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Caillebette bequest

Wilenski, R. H. Modern French Painters. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1954 edition.

page 149: "Gérôme, for example, said in an interview published by the Journal des artistes: 'Only great moral depravity could bring the State to accept such rubbish.... These artists are all Anarchists and madmen.'

page 155: "In the spring the pictures finally accepted by the state from Caillebette's collection were exhibited in the Luxembourg, and Senator Hervé de Seisy attacked them as a 'misérable collection' representing 'sous les aspects les moins attractifs un art absolument en décadence et dans lequel nos jeunes élèves ne peuvent trouver aucune étincelle du feu sacré qui doit éclairer leur carrière'.

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By far the most important political attack on modern art of the 1940s was
subversive. I've studied these citations carefully and conclude that half-
launched by academic artists against the State Department's exhibitions of Ameri-
-dozen of the 45 artists were in fact Communists or legal party-liners. At
can painting, which had been bought to send abroad.

Late in the fall of 1946 the Hearst papers published every week a full page
picked out which pictures were painted by the half-dozen Communists.

of illustrations of work by such artists as Stuart Davis, John Marin, Ben Shahn,
The traumatic effect on the State Department was enormous. Even today the

and Kuniyoshi with quotations assailing the exhibitions by Dean Cornwell,
United States Information Agency attempts to exclude a matter of public policy

Charles R. Knight, Eugene Speicher and other conservatives. Look Magazine
abstract art from its shows sent abroad for fear some congressmen won't like it.

published a spread reproducing a dozen of the pictures in order to show how the
This is done in spite of the facts:

American taxpayers' money had been spent. Pressure mounted and finally Secretary
first that abstract painting is apparently the strongest movement in contemporary

Marshall ordered the shows withdrawn for the good, as he said, of the State
Department. abstract painting is anathema to communists.

Department. abstract painting is anathema to communists.

The attacks were for the most part on the radical style of the pictures
but the radical politics of some of the artists was also used.

After the shows were withdrawn Congressman Busbey renewed his assault on the
State Department show and published a list of 24 of the 45 artists with citations
from the files of the Un-American Activities Committee as evidence that they were

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subversive. I've studied these citations carefully and conclude that half-
 Then there are the "black lists" or "gray lists". The "gray list" I
 a-dozen of the 45 artists were in fact Communists or loyal party-liners. At
 gather has nothing to do with works of art themselves, but simply with the artist's
 the same time, I am pretty sure that Congressman Busbey could not possibly have
 past as it is presented in some security dossier. The dossier may or may not contain
 picked out which pictures were painted by the half-dozen Communists.

The traumatic effect on the State Department was enormous. Even today the
 checked on but it has been used to blackball artists without further investigation.
 United States Information Agency attempts to exclude as a matter of public policy
 None of us on the outside have been permitted to see this list, but we know from
 abstract art from its shows sent abroad for fear some congressmen won't like it.
 experience how it works.

This it does in spite of the facts:

In 1952 John Saur, now in the Whitney Museum, was asked by the State Department
first that abstract painting is apparently the strongest movement in contemporary
 to do American on recent American sculpture for publication in Europe. Saur
 American art and

naturally included William Zorach in his review and also in the 7 illustrations
second that abstract painting is anathema to communists.

he was asked to recommend. He was astonished to receive a phone call from the State
 Department saying that Zorach could not be included because, Saur discovered,
 Zorach had been listed by Congressman Dondero as having been a member of the John
 Reed Club in the early 30s. About this same time Zorach also lost an important
 Government sculpture commission for a memorial in North Africa after he had already
 prepared the model at the request of the architects. It appears that he had been
 denounced by some conservative sculptor.

Zorach emphatically denied Congressman Dondero's accusation and had his
 denial read into the Congressional Record by his own congressman. He is puzzled

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Then there are the "black lists" or "gray lists". The "gray list" I gather has nothing to do with works of art themselves, but simply with the artist's past as it is presented in some security dossier. The dossier may or may not contain true information; it may in fact include false accusations which have ~~never~~ not been checked on but it has been used to blackball artists without further investigation. None of us on the outside have been permitted to see this list, but we know from experience how it works.

In 1952 John Baur, now in the Whitney Museum, was asked by the State Department to do an article on recent American sculpture for publication in Europe. Baur naturally included William Zorach in his review and also in the 7 illustrations he was asked to recommend. He was astonished to receive a phone call from the State Department saying that Zorach could not be included because, Baur discovered, Zorach had been listed by Congressman Dondero as having been a member of the John Reed Club in the early 30s. About this same time Zorach also lost an important Government sculpture commission for a memorial in North Africa after he had already prepared the model at the request of the architects. It appears that he had been denounced by some conservative sculptor.

Zorach emphatically denied Congressman Dondero's accusation and had his denial read into the Congressional Record by his own congressman. He is puzzled

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4a

by the source of the stories, but thinks that it may go back to an even earlier museum officials as the most desirable American painter to be represented at an period when the Provincetown Players were started. It seems that he took part in important foreign exhibition. This nomination, however, though 6 to 1, was vetoed a play in which John Reed was a fellow actor. The error is farcical, but the ~~xxx~~ by a representative of the State Department. results so far as the sculptor is concerned were serious.

Last year the Museum was asked to do an emergency exhibition of American

Take the case of Ben Shahn. In 1931 Shahn painted a series of small painting to be shown at a South American conference by the United States Information Agency. Our Museum agreed to do this with the usual provision that we should be During the mid-thirties Shahn was associated with some artists' organizations ives to make our own selection. When the U.S.I.A. received the list we had a phone which were Communist dominated. By the mid-1940s however, he was being criticized ~~and~~ that Franz Kline, one of the best of the younger American abstract paint- by party-linerwriters as a formalist. In 1946 in Congressman Busbey's denunciations ~~was~~, he removed from the exhibition. It appeared that he was on the list. We of the State Department exhibition Shahn was among 24 painters who were supposed to ~~refuse~~. ~~Set-it-to-aside-however~~, to the credit of the U.S.I.A., that not long after- have subversive records. Some of the 24 had as many as three columns of citations. words we were informed that the charge against Franz Kline was a case of mistaken Shahn had only one citation. He had contributed a drawing to the New Masses identity.)

2rd annual art auction in March, 1942. This was at a time when we were allies with

I gather from recent statements from members of the U.S.I.A. that it no the U.S.S.R. which was winning sympathy of most Americans fighting a losing struggle longer was a list of artists against whom miscellaneous and often unproven charges with the Nazi invaders. Like many gullible liberals, he worked for Wallace in 1947. have been leveled, but now confines its "black list" to artists - I quote:

Perhaps the Communist subvers'ion of Wallace's Progressive Party further dis- "who are avowed Communists" or who "refuse to answer questions of congressional illusioned Shahn. In any case, he was later to speak with extreme bitterness of the committees regarding their connection with "the Communist movement," an improvement Communist infiltration and corruption of the liberal movement.

over the previous "gray list" practice of the State Department and the old U.S.I.A.

A few years later Shahn was nominated by a committee of leading American which had been so intimidated by congressmen such as Busbey and Denton,

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4b

museum officials as the most desirable American painter to be represented at an important foreign exhibition. This nomination, however, though 8 to 1, was vetoed by a representative of the State Department.

Last year the Museum was asked to do an emergency exhibition of American painting to be shown at a South American conference by the United States Information Agency. Our Museum agreed to do this with the usual provision that we should be free to make our own selection. When the U.S.I.A. received the list we had a phone call asking that Franz Kline, one of the best of the younger American abstract painters, be removed from the exhibition. It appeared that he was on the list. We refused. *(Though the following P.S. is beside the point it should be added)* ~~Let it be said, however,~~ to the credit of the U.S.I.A., that not long afterwards we were informed that the charge against Franz Kline was a case of mistaken identity.)

I gather from recent statements from members of the U.S.I.A. that it no longer uses a list of artists against whom miscellaneous and often unproven charges have been leveled, but now confines its "black list" to artists - I quote: "who are avowed Communists" or who "refuse to answer questions of congressional committees regarding their connection with the Communist movement," an improvement over the previous "gray list" practice of the State Department and the old U.S.I.S. which had been so intimidated by congressmen such as Busbey and Dondero.

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WELLS, WALTER

Actually, if we are to judge by the statistics published in the current issue of LOOK magazine, only 5% of the great American public is seriously concerned about civil liberties in general, not to mention the civil liberties of so marginal and unconventional a group as the artists.

1938

1938, April 23

Report of the Central Committee of the Communist

Party, U.S.A., published in Pravda led to the

but this article

formation of the yse

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SOCIALIST-REALISM

1930

BRODSKY, Isaac Lenin in the Smolny Institute

1931 Gorky

1932 Stalin

1932, April 23 Decree of the Central Committee of the Communist

Party, U.S.S.R. published in Pravda led to the

formation of the Yseccokahudoshnik.

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Make clear

that realism is not un-American - it is not necessarily Communist.

Realism is one way to paint -- one of the great traditions of painting - John van Eyck, Mantegna, Dürer, Velasquez, Vermeer, Courbet and in our own day many excellent painters and sculptors have been more or less realists.--

but this marble waxworks

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ARCHITECTURE

A very brief glimpse at architecture:

- *-- In 1927 Leonidov designed this project for the Lenin Institute.
- About ten years later Yofan and his associates designed this project for the Palace of the Soviets.
- In 1928 while in Moscow Sergei Eisenstein introduced me to the young architect Andrey Burov who had just designed this model dairy.
- In 1937 Burov designed this Architects Club in Moscow.
- In 1935 - while Mikritin was struggling with his painting of subway works, the workers themselves were building this subway station.

A word of warning: I am going to quote the words of a number of Americans. In this period of suspicion and guilt by association, quotation is a delicate business, especially out of context. Some conservative artists and their friends seem to think that modern art is somehow subversive and even cosmopolitan. This was a view held by the Nazis. Nevertheless agreement about modern art does not make our conservative friends Nazis.

It is not an orthodox dogma of Communism that modern art is an instrument of capitalism and the decadent west, and that the only permissible style of art is realistic.

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Introduction

This is a long, complicated and delicate subject to tackle in one evening.

Most of the words you will hear this evening will not be mine, they will be quotations, quotations from Russian, German and American writers.

It is true that all orthodox Communist artists and critics must be

realists, but this does not of course mean that all realists must be Communists.

most of the slides will pass quickly. All the same I should inform you right

now that the lecture will last a couple of hours. About 2/3 of the way

through there will be a five minute intermission, time to stand up and

stretch -- you can even leave if you want to, though the second half of this

game, though shorter, is more interesting and more important.

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Introduction
Introduction - 2

This is a long, complicated and delicate subject to tackle in one evening. Now this does not mean that when President Truman attacks modern art while at the same time he expresses his preference for realism, he is

Most of the words you will hear this evening will not be mine, they therefore a Communist.

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It is true that all orthodox Communist artists and critics must be

There will be a good many quotations and a great many pictures -- but realists, but this does not of course mean that all realists must be Communists.

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Ask Lenin, Churchill, Hitler, Eisenhower, Stalin and Truman "do you

now that the lecture will last a couple of hours. About 2/3 of the way like modern art?" -- the would answer "no;" ask them if they prefer realistic

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Yet, of course what is important here is not so much what these chiefs-

A word of warning: I am going to quote the words of a number of of-state say, but what they do. This involves the problem of freedom which

Americans. In this period of suspicion and guilt by association, quotation is the fundamental point of this evening's argument.

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I am going to talk first of all about art under the Nazi dictatorship;

and their friends seem to think that modern art is somehow subversive and even secondly about certain American attitudes toward modern art; then about what

communist. This was a view held by the Nazis. Nevertheless agreement happened to art under the Soviet regime; and lastly and very briefly a few re-

about modern art does not make our conservative friends Nazis. marks about Communist influence on western art during the past five years.

It is now an orthodox dogma of Communism that modern art is an instrument

Let me remind you that the history of the Nazi regime is, we hope, limited

of capitalism and the decadent west, and that the only permissible style of art to the dozen years between 1933 and 1945. This is less than one third as long

is realistic.

as the Soviet regime, which began at the end of 1917 and is still going strong.

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Introduction

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Introduction - 2

Now this does not mean that when President Truman attacks modern art while at the same time he expresses his preference for realism, he is therefore a Communist.

It is true that all orthodox Communist artists and critics must be realists, but this does not of course mean that all realists must be Communists.

Ask Lenin, Churchill, Hitler, Eisenhower, Stalin and Truman "do you like modern art?" -- they would answer "no;" ask them if they prefer realistic painting? they would answer "yes." I think I've now reduced the question of guilt by association to safe absurdity.

Yet, of course what is important here is not so much what these chiefs-of-state say, but what they do. This involves the problem of freedom which is the fundamental point of this evening's argument.

I am going to talk first of all about art under the Nazi dictatorship; secondly about certain American attitudes toward modern art; then about what happened to art under the Soviet regime; and lastly and very briefly a few remarks about Communist influence on western art during the past five years.

Let me remind you that the history of the Nazi regime is, we hope, limited to the dozen years between 1933 and 1945. This is less than one third as long as the Soviet regime, which began at the end of 1917 and is still going strong.

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1a

Experiment, ferment, did indeed bubble on for a couple of years after the revolution. I had begun before 1917, even before 1914. In 1918 and '19 it prospered. The Czarist Academicians were dispersed -- but only briefly. By 1920 they had counter-attacked by pointing out that their realistic art might be more useful to the revolution than the chaos of these crazy modernists and leftists. By 1922 the reactionary artists' society, the A.K.R.R. was the strongest in Russia. The A.K.R.R. manifesto of 1922 proclaimed: "It is our duty to perpetuate the Revolution, the greatest event of history, in our artistic documents. We render...the life of the Red Army...the workers and peasants, the leaders of the Revolution, and the heroes of labor." (C.G.E. Bunt, A History of Russian Art, London, 1946)

1. Realism in style - immediately comprehensible

2. Patriotic in subject - heroes of revolution -

military men - soldiers, workers, peasants

race, class

landscape

Fear and hatred of foreign (bourgeois) influence

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ZIEGLER, Adolf The Goddesses of Art 1938

THORAK left: Noble Knight 1944: Exhibition of German Art
right: Prophets

Die unzerstörbaren Werte unserer Kultur

The immortal, the undying value of our Culture.

KUMRINIJSKI Finis

In Art, Hitlerite Germany and Stalinist Russia alike

1. Realism in style - immediately comprehensible

2. Patriotic in subject - heroes of revolution -

military past - soldiers, workers, peasants

race, class landscape

Fear and hatred of foreign (bourgeois influence)

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33a

Hitler was right! (slide)

It would be hard to choose the most important American document
Let us not be too complacent. Here is a page from an American popular magazine
attacking modern art during the 1930s. We have Congressman Darby's attack
reproducing works from the 1937 Degenerate Art show in Munich. Dali, now in the
on the State Department exhibition of American art which has been sent abroad
Philadelphia Museum, is added for good measure. The text proposes a "campaign
on grounds that it was full of un-American abstractions and expressionist
of ridicule for such craftsmanship as this, shown at the recent Carnegie
distortions. Also that some of the artists included had Communist records.
International Exhibition in Pittsburgh."

This congressional denunciation was inspired by academic artists who
1937 Sanity in Art in the show. It was effective. The State Department was
founded: Mrs. Logan

Gutson Borglum - honest philistine anger

Paul Finnwin

no accusations of Communism at this early stage, but/un-American - subversive -
incompetent
insincere - dishonest.

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33b

It would be hard to choose the most important American document attacking modern art during the 1940s. We have Congressman Busby's attack on the State Department exhibition of American art which has been sent abroad on grounds that it was full of un-American abstractions and expressionist distortions. Also that some of the artists included had Communist records.

This congressional denunciation was inspired by academic artists who had not been included in the show. It was effective. The State Department was intimidated and the exhibition withdrawn.

members have, I believe, had a chance to see what Mr. Busby says by examining art. This was the Congressman's reaction to the material exhibited at the exhibition of American art. He was attacked the day after that by the right-wing artists of this country to force their withdrawal of the exhibition. It is not of course referring to specific art or artists.

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There was the curious manifesto published by the Boston Institute of Modern Art which accused modern painters of social irresponsibility and chicanery and enjoined them to mend their ways. The Boston Institute even changed its name from Modern to Contemporary, but within two years it also changed its mind publicly, though implicitly, and apologized.

There was an article in the Atlantic Monthly full of hate and contempt by Francis Henry Taylor; and another in Harper's by Lincoln Kirstein; both attacked modern painting on the theory that it was not humanistic. You I. C. A. members have, I believe, had a chance to see what Mr. Kirstein means by humanistic art.

Then there were Congressman Dondero's speeches in Congress based on material supplied by an organization of academic artists. Dondero referred to modern artists as "germ-carrying art vermin" and "international art thugs." He saw in abstract painting a plot to undermine our republican system in favor of communism. He even attacked the New York Times and the Metropolitan Museum of Art for showing some sympathetic interest in modern artists. Dondero called upon the "patriotic proponents of academic art ... the loyal, patriotic, clear-minded, right-thinking artists of this country" to "purge their establishments of this social disease." He is not of course referring to syphilis but to modern art.

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In the end, after much debate, most of the Council was finally persuaded that the modern artists were not subversive or communist. I'm glad several public hearings held before the City Council of Los Angeles. They concerned an art exhibition at which a number of modern artists got prizes to the disadvantage of their conservative colleagues. The conservatives organized a Committee for Traditional Art and got the ear of some members of the City Council. Listen to Council President Henry:

"This art is a replica of what appears in Communist papers.

There's no doubt that this is another instance of Communist infiltration." ...

non ("The art exhibit carries a definite communist motif. Some people say they could
sequitur (do better painting blindfolded with brushes tied to their elbows."...

Henry and Councilman Don A. Allen particularly objected to the exhibition's second prize winner for oils -- "Surge of the Sea" by Rex Brandt, a well-known conservative artist.

They saw in a sail-marking "a hammer and sickle" insignia...

In one letter read to the Council, the show was called "a collection of meaningless lines and daubs, with nothing that is uplifting and spiritual."

This one was signed by Duncan Gleason, chairman of the coordinating Committee for Traditional Art, and it also asserted that the show was "an affront to the sensibilities of normal people."

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In the end, after much debate, most of the Council was finally persuaded that the modern artists were not subversive or communistic. I'm glad to report to you that the embarrassed Mayor of Los Angeles went further: he expressed chagrin that his great city had been made a laughing stock in the eyes of the nation. He Gaillebotte -- Luxembourg -- Impressionist pictures

Gérôme, President of the Salon des Artistes Français, -- thundered -- "Only great moral depravity could bring the state to accept such rubbish. These artists are all anæroides and lunatics."

8 potets

11 Pissarro

2 Renoirs

2 Cézannes

I've no doubt that the President of France in 1894 would have agreed with Gérôme just as today our democratic chiefs-of-state always side with the academicians.

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Let us quote President Truman's letter to Assistant Secretary of State Barton
Of course this pattern of the Academic artists' assaulting
attacking the State Department's doomed exhibition of 1946. He writes:
their modern rivals on political and moral grounds is classic.

"I am of the opinion that so-called modern art is merely the vapors of half-baked
Cézanne's paintings attacked as "obviously the work of a
lazy people. An artistic production is one which shows infinite ability for taking
Communard"
pains and if any of these so-called modern paintings show any such infinite ability I
1894 - when the Caillebotte -- Luxembourg -- Impressionist pictures
are very much mistaken.

Gérome, President of the Salon des Artistes Francaises, -- thundered --
"There are a great many American artists who still believe that the ability
"Only great moral depravity could bring the state to accept such
to make things look as they are is the first requisite of a great artist -- they do
rubbish. These artists are all anarchists and lunatics."
not belong to the so-called modern school. There is no art at all in connection with
and the Museum meekly refused:

- the modernists, in my opinion."
- 8 Monets
 - If I may look across the Atlantic a minute there was the hub-bub at the
 - 11 Pissarros
 - Royal Academy banquet of 1894 at which Sir Alfred Jennings, President of the Royal
Academy and I was held one of the crudest living portrait painters of horses, etc.,
 - 2 Renoirs
 - 2 Cézannes

I read the obituary of his works even though all of you doubtless remember his ringing
I've no doubt that the President of France in 1894 would have agreed with
works. They are unforgettable. After a diatribe on Watteau and other "impressionists"
Gérome just as today our democratic chiefs-of-state always side with the academicians.

"Not so long ago Mr. Churchill and myself were walking together. Mr. Churchill
said to me, 'Alfred, if we saw Pablo Picasso (another impressionist) coming down the
street, would you kick me in kicking me out in a certain part of his body? I said,
'By God, I would, Winston.'"

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Let me quote President Truman's letter to Assistant Secretary of State Benton attacking the State Department's doomed exhibition of 1946. He writes:

"I am of the opinion that so-called modern art is merely the vaporings of half-baked lazy people. An artistic production is one which shows infinite ability for taking pains and if any of these so-called modern paintings show any such infinite ability I am very much mistaken.

"There are a great many American artists who still believe that the ability to make things look as they are is the first requisite of a great artist -- they do not belong to the so-called modern school. There is no art at all in connection with the modernists, in my opinion."

If I may look across the Atlantic a minute there was the hub-bub at the Royal Academy banquet of 1949 at which Sir Alfred Munnings, President of the Royal Academy and I am told one of the greatest living portrait painters of horses spoke. I read the climax of his speech: even though all of you doubtless remember his ringing words. They are unforgettable. After a diatribe on Matisse and other "impressionists" he recounts:

"Not so long ago Mr. Churchill and myself were walking together. Mr. Churchill said to me, 'Alfred, if we saw Pablo Picasso (another impressionist) coming down the street, would you join me in kicking him hard in a certain part of his body? I said, 'By, God, I would, Winston.'"

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39a

In fairness to Sir Winston I should inform you that he is said to have denied these remarks though they do harmonize with some of his other expressions of hostility toward modern art.

But let us distribute the honors fairly. Not long ago a distinguished American statesman was being conducted through the U. N. building in New York. Stopping before the large murals by Fernand Léger, he exclaimed: "Well, you don't have to be nutty to be modern!" Of course President Eisenhower like Sir Winston Churchill is a painter of somewhat conservative tendencies. Yet Mr. Eisenhower's outburst is far less serious than Mr. Truman's when after looking at paintings by some of the old masters he remarked "It is a pleasure to look at perfection, especially when you think of some of the lazy, nutty moderns. It is like comparing Christ with Lenin. May there be another awakening." (New York Times review by Orville Prescott, March 18, 1952 of the book Mr. President by William Hillman.)

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33a

Dup.

Hitler was right! (slide)

It would be hard to choose the most important American document of the 1930s. Let us not be too complacent. Here is a page from an American popular magazine attacking modern art during the 1930s. We have Congressman Purby's attack reproducing works from the 1937 Degenerate Art show in Munich. Dali, now in the on the State Department exhibition of American art which has been sent abroad Philadelphia Museum, is added for good measure. The text proposes a "campaign on grounds that it was full of un-American abstractions and expressionist of ridicule for such craftsmanship as this, shown at the recent Carnegie distortions. Also that some of the artists included had Communist records. International Exhibition in Pittsburgh."

This congressional denunciation was inspired by academic artists who

1937 Sanity in Art in the show. It was effective. The State Department was founded: Mrs. Logan intimidated and the exhibition withdrawn.

Gutson Borglum - honest philistine anger

Paul Finnwin

no accusations of Communism at this early stage, but/un-American - subversive - incompetent
insincere - dishonest.

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33b

It would be hard to choose the most important American document attacking modern art during the 1940s. We have Congressman Busby's attack on the State Department exhibition of American art which has been sent abroad on grounds that it was full of un-American abstractions and expressionist distortions. Also that some of the artists included had Communist records.

This congressional denunciation was inspired by academic artists who had not been included in the show. It was effective. The State Department was intimidated and the exhibition withdrawn.

members have, I believe, had a chance to see what Mr. Hirstein means by humanistic art.

Then there were Congressman Bouders's speeches in Congress based on material supplied by an organization of academic artists. Bouders referred to modern artists as "germ-carrying art vermin" and "international art thugs." He saw in abstract painting a plot to undermine our republican system in favor of communism.

He even attacked the New York Times and the Metropolitan Museum of Art for showing too sympathetic interest in modern artists. Bouders called upon the "patriotic proponents of academic art ... the loyal, patriotic, clear-sighted, right-thinking artists of this country" to "purge their establishments of this social disease."

He is not of course referring to syphilis but to modern art.

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There was the curious manifesto published by the Boston Institute of Modern Art which accused modern painters of social irresponsibility and chicanery and enjoined them to mend their ways. The Boston Institute even changed its name from Modern to Contemporary, but within two years it also changed its mind publicly, though implicitly, and apologized.

There was an article in the Atlantic Monthly full of hate and contempt by Francis Henry Taylor; and another in Harper's by Lincoln Kirstein; both attacked modern painting on the theory that it was not humanistic. You I. C. A. members have, I believe, had a chance to see what Mr. Kirstein means by humanistic art.

Then there were Congressman Dondero's speeches in Congress based on material supplied by an organization of academic artists. Dondero referred to modern artists as "germ-carrying art vermin" and "international art thugs." He saw in abstract painting a plot to undermine our republican system in favor of communism. He even attacked the New York Times and the Metropolitan Museum of Art for showing some sympathetic interest in modern artists. Dondero called upon the "patriotic proponents of academic art ... the loyal, patriotic, clear-minded, right-thinking artists of this country" to "purge their establishments of this social disease." He is not of course referring to syphilis but to modern art.

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Two other incidents are instructive: Late in 1951 there were several public hearings held before the City Council of Los Angeles. They concerned an art exhibition at which a number of modern artists got prizes to the disadvantage of their conservative colleagues. The conservatives organized a Committee for Traditional Art and got the ear of some members of the City Council. Listen to Council President Henry:

"This art is a replica of what appears in Communist papers.

There's no doubt that this is another instance of Communist infiltration." ...

non ("The art exhibit carries a definite communist motif. Some people say they could
sequitur (do better painting blindfolded with brushes tied to their elbows."...

Henry and Councilman Don A. Allen particularly objected to the exhibition's second prize winner for oils -- "Surge of the Sea" by Rex Brandt, a well-known conservative artist.

They saw in a sail-marking "a hammer and sickle" insignia...

In one letter read to the Council, the show was called "a collection of meaningless lines and daubs, with nothing that is uplifting and spiritual."

This one was signed by Duncan Gleason, chairman of the coordinating Committee for Traditional Art, and it also asserted that the show was "an affront to the sensibilities of normal people."

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In the end, after much debate, most of the Council was finally persuaded that the modern artists were not subversive or communistic. I'm glad to report to you that the embarrassed Mayor of Los Angeles went further: he expressed chagrin that his great city had been made a laughing stock in the eyes of the nation. He Gailliotte -- Luxembourg -- Impressionist pictures

Gérome, President of the Salon des Artistes Français, -- thundered --

"Only great moral depravity could bring the state to accept such

rubbish. These artists are all anarchists and lunatics."

and the Museum weekly refused:

6 Manet

11 Pissarro

2 Renoir

1 Cézanne

I've no doubt that the President of France in 1894 would have agreed with

Gérome just as today our democratic chiefs-of-state always side with the academicians.

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Let us quote President Truman's letter to Assistant Secretary of State Benton
Of course this pattern of the Academic artists' assaulting
attacking the State Department's decadal exhibition of 1946. He writes:
their modern rivals on political and moral grounds is classic.

"I am of the opinion that so-called modern art is merely the vapors of half-baked
Cézanne's paintings attacked as "obviously the work of a
lazy people. An artistic production is one which shows infinite ability for laboring
Communard"

1894 - when the Caillebotte -- Luxembourg -- Impressionist pictures
as very much mistaken.

Gérome, President of the Salon des Artistes Francaises, -- thundered --

"There are a great many American artists who still believe that the ability
"Only great moral depravity could bring the state to accept such
to make things look as they are is the first requisite of a great artist -- May be
rubbish. These artists are all anarchists and lunatics."

no belong to the so-called modern school. There is no art at all in connection with
and the Museum meekly refused:

the modernists, in my opinion."

8 Monets

11 Pissarros

2 Renoirs

2 Cézannes

I need no say of the records now though all of you doubtless remember the words
I've no doubt that the President of France in 1894 would have agreed with
Gérome just as today our democratic chiefs-of-state always side with the academicians.

be recorded:

"The art world has been..."

and to be, indeed, it is one of the most..."

street, would you like to be..."

"By, God, I would, indeed."

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Let me quote President Truman's letter to Assistant Secretary of State Benton attacking the State Department's doomed exhibition of 1946. He writes:

"I am of the opinion that so-called modern art is merely the vaporings of half-baked
 lazy people. An artistic production is one which shows infinite ability for taking
 pains and if any of these so-called modern paintings show any such infinite ability I
 am very much mistaken.

"There are a great many American artists who still believe that the ability
 to make things look as they are is the first requisite of a great artist -- they do
 no belong to the so-called modern school. There is no art at all in connection with
 the modernists, in my opinion."

If I may look across the Atlantic a minute there was the hub-bub at the
 Royal Academy banquet of 1949 at which Sir Alfred Munnings, President of the Royal
 Academy and I am told one of the greatest living portrait painters of horses spoke.

I read the climax of his speech: even though all of you doubtless remember his ringing
 words. They are unforgettable. After a diatribe on Matisse and other "impressionists"
 he recounts:

"Not so long ago Mr. Churchill and myself were walking together. Mr. Churchill
 said to me, 'Alfred, if we saw Pablo Picasso (another impressionist) coming down the
 street, would you join me in kicking him hard in a certain part of his body? I said,
 'By, God, I would, Winston.'"

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39a

The Washington Post

Washington

In fairness to Sir Winston I should inform you that he is said to have

denied these remarks though they do harmonize with some of his other expressions of hostility toward modern art.

Dear Alfred:

But let us distribute the honors fairly. Not long ago a distinguished American statesman was being conducted through the U. N. building in New York. Stopping before the large murals by Fernand Léger, he exclaimed: "Well, you don't have to be nutty to be modern!" Of course President Eisenhower like Sir Winston Churchill is a painter of somewhat conservative tendencies. Yet Mr. Eisenhower's outburst is far less serious than Mr. Truman's when after looking at paintings by some of the old masters he remarked "It is a pleasure to look at perfection, especially when you think of some of the lazy, nutty moderns. It is like comparing Christ with Lenin. May there be another awakening." (New York Times review by Orville Prescott, March 18, 1952 of the book Mr. President by William Hillman.)

Best regards,
 I am not turning your
 Washington matter up
 could - many thanks -

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The Washington Post
AND
Times Herald

1515 L STREET, N. W. - WASHINGTON 5, D. C. - REPUBLIC 7-1234

washington

March 1, 1955

Dear Alfred:

I enclose herewith two copies of the article based on your talk. There has been a very favorable reaction to it here, even from the most conservative quarters - Bob says even business friends of his are talking about it. Next week comes the USIA's reply, and a discussion of the bills now before congress - I will send you copies as soon as they are published. I believe Con. Thompson plans to make reprints of both articles for distribution to interested people, and plans to have both written in to the Congressional Record. I will send you copies if he does.

I wonder if you have had a chance to read the Arts Digest editorial and my article which I gave you at Mrs. Bliss's? Being without an editor, I have never heard from the Digest as to whether they will actually take the article or not, although it was a commission. I wonder if you think it has merit, and whether it might find a publisher elsewhere if the Arts Digest doesn't come through. I have a very handsome set of photographs to go with it.

That old debbil, money, seems to raise its head too often these days - if you hear of any articles that you think I could tackle, or art work I could do from here, I would be so grateful if you would keep me in mind.

Best regards,

Leslie -

*I am not wanting your
material under separate
cover - many thanks -*

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Washington

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS *events at The Corcoran Gallery*

3104 QUE STREET NW WASHINGTON 7 DC telephone HU 3-4440

ROBERT RICHMAN Director

16 February 1955

Dear Alfred:

I thought you would be interested in both of these enclosures. We have had so many enthusiastic phone calls about your excellent lecture, not the least of which were the very warm and glowing ones from Duncan Phillips and Mrs. Bliss.* It was such a pleasure to have you here and I know that it was possible because you sacrificed your time and energy to make it so. I shall always be grateful to you for that. With all good wishes,

Yours,

Robert

** Daida and I add ours, Too!*

RR:c
Enclosures

THE ADVISORY BOARD OF ARTISTS

Naum Gabo | Martha Graham | Roy Harris | Bernard Leach | Herbert Read | Allen Tate

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cc J.T.S.

Mr. Robert Richman

- 2 -

February 15, 1955

February 15, 1955

industry. I admire Herbert as a philosopher and aesthetician enormously, but I do not really exaggerate both his influence and his priority, at least so far as this country is concerned, although I would agree that he was a real pioneer in England. I had a really interesting and exciting time in Washington, but I hope I was not too much trouble to you and your wife. Heaven knows, the snow storm plus the exceptional character and subject of my talk would have given you plenty of headaches without the Carters' hospitality. (I had one myself and must have drunk five glasses of water during those two agonizing hours). I made the train easily and had an agreeable trip back.

Here are my expenses:

Railway	\$26.71
Tips	3.25
Taxis	5.50

If you have the time, send me any account you can of the reactions to the lecture. I was a bit concerned over Mrs. Bliss' attitude, but she was agreeable enough afterwards. However, it seemed to me that Mr. Bliss looked a bit grim. The Phillips, however, seemed generally enthusiastic.

Leslie Portner asked me for the manuscript of my talk, but none exists. I gave her my notes which are pretty confused.

During intermission I had a brief and rather intense talk with Mr. Breker (?) of the U.S.I.A. The main points are mentioned in the enclosed copy of a letter to Leslie Portner. My one regret is that I did not make clear my sympathy for the employees of the U.S.I.A., some of whom I am sure have been made quite uncomfortable by the un-American methods which they seem obliged to employ. I gathered from Mr. Breker that all is now much improved. I am not entirely sure how Leslie will report the issues involved, but I had the impression that she was very sympathetic.

It was a great pleasure to see your wife, whom I think I had never met before -- though I did feel that I put her to a good deal of anxiety. I hope she can forgive me.

Let me tell you again how much I admire what you are doing -- and also the anthology of critical essays which you gave me and which I read on the train with much profit and interest.

Sincerely,

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Mr. Robert Richman
Institute of Contemporary Arts
3104 Que Street, N. W.
Washington 7, D. C.

AHB:ma

P. S. I also read the reviews of Herbert Read's book on art and

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Washington

Mr. Robert Richman

- 2 -

February 15, 1955
January 21, 1955

industry. I admire Herbert as a philosopher and aesthetician enormously, but I do think you greatly exaggerate both his influence and his priority, at least so far as this country is concerned, although I would agree that he was a real pioneer in England. However, for the first edition of art and industry, we supplied a good many of the illustrations directly from ~~the~~ catalogue on Machine Art, the exhibition held early in 1934. We felt greatly indebted to the Europeans, such as Muthesius, Gropius and Le Corbusier, but at that time Read was to us an English literary critic who had just written a brilliant, but rather provincial and ~~rather~~ irresponsibly illustrated book called Art Now. Later I changed my opinion about ~~it~~ completely and I think of him always with both affection and admiration, and, I might add, astonishment at the quality and quantity of his writing.

in a most positive way - by changing my decision about lecturing in ~~really~~ ^{really} ~~him~~ ^{him}
Your letter arrived just a few minutes before a phone call from Mr. Richman and tipped the balance in favor of coming to Washington. My reluctance was based entirely on the pressure of work here which has been almost intolerable during this 25th anniversary year.

In any case I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, though if you skip the lecture, I shall sympathize, since it's going to be long and the material is probably quite familiar to you.

Sincerely,

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Mrs. Robert Wade Miles
1537 Twenty-Eighth Street
Georgetown
Washington 7, D. C.

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Washington

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Jan. 20, 1955

January 21, 1955

To: Alfred Barr

Re: _____

From: M

URGENT

Dear Mrs. Bliss:

I did respond to your note in a most positive way - by changing my decision about lecturing in Washington. Your letter arrived just a few minutes before a phone call from Mr. Richman and tipped the balance in favor of coming to Washington. My reluctance was based entirely on the pressure of work here which has been almost intolerable during this 25th anniversary year.

In any case I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you, though if you skip the lecture, I shall sympathize, since it's going to be long and the material is probably quite familiar to you.

Sincerely,

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss
1537 Twenty-Eighth Street
Georgetown
Washington 7, D. C.

Yours very sincerely

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Mr. Alfred Barr
11 West 53rd Street
Museum of Modern Art
New York, N.Y.

you to Union + shif

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THE



1537 TWENTY-EIGHTH STREET
GEORGETOWN, WASHINGTON 7, D. C.

RT

January 11, 1955

To: Alfred

From: M

Dear Mr. Barr:

Robert Richman and Duncan Phillips tell me they have invited you to lecture to the I.C.A. and the Phillips Gallery the 18th or 25th of February.

This note is to tell you I greatly hope you will give these two lectures. The audiences of our two friends are more than ordinarily receptive and you, being you, would meet a response that would gratify you I am sure and would also give a special satisfaction to this member of the Museum of Modern Art's Board!

Do come.

Yours very sincerely

Mr. Alfred Barr
11 West 53rd Street
Museum of Modern Art
New York, N.Y.

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Addendum:

Jose' Gomez Sicre wanted you to come to Washington to see the Obregon show at The Pan American Union which opened the week of Jan. 17 (and might still be on view Feb. 11-12)

BT

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THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Date Jan. 20, 1955

To: Alfred Barr

Re: _____

From: MA

URGENT

Marga called to say:

1. Mrs. Duncan Phillips (such a lady!) had called and expects you to stay in their home the night of Friday, Feb. 11.
Mrs. Phillips is home now, and Marga thinks it would be good to call her immediately with answers to this and the following questions: Woodley 6-7518 is the number.
2. Would you mind having people to the house of the Phillips' before the lecture (she thought you might break the rule this time, since you've given the lecture before)
3. The Blissesses would like to organize a luncheon on Saturday if you can attend.
4. Mr. Richman would like to have a cocktail party ~~at~~ Saturday, if you can come. (Marga phrased it that he was "toying with the idea of")

Marga thinks that they would be perfectly willing ~~to~~ and glad to keep you for the weekend, but they need to know about your wishes to resolve the social situation for the various people.

Addendum:

Jose' Gomez Sicre wanted you to come to Washington to see the Obregon show at The Pan American Union which opened the week of Jan. 17 (and might still be on view Feb. 11-12)

BT

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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS

Washington
Lecture
events at The Corcoran Gallery

3104 QUE STREET NW WASHINGTON 7 DC telephone HU 3-4440

ROBERT RICHMAN Director

January 21, 1955

8 January 1955

Dear Robert:

I have talked to Mrs. Phillips who has very kindly asked me to stay at her house Friday and Saturday nights.. She tells me that the lecture will be held at the Corcoran and that you had previously said that it would be at 8:30 on Friday evening the 11th. I am taking the train which leaves New York, Pennsylvania Station, at 3:30 and gets to Washington at 7:15. I shall have eaten on the train and will come directly to the Corcoran, unless you tell me otherwise. I assume that I can get in there directly from the station so that I can rifle through my slides again and give instructions to whomever is running the lantern.

Unless you direct me to reduce the lecture, it would last about two hours with a ten minute intermission. There would be as many as 150 slides, not counting a dozen or so repeats, so that the operator should be fairly experienced. (I have had some bad luck in the past, especially at the Victoria and Albert where the talk was delayed for 20 minutes.) I shall need just one lantern, but it should be strong enough to project color slides. All the slides are standard size -- no 2 x 2's.

I realize that two hours may seem a frightening length of time, but now that I have given the lecture in half a dozen different cities, I am convinced that the interest of the material and the rapid sequence of slides does really maintain the interest of the audience.

I hope to have some word from you confirming the arrangements.

The talk changes every time it's given and is brought up to date. It might be called Modern Art under Tyranny or Tyranny and Modern Art. It will cover the story of what happened in the U.S.S.R. and Nazi Germany with some parallels or extensions in Italy, France and the U.S.. It sounds very solemn, but I find that there are a good many laughs in it too. The subject is essentially comic, though tragic enough for the individual.

Sincerely,

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

Mr. Robert Richman
Institute of Contemporary Arts
3104 Que Street, N. W.
Washington 7, D. C.

P. S. Mrs. Phillips said she wanted me to dine at her house on Saturday evening and something about Mrs. Bliss's asking me to luncheon with her, though I have not heard from her. Candidly, I am not particularly eager to go through the mill of social entertainment, so don't feel obliged to go to any trouble on my account.

I would, however, like to hear about your remarkable Institute, and I am looking forward very much to seeing you and other friends in Washington.

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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS *events at The Corcoran Gallery*

3104 QUE STREET NW WASHINGTON 7 DC telephone HU 3-4440

ROBERT RICHMAN Director

8 January 1955

Dear Alfred:

Duncan and I have reconferred. The lecture you have on tap -- "one on modern art in relation to political oppression--Nazi, Soviet and expressions of intolerance in the western democracies"--is a much better one than the two I prosaically suggested.

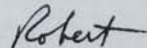
Herbert always gives a non-lecture in art--no slides (I use E E Cummings' wonderful title) when he comes to ICA. And the lecture you have at hand is exactly to our liking.

Won't you reconsider the invitation to give the lecture you have on tap at the ICA under joint auspices of The Phillips Gallery and The Institute.

Those dates I suggested are held open--Auden has confirmed the 25th of February. Otherwise, it is a free choice.

With every good wish,

Sincerely,



Robert Richman

Mr Alfred H Barr, Jr
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York 19, New York

RR:c

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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS *events at The Corcoran Gallery*

3104 QUE STREET NW WASHINGTON 7 DC telephone HU 3-4440

ROBERT RICHMAN Director January 5, 1955

3 January 1955

Mr Alfred Barr
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York, New York

Dear Robert:

I hasten to reply to your letter of January 3rd so that you may get off other letters before the end of the week. Fortunately for ICA, the Post critic is sympathetic to

"The Abstract Expressionists". The crowds are flocking in! I'd like very much to accept your invitation but the truth is I have no lectures on tap except one on modern art in relation to political oppression -- Nazi, Soviet and expressions of intolerance in the western democracies. In any case, I couldn't give this lecture, much less an entirely new one on Matisse or some other subject, this spring since I'm too much involved in the Museum's 25th Anniversary year.

National Gallery and the ICA have had to be postponed until 1956. I feel flattered at your asking me.

Sincerely,

The Activities Committee of the ICA had chosen you as one we should like to invite to Washington for a lecture next season. But the emergency of Kenneth's change in dates leaves us with a considerable breach.

Alfred H. Barr, Jr.

With no wish to minimize the very considerable breach, I have no way asking for a hasty reply. You find it in your heart--to talk at ICA on either January 15th? This lecture, given at ICA, would be jointly sponsored by The Phillips Gallery and the Institute.

Duncan has also authorized me to say that if you are willing, The Phillips Gallery would like to have you give a second lecture on the day before or the day after the ICA lecture.

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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS *events at The Corcoran Gallery*

3104 QUE STREET NW WASHINGTON 7 DC telephone HU 3-4440

ROBERT RICHMAN Director

3 January 1955

Mr Alfred Barr
The Museum of Modern Art
11 West 53rd Street
New York, New York

Dear Mr Barr:

I thought you might like to see this review; fortunately for ICA, the Post critic is sympathetic to "The Abstract Expressionists." The crowds are flocking in!

Owing to his recent appointment as chairman of The Lay Committee on Television for The Commonwealth --or some such a title--Sir Kenneth Clark has postponed his trip to the USA, scheduled for February and March 1955; and, then, his lectures at The Phillips Gallery, The National Gallery and the ICA have had to be postponed until 1956.

The Activities Committee of the ICA had chosen you as one we should like to invite to Washington for a lecture next season. But the emergency of Kenneth's change in dates leaves us with a considerable breach.

With no wish to minimize the very considerable esteem we have for you, and in no way asking for a hasty substitution et cetera, could you find it in your heart--and indeed in your schedule--to talk at ICA on either February 25th or February 18th? This lecture, given at ICA, would be jointly sponsored by The Phillips Gallery and the Institute.

Duncan has also authorized me to say that if you are willing, The Phillips Gallery would like to have you give a second lecture on the day before or the day after the ICA lecture.

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- 2 -

It could be impromptu, with or without slides. And in view of the ICA's three exhibitions on TRENDS IN MID-CENTURY AMERICAN PAINTING, it would be most salutary to have America's leading authority on American painting "talk" and/or "lecture" on those TRENDS. Perhaps you'd care to lecture on Matisse for The Phillips Gallery if you'd consent to a second lecture. Duncan and Marjorie would want you to be their house guest, too, in either circumstance.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and The Phillips Gallery, may I make this invitation firm. Our honorarium is \$100 plus travel** With fond hope, and all the best wishes for a Happy New Year, I am

Sincerely yours,

Robert

Robert Richman

PS * Feb 4 and 11 are also open; so too are Feb 3, 10, 17 & 24 at ICA. W. H. Auden needs either the 18th or 25th; and Ernesto Rogers and Dame Edith Sitwell await your pleasure before setting their dates. Our calendar goes to press on January 17th.

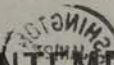
RR:c
Enclosure

** The honoraria double for 2 lectures, i.e. ICA & PGA pay that per lecture. Sorry to be so confusing. Best a kin tot.

RR

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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS *events at the Corcoran Gallery*

Seventeenth and New York Avenue NW Washington 6 DC

calendar for FEBRUARY 1955

NANOOK OF THE NORTH	FEBRUARY 4 Friday at 8 pm	films	<i>Flaubert's famed documentary and "World Without End." All Members</i>
ALFRED H. BARR, JR	FEBRUARY 11 Friday at 8:40 pm	lecture	<i>"Modern Art—and Political Oppression" jointly sponsored by The Phillips Gallery</i>
THE INSTRUMENTAL ENSEMBLES	FEBRUARY 19 Saturday at 2:30 pm	concert	<i>First recital by this new Washington Ensemble. All Members may bring Guests</i>
TRENDS IN PAINTING: I	FEBRUARY 20 Sunday at 5 pm	exhibition	<i>"American Abstract Expressionists and Calligraphists" exhibition closes</i>
W. H. AUDEN	FEBRUARY 25 Friday at 8:40 pm	reading	<i>from his published poems and new work B Members; Annual Members; NO GUESTS</i>

* Office 3104 Que Street NW Washington 7 DC HU 3-4440
hours Mondays through Fridays from 11 am to 4:30 pm

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INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ARTS *events at the Corcoran Gallery*

Seventeenth and New York Avenue NW Washington 6 DC

calendar for | JANUARY 1955

ROBERT LOWELL	JANUARY 7 Friday at 8:40 pm	reading	<i>from his published and new work B Members; Annual Members and guests</i>
TRUMAN CAPOTE	JANUARY 14 Friday at 8:40 pm	lecture	<i>discussion and reading of his fiction A Members; Annual Members; NO GUESTS</i>
DAVID DAICHES	JANUARY 26 Wednesday at 8:40 pm	lecture	<i>"English Letters at Mid-Century" A Members; Annual Members and guests</i>
CHAPLIN & HEMINGWAY	JANUARY 27 Thursday at 8 pm	films	<i>"Spanish Earth" by Hemingway; "Carmen" with Chaplin. Members only; NO GUESTS</i>
TRENDS IN PAINTING: I	JANUARY all month	exhibition	<i>of the highly controversial "Abstract Expressionists and Calligraphists"</i>

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THE WASHINGTON POST and TIMES HERALD Sunday, February 27, 1955

E7

Art in Washington

Can Art and Politics Mix?

By Leslie Judd Portner

First of Two Articles

ART LIKE every other activity these days has become closely involved with politics. Mass communication has given a tremendous range to every form of graphic expression, and art has become a potent weapon for propaganda, good or bad. Too often, however, it has been an unwitting—or unwilling—tool for opposing factions, both political and artistic.

Mrs. Portner

Some of the more contradictory aspects of this situation were recently emphasized in a speech given here by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The lecture was jointly sponsored by the Institute of Contemporary Arts and the Phillips Gallery. Long a champion of the right of the artist to freedom of expression, Barr underlined some of the inconsistencies and misconceptions which have arisen in the public mind in recent years.

Starting with the rise of nazism, Barr drew attention to Hitler's rejection of all modern art, which was accompanied by the closing of galleries and museums, exhibitions of "forbidden art," the suppression of the Bauhaus School, and persecution of such important artists as Lehmbruck, Kollwitz, Klee, Grosz, and others.

MOVING ON to Russia, Barr read excerpts from speeches and trials in which the leaders of the People's Republics denounced modern art as "decadent formalism," and imposed in its place a national form of painting called "social realism." Resemblance to poster-painting was more than coincidental, since art was henceforth to be required to advertise the regime.

Yet, lest a liking for realistic art seem inherently Fascist or Communist, Barr also pointed out that Eisenhower, Truman and Winston Churchill have each at one time or another made spirited public attacks on modern art.

He added that a strange contradiction has arisen. While the Russians denounce modern art as decadent and capitalist, Americans with equal fervor have denounced it as Communist. Conservative Congressmen have filled the Congressional Record with blanket condemnations; pamphlets and manifestos by reactionary artists, books and speeches by people, both in the art world and out, have piled up arguments to explain why modern art in this country is Communist. It seems unfortunate that these red-blooded Americans have not bothered to find out that the Russian party line, so like their own, also makes modern art the scapegoat.

IT IS ONLY in the last few years that our own Government, after a series



"Stalin and Voroshilov on the Kremlin Grounds," by Alexander Gerasimov, a typical example of official Russian "social realist" painting.

of difficult trials and errors, has begun to use art as an ambassador for democracy. Originally the program was in the State Department, which quickly found that it had a bear by the tail. An exhibition of American painting, which was a fair enough cross-section of art in this country, was hastily recalled from Poland in 1946, thanks to complaints of conservative Congressmen who did not like the abstractions included. Russia quickly filled in the gap with an exhibition of its own.

The State Department was further hampered by the mysterious "gray list," which did its tattle-tale best to clean out the political wolves from the sheep—with a resultant wholesale slaughter of some of the innocent but woolly thinkers. Congressmen Dondero rose like Jehovah in his wrath and pointed an accusing finger at almost every American artist who had inadvertently found out that Impressionism was past its prime.

Three years ago, the United States Information Agency took over the exhibits program. Barr pointed out that the new program has been a deliberately conservative one, stressing the historic aspects of American art, and carefully avoiding any artists who might appear controversial, either from a technical or political point of view. It disclaims any "gray list," but will show the work of the so-called Communists. This year will be the first time that the work of abstract painters will be included.

MEANWHILE militant realist painters made themselves felt across the land. The Metropolitan Museum was

beseiged by manifestos when it put on a sculpture show from which certain conservative artists were excluded by the jury. The phrase, "left wing," was used with a fine disregard for its meaning. Mrs. Josephine Hancock Logan, wife of a former honorary president of the Art Institute of Chicago, published an entire book about "modernistic, moronic grotesqueries that were masquerading as art." In 1951, after a committee for traditional art brought in complaints against prizewinning modern artists in a Los Angeles exhibition, the city council went on record as saying: "This art is a replica of what appears in Communist papers. There is no doubt that this is another instance of Communist infiltration." It later publicly retracted these words.

Feeling an urgent need for a clarification of position, the American Federation of Arts this year issued the following statement of policy: "Freedom of artistic expression in a visual work of art, like freedom of speech and press, is fundamental in our democracy. This fundamental right exists irrespective of the artist's political or social opinions, affiliations or activities. The latter are personal matters, distinct from his work, which should be judged on its merits."

And in his message on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art, President Eisenhower said: "To me, in this anniversary, there is a reminder to all of an important principle that we should ever keep in mind. This principle is that freedom of the arts is a basic freedom, one of the pillars of liberty in our land."

Gallery Notes

Works by Matta of Chile Shown at Pan America

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Gallery Notes

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THE Pan American Union is showing through March 15 a large exhibition of recent works by Roberto Matta of Chile, a painter of international reputation. Matta has been associated with the surrealist movement almost from the beginning of his career, having joined the group in Paris in 1937. James Thrall Soby, art critic and historian, has written of Matta that he is "the latest, perhaps for a time the last important painter of the surrealist movement."

The artist was born in Chile in 1912 and graduated from the University there with a degree in architecture. From 1934-35 he worked as assistant to the famous architect, Le Corbusier, in France, before joining the surrealist group as a painter. In 1939 he came to the United States where he lived until after the war. He now divides his time between Rome, Paris and New York.

Matta's painting is very challenging. There are few artists working today who can achieve the color tones and luminosity that he is able to do with the most economical of means: thin turpentine wash which is lightly drawn over, the edges blurred, or lost and found to achieve a curious underwater effect. A sense of infinite depth is acquired through the sensitive use of color and tone, with almost no dependence on the laws of perspective.

The subject matter is less irrational than it might at first

seem, if the dream world, rather than the external world, is seen as the point of departure. Here Matta's Latin American heritage makes itself felt, especially in such a painting as "Sand Witch," where the totemic figure at the left is clearly reminiscent of some of the ancient Aztec gods of fire and death. The strange temple in the background resolves itself into human figures waiting to swallow the unwary. All of the elements in the painting are held in suspension around the central geometric form which

alone must control not only the disparate compositional elements, but also the forces of darkness in array against reason and logic.

Matta's gesticulating figures, his monsters and curious edifices seem like descriptions of strange planets yet unexplored—but it's not Mars he is talking about, it is the human mind.

Harry F. Guggenheim, chairman of the board of trustees of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, announces that a group of paintings from the Solomon R. Guggenheim

Museum, New York, has been sent on extended loan to Goucher College, Towson, Md. This is one of 17 groups of paintings which the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum is lending to various institutions throughout the United States from the Atlantic Seaboard to the Pacific Coast.

The paintings, which will be shown throughout the academic year 1954-55, include works by Kandinsky, Klee, Kokoschka, Marc, Picasso, Nash, Valmier, Vordemberg-Gildewart.

The Baltimore Museum announces its 1955 Maryland Regional Artists Exhibition, to run April 17 through May 15. Entry cards must be received at the Museum by March 15. Artists born or now resident in Maryland, and residents of the District of Columbia and Delaware are eligible to submit fine arts exhibits in all media. For further information write or call the Baltimore Museum.

THE EXHIBITION of paintings by Patrick Flannigan, now at the All Nations Club, has been extended two more weeks.

Marguerite Burgess, well known Washington painter, is currently conducting classes in oil painting for beginning and intermediate students on Thursday evenings from 8:15 to 10:15, in the Bannockburn Clubhouse in Bethesda. For further information call Oliver 4-2367. L. J. P.

Art Calendar

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY, Watkins Gallery, Massachusetts and Nebraska aves. nw., 2-3 daily; closed Saturday. Paintings by Gene Davis, through March 6.

ARTISTS MART, 1361 Wisconsin ave. nw., Monday-Saturday, 10-6; closed Sunday. Jules Eboll, Lyn Rebert and Millicent Tomkins, through March 9.

ARTS CLUB, 2017 I st. nw., Monday-Saturday, 1-5; Sunday, 1-3. Latin-American paintings by the Bal Boheme Committee, through March 4.

BARNETT ADEEN GALLERY, 127 Randolph pl. nw.; Sunday, 2-3. Ruth Galoon, through March 31.

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY, 620 Michigan ave. ne.; Monday-Saturday, 9-5; closed Sunday. Paintings by Cy Twombly; African sculpture, through March 4.

CIRCULATING GALLERY, 1610 Wisconsin ave. nw., Tuesday-Saturday, "Five American Printmakers," through March 15.

CORCORAN GALLERY, 17th st. at New York ave. nw.; closed Mondays; Tuesday-Friday, 10-4:30; Saturday, 9-4:30; Sunday, 2-5.

DUMARTON OAKS, 1703 22d st. nw.; daily, 2-3; closed Monday. Early Christian and Byzantine art.

DUPONT THEATER LOUNGE, 1332 Connecticut ave. nw., 1-11:30 p. m. daily. Self-portraits by Washington artists, through March 31.

FRANZ BADER GALLERY, 1705 G st. nw.; Monday-Saturday, 9-5; closed Sunday. Kenneth Sibus, through February 28.

FREE GALLERY, 12th and Jefferson drive sw.; daily, 9-4:30. Works of art from Far East, Near East and India. Paintings and prints by Whistler, Islamic art, recent acquisitions.

GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY LIBRARY, 2023 G st. nw.; Monday-Friday, 9 a. m.-10 p. m.; Saturday, 9-3; Sunday, 2-6. Watercolors from the American Index of Design; through February 28. Photographs of Four Corners, by David de Harport, March 1-31.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY, 2401 6th st. nw.; daily, 9-5; closed Saturday and Sunday. "Illustrations of the Fables of La Fontaine and Old Testament Subjects"; through February 28.

IFA GALLERIES, 2623 Connecticut ave. nw., daily 9:30-5; Tuesday, 9:30-9; closed Sunday. Portraits by Washington artists.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, 1st st. and Independence ave. se.; Monday-Saturday, 9 a. m.-10 p. m.; Sundays and holidays, 11:30-10. The Gutenberg Bible, the Great Bible of Mainz, the Gettysburg Address.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES, Constitution ave. at 7th st. nw.; Monday-Saturday, 9 a. m.-10 p. m.; Sunday, and holidays, 1-10. Declaration of Independence, the Formation of the Union and States of the Union Exhibits.

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, 6th st. and Constitution ave.; Monday-Saturday, 10-5; Sunday, 2-10. Paintings and sculpture from the Mellon, Kress, Widener Collections, with gifts from other donors. Gulbenkian Collection, extended loan, 17th century paintings from the Chester Dale Collection, extended loan, American Primitive paintings from the Garbisch Collection, "Renaissance Engravings," work by Lucas van Leyden, Marcantonio Raimondi and Jean Duvet from the Roosevelt Collection, Austrian prints and drawings from the Albertina Collection, through March 20.

OBELISK GALLERY, 3241 P st. nw.; Tuesday-Saturday, 11-6; Sunday, 3-6; closed Monday, Ivan Mosca, through March 10.

PAN AMERICAN UNION, 17th st. and Constitution ave. nw., Monday-Friday, 9-5; Saturday, 9-12; closed Sunday. Matta of Chile, through March 15.

PHILLIPS GALLERY, 1600 21st st. nw.; Monday, 11-10; Tuesday-Saturday, 11-6; Sunday, 2-7. Modern European and American paintings, Maurice Sterne, recent purchases and loans, through February 28.

PLAYHOUSE THEATER, 727 15th st. nw.; Sunday, 12:30-11:30 p. m.; 10:30 a. m.-11:30 p. m., daily. Faculty, YWCA; through March 15.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, 10th st. and Constitution ave. nw.; daily, 9-4:30. National collection of fine arts. Division of Graphic Arts; permanent collection in anthropology, natural history, American history, arts, engineering and aeronautics. Smithsonian Building; Arthur W. Heintzelman, through March 27. Natural History Building; Photographic Salon, through February 28. Washington Watercolor Club, March 6-25.

TEXTILE MUSEUM, 2320 S st. nw., Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 2-5 p. m. Admission by card obtainable from George Hewitt Myers, 7390 15th st. nw. Rugs, tapestries and other textiles of the Near East, Far East and Peru. Special exhibition of Chinese rugs.

TRUKTUN-DECATUR NAVAL MUSEUM, 1610 H st. nw.; Tuesday, Friday, Sunday, 9-5; Saturday, 10:30-5; closed Monday. Contributions of the Military Engineer to Sea Power.

WHYTE GALLERIES, 1518 Connecticut ave. nw.; Monday-Saturday, 9:30-6; closed Sunday. Minna Citron, through March 15.

New Art Books

MICHELANGELO, by Margareta Salinger, 37 illus, 20 in color. GOYA, by Frederick S. Wight, 44 illus, 22 in color. FLOWER PAINTING, by Margaret Fairbanks, 44 illus, 24 in color. BRUEGEL, by Wolfgang Steckow, 48 illus, 24 in color. Harry N. Abrams, Inc., in association with Pocket Books, Inc., Pocket Library of Great Art, 50 cents each.

Continuing its series of works on the world's great artists, Pocket Books adds four new titles to the twenty already published. The texts are written by scholars in the field, and the reproductions carefully chosen. While their quality may leave something to be desired, the plates are remarkable at this price.

L. J. P.

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- MEMORANDUM

To: René
From: JAMES WHITE

Date:

Subject:

Attached example
of current USIA
policy: Lucius Beebe,
Tarzan. Such programs
inspire confidence in
the U.S., in sure.
J.

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NY TIMES
1-26-56

THE P

Radio: Voice of America

Sample of Daily Fare Includes News, Music, a Quiz and Lucius Beebe

By JACK GOULD

WHAT kind of entertainment did the United States send to radio listeners in Europe yesterday? Some of it was decidedly first-rate and lively; some of it could only make an American listener wince. In any case, the program assuredly was varied—everything from Secretary of State John Foster Dulles to Lucius Beebe.

The Voice of America for Freedom and Peace offers one of its main English-language programs from 1 to 2 P. M. daily. This means it reaches listeners abroad during the early evening hours. The programs are broadcast on shortwaves and the eavesdropper has a wide choice of stations in the 15, 12 and 11 megacycle bands. Usually, these outlets come in as loud as a regular local station.

In its programming, the State Department has come under the influence of Sylvester N. Weaver Jr., chairman of the National Broadcasting Company. Its show bears the title of "Panorama U. S. A." and is patterned directly on "Monitor," the week-end feature of N. B. C.

In the course of the hour there is a little of everything. Yesterday afternoon there was a comprehensive summary of the news, quoting the morning news conference of President Eisenhower and related opinions of the Secretary of State. There also was a subdued and sedate variation of "Meet the Press," during which Senator Henry M. Jackson, Democrat of Washington, was interviewed.

The bulk of the program consisted of music, and the selections were fine: Burl Ives, the Boston Pops Orchestra, the Sauter-Finegan Orchestra, Count Basie and Patti Page were among those represented.

Two special features were a little disconcerting. Mr. Beebe was interviewed as the owner of his personal railroad car.

He regaled the European audience with many enticing details. The car has a twenty-two-foot drawing salon, a master stateroom suite with private bath and hot steam

room, and a dining salon seating six comfortably and eight in an emergency. A chef and steward occupy the crew quarters.

The European listener could hardly have serious doubts about the continued state of our prosperity.

The Voice of America also had a quiz game that sounds like good fun; yesterday it was presumably just chance that it turned out rather anticlimactically.

The listener abroad is asked to try to identify the American author about whom biological details are given. The announcer imparted all the essential information with the bombast and momentousness befitting a state occasion.

The excitement quickened as to whom the V. O. A. had chosen for world-wide honor. Yesterday it was Edgar Rice Burroughs, creator of Tarzan.

All in all, however, "Panorama U. S. A." is not bad and does have one virtue, if listening to several of the shows is a criterion. It is not afraid to reflect the lighter as well as the more serious sides of American life, which in the long run probably wins the confidence of our overseas audience.

Not as much can always be said for the Voice, however, when it proclaims itself the official voice of American foreign policy. Last week-end, in its summary of the week regarding the United States position on international matters, it presented the view points of President Eisenhower and Mr. Dulles.

At no time in the review was there any reference whatsoever to the controversial "brink of war" article in Life magazine, news of which has appeared in newspapers all over the world and on the short-wave broadcasts of many other countries. Not to mention the one point that has had such widespread repercussions does not seem the best way to bolster faith in the Voice of America—especially when turning the short-wave dial a hair can always bring in a beautifully distorted account of such an incident from Radio Moscow.

Art in Washington

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By Leslie Judd Portner

First of Two Articles

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Starting with the rise of nazism, Barr drew attention to Hitler's rejection of all modern art, which was accompanied by the closing of galleries and museums, exhibitions of "forbidden art," the suppression of the Bauhaus School, and persecution of such important artists as Lehmbruck, Kollwitz, Klee, Grosz, and others.

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Yet, lest a liking for realistic art seem inherently Fascist or Communist, Barr also pointed out that Eisenhower, Truman and Winston Churchill have each at one time or another made spirited public attacks on modern art.

He added that a strange contradiction has arisen. While the Russians denounce modern art as decadent and capitalist, Americans with equal fervor have denounced it as Communist. Conservative Congressmen have filled the Congressional Record with blanket condemnations; pamphlets and manifestos by reactionary artists, books and speeches by people, both in the art world and out, have piled up arguments to explain why modern art in this country is Communist. It seems unfortunate that these red-blooded Americans have not bothered to find out that the Russian party line, so like their own, also makes modern art the scapegoat.

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~~Hitler, Stalin, Churchill Cited~~ *WASH*

Politicians Arraigned by N. Y. Museum Expert For Their Hostile Attitude Toward Modern Art

By Paul Sampson
Staff Reporter

Modern art never has fared well at the hands of politicians, a student of the subject said yesterday.

Politicians from Lenin to the Los Angeles City Council have expressed contempt for and fear of modern art, according to Alfred H. Barr, director of the permanent collection at New York's Museum of Modern Art.

Barr spoke at the Corcoran Gallery yesterday in a lecture sponsored by the Institute of Contemporary Art and the Phillips Gallery.

Barr cited Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, Churchill, President Truman and President Eisenhower as sharing a common dislike

for modern art and a taste for realistic art.

The art expert hastened to add he wasn't implying any guilt by association. What is fundamental, he said, is what these leaders do about art.

In 1919, Lenin said he didn't understand modern artists and added, "They give me no joy." He thought art should "unite and uplift workers and peasants." For about three years after this, modern artists in Russia painted, but the old Czarist academicians eventually proved that their realism was more useful to the Revolution.

Since then realism—or "socialist realism" as the official line was called—has dominat-

ed Soviet art. Barr showed a slide of a typical Soviet painting—Stalin and Molotov smiling and walking through a pleasant park with a group of children.

Barr maintained that the alliance between academic artists and politicians has been mutually profitable. Academic artists, he said, have the most to lose in the struggle with modern artists, while politicians can gain support from the general public, which usually doesn't like modern art.

Barr described an incident in Los Angeles a few years ago when some city councilmen protested awards to modern artists because modern

art supposedly was subversive and Communist-inspired.

He criticized what he called a "gray list" of politically suspect modern artists in the State Department, whose pictures couldn't be used in official overseas exhibitions. He also complained that the United States Information Agency tries to exclude abstract art from its foreign exhibitions, even though the abstract movement is the strongest art movement in America.

He quoted a speech made by President Eisenhower, a rather conservative painter, at the Museum of Modern Art, in which the President unequivocally indorsed freedom of arts.

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—Hitler, Stalin, Churchill Cited—

Politicians Arraigned by N. Y. Museum Expert For Their Hostile Attitude Toward Modern Art

By Paul Sampson
Staff Reporter

Modern art never has fared well at the hands of politicians, a student of the subject said yesterday.

Politicians from Lenin to the Los Angeles City Council have expressed contempt for and fear of modern art, according to Alfred H. Barr, director of the permanent collection at New York's Museum of Modern Art.

Barr spoke at the Corcoran Gallery yesterday in a lecture sponsored by the Institute of Contemporary Art and the Phillips Gallery.

Barr cited Hitler, Lenin, Stalin, Churchill, President Truman and President Eisenhower as sharing a common dislike

for modern art and a taste for realistic art.

The art expert hastened to add he wasn't implying any guilt by association. What is fundamental, he said, is what these leaders do about art.

In 1919, Lenin said he didn't understand modern artists and added, "They give me no joy." He thought art should "unite and uplift workers and peasants." For about three years after this, modern artists in Russia painted, but the old Czarist academicians eventually proved that their realism was more useful to the Revolution.

Since, then realism—or "socialist realism" as the official line was called—has dominat-

ed Soviet art. Barr showed a slide of a typical Soviet painting—Stalin and Molotov smiling and walking through a pleasant park with a group of children.

Barr maintained that the alliance between academic artists and politicians has been mutually profitable. Academic artists, he said, have the most to lose in the struggle with modern artists, while politicians can gain support from the general public, which usually doesn't like modern art.

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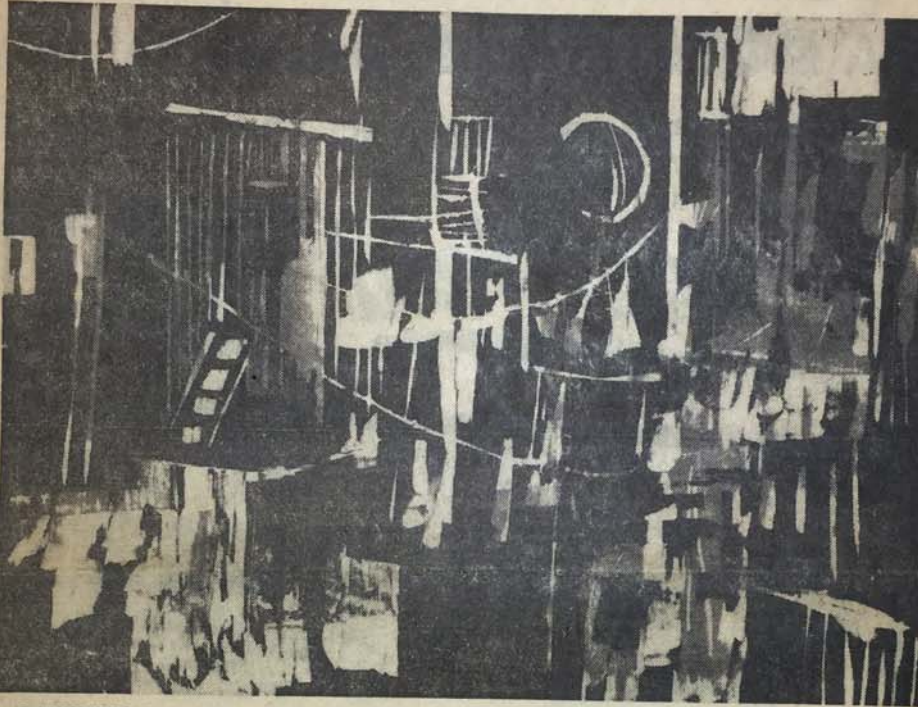
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ES HERALD, Sunday, March 6, 1955

E7

Government Gets Behind Art



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By Leslie Judd Portner

(Second of two articles)

LAST WEEK this column was devoted to a discussion of art and politics. The article was based on a talk given here before the Institute of Contemporary Arts by Alfred H. Barr of the Museum of Modern Art. Barr pointed out some of the injustices and discrepancies which have arisen when art and politics have met on unsympathetic terms. Today's column is devoted to some of the new art programs now being undertaken by the United States Government.



Mrs. Portner

The Government's most active branch now using art is the United States Information Agency, which was set up in 1953 to conduct the Government's overseas information and cultural programs. Richard Brecker was named chief of the exhibits branch, which began by inaugurating a firm policy of using an outside jury for selection of its art shows. It also arranged loan exhibitions from outstanding museums and collectors across the country, encouraged an international exchange of art work among independent groups, and stimulated private enterprise to organize international exhibitions wherever possible.

The agency's policy of proscribing the use of certain artists for political reasons was established in 1953, and has not been altered since. It clearly states that an agency will not exhibit "works of avowed Communists, persons convicted of crimes involving a threat to the security of the United States, or persons who publicly refuse to answer questions of congressional committees regarding their connection with the Communist movement."

The agency feels that as long as its funds are supplied by Congress, and through it by the taxpayer, it can make no change in this basic position, regardless of the policies of private institutions or organizations.

THE ART EXHIBITS of the agency cover such fields as American Primitive Painting, Nineteenth Century American Painting, Works by George Catlin, the Printmaker's America, American Drawings, American Indian Paintings, American Watercolors, Handicrafts of the United States, American Design, and many others.

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Meanwhile, art at home has not been neglected. Congressman Howell (D-N. J.) was defeated in his bid for a seat in the Senate last year, but no less than 23 bills have been introduced since Congress reconvened, asking for implementation of one or more titles of the omnibus Howell Bill. Congressman Thompson (D-N. J.) was the first to introduce a bipartisan bill (HR 21) asking for an "Inaugural Hall of Presidents and a music, drama, fine arts and mass communications center" for the Nation's Capital.

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A SURPRISE finish to the hearings was a statement that Robert W. Dowling, president of the American National Theater and Academy in New York, had guaranteed to raise the money nationally to erect the center, if the Government would pass the bill. Thompson further introduced a bill (HR 4307) for the erection of the Smithsonian's National Collection Museum, to include the music and theater arts facilities envisioned above. Thompson and four other Congressmen have in addition introduced bills asking for a state aid program for art on a matching fund basis.

Regional art also has come in for support on the Hill, in the person of Congressman Udall (D-Ariz.), who has decorated the walls of his offices with a group of 12 fine paintings by Arizona artists. So effective has this presentation been that other Congressmen have been quick to follow his example.

This could be the beginning of an outstanding program of regional representation in this city, and a basis for friendly rivalry among the states. Until we have a national gallery here where living American artists from all over the country can exhibit, Congressman Udall has the most promising substitute yet offered.

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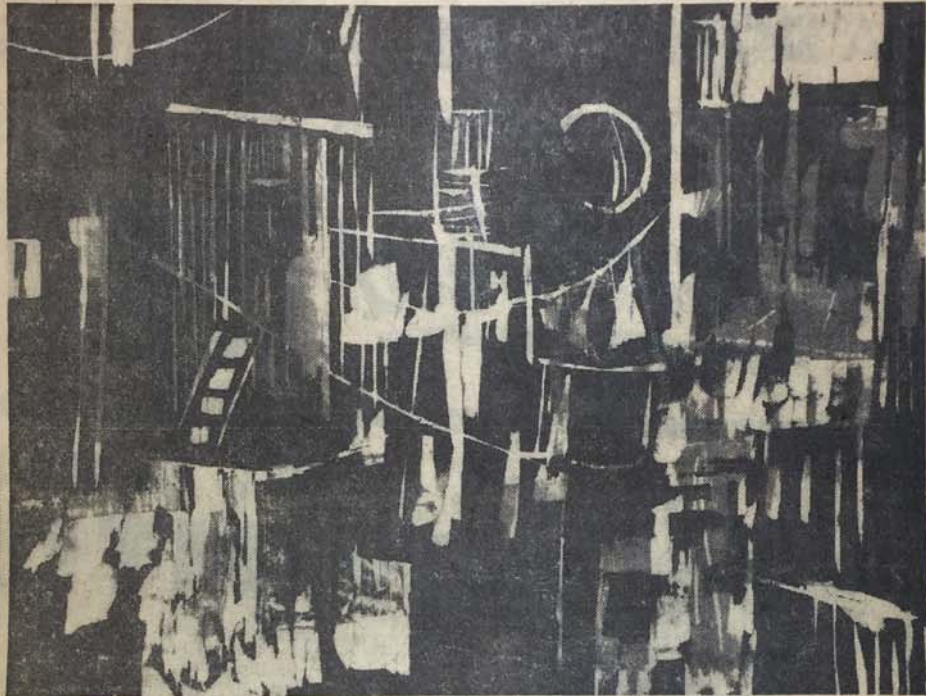
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VERNE'S HELICOPTER

TO THE EDITOR:
 In Ray Bradbury's imaginary interview with Jules Verne—"Marvels and Miracles—Pass It On!" (March 20) Verne recalls Paris "swept with the fever of men giving all and anything to—sail their balloons."

It brought to mind the irony of fate. Verne lived in a period in France when there were men who believed enthusiastically in the helicopter and saw no future in the balloon. Three names stand out—De La Landelle, Tournachon (whose pseudonym was Nadar) and D'Amecourt.

D'Amecourt was the most technically minded of the three. He constructed flying models during the 1860's and in 1861 obtained patents on his helicopter ideas. He also wrote books on the subject. An early one, published in 1863, was "La Conquete de l'Air par l'Helice," and it consisted of 40 pages on a subject we consider quite modern. In fact, in this book the author coined the word "helicoptere" for his creation.

Verne's idea of the helicopter was influenced by De La Landelle, and the illustration with Mr. Bradford's article shows a craft that is more

RODIN AND THE CLIQUE

TO THE EDITOR:
 In "Revival of Rodin—And of Sentiment" (March 20) Aline B. Saarinen gets at a far more important matter than the renewed interest in the French sculptor. It is the long existence of what she calls "the influential group—certain museum men, art writers, dealers, avant-garde artists and collectors—that shapes the program and prejudices of tastes in art, [and that] gave Rodin a virtual go-by."

To that powerful clique which controls the art world, Mrs. Saarinen deftly offers face-saving arguments by means of which it can do a volte-face from their position of the past twenty to thirty years. "The need for any intellectual apology is fast disappearing," she writes. "We seem to be entering a new cycle in all the arts wherein rules are less rigid and where expression of emotion can again be outspoken, immediate and affirmative."

Will the clique take the hint? I doubt it. The determination to foist upon the public mechanistic and non-objective art has an anti-religious, anti-humanistic basis which is not going to alter quickly. FITZROY DAVIS, New York.

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Art in Washington

Can Art and Politics Mix?

By Leslie Judd Portner

First of Two Articles

ART LIKE every other activity these days has become closely involved with politics. Mass communication has given a tremendous range to every



Mrs. Portner

form of graphic expression, and art has become a potent weapon for propaganda, good or bad. Too often, however, it has been an unwitting—or unwilling—tool for opposing factions, both political and artistic.

Some of the more contradictory aspects of this situation were recently emphasized in a speech given here by Alfred H. Barr, Jr., of the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The lecture was jointly sponsored by the Institute of Contemporary Arts and the Phillips Gallery. Long a champion of the right of the artist to freedom of expression, Barr underlined some of the inconsistencies and misconceptions which have arisen in the public mind in recent years.

Starting with the rise of nazism, Barr drew attention to Hitler's rejection of all modern art, which was accompanied by the closing of galleries and museums, exhibitions of "forbidden art," the suppression of the Bauhaus School, and persecution of such important artists as Lehmbruck, Kollwitz, Klee, Grosz, and others.

MOVING ON to Russia, Barr read excerpts from speeches and trials in which the leaders of the People's Republics denounced modern art as "decadent formalism," and imposed in its place a national form of painting called "social realism." Resemblance to poster-painting was more than coincidental, since art was henceforth to be required to advertise the regime.

Yet, lest a liking for realistic art seem inherently Fascist or Communist, Barr also pointed out that Eisenhower, Truman and Winston Churchill have each at one time or another made spirited public attacks on modern art.

He added that a strange contradiction has arisen. While the Russians denounce modern art as decadent and capitalist, Americans with equal fervor have denounced it as Communist. Conservative Congressmen have filled the Congressional Record with blanket condemnations; pamphlets and manifestos by reactionary artists, books and speeches by people, both in the art world and out, have piled up arguments to explain why modern art in this country is Communist. It seems unfortunate that these red-blooded Americans have not bothered to find out that the Russian party line, so like their own, also makes modern art the scapegoat.

IT IS ONLY in the last few years that our own Government, after a series



"Stalin and Voroshilov on the Kremlin Grounds," by Alexander Gerasimov, a typical example of official Russian "social realist" painting.

of difficult trials and errors, has begun to use art as an ambassador for democracy. Originally the program was in the State Department, which quickly found that it had a bear by the tail. An exhibition of American painting, which was a fair enough cross-section of art in this country, was hastily recalled from Poland in 1946, thanks to complaints of conservative Congressmen who did not like the abstractions included. Russia quickly filled in the gap with an exhibition of its own.

The State Department was further hampered by the mysterious "gray list," which did its tattletale best to clean out the political wolves from the sheep—with a resultant wholesale slaughter of some of the innocent but woolly thinkers. Congressmen Dondero rose like Jehovah in his wrath and pointed an accusing finger at almost every American artist who had inadvertently found out that Impressionism was past its prime.

Three years ago, the United States Information Agency took over the exhibits program. Barr pointed out that the new program has been a deliberately conservative one, stressing the historic aspects of American art, and carefully avoiding any artists who might appear controversial, either from a technical or political point of view. It disclaims any "gray list," but will show the work of no known Communists. This year will be the first time that the work of abstract painters will be included.

MEANWHILE militant realist painters made themselves felt across the land. The Metropolitan Museum was

beseiged by manifestos when it put on a sculpture show from which certain conservative artists were excluded by the jury. The phrase, "left wing," was used with a fine disregard for its meaning. Mrs. Josephine Hancock Logan, wife of a former honorary president of the Art Institute of Chicago, published an entire book about "modernistic, moronic grotesqueries that were masquerading as art." In 1951, after a committee for traditional art brought in complaints against prizewinning modern artists in a Los Angeles exhibition, the city council went on record as saying: "This art is a replica of what appears in Communist papers. There is no doubt that this is another instance of Communist infiltration." It later publicly retracted these words.

Feeling an urgent need for a clarification of position, the American Federation of Arts this year issued the following statement of policy: "Freedom of artistic expression in a visual work of art, like freedom of speech and press, is fundamental in our democracy. This fundamental right exists irrespective of the artist's political or social opinions, affiliations or activities. The latter are personal matters, distinct from his work, which should be judged on its merits."

And in his message on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Museum of Modern Art, President Eisenhower said: "To me, in this anniversary, there is a reminder to all of an important principle that we should ever keep in mind. This principle is that freedom of the arts is a basic freedom, one of the pillars of liberty in our land."

Gallery Notes

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THE *Spectator*

COMMENTARY

ELLIOT E. COHEN

Dear Mr. Barr:

THE misunderstanding of the United States by Europe is indeed it has been a long process of trans-Atlantic conversations. Yet, as late as the first-hand encounter with an American editor with this, though he has long been raising the danger for us of the European opinion; and, had gone to Europe on a mission aimed at helping the situation. Alas for his prediction a cold war in the midst of the century.

He had plenty of opportunity to meet his fellow-Americans on the Continent during those busy days just after Truman had intervened in Korea—there seemed hundreds of them, economic, technological, and cultural, resident or visiting—he found them in a state of bewildered outrage over the “anti-Americanism” that seemed to beat on them from all sides. It is from those unhappy days that date most of the frantic editorializing, swinging between recrimination and soul-searching, and the hectic spate of programs for better understanding with our allies.

But by bit we have learned the dimensions of the problem—this may be the most we have to show for two years of trial and error. We learned first of all that Europe's hostile disrespect was due to no unfamiliarity with things American. There is a reasonably abundant flow of facts and goods and people across the Atlantic; if we are strange, it is

ELLIOT E. COHEN is the editor of COMMENTARY, and an occasional writer; and it perhaps should be mentioned that his opinions, like those of other writers who appear in our pages, are not official expressions of views either of this magazine or of its sponsors.

I am sending the enclosed to some of my fellow members of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, because I should like to have some sense of their own thinking on some of the issues discussed.

I would deeply appreciate hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Elliot E. Cohen

Enclosure

34 WEST 33rd ST., NEW YORK 1 • LONGACRE 4-4064

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The Land of the Machine . . . a sullen population of robots chained to the belt-line, ridden by fear, bullied by threats and propaganda, and cozened by the vulgar mass arts and mechanical gadgets . . . a police state, ruled by Finance Capital through venal, illiterate political bosses, the FBI, and the generals, under the form of a sham democracy in which the population, given a meaningless paper franchise and deprived of all rights and liberties, finds itself helpless either to stay its own increasing victimization—see the charred black corpse swinging at every crossroad!—or to brake the suicidal careening of its production-and-profit-mad economy toward the imperialistic enslavement of all peoples, total war, and an apocalyptic holocaust and collapse. . . . It is, in essence, the myth of the

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THE FREE AMERICAN CITIZEN, 1952

Our Democracy, Two Years After Korea

ELLIOT E. COHEN

THE misunderstanding of the United States by Europeans is an old story: indeed it has been the small change of trans-Atlantic conversation for three generations. Yet, as late as two summers ago, a first-hand encounter with it could strike an American editor with the force of a revelation. This, though his own magazine had long been raising warning signals of the danger for us of the prevailing state of European opinion; and, as a matter of fact, he had gone to Europe as part of a cultural mission aimed at helping ameliorate this very situation. Alas for pride of prophecy. He had been predicting a cold snap: he found himself in the midst of the Blizzard of the Century.

He had plenty of company. Whenever he met his fellow-American plenipotentiaries on the Continent during those July days just after Truman had intervened in Korea—there seemed hundreds of them, economic, technological, and cultural, resident or visiting—he found them in a state of bewildered outrage over the “anti-Americanism” that seemed to beat on them from all sides. It is from those unhappy days that date most of the frantic editorializing, swinging between recrimination and soul-searching, and the hectic spate of programs for better understanding with our allies.

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not because we are strangers. Rather it is as if there hung between us, more formidable than any Iron Curtain, an invisible distorting lens that has skewed the American social landscape and its inhabitants into fantastic shapes. Whatever the multiplicity of factors that had wrought such a delusion, the Continent saw us as living in this distorted world. There was a myth about America, supported with the kind of intense emotionality which disqualified in advance any countering by reasonable discussion. And what a myth!—one rubbed one's eyes at the crude stereotypes that stood for the characters, and the vulgar comic-book drama that passed for the plot.

A second discovery was that belief in this myth was no monopoly of the uneducated masses, or of those under the sway of Communist propaganda or commitment. The highest luminaries of arts and letters were responsible for some of the silliest absurdities. Jean-Paul Sartre's fabulously successful play about our South, *The Respectful Prostitute*, presents only more nakedly the whole creaky paraphernalia of America as seen and believed, in one degree or another, by the European intelligentsia from Kafka to Kingsley Martin.

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Frankenstein monster, the machine built to be man's slave, and which enslaved him.

Behind the "anti-Americanism" of Europe's intelligentsia, there is little ardor for Communism or the Soviet Union: the term "neutrality" fairly enough characterizes a state of mind that fails to see any difference worth mentioning, much less fighting for, between our "capitalist democracy" and Russia's "people's socialism." If, as between the two slave states, there is a shade of inclination towards the East, it is partly the opportunistic accommodation that one makes to the nearer menace—plus a kind of persisting belief that the politics of the inheritors of the Russian Revolution, for all their present destructiveness, remain somehow geared to human ends. It is a real people's government; we are not.

THE Communists' absurd claim to be a people's government is so fair a target that we can be properly suspicious of critics who attack us for concentrating so much of our polemic on exposure and negation. Yet why don't we speak up about what we have to offer in the realm of politics?

How may a people be governed so that it can produce and share among its members the goods sufficient to their needs, while enjoying those freedoms and human dignities as vital as bread and shelter, and maintaining the strength and unity to protect itself from its enemies, foreign and domestic? This is the prime question to which the suffering peoples of the world today seek an answer—challenging us to offer an alternative to the Kremlin's confidently asserted formula.

Yet few proposals would evoke more bewildered shudders from enlightened Americans than the suggestion that in the everyday realities of the American political system we have our own answer to this question.

This editor heard such a shudder—or its equivalent—from more than one of his colleagues when, as a member of an American delegation at an intellectuals' congress at Berlin, speaking on a panel, "The Citizen in a Free Society," he offered some affirmative, mildly hopeful reflections on the character and quality of American political practice.*

*Most of the passages that appear in Section II of this article are quoted from the text of that address.

Thereupon, a highly esteemed American writer, an old friend, found it necessary to express his embarrassment. "Some eloquent passages," he remarked, "but hardly proper for this gathering . . . you should have waited for some European to say it!" The quick rejoinder from a hard-bitten ex-Communist Austrian historian, "How long would he have had to wait?" did little to allay the impression that one had committed a horrible gaffe.

Brooding over this during the sessions of Congress, and listening in the ensuing weeks to the interchange between Europeans and Americans, one became aware that something more than tact dictated our tactics; wasn't it rather that most sophisticated Americans—however anti-Communist—pretty well shared the overseas Dim View of our politics? Wasn't there something more than slightly familiar in the characters, the props, and the plot elements that composed Europe's myth of America? Did they do more than duplicate the melodramatic *mise en scène* made familiar to us by the creative imaginations of our most highly regarded social dramatists, novelists, forward-looking historians, social scientists, editors and journalists, of the decades both before and after the Popular Front dispensation? Whether this construct originated in our own national atelier, or whether it sprang from a common source, we will not stop to discuss here: but that the enlightened on both continents shared a common vision about our American democracy is hardly arguable.

ACTUALLY, this need come as no revelation: what else have our best minds been saying through all their respectable organs of opinion for the past two decades or more? What else can they mean by the chorused reiteration that, after all, if "our boys" show no zeal for the struggle against the enemy, it is because we have no positive vision to give them worthy of their sacrifice. Variants on the same plaintive theme: our fighting men know what *they're* against, not what *they're* for. . . . How can *they* be expected to beat something with *nothing*?

Under the rhetorical indirection of the "they," it was, one suspected, the educated that were voicing their own defeatist skepticism about America; and listening to them in the months after the Korean intervention,

one realized with dismay how little confidence there was among the forward-looking of our worthiness or our capacity to defend the freedom which we claimed as our heritage; and to rouse others to defend their freedom, if they had it, or to win it, if they lacked it, side by side with us.

If they had shown themselves self-dubious even in the face of Hitler, the challenge of Stalin's (and Mao's) Wave of the Future found them shamefaced as well as shaky. Few of the American liberal-minded were Communists, but one hesitates to estimate how much of the positive political sanction of World War II accompanying their anti-Nazism came from the hopes of the Russian "revolution" embodied in "our Russian allies"—"they at least knew what they wanted, had *something* (of course, we disagree with it and deplore it) to offer. . . ."

In any case, now that Korean intervention found us engaged in a new grim struggle, there arose the old self-doubting cries again, cast in an even more despairing key. "Of course, we must defend ourselves, *but* what values can we in all honesty say we are defending? What new political hope, in competition with the Russians, can we offer to stagnant Europe and backward Asia?" Most awful specter of all—mobilizing our all to throw back totalitarianism, must we not inevitably become totalitarian ourselves? With reactionary demagogues and trigger-happy generals panicking our credulous masses into a mindless anti-Communist hysteria, are we not doomed to the slavery of the barracks state, fastened upon us by a fascism once again on the march?

II

WHAT have we to offer against all that? A great deal, some think—who have somehow found the sight and the grace actually to look at America.

One remembers the testimony of a certain wise man who had come to live among us after the Theresienstadt concentration camp, the venerable and heroic scholar Leo S. Baeck, one-time Chief Rabbi of Berlin. A score or so of American intellectuals—novelists, historians, poets, political writers—had gathered to listen to him; and after some talk of Goethe and Nietzsche and Mann, one voiced the question in all minds: "Can what happened in Germany happen here?"

The answer was in essence not religious or moral, but political. "No. I am sure that it cannot happen here, or in England, or anywhere else where there lives what we have never had in Germany—the free citizen, the man who at a certain point will stand up in the face of the state and say: so far and no further. And this man is born of a certain living experience which we in Germany never had, of having once in history faced up to the state, having known it for what it is, something not divine but made up of human hands, and so capable of being taken apart in the hands of ordinary human beings and put together again, something to serve, not as man's history-ordained master, but as his servant and instrument. When you have men in their millions who have the sense of this ingrained in them, you have that which will safeguard them—and will safeguard you—from the ultimate cataclysm and the final bestiality."

It is the fate of the intelligentsia who live by ideas often to be imprisoned by them. Yet, finally, can we resist the plain evidence of our senses? Might not we begin to be responsive to the possibility that in Dr. Baeck's free citizen, our fellow countryman (*homo Americanus*), we have not merely a lesser evil but a substantial, palpable, perhaps victorious good?

ONCE we have rediscovered him, I believe we will have little difficulty discovering the essence of the good he represents. It is no single principle or idea or institution, but it resides in the nuances of an individual personality and his mode of living. The plain fact is that that impossible, fantastic phenomenon, the citizen of Jefferson's dream, today walks the face of the earth by the millions, and more alive and kicking than ever. That paradoxical Jeffersonian man—who was to be at the same time the eternal rebel and the eternally responsible, who was to tear down and to build up, who was to know no higher good than the satisfaction of his own selfish needs and impulses and at the same time to join with others and to sacrifice all for his brother and the common good; the materialist who was to live by vision and the visionary but who was never to move from the practical, the feasible, and the plain evidence of his five senses.

What we see is that he has survived the

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vicissitudes of war and economic collapse, ideological perversions and seductions, has kept his own essential character, has been able to shift and change and grow. Certain crucial traits he seems firmly to have inherited from his 18th-century model. In his view of society, the individual human being remains at the center of the stage; and the satisfaction of the needs of the individual human being remains the duty and the obligation of government and political action. Today, as in the original version, he recognizes no end or aim or goal of his state or nation other than this; indeed there exists no political party or political ideology of any consequence that dares speak to him in the name of any other goal. He has kept his suspicion of the state and his fear of the accretion of power to government. He has kept as his touchstone the realities of daily life as they are *experienced by ordinary men*. And he has kept his skepticism about political absolutes and supra-human ideologies.

We can see today that some peculiar circumstances of American development—indeed, the very circumstances that seemed to many to threaten the whole future of our national life—have helped us avoid certain grave pitfalls of our modern age. It is by now a commonplace that the 18th-century heritage of the French Revolution, in its statement of human rights and the laws of nature, was characterized by a certain abstract rationality. Perversions of the democratic theory were to grow out of this. In the name of these human rights, certain rulers and classes of the old regime were able to repossess themselves of their old authority, and certain new classes were able, by virtue of their asserted individual rights, to place themselves outside the control of the great majority of citizens. With the growth of concentrations of power, whether through industrialization or the centralization of government, man increasingly found himself a single, isolated, powerless individual vis-à-vis industry and the state. His parchment constitutions told him one thing; his daily experience with industry and government told him another.

HERE it was that necessity—difficult, dangerous necessity—seems to have come to the aid of the free citizen of America. An incredible diversity of racial stocks, re-

ligious denominations, and cultural groups poured into America from every quarter of the globe. To American and European thinkers alike, the diversity and heterogeneity of the American population seemed a fatal barrier to the shaping of a nation and the building of that mutual confidence, understanding, and unity necessary for survival. We know that unhappy phrase: "The Jews are our misfortune"; and, similarly, in a more general sense, most Western nations have felt that the alien in their midst was their misfortune. But, paradoxically, out of the necessity of having to learn to live with, and to share a government with, a diversity of peoples, we have learned not merely to accept heterogeneity and diversity as intrinsically enhancing and enriching; we have also learned that heterogeneity is a safeguard and a protection against the possibility that any individual or any group may be isolated or by category excluded. Thus, there has developed a political and social buffer, in the form of the many organized ethnic groups and religious denominations, between the lone individuals and the giant state and giant industry. The individual, in his struggle against the elephantiasis of modern institutions, is not alone and is not powerless.

But beyond and above these major ethnic and religious groupings, there is the host of cellular structures which Tocqueville noted so many years ago—the bewildering proliferation of private citizens' groups, formed by free association, in which Americans almost instinctively seem to join to carry out the most diverse aims and purposes, from the highest to the most trivial: fraternal orders, educational, health, and social welfare associations, neighborhood and regional organizations, associations for the slaughter of wild life and for the preservation of wild life, together with all varieties of associations for the protection of economic, financial, class, and occupational interests.

I remember two visiting intellectuals with in the same week, one from England, the other from Germany, expressing wonder at the extraordinary amount of actual work that was in the keeping of such private groups. One, interested particularly in the public health field, had noted that as soon as the authorities took over the responsibility for

fighting one disease, a new citizens' group sprang up to fight another. Indeed, the initiative these groups display, the sheer amount of work they voluntarily carry through, may well be the single most extraordinary phenomenon in the United States. Sometimes one feels these are not only a supporting, supplementary force, but the very social fabric itself.

The tendency in America to form these free associations is stronger than ever today, and in the field of government we have two seemingly contradictory trends: on the one hand, the increasing centralization of the state; on the other, the growth of what some denounce as "pressure groups," but which actually represent the recognized right of Americans to associate with each other in their own particular interest, and influence their government or their fellow men by whatever persuasion they can muster. It is common habit to sneer at the American as a "joiner"; but the word, it seems to me, is often used in precisely the wrong sense—as meaning that he is but a fragment of a collective, mass personality. The point of the matter is almost the reverse. He is a joiner, not primarily of mass organizations, but rather of a whole diversity of smaller groups and, significantly, each man is usually in many groups. Under our pattern many of these private groups exercise authority autonomously or jointly with government over important areas of commerce and the good and welfare. And we have succeeded, too, in maintaining the rights, responsibilities, and ties of the homier smaller units which Jefferson held so important—the ward, the township and city, the county, the state, and the region.

Two benefits result: first, diverse loyalties are developed which modulate and whittle down the encroaching primal loyalty to the state, and it is thus that we have not merely a mixed economy but a mixed polity, a society organized under a governance that is only in part a government by law, and ruled as much by the free association and mutual self-limitation between men and men. Second, when each individual may belong either by formal or informal affiliation with so many groupings, some of which cut across racial, class, and economic lines, he tends to develop a sense of solidarity with all his fellow citizens, since in at least some of his

associations he joins with men and women excluded in others. If the American white Christian does not meet the Jew or the Negro in his church or his club, he will meet him in his parent-teacher association or his union local. There are still gaps and evils: there are large areas where, shamefully, racial exclusion and discrimination powerfully operate, but in the interplay of the little communities with the great community, aided and abetted by organized protest, education, legislation, and the needs and general give-and-take of production and commerce, we have a dynamic process at work whose progress forward is steady and accelerating. Most on our conscience is the Negro: but even here we need hardly grovel in guilt before the other nations. Which society that has had the same problem has had greater success in weaving widely different "ethnic" groups into a national community: South Africa, Russia, India herself?

Furthermore, there is in these distinctive groups an offset to the uniformity of mass-produced, commercial culture, and a keeping alive of smaller gardens in which cultural produce seems always to grow better. Above everything else, this group life buttresses the individual in his private life, and if the American citizen is still to a happy degree a private person, we should point secondarily to the privacy of the polling booth, which we take for granted, but primarily to the privacy he enjoys in his home, in his ethnic ties, and his religious, community, trade, professional, party, and trade union associations. Perhaps in this intermediate fabric of voluntary organizations, we should see the true third force standing between the over-arching state power on the one hand, and the lone individual on the other.

A SECOND challenge to the free citizen has been, of course, industrialization, and its concomitant, urbanization, at a pace so swift and a scale so vast in America as to presage a total inundation of the individual. The Jeffersonian prescription, as prophets of doom have never ceased to point out, based itself on the small farmer, the small craftsman, and the small merchant. But another side of that same prescription has proved capable of withstanding and, to some extent—for the task is only just begun—domesticating the industrial monster. That we must

Residual - For
Contract -

Venice - Dufy, Caldera, French Rev.?
Paris - 3 + Renoir, Picasso, Gauguain
Picasso - Bacon
Corn. English
Pig
quit.

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domesticate it, we have never forgotten: our people have never been subject to machine-glorification or -terror; nor have they ever found alluring that greatest of all machine concepts, the Industrial State. For us machines remain machinery, our tools and servants, never the Monster, the Model, or the Master.

By the other side of the formula, I refer to the stress Jefferson placed on the encouragement of sciences and techniques, not only to improve technology and productivity, but to help overcome ignorance and oppression; his faith in general education, for civic as well as vocational purposes; his stress on compromise, accommodation, and moderation in the relations of one group to another, and in the relations of the state to them.

All these have fostered a creativity in the arts of applying checks, balances, and restraints to curb the potential new tyrannies of industry and government. Spurred by the lessons of the depression, the United States has seen such a tremendous expansion and proliferation of government agencies and functions as to leave many Jeffersonians aghast. But at the same time, one must note that, by and large, the direction of this expansion and centralization has been in deep consonance with the spirit of the tradition: it has been toward enforcing checks and balances on industrial and financial power in order that we might protect and provide a fuller life for the individual citizen, while maintaining checks and balances on the machineries of the welfare state itself.

Most important of all, there has been, in all this, very little surrender on the part of the recalcitrant citizen of his jealously guarded right to his opinions and their free and open expression, and above all of his cherished right to opposition. The British have their "loyal opposition." In America every citizen would seem to consider himself a permanent member of his government's "loyal opposition." He is inveterately, as we say, "agin' the government." In war no less than in peace, we see him, despite episodic aberrations, refusing to be passive and submissive, refusing to place his destiny in the hands of any single leader, party, or elite. The free citizen has shown no signs of accepting any holding company for his

rights other than the traditional agency of elected representatives, who by and large have been people like himself, chosen from among himself, with relatively little permanence and tenure, ruling temporarily and, as it were, by sufferance. Even in times of the greatest crisis, he has on the whole turned a deaf ear to demagoguery. His relation with his governors tends to remain a relation of one to one, rather than the relation of an anonymous member of a mass to a great Spirit who acts for him and speaks in his name. The larger America grows, the closer Americans seem to want to keep their leaders to them. It has some significance that in those countries that call themselves "people's democracies" the great leader finds it necessary and wise either to keep great armies of storm troopers between himself and his worshipful public, or to become invisible, except for graven images. The handshake of the citizen with his president remains an inviolable American custom.

WHILE from birth a member of the loyal opposition to his own government, the American citizen does not evade responsibility for the acts of his country. Whenever the government has committed a wrong, he has felt himself individually shamed and implicated. To deny that one committed a crime because one "was only following orders," or to plead the eternal innocence of the "little man" is not in the American grain. Along with this there endures the citizen's stubborn suspicion of force. Discipline and authority are still unpopular words. Uniforms are still not highly regarded; medals are not good form; and there is no trace whatsoever of adulation for feats of arms or military grandeur. Attempted encroachments on civil rights are bitterly fought inch by inch, and even the highest considerations of national security are yielded to only slightly and reluctantly.

And, perhaps of greatest interest in this international era, we see signs that the American citizen is growing beyond the isolationist tradition of the early American democrat. Nothing was more characteristic of our 18th-century political thinkers than their desire to cultivate their own garden and stay at home, and to avoid entanglements with foreign quarrels and responsibilities. Unquestionably, there was a broad, universal

humanism about their doctrine, and there was no lack of sympathy for the plight of all mankind. But it remained abstract. The less favored nations were to learn by the example of what the New World achieved on its own home grounds. There is probably no stronger American emotion than this—and so it is amazing to what extent in a few short years the majority of Americans have shown a readiness to accept new and larger responsibilities for implementing their humanist tradition universally. Of course, there is behind this much of self-protection and a sensed mutuality of interests, rather than mere sentiment or ideology; but no sane person would be inclined to think this motivation at all dishonorable.

IT MUST be said that as compared with these extraordinary extensions and adaptations of the older tradition, there has been little corresponding development of ideas, philosophy, or any articulate expression of what has been achieved, or any appreciation of the deeper meaning underlying it. Perhaps the American's inveterate suspicion of ideologies restrains him. And, after all, what he has to contribute is not so much another and alternative competing ideology, but something more complex and subtle, a prospectus of a whole way of living, a web of practices, attitudes, insights, areas of compromise and of no compromise, plus a whole confused treasury of experiments, some "proved," some half-achieved, some tentative, some at the point of being discarded for new explorations, depending on time, circumstances, and conditions. *It is of the essence of our rule and our rulers, that we place our faith not on ideals and abstractions, but on human experience, not so much on human rights, as on humane processes.*

We have been having our debates in America as to the character and the essence of our democracy, and one of the favorite areas of search and discussion has been as to whether or not there is a religion at the heart of democracy or, put another way, whether democracy can hope to exist and free citizens remain free without some basic religious consensus. I would venture only a footnote on the issue. It seems to me that the free citizen, religious or non-religious, does have at least one shared conviction. Whether he professes to believe in God,

or professes not to believe in God, he has a conviction that there is no God but God. To put it another way: I think both the religious believer and the man of secular faith in the United States come very close to holding in their hearts the Hebraic commandment "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." I take this to mean that whether one believes in some transcendent power or not, one does not believe that there is any idea, institution, or individual—a man, a nation, an "ism"—that man can accept as a God. I cannot presume to speak for the religious man, but the essence of the secular humanist seems to me that he keeps this obdurate recalcitrance in the face of all proposed faiths and ideologies that would give any political thing supra-human and transcendental value. In the political world of the free citizen, the individual human being stays, as we have said, in the center of the stage. In his individual self, he is humble enough not to think himself God or godlike, and he considers that he remains on eternally safe ground so long as he permits no other human being or human agency, no human priesthood or elite, to arrogate to themselves the attributes of the divine. His temper is too skeptical and experimental for him to allow any human being or any movement to equate itself with history, or for him to give credence to any political ideology that claims an inevitability and a determinism beyond the fallibility and the tentativeness of human beings struggling to build a society and maintain it in the face of the difficulties of nature and the enmities of man.

BUT here one always senses a broad demurrer on the part of the European. With your opportunities, say our friends in other countries, with your magnificent resources, with your abounding prosperity and abundance of material goods, with your relative security from aggression and attack—the achievements and promises of America are understandable; but what has this to do with us who have none or few of these things?

Of course this is more than half a truth, and certainly my own political and social views would not minimize the force of natural and economic circumstances. In the past century, we have indeed been a

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avored and a sheltered land. At the same time, we have seen enough recent history to know that there is more than a possibility that the free citizen's way of life may be transplanted to other lands and grow and flourish there. Certainly that cannot be said of the totalitarian systems. Nazism—though many feared the opposite—proved itself soon enough to be a non-exportable way of life, except in the relation of master to slave. And as is being proved in the satellite countries, world Communism is also non-exportable, except in the relation of master to slave. But while it is true that democracy cannot be imposed or exported ready-to-run, the general working blueprint can be. But after that, since the heart of it is self-dependence, it must in every land constitute itself, in the old Hasidic phrase, "from the gathering together of all the sparks" of hidden, if presently perverted and corrupted, virtues.

To many of us, it is most hopeful that so much of the American tradition about which I have spoken here, in a way that must have sometimes sounded idyllic or nationalistic, is but an extension and working out of ideas and insights of European thinkers, French, German, and especially English—and their Greek and Hebrew forebears—which it has been our good fortune to have had the opportunity to put into practice on broader, richer acres and under fairer skies. What a gross impertinence it would be if an American intellectual should actually ask Europeans to defend the democratic tradition without at the same time acknowledging that the free citizen is in large part no American gadget but Europe's greatest creation. If in certain European lands the tradition has faltered or suffered crushing blows, we must believe that it still lives as the great—if submerged—tradition in the mind and heart of the people. The dream of a time when he can be free and a citizen is still the great dream of Western man, not as a substitute for bread and security, but as the only sure road for seeking and achieving such goods, and others no less precious. And why should we doubt that the dream that animates the aspiring Asiatic peoples or the road that they need to take for its achievement is different from our own? The political truths that our founding fathers held self-evident they never thought of as stopping at either ocean's edge.

III

YET, four years after the conquest of Czechoslovakia, two years after Korea, how much of all this had we succeeded in voicing to bridge the gulf in sentiment between Europe and ourselves? Militarily, economically, and diplomatically, our practical politicians and soldiers had flung across the gulf a network of rope-bridges. But there is no comparable progress toward that meeting of minds on political aims and goals that is the true Grand Alliance.

Here, as they would be the first to agree, we have a right to look to our leading minds and spirits; but from that quarter there has come no clear lead or inspiration, to say the least. One returned home after the Korean intervention to find the educated classes in a black funk—tomorrow the Soviet forces might be at the Channel ports, the next day after that over Washington: what was there to stop them? They—the Pentagon generals and admirals—were willing a war they couldn't possibly win. And there began, both among those who had no illusions about Communist evil and aggression, as well as those who were still not so sure, a period of suspicious soul-searching of our own motivations and designs, and our own national worthiness, that has lasted till today. We have seen every step of our program fearfully scrutinized for imperialistic aims or the intent to impose our will—or our way—on our allies or the oppressed peoples—lest we be misunderstood. With reluctance, we were permitted to rearm and arm our allies. Programs for material aid were approved, but they were searched for political contraband; heaven forbid, that we should slip copies of the Declaration of Independence, and political directions for duplicating it, into our Care packages. Support of "reactionary" politicians was deplored, but neither were we to raise the slogans of political liberation, or democratic self-rule along American lines. That was political interference. Housing projects for the Ganges, yes, but otherwise hands off. Democracy, American model, was apparently too good for "backward" peoples—or maybe not good enough, as compared to the popular formula for "destroying feudalism."^{*}

^{*}A number of articles in COMMENTARY have noted this failure to raise the banner of democratic liberation and self-rule. Bogdan Raditsa, in "Beyond Containment to Liberation" (September

Most favored of all was the soulful thought that the best way to meet the Soviet challenge was to reform ourselves at home—had we a right to point the finger at anybody else's broadest beam, so long as there was the slightest mote in our own eye?

Overwhelming all else was an alarmist screaming, a warning of one dire menace after another detected within our own sheepfold. The Black Tide of Reaction. Bourbonism. The Pentagon Mind. Red Hysteria. Neo-Fascism. Finally these nightmares were to materialize into twin super-menaces of such terrifying dimensions as to eclipse totally such trumped-up bogies as Stalin. MacArthur! McCarthy! Can one recall anything like the wave of terror that swept through the ranks of the enlightened as MacArthur's plane approached these shores—it was Hitler entering the Chancellery all over again: nothing could save us now! And then the dark days of the dictatorship of Senator McCarthy, when printing presses stood mute, when freedom of expression went underground in the universities, and radio-TV stations and the lights of Broadway and Hollywood were extinguished; and when roving mobs of Legionnaires cast into the overflowing dungeons any government employee or plain citizen heard expressing "an unpopular opinion." So our most reliable watchmen—from Justice William O. Douglas up and down—believed and reported week after week in the news columns, special "surveys," and Sunday magazine section of the authoritative *New York Times*, and so their opposite numbers in Europe read and believed, and were not surprised. To hear that fascism was at our threshold, or already inside, only confirmed their cherished myth.

1951), criticized influential opinion and policy-making experts for placing their full dependence, in the field of politics, on "realistic" power arrangements in Central Europe; and Sidney Hertzberg, criticizing Mr. Kennan's program for our relations with Russia, questioned the undemocratic "Realpolitik" he saw exhibited there (April 1952). Herryman Maurer in "The Responsibility for the China Decisions" (also April) saw our failure in the East based on abandonment of our traditional democratic approach toward the solution of China's problem in favor of an emphasis on a more efficient and manipulative approach which led us to press for the coalition with the Chinese Communists, a policy decision which he reminded us had the assent of the experts of both parties, and of enlightened opinion collectively.

SHOULDN'T we recognize that we are faced in this era with a disaffection with democracy on the part of our intelligentsia? One says "disaffection" because it seems a matter of sentiment and attitude, rather than of ideology or program. We should say at once that it is neither Communist nor Marxist—certainly not to the degree of its European counterparts—though the Stalinists have given it some of its vocabulary and mythology and at various junctures gained from it considerable aid and comfort for their cause: its contours and elements mark it as part of an indigenous tradition that antedates the Popular Front; its characteristic prejudices about democracy and the intelligence of the electorate are shared by modern-minded American "conservatives" as well as "liberals." It especially colors the rank and file of those who make their living and their contribution to society professedly by their brains (and this, incidentally, in our day includes large sections of the business as well as professional community)—irrespective of whether they think of themselves as intellectual, non-intellectual, or anti-intellectual.

This disaffection shows itself in a pervasive distaste, a shrinking from, an inveterate disrespect for the bumbling all-too-human processes of public affairs as practiced here; and above all in a condescending contempt, mistrust, and fear of "the masses." The People, yes; the Common Man, yes; but we are aware by now that these are the abstractions of those who prefer, instead of the old ideal of human fraternity, one or another of those schemes or regimes operated from above by the smaller self-selected fraternity of those who know better on behalf of the anonymous little men who know less.^{*}

One is tempted to describe some of the elements of the mentality of so many among America's enlightened, and to pin down the factors in class, culture, and historic event

^{*}See this writer's "Citizen's Victory: Defeat of the 'Common Man'" in the December 1948 issue of this magazine for the suggestion that the concept of the "common man" (in contrast to the "citizen") at the root of most modern "popular democratic" and "national socialistic" movements has its source in, and shares common elements with, the assumptions and managerial-manipulative practices of large-scale industry and commerce, and their allied mass-communication industries.

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that have given to its *malaise* its peculiar quality and shape: its congenital idealism, which sees whatever is as wrong and unworthy, as against what can be thought or imagined; its persistent utopianism; its disvaluation and rejection of the near and the everyday as compared to the future and the faraway; its indispensable role and its ambiguous responsibilities and peculiar status in our large-scale corporate, governmental, and mass-communication institutions; its aspirations as an elite, and its patent greenness and inadequacy for the role; its fetish-worship of Science (including the sub-sciences of psychological manipulation) and Revolution as the twin-motors of its particular brand of predestined Progress; its occupational isolation from people and experience and its specialist narrowness; its lack of sympathetic identification with its fellow men which, under the name "objectivity," it has made into the prime intellectual and moral virtue of its class; its glorification of methods and its indifference to their human implications; its faith in the magic Idea, the over-all Solution, and the Big, Strong Man; its vaulting ambitions and their recent terrible defeats; its insecurity, guiltiness, and panic. But all this is a matter for many articles, not to say books; and, parenthetically, there are few subjects more important for study if we are to understand our times. In the space here remaining, this writer can only hope to expostulate a bit with the alienated, in the light of some recent facts.

FORTUNATELY, we are just now enjoying one of those national moments when even the sophisticated awake to a sense of the capacities of our democracy, like the glow that followed the Truman surprise election. Our two presidential conventions, perhaps the most scorned symbols of "the whole vulgar, fraudulent, worthless farce of American politics," exhibited themselves on the most glaring public stage in history—and out of them emerged two excellently qualified candidates authentically reflecting the nation's needs and the people's choice. Come to think of it, even faced in the raw, the proceedings and the personalities involved had not seemed disreputable, irresponsible, or unintelligent.

Using our momentarily unjaundiced eyes, might we not glance back over our citizens'

performance in the last two years' ordeal? Faced by a sudden massive attack, thrust suddenly into vast new worldwide responsibilities, our ordinary President* and our ordinary Congress—those two other universally hooted symbols!—have taken courageous decisions, developed large programs of armament, aid, and reconstruction, steered a reasonably steady international course in the face of Soviet threat and trickery, and managed throughout a high measure of domestic well-being and national unity—in short, found the necessary capacity and skill to lead an imperiled nation. Under great stress and inner anguish, with warnings of imminent menace and doom dinning their ears, our citizenry have shown little serious tendency to succumb to panic, divisiveness, hysteria, or hate. They have not cried for demonstrations of our might and power: they have waited to see the whites of the enemy's eyes—and kept their A-bombs in dry storage. In the face of the sudden revelation and the continuing danger of a ruthless conspiracy infiltrating opinion and institutions, the record shows no political persecution such as World War I's Palmer raids, and few invasions or abridgements of civil rights and liberties. The citizenry has only asked that known Communists and fellow-travelers be removed from positions of high security or public trust and influence: at this late date, only a small handful of the top leadership of the Communist party has been subjected to indictment or imprisonment, and then after lengthy, scrupulous legal trials, quite devoid of mob pressures. Aside from these, political dissenters have not suffered arrest or frame-up, nor has the expression of dissent, including that of Communists, been suppressed. There have been episodic attempts at suppression, some unwise and dangerous laws passed and legal precedents set up, and administratively there have been and are serious black spots, especially in the fields of immigration and visa control. But the traditional democratic recourse of organized protest is still available and remedy of abuses is

*Possibly as illuminating as any single reflection of the attitude of the intelligentsia to American democracy is the peculiar sense of affront that it has never got over feeling at the presidency of Mr. Truman, a representative product of our political system, and its inability to appreciate any facet of his personality or his approach to the nation's problems.

not only feasible but likely.* During this whole period the status of alien and "minority" groups, customarily subject to suspicion and scapegoating in times of tension, has steadily improved. And as for that mother of all nightmares, the threat of a domestic fascism, with the shoeless and the know-nothings swooping down on the cities from the swamps and the hills and sweeping us under in the storm tide of black reaction—where are the signs? As for McCarthy, he remains in the popular mind an unreliable, second-string blowhard; his only support as a great national figure is from the fascinated fears of the intelligentsia. As for MacArthur, the General on Horseback came, had his tickertape triumphs, and faded away at the convention, clearly revealed under the klieg lights as no neo-fascist demagogue but a somewhat more rhetorical Hoover, exciting among the citizenry much the same bored respect for his dullish conservative aphorisms.

WE WOULD not be happy if America's intelligentsia were suddenly to point as a man to the dome of our Capitol and declaim Lincoln Steffens' words, "I have seen the Future, and it works." But perhaps we might begin to admit the possibility. Maybe *here*, right on our own doorstep, is the long yearned-for political alternative, after all.

We are proudly exporting our technolog-

*There have been throughout the period the threats of individual demagogues—mostly tin-pot, but always potentially dangerous—and of over-excited pressure groups; and the climate of opinion—on which, after all, the safeguarding of liberties depends more than on legalities or legislation—has remained disturbed and confused. Most of the responsibility here lies with the primitives and the patrioteers, whose performance in their traditional roles of enemies of freedom has been up to scratch. One wishes one could say as much for the forces of light in their role. They, alas, have shown themselves little concerned with the harm of Communist infiltration into our institutional life; though abstractly they admit that Communist totalitarianism is as evil and as destructive as the Nazi variety, they have shown nothing like the same zeal in counteracting Communist cadres and fellow-travelers as influences in this country. In a situation requiring above all the kind of intellectual clarity and moral leadership in which they supposedly specialize, they have shown themselves unreliable and uncommunicative as to the facts, and they have seemed more interested in professional and political self-protectiveness than in safeguarding the general interest.

ical skills and our technical experts to our global cousins; what of this "know-how" of self-rule, possibly the best of all of the techniques and processes of our devising? Why not, as a beginning, share with the peoples of the world a true report of all this—not written chauvinistically, or uncritically, or ideologically, but *as is* with all its imperfections on its head? What could be more useful, not merely for their greater understanding and closer bond with us, but so that they might be encouraged to go and do likewise?

But any such possibility as this is still some way off, one fears. Prior to any such hope, we must achieve the coming home again of our own "forward-looking" intelligentsia. Before rapprochement can be made with Europe's and Asia's intellectual spokesmen, there must be some larger inclination of sympathy and identification between our own writers, thinkers, propagandists, "experts," and professionals, and our own life.

TO BE sure, there have been changes of heart lately, but oftenest these have been in the direction of the rejection of politics and political issues altogether, in favor of a retreat to the privacies of mysticism, art, and the personal life and career. Happily, however, there are signs of something else: a certain beginning curiosity about the actual aspect of life as lived in America, leaving the traditional intellectual myths and ideologies to one side. Also, there is a certain drawing toward one's neighbor even if he lives in a different neighborhood—and here and there discoveries are reported, in a note of pleased excitement. And there is abroad a sense that, while the world is as desperate as ever, the ground just around one's feet is a little solid. The recent years have been a nightmare for the enlightened; but in more places than one today there is the good feeling of having come back into the free air after years underground. Perhaps soon those who must do our talking to European opinion will find the kind of unabstract, living words that because they report of things seen rather than dreamed or feared, will bring belief, accord, and a new courage to our allies in the continuing great struggle for human freedom.

Even more important, such a return to American realities and renewed confidence in our democracy would invigorate laggard, faithless elements among ourselves, and give

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clearer direction and vertebral stiffening to our foreign effort. But most of all we need our alienated intelligentsia home again because it is to their dissatisfactions, their zeal for human betterment, and their knowledge, skill, and creative power that we owe so much of what we have built politically and socially in America—and the job within our own borders is still only half done.

We have had a failure of American intelligence—but we cannot live, much less go forward, without intelligence, or the men of intelligence. Now that the faith in glorified saviors and quick colossal solutions has largely gone, the way is open. Most promisingly, we have in the past months seen something like a movement toward a reevaluation of the American scene and a critical reexamination and revision of some of the leading concepts and attitudes that have dominated

opinion among the moderns. The first fruits of this have been visible in half a dozen of our better magazines, both "serious" and more popular, and there are even some books. Undoubtedly, this reflects a search on the part of broad sections of the intelligentsia for new paths, some of which may turn out to be older paths.

In any case, there is more than a beginning. And we should not forget that we have a seasoned minority of sizable number who have pretty much known the score these past fifteen years or more, and are being increasingly listened to. Particularly noteworthy, the student and younger graduate generation shows few signs of allowing itself to be panicked by its more fearful elders: it appears to have made up its mind to look around for itself, and it seems to be looking in the right direction. There lies the best hope.

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SCHLEMMER	Bauhaus Stairway	K1916c	ptg.
WALDSCHMIDT	Plowman	9083	Nazi
GROPIUS	Bauhaus, Dessau, gen. view	685	arch
SCHLEMMER	Bauhaus Stairway	K1697	ptg.
KANDINSKY	The Black Circle, 1924	11241	ptg.
KLEE	Twittering Machine, 1922	K1862c	ptg
FEININGER	Viaduct, 1920	K3065c	ptg.
Entartete Kunst	catalogue page: "Drei Kostproben", 1937	9054	Nazi
Entartete Kunst	catalogue page: "Der Künstler muss als...", 1937	9052	Nazi
GROSZ	Besitzkröten, 1921 (from Die Gezeichneten)	9488	Dwg.
Entartete Kunst	catalogue page, 1937 (Otto Dix)	9053	Nazi
MARC	Red Horses, 1909	2401	ptg
LEHMBRUCK, Wilhelm	Kneeling Woman, 1911	2038	sculp.
KLEE	Around the Fish, 1926	K956c	ptg.
KIRCHNER	The Street, 1913	K955c	ptg
KOKOSCHKA	Self Portrait, 1913	K2131c	ptg.
DEPAIN	Valley of the Lot at Vers,	K1733	ptg.
MATISSE	The Blue Window, c.1912	K2169c	ptg
ENTARTETE KUNST	Catalogue covers, 1937	9029	Nazi
Photograph	Hitler and Professor Gall	9036	Nazi
GROPIUS	Bauhaus, Lab. workshop tech. sch., Dessau	8717	Arch.
MUNICH	Haus der Deutschen Kunst, 1937	9035	Nazi
Kunst im Deutschen Photograph	" turned over to Hitler by Staatskommissar Gauleiter A. Wagner	9051	Nazi
Photograph	Hitler speaks to German artists opening of Grosse Kunstausstellung, 1937	9037	Nazi

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PHOTO	First visit to exhibition Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung, 1937	9038	Nazi
Photograph	View of gallery: Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung, 1937	9039	Nazi
KLEIN, Richard	The Awakening	9041	Nazi
THORAK, Joseph	Comradeship, 1937, plaster	9040	Nazi
ZIEGLER, Adolf	The Four Elements	9044	Nazi
Munich	Gall. Leonhard, Troost, Gerdy Interior Das Fuhrerhaus	9055	Nazi
SPETZLER*PROSCHWITZ THORAK, J.	Wine and Hospitality	9049	Nazi
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PICASSO	Harlequins, 1905	11234	Ptg
EARLACH	Monks Reading, 1932	9009	Ptg
ZIEGLER, Adolf	Goddesses of Art, 1938	9032	Nazi
THORAK, J. " "	Noble Knight Prometheus	9033	Nazi
HOYER, Hermann	In the Beginning was the Word, 1937	9028	Nazi
Now and Then	Page: Hitler was right	9489	Nazi

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GABO	Design for Kinetic Construction, 1922	11384	Dwg.
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TATLIN	Mon't to 3rd International, Model	2722	Const.
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RODCHENKO, Alex.	Composition, 1918	11378	Ptg.
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CHAGALL	The Green Violinist, 1918	K1933	Ptg
KANDINSKY	Improvisation, 1915	K857c	Ptg
MALEVICH	3 Compositions on Wall	K3082c	Ptg.
RODCHENKO	Non-Objective Painting: Black on Black 1918	11031	Ptg.
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JOHANSON, Boris	Interrogation of 2 Communists, 1933	9092	Soviet
NIKRITIN	Old & New, 1935	9005	Ptg.
TOIDZE, Irakli	J.V. Stalin at the Ryon Hydro-elec. Power station.	9109	Soviet
LEONIDOV	Project for Lenin Inst., Model, 1927	8778	Arch
YOFAN & SHCHUKO	The Palace of the Soviets	11393	SOVIET

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FOUGERON, André	L'Hommage à Houlier	B55.51	
GUTTUSO, Renato	The Maffia, 1948	4406	Ptg
GUTTUSO	Photo of the artist	3257	Ptg
GUTTUSO	Battle of Ponte Ammiraglio	11356	Ptg
GUTTUSO	Boogie-Woogie in Rome, 1953	B55.53	Ptg
PIZZINATO, Armando	MAY Day, 1948	11373	Ptg
PIZZINATO	Firing Squad	11355	ptg
PIZZINATO	Linemen	11358	ptg
RYANGINA, Seraphima	Higher and Higher, 1934	9091	Soviet
DOHANOS, Stevan	Sat. Ev. Post cover, Oct.4, 1952	11372	Ptg.
PICASSO	Korea, 1951	11336	Ptg
PICASSO	Painting, 8/2/50	11335	ptg
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KANDINSKY	The Black Circle, 1924	11241	9042	ptg.
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FEININGER	Viaduct, 1920	K3065c		ptg.
Entartete Kunst	catalogue page: "Drei Kostproben", 1937	9054	9049	Nazi
Entartete Kunst	catalogue page: "Der Künstler muss als...", 1937	9052	9020	Nazi
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