

SPOTLIGHT

Xmas Cheer

BIRTHDAY GIFT:

Rolling fast and furiously, the Red Army crashed into its third offensive last week along the bloody Don between Voronezh and Stalingrad. It began a few days before Stalin's sixty-third birthday and carries in its fierceness the mutual zeal and devotion between the Premier and his troops.



The offensive, at the moment we go to press, is approaching the important railway junction at Millerovo on the Moscow-Rostov line. More than 300 villages have been liberated and thousands of Nazis will never utter another heil. By advancing to Kantemirovka the Russians will dominate the ground between the Don and the Donets and in time strangle the Germans in the Stalingrad area and isolate the Nazi divisions in the Caucasus. Despite strongly fortified positions, the Germans are being squeezed on a narrowing terrain and their possibilities of counter-attacking become more and more limited.

ON THE central front the Russians are moving along and have captured strong points west of Rzhev. The past seven days on the Eastern Front must have found Hitler screaming for the scalp of another general. Zeitzler, the newly appointed chief of the general staff, was supposed to outwit and outmatch Timoshenko. We wouldn't be surprised if Zeitzler now moves into the ranks of the dismissed Halder and von Brauchitsch. And the moment was never riper for the Allies to begin marching into Europe for the final coup.

Thunder in Burma



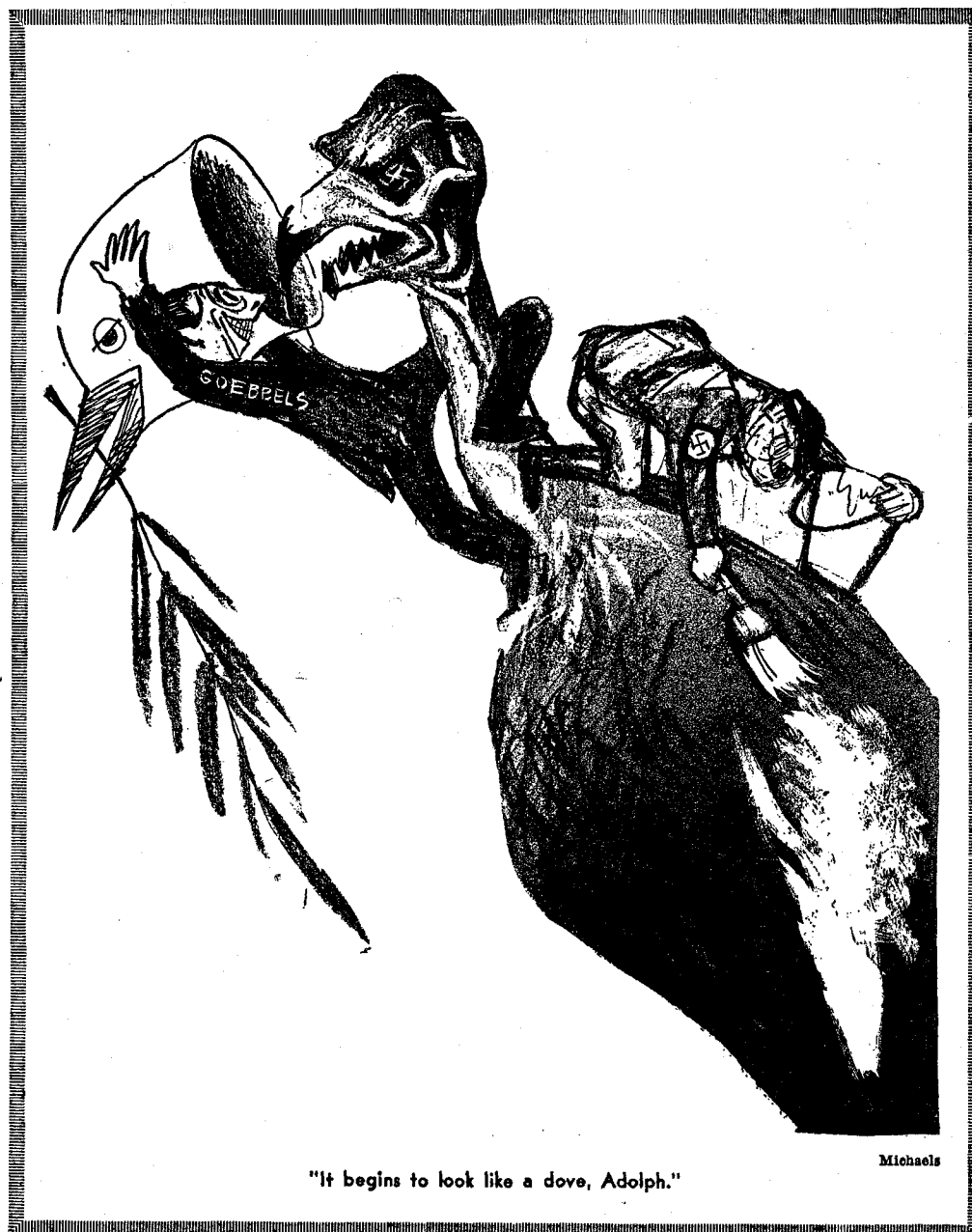
THE news of the invasion of Burma's western coastal plain by a British force is welcome to everybody who has been waiting for an offensive that will relieve China's desperate situation. There is as yet no evidence that the drive toward Akyab constitutes the beginning of a major offensive; it may be simply an offensive-defensive action de-

signed to forestall a Japanese attack into India itself. Nevertheless it is heartening to learn that the grand strategy of the global war calls for positive action in Asia at the same time that a decisive campaign against Hitler is being pushed in the approaches to Europe.

THE loss of Burma was probably the most severe blow China has received in its valiant five-and-a-half-year war against Japan. It temporarily reduced China as the land base for operations against our joint enemy to an area in which defensive operations with rapidly diminishing supplies were the only strategy possible. Not only was

the Burma road closed, but the construction of other avenues of approach for which preparations had been made was cancelled out. The gasoline of Burma, moreover, was lost to the United Nations air forces. And perhaps most important, the Chinese people became physically isolated just when their potential allies had finally made up their minds to give them real assistance.

The early recapture of Burma will do more than open a supply route to the sorely pressed Chinese armies. It will restore China's confidence in her allies. For Burma cannot be reconquered in the near future without genuine and complete cooperation between the Anglo-American and Chinese



"It begins to look like a dove, Adolph."

Michaelis

commands. If the former persist in their earlier policy of refusing Chinese aid—indeed if they refuse to undertake the real Burma offensive until it can be undertaken entirely by Anglo-American forces—the cost will be measured in additional time, additional tens of thousands of lives, and by increasingly strained relations with the heroic Chinese people.

Diagnosis and Cure

WHEN the devil sprouts angels' wings, beware. Flying high, with a halo of pretty words, Monsieur Darlan in a statement and interview last week was induced to disavow both his record and intentions. And hypocrisy, born of long association with hypocrites, carried the day. Speaking to an Associated Press correspondent, Darlan insisted that his participation in the Vichy Cabinet was for the purpose of resisting complete Nazi domination over France. "No Frenchman worth that name, and I, in the first place, could willingly submit to German oppression." This from the mouth of a man who initiated the hangman's justice which condemned to death thousands of patriotic anti-fascist Frenchmen; who cleared the way for the importation of French slave labor into Germany!

In his speech Darlan also emphasized that he had taken measures to abrogate anti-Semitic laws in North Africa which "resulted from laws passed in France under German pressure." (Laws which, of course, Darlan helped enact.) But no sooner had his words been uttered than the monitor of the Federal Communications Commission reported that the radio in Morocco was broadcasting anti-Semitic and anti-democratic propaganda. "Our fight," said the radio at Rabat, "is not of the Jews and the liberals. . . . Some persons will tell you that we are fighting for the democracies, but we hope that an aristocracy will develop in France as a result of this war."

WHAT credence can be placed in a man whose words are contradicted by deeds a moment later? Darlan has made a double promise—that he will bow out of the scene the moment France is free, and that the French people themselves shall decide their own destiny. Belief in such statements would reveal a political innocence worthy only of babes. Darlan is firmly entrenched politically in North Africa and even if he does remove himself in the future he has already appointed to decisive positions officials whose politics are his own, and whose army is stippled with fascists of the Doriot stripe. Cooperation with Darlan has created suspicion among the Allies, and in occupied Europe, the deepest resentment. It has also encouraged those

quarters who believe that the Darlan precedent can be used again elsewhere. It gives substance to the theory that victory can be bought cheaply and without battle. And it may not be far fetched to think that such ideas in part explain the slowness with which Allied armies have moved in Tunisia. Darlanism is a kind of pathological politics to be cured not by charms but by surgery. The alternative is to run the risk of a plague whose ravages are without limit.



Doubletalk

THE Great Engineer, having completed his brilliant Hooverville projects, now undertakes to blueprint the mechanics of peacemaking. Such programs when formulated by the less wily are convenient means of evading the grim present and its immediate political issues. In the case of Hoover they provide a way of talking through both corners of the mouth simultaneously. From one corner he is again the incomparable administrator ready to solve the problems troubling a world at war; from the other he is promulgating policy to guide the boys who have been forced temporarily into a back seat—a policy whose vague phrases cannot be easily identifiable as comforting the enemy.

Mr. Hoover's words, when the camouflage is removed, reveal a deadly fear that the peoples of the world have taken to heart the third plank of the Atlantic Charter—the right to self-determination and the restoration of sovereignty to conquered nations. If his teeth chatter at the thought of a stabilized Europe and Asia completely in the hands of their populace, the "cooling off" stage he proposes after a "conditional peace" will prepare the way for those forces

of repression who can rule according to Hoover concepts.

BUT what Hoover passed out in his speech last week are the tastier morsels made from the same pot of poison whose recipe is carefully described in his book *The Problems of Lasting Peace*. There he attacked by innuendo the Allied coalition and the promise it gives for victory and an enduring peace. Early in the book he and his collaborator Hugh Gibson, former ambassador to Belgium, have this to say: "In the first place, we must recognize that our allies in this war—Britain, Russia, China, and the others—will look upon the problem of peace through different eyes." And later in the book they write "Communism and fascism are both founded on sheer materialism. They are both intensively militaristic and imperialistic. They both ruthlessly oppose intellectual and spiritual freedom. . . . There is less murder and liquidation under fascism, but the moral base is no higher."

With this pivot of Hoover's thinking in mind it becomes immediately clear what is behind the hazy generalities of his speech. His "conditional peace" idea linked to a period of "cooling off" is the machinery by which he hopes to destroy the United Nations at a later moment—a moment when the coalition will have fulfilled its military obligations and turns to the obligations of peace. The "cooling off" period is the "American Firsters'" refrigerator in which to freeze the ardor of the United Nations for continued collaboration with the Soviet Union, should it become impossible now to swing a negotiated peace such as Hugh Gibson, Hoover's partner in appeasement, suggested only a few weeks ago. The Hoover perspectives, then, are: continued intrigue against the USSR under the guise of a so-called machinery for peace; sowing distrust among the Allies by holding up the old picture of Versailles; and diverting attention from those military necessities without which victory is impossible.

Tin from Bolivia

ONE does not have to read the radio transcriptions of the FCC monitoring service to know that the Axis is triumphantly predicting a complete stoppage of tin mining in Bolivia because of the mine owners' refusal to increase wages above starvation level. Inhuman exploitation on the part of the Patino, Hochschild, and Arramayo interests continues in spite of the fact that the US Metal Reserves Corp. has raised the price paid for tin from 48½¢ delivered in New Orleans to sixty cents delivered in Chilean ports, retroactive to January 1 of this year. The United Nations' chief source of this strategically vital material is now threatened by what can

only be described as sabotage on the part of the owners.

The first comprehensive report on the situation has just reached us via Allied Labor News. The trouble seems to be a combination of political blackmail, exploitation, disregard for human welfare, and lack of interest in production for the war effort. The Bolivian Parliament, with Cabinet approval, recently passed the Busch Labor Code, under which mining and industrial enterprises must give dismissed workers one month's severance pay for every year's employment. The Hochschild tin interests thereupon succeeded in organizing a united front with the Patino and Arramayo interests on a policy of granting no wage increases until and unless General Peneranda, president of Bolivia, vetoes the Busch Labor Code.

THIS development came on top of an intensive anti-labor campaign directed against the Confederacion Sindical de Trabajadores de Bolivia, which has been trying to improve conditions of work in the tin mines. The Patino interests were reported to have agreed to a settlement of the strike in their Catavi refinery and Llallagua mines with wage increases and the abolition of the hated company store system, when the Hochschild people intervened to organize all tin owners in blackmailing the new Labor Code. Bolivian labor last week appealed directly to United States unions to bring all possible pressure to bear upon a speedy and favorable settlement of the Patino strike and consequent defeat of the war sabotage schemes led by Hochschild. Strenuous steps must be taken not only by American trade unions, but also by Washington. The success of our

war effort is closely linked to the improvement in the conditions of work of Bolivian tin miners.

Sidelights Abroad

CHILE will break off relations with the Axis soon if over-cautious President Rios will accept the nationwide criticism that there is nothing to be gained in waiting for a more appropriate moment. Trade unions are also pressing for recognition of the Soviet Union. Failure thus far to align Chile against Berlin and Tokyo has not helped in accelerating national unity.

The Greeks have a word for it: *Sabotage*. Hitler has been forced to send back thousands of Greek workers from Germany for spreading defeatism.

Watch for Lombardo Toledano's visit to the United States early in January. As head of the Confederation of Latin American Workers he will propose a Pan-American Labor Congress. Toledano will be seeing William Green and Philip Murray as well as government officials to convince them that such a congress "will mean that the first round in the battle for the security of our continent will have been won."

SPLIT-SECOND tactics is what modern warfare demands. And if you have anything in the way of a wrist or pocket watch the Red Army can put it to good use.

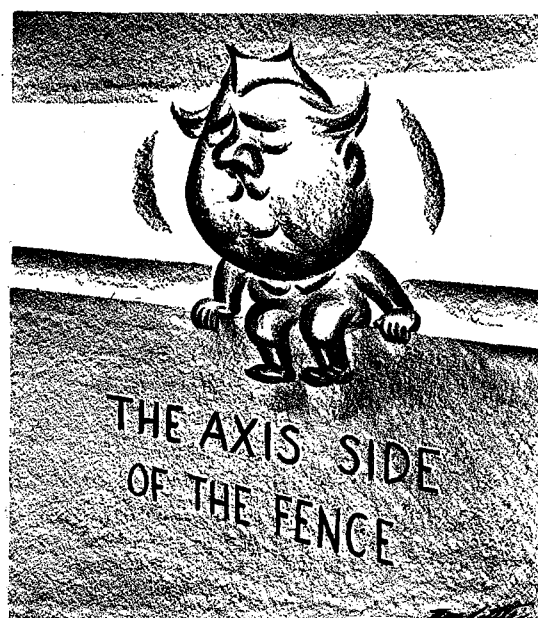
The Soviet Union has not been able to maintain its timepiece production. It had only two watch plants before the war, both

of which have had to be shifted to the rear. The Ambijan Committee for Emergency Aid to the Soviet Union (285 Madison Ave., New York) guarantees immediate shipment to the fighting front of all watches contributed, no matter what their quality or type. The Jewelry Workers Union and several watch experts are doing the repairing and adjustment.

THE closing paragraph in an interview between the spokesman of the Chinese Communist Party and the Yen-an daily paper *Liberation* reads: "We hope that the members of the Kuomintang correctly understand our sincerity in the interests of our country and our people and that they have taken further steps along the path of strengthening our cooperation. If such is the case our enemy will be finally driven off Chinese territory no matter how strong he is, and the mighty and independent republic of China will then be successfully built up in the near future." Occasion for the interview was the manifesto of the tenth plenum of the Kuomintang.

THE Mikhailovich myth continues to explode, despite American newspapers. Last week the New York *Daily Worker* published two official documents from Yugoslavia's National Liberation Army telling why Mikhailovich refused to cooperate with genuine guerrilla forces. Material found in Mikhailovich headquarters offers undeniable proof of his relations with the Nazis and Serbian quislings.

According to London press dispatches, the British Communist Party, through Harry Pollitt, has asked the Labor Party to accept it as an affiliated organization.



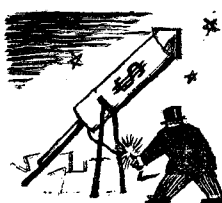


Unwept, unhonored, and unsung.

A Scrapper Departs

SO LEON HENDERSON has tossed in the towel. Not since the congressional days of Fiorello LaGuardia has Washington known such a colorful scrapper. One of the most brilliant of the brain-trusters, Henderson was anything but academic or stuffed-shirt. His sprawling form seemed to be merely the visible image of a personality and an energy no less sprawling. Whether he was issuing a new price-control regulation, or exchanging shots with a congressional committee, or putting gas in his old jalopy, or relaxing in a New York night club, Henderson was always "good copy."

It is probable that Henderson's resignation as head of the Office of Price Administration was due more to political than to physical difficulties. As an anti-fascist and original New Dealer, he incurred the hatred of appeasers and reactionaries long before our entrance into the war; one re-



calls Martin Dies' effort to smear him because he had favored the democratic side in the Spanish war. And for advocating over-all price-control Henderson got no valentines from the so-called farm bloc which actually represents big business-as-usual in agriculture. On the other hand, Henderson's own weaknesses antagonized those who should have been his closest collaborators. This was something more than lack of tact. It was not failing eyesight so much as a failure to see the problems of the economy as a whole and to distinguish between friends and foes that made things so tough for him. He alienated labor by his demand for wage-freezing earlier in the year and cheered the Tories by his alarmist speeches that living standards must be ruthlessly cut to 1932 levels. Now these same Tories and defeatists have forced him to resign.

Yet it would be a running away from the truth to ignore the fact that Henderson is, above everything else, a victim of the system under which he worked. No one can tell how much, if at all, he is to be blamed for the bungling of rationing which

has ruffled the tempers of so many millions throughout the country. So long as there is no over-all planning and centralized control of our war economy all kinds of unnecessary dislocations are bound to occur in the distribution of civilian goods as well as in war production. It is reported that Sen. Prentiss Brown of Michigan, who was defeated in the November elections, is slated to be Henderson's successor. He may by suaver methods establish better relations with Congress, but that by itself will not eliminate the defects stemming from a war economy which, like Topsy, just grew.

Ration the Excuses

THE disappearance of Henderson, the whipping boy, may have one good effect: it will focus attention on the real problem. A storm is blowing up in the civilian sector of our war economy. The sudden stoppage of all gasoline sales in the eastern seaboard states except to commercial vehicles was only the most dramatic expression of this crisis. As is well known, there is no shortage of gas; this problem is a direct result of a developing crisis in another sector of our war economy, transportation. And all of it is, of course, tied up with production. The public is being told that the needs of the African offensive and increased shipments of fuel oil have made it necessary to cut down gas. No one will dispute that the armed forces have first call and no sacrifice that strengthens our military effort is too great. In this case, however, we wonder whether the patriotism of the American people isn't being imposed upon. Did the gentlemen who are offering these excuses just discover that in war it is necessary to fight and that in certain months of the year the weather gets cold?

EVEN bigger headaches are on the way. The price control structure is wobbling. Only the other day the OPA announced that wholesalers and retailers would be allowed to increase prices on seventeen food items. The cost of other items in the family budget is going up and quality is going down. Without rationing, as the British experience proved, price rises cannot be checked. Yet in America except for gas, tires, fuel oil, sugar, and coffee, rationing is just a word in the dictionary. Here again we are being fed excuses, such as that the delay in meat rationing is due to the inability to get ration books printed in time—excuses that only cover up. Secretary of Agriculture Wickard stated the other day that no widespread food rationing is being planned because "Congress just won't grant the funds." This is true, and the people will have to start hammering away at the bottleneck of congressional sabotage. Yet the obstructionism of Con-

gress is only a small part of the problem.

The principle of rationing is one that must be established not only in consumers' goods, but as Earl Browder emphasized in his new book, *Victory—and After*, in production materials and in manpower. And it is a principle that must operate not in terms of making a little go a long way, but in terms of providing what is needed—the necessary supplies of raw materials, machines, and workers for war plants, and of food, shelter, and clothing to maintain our fighting forces and our working forces at maximum efficiency.

A Size for Victory

Too large an army? We wonder what the man in the street in Moscow or Chungking would think if he were told that at the very moment when the United States was at long last swinging into offensive action, a debate had been started over whether it was building too big an army. Before we have even begun to fight we are already talking about eliminating some of the fighters!



Somehow we feel that this controversy is only another variation on the victory-through-air-power theme. The myth that this war doesn't require mass armies and can be won largely by machines dies hard despite repeated burial on the blood-soaked plains of Russia. And though honest, patriotic people are among those who are raising the question of the size of our army, they ought to be very much disturbed over the company they're in—for instance, the defeatist *New York Daily News*, which is all for cutting down our army.

NO ONE can accurately estimate just how many Americans will be needed on the fighting fronts to defend our national existence and help free the world from fascism. To a large extent this depends on how soon we and our British allies open a second front in Europe that, together with the Red Army, will crush the Nazi octopus. That will not be an easy job and it will cost the blood of many thousands of Americans. The defeat of Japan will also cost blood—and the cost will be much less provided we fight a true coalition war in alliance with China, India, and Australia.

The tasks that face us are so vast that an army of 7,500,000 men by the end of 1943 doesn't seem too large. Nor are we impressed with the argument that our manpower and womanpower are insufficient to equip an army of this size, a navy of about 2,000,000, and at the same time provide lend-lease supplies for our allies and essential civilian goods and services at home.

WHAT ABOUT OUR COLLEGES?

REFUSAL to gear our colleges to the war effort is not to defend culture but to aid the vandals who seek its destruction. Only a hardbitten educator-as-usual would deny that the war has made a reorientation of the university curriculum as imperative as the conversion of our industrial plant. Since Pearl Harbor the real question has been how best to employ our educational resources for victory and for coping with the problems of a postwar world. And this question has by no means been solved.

It will not be solved until we recognize that our resources for training specialists are an integral part of our resources for turning out planes, munitions, agricultural products, and a sound public health program. Our educational economy, in short, is closely linked to our war economy as a whole. Planning for the colleges is impossible in isolation from planning for other areas and functions of the national life today. The principle of the Tolan-Pepper Bill, calling for centralized over-all planning of a war economy under civilian direction, must be applied to education, no less than to agriculture and industry. The problem cannot be tackled piecemeal. And much of the recent discussion in educational circles has been confusing and futile because it has been piecemeal.

Announcement by the Army and Navy of a program to use college facilities for training military specialists must be evaluated in the light of this total problem. Under this program the Army and Navy will contract with selected schools to furnish instruction as well as housing facilities for men who will be on active duty, in uniform, with pay and under general military discipline. Both the Army and Navy stress that the selection of qualified trainees will be "on a broad democratic basis without regard to financial resources," a provision which should be rigorously observed to eliminate Jim Crow. Specific details of the Army and Navy plans differ in certain respects, owing to differences in the requirements of the two services. It is expected that approximately 200,000 men of from seventeen to twenty-two will be sent to about 200 colleges for periods varying according to the work for which they are being trained.

Most university and college heads welcome the clarification of educational policy by the armed forces and the opportunity to cooperate more effectively in the war effort. When the draft age was reduced to eighteen, the principal source of men college students was eliminated, pending some plan for integrating colleges with war needs. By availing themselves of our school facilities, our military leaders are helping the colleges to survive in a difficult period at the same time that they are increasing the efficiency of the armed forces. This is an important constructive move which merits complete support.

At the same time it should be noted that this program covers only the specific needs of the Army and Navy. Welcome as it is in this respect, it cannot for a moment be viewed as a solution of the general need to plan education in terms of every phase of war production. Insufficient provision has been made for insuring an adequate supply of students trained to carry on work at home that, while not specifically military, is vitally related to the war effort: for example, engineers for industry, physicians and dentists for an expanded health program, agricultural specialists for our rapidly growing food requirements. Government has a serious responsibility to insure such a supply of essential skills, a shortage of which has been strongly apparent in recent months. It is urgent to plan for trained personnel in the Army and Navy; it is no less urgent to plan for trained personnel in vital civilian work. In the absence of over-all planning as envisaged by the Tolan committee report, there is a real danger that our trained reserves will be depleted.

Even today, with manpower and production poorly organized, with our reserves of potential women workers largely untapped, and with Negro labor only partly utilized, we are equipping an army and navy only 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 smaller

than what is contemplated for a year hence. What can we not do once we adopt a manpower program such as the CIO has just proposed and organize our entire economic machine under centralized, planned control?

Eyes on Small Business

WASHINGTON is beginning to worry about the small businessman. It's about time. On November 3 the small businessman registered his worries in a way that can only make trouble for everybody. Last week Lou Holland, head of the Smaller War Plants Corp. and deputy chairman of the War Production Board, was fried over a slow fire by the Small Business Committees of the Senate and House. They wanted to know why after six months so little had been accomplished in the way of utilizing the facilities of little business for war production. Of 2,200 distressed small firms which the SWPC has on file, only 234 have received contracts. Of \$150,000,000 appropriated to help small business, only \$2,000,000 has actually been loaned. Lacking representation in the Procurement Policy Division of the WPB and on the administration of the Controlled Materials Plan, the SWPC has no machinery for assuring either contracts or raw materials to smaller manufacturers.

In a letter to Sen. James E. Murray, chairman of the Senate Small Business Committee, Donald Nelson discusses the wholesaler and retailer. In view of the curtailment of consumers' goods and the consequent elimination of many stores, Nelson raises the question "whether such elimination should take place through the natural operations of the competitive system or whether varying degrees of governmental guidance should be undertaken in connection with the preservation of units necessary to place products into consumers' hands."

It is clear that on this, as on most other questions, the WPB, instead of making policy, is acting as a sort of pressure gauge registering the relationship of forces between the business-as-usual elements and those urging centralized, planned administration of our war economy. But Nelson's letter shows that he is beginning to think, though still too hesitantly, along the lines of such centralized direction and control.

The solution of the problem of the small manufacturer is relatively simple. Extensive subcontracting, the planned allocation of materials, and, wherever necessary, the pooling of facilities, will do the trick. As for the retailer, we refer you to the article by Frank Wallace on page 16 which, as far as we know, presents the first constructive proposals in this field.

Script by Jeff Davis

M-G-M's *Tennessee Johnson* was originally titled *The Man on America's Conscience*. If this picture is distributed, despite the protests of people who respect our history, it will go down in the records

as "The Film on America's Conscience." For it is a crude monstrosity that glorifies the treason of Jefferson Davis, defies Andrew Johnson's betrayal of the Union cause, vilifies the sturdy liberator Thaddeus Stevens, and insults the Negro people. There were no stormtroopers at the preview, but their degraded spirits were applauding. Here was an outright apology for slavery. Here was freedom gagged, betrayed, kicked into the vilest corner of a concentration camp. Here, in the midst of a war for national survival, was an enemy bomb timed to smash national unity.

Tennessee Johnson does for Thaddeus Stevens what *Santa Fe Trail* did for John Brown and what *Oliver Wiswell* did for Sam Adams. These ugly distortions, bad enough in peacetime, are even more sinister in time of war. They are particularly sinister when, like *Gone with the Wind*, they celebrate the "white supremacy" dogmas of Tom Connally and Alabama's Governor Dixon. The Office of War Information has recognized this by frowning on revivals of the infamous *Birth of a Nation*. Patriotic Americans should insist on writing to Elmer Davis of the OWI in Washington that *Tennessee Johnson* is equally disruptive of decency and morale.

To the *Daily Worker* and its film critic, David Platt, a vote of thanks is due for their enterprise in exposing this outrage. Their patriotic campaign against *Tennessee Johnson* has called attention to an evil that we must all join in resisting.

Doctor Boas—Trail-Blazer

AS WE go to press, we learn with sorrow of the death of one of the greatest Americans of our time, Dr. Franz Boas. Dr. Boas was one of the commanding world figures in anthropology whose work was a shining monument to that democratic culture which nurtured him and a challenge to the obscurantism and racism which reached its foul fruition in Nazism. An immigrant and a Jew, he became a symbol of the best traditions of Americanism. Long before the rise of the Nazis, Dr. Boas set about disproving the doctrine of racial purity and racial supremacy. He profoundly influenced all later work in this field by showing that there are no important biological or mental differences among races, and that the "backwardness" of certain races is due to historical and environmental factors. Dr. Boas also made major contributions in the study of the culture and language of the North American Indians.

With the triumph of Hitler in Germany, there began a new phase in Dr. Boas' development. The man of science became a man of public affairs, an active supporter of republican Spain, a warm friend of the Soviet Union, an advocate of the freedom of Earl Browder, founder and head of the

American Committee for Democracy and Intellectual Freedom. Needless to say, his heart and soul were in the war against the Axis and he looked forward with faith and hope to its victorious outcome. In a later issue, *NEW MASSES* will publish an estimate of this illustrious citizen of America and of the free world.

Sidelights at Home

THE curtain rang down on the 77th Congress last week. Senator Barkley, the majority leader, called it "one of the outstanding Congresses in the history of the United States." It was certainly outstanding for obstructionism and the degree to which patriotism was lost in the shuffle of politics-as-usual. Among unfinished business which must start all over the long trek toward enactment are the Anti-Poll Tax Bill and the third War Powers Bill. The new Congress opens January 6.

Plus: Ham Fish's resignation (evidently by request of the Republican high command) from the House Foreign Affairs Committee—the only act of patriotism he was guilty of in his twenty years in Congress. . . . Minus: The executive order giving the Dies committee authority to examine income tax returns and other tax data in the possession of the Treasury Department. The committee is preparing its annual holdup of Congress, having spent for the usual subversive purposes the \$110,000 it mulcted out of Congress last year.

WHAT's this we read in the War Production Board's report on the first year of war: that we are now entering the phase of "all-out mobilization and centralized direction" of our economy? Looks like a plug for the Tolan-Kilgore-Pepper Bill.

Despite the excellence of so much of its work, the War Labor Board is fast becoming a bottleneck in war production. The executive boards of two major CIO unions, the United Auto Workers, and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers, last week criticized the long delays in rendering decisions. The International Association of Machinists (AFL) registered the same kick. The UE adopted a seven-point program for streamlining the functioning of the WLB.

Sentenced to hang last Friday on the familiar "rape" charge, William Wellman, Negro laborer, was granted a sixty-day reprieve by Gov. J. M. Broughton of North Carolina in response to thousands of protests. Wellman was actually working on a government construction job 400 miles away at the time of the alleged crime.



GUEST EDITORIAL

by **ALBERT DEUTSCH**



Albert Deutsch is a New York newspaperman whose column on health problems has evoked national attention. He is the author of "The Mentally Ill in America: The History of Their Care and Treatment" and co-author with David M. Schneider of "The History of Public Welfare in New York State." In the following editorial Mr. Deutsch continues the discussion of Surgeon General Parran's recent article in NEW MASSES. Last week we published the statements sent us by John A. Kingsbury and Ray Lyman Wilbur, chancellor of Stanford University, California. Others will appear in subsequent issues.

SURGEON GENERAL PARRAN succinctly stated the main problems of wartime medical care in his paper published in NEW MASSES December 1.

The growing doctor-shortage, as Dr. Parran points out, is only part of the over-all problem of preserving civilian health in wartime. Dentists, nurses, and other elements of medical manpower must be considered. So must the conservation of medical equipment and supplies. The people's health, in great measure, depends on how quickly this over-all problem is handled satisfactorily on a national scale. It won't be solved on a business-as-usual basis. Yet, a full year after Pearl Harbor, organized medicine still insists that it be handled on just such a basis.

For one year the Procurement and Assignment Service (PAS), the federal agency set up to ration doctors for civilian and military needs, has been handling it on that basis. The PAS, let it be said, was inspired by the American Medical Association, and has been dominated by represen-

THE HEALTH DEBATE

tatives of organized medicine since its creation in November 1941.

Dr. Parran, in his article, quotes Mr. Channing Dooley of the War Manpower Commission as follows: "When you have a tough problem to solve, break it up into a lot of little problems and then solve them one by one."

I cannot agree that this sentiment is applicable to the present crisis in wartime medical care. As a matter of fact, I believe this is precisely the approach that's prevented equitable distribution of our medical manpower and facilities thus far. What's needed right now is to see the problem of medical care *whole* and to tackle it that way, instead of breaking it up into disparate segments.

THE PAS messed up its task mainly because it tried to segment it. President Roosevelt's executive order creating the agency clearly gave it the responsibility of supervising the procurement and assignment of doctors so that an equitable balance would be maintained between military and civilian supply. The PAS interpreted its task as first procuring doctors for the armed forces, and then looking after civilian medical needs. It accepted without question the Army's own estimates of the number of medical men it needed. No effort was made to learn from the experience of our Allies who, it turned out, have done well with a far less proportion of military doctors. The PAS accepted the Army's arbitrary estimate, based on the ideal theory of an illimitable supply of physicians, and procured all the doctors it asked for.

The expert testimony produced at the Pepper Senate subcommittee's hearings on medical manpower has shown pretty conclusively that the Army's estimate of its doctor needs was too high, and that it has dangerously overdrawn on the general medical manpower pool. By the time the PAS was awakened to that fact by the outcries of health experts, grave doctor shortages had already cropped up in over 300 war-boom areas where health protection was most vital to the war effort.

The lopsided distribution of doctors that had existed before the war was allowed by PAS to become even more unequal during the war emergency. The PAS excuse that it had no power to check this maldistribution is feeble; it knew what the situation was and it remained silent when it was PAS' patent duty to at least call public

attention to the unhealthy trend. So when PAS finally got around to thinking of civilian medical needs, it found itself already faced with grave dislocations caused by its shortsighted procurement policy. It had tried to solve, "one by one," problems which were really integrated and inseparable.

Turning to the civilian field, the national PAS adopted the policy of "local responsibility" for solving doctor shortages. It left to the PAS in each state the question of meeting doctor shortages in its own borders, and to each local PAS the decision as to whether it needed more doctors.

The policy of PAS is readily understandable. Its directorship is dominated by representatives of organized medicine. Organized medicine has always exhibited a phobia against "federal control" and "government medicine." It has a morbid fear of centralizing authority in any national agency in the matter of medical care. Hence the insistence on "local responsibility," war or no war. Result: the many examples of acute doctor-shortages in war industry areas presented by Dr. Parran remain unsolved to this day. Scores of others might be mentioned. There is the classic case of Middle River, near Baltimore, where 35,000 Glenn Martin bomber plant workers and their families are deprived of adequate medical care because the six doctors of the area, in their capacity as a committee of the Baltimore County Medical Society, have successfully blocked Uncle Sam's efforts to bring medical men and medical facilities to the place. They are making plenty of money, and they don't want outside competition or "government medicine."

Medical care is essentially a national problem. It must be tackled on a national basis by an over-all national agency, empowered to distribute available medical personnel and facilities to the best advantage of both the military and civilian population. It can't be solved in segmented parts, or on a local basis.

The medical needs of the military services have the first priority. But those needs must be met intelligently, with due regard to the limits of existing medical resources. It is crazy to recruit trained obstetricians and pediatricians for army service, where their special skills are wasted—as has happened in many cases—while pregnant women and sick children suffer for lack of special care. It is no less foolhardy to send industrial doctors into military service,