

# CATHOLIC WORKER

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## Singer Strike

By DAVID MASON

Seven thousand workers are rebelling against the speedup system in the Singer Sewing Machine Company's plant in Elizabeth, N. J. They have been on strike for more than five months, since last May 2nd, and the admirable organization and conduct of their long and bitter struggle is an example of solidarity, co-operation and self-help which merits the close attention of all labor organizations and everyone who has the interests of labor at heart.

There are other important issues in this strike, but the speedup controversy has far-reaching and vital significance. The union, Local 401, United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, CIO, says that the "Standards" system is a modern speedup method used by the company to get more production out of the workers for less money. It means that workers will eventually work themselves out of a job. It was installed by an industrial engineer, one of the many "experts" who make a fat living showing corporations how they can sweat more production and profits out of their workers for less cost.

### Their Lives Are at Stake

The workers insist that their whole working future is at stake in the Standards controversy. Their seniority and job security, their wages, pensions, health and other important factors can all be determined by the operation of this speedup system. "Let's see how," they say:

"Seniority and job security crumble as the speedup eliminates jobs throughout the plant and threatens mass layoffs. A

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## Education

By IRENE NAUGHTON

There is a well-known French mathematician, Marcel Legault, who said in an interview recently: "The circle of abstract ideas are crimes committed against life." To him his many years of education had somehow missed the mark, and he became a farmer, to find in manual labor a deepening of life. What did he mean by that remark? The circle of abstract ideas are crimes committed against life. Murder or mutilation of life, or theft of it? This article is an attempt to explain what such a remark means to me.

### Through the Senses

The theory of cognition, according to St. Thomas, is: "Nothing is in the mind that is not first in the senses." I do not understand how the philosophy of Aquinas, or any abstract knowledge, can have any real value to students who do not live a rich sense life of their own, so that in a way, they should go through the same process of abstraction from their own sense experience as these great thinkers, and thus philosophy might continue to be creative. Too often, for most of us, it is something to be memorized and taught, and is made sterile in so far as life is concerned.

There is another kind of abstraction to which we are subject in

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## Mott Street

The director of the James settlement playground, which is directly across the street from us, paid us a visit. This young man, he is in his late twenties which seems young to me now, spoke of the regrettable daily incident of our soup line standing alongside one section of a wire fence which encloses his playground. These men are in plain view of the children playing in the yard. He attempted to lend an air of cheer with a steady smile as he described the sordid appearance of our men and the harmful effect it would produce upon the children who frequented the playground. Wouldn't we please discover another place for these unsightly people to congregate while waiting for our soup to be served? The young man was friendly enough and we wanted to cooperate even though we disagreed completely with the reasons that he advanced for his request. However he was quite unimpressed and a quick shadow of pain crossed his face when we attempted to stress the unimportance of clothes fashion among men. His own apparel had quite a studied fastidiousness about it. Then he went on stating that he was fully aware of the good work we were doing on our side of the street. Throughout this painful visit we were as equally civil and cheerful as our visitor as we promised to try and find another location for our poor to queue up for their soup and bread. We

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SAINT FRANCIS sweeps a church

For an individual man to lead a good life two things are required. The first and most important is to act in a virtuous manner (for virtue is that by which one lives well); the second, which is secondary and as it were instrumental, is a sufficiency of those bodily goods whose use is necessary for an act of virtue.

St. Thomas Aquinas.

## On Pilgrimage

The Little Flower said: "I should not be happy in heaven if I was not able to provide little pleasures on earth for those I love. . . . I shall spend my heaven doing good upon earth." I like these quotations. Either the Little Flower is looked upon (perhaps because of her nickname) with sentimentality, or, as one gets to know her better, with dread. On that frail battleground of her flesh was fought the wars of today. When she died her bones were piercing her body and she died in an agony of both flesh and spirit. She was tempted against faith and said that for the last years of her life she forced herself to believe with her indomitable will while a mocking voice cried in her ears that there was neither heaven nor hell, and she was flinging away her life for nothing. To her God was a consuming flame. "It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God," St. Peter said with exultation. We have to pay a great and terrible price but "underneath are the everlasting arms." Thank God for the saints whose feast days come around and remind us that we too are called to be saints.

### Gratitude

St. Teresa of Avila said once that she was of so grateful a nature that she could be bought with a sardine. And St. Augustine said, "Woe to that person who had not gratitude." So we always like to thank our friends and benefactors publicly as well as by letter when they help and come to our rescue and cheer us on the way. We are

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## Seamen Convene

By JOHN McKEON

Boredom hung like a fog over the convention, as palpable as the cloud of tobacco smoke rising from the delegate crowded tables on the floor of the old St. Nick's Fight Arena, here in New York. Day after day the 7th biennial convention of the National Maritime Union had droned on through a welter of dry facts, statistics, reports from various committees: the brother who submitted the minority report on the contested election of a delegate from the Marine Flasher, the report on the financial status of the union newspaper "The Pilot," reports on reports, questioned credentials, union literature, the reading of the new union contract.

Through all of it the delegates, beaten down by a combination of rhetoric and poor ventilation, dozed, gossiped, flipped idly through magazines, newspapers and pamphlets, or ambled idly to the rear of the arena to patronize the temporary bar or the excellent buffet lunch for a quiet beer or sandwich.

In vain the union whips pleaded, shouted and exhorted the wayward delegates to break up the meetings at the rear of the hall; only the hard, sardonic voice of the union president, Joe Curran, calling on the masters-at-arms to shepherd the delegates back to their tables, recalled them to their duties.

Day after day the only group of delegates who took any demonstrable interest in the proceedings were the communists, the one tightly knit and politically aware group, who fought a brilliant and inspired delaying action, using

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## POVERTY'S PROGRESS

### The Victim Soul

He sat loosely, half sprawled in the darkened doorway of the Catholic Worker and the sight of his ravaged face with the cheeks gray as lard and the sweat gleaming on them could have been spelt anguish, but his voice was mocking when he spoke, for all the quality of pain implicit in it. "You think I'm drunk." He made the words declarative with no hint of question in them, removing the last soggy inch of butt from his mouth and flinging it from him in the direction of the gutter with a motion as stiff as a doll's. "Or nuts."

Looking at him in the uncertain light of the street lamp he might have been either or both and starved to boot but the night was far spent and all the beds taken, leaving nothing but cigarettes to be offered and, hardest charity of all, the willingness to be bored by listening helplessly, incapable of aid, to a repetition of the oldest story in history; the composite story, the one with the interchangeable parts that fit any time and any clime but that always bears the same title. The one that's called "Human Misery," or "The Way It Happened to Me Was—" only this time the parts didn't slip into the timeworn grooves and the tale had a new twist. New to us at least and this was the way it developed:

As a young man (and even yet he couldn't be called old) he had been a high tension wire worker, one of the select and curious aristocracy of workers born of the in-

dustrial revolution. The ones removed by their various trades from their kind, abstracted from life, who are on intimate terms with Death, meeting him face to face every day of their working lives as casually and as closely as a fellow passenger in a subway rush hour—in the driver's seat of a truck carrying high explosives, in the cockpit of a plane in a power test dive, in a diver's suit walking on the murky bottom of the ocean floor or leaning back and outward, straining against the slender safety belt atop the tall steel flowers of the power stations, casually mending the broken, spitting wires that are death to touch with the naked hand. The true mercenaries of industry, risking their lives for a bonus, the few extra dollars and who yet take pride in their work; the poor insurance risks who become lonely and withdrawn, are in time so detached from life that alcohol becomes a necessary midwife to emotional expression, and of whom it can truly be said that sudden death is the occupational disease of their given trade.

Like most of his kind he had been innocent of formal religious beliefs or practices, living in a world of exact and exacting natural order relationships: the given job, the given danger, the given relaxation, the given moment, without past or future—the timeless world of the immediate and yet with an intense and melancholy awareness of the transience of things human; the deep and unspoken knowledge that man and

man's desires are but aspirant dust blown by winds immeasurably and forever beyond the power of his control.

He had worked winters in the Rocky Mountains, part of the emergency crews that repair power lines broken by the sudden fierce blizzards and who, in the spring, return to San Francisco or Los Angeles to squander their back pay in one long Homeric splurge and it had been on one of those returns that a fellow worker, a Catholic, had taken him to an Easter Sunday Mass in a church in Los Angeles. He grinned as he told about it, flattening his lips against toothless gums.

"I was young and stupid," he said, "and it was the first church I had ever been in. We were fresh out of the mountains with seven hundred bucks in back pay and I was still wearing my safety belt and shackles. I remember tossing them in the vestibule of the church before I went in." He stopped, dragging deep on the cigarette and exhaling slowly. "There were all those candles and the vestments and the priest making funny motions and speaking some kind of language. I couldn't figure what was going on, but I had a hunch it was important. Anyhow everybody acted like it was important. It was better than a play." He grinned mirthlessly again. "When I left I wanted to go back and give the priest ten bucks because I enjoyed it so much but the guy I was with had more

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## Pacifism

By ROBERT LUDLOW

In the Blackfriars publication LIFE OF THE SPIRIT for September, 1949, Father Victor White O.P. has an article on The Morality of War the import of which is to decry Catholic pacifism. He begins the article by quoting Christ's prophecy that "You shall hear of wars, and rumors of wars. See that you be not troubled. For these things must come to pass, etc." Now the implication that Father White gives, and that most everyone gives who quotes this passage is that since Christ foretold there would be war it comes therefore with the sanction of God and we have no right to oppose it—at least we should not say that all war is wrong. If the arguments against pacifism were no more weighty than this pacifists would indeed have an easy time in any debate on the subject. For a perusal of the New Testament shows that Christ also foretold that scandals would take place. And surely war among the members of Christ's Mystical Body is a great scandal. He says "Woe to the world because of scandals. For it needs must be that scandals come: but nevertheless woe to that man by whom the scandal cometh." St. Matthew 18:7. And then in Matthew 13, 41 He says "The Son of man shall send his angels: and they

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## APPEAL

Feast of the Little Flower  
1949

Dear Fellow Workers in Christ:

We live in a slum, but there are many banks around us, over on the Bowery and west on Broadway. They look like temples and they are bigger than our churches down here. There are two over on Grand Street where the L station is, and I was meditating about them the other day. They fittingly look like temples, I thought, since enshrined in them is money (which is a symbol of man's body and blood, his toll, basically speaking), which the high priests of finance take and multiply. "You can't serve God and money," our Lord said, but he also talked of the holiness of money when he talked of the widow's mite which she generously gave. When we send out this appeal, spring and fall, we also feel, when we see the answers come in, the holiness of money, looked on in this sense. It means someone's sweat and penance, and co-creatorship. It is terribly important, and we do not regard it lightly. It is sent us to serve the poor, to feed the hungry, to shelter the harborless, to clothe the naked, to visit the sick, to bury the dead, to ransom the captive. And we feel our obligation to work hard to administer this trust, and to earn our bread and board. God help us if we do not. We beg your prayers for ourselves personally, as well as money to help go on with the work.

To help the poor! This is a great and terrible work. It is through the poor that we achieve our salvation; Jesus Christ Himself has said it in His picture of the last judgment. It is through the poor that we can exercise faith and learn to love Him. It is a great relief to read the lives of such saints as St. Vincent de Paul when doing work of this kind. A recent article said that he had contact with refugees, convicts, thieves, assassins and bandits, as well as with professional beggars, swindlers, prostitutes. "He saw quite clearly, and sometimes said, that many of these poor people were filthy, physically repulsive and suffering from loathsome diseases, that they were dishonest, drunken, hypocritical and ungrateful, but to use his own phrase, that is one side of the medal; turn it, and with the eyes of faith you see that each is stamped with the image of God and is a brother of Jesus Christ." "The poor are your masters," he said, "and thank God that you are allowed to serve them." There is no limit to how Christ loved them. He died for them. We have been unusually surrounded by sin, sickness and death, these last six months, so we need a St. Vincent de Paul to encourage us, give us perspective and perseverance. The more we can look at the good side of the coin, the better off we are ourselves, finding Christ in others. Our faith will grow through such an exercise of love.

Last night we heard Father Lombardi at the Cathedral, and though the vast place was filled, there was no collection taken up. His message was the Gospel one. "We need to be more good," he said simply. "We need to be saints," and to do that, he pointed out, we need to work for a better life for the poor here and now. "To make," as Peter Maurin said, "a society where it is easier for men to be good." We beg your help to pay the bills for our breadline, which is getting longer, and for St. Joseph's House of Hospitality, which is always full.

Gratefully in Christ,  
THE EDITORS.

## You That Pass

Oh, you that pass me by upon the road  
With face averted and with eye askance,  
And ears stopped up complacently:  
You reassure yourself that here I lie  
Through fault of mine.  
My Friend, you cannot know the chill  
Of wounds grown cold, the agony of one  
Who faces death alone and comfortless.

I do not ask that you should carry me  
Up to the inn; or that you extend yourself  
For my amending; I would not have you oil  
My wounds with hands that shake  
Through fear of my contagion; you need  
Not dip the water from the ditch to wash my face  
Or bathe my aching throat and eyes.

I have become inured to these!  
But could you tarry one short while  
That I might sense the warmth of sympathy,  
The comfort of community and the feel  
That though your flesh does shrink from me,  
You would not leave me quite alone,  
Not utterly alone and comfortless.  
Just stand across the road the while you say  
"Hail, brother!" and I shall bless you everlastingly.

# POVERTY'S PROGRESS

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sense and told me to stick it in the poor box. After that I went off and on and then regular and a couple of years later I took instructions and joined the Faith."

"That was how it began," he said, "and it was like God was testing me. I was young then and had plenty of heart. Plenty. I was built like a young bull. Even yet," he said, thrusting forward his arm and rolling up the sleeve of his denim shirt, displaying the still full swell of deltoid and biceps among the wasted sinews. "I really had it then," he said, not in anxiety that he would not be believed, but in a kind of reminiscent wonder, as though contemplating a past miracle he was not aware of at the very instant of its happening.

"In '32 I was working on the Jersey Flats for the New Jersey Power & Light and one night that winter one of those tri-motored passenger planes crashed into a power line tower and the power failed all over Hoboken and up to Jersey City. They called us out on emergency and when we got there the plane was crumpled on the ground with the lines wrapped around it like spaghetti and the passengers inside frying like strips of breakfast bacon.

"There were sixty-four linemen standing around that tower and when the foreman asked for volunteers there wasn't anybody who'd go up it in the rain while it was still shot hot. You know what that means, shot hot? That tower was a hundred feet high and just like an electric chair every inch of the way to the top. One hundred and thirty-two thousand volts and if you slipped and any part of it touched you going up or while you were working up on top, brother, you were done. And that repair job would take an hour. They paid us high for those jobs but there wasn't anybody who was having any."

His eyes glittered as he spoke, recreating that night seventeen years ago on the rain swept flats from the tableau frozen forever in his mind: the crumpled plane, the dead passengers in the wreckage, the newsreel men, the silent group of linemen, the tall stalk of the tower looming overhead and the blue flames at the ends of the broken wires, spitting like cobras in the darkness.

"It was like a test," he said. "Like God was testing me to see whether I had heart enough or courage enough. There were sixty-three other guys but it was like I knew I was the one He wanted;—so I got out in front and said O. K. I'll go up and it was like in a church, no one said anything. They all thought I was nuts. I stripped to the waist and brother, it was cold, that rain was turning to sleet but I had to strip, I didn't have a prayer if my jacket was to touch that tower and I tied the legs of my pants with twine to make them as skintight as I could because the only part of me that could touch had to be in rubber, my shoes and my hands, that's all. I was praying, man, hard, when I started up and I was praying all the way and every minute until the job was over and it was ninety minutes by the clock when I got down but I did the job. They wanted to give me a bonus for doing it but there wasn't enough money in the world to pay me for going up there and it wasn't for money I did it."

He sank back as though exhausted in the doorway and for a time we were both silent, each with our thoughts. The rumble of a heavy truck sounded faintly from the direction of Canal Street and then died away in the direction of Brooklyn Bridge. The night was quiet with a faint, scarcely perceptible twinge of autumn to the air. The summer was dying, the fiestas over, the barrows of the street vendors along Mott and Mulberry selling broiled sausage, shrimp and pork were gone, along with the stands of the pizza mer-

chants, the mounds of popcorn and fresh roasted peanuts. The fierce, choking heat of a Bowery summer had disappeared. Overhead the equinoctial moon shone with all the inherent duplicity of a pawnbroker's smile, giving simultaneously the appearance of warmth and the effect of coldness and beneath its chill effulgence the city was like a pressed flower that held the form of summer hostage for the fled fragrance.

The man in the doorway straightened and leaned forward. "March the first Ash Wednesday Holy Year Nineteen Hundred and Thirty-three," he said, threading the words together glibly and easily like a set and often delivered speech. "That's when I got it," he said, smiling in explanation. Got what, we asked. He hesitated for a moment, nerving himself for what he was about to say. We waited quietly. "When I got the privilege, when I asked . . ." he stumbled and then recovered. "When I got the privilege of Carrying the Cross." He spoke quickly now, not looking up, the words coming in a flat rapid monotone. "I was a convert and I was eager. It seemed like I couldn't do enough or get enough of the Faith. It was like I had to make up for all the time I had wasted and so I offered myself to take some of the suffering."

And so your offer was taken, we said. "Yes," he said belligerently. We shrugged, covering the awkwardness by offering a cigarette. After all, admitting the supernatural, one can judge only the improbable, since the impossible is excluded. Or is it that we have an instinctive aversion to the martyr who lets it be known that he is a martyr and who is not a religious? We are children of our time and St. Benedict Joseph Labre has been safely dead a hundred years and more. We no longer quite believe that sanctity and ragged strangers are possible traveling companions, finding it easier to associate sanctity with the cloister than with Skid Row.

We looked at him closely, but there was nothing to differentiate him from hundreds, thousands, of others who pass through the coffee line at the CW. Could it actually be true and not a paranoiac delusion, an outraged rationalization of personal failure? That in the century of penicillin and atomic energy a man could be chosen to help carry the Cross? Curiosity pressed a hundred questions but charity forebore. Besides, in the event that it were true it would be discourteous to question a saint closely about his personal relationship with God. Either he would tell or he would not.

"Someone has to make up the difference," he was saying, his voice rising. "How many meals do we offer up to God for the starving children of Europe, China, the world? How many personal sacrifices for the conversion of Russia? How much of our wealth do we pour out to help the people of India? The ones who die like flies from hunger and disease? I was in India once for two years, drilling artesian wells for the English two hundred miles outside of Calcutta. Two years is all any white man can stand it. You know how it is out there? I could sit here all night and every night for a week and I couldn't get you to see it. I've seen children born in less decency and comfort than an alley cat in America. They're born hungry, live hungry and die hungry, in misery, filth and despair. You wouldn't treat a homeless dog the way those people are treated. You can't call them people; they're animals and yet they're human souls, children made in the image of God and how many of us pray for them, work for them, sacrifice for them?"

He continued speaking of India, drawing a picture of superstition, filth, parching heat, snake ridden huts, the natives of the back country villages who could not bathe because never in their lives had they seen more water at one time

than would fill a calabash water bottle, who look on cobras as sacred, refusing to kill them, and who have the highest infant mortality rate in the world.

"We used to move from one village to the next, drilling the wells, and when we got the pump in the natives would huddle around in a mob, not believing what was going to happen, even though they had been told, and when I turned that valve I felt like Moses striking the rock. You couldn't quiet them down for two weeks; they used to live under the open valve like June bugs in a sink—the whole village, bowing down, worshipping the fact that they had water enough for all to drink, to take a bath in, to irrigate those miserable little things they called a garden, and afterward when you passed in the street they'd bow down in the dirt before you in thanks. And how many of us worry about them in this country and sacrifice a meal for them? Sure, we all have worries of our own and they all add up to trying to latch on to an easier life for ourselves. To have it easy, soft, no responsibilities.

"I was young, and strong and I had a heart, and I wanted to do something, so I offered myself. Now I'm not young and my left shoulder and arm and side are crippled up with pain and I can hardly eat solid food, but I'm not quitting the job that was given me. Someone has to make up for the selfishness, the not caring because I'll tell you something . . ." He heaved himself erect stiffly and flexed his arms wearily. "It'll be a rough day when no one offers himself anymore."

We stood up, silent. There was nothing to say to him. A problem of such heroic stature, self-imposed or otherwise, demanded at least the tribute of silence. He stood looking at us for a moment and then flipped a hand in farewell and started walking down the street toward Chinatown: a small man, bent and twisted by what might have been arthritis, and, watching him, as he disappeared into the darkness a phrase that he had spoken earlier crossed our minds: "You ask, you ask and yet when God gives what you asked it's not what you wanted when you asked for it." Perhaps he was right. Asking a favor of God is like unwinding a spool of thread: there is always so much more to it than we imagined and the heart of the spool is hidden from our sight until the very end. Safer to ask for nothing and to accept and return thanks for what is given, knowing that the God of the Beneficent Act, beneficent in human terms, is also the God of Thunder and of Holocaust, who gathers His Creations to Him with sweeping gestures in wars, plagues, famines and earthquakes and Who is a Name not lightly invoked.

JOHN McKEON.

## Christmas Cards

12 cards	1.00
25 "	2.00
50 "	3.50
100 "	6.50

Envelopes included

Hand Made Sterling

Silver Rosaries

Black Beads . . .	3.50
Pearl Beads . . .	4.50
Crystal Beads . .	4.50

(in gift box)

WM. & DOROTHY GAUCHAT

Our Lady of the Wayside Farm  
Avon, Ohio



## On Pilgrimage

(Continued from page 1)

sending out our appeal this month as we usually do in the month of October (a great month for saints) and right now I want to thank them for the help they are going to give as well as for the help they have given us in answer to the appeal which I put in this column last month. Then I mentioned the fact that Peter's funeral bill had not been paid and four people sent in donations for that specifically, three for ten and one for a hundred dollars. The one who sent in a hundred dollars said that she was praying to Peter for a particular favor and she wanted to thank him beforehand for his intercession for her.

### On Funerals

And here I want to talk about something which it might have been more fitting to talk about in November, the month of the dead. However, I must, answer the shocked attitudes of some of our friends when they learned that Peter's funeral had cost so much. They are poor people themselves and when they wrote, they said that they could not understand how Peter, a poor man, should have had so expensive a funeral, that he would not have wanted it. Indeed, we did not want it either. But we beg our friends to understand if they have not been facing the same circumstances themselves, they will at some time in the future. If we write about this now, maybe our readers will meditate and pray about it, during the month of November, and write into their wills directions as to how they wish to be buried, so that their friends and relatives will not be faced with the same situation we were.

The undertakers, morticians, as they euphemistically call themselves, know that people are not in the humor for a fight, for contention, for opposing them when some one dear to them lies dead and waiting for burial. Catholics especially, with their reverence for the body, wish to do it fitting honor to the last. They wish to show that they love the body which served the soul of the departed one. Eventually, as we say in the creed, there will be a resurrection of the body. So when the undertaker comes around, the bereaved are in the helpless position, of putting themselves in his hands, and taking his advice.

What we said we wanted was as simple a casket as possible. Whereupon, the only simple casket they had to show us was one for \$190. Without our knowledge or desire, they added to this a fifty dollar white pine box, into which the coffin was placed before it was laid in the grave. A totally unnecessary extra. We knew enough to refuse the customary artificial green grass lining for the grave (which came to twenty dollars extra when my mother was buried five years ago). I suppose the price has been raised since like everything else. The New York representative of the firm of John W. Walsh of Newburgh, which was taking care of the funeral, tried to persuade us to have the grass to cover up the "unsightly earth," the fresh-dug earth, the good earth which Christ made sacred by his humanity! We knew enough to forbid cosmetics, but it was hard to see Peter lying there, in shirt and tie and pressed suit, he who had gone rumpled and untidy and unconscious of his garments during life.

Here is the itemized account of the funeral: Embalming, \$35; casket, \$190; outside box, \$50; personal service (Newburgh), \$25; removal to New York City, \$50; suit, \$12.

For the New York services and "equipment" which consisted of one stand for the coffin when Peter was laid out in the office, \$147. Opening the grave, \$40. Hearse to the cemetery and three limousines,

\$80; death notice in the paper, \$3. The total is \$632.

### Exploiting Grief

When I asked for our own pall bearers, the New York representative tried to terrify us by hinting at disastrous occurrences at the recent funeral of a fireman, when the relatives insisted on having their own pall bearers. Monsignor Ligutti never ceases to protest and cry out against the practice of hiring pall bearers to carry the dear body into the Church, and afterwards out to the grave.

I have protested this bill, but the undertaker makes no effort to lessen the price, stating indignantly that this is the price he charges the priests, Brothers and Sisters in the various Catholic institutions in the neighborhood, and that the extra amount was because Peter had to be taken from Newburgh to New York. He sees no place where the bill can be cut, and refuses to concede that undertakers have one at their mercy when by law it is necessary to call them in.

By law one is forced to be embalmed. That costs \$35 according to Mr. Walsh. But there is no law enforcing the heavy fancy-lined casket, unless the undertakers have forced such a law on the books for their own profit. One can have a decent pine box made and painted black, and as Ade de Bethune says, appropriate symbols painted on the box. We have heard of several people who have had their coffins made already and in readiness for them, as good old Irish women (I have heard) have their shroud ready and put away for the laying out. In Sigrid Undset's novels, the mother of the household before death left directions for the funeral feast and the accommodations of the guests. Death was not a subject to be avoided but to be provided for like a birth. And indeed it is a birth into eternal life and should be so regarded. We are living now in shadow, and the day will come when we will live in eternal brightness with "the desire of the everlasting hills." We should prepare for death with joy, as for our nuptials.

### Retreats and Meetings

Romano Guardini said that one's spiritual life must be continually deepened and one's understanding of the faith made fresh and vivid. According to a recent article in the Dublin Review his aim was to show how life in Christ could be achieved by realizing the faith in response to the needs and opportunities of our everyday occupations. The way he did it in the university was by lecturing about great Christians who in their efforts to realize it in themselves and their thought, could serve as models to the rest of us. One of his courses was the problem of religion in Dostoevsky's novels.

The first week in September we had Helene Isvolsky at the farm at Newburgh, giving a course on Dostoevsky, Tolstoy and Soloviev, the three great Russians.

"In a field where poison grows," she began her course, "you will find its antidote. The same soil produces both."

She spoke of Soloviev who told of the glories of the Incarnation, and is the link between the east and the west. She spoke of the three great men who emphasized the dignity of the human person.

"To love Russia," Berdyaev said, "is the way of the cross."

These three men wrote of the struggle of man towards God and to all of them the golden key which opened the doors of prisons and led out of darkness was the key of love. To listen to such talks is not only to learn more of Christ, but to learn to love the Russians who are truly Christ-bearers in their sufferings and poverty. The ruthlessness of the revolution, Helene Isvolsky said, was due to the degradation of the human person from which they have suffered for centuries.

We hope Miss Isvolsky will give us some more evenings this winter. Father Meenan's retreat was so

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made this half hearted promise with great misgivings since our line of men is growing larger each week as unemployment spreads throughout the land.

### Trial and Error

During the past few months we have mentioned the court trial of one of our workers, Joe, who was being tried for entering uninvited the private home of a stranger. Our friend Joe was intoxicated at the time. After seven months and six inexcusable postponements of the trial, Joe was finally informed by the judge that he would be set free upon the next week's visit to the courtroom. After all the complainant clearly indicated to the judge that she had no desire to prosecute since it was the Brooklyn police department that persuaded her to sign the complaint at the time of the incident even though no harm was done in her home by Joe. Besides the defendant's behavior had been excellent since the arrest according to her satisfaction and our's. Well to make a long story longer we appeared the following week and the case was postponed another week. Then we went before an-



other judge who sentenced Joe to ninety days ruling out completely the promise of the previous judge. To climax the turn in affairs this judge expressed much disgust with Joe and said he was a menace to society and at the same time lecturing our friend lawyer for wasting his time with such a case. Maybe there is a courtyard where a poor man without money or prestige can get a fair deal and still not be subjected to the whims or the moronic temperament of an incompetent judge, we certainly hope so.

### Infallibility

A few nights ago I sat in our dining room discussing the activities of our lay apostolate with a very earnest young Catholic married man from out of town. He spoke of their actions and interests and his part in the work. All in all, we were quite impressed with the zeal and fervor of that mid-west group. After an hour's conversation our friend turned to

inspiring that we are going to ask him to give us a course of lectures here at the Catholic Worker these coming months.

Another great evening of the month! Father Ricardo Lombardi of Italy spoke (after his Fordham meeting) at the Cathedral to a packed crowd who gathered at seven and sat until ten in spell-bound attention. He recounted the response of the people in Italy to the call for social justice and a rebirth of love between men, and he ended his simple discourse with the words, "we must have saints in every country. We must be more good." He reminded us of Peter Maurin.

DOROTHY DAY.

## Mott Street

me and asked my opinion of the Pope's decoration of William Randolph Hearst for "civic qualities, comprehension of spiritual values, and devotion to humanity." Our visitor was quite distressed by such an award to Hearst and frankly voiced his disapproval. Then he turned the sixty-four dollar question on me and asked if we intended to take up this issue in our paper. I replied that I too had a sickening sensation when I read about the decoration and at the time thought seriously of writing something about it but happily forgot about it. And with an uneasy smile I said to my visitor it would have been awfully nice if you had stayed home with your little group out west. "After all," as I said to my visitor, "you can't criticize the clergy without being labeled as anti-clerical. And no one will accept your criticism in the proper spirit. They won't believe that you consider the Church as your family and that you are attempting to make the members of that family a lot better than they are. Besides having a stake in that family and demanding that you be properly represented to those in the Church and outside of the Church. And the only way I could begin to explain this particular decoration of Hearst by the Pope is that he was ill-advised. Since I seriously don't believe that our Holy Father would issue such an award to Hearst if he were fully aware of the flagrant violations of Christian principles that Hearst journalism has been guilty of down through the years. All our lives we have taken great pain to clarify the infallibility of the Pope to those outside the Church and inside too. We say he is only infallible when he speaks ex cathedra—that is when in the exercise of his office as Shepherd and Teacher of all Christians, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church. Then we turn around and in mistaken loyalty to the Pope proceed to justify all his actions even though they be in error, thus contradicting our painful definition of infallibility and consequently making our Holy Father infallible in each and every action of his life. So we can point out to anyone that the act of issuing a decoration to Hearst was not ex cathedra but was an unintentional mistake on the part of our Holy Father, at the same time having a tremendous love and loyalty to His Holiness.

### Lectures

Our Wednesday night lectures have continued all during the summer and now that the week end vacationing is over for most of our interested members we are reverting to Friday nights for our lectures. Our first Friday night speaker will be Anne Fremantle of Commonweal, Oct. 14. During the past few weeks we have had Philip Burnham also of Commonweal; Father Murphy of Brooklyn spoke on Prayer; Father Meenan of Ferndale, Connecticut gave us a spiritual conference on Faith and Dorothy Day reviewed the collection of Peter Maurin's essays, "Catholic Radicalism." The talks were all well received and provoked great discussion. Again the subject Poverty was well worked over and once more we realized how far all of us were from a thorough comprehension of the subject. It is a topic that all of us can be very glib over and still completely misunderstand it. Thomas Merton (Father Louis) in his book "Seeds of Contemplation," has a trenchant comment on poverty, "It is easy enough to tell the poor to accept their poverty as God's will when you yourself have warm clothes and plenty of food and medical care and a roof over your head and no worry about the rent. But if you want them to believe you—try to share some of their poverty and see if you can accept it as God's will yourself."

The October issue of Today, a

Catholic student publication, carries a fine complementary article by Lois Schumacher on the Catholic Worker. At times the article is rather flattering but we loved every word of it. I guess we are as susceptible to flattery as the next one. But all the nicest things stated in the article are the very same remarks that we would write of Lois and the other volunteer workers that we have enjoyed working with during the past summer. Today magazine is the best Catholic student publication in circulation and we urge all our readers to subscribe, their address is 638 Deming Place, Chicago 14, Ill. By the way a former editor of Today, John Cogley, comes to town this week to join the editorial staff of Commonweal. John is also a former editor of the Chicago Catholic Worker which existed from 1938 to 1942. John possesses great writing talent and we are sure that he will be a definite asset to the pages of Commonweal.

### Farming

One beautiful weekend during the latter part of September several of us drove out to Sag Harbor, Long Island, to visit our friends the Whelan and Koncelik families who have moved out to that part of New York to start a farming commune. These two young couples with their four children have purchased a forty acre plot of land out there along the coast of Long Island opposite Shelter Island. They have rented a nearby house and are proceeding to clear the land in order to build houses and barns and also in order to begin to cultivate the land. Every acre of their land is covered with trees of all sizes and shapes, reminding me somewhat of the impenetrable jungle of Guadalcanal. We were all impressed with the scenic countryside and the nearby waters and were also properly impressed with the tremendous amount of work in the offing for these young friends of ours. As with most people that we have conversed with upon returning to the land we found that romanticism was singularly absent when they discussed ways and means of achieving their objectives.

### A & P

And now that the gigantic corporation of stores known as the A & P is on the brink of being annihilated by the government they have bowed down to placing ads on the windows of their stores for the benefit of their customers. The ads can be summed up in the tone in which they are written, "Haven't we always been good to you." There is no mention of the numerous small stores that have been forced out of business because of the A & P, nor do they tell the whole truth about the low wages and long hours that the A & P employees have been coerced to put up with since its existence. Here is hoping and praying that other mammoth monopolies like Walgreen Drug stores, Woolworth Dime stores plus many others receive their comeuppance.

### Race Issue

If you are ever in a mood for a good movie, most of them aren't worth the time or money, be sure and see the picture *Lost Boundaries*. It is a true story of a colored doctor, and his wife and family who passed for whites. The living hell that that poor family went through because they were colored should shame every one of us regardless of how remote is our part in perpetuating segregation or racial prejudice. One of the most paralyzing scenes in the picture is that of a white nurse smashing a bottle of blood donated to a blood bank simply because it was donated by a colored person. If you shed tears easily be well supplied with handkerchiefs before seeing this picture.

TOM SULLIVAN.



# Seamen's Union at the Crossroads

## Work

(Continued from page 1)

every trick in the bag to stop the Curran steamroller and sabotage the convention to a level of ineffectiveness, working for the time when individual delegates, bored to death with the everlasting squabbles that made no sense in terms of dollars and cents, would drop out, fail to attend meetings in numbers sufficient to give the comrades the edge.

### Votes

It was a technique that had served on countless occasions before, allowing a minute group, tireless and with Robert's Rules of Parliamentary Procedure committed to memory to chivy, harry, herd and control meetings of hundreds, even thousands of union members; as perfectly trained sheep dogs control a flock numbering thousands, effortlessly and with flawless discipline. One watched with admiration, even sympathy, as the bottomless bag of tricks was explored, all with the intention of delaying the meeting, adding to the expense, creating a stalemate. The hand votes on motions that were allowed to go through, then questioned, recounts demanded, charges of bribery and corruption proffered, the honesty of the masters at-arms who counted the votes impugned, until in exasperation the convention was forced to hire, at a hundred dollars a day, a Fair Ballot Practices Committee to count votes.

By all the rules the convention should have bogged down, only this time a switch had occurred. A switch whose name was Joe Curran. It is not stretching the truth to say that the communists made Joe Curran. They had trained him, backed him, fought for him ruthlessly, taught him every trick of the trade, built him up to a position of eminence only to have the tool break in their hand at the crucial moment.

Curran it was, with Robert's Rules committed to memory, who effortlessly and with heavy sarcasm, straightened out the tangled legal webs the comrades sought to weave around the convention, whose command of epithet and invective bespoke not only the school he had been trained in and the diligence of his teachers, but the mastery of his trade. Inversely the communists could, and perhaps did, feel pride in their former pupil, but it was this very fact that gave a special animus to their altercations, a sharper edge to the cut and parry of their engagements, that removed the convention to the realm of a private polemic between Joe Curran and The Communist Party, where the delegates were reduced to the status of bewildered spectators.

Watching from the gallery it was impossible not to recall the haunted cry of Macbeth, "Having taught poisoned instructions . . . we but commend the chalice to our own lips." But one thought with sadness also of the helplessness of the delegates without Joe Curran in the face of that blind fury of the communists rule or ruin policy, of their political torpor, ineptitude, their reduction of every problem to terms of immediate gain.

The lines of the essential tragedy of the convention were most clearly drawn at the end of the long afternoon on the day the motion was put on the floor to amend the union constitution to bar all communists from membership in the union. The chips were down and the battle lines clearly drawn to the average spectator—the fight between anti-communists and communists, between Christ and anti-Christ, between Americanism and the atheistic ideology of the foreign hordes, but a sad story was being played out behind the scenes to the initiated spectator.

Perhaps the most tragic figure to speak into the microphone that afternoon against the amendment, which carried with the necessary two thirds majority, was Charles Keith, ex-communist, militant union member, one of the group of N. M. U. men who go back

thirteen long years to the historic day in 1936 when Joe Curran's star rose and he emerged as a rank and file labor leader of genuine stature, inaugurator of the sit down strike and the future president of the most militant union of seamen in history.

### Keith

Keith stood wide legged before the microphone, a powerfully built young man, deep voiced, with a shock of black hair that fell across his forehead as he surveyed the suddenly hushed audience. When he began to speak there was utter silence in the hall.

"We, face a historic moment today," he said, "as citizens, men, and union members. What we are proposing to do is a denial of all we have ever fought for, ever believed in, ever aspired to. Freedom is not a divisible thing. Either one has it or one has not. Either one believes in it or one does not. One cannot deny it to another and hope to practice it long oneself. To deny it to another is to admit fear and weakness, not only to the world, in terms of political pragmatism, but to ourselves, down where we live, in terms of our principles, our essential manhood. If we do this thing today we are denying, whether we will it or no, the principles this country was founded on, that better men than us lived for, gave their blood for, died for when necessary. It is not a question of whether we hate what they (communists) stand for, their intolerance, character assassination, connivance, political viciousness. That is a purely negative approach. What counts is the positive aspect. Whether or not we believe enough in the principles of freedom that we give lip service to, to practice them in reality, in life, here in our union where it counts. If you deny a man the right to his bread and butter because of his skin, or religion, or political beliefs you are denying the principle of free growth, of life itself, and when you do that you are admitting your own fear of life, your lack of faith in the masses of people to choose wisely; you are becoming like the very people that you profess to despise for their actions. You can't shore up a rotten ship of state by becoming reactionary. The communists sprang from those very seeds of decay that we are now trying to make flower by our failure to practice what we preach. The answer to communism is not less freedom, but more freedom. And if we are so stupid as to be fearful of being overwhelmed by them ideologically it would be far better to nail what we believe in to the mast and go down with flags flying. That way at least we would have dignity in defeat, because, make no mistake, if we pass this amendment it will be a defeat, not a victory . . ."

One listened, gripped by a curious mixture of anguish and hatred, aware suddenly of the schizoid character of our times, where man is forced, out of principle, to affirm values implacably dedicated to his destruction.

In the silence that followed his speech Joe Curran's thick shouldered form strode forward to the microphone and when he spoke his voice was wearily patient. "You all know Charley Keith. He fought for the communists in Spain with the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Then he got thrown out by the comrades for insisting on that freedom of speech he's always talking about. He's a Trotskyite now. And what did the comrades do when they threw him out? The Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade sent a delegation to my office and demanded that he be expelled from the union as a Fascist, a rat, and a traitor to the working class and that he deserved to lose his job and starve like a dog. That's their exact words. The Communist Party sent a delegation to my office demanding that he be expelled forever to starve like a dog. And why? Because he differed with them and

believed in freedom of speech. They have no compunction about throwing anyone on the street to starve. And now Charley Keith gets up and defends them. He's a Trotskyite. They're the first people the comrades shot in Spain, whenever they came to power or had the power. They're the first people they'll shoot here if they ever get the chance. Now, I ask you, what kind of jerk would be on the side of people who are out to shoot him the first chance they get?"

Reduced to those terms the argument had irresistible appeal to the seamen delegates, than whom no tougher group of realists exists in the natural order, and derisive laughter exploded throughout the hall, evaporating the principles of Charley Keith like so much steam. Time after time the liberal element of the seamen came forward to the microphone, trying in vain to stem the tide of reaction, including that nameless seaman who said, "I haven't been to church in twenty years but I was taught in Catholic school by the nuns in Philadelphia, my home port, that we're supposed to give a break to people who don't believe like we do and I still think it's a good way to live . . ." and after he had finished Curran said sardonically, "Well, we all know about religion." Once again the derisive laughter rose, out of the bitter memories of the religion that is shoved down a seaman's throat with every spoonful of watery soup in the waterfront missions.

One thought sadly that Curran too is a Catholic, non-practicing, but a Catholic and how bitterly the Church must have failed him in his early struggles to better



both his lot and the lot of his fellow workers. One could meditate also on the fact that these are the only labor leaders of true stature that the Church has ever thrown up, and out, in America: the Currans, Bridges, Mooney's and McNamara's. By all the rules of the game they should have been the leaders of Catholic Action's Labor Section; they had the brains, drive, honesty, vitality, fervency, integrity, the quality of natural leadership, everything but the demonstrable knowledge that the Church was on their side in their struggle against injustice. All of them were lost by default; we simply never thought them important enough to struggle for and we are left with the Joe Ryan's of labor. Well, Joe Ryan is a human soul too, it might be argued. One could wish though that there weren't so many bodies of longshoremen constantly being found floating face down in New York Harbor, or tales of racketeering and bribery within the International Longshoremen's Association.

### No Vision

But it is not racketeering so much as shortness of vision that is negating the best efforts of American labor. As the factories of Europe come into fuller and fuller production the essential tragedy of pure trade unionism in the United States is becoming increasingly clear. In their efforts to make their demands acceptable to employers, unions are attempting to rid themselves of communists, but that will not halt the inevitable depression. The N. M. U. especially is in the midst of a tragic economic condition that it

is powerless to control. The European Recovery Plan makes it mandatory that the maximum of trade with Europe and the world be shipped in foreign bottoms, which means the continued tying up of American vessels. Every ship's graveyard in America is jammed with American merchant vessels. Thousands of seamen are on the beach without hope of employment in the foreseeable future.

Reactionary unionism is not the answer for the N. M. U. Curran himself knows that those seamen from the Gulf Ports who voted for the amendment to bar communists did it for the worst possible reason: As southerners they voted their prejudices. The communists are for equal economic rights for negroes, and the Gulf seamen are against negroes sailing their ships. So they are against communists. The crusade against communists is inevitably enlisting the services of people who are not only coloring the means but will determine the end. What they seek is not the overcoming of economic injustice, the Christian Revolution, but the status quo, or better yet in their book setting the clock back farther still to a period of rank reaction, the intolerance of the right against the intolerance of the Kremlin.

And the irony of it is that all these political concessions to the economic powers that be are worthless. No matter how pure a union is politically it still needs boom times to function with the maximum of benefit to its members. No concessions can be wrung from an employer by a union when a depression arrives and there is a mad scramble for survival on the part of the working class. And one of the schizoid features of our profit economy is the building up of rival systems, implicitly dedicated to its commercial ruin: England investing in U. S. expansion in the nineteenth century only to be ruined in this one; the U. S. building Germany and Japan, then being forced to destroy them and then because of the contradictions of her economy being forced to rebuild them again for another future destruction.

The way out is clear. Reaction will not delay, but hasten the inevitable classic cycle of a profit economy: Boom, bust, depression and war. Not until trade unions look beyond immediate profit and seek to become the owners of the means of production, operating co-operatively, from each according to his ability, to each according to his need, regardless of the bugaboos of profit and loss, will an effective brake be put on the cycle. And some small degree of Christianity be realized in our economic lives.

## Books to Buy

FOUR COMFORTABLE SAYINGS — Leon Bloy: 50c.

WORK AND CULTURE — Eric Gill: \$1.00.

A MECHANISTIC OR A HUMAN SOCIETY — Wilfred Wellock: 25c.

THE PROGRESS OF A PLOUGH-BOY — William Cobbett: \$2.75.

THE FAILURE OF TECHNOLOGY — F. G. Juenger: \$2.75.

WORK — Ade Bethune: \$1.00.

DISTRIBUTISM — S. Sagar: 30c.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER — G. K. Chesterton: \$3.75.

AN AMERICAN DISTRIBUTIST HANDBOOK — Graham Carey: 75c.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RURAL LIFE — Rev. George H. Speltz: \$2.25.

WAR, CONSCIENCE AND THE RULE OF CHRIST — From the Papal Encyclicals: 25c.

DAVID HENNESSY  
THE DISTRIBUTIST  
BOOKSTALL  
Stotler's Crossroads,  
West Virginia

We are apt to assume here in The Catholic Worker that our ideals on work (manual labor in this case) are well-known. Peter Maurin made manual labor and voluntary poverty the foundation of his teaching and these are our techniques of action, he said. Always he quoted St. Benedict whose motto "Pray and Work" was his also. He and Father Virgil Michel the Benedictine, used to talk endlessly about work in relation to bodily and mental health and in his vision of the integrated life—a life in which man would be as happy as possible in his labor—he always talked of the necessity of our using our bodies as well as our minds. He pointed with scorn to the fact that men in factories were alluded to as "hands" and that field workers in our huge industrial system of farming are considered "hands" also. It is well known, of course, that Peter opposed the capitalist industrial system on the land as well as in the city. He well recognized the plight of the migrant workers who are necessary to keep such a system of agriculture going.

The thing he always kept pointing out was that we did not take into consideration the needs of man and since man is not made to live alone, when we talk about man, we think also of the family and its needs; of light, space and air, a home of one's own, a garden for the children, a place to work and to play, and tools for work, and is it too much to expect that our dear Lord who provides us with all things necessary for body and soul, did not intend that we should have these means with which to work and to pray.

### A Theology of Labor

There is very little written on the subject of work that is available to students; much is written about the worker these days, but very little about work itself, so when a pamphlet entitled "Towards A Benedictine Theology of Manual Labor" came into the office last month I was delighted. It is by Dom Rembert Sorg, O.S.B. and it can be obtained from St. Procopius Abbey, Benedictine Orient, Lisle, Illinois. It is duplicated there for private distribution. Father Rembert himself is known to all readers of Orate Fratres for his very splendid articles. His own address is Holy Cross Mission, Field, Wisconsin, where he is living his philosophy of labor. In his introduction, he alludes to one of the publications of the Catholic University of America Press for 1945 by Rev. Arthur T. Geoghegan, The Attitude Towards Labor in Early Christianity and Ancient Culture. Unfortunately this thesis is out of print, but I had the opportunity to go through it and certainly feel that it is a book that should be made available to the layman. It reminded me of a volume entitled "The Ancient Lowly" which I picked up in a secondhand store some years ago by a Socialist who wrote about the history of labor from earliest times and whose thesis was that they were the exploited and the dispossessed and that his job was to contribute to their enlightenment and class-war consciousness.

In the whole study of labor and of work there is usually an acceptance of our capitalistic industrial system and the acceptance of the machine as the means to do away with human labor. A. J. Penty has well handled the subject of the machine and Eric Gill also, and the work of these two writers should be reviewed again and again in the study of a philosophy of labor. But here is a book by Father Sorg which is of exceptional interest to all in the lay apostolate which has more than a philosophy of labor; it has a theology of labor. It treats of the Benedictine monastic tradition and quotes extensively from the Fathers of the Church. He says in the introduction "the crux of the question of manual labor in St. Benedict's rule lies in that variously interpreted passage, 'If, however, the needs of the place require

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# Education and Knowledge

(Continued from page 1)

school, those abstractions by which pupils in a New York grammar school memorize the growing and processing of sugar cane in Louisiana; pictures in their imagination, and their books are the nearest they come to the real thing. This is similar to the abstraction to which they are subject in learning the Gospels. Our Lord says, "how often would I have gathered these into My arms as a hen gathers her brood beneath her wings," and the school children see a picture of a hen with chicks beneath her wings, and are supposed somehow to grasp the depth of the parable. The wisdom we receive from the Gospel is of course knowledge that could only be known by Faith, but our Lord taught us so often by an analogy with sense experience.

## Audio-Visual

In last month's Integrity, devoted to education, there is an article disparaging the Audio-Visual aids to education, and stating that the spoken and written word has always been the best way to educate. The spoken and written word have always been the best way to educate, given a basis of total and enriching and sanctifying sense experience, that is almost completely lacking at this moment of historical reality. The audio-visual aids mentioned are films, radio, and field trips. These are, to give them their due, an attempt to bring education out of the abstract. In the field trip there is the real thing, instead of the picture of it, the lion in the zoo, instead of the abstract description, and the abstract picture. And to my mind, much of the teaching of geography would improve by films, instead of those tedious memorizing lessons of the industries of Italy, the large cities, etc. The Audio-Visual aids to education are good in so far as they substitute the thing instead of the written description of it, bad in so far as they help make distraught, nervous children, whose minds are cluttered with disjointed bric-a-brac. Take the radio, for instance. It is not bad because it substitutes for the book, but it is bad because it substitutes for the student's own sensory organs. To quote Max Picard, ("The Hitler in Ourselves" Henry Regnery Co.) "what happens becomes real to (the individual) only as the radio reports the event, or as the illustrated paper depicts it. The radio perceives, registers, and judges for him. The soul is tied directly to the radio alone, no longer to its own sensory organs." There are inadequacies in the field trip too, in attaining true knowledge, and I will take that up later in the article.

The city child, and many town children are surrounded by the artificial and the sensibly repellent. As I remember city experiences as a child, the sensible surroundings were hard, unyielding, incomprehensible. Can you know concrete? The mind trying to grapple with such matter is thrown back like the human body trying to scale the side of a building. It was sense knowledge from which the mind could abstract very little, except an idea of ugliness. The things that remained in my mind as though a union were somehow possible between them and the mind were the flashes of the elemental, a horse-drawn wagon, sunset over the Palisades, the city-child's treasure, his dog. We built street fires to bake potatoes, and the element of fire with its straight-from-God quality, and the potato still soil-covered, and the using our powers, without troublesome grownups, delighted us. I believe it is from such sense experiences that the mind abstracts and knows, and that one reason for the great abundance of uneducated "educated" people is that students have been handed on a dish the abstractions of past thinkers, abstractions which they memorize, and which they forget as soon as

expediency requires—and which at no stage mean anything to them.

Take one of the five proofs for the existence of God. These are not revealed religion, and are therefore supposed to be arrived at, like all rational knowledge, by an abstraction from sense knowledge. How could a city child arrive at God's existence from observing the order of the universe? He sees practically nothing of the cycles of the seasons; electric light, smoke, and high buildings almost negate the sun, moon, and stars. Hence, all this knowledge which should be arrived at experimentally by the mind (plus the mental discipline of study) becomes part and parcel for him of the body of Faith, like revealed truth.

But there is another point to be considered. Not only is the sense experience provided by average city life largely unknowable, elusive, and repellent.

It is also lifeless. In school, the functions of man, animal, and plant are described, you say. We have biology. But in all these sciences, we kill to dissect. In each case our knowledge is the knowledge of a corpse, and I defy the proverbial visitant from Mars to find out anything really worthwhile about man, if he should stumble on this planet, and find only a corpse, and dissect and analyze to his heart's content. The living must be known as living, and can never be learned from textbooks. Friedrich Juenger writes (The Failure of Technology, Henry Regnery Co., Hinsdale, Ill.): "Whatever moves by itself, whatever possesses the capacity to direct its own motions without obeying any mechanically explicable compulsion—and even plants have that capacity—moves in a manner that cannot be adequately described in terms of a sequence of functions. Wherever the vitality of any living thing manifests itself, there the study of mobility is not enough, because all functionalism can be studied only in passive motions, that is in dependent motions. . . . Thus, when the functions of man, animal, or plant are described, they don't tell us anything vital about that man, that animal, or that plant. This remains true no matter how many functions may be discovered, for functions always refer to passive mobility only, to a mechanical interdependence, which means to say: to something dead."

This type of scientific, or functional mind, acquires a certain amount of knowledge of living things (by abstracting the life), but it is a very limited knowledge. This type of mind "is incapable of approaching an indivisible whole, and when it attempts to do so, it fails." (Juenger) To learn about things as whole things, we must begin to know with what Max Picard calls "the method of wholeness." The rational type of mind, the Euclidian mind, has almost a compulsion to cut into jigsaw pieces everything it meets.

## Living Things

I remember once one of those particular experiences of living things which we all have. I was passing by a typewriter store on Sunday in a deserted business section. Two kittens were dancing about over and around the typewriters, and the indescribable contrast between life and the inanimate struck at my heart. I had the same experience again on going down a deserted street of brownstone houses, and suddenly seeing a dog's snout pressing eagerly through the barred ground floor windows, with his humorous-sad brown eyes. To the functions of the typewriters do you add for the kittens' motion, to the immobility of the stone do you add for the dog motion, and can you thus through analysis arrive at a knowledge of life? And yet, through biology in our lifeless cities, through the study of passive mobility, we expect to teach our children life.

Peasant peoples have much of

the sense of awe for the mystery of life in animals, often to the point of superstition, as witness this passage from "Christ Stopped at Eboli" by Carlo Levi.

"The peasants say that there is something satanic about goats. This is true of all the animal world, and of the goat in particular. Not that it is wicked or has anything to do with the devils of the Christian religion, in spite of the fact that they often show themselves in its guise. It is demoniacal like every living thing and even more so than the rest because some strange power lurks behind its animal exterior. To the peasants the goat represents the ancient satyr, indeed a living satyr, lean and hungry . . . a poor, hairy, brotherly, wild satyr, looking for grass on the edge of a precipice. . . . Under the gaze of these eyes, neither human nor divine, and accompanied by these mysterious powers, I climbed slowly toward the cemetery."

## Farrabique

There is a very fine French film called "Farrabique," which shows the life of a French peasant family over a year. To our feverish modern minds, nothing happens in this picture, nothing happens and everything happens. In it you grow aware of the great happenings of the living, breathing world around us, the natural world. You have seen films in slow motion. This film uses technique creatively, when it shows in speeded-up motion the growth of plants, the unfolding of blossoms, the pollenization of Spring, and all the new-born things. If you have ever planted beans, you know that they



grow out of the ground in an arch, and then one morning when you come out, they will have straightened up, and beside each plant will be a neat hole where the head has lifted itself out and up. It is a beautiful sight, even at nature's pace, but to see the beans straightening and lifting in this picture, like a row of dancers, is weird and uncanny, and you are struck with the close resemblance to animal life. The picture makes you understand better the universal human experience of a kind of joyous terror on being alone in the countryside on a midsummer night. It's always a midsummer night's dream. You feel life breathing and stirring around you, insect, plant and animal, and you learn much from the experience, a knowledge that is mostly inarticulate, that cannot be put in syllogistic form, and is therefore, alas, discarded by most of education because it cannot be signed with a Q.E.D. Walt Disney shows in Snow White a night scene in the woods, where the trees and bushes clutch at the fleeing Snow White. That's certainly the way it feels!

## Franciscan Learning

Part of the poverty which the Franciscans espoused was to be unlearned in the scholastic sense, in the typically analytic, and syllogistic sense. Analysis always abstracts and separates. And yet the Franciscans developed their own learning, a method of wholeness, always the method of the poet as opposed to the philosopher. The thing is that we need both, St. Francis' Hymn to the Sun, and the syllogism. Franciscan empiricism may be said to be the same as scientific empiricism, but it is a partial similarity: St. Francis—student of the living, the birds and growing things; science

(Continued on page 8)

# Singer Strike

(Continued from page 1)

worker can lose his job altogether as a result of Standards, or be transferred to another job where he could be downgraded with a cut in pay. In Department 33, chrome plating and drying frames, before Standards, two men turned out 225 frames a day. Under the speed-up system, one man turns out 240, which means that one man loses his job while the other works twice as hard. Department 40 had an assembler doing 448 pieces a day before the speedup; under Standards he had to do 1,000 to hold his job! Every worker knows what the results of this kind of speedup will mean—thousands laid off.

"Wages go down as Singers retimes and revises jobs. Earnings are cut while production is boosted! And the company has told the Union this process will continue. Instead of rewarding the workers for their inventiveness, the company punishes them by cutting their pay.

"Health suffers as the Standards speedup grows. Years are cut out of our working lives as a result of the intense physical and mental strain. It is only since the speedup that Department 6, the pressroom, earned the name of 'the Butcher Shop.' Workers lost fingers, suffered back strain, and worst of all, terrific nervous strain. This was the general health picture throughout Standards departments.

"Pensions go by the board as the old-timers who are unable to keep up the speedup are forced to resign before they can qualify for their pensions, little as they are."

This is certainly a matter of the most vital importance to those who are directly affected by the inhuman speedup system, yet the Singer Company obstinately refuses to discuss it or negotiate about it.

## Singer's First Strike

This is the first strike experienced by the Singer Company since it was founded, seventy-six years ago. The original Singer factory was located on New York's lower East Side, but during the widespread labor organization activity of the 1880's the company removed to Elizabeth, a place remote from the contagion of organization. A new force was built up, composed of immigrants from several European countries, and the paternalistic policy of the company staved off organization of its employees until the U. E. stepped in and did the job in 1943. A number of the families of Singer workers are represented in the plant by three generations—the immigrant grandfather, his sons and grandsons—but the young men of today will tell you frankly that they do not expect to be able to work side by side with their sons or grandsons if the speedup system is continued.

The strike headquarters is housed in a small building at Second and Trumbull streets. In size it offers a marked contrast to the vast sprawling plant across the street, and it is a beehive of activity, while the Singer factory is completely deserted, hushed, locked and barred, its hundreds of windows all tightly closed, like dead eyes. But strike headquarters is very much alive. It is an extremely busy food distribution center. The union buys groceries, meats and vegetables wholesale and distributes them to its striking members by a cash allotment system. If the striker is a single man, he receives a food order for \$5.50 a week. The amount is increased \$2.00 for each member of a family. The allowance seems small, until you learn that everything is priced at wholesale rates. That helps some, but what they can get is still a minimum. Vegetables are brought from the New York and Newark wholesale markets every day in truck trailers which are parked beside headquarters all day, and the vegetables are distributed right off the tail-

board into the strikers' baby carriages, express wagons, baskets and cartons.

## A Miniature Supermarket

The meat and grocery department, in the headquarters building, is well staffed and well stocked, but it is a bottleneck on account of its size. It is able to serve about sixty customers an hour. Numbers are issued to each man as he arrives and called out in order by a man at the door, so no one has to wait in line very long. No one seemed to mind waiting the afternoon I was there, because everybody was either listening to the World Series game on a portable radio near the vegetable truck or watching it on a television set conveniently placed in a window.

Striking workers have many pressing needs besides food, and U. E. 461 has a highly efficient Welfare Committee which attends to those needs. It has a separate building for its work, about two blocks from headquarters. In one week the Welfare Committee handled more than 2,250 cases, taking care of food, rent, gas and electric bills, shoes and clothing, medical and other needs. In one week the union must expend more than \$10,000 to meet welfare needs and supply strikers' families with food orders averaging \$9.00.

## Help Is Needed

It is obvious that the union could not carry this heavy financial burden by itself. Other unions, realizing that these workers are fighting a battle which is the concern of all labor, have given organizational and financial aid. Seventy-five unions—A. F. of L., C. I. O., Railroad Brotherhoods and independents—have joined in a Jersey-wide conference for that purpose. There is a New York Conference of Labor to Support the Singer Strike. Much more help is needed. Clothing of all kinds will be most welcome.

It is not possible to tell the whole story of this strike in our limited space. I have tried to present some of the facts which impressed me as important after I visited the strikers. They are taking a firm stand against one of the greatest evils of the industrial system, the speedup. In this they are not just carrying on an ordinary strike, but rather are leading a rebellion against something that deserves to be crushed. More power to them, and may they be blessed with victory.

## BOOKS

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## Work

(Continued from page 4)  
them to labour in gathering the harvest, let them not grieve at that, for then they are truly monks when they live by the labour of their hands as our fathers and the apostle did. But let all things be done in moderation on account of the faint heart."

Peter Maurin's idea for our farming communities was that there should be four hours of manual labor a day. If all the people did this conscientiously, putting in four solid hours a day, there would be time indeed for study and prayer, for the intellectual work of reading and study as well as for the clerical work which is a toll-some accompaniment to such work as ours.

Father Sorg's treatise goes back to St. Anthony of Egypt who rejoiced in never having been troublesome to anyone else on account of labor of his hands. The great rules of St. Pachomius and St. Basil both called for manual labor. St. Jerome said that the monasteries of Egypt would accept no monks who would not do manual work and in St. Basil's rule, the strict rule of manual labor is inculcated. His rule states: "When you taught us that manual labor is necessary, it remaineth that we be taught the kind that suits our profession." He enumerates various suitable kinds, but selects agriculture as being the most congenial and the motives laid down were self-support, alms giving and asceticism.

"The first purpose of the monks manual labor was, of course, self-support. What was important in their spirit is that this self-support is the first step towards, and the lowliest attainment of charity. It is out of the question to speak of charity in a man that does not try to support himself, any more than to think of Christian faith in a father who even though he attempt some noble missionary enterprise in the Church, neglects to feed his own children. St. Paul would say of him that 'He hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel.'"

### Own Burdens

With the usual paradox that we find over and over again in the New Testament, we are told to bear our own burdens in Gal. 6, 5 and then later on, we are told to bear one another's burdens. So in addition to our working we are also to help others. Consistently throughout the New Testament we hear the injunction not to judge, if we do not wish to be judged, so that when we read these things, it is to take them to ourselves, to work ourselves, to feed our own bodies and souls, and with whatever we have left, feed others.

Perhaps Father Sorg is a bit harsh when he quotes from the Didache. For the one time that St. Paul says "if a man will not work, neither let him eat," the entire New Testament, the sayings of our Lord, incline us toward tender kindness towards our fellows and an aversion to judging. We have suffered much in the Catholic Worker movement from all the people who come and look at the men on our bread lines (and we are feeding 500 a day in both Detroit and New York right now) and say, "Are you not contributing to the delinquency of these men by feeding them?"

The problem of unemployment

and alcoholism is so acute these days that both New York and Chicago newspapers have been running accounts of the skid roads and the men on them. The I. W. W. paper published in Chicago has a delightful satire on the series that ran in the Chicago News. Everyone likes to see the end of a story the writer said, and the reason for this fascinated interest on the part of the readers which boosted the circulation of the News to 20,000 is because this is the end of the story for them as well as the men on skid road. This is the logical conclusion of our present system. And the story goes on to tell of a little boy asking, Who are all these men? and the reply being given, they are hoboes, and he wanted to know if there were not any "Mama" hoboes. The story points out that there is a high death rate and no birth rate and yet the numbers keep increasing. The I. W. W. song that deals with this situation is that famous one: "Halleluia, I'm a Bum" and one of the verses runs: "Why don't you work like other men do? How can I work when there's no work to do?"

On every side we see work that needs to be done; even to the sweeping of the streets and the cleaning up of lots, the repairing of old buildings to provide for the homeless. But if a man took a broom and started to sweep a street, he would soon find himself put on the psychopathic ward, and if a group started to clean up a vacant lot for children to play in, not only would they be trespassing on another man's property but the neighbors themselves, made irresponsible by our denial (in effect) of private property, would soon clutter up the lot again by tossing garbage, tin cans and bottles out of the windows.

"The workers as a mass have lost a philosophy of labor," as Peter says and they have lost a philosophy of poverty. And it is good when a book like this comes along that will stimulate thought on man's work, his need for work, and his desire to work.

It breaks our hearts here at the Catholic Worker to see these lines of men who need work as much as they need bread and we do not have the work to give them.

We have farms, it is true, but you cannot cultivate the earth or build shelters for the workers without skills, tools and materials; and God has seen fit to keep us in such poverty that we are not able to provide these. The miracle of the loaves and fishes is repeated over and over again so that we could almost say "We can do all things in Him who strengthens us." Certainly by ourselves we could never have kept going with the cost of food going up 40%. We still put the same food on the table regardless of the numbers who come. Even with "rationing" we still had coffee—not that coffee is as necessary as soup but St. Joseph is tender and tempers the wind to the shorn lamb. Somehow or other just enough comes in, just enough to keep going, through the almsgiving of the faithful and through the fact that everyone works in the movement without salary and is pledged to voluntary poverty, to the greater or less degree that they can take it.

### St. John Chrysostom

Father Sorg's book is utterly delightful and he has chosen a wealth of quotations from the early fathers. St. John Chrysostom writes: "The sun being risen, they depart, each one to their work, gathering thence the Lord's supply for the needy." In St. John Chrysostom's Homilies, "almsgiving is the love of Christ. The manual labor of monks a sacred spiritual thing and a Holy Communion."

"Nowhere have I seen love so in flower, nowhere such quick compassion or hospitality, so eager," says St. Rufinus. "So great is the love that is in them and by so strong affection are they bound towards one another and towards all brethren that they are an example and wonder to all . . .

one gets the impression that the Holy Spirit abounded in that country like fire in a dry woods and that society in that region was pregnant with Christ and that you could almost live on love alone."

"It was the custom, not only among these, but among almost all the Egyptian monks, to hire themselves out at harvest time as harvesters; and one among them would earn eighty measures of corn more or less, and offer the greater part of it to the poor so that not only the hungry folk of that countryside were fed, but ships were sent to Alexandria, laden with corn, to be divided among such as were prisoners in jails, or as were foreigners and, in need, for there was not enough poverty in Egypt to consume the fruit of their compassion and their lavishness."

The third purpose of the monks' labor was ascetical. "In avoiding the sweat of the face, the drudgery of the thorns and the thistles, all of which are the punishment of sin, and which induce sloth and atrophy, the rich shirk work itself, which is not a punishment of sin, but a glorious, pleasurable exercise of human nature's God-given facilities."

Father Sorg holds that those who do not work at manual labor have more than ordinary trouble with the desires of the flesh. "Poverty coupled with manual labor is charity's twin sister and inseparable companion," and he even goes on to say that people who do intellectual labor and who go in for artificial physical exercise as a substitute for human nature's ontological need for manual work have also a substitute chastity. "The inference is quite likely that a substitute manual labor induces some sort of substitute chastity and not the real virtue which, as St. Thomas teaches, consists principally in charity."

He goes in also for a deeper theology of manual labor in dealing with man as co-creator with God; taking the raw materials that God has provided, making things of use and of beauty and thus bringing about in his life that synthesis of cult, culture and cultivation that Peter Maurin used to talk so much about.

I could write much more on this whole subject but I am sure that what I have written will induce our friends to write to Father Sorg and get this very inspiring booklet.

DOROTHY DAY.

"Do you see the courage of the holy women, their love for Christ, the generosity with which they spend their treasures and risk their lives? We men ought to imitate these women; let us not abandon Jesus in His hour of need. They gave so generously of their goods at the risk of their lives, for His dead body. But we refuse to feed Him when He is hungry; to clothe Him when He is naked; when He asks an alms of us, we pass Him by. Oh, no doubt, if you were to see Christ Himself you would each give lavishly. But this man is Christ; He tells us: 'It is I.' Why then do you not give Him all you have? For even now you still hear Him say, 'Ye do it to Me.' Whether you give to Him or to this beggar matters not, and what you do is no less noble than the deed of the holy women in ministering to Him then. Nay, your act is even more noble. No, be not shocked! To feed the Lord when He is visibly present, and when the very sight of Him would move a heart of stone, is not as meritorious as to care for the poor, the lame and the deformed because of His words. For in the first instance, His appearance and the majesty of His presence makes us feel generous. But here the reward of charity is due solely to your good will. Besides, it is a proof of greater love for Christ to lavish every attention upon a fellow servant simply because of His words."

—St. John Chrysostom

## Book Reviews

The intrepid Austrian pacifist champion of social justice, Father Johannes Ude has recently presented the Swarthmore College Peace Collection with three of his publications. *Thou Shalt Not Kill!* (*Du Sollst Nicht Töten!*) appeared in 1948, the last of the three to be published, and is a compendium on the theories and practices of its seventy-five-year old author, now living on the Grundl-See in the Salzkammergut, Austria. Still fresh and enthusiastic for the cause of a better Christian social order, he writes us of his hopes to serve as head of a Peace University that may be organized at Bad-Ischl. His courageous and penetrating book, *Thou Shalt Not Kill!*, was written between 1941 and 1944 when he was in constant danger of arrest by the Gestapo. Due to his open criticism of the National Socialist anti-Jewish action of November, 1938, Ude had been forced into exile. Just before a second arrest by the secret police in August, 1944, he gave the manuscript to the present editor of the book, Hanns Kobinger, telling him to do what he wished with it. In the preface Kobinger says, "It was passed from hand to hand by brave members of the underground," until he finally published it in its original form.

In *Thou Shalt Not Kill!*, Ude develops his thesis in three parts. In the first, the teaching of the Fifth Commandment is expounded in all its implications, with the conclusion that killing in any form is wrong. The second demolishes arguments in favor of wars, "just" or otherwise, and opposed all other violent social mores, such as the death penalty and duelling. The beliefs and practices of non-violent groups, such as Quakers, Dухobors and the followers of Gandhi, are carefully described. In analyzing the causes of the Spanish Civil War, Ude uncompromisingly places responsibility for the war on the Church and nobility as large landowners, backed by international capitalists. He declares firmly that institutions and groups continuing to create or permit unemployment and low living standards are war-promoters and traitors to a true Christian social order. The concluding part, entitled "Peace Be Unto You," sounds a dramatic appeal for clear thinking and consistent action on the part of church members, educators, women, and believers in international cooperation on political levels. In the last sentence Ude flings down the challenge: "Therefore not: War—or Peace? But simply only: Peace! Uncompromisingly only Peace!"

The contents of this book are so important to the peace movement that we hope publishers in other countries will soon make it available in translation.

One of his two other books sent to the Peace Collection, *Property, Capitalism and Christianity*, was written as a series of lectures given by Professor Ude at the University of Graz during the 1930 summer semester. They expand unambiguously his hope for a Christian revolution to end the economic exploitation of the masses. Effective woodcuts by K. A. Wilke heighten the message of the booklet.

In his *Sociology: Elements of Fundamental and Rational Social and Economic Theories Treated According to the System of St. Thomas Aquinas*, the author in clear, syllogistic form and leaning on the authority of the great Church thinker for his method, attacks the abuses of our present society. He declares ruthlessly high interest rates and the concentration of capital and land in the hands of a few individuals, reminiscent of certain early demands of the National Socialists. But unlike the latter whom he fought to the bitter end, Ude preaches the immorality of war under all circumstances and defends the right of conscientious objection to mili-

tary service. This publication bears the imprimatur of the Bishop of St. Gallen, Dr. Alois Scheiwiler, who also writes a laudatory introduction recommending the book to all serious students of the Christian social order.

*Du sollst nicht töten!* von Universitätsprofessor Johannes Ude. Hugo Mayer Verlag, Dornbirn, Austria, 1948. 423 p. (*Thou Shalt Not Kill!*)

Eigentum, Kapitalismus, Christentum, von Johannes Ude. Helmgarten Sonderheft. Leopold Stocker Verlag, Garz, Austria, 1930. 48 p. (*Property, Capitalism and Christianity*).

*Soziologie: Leitfaden der natürlich-vernünftigen Gesellschafts- und Wirtschaftslehre im Sinne der Lehre des hl. Thomas von Aquin*, von Dr. Johannes Ude. 3te Auflage. Alpenland-Verlag, Schaan, Fürstentum Liechtenstein, 1931, 396 p. (*Sociology: Elements of Fundamental and Rational Social and Economic Theories Treated According to the System of St. Thomas Aquinas*).

**THE BENDING CROSS**—A Biography of Eugene Debs by Ray Ginger, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick—\$5.

This is not only a highly readable biography of Eugene Debs but an excellent commentary on the American labor movement — of which there are few excellent commentaries.

Debs is typical of those whose genuine love of their fellows led to the acceptance of Marxian political methods and Socialism as a means whereby to remedy injustice. He failed to see that the anarchists had the better of the argument and that to work for social justice through political means was to insure subsequent tyrannies as great as those opposed. Debs took the wrong road when he refused to follow the IWW in rejecting such means and in advocating instead direct action by the workers. From then on he identified his cause with the Socialist party and could he have lived to see what an anemic party it has ended up as he would have without doubt disowned it. Indeed he must have been sorely tried in this direction many times in the final years of his life and tempted to identify himself with the Communists. It is unfortunate that he did not see that the State was as great an evil as capitalism because the State is, after all, but the political expression of capitalism. Such a man as Debs could have led a movement of non-violent direct action for he was suited to lead since he was ever willing to have others lead. But that is the tragedy of our times—that we still conceive of revolution in political and Statist terms despite the repeated demonstration that such means fail because they are psychologically dangerous and because they are committed to violence and because they are incompatible with the end they envision.

Debs was a safe man also because he practised the works of mercy—he would listen to the arguments of those scientific socialists who berated him for wasting his time on "the offshoots of the capitalist system" and he would simply reply that he could not ignore them or refuse to help them because he wasn't built that way. He would have led a revolution with pity. The price of the book is its only drawback.

R. L.

Pope Benedict XV, speaking of World War I, wrote: "We witnessed desolation and death descend upon defenseless cities, upon peaceful villages, and their innocent population."

How much more is not this true in the atomic era? Is not this a clear violation of the fifth commandment?

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## Pacifism and Fr. White

(Continued from page 1)

shall gather out of his kingdom all scandals and them that work iniquity." And then St. James states (chapter 4, 1-2) "From whence come wars and contentions among you? Are they not hence, from your concupiscences which war in your members? You covet, and have not; you kill and envy, and cannot obtain." St. James evidently regarded wars as among those scandals of which Christ foretold they would come and yet he, as did Christ, did not hold guiltless those by whom they came. If we know that sin will be committed because Christ foretold it that is no justification for our own participation in the sin.

Also in this matter of accusing pacifists of a subtle manicheism. Such arguments are neither here nor there because it can be shown with equal dexterity that those who support war are outright manicheans. Because they state that evil is physical and moral and that we shouldn't pay much attention to physical evil (in which category they place war) because it concerns only the body. This was the type of argument handed out to pacifists by the clergy, etc., during the last war. And it not only posits an unreal separation of moral and physical evil in regards man (for to harm your neighbor's body is a moral as well as a physical evil) but it portrays a contempt of the body which is, if one is impressed by this type of argument, manichean.

### Clarification

"We must rid ourselves of the idea" says Father White "that conflict, force, violence, destruction and death are inherently and wholly evil—an evil from which no good can come." Here there is again need of clarification. No one asserts that good may not come out of evil. But that does not mean we should partake in evil because good may come out of it. Would anyone of our theologians contend that we ought occasionally to commit adultery because good may come out of it? If Father White denies that "conflict, force, violence, destruction and death" are wholly evil it implies he regards them as partially evil. Is there no obligation on the Christian to shun partial evils? If not it leaves the door open to a lot of interesting activities. Can anyone assert, for example, that sexual intercourse is wholly evil? Even when done out of wedlock it cannot be called evil in itself. There is the further fact that Father White does not distinguish enough. I could agree with him that force in itself is not always evil but I would regard violence as always evil because violence is uncontrolled force and it is evil because it is against reason. And, taking man in the concrete, I think it fair to state that man engaged in warfare always uses violence because the forces in him that awaken in order to go to war or that awaken in the course of war become uncontrollable so that deeds of uncontrolled force are always perpetrated in war. Therefore war is a species of violence. The wars of the Old Testament, those which were directly ordered by God, were controlled affairs inasmuch as the author of life can recall life when He pleases. But that He regards the wars of man as evils is quite evident from the text of St. James and the whole teaching of Christ. Christ states "by their fruits shall you know them" and that, I believe, applies to arguments as well and I think there must be something wrong with an argument which, by some process of logic, can arrive at this conclusion stated by Father White: "Perhaps it was cynicism, but perhaps there was more wisdom than was recognized, when the explosion of the first atom-bomb in the desert of New Mexico was given the code-name of 'Operation Trinity'!" It is an example of the wedge morality that proceeds from

Christ driving the money changers out of the temple to a justification of war. And, with Father White, states "the right and the obligation sometimes to resist force by force." It is hard to see where the "obligation" exists for the Christian not to follow the more perfect example of Christ in not resisting injury. And, as Pius X stated, this teaching of Christ applies not only to individuals but to nations. In modern times Gandhi is the only national leader who has harkened to it. As far as modern war is concerned we can skip over the Thomistic requirements for a "just" war, as does Father White, for it is a simple question of violating the fifth commandment by committing murder. To kill the innocent has always been regarded as murder by the theologians—unless our new theologians have developed a new morality in this matter. Or unless we have so succumbed to collectivist concepts that individual morality no longer exists and a whole people is held guilty of war. Otherwise we must admit that children under the age of reason are not guilty and to kill them is murder. I know a thousand and one arguments are available to get around this fact but I cannot but suspect they are unconscious rationalizations. I agree with Father White of course that we are obliged to follow our conscience whether it results in our being conscientious objectors or going into the army. It shouldn't be necessary to state, but to avoid any possible misunderstanding I will, that this is an objective discussion and that the farthest thing from any mind is to judge any individual guilty of murder because he was a soldier in the last war. Individual salvation depends on obedience to conscience and, I presume, the fellows who went in the army did so in good conscience. But this is no reason to make morality in itself a purely individual affair and to deny the existence of objective norms. The Catholic has to consider adultery as objective mortal sin and he is not accused by his co-religionists of assuming that all people who commit adultery go to hell. Neither can he, with any show of reason, accuse the pacifist of teaching that all soldiers go to hell.

### Sentimentalism

Father White accuses pacifists of presenting a sentimental picture of Christ. I don't think such to be the case. I think the pacifist presents Christ as making more demands on the individual than does the non-pacifist. I think that is why some misinformed individuals accuse us of Jansenism and manicheism. At any rate it is a far cry from sentimentalism. At the same time there is great need to emphasize the spirit of Christ, the warmth of Him, and the charitable contempt He had for legalizers. And the spirit of the legalizers is the same spirit that is found in our logic texts and our casuistry. Not the casuistry which has mercy on man because it has explored the many extenuating circumstances that lead to objective sin, but rather the casuistry that will justify murder in an effort to make no difficulties with the State—the casuistry that allows the atom bomb because to use it is not a "primary intention"! No one knows who is the greatest hero, the soldier or the conscientious objector. Only God knows. It is all too complicated to figure out even if we had not been forbidden by Christ to judge. At any rate it is useless to argue on an individual basis in the matter—we can but try to present and understand Christ as He is presented in the Gospels and to endeavor to partake of His life as it comes to us in the sacraments. For the criterion of action for the Christian is not what is natural to man or what is inherent in nature but what Christ would have us do. And I do not mean this in any heretical sense. The supernatural

is not opposed to nature but it does transcend it and reaches conclusions that are superior to the conclusions of reason. So it is not particularly convincing to have Father White point out that strife and warfare is natural. To say that a thing is natural is not the last word for the Christian. For the Faith is essentially a supernatural affair. It goes beyond Aristotelianism. But even from the standpoint of what is natural Father White is too much the Darwinian. He should read Kropotkin's book MUTUAL AID wherein is shown that the normal relationship within a species is not warfare—that man is the only species of animal that indulges in this on an organized basis. There is, of course, strife of species with species among the lower animals. But this is nothing to pattern human behavior on anymore than we should pattern it on the promiscuous sex relations among some animals. When, on any question of conduct, we have the life of Christ as our guide, it is something of a waste of time to expend time and energy in trying to determine what is the "natural" thing to do. Christ Himself says "You have heard it said of old, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth—but I say unto you . . ." And it is the teaching of Christ that has relevance for us, for we have transcended nature to the degree that we have been divinized in Christ.



O TEMPLE  
IN WHICH  
GOD WAS  
MADE A PRIEST

## St. Thomas On Regional Economy

Now there are two ways in which an abundance of foodstuffs can be supplied to a city. The first we have already mentioned, where the soil is so fertile that it nobly provides for all the necessities of human life. The second is by trade, through which the necessities of life are brought to the town from different places. But it is quite clear that the first means is better. For the higher a thing is the more self-sufficient it is; since whatever needs another's help is by that fact proven inferior. But that city is more fully self-sufficient which the surrounding country supplies with all its vital needs, than is another which must obtain these supplies by trade. A city which has an abundance of food from its own territory is more dignified than one which is provisioned by merchants. It is safer too, it seems, for the importing of supplies can easily be prevented whether owing to the uncertain outcome of wars or to the many dangers of the road, and thus the city may be overcome through lack of food.

## Youth Betrayed

To my eyes, nowhere is the wrongness of our present age expressed so vividly as in the way it treats our youth. It has finally caught up with us, and the present generation is being lost, even more so than the last. Yet this perversity to us who are young, is so subtle, so hard to put our finger on, because we were conceived in its folds and are children of our age. The people with whom I work and live and have grown up, have no idea, no conception of happiness. When I just start to tell them of what living means in its full sense, they look at me with wry faces at the prospect of existing so.

In high school they filled our minds with great appreciation for the spirit of free enterprise. They called it liberty, initiative; all we had to do was compete, and if we succeeded we could sit back and enjoy it while the other fellow worked. "Build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door," as the old proverb says, but alas, we can't even build a mousetrap. When we came out of high school we ran up against a stone wall. What a sharp antithesis between the books and reality. The youth of this generation indeed has not been given a chance. Why if we the youths knew the meaning of the words "the whole man" there would be a revolution indeed, but we remain deluded. Our elders have compromised, and have tacitly concluded this mess, and we have given up to share in their slavery.

Last night, a group of fellows with whom I grew up had a little get-together in honor of a member of our group who had enlisted in the Navy and was leaving the next day. We sang songs and shouted and laughed, even stupidly. Why? Not so much because Joe was leaving, but because something had built up inside and had to find release. We all needed a break in the vicious circle, something one could remember the next day at his insipid job.

Joe was leaving, and he was sad, tense. He felt something driving him to enlist which he himself couldn't understand or explain. He said maybe he could learn something in the Navy, maybe when he came out he would have a trade, a future, not a stockboy's job. He had knocked around, switching one cheap job for another, and not working a great deal. Some say these youths are lazy; I say they are psychologically frustrated and can't work at a job they hate. At one point during the night, when one of his friends, with tears in his eyes, was imploring him not to go, Joe exclaimed, clutching his head with both hands, "I don't know! I don't know why I'm doing it, I just want to go, I don't know why."

No, he couldn't take this sort of thing any more, it was like a dog that runs in a circle chasing his tail. He enlisted to forget for three years; for three years there wouldn't have to be a future. After all, it might be different after he got out.

Joe is the personification of a million others, working as bus boys, errand boys, stockmen, assemblers, making thirty-five, forty dollars a week; holed up in dirty factories, stuffy offices; pale youths without a future, a chance to marry and raise a family decently. A million others who come home and find their release in bars and television, who fall in love with a girl and go out for three and four years and still see no hope of a good marriage. When they do marry they combine their salaries, practice birth control, and wrap the meshes of the system snugly around them, thwarting all chance for real happiness.

"Suppressed, thwarted, corrupted, poisoned, subjugated." It is one thing to read Don Benedetto's words in Silone's "Bread and Wine;" it is quite another

thing to see the living reality, the deep, sad expression of these words. If there is needed proof of how wrong the whole system is, look at our youth, more especially the youth of our big cities. They are being robbed of that sense of living, that sense of being, which comes from living as a "whole" man.

Yes, our youths join the Navy and the Army, they are vulgar and love nonsensical things, but let's not judge too quickly or rashly. They are like babies who have exchanged rattles and blocks and crayons for beer and sex and sports. They are dwarfed, and humped and crooked and their minds are undeveloped, for nobody has taught them. Truly this is the time for cutting and pruning and shaping the vines, not for worrying about the ill effects of bad wine.

Our priests are far away from them, the modern world holds out its lures, they are not reached, and life goes on in its stupid, petty and so vicious way. They who in the flower of life abound with creativity and the power to work and build a good life, are slapped down, and the irony is they say they like it. Can we tell a child there is something better than a chocolate bar?

The road forward is a long road, a road not unlike the one that led to Calvary. The transition from a lower stage to a higher is never achieved easily or painlessly. Yet there is a key word, a precious little seed that offers hope and strength; potentiality. It is up to you and all the ones who have lifted the veil from their eyes, to appeal to it, to try to cultivate it, to feed it, with an approach that seems crazy and hopeless, but because it is good it will succeed.

Sincerely,  
Fred Rubino

## From Bread and Wine

By Ignazio Silone

Don Benedetto: "What our country lacks is not the critical spirit. . . Perhaps what it lacks is men. There are malcontents, and there are perpetrators of violence, but men are lacking. I too ask myself what is to be done, I am convinced that it would be a waste of time to show a people of intimidated slaves a different manner of speaking, a different manner of gesticulating, but perhaps it would be worth while to show them a different manner of living. No word and no gesture can be more persuasive than the life, and if necessary the death of a man who strives to be free, loyal, just, sincere, disinterested; a man who shows what a man can be."

"Is it enough? I do not think it is enough," the young man said.

"For the time being I do not see anything else. One must respect time. Every season has its own work. There is the season for pruning the vines, the season for spraying them, the season for preparing the barrels, the season for gathering and pressing the grapes. If in spring, when the vines are being tied to the stakes, someone passes by and says: 'It is not worth while doing that, because if the barrels are bad the wine will be spoiled; the first thing to do is to attend to the barrels.' You can answer him and say: 'Every season has its own work. This is not the season for cleaning out the barrels, but for pruning the vines and tying them to the stakes. Let me, therefore remove the useless branches from the vines. Let me prune and tie them to the stakes.'"

(This is the quotation referred to in Fred Rubino's letter).



## To the Pope

Holy Father,

I am writing this letter in a prison cell. For weeks I have been kept here without knowing of what I am accused (1 Pet. 2, 19; 2 Tim. 3, 12). But I know that the Lord who embraces everything in His wise plans has given me, not without a good reason, this time for quiet and prayer. So I accept gladly the many hardships of my lot and endeavor to redeem the time (Eph. 5, 16).

Perhaps God has also granted me these quiet days so that I can write this letter to which I feel impelled by the Spirit.

The need of our day — and through it God is speaking to us — imperatively demands the utmost effort to heal the dismemberment of the Christian Church, to make Christ's Kingdom of Peace effectual throughout the world.

I have had close contact over many years with separated Christians of all denominations. With the knowledge and consent of the Bishops, I was present, for example, as a Catholic observer at the World Church Conference — "Faith and Order" — at Lausanne in 1927 and thus had opportunities of testing my opinion through personal conversations with representatives of the most varied religious bodies of both the West and the East. This experience has been constantly tested and deepened. For many years I have had the closest and most cordial relations with innumerable pastors of the German, Swiss, Danish, Swedish and Dutch Reformed and Lutheran Churches and with many members of the Anglican and Old Catholic Churches. In 1938 I founded a fellowship, "Una Sancta," in which simultaneous prayer is offered for the full realization of the unity of the Church by a considerable number of members of non-Catholic bodies as well as of our own Holy Church.

### Mutual Faults

The opinion of the best minds among non-Catholic Christians is that a certain proud self-righteousness on our side prevents our acknowledging the faults and failings within our own Church, the sins and errors through which we share in the guilt of these divisions; it prevents that readiness to repent which, they say, we always exact from others. They deduce from this that the Holy Ghost is not the soul of the Church, because, instead of putting her own house in order, she practises a too rigorous condemnation (1 Cor. 11, 31) only finally to be exercised by the Lord (Matt. 23, 9). They do not believe that our Leader is utterly prepared to serve as the Master did in all humility (John 12, 14; Matt. 18, 2; and 20, 26), but see in the claim to authority (which they consider as inconsistent with evangelical simplicity) a thirst for power and a too earthly desire for recognition. They consider that the exercise of the Holy Office in the Church is often incompatible with the warning of the Apostles (1 Pet. 5, 3) and therefore distrust the Office itself. They believe that in discussion with "heretics" there is more desire for a victory for dogmatic and narrow orthodoxy than holy zeal for the truth of God, and are convinced that they have experienced among many, even among leading representatives of the Church, an overbearing spirit and a merciless severity.

I do not in any way make these reproaches my own. They are grounded in part on a misunderstanding of the holy responsibility of the Pastors of the Church for the preservation of the depositum fidei (1 Tim. 6, 20) and for its proclamation (2 Tim. 4, 2), but often also on a fundamental denial of the apostolic pastoral office of bishops; and yet it seems to me from my wide experience that this

denial does not arise from enmity but from a deep inward mistrust.

From many personal conversations with different persons outside our Church, I can say that if the Christians now separated from us were to see the readiness of Church leaders to test everything which seemed doubtful to conscience, if just here they found true humility and love ready to listen to the Holy Spirit even when He speaks through a brother in Christ who differs from them in belief (John 3, 8), an inward approach would be perfected, drawing together much that to-day seems impossible to bridge. Humility and love can overcome all obstacles.

When the "Reformation" in Germany became an unhappy Revolution, the Holy Spirit called for a true Council of Reform to meet in Trent. The eloquent complaint of Hadrian VI in the instructions to his Papal Nuncio, Chieregato, at the Nuremberg Reichstag of 1522, shows clearly that he believed a thorough reform to be necessary. It was a wise and humble thought of the Pope to invite Protestants to this Council that they might themselves state their grievances and take an actual part in the renewal of the Church. Unfortunately, this great plan which promised without doubt the best results did not come to fruition. People's minds were still too heated. On both sides there was no readiness for a truly evangelical discussion. But has not the time come to-day to repeat, in some way, this experiment, trusting in the Lord who stretches His protecting hand over His Church!

### Twelve

Certainly it would not be possible without extensive preparation. It seems to me that this should not be postponed. I could imagine that your Holiness might choose some twelve men on whom you could rely, personalities recognized in the Church, of proved theological learning, firm faith and spiritual power, humility and love, men coming chiefly from countries where Church separation operates, where in consequence these questions are very real. These might be commissioned by Your Holiness to get into touch with a like number of leading representatives of separated churches. The right persons would have to be chosen with care and deliberation. But doubtless among all the separated communities in Germany, England, America, the northern countries, and quite specially in the Orient, serious, well-disposed and weighty persons could be found who could and would begin confidential conversations. Perhaps Assisi would be the most suitable meeting place; for the spirit of the Poverello, who is revered by all Christians without exception, would help to create an atmosphere of peace and reconciliation. The purpose of these first discussions would be to obtain an objective survey of actual difference as well as possibilities of approach.

The report of these persons commissioned by Your Holiness would then be studied in a Pontifical Commission appointed by Your Holiness, in order to create preliminary conditions for the realization of the great plan which in God's good time should crown the work — the calling of a General Council to give the re-united Church a new vision.

Is all this which I lay before Your Holiness too daring? I know that it goes far beyond what can be counted on to succeed. But it seems to me that only a great venture of faith, humility and love can solve the problem of the fate of Christendom.

Your most devoted

Dr. Max Josef Metzger

founder of UNA SANCTA MOVEMENT — executed in Germany in 1944

Advent, 1939.

From "News Letter"

London.

## Education

(Continued from page 5)  
—functional student of the living, regarded as dead.

### Time in Knowledge

The next point I wish to make about our knowledge is that we know nothing in time. Here we see the inadequacy of the field trip to the zoo. Take the giraffe home with you to your house, if you want to know him, and similarly the cow. But we are today what Max Picard calls "The Man of the Instant." "In this world of the momentary, one has no time to live with one's fellow man and really to know him. One briefly files him away after due cataloging of racial features or graphological semantics or psychological tests." That's why social workers have to keep case histories. The Christians have put all the burden on a few social workers, who haven't time to know the poor. But to return to knowledge of things in time, Picard writes: "If something turns up for a moment only, attention focuses not upon the true nature of the thing, but only upon its appearance as it comes and goes again." As the children and the teacher visiting the zoo on a field trip. It is also a flying trip. "And yet, by the slow growth of a living thing in nature, man is reminded of the fact that not only space but time as well must have its part in the



order of things." And that is why the city child is sophisticated, but not wise — sophisticated, nervous and distraught. He knows thousands of things in an instant, and in an instant they are gone; he knows nothing in time. An outstanding liturgist, whose parish is one of the most alive I've ever known, and where the school children sing the Mass almost daily, said to a group of us, that it was well-nigh impossible to get the children to concentrate. Radio, movies, and city panorama are almost destroying true knowledge. Picard writes: "Matter needs time in order to be formed." And hence to be known. As a man and wife are still learning to know each other until their dying breath. We moderns, what a bottomless well of disjointed knowledge we have! Yes we know everything, and we know nothing, we have collected a lot of labels.

### Manual Labor

There is another point on which I have not touched. Touched is the right word, because it is a matter of the knowledge that we gain through the use of the sense of touch, the knowledge given by manual labor. Now there is a knowledge of God's creatures, the creatures of matter, which only comes through manual labor, or the manipulation of matter. In manual labor, man learns the rhythm of matter, and gets in time with it so to speak, whether it is living or inanimate matter. Watch a carpenter or a sculptor touching wood, or a farmer handling a team, or a woman making bread. There is nothing as near human flesh as

## CHINA

65 Rua Do Campo  
Macao, S. China

Since my letter in your 1948 July-August issue I have made several attempts to send thanks, but our world is so full of problems we need a day of 48 hours. Apologies for my seeming negligence.

Events in China, shifting from bad to hopeless, have confirmed our thesis that "Hunger is the most fertile hotbed breeding Communist microbes." The Chinese are averse to Communism, but when more American aid entered China to stem the Communist advance, more hunger and misery followed, chaos spread, the Reds advanced more rapidly, regiments, armies, fleets went over to them.

The explanation? Hunger coupled with ill treatment by Nationalist autocrats. The pacific Chinese people, between the sea and the devil, have heard that Communism is not to be desired, but experience has taught them that in several respects the Nationalists are far more undesirable. Where have those vast sums of American dollars gone? Most of them have been channeled into the bottomless pockets of the mandarin clique, represented by the Big Four bureaucratic families. American sacrifices, instead of helping relief, have helped these cliques buy extensive properties, luxurious castles, mansions and villas in foreign countries, and deposit fortunes in foreign banks, even under your noses in America, while in China thousands died daily of hunger and misery. The fortunes of the Big Four represent almost the entire wealth of the country. The Communists wanted these autocrats as top war criminals, but many had already fled abroad. For details on the Big Four see Associated Press and Reuter dispatches from Nanking and Shanghai, June 1st and 13th. The Communists boast that the Nationalists obtained from America the Reds' armament, ammunition, medical and other supplies! Yet American supplies until lately continued to pour into China, serving only to offer tempting opportunities for crooked dealings and prolong the war.

Americans sent to investigate these "rumors" probably saw and heard only what had been prepared for them. They were not permitted to pierce or peep through the bamboo or silk-embroidered curtain; as the Chinese adage has it, they "contemplated flowers by galloping through." Yet congressmen still advocate China aid. China badly needs help, but no amount could save her unless a new set of God-sent, capable, honest administrators could replace the present corrupt, inefficient ones and recapture the people's confidence. Propaganda has misled Americans.

Let us take a short journey to the sweet-smiling dreamland of "If." If we could have had just a millionth part of that American aid we could have repaired dilapidated orphanages, clinics, foundling homes, asylums for the disabled, the blind, deafmutes, cripples,

bread dough, and Christ chose bread to be changed into His flesh. (Cf. Father Rembert Sorg "The Theology of Manual Labor," reviewed in this issue.)

Let us know the elemental, the natural, and the living, (including as a peak our fellow man, and the summit God, who is Life), and let us take time to know them. It cannot be speeded up, such knowing, and it is the only true basis for the mental discipline of study. Let us become wise instead of high pressure men and women. If we dug up lawns and parks for Victory gardens during the war, perhaps we could do the same thing for education in our city schools as a beginning, and every boy could learn how to build a house, and every girl how to make it a home. Education needs to return to its grass roots.

aged, hospitals for babes and free schools to meet increasing demands of thousands of destitute refugees. Our Catholic institutions used to bear the brunt in relief work because access to us is easier and fewer or no formalities are required. But to our grief we had to suspend some of our charitable homes, as we depend mainly on private donations, which have dwindled tremendously, particularly from the United States. The total of gifts this year was only a tenth of last year's total. Americans contributed generously toward the Chinese government relief fund, but we have not been deemed fit to receive even a couple of cents from these government sources.

Innumerable people in the United States would help us again but to let them know our desperate condition we must enlist the support of the press and particularly the CATHOLIC WORKER.

Our benefactors ask how to make remittances safely. Luckily, our institutions are in a foreign settlement distant from troubled zones. We have regular, efficient postal service, especially airmail, so it is safe and easy to send bank drafts or personal checks payable at New York (large amounts) or (for smaller sums) even United States currency, all by post, preferably airmail.

God bless you and your apostolic labor and the Catholic Workers. Please give them my sincere thanks and kindest regards.

Very gratefully and respectfully  
yours in Jesus, Mary and Joseph,

Rev. Lawrence Mahn.

## France

Garry Davis, who last year renounced his American citizenship and went to the United Nations Assembly in Paris to appeal for world citizenship, has declared his adoption of the pacifist position of opposition to all war. He courted arrest several times during the month of September by camping in front of a Paris prison in protest against the detention of Jean Moreau, a conscientious objector. French law makes no provision for recognition of the right of conscientious objection to war. Davis wrote a letter to President Auriol asking that he be put in jail along with Moreau. He was finally brought to trial on October 4 and sentenced to eight days' imprisonment, but was immediately released because he had already served eight days. Fifteen persons, mostly young followers of his World Citizens movement, were arrested for attempting to continue the vigil outside the Cherche-Midi military prison, where Moreau was incarcerated.

On the day Davis was sentenced in Paris twelve pacifists were arrested in Washington for picketing the French Embassy. The picketing was organized as a demonstration of support of Garry Davis and a protest against the refusal of the French Government to recognize the right of conscientious objection to war.

Davis, who is now threatened with banishment from France because of his arrest and conviction, has received the active support of religious and educational leaders, including the Abbe Pierre, of Nouilly, who is launching a national petition in favor of recognition of conscientious objection and is bringing the problem before the National Assembly and the Government.

In a statement issued on September 21st, Davis referred to "Jesus, Buddha, Lao Tzu, Tolstoy, St. Francis of Assisi, Gandhi and other great thinkers and religious leaders" who have taught man "to work for and love his fellow man rather than be trained in killing. He declared: "For me, and no doubt for many of us, the era of violence is dead, though not yet buried." D. M.