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Mann, Klaus

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Thanks.... Nice things have been said... I know, of course, that there are many readers more critical and less understanding - let alone the vast majority of people who don't read a magazine but have just "a look" through its first issue and then come out with a scathing judgement....

However, I realize perfectly well that it would be utterly silly to disregard this hostile criticism altogether - because some of it may be biased and malignant.....
Particularly with regard to our First Issue, I have to admit now that some of the not-so-very-flattering judgements ~~very partly~~ were partly justified.... It is true that our opening number contained too many brief contributions by too many celebrated writers - ~~which was~~, and that the flavour of it was a trifle too European.... (For it is NOT our intention to produce ~~to~~ a "Refugee Review" - as a "national magazine" labeled us very maliciously; what we want to produce is an organ to promote and stimulate a truly super-national, ~~constructive, co~~ spirit of constructive co-operation....) - a forum where the best American minds could meet with those creative vanguard of the American spirit appears side by side with the creative minds exiled from war-stricken Europe....

~~There is something dangerous about the first issues of a new periodical~~

The feat is to take criticism seriously - but not too seriously. To get stimulated but not discouraged by it....

I was amused when ~~there~~ a fellow editor who runs another monthly for fourteen months, wrote.....

"There is so much advice I would like to give you about the horrors of editing. You will find everyone seems to let you down, but long after you have given up hope the copy comes in, sometimes a year late. Also everybody abuses your magazine, especially your contributors. But it really doesn't matter as long as they go on contributing. The thing is always to remain perfectly friendly and completely cynical. If you have politics, people will disagree with them -: if you have none, they will call you escapist. If you use the same contributors, they will call you a clique -: if you present a variety of writers, they'll say that your magazine has no character - and so on.

However, it is very interesting, like sitting all day under a tepid shower, and sometimes one feels one is really helping something or someone. The further people are from the magazine, the nicer they are about it - and readers are always more enthusiastic than writers."

The main thing for an new magazine is to be obviously and conspicuously different from other magazines that exist already.

2)
I remember conversation with a sceptical friend - (he is in this room....) - ; "What for?.... There have been plenty of literary magazines... All of them failed, sooner or later..."

Emphatically "Our is to be fiddere different!"

"How...?"

Impossible to find a new form in the technical sense....

Mr. Henry Luce could find a new form for an illustrated ~~paper~~ ^{weekly}

Mr. Ingersoll for a daily paper... But a literary monthly is has to remain a literary monthly - as a novel has to remain a novel - a tragedy - a tragedy... Foolish to print magazine on think steel plates - as did Italian Futurists....

Contents can be new - or the ~~spirit behind~~ combination of various items and the spirit behind them...

Uneniably, there have been plenty of literary magazines - and most of them have failed, sooner or later (although some of them exercised a considerable ~~intellec~~ influence upon the intellectual life of this country - as did The American Mercury and The Dial. Now, I don't want to compare modest little "Decision" with those venerable periodicals which have ~~be~~ long become something like classics of the American literature... Besides, I wouldn't like the comparison - because the Dial cost such a staggering lot of money, as everybody knows - and because Mr. Mencken, the ~~g~~ founder of the "Mercury", has meanwhile turned pro-Nazi. Neither do we intend to run such a stupendous deficit, nor are we inclined to become adherents of Mencken's odd political Credo....

- - - - - What I want to point out is just this: That Decision

we don't want

3)

to repeat any accepted type of a periodical. I believe, that a political and spiritual situation so completely unprecedented as ours, requires, indeed, new instruments to meet and analyze its sweeping implications....

In view of the tremendous challenge confronting us, most of the accepted clichés and ~~diff~~ traditional differentiations ~~have~~ already lost, or are gradually losing, their validity. ~~The contrast between the various national groups gathering now in this country is by no means the only~~

What is necessary, above all, is a ~~compreh~~ comprehensive outlook

- a synthetic approach.... A magazine that calls itself "a review of free culture", ~~has shou must not negle ignore~~ is bound to present a definite political view as well. For, what is the use in discussing cultural values - ~~unless~~ if one ~~neglects~~ ^{ignores} the political and social ~~problems~~ issues on which the ~~very~~ existence of these values depends? - On the other hand, it would be preposterous to neglect very values one fights for and to banish the discussion of purely aesthetic or moral questions from the pages of a cultural magazine....

The ~~task~~ task is to combine the fighting spirit which is so ~~indispensable~~ ^{imperative} and essential in these troubled days, with a certain detachment and objectivity indispensable for all creative work...

What is new about a magazine like Decision, and what I think makes it timely, is not so much the character of any individual contribution but the mixture of various topics, various nationalities, various literary groups.... One of these combinations and interfusions....: vanguard with established writers...

rather "little magazine"
not commercial

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However, specific indications as to contributions to appear in early issues: *promised but in our hands?*

Stories: American: Katherine Anne Porter Ellis St. Joseph Bessy Breuer
James T. Farrell Hans Otto Storm Carson MacCullers Eleanor
Clark *Young, m...*
English: Isherwood James Stern Huxley *Mon from 1941*
European: Borgese Arthur Schnitzler A.M. Frey

Articles: Political: Del Vayo (South American)
Van Paassen (Lecture Tour)
Hartman, Risk of Peace (Survey)
Malcolm Cowley, Liberals/Party Line
New Order:
Central! Adamic (His idea....)
Laski
Winter....Czech.... Scandinavian etc.
"Refugees and Union"
Robert de Saint Jean, "General de Gaulle"
Diana Sheean, Letter from London
Housing Program
Czernin, "Governments in Exile"
City of Man Debate, Borgese/Etiemble

Conclusion

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I think what
The main task of the new
manager is to be obviously
and

What is only 4. contents
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that D. has a 1
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repeat my accepted
in view of a 4

a new 50 instances do
analogous and master its
its situation 1/5 its
of D. new list up 1/5
inherent

500 Winn
500 Thomas
100 London
100 Dicty
100 Newton
Madam Clay bridge

"In these troubled days..."

Another defeatist ~~an~~ axiom ~~of the business department~~ we disapprove of and, therefore, want to refute, is that people are not very much inclined ^{in these} to read serious things, unless for the definite purpose of obtaining new information about those crucial goings-on in the world. According to this discouraging theory, the literary public wishes ^{to be} either thrilled ~~and instructed by topical~~ or diverted; - which ~~would mean that~~ readers are taking that the two only patterns of literary production that appealing to readers in the times of crisis, is a sensational journalism or a ~~some~~ romantic escapism; ^{right} people want to be transported into the exciting center of a tumultuous actuality - or they desire to are hankering for complete oblivion: "Please, don't talk about those that crude reality all the time! We want to forget, to escape..."

It would be too bad if this gloomy diagnosis were correct. Fortunately it isn't. We know better. We ^{too,} have our experiences. - the encouraging and exciting experiences of these last six months.

~~Needless to say that we anticipated the doubts as to the feasibility~~

We ventured on this daring enterprise - the foundation of a Review of Free Culture in these troubled days - with comparatively modest means, a great deal of confidence and with no illusions. We were positive that there is a place and a significant function for a periodical of ~~some~~ precisely this type, in this country - in these troubled days.

~~Needless to say that we anticipated all objections and doubts we would have to meet - and to refute. In our first announcement sent to a limited number of friends before the publication of our first issue, in January, 1941, we stressed ^{both} not only our confidence but also ^{the} the difficulties ^{that will} ~~that~~ and our confidence that we would overcome them. ^{You} may allow us to quote a few paragraphs of this first proclamation:~~

in store for us,

"....."

Success and Criticism.

~~Did~~ Have we been successful? Have we accomplished what we were planning for? ^{it is our ambition} to create a magazine that is both cultural and realistic; American and cosmopolitan; readable and serious; a magazine which ~~deals~~ takes sides in this crucial struggle - which is devoted, passionately and militantly, to the cause of the Democracies, ^{and yet} ~~but, at the same time,~~ refuses to join in the noisy chorus of obvious propaganda; a magazine that is neither scholarly nor superficial but deals, with the manifold aspects and implications of Free Culture, according to the best knowledge and the genuine convictions of its contributors and editors.

The notion of Free Culture is great and comprehensive. ~~I Not only~~ It includes not only the cultural tendencies and traditions of all nations, but also the ~~most many different spheres and facets of cultural~~ entirety of endeavours and accomplishments in the different fields of cultural activity. ~~A magazine Since we called this magazine Our magazine,~~ if it was to live up to its program, had to deal not only with the vast scope of cultural problems (including literature, music, painting, architecture, theatre, dance, ^{radio} and ~~now~~ the film), but also with the essential aspects of social and political life. For the connection between the two spheres of life, ^{the} cultural and ^{the} political, is direct and vital. ^{We believe that} ~~the~~ ^{known}

^{the} very existence of culture depends on the political developments - to be more precise, it depends on the outcome of the present war. But ^{also} we believe that ~~no~~ ^{of our side} military victory over barbarism would have any value, unless we maintain ~~if do not fail to maintain~~ and to amplify will have exactly as much or as little value as have the cultural and moral institutions that we defend in this struggle.

The double task of a magazine such as ours is to combine the fighting spirit indispensable in this crucial hour with the creative detachment and the open-minded humanism without no cultural life can exist.

Success-Criticism-Improvements.

Have we been successful? Have we accomplished what we were planning for?

Not completely, of course. But, perhaps, to a certain degree...

~~The response we found from the public as well.~~ There are unmistakable signs proving us that the public as well as the contributors understand what we are trying to do, and they think it worth while. ~~At the end of~~ After only five months of operations we could increase of our circulation from to . We receive many letters which ~~show us~~ indicate that those who read Decision are not dissatisfied with what we have to offer. (A few samples of this large correspondence are quoted in another part of this booklet.) The list ~~of~~ ^(or shortly to appear) enumerating some of the contributions recently featured in this magazine, may convince you that the response from the literary circles is no less encouraging.

Yet, there has been criticism as well. ~~The fact~~ ^{We have} ~~quoted~~ ^{in our letter department} occasionally quoted one or another of the more aggressive utterances. The fact that we don't include any hostile statements in this report, does not mean that we are ashamed ~~by~~ of disapproving or even abusive words that have reached us; nor does it indicate that we refuse to take such criticism seriously and to consider it as it sometimes deserves. Even the most heated attacks contain often at least a germ of truth or stimulating advice. Our reason for not repeating here any offensive words is, rather, that we hope ~~they won't be timely any more~~ ^{we get} to overcome the shortcomings or mistakes to which they refer. ~~This seems to us~~ ^{The} most persuasive, most productive answer we can give our critics is - to improve according to their wishes (provided, of course, that they have succeeded in convincing us - which is not always the case....)

The New Set-Up.

(New cover....Th. M., Louis Adamic etc. as Advisory Editors....)

Selection of recent contributions:

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Selection of Coming Contributions:
(Emphasis of Reconstruction serial...)

Quotations of letters and reviews:

Postscriptum from the Business Department:

- 1.) Sponsors of "Decision" (from ten to ? dollars.)
- 2.) Year....
- 3) Short term...
- 4) Libraries....