3. *Wages should be tied to the cost of living.* Since the largest item in the cost of living consists of food, this measure would insure rising costs and thereby multiply the number of producers who would be unable to make ends meet. Supply, as a result, would be further curtailed in relation to demand. Were the disemployed rehired at their increased rate of pay for armament or other public work, demand would be further increased in relation to supply.

4. *Corporation and profit taxes should be raised.* This measure would hamper the efforts of businessmen to increase production, since corporative income and profits are the sources from which much of the money used to expand the plant is usually drawn. Thus capacity and the supply of finished goods would be held down. Other taxes should *not* be raised appreciably since most of them curtail purchasing power and consequently the demand for goods and services. And demand, it need hardly be recalled, must be increased in relation to supply in order to insure a cumulative inflation.

5. *Government bonds should be purchased from the banks on demand.* This is to make certain that the banks will always have the means to expand credit when called upon.

Other measures can be envisioned. For example, farm products could be purchased whenever good weather or other cause threatened to lower their price. And the government could spend more money than it recovered by way of taxation. But were the measures cited above enacted, these further steps hardly seem necessary.

I Will Become A Communist—

when members of the Soviet delegation to the United Nations shall return to Moscow without American electric refrigerators, washing machines and television sets;

when our American fellow-travelers stop calling themselves progressives;

when a Soviet general recalled for disagreeing with Stalin is given a tumultuous reception by the people all along the streets of Moscow;

when the following advertisement shall appear in the Soviet press: "Spend your vacation abroad. Special reduced rates to London. See the inspiring Festival of England";

when a Soviet citizen accused of pro-Western sympathies shall publish a book entitled "Ordeal by Slander";

when the *New York Daily Worker* shall criticize a Soviet composer two weeks before Moscow condemns him, and not two days after.

ARGUS

This Is What They Said

THE VITAL interests of the United States and the Soviet Union conflict at no point on the earth's surface. . . . There is no necessary reason in the logic of geography, or in the logic of economics, or in the logic of national objectives, why the United States and the Soviet Union should ever find themselves in conflict with each other, let alone in the kind of conflict reckless and irresponsible men have begun now to suggest.

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH, then Asst. Sec. of State, Department of State Bulletin, May 27, 1945

The vast moral achievements of the Soviet Union are in no small measure due to the removal of fear. Fear haunts workers in a capitalist land. . . . Nothing strikes the visitor to the Soviet Union more forcibly than the absence of fear.

REV. HEWLETT JOHNSON, Dean of Canterbury, in "The Soviet Power," 1941

Our participation in this organization's work [the UN] is aimed at making it effective in preventing fresh wars. MOLOTOV, February 6, 1946

"The Vigil of a Nation" by Lin Yutang libels some of our best allies among the Chinese people, allies who happen to be led by Chinese Communists—who happen to have renounced, years ago now, any intention of establishing communism in China in the near future, and have an administration which is, according to most people who have seen it, more nearly democratic than any China has yet known.

EDGAR SNOW in the *Nation,* February 17, 1945

How's That Again, Mr. Truman?

The law of supply and demand, operating in the market place will, from now on, serve the people better than would continued regulation of prices by the government. . . . I am convinced that the time has come when such controls can serve no useful purpose. Their further continuance would do the nation's economy more harm than good. Accordingly I have directed immediate abandonment of all controls over wages, salaries, and prices.

HARRY S. TRUMAN, November 9, 1946

These people who say we should throw out price controls and rent controls are wrong. They are just as wrong now as they were back in 1946.

HARRY S. TRUMAN, June 14, 1951

[*We are indebted for the juxtaposition to the Mansfield, Ohio,* News-Journal.]

The Freeman *invites contributions to this column, and will pay $2 for each quotation published. If an item is sent in by more than one person, the one from whom it is first received will be paid. To facilitate verification, the sender should give the title of the periodical or book from which the item is taken, with the exact date if the source is a periodical and the publication year and page number if it is a book. Quotations should be brief. They can not be returned or acknowledged.* THE EDITORS

Our Avant Garde Illiterates

By EDWARD DAHLBERG

THERE is no more unlettered writer than the naturalistic novelist; in the name of bread, reason and enlightenment he has created a humdrum cage for simians. Garnett, the critic, once said that the Oscar Wilde trial had set English poetry back fifty years; the retarding influence of Zola's "La Terre" and "Germinal" on American literature has been even more disastrous.

The American naturalist, whose fount is Zola, is prurient, and his *homo economicus* is inert and without will; his anti-hero is a mediocre, fatalistic Colossus governed by the dreary wage god of economic determinism. This god employs the shears of Atropos, Greek Necessity, with the same sadistic violence that Popeye uses to cut up kittens in Faulkner's "Sanctuary." Environment, poverty and wanton, wart-like illiteracy are the nemesis and the fate of the Popeye anti-hero. In the Faulkner and Caldwell fiction there is no difference between the sick stupidity of the protagonist and that of the author. It was Gauguin who said that when the washerwoman in a Zola novel spoke, Zola wrote as she talked, and that when she ceased speaking, Zola still wrote like the washerwoman.

The American Popeye-hero is impotent, and the Popeye Faulkner novelist is a medieval corncob poet of everyday banalities that have a Rasputin odor. The product of the Popeye school of writing is a black, corrupt sacrament of bread and violence, a decayed, sham saviorism. Faulkner, the Nobel Prize winner, gives us a diseased world, a moldy poor white class—and all in the name of truth and humanity. His idols recall the dog-relics which, according to Gorki, the Russian monks used to sell to ignorant peasants as the sacred remains of a saint. There is neither health nor sun in Faulkner, and his readers are compelled to witness the spectacle of fetid, dying people who are dour and wicked. There is no wit, or good ripe bawd, in him as ease or balm for the suffering, ailing mind. The ear is never quieted by the "faint sound of the trumpet of justice" coming from a Georgia cracker's ram's horn. Horus is the Egyptian god of writing and of the moon, but Faulkner's novels are moon-madness unworthy of Horus, and his language is a ruined and half-lost speech like the abc divisions of "she," "he" and "I," the characters in "The Sound and the Fury."

Faulkner never bothered to learn how to write, as is evident in his amateur child-cult primitivism, —"Twilight ran in like a violet dog"—or in that guttering infantile anthropomorphism in the "bearded watching trees" or the "sourceless . . . suspurant . . . moon." The baby cult speech quickly passes over into nausea and the impotency obsession. Faulkner's desiccated Taliafferro in "Mosquitoes" looks like an "extracted tooth," Jennie has "soft, wormlike fingers," and Cecily Saunders an "epicene chin and sexless knees." Faulkner's Januarius Jones contemplates his beloved with "yellow eyes, warm and clear as urine."

THERE is that nihilistic, ungovernable nausea in all the naturalistic or Marxist novelists who write with a pen that is a muckrake. Frank Norris's intellectual retching is plagiarized from Dr. Swift. The rodents in "Gulliver's Travels" are the results of hopeless, cruel revulsion against human flesh. When Gulliver returns home he faints when his wife kisses him, and he reels with queasiness as his son touches the bread on the table with his fingers. Swift regarded sex as abominable, and Norris in "McTeague" had the same misogynistic qualms; for when that ugly bulk of stupor, the quack dentist, McTeague, looks at the young, delicate Trina Sieppe, her hair reminds him of ordure. After Trina has left his ursine, suety arms, she goes home, opening the door just as her mother is setting the mouse traps. Dr. Swift was at least a man of honest letters and recognized his malady no less than Thoreau, who did not even like the sex habits of cabbages. But Norris and the other American naturalistic novelists have no comparable self-knowledge.

Dostoevski was very troubled about human odors: In "The Brothers Karamazov," Christian Aloysha has real atheistical misgivings when he confronts Father Zossima's corpse. The odor of decay is hard evidence to refute, and those who depend entirely upon the evidence of their noses are likely to lose their reason, for as Thoreau (whose Puritan olfactories were much too agile and precise) said, "The imagination is wounded long before the conscience." Poor Aloysha Karamazov, who tries desperately to heal the injury done to his spirit, sits on the tomb of a saint whose body was said to have given off the remarkably good fragrance of a budding lemon branch.

There is no budding lemon-branch fragrance in the American naturalistic novelists; sadism and revulsion and communism have one miserable, cankered skin. Erskine Caldwell was a gifted, picaresque necrophile in his first book, "American Earth." This early Caldwell book is a Georgia cracker prose-poem on fungused trees, an infected, puce-colored evening sky, a dissevered hand, an amputated leg. Later on Caldwell made a Marxist proletarian rite of his corpse-lust, trying to palm off as communistic compassion a scene in which hogs devour an oppressed Negro sharecropper's