

given to independent organizations, respected by everyone, who have, for their own inscrutable reasons, arrived at positions which can be more than useful to the Party. One can expose the Stockholm Petition as a Communist fraud. But the Quakers are neither Communist, nor a fraud. Nevertheless, they are at the present time propagandizing for a program which can, to the extent that it wins acceptance, more

effectively serve the Stalintern's aims in America — and reduce our chances for true peace — than the Communist peace thumpers themselves can ever hope to do. No wonder then that the *Compass*, the New York newspaper that daily spreads goodwill toward the Communist tyrants, does not serialize the "peace" program of the Communists.

It serializes — as it recently did — the program of the Quakers!

Our Writers in This Issue

HAROLD LAVINE is the political editor of *Newsweek* magazine, foreign correspondent and well-known writer on national affairs . . . MAYNARD STITT, former newspaperman, was on the staff of United Press for several years . . . ALFRED TOWNE continues his series on homosexuality in American culture on page 22 of this issue. His first article, "The New Taste in Literature," ran last month . . . LEE MORTIMER is co-author (with Jack Lait) of the current, run-away bestseller *Washington Confidential* . . . JULIEN STEINBERG joins THE MERCURY with this issue as Managing Editor. His recently-published *Verdict of Three Decades* won national praise as one of the most effective indictments of Soviet Communism ever published; it was condensed in the *Reader's Digest* in March of this year, and a script reporting its contents was beamed by the Voice of America to the Iron Curtain countries. Mr. Steinberg, who has written for many publications, is a former editor of *The New Leader*, and *Modern Review*, the magazine of the American Labor Conference on International Affairs. His articles on Soviet espionage appeared in the May and June issues of THE MERCURY . . . CALVIN COURTNEY is the pen-name of an editor of a national magazine . . . PETER MINOT spent the war years as a G.I. in Puerto Rico . . . MANNY FARBER is the former movie reviewer of the *New Republic* . . . ALEXANDRA ORME is the author of the recent Book of the Month Club choice *Comes the Comrade*; her forthcoming book, serialized in part in these pages, will be *By the Waters of the Danube* . . . MAX EASTMAN is the famous writer, poet and political analyst. His latest book is *Enjoyment of Living*, volume one of his autobiography . . . A biographical note on FREDA UTLEY will be found on page 102.

Fed up with the political boss of your town? Compare him with

NEW YORK'S WORST MAYOR

CALVIN COURTNEY

WHEN THE KEFAUVER people finally trundled out of New York last March, the cheers of the electorate ringing in their ears, it would have been hard to find many local patriots who were not entertaining the notion that William O'Dwyer was the biggest thief ever to hold office as mayor in the city. While the judgment reflected a commendable, albeit retroactive, concern over the cleanliness of municipal politics, it was far from accurate. Pending further blabbing by further bookmakers, we can only say that Mr. O'Dwyer has not been directly accused of anything more dishonest than accepting an envelope — whether red, brown, manila, or white is uncertain — from John P. Crane

of the Uniformed Firemen's Association. And even this small matter is shrouded in uncertainty.

Actually, New York's worst mayor was not O'Dwyer. Nor was it the late James J. Walker. Nor was it Boss Murphy's epic triumph, John F. Hylan. Nor, in fact, was it the incomparable A. Oakey Hall, who served under Tweed. By any honest system of bookkeeping, the biggest forger, liar, embezzler, and hypocrite who ever sold a ward in Gotham was the Honorable Fernando Wood, who preceded Tweed by a few years but taught him plenty. The most commonly accepted evaluation of Wood is the one made by John Bigelow, an editor of the New York *Evening Post* during the mayor's