# The Night [illegible] AN LTI

[illegible] Fortsetzung

[illegible] Wasser haben wir's [illegible]

[illegible] Wasser ... [illegible] hat nicht Ruh' bei Tag [illegible] Nacht,

[illegible] Wasser, das Wasser, das [illegible] Wasser.

[illegible] girl and I, the two outsiders in the happy-go-lucky Heidelberg crowd, came together. Her name was Lisa. I never asked her second name, and she did not ask for mine. Two days we spent in Heidelberg. We were fantastic and provisional, those six glorious days hiking through the Odenwald Mountains from Heidelberg to Darmstadt. Every mountain crest along the Roman Bergstrasse bore an ancient castle with a moat. Every Burggraf's wife cultivated the vine on the banks of the mountain walls often six to ten feet thick. The Continent seemed [illegible] happy. Each day we [illegible] to Darmstadt. [illegible] to Heidelberg. I traveled [illegible]

[illegible] was interrupted on the top [illegible] of the Karl Liebknecht [illegible] Within a day, I received [illegible] passport in the name of [illegible] issued, a commercial traveler, resident of Aalborg. [illegible] a good passport. Except for [illegible] of photograph. It had [illegible] United. A Soviet visa [illegible] a Polish transit visa were already entered in it. In addition, I received a special document of [illegible] Intourist, containing instructions to show it only [illegible] Soviet frontier police. [illegible] with three other comrades, [illegible] named Hans Kippenbrock, a girl from Cologne sent [illegible] at the Lenin University, [illegible] apple-cheeked leader of the [illegible] Party of Switzerland. [illegible] seeing that my overcoat was [illegible] and light, supplied me with [illegible] coat he had in reserve.

[illegible] hour before my departure, [illegible] and unexpectedly chanced upon [illegible] writer in the restaurant of [illegible] Liebknecht House. He [illegible] silent at a table, lunched [illegible] a glass of beer, (the personification of a creature continuously [illegible] over conspirators and spies). [illegible] He looked askance at me [illegible] I told him that I was going [illegible] Moscow.

"Who is sending you?"

"Comrade Dimitrov."

He gave a faintly sardonic smile. [illegible] he shook my hand. "Gute [illegible]," he growled. "Don't forget [illegible] come back."

We exchanged a few curt remarks with my travel companions [illegible] he walked away, holding [illegible] hands clasped behind him. [illegible] danced in the eyes of the [illegible] from Cologne. "Do you know [illegible] Ernst's nickname?" she [illegible] intimately. "In meetings [illegible] imitates the gestures of Vladimir Ilyitch. We get him mad by [illegible] him 'Little Lenin.' They [illegible] he practices Lenin poses in front of a mirror when he's [illegible]

With uncanny precision, a message from the Profintern sitting out in the bedlam of the [illegible] in Moscow, upon our arrival there two days later. We were driven to the Bristol Hotel, a Western caravansary for Communist transients from abroad. I was lodged in a room together with Ernst and a Lett. Three [illegible] chairs, a table, a washstand, a samovar and a picture of [illegible] made up the furniture. [illegible] was an outfit for cooking, [illegible] had broken down and was out of use. I had hardly been a few hours in the hotel—it was more like a cosmopolitan [illegible] than a hotel in the [illegible] somewhere—when a sly-faced [illegible] engaged me in a conversation about Russia. He was [illegible] friendly. And after a while, [illegible] I ventured openly the [illegible] Ernst and Stalin's qualities of leadership. I knew what [illegible] from [illegible] in the [illegible] O.G.P.U. [illegible] a thing his counterpart [illegible] would not [illegible] right fist with a grin and shouted: "Heil Moskau!"

The morning after our arrival our group mustered. The girl from Cologne moved to one of the students' houses. The Swiss departed for a conference with Plattinsky. I did not see him again. Sallai moved to the Hotel Savoy where his compatriot, Bela Kun, who had received the Order of the Red Banner, was the center of the Hungarian colony. I asked Sallai if he wanted back the overcoat he had given me. He seemed to be hurt.

"I have one just as good. Keep it, because I don't need it." It was the overcoat for three years. It lived longer than its original owner. For Emmerich Sallai, together with another Comintern man, was condemned to death for high treason in Budapest on July 29, 1933, and was hung the same week. Both were reported to have died with the cry, "Long live the proletarian dictatorship. We shall be avenged."

It was a routine conference in the Profintern was already underway. Risking a rebuke from my superiors, I stole one short day to roam through Moscow. The Five-Year-Plan propaganda dominated public life as a high mountain dominates the surrounding sea—it was visible wherever one went and, to me, it was stirring. The Kremlin had decided to sacrifice for years the normal well-being of 180,000,000 people to win a titanic race against a century of backwardness. "Socialism or die!" To the young Communist from abroad this "all or nothing" cry was familiar and reassuring music. "Once the Five-Year-Plan is completed, the Soviet Union will be so invincibly strong that it will insure the triumph of revolution outside of Russia." What was this not worth to a young fanatic, who was prepared to suffer every privation himself, even to give his own life for the revolution? Such reasoning made the Bolshevik indifference to the ocean of human suffering stretching before our eyes appear in a noble light.

The office of the Maritime Section of the Comintern attended the conference in the Red Room of the Profintern Building.

A tall, lean Russian presided, a blond young man of reserved manners. It was Kommissarenko, the chief of the shipping and waterfront unions of Russia and Siberia. But the man who dominated the meeting was Losovsky, the head of the Profintern. He had a thin, almost hollow face, an ill-tended reddish beard, and quick, fanatical eyes. He was a clever speaker, fond of sarcasm and possessed of a lashing dialectic which I thought highly unusual in a man of his decrepit appearance. The third important figure in the assembly was Albert Waller; his energetic bluffness and virility had not changed since I had seen him last. The rest were delegates from the maritime sections of the Communist Parties of nearly a dozen countries. The conference had been called to formulate plans for the organization of an International of Seamen & Harbor Workers, and of Red waterfront unions on all continents. The International was to be created within a year, after a world-wide preparatory campaign. Its chief task was the mobilization of seamen for the protection of the Soviet Union in case of war, by tying up the shipping of nations antagonistic to Russia. Concurrently, the new International was to serve as a batmunist control. On the fourth day all maritime unions which would not possibly be brought under Communist control. On the fourth day of the conference, Osalp Piatnitzky, the organization chief of the Comintern, addressed us on the technique of translating propaganda into organization, and organization into action. This lynx-eyed [illegible] Bolshevik spoke of "our tasks in Malaya, Greece or America" as if these countries were garden patches in Moscow.

Of special interest to me were the reports on the steady progress of Communism in the United American seaboard ever since the early haphazard days when I had been one of the legion of traveling delegates from Hamburg to carry propaganda literature across the Atlantic. International Seamen's Clubs had been established, with Profintern funds, in the nine most important ports of the United States. Using the working methods developed in Hamburg, these clubs had consolidated their growing influence, and gave rise to a national organization which was called the Marine Workers' League. Losovsky had granted a special monthly subsidy for the publication of a Communist newspaper for American seamen, the Marine Workers' Voice. The Moscow conference, accepting a plan drawn up by Kommissarenko, decided that the time had come to engineer into existence a Red trade union of American waterfront workers. Two young American Communists, possessing leadership qualities and the necessary ruthlessness, had risen from obscurity to a place high in Losovsky's favor. Losovsky spoke of them with almost fatherly affection. One was Gerry Mink. The other was Tom Ray. Losovsky and Waller agreed to give Mink the leadership of the Atlantic coast, and Ray that of the Pacific, with respective headquarters in New York and San Francisco. Mink and Ray were placed on the payroll of the Profintern; Losovsky decreed that they should receive additional monthly allowances to cover the costs of the Marine Workers' Voice, of the maintenance of the International Clubs, and of sending a corps of organizers into all harbors between Norfolk and Seattle. Like all Soviet funds for maritime work abroad, this money was to be converted to its destination through Albert Waller's office in Hamburg. Finances were also provided for a convention of American waterfront Communists, held in April, 1930, three months after the Moscow conference, in New York, to organize the Marine Workers Industrial Union. It was attended by 118 delegates from Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf and Great Lakes ports. George Mink, Tom Ray and a certain La Rocca were then summoned to Moscow to submit reports and receive further instructions.

Each evening, after a day of drawing the blueprints for future campaigns, ended with an outright saturnalia. The only groups that kept aloof from these orgies were the Russians, the grave-faced Chinese, and the older Germans, who withdrew to prepare their notes for the next day's speeches and arguments. The rest of the delegates repaired to their hotels, the Bristol and the Lux, where most of the foreign Comintern workers had their crowded quarters. Vodka, wine and a variety of cheap candles and cakes were always on hand. Often there were as many as 24 of us in a room six or eight feet square. The sudden stripping of an unsuspecting newcomer, mutual dousing with cold water, vodka-drinking contests, and "nationalization of women"—a juicy satire on bourgeois propaganda—were popular games. Men appeared in women's clothes, girls dressed as peasants or stevedores, and—with lights turned out—each participant was obliged to regale his original utter nakedness. Before the master of ceremonies decided to switch on the lights. Mock "proletarian courts" then meted out punishment to those caught in diverse stages of disabillgment. Our frolics usually terminated at midnight; for Comintern workers had to be caught catching up on his sleep during the next day's duties. The older Bolsheviks knew no pity in this respect.

On the last day of the conference Albert Waller showed me a letter from Wollweber, then in Berlin. The "Little Lenin" was jealous of the attention Waller was receiving in Moscow. He complained to the Comintern that promising young elements were being stolen from the German Party for international assignments. "Is it possible," the letter burst out. "Don't let him dupe you."

"But why all this confounded sneaking?" I cried.

"Human nature is the most stubborn concoction imaginable," Waller replied grimly.

The next day I was commissioned to go to Antwerp to take charge of the activities of the Communist waterfront units and the International Clubs in Rotterdam, Antwerp, Ghent and Dunkerque. My monthly salary was $100; my monthly organizational fund $150. I was glad to return to the firing lines. I detested the life of a politician.

News of the rising storm in Germany burst like a warning squall into the sleepy atmosphere of my compartment as I passed through Berlin. "Hitler's newspapers howled on the platforms, "Bloody Riots in Berlin and Hamburg! Nazi Stumfuehrer Murdered!" The Party had led the unemployed masses into battle against the police. There had been barricade fighting in industrial districts. Hamburg proletarians died and wounded. On Feb. 23, in Berlin, the Storm Troop leader Horst Wessel had died from bullets fired by Communist assassins. Dr. Goebbels' newspaper, the Angriff, clamored for revenge. The struggle for the conquest of Berlin, of Germany, of the world, was thrown into a swifter pace. From an adjoining railway car, packed with Brownshirts, I caught a glimpse.

It was the Horst Wessel Song, written by the murdered Nazi student, the battle-song which was destined to rank equal to Deutschland ueber Alles in later years.

My train pulled out of Berlin. Westward it rolled, toward the Rhine. The first smell of Spring was in the air.

(To be continued)

## Hold Everything — *By Clyde Lewis*

"My gosh! I'm the first parachute casualty."

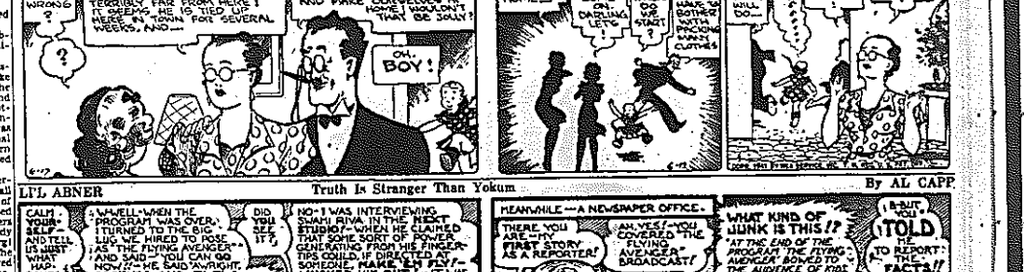
## BLONDIE — The Last Straw — By CHIC YOUNG

## GASOLINE ALLEY — Come Sek'm! — By FRANK KING

## RED RYDER — What Next? — By FRED HARMAN

## THIMBLE THEATER — Here's Looking at You! — STARRING POPEYE

## BOOTS AND HER BUDDIES — All Enthusiasm — By MARTIN




## L'IL ABNER — Truth Is Stranger Than Yokum — By AL CAPP

## WASH TUBBS — And Make It Snappy — By ROY CRANE