald Tribune*; and the exotic theories of Fred Pasley in the New York *Daily News*. As far as the Allen series is concerned, it may be recalled that this Kansas correspondent quotes Trotsky as calling Cárdenas a Communist. If the Coyoacan exile made such an inane remark, it must be assumed that he is attempting to force Mexico to deport him. The Pasley reports of an alleged alliance between Cárdenas, Lombardo Toledano, and Trotsky are so contrary to easily verified fact that Mexico finds it difficult to believe that the entire American capitalist press is not mercenary.