Unusual Summer Session
Opened With Enthusiasm

THE DEVELOPMENT of Commonwealth College into a specifically southern college for workers and farmers, long more of an ideal than a reality, has taken solid form at the summer session which opened on the wooded campus in the Ozark mountains June 29th," wrote Carl Haessler in the Federated Press issued from Commonwealth College for a week on the International Scene, the initial subject of the summer course.

Classes met on the bluff, with the more than fifty students who are attending Commonwealth this quarter grouped around Carl, as he presented his analysis of the forces which are now driving toward an inevitable imperialist conflict between the United States and Japan. During the open discussion which followed his lecture, the students challenged his arguments, corroborated his statements with additional information, or presented entirely different views. New students were impressed not only with the informality of Commonwealth classes, but with the liveliness and intelligent interest of the discussion which followed.

"Commonwealth students are better informed and more wide awake than the majority of students in my classes during the winter," said Haessler. He also remarked on the increasingly important part which the school is playing in the southern labor movement. "While the customary interest in learning combined with vacation features at a low charge has been shown by northern and eastern students," he said, "there are over a dozen southern workers and farmers enrolled this summer. During the year the southern orientation was manifest in the presence of sharecroppers and farm tenants - union men and women - and southern miners and industrial workers."

It was a varied group that Haessler pictured the dominant trends in the international situation, as he saw it. In his opening lecture, he traced briefly the development of capitalism in the United States to its present position as the strongest imperialist world power. He pointed out that the Pacific would undoubtedly be the theater

SPECIAL NOTICE

BECAUSE SOME of the students whose applications were accepted for the summer session failed to arrive, Commonwealth can accommodate a limited number who wish to attend the last four weeks of the course. A special tuition rate of $25 is being offered and the usual Commonwealth rates per week industrial time is required.

The last four weeks, starting July 27 and ending August 22, will include studies, group and individual, in the following subjects under prominent leaders in each field: Trends in the American Trade Movement, Claude Williams; Farmers' Movement, Clyde Johnson, J. R. Butler, and Art Skreberg; Organization of the Unemployed, Bill Reich; and the Farmer-Labor Party, Mother Ella Reeve Bloor.

It will be necessary, because of limited time, for those who are interested in taking advantage of this special offer to send application immediately to Charlotte Mon­kowitz, Commonwealth College, Mena, Arkansas. Write a letter of approximately 500 words, stating name, age, address, schooling, occupation, affiliations, describing also your interests and experiences in the labor movement. Include authorization for the college to wire you collect acceptance or rejection of your application letter. If you are interested, write immediately! No time should be lost! Bring two pillow cases, three sheets, towels, and any blankets and work clothes you may need.

For those who cannot attend Commonwealth for more than two weeks, the rate is $2 a day, without industrial work.

Jules Karstein Lectures
On Soviet Union Today

ALTHOUGH we cannot make a very exhaustive study of six lectures, I hope to give Commonwealth students a fundamental understanding in popular form of what the Soviet Union was, what it is, and where it is going," said Jules Karstein, in opening his discussion of the Soviet Union Today, the week of July 6th to 11th, at Commonwealth's special summer session.

Jules Karstein, who is a lecturer and organizer for the Friends of the Soviet Union, presented in his first lecture the highlights in the development of the U. S. S. R. from page four

Carl Brannin to Teach
At Anti-War Institute

THE FACULTY of the Southern Workers Anti-War Summer School to be held at Commonwealth August 31st through September 12th, will include Carl Brannin of Dallas, Texas, who has been identified for a number of years with the left wing of the labor movement.

Born in a small West Texas town, Carl Brannin's early years were spent in a farm and ranch environment. After his graduation from Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College he worked for a year in a cotton mill which convinced him that he had little bent for mechanical or factory work. After several years of groping around, he became interested in the public ownership movement in Cincinnati and was later active in it in a state-wide campaign for the Single Tax in Missouri. The later months of the war he served on the staff of the National War Labor Board as a labor advisor. In 1919-20 he took part in the campaign in the Washington Farmer-Labor Party and played a prominent part in the consumers' co-operative movement in Seattle.

From 1923 to 1925 Brannin traveled extensively in Mexico, Europe and the Soviet Union. Since 1919 he has been a correspondent for the Federated Press. Returning to Seattle in 1925, he was active in the Seattle Labor College as a special lecturer and instructor in labor journalism. In 1930 he became director of the Seattle Labor College and founder of the "Vanguard," an independent radical newspaper which was issued for several years. In 1931, before there was any organization of the unemployed, he, with two other Socialists, organized the Unemployed Citizens League which soon reached a membership of 15,000 and attracted nation-wide attention by its independent aggressive character.

Returning to Texas in 1933, he became active in the Central Unemployed and Workers Federation of Dallas and helped to engineer the siege and occupation of the City Hall in protest against relief cuts in the spring of 1935. Brannin was candidate...
Haessler Holds Important Post in Labor Journalism

Making statistics more than mere figures, commenting with a keen sense of humor and a penetrating insight on the currents and counter-currents of the complex international situation, Carl Haessler introduced the first week of the summer session at Commonwealth with a series of stimulating lectures on the International Scene. It was evident that the interest aroused was due largely to the charm and forcefulness of Haessler's personality and his original presentation of the subject.

Carl Haessler holds an important place in the American labor movement as one of its foremost journalists and teachers. He is at the present time the managing editor of the Federated Press and one of the editors of the People's Press. He teaches labor journalism during the winter months at both the Chicago Workers' School and the Chicago Labor College.

Haessler was born in Milwaukee in 1888. In 1911 he was graduated from the University of Wisconsin and studied philosophy of history and economics for the next three years at Oxford as a Rhodes scholar. When he returned to this country he taught philosophy at the University of Illinois which he left in 1917 to work as a reporter on the Milwaukee Leader.

When Haessler was drafted in 1918, he was sentenced to twelve years at Fort Leavenworth Penitentiary as a radical objector. He served twenty-six months of his sentence at Leavenworth and Alcatraz.

In 1921 he returned to the Milwaukee Leader, working for that publication until he became managing editor of the Federated Press in 1922. One of the most important and significant assignments which Haessler ever had was the tenth anniversary celebration of the Russian Revolution in 1927. Haessler has also acted as the Chicago correspondent for the New Masses and the London Daily Herald.

Haessler is a member of the Advisory Board of Commonwealth College and holds a prominent position in a number of important organizations. He is chairman of the Chicago chapter of the Inter-Professional Association, a member of the executive board of the American Civil Liberties Union and a member of the American Newspaper Guild.

Four people in the country today are better informed on the labor and socialist movements and international affairs than Carl Haessler, because of the position he holds and his opportunity to keep in close touch with international developments through the foreign correspondents of the Federated Press. He lectures frequently and is published extensively in the New Masses, Nation, American Mercury and most of the radical and liberal magazines and newspapers in the country. In 1929, he collaborated with Sinclair Lewis in collecting material for a novel on the labor movement. Unfortunately, the novel was never finished.

Admiration Cigars

BY CICILIA MATTOX

T HERE is probably the most effective and adaptable device of propaganda which working class organizations can use," said W. Boris Zaslavsky, Commonwealth student from Chicago, who is to supervise the section on mimeograph technique in the course on Graphic Methods of Propaganda being taught here this summer.

The entire course will be under the direction of Charles Mattox, Commonwealth art teacher, and will be closely related in a very practical way to the general curriculum of the summer session. The course will include instruction and practice in means of cheap production as well as training in lettering, layout, cartooning and design. Special attention will also be given by Mattox to more advanced students who are interested in drawing.

"A person does not have to possess any special ability to master mimeograph technique," said Zaslavsky (also known as "Bill Stencil"), who has had considerable experience teaching various duplicating methods to members of workers' organizations in and around Chicago. "The average working class organization has not yet fully realized," he said, "the importance and value of the mimeograph. A course of the type being offered at Commonwealth this summer is marked by simplicity and fully explores the possibilities of this technique.

The course will be introduced by a study of a collection of mimeographed work. This collection includes representative samples of leaflets produced by both working class and bourgeois groups, with a special display of the best work put out in the field by expert technicians. For those who are unable to draw or letter well, instruction in tracing and copying will be offered. Various ways of building up files of useful cartoons and attractive types of lettering will also be discussed.

Students will learn not only how to use the mimeograph but also how to construct their own instruments. Methods of screening and shading will be taught, mimeoscales and simple hand mimeographs will be built, with all students engaged in actual laboratory work in a collective project at the end of the course. It is expected that practically every phase of mimeograph technique will be covered. Even methods of distribution, with a collection of leaflets produced in Germany by anti-Nazi organizations for illustration, will be discussed.

Zaslavsky taught mimeograph technique at the Chicago Workers' School for three quarters and has given both private and class instruction to various trade union groups. He recently presented a special eight weeks course to twenty-five Illinois
Midwest Writers Convene at Chicago

BY HELEN NORFORJ

NOTE: Helen Norforj and Matt Smith were the Commonwealth delegates to the Midwest Writers Conference. The former sends this report.

This Conference is not a success, but it is not a failure, it is the beginning of a writers' organization that can show New York, the way," said Mike Gold, one of the guests at the Midwest Writers Conference at Chicago, June 14th.

The delegates from Commonwealth spent two days and nights on the road, hitch-hiking. We arrived expecting to see something strong emerge from the conference. We met here the writers who have placed the Midwest before the world. We saw the individual writers take steps to break through their isolation once and for all, to band together in a group with its own national magazine in which the Midwest writer is to have voice. We witnessed definite moves taken toward the formation of a permanent organization through which our problems can be solved: the problems of living by writing, and of finding free expression in print.

The call, signed and distributed by Meridel Le Sueur, Dale Kramer, Lewis Fall, Jack Conroy, Kerker Quinn, Richard Leekley and others had worked for weeks to bring it about successfully. But: "By all means Carl Sandburg should have been here," said Mike Gold. "Sherwood Anderson should have been here. The absence of men such as these limits what can be accomplished by your Conference." Gold felt further disappointment that the representation was preponderantly left wing. Those calling the Conference had wanted just this representation first, and later in the year, with the sound body of writers growing from this Conference as the prime mover, to call a wide Congress of Midwest writers into which every honest person would be drawn.

Ninety writers came as delegates, from Minneapolis, from St. Louis, from Milwaukee and other regions. The majority were younger writers, attending their first conference; it is good to think that here is the energy for the future.

What concretely evolved from the Conference was a continuations committee which is to form the Federation of Midwest Writers. A publications committee is being formed in the new federation which will decide on the magazine, its format, policy and title. Meridel Le Sueur was elected editor of the new magazine. Working with her will be regional boards in each of the regions best represented at this Conference: Detroit, Minneapolis, St. Louis, Des Moines, Milwaukee-Madison. Later other regions will have a like share in the magazine as they become active within the framework. The boards are to make primary selections of manuscripts from those in their regions, but more important, the boards are to take the work up for distribution and selling the magazine. The function of the magazine will be in the defense of culture and against fascism. "The federation will become a strong link between the Midwest and the East," said Meridel Le Sueur. "It will also become an important forum for its members with the Writers Union, the Artists Union, the Authors League, anti-Heart committees, and many other organizations."

The several committee reports were full of interest. That on the craft of writing recommended that the writing of the short, one hundred page novel be encouraged as a form and that cheaper editions of books and pamphlets be one aim of the writers.

McEwen of the Cleveland Writers Union placed several new issues before the Conference. "Copyright laws should be revised. The unwritten law which permits the authors to submit only one copy of a manuscript, forcing him to wait a week or more before publication, should be discarded."

WPA writers' projects were discussed. It was stated that salaries can be raised ten per cent if the state director so requests. Work of writers has been confined to dry reports, historical surveys, although when given an opportunity to write creatively, fine work has been done on WPA projects. If his creative abilities are not to be stifled by this kind of work, the writer must be given a broader scope, allowed to decide what he should write. Committees should be set up for the purpose of selecting subjects.

Matt Smith of Commonwealth delivered one of the most dramatic reports of the Conference. Speaking of demands won by the New York Writers Union, he drew applause when he said, "We demanded that the non-relief percentage be raised to twenty-five per cent; when this is gained, we will raise it to forty, then to ninety per cent, until everyone has a job."

"The transfer of tuberclar writers at the demand of the Union shows that we can go further than economic demands, and win concessions for the writer as a human being." A resolutions committee drew up a list of resolutions supporting all labor, student and youth organizations and their struggles and protesting all steps and trends of repressive forces toward fascism and war. - As the personal differences and irritations which arose from this busy conference fade out, we shall see that as Horace Gregory remarked in his letter of greeting: "This is one of the most important cultural events of our generation." Here history was made. The very clashing of opinions had great value. Each writer, whoever he was, left this Conference with a broader understanding of his own tasks, his own place in his society, and with a deeper feeling of his essential solidarity with each of the rest.

Students to Improvise for Campus Entertainments

SATURDAY night entertainments this summer will include a novel and valuable plan, according to Mara Alexander, Commonwealth student of extensive dramatic experience, who will be in charge.

The entertainment will be based chiefly on improvisations drawn from the experiences of students who will re-enact informally dramatic incidents in which they have participated or with which they are familiar. By this method little time for preparation will be required and the short plays that are presented will lie in keeping with the atmosphere of informality and co-operation that prevails at Commonwealth.

Mara reports that she has discovered considerable talent among the students this quarter and that the Saturday night entertainments should prove highly successful. She also hopes to gain material from the improvisations that are given by the varied types of workers a.d students who attend Commonwealth to prepare short plays and sketches that can be used by various organizations of the New Theatre League. One of the students, Sylvia Davis, will provide the musical backgrounds for the improvisations and everyone will co-operate in building the scenery, writing dialogue and directing the plays, under Mara's general supervision. A production of the popular anti-war play, "Bury the Dead," has also been proposed, if satisfactory arrangements can be made.

Mara has played in a number of Broadway productions and has recently been active in the left-wing theatre movement. Last year she studied under the famous Russian director, Meyerhold, in the Soviet Union. She has also served as an organizer, actress and promotion manager for the New Theatre Union and during the past winter has directed her own group of professional actors under the name of Contemporary Players. She is a member of the New Theatre League and has worked with several little theatre groups.

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CLAY FULKS TO WORK ON WRITERS PROJECT

Clay Fulks, member of the Commonwealth College Association and long a resident on the college campus, has been appointed editor-in-chief of the "Arkansas Guide Book," being prepared under a Federal Writers Project at Little Rock. Clay will remain in Little Rock for several months, after he returns from a trip to Washington, D.C., where he has been called on business in connection with the project. Clay is a native of Arkansas and intimately acquainted with the history of the state. He has twice been the candidate for governor of Arkansas on the Socialist ticket.

The best known writing which Clay has done was published by Bredeman-Jules several years ago in the famous Little Blue Books. For two years previous to the war he wrote for the Milwaukee Leader. Clay is chiefly known as a satirist and has contributed extensively to the Baltimore Sun, American Mercury and other publications.

[ART COURSE from page 2] trade union students.

The art work under the supervision of Charles Mattus has been concretely related to the first week of the summer session, during which time Carl Haessler led the discussion on the International Scene, by the production of maps showing dominant imperialist conflicts and of illustrated charts which describe graphically world economic and social conditions.

[CARL BRANNIN from page 1] of the Socialist Party for the Legislature in 1935. He has been a member of the Federal Employees Union in Washington, D.C., the Wage Payment Union and is at present a member of the American Federation of Teachers.

Carl Brannin has always stressed the importance of industrial unionism, independent political action by organized workers and farmers, labor education from the working class basis and consumer co-operation.

Visitors Here

Mr. and Mrs. Murray Gitlin, Mrs. Laura Brown and Nathan Lerner, artist, all of Chicago, visited the campus from June 27th to June 30th, as the guests of Carl Haessler. Eric Haessler, Carl Haessler’s son, announced that he and his father were glad they came to Arkansas in time to break the drought. Eric reminded the student body that he brought rain from Chicago last year, too.

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S"ummer Session from page 1]
of the next war and on the second day he described in some detail the conflict of America’s interests in China with those of principally Great Britain and Japan. The European situation, he claimed, was extremely important, but secondary to that of the Far East. In his third lecture, he analyzed the economic and political conditions of the various European countries, giving particular attention to France, Germany and Great Britain.

As the complex international scene was being revealed with all its contradictions and dangers, Haessler returned on the fourth day of his discussions to the Asiatic countries and their relationship to general events. His fifth lecture was concerned with the Soviet Union, with particular emphasis on its foreign policy, as illustrated by the Franco-Soviet Pact in the West and by its protection of Outer Mongolia in the East. The fundamental and important conclusions drawn from the week’s discussions were summed up in the lecture on the last day, at which time Haessler presented a preview or "dress rehearsal," as he called it, of the impeding war.

Haessler predicted, with the reservation that as a "dopeseller" he might easily be wrong, that the next war would be a clash between the most powerful imperialist power at present (the United States) and the most important rising power (Japan). The entire world would be involved, he thought, with the Soviet Union allied with the United States and Great Britain allied with Japan. He presented extensive proof of the militarist designs of our country and urged the necessity of a strong movement against war and fascism. The ultimate conflict was inevitable, it seemed to him, with perhaps colonial uprisings and proletarian revolutions precipitated in many countries.

While a few disagreed with parts of Haessler’s interpretation, all were very much impressed with the documentary evidence he had at hand to support his case. Commoners felt that Haessler had given them a splendid introduction to the summer course, looking forward to seven more weeks of serious study and wholesome recreation. The week of July 6th, Jules Karstein discussed the Soviet Union, giving the students a comprehensive picture of the background, latest developments and problems of the U.S.S.R.

"At Commonwealth," said Carl Haessler, "America’s studious workers and farmers are thrown together for several months exchanging ideas, comparing working conditions and union structures and learning how to assemble facts and marshal them effectively and how to carry the message of labor’s hopes and labor’s strength to their fellows back home."

Memory of Forests

BY JOSEPH FRANK

We walk in silence through the broken streets,

Thinking on the wind;

and the cold rain

Falling between grimy towers

Shot with light:

(patterns woven

Against the bleak darkness).

Your eyes

Are soft in the glint of stone,

Warm with the memory of forests;

And the scent of pine, bare in our nostrils.

There must be many here,

Sleeping,

Soon as we pass, in dim hallways,

Boles racked on steel

Who remember:

the sheen on water, sunlight,

A voice through the trees, the touch

Of supple arms, soft at their base,

And the night

Here in the shadows the forest rises

Blurred with the dust of years;

The rain

Seeping through worn shoes hangs like a pall;

This is what remains.

Is all . . .

[JULES KARSTEIN from page 1]

1917 to 1928. His second lecture was concerned with socialist planning, including a discussion of the Soviet economy and the two Five Year Plans. The Soviet as a producer was the subject of the third day and the Soviet as a consumer was considered in the fourth day’s discussion.

On the fifth day Karstein spoke of the Soviet citizen, with a study of the Red Army, education and cultural institutions, social security and insurance. In his final lecture he analyzed the new proposed constitution of the U.S.S.R., with special consideration of the dictatorship of the proletariat, democracy and the Soviet peace policy.

Karstein lived in the Soviet Union for seven months during 1930 and 1931 and is a member of the National Committee of the Friends of the Soviet Union, of which Corliss Lamont is the head. He is a member of the editorial staff of Soviet Russia Today and contributes frequently not only to that magazine, but to various labor and liberal publications, principally on subjects related to the Soviet Union.

Karstein was born in New York City and has a varied background. He left school when he was fourteen years old and worked as a coal passer, a printer’s devil and reporter before he became a rewrite man on the New York World in 1926 and 1927. After that publication crashed, he became associated with Soviet Russia Today, a magazine which, with a circulation of 45,000, is fast growing in importance and interest.

[SUMMER SESSION from page 1]