

CLENCHED FIST

THE MAGAZINE OF CLEAN WHOLESOME
UNITED FRONT MARXIST-LENINIST PROLETARIAN
FICTION

4 January 1938

Dear Comrade Smith,

Proletarian greetings for the
New Year!

We were very glad that you sent to us the manuscript of "How I Learned What They Mean By a Simple Worker." We wish to apologize for holding the story so long, but we have been considering it carefully.

It seems to us, however, Comrade Smith, that there are overtones of social fascism in this, your second story that we have read. But with a bit of editing, we feel that it can be woven into an excellent piece of wholesome Marxist-Leninist creative work.

The unflattering references to the WPA Writers' Project will have to be omitted. Inasmuch as the editors of CLENCHED FIST have very well-paying administrative positions on that project -- and their salaries pay largely for the mimeographing of CLENCHED FIST, it seems to us to smack of social fascism to refer unflatteringly to the workers and accomplishments of the Federal Writers' Project.

Also, the ending of the story seems to smack of bourgeois defeatism. In the ending, there is none of that carefree working-class give and take that distinguishes the writings of our contributors from the decadent work of the "aesthetes". We do like, however, this passage: "Long live the Rev! Long live the editors of CLENCHED FIST!" However, fitting references to Dneiperstroi, the Second Five Year Plan, Harry Hopkins, the writings of Michael Gold, the Young Communist League, Father

Divine, Henry Yagoda, the widow of Lénin, etc., would not be amiss.

If you are willing to consent to a few changes, which we can make right here, we will be glad to publish your manuscript in the 3rd issue of CLENCHED FIST, which we hope to get out by July. We assure you that the 3rd issue will be our best. We think our best contribution so far, a very wholesome and laughable story, is one by contributor R.T.Snitkin, which tells of how a simple worker kicked a Trotskyite in the nuts.

Red Front!

Sincerely,

Andreas Jones

for the editors of CLENCHED FIST

Dear Dale, I thought of all of you often during the Holidays; wished that you could have been here. We're in a swell place now, much better than I ever expected we could find in Denver for the cheap rent (comparatively).

Last night saw the Federal Theatre here do Shaw's ANDROCLES AND THE LION. They hoked it terribly, but the sets were fine, and there were several good performances. Far better than I expected.

I am starting work on a new novel, of which more later. There is much to be thought out. Eventually, I shall need your help, and Getty's. Have abandoned THE CROWD for the time being. I still think that will be the best book I'll ever write, but for it I need unlimited time and I need to know far more than I do now. This other novel, the one I'm working on now, will serve as good discipline for writing THE CROWD....During the vacation I wrote 3 stories. I think I'm getting something over in these that was missing in others I've written, but whether it is that quality you longed for I have no way of knowing.

I appreciated Getty's remarks on my poem in SIGNATURES, and was glad to know that you and Margaret liked the thing....For some reason or other, it seems to me that none of us really get all we should be getting out of our stories and poems and books, etc. I know I'm terribly dissatisfied. We just don't dig deep enough. There are few enough writers who can even approximate the pity and terror of a daily newspaper, to choose the most obvious example....But Win We Will, etc., etc., etc.

Do you see Johnson at all? I've heard from him about as seldom as you guys.

The library school is mainly crap and it's beginning to tell on me. Hope I'll get a couple of weeks vacation from work this summer: I'd like to see all of you. Any chance of you and Margaret coming out here?

Best always,

Waldm

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