

Coughlin Offered Me a Job

Port of an interview following an ad in the New York "Times."
 author, a New Masses reader, is an employed newspaperman.

N M 8/29/39

WINDOW... experienced... at ladies' and men's apparel... single man preferred. Y 2664 Times Annex.
 WRITER, experienced, aggressive, journalist, college education (preferably with scholastic background), specializing in economic, political or foreign affairs, wanted for \$50-a-week position on national weekly; unusual opportunity also for newspaper men and writers already employed who wish to augment their present salary; send letter with non-returnable snapshot, if convenient, and full details. E 551 Times.
 YOUNG MAN for office work, neat, conscientious; permanent opportunity; state

ON SUNDAY, August 13, a tall, shambling young man with a shock of blond hair and close-set, brown eyes in New York. He rented, for a three y, a \$15 a day room at the Waldorf- registering as Humphrey Ireland of Oak, Mich. On the same day the above appeared in the help-wanted column of w York Times.

advertisement said nothing about race, se ad-readers know that a request for hot is code for "No Jews need apply." it 250 answers were mailed to E 551; mes passed them on to the gangling man at the Waldorf. On Monday he telephone calls which resulted in ap- ents for exactly ten of the applicants at the hotel, Room 901, on Tuesday. : telephone conversations followed the pattern. Ireland stated that he repre- a "Western news magazine" and asked uestions:
 at inside sources of information do you uch as private newspaper and maga- orgues and contacts with government ?"

at are your politics?"
 : you willing to work for a publication hich you are not in political agree- ence Stebbins, a small real-estate age- \$100,000 had been paid in a check b and in Mr. Schenck's racing stable another; he had stock in 20th Centu niture was listed as an item in the b had been given a house by one studio; The evidence against Biuff piled story "IA GRANTS LOCALS AUTONOMY Daily Variety, a trade paper, headli STRIKED BY LABOR PAYOFF CHARGE" LATE CHIEFS SOLD OUT UNION" "FIL STUDIO FRONT OVER BRIBES STORY

it fascist, they call it nationalist. Do you think you can work for a magazine like that?"

Without waiting for a reply he added, growing more excited as he talked: "Let me warn you! If you decide to work for us, keep it quiet. Because if it gets known you might never find work on another newspaper. People hate us in New York. We can't even get on the newsstands. And they say they have freedom of the press—"

Peering at each listener with a sly grin, he made his revelation: "Maybe you've guessed what the magazine is? It's Father Coughlin's *Social Justice*."

One man interviewed objected that he was not a Catholic. "Neither am I," Ireland replied easily. The only man among the ten who was an Irish Catholic, he rejected. Others protested that they could not subscribe to the absurdities printed in *Social Justice*. "I don't care what your own politics are," Ireland said, "as long as you can write our kind of stuff—stuff that will stir people up."

Laying his cards on the table, he assumed a jovial, cynical attitude, conceding that any reputable newspaperman might understandably hesitate to associate himself openly with the fascist sheet. He promised that the names of those hired would be kept secret and that they need have no contact with the local Coughlinite strong-arm organizations—Christian Front and Christian Mobilizers. Each of the men who wanted to try for the job, he instructed, was to write a sample article and submit it directly to the Shrine of the Little Flower at Royal Oak, so that Coughlin himself might choose the six most expert with the poison pen.

In the past, Ireland divulged, Coughlin's well financed publication (claiming a circu-

dictated by him. The IA took to replacing ducers there was to be no settlement unless company union; Mr. Browne told the pro- charges they had made that the IA was a strikers were ordered publicly to retract The course of this strike was stormy. The THE OPEN DOOR POLICY 2 percent from his disability compensation. sation for a studio injury, was told to pay his and blacklist; one man, receiving compen-

peated several times in each interview, stressing the word "Jewish" heavily. Whenever he referred to Jews he grinned wryly and allowed a facetious note to creep into his voice, implying that neither he nor his listener agreed with such an absurdity as anti-Semitism. The tacit understanding throughout was that this was strictly a cash deal—the newsman was being offered a little more money than usual to sacrifice whatever vestiges of integrity he might have preserved in the brass check business.

The job, as Ireland described it, was an easy one. One story weekly giving hell to the Jews for about four hundred words, plus two shorter pieces—a total of well under one thousand words. Little enough for \$50.

Besides the "Jewish bankers" and the "Jewish atheistic Communists," it developed, he also wanted to "get" the "Jewish congressmen," the "Jewish trade union leaders," and the "Jewish college professors." From the emphasis placed on the word, his listeners were given less to understand that he wanted the attacks confined to Jews, than that whatever was attacked—from the farm program to the World's Fair—should be characterized as "Jewish." The technique, he indicated, might best be acquired by reading back numbers of *Social Justice*.

As each applicant prepared to leave, Ireland repeated his admonition to secrecy. "Plenty of people don't like us," he warned. "You might get your jaw broken if they knew you worked for us." At the door he made one last impressive effort to drill into each man the exact nature of the material wanted.

"We appeal to the lowest type of human being," he said earnestly. "When you write for us, don't write as if you were writing for Hitler. Don't write as if you were writing for Mussolini. Write as if you were writing for Franco. 'Catholic' and fascist—that's the combination."
 THOMAS WHARTON.