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Western Kentucky University

Earl Moore

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Western Teachers College

WHAS Broadcast No. 16

January 14, 1936

4:00-4:30 P.M.

Strings and Voices

"College Heights."

Moore

Western Kentucky State Teachers College. We greet you all both great and small with the words of our college motto --

Voices

"Life More Life"

Vibraphone

Chords.

Moore

Amelia Earhart will be heard on the Western Teachers College campus on "Aviation Adventures," Monday evening, January 20, at eight o'clock.

We convey greetings to the Louisville and Jefferson County Association of Western Alumni, which will hold its annual banquet and reunion Thursday evening of this week in the Kentucky Hotel in Louisville, at 6:30. This get-together is for all in Louisville and Jefferson County who are graduates of former students not only of Western Teachers College, but also of the various institutions which preceded it in Bowling Green and out of which it developed. Music for the reunion will be contributed by the Men's Glee Club of the College, which is making numerous appearances this week in Louisville and vicinity and in Greene County. The Glee Club will also be heard in a special broadcast from this station tomorrow from 2:30 to 3:00 in the afternoon.

To-day we present the Western Symphony Orchestra, directed by Dr. R. D. Perry. We hear them first in Roberts' arrangement of a number by Franz von Suppe, "Pique Dame."
And now "In a Persian Market" by Ketelbey. This number presents a scene in a Persian marketplace. The camel-drivers gradually approach; the cries of beggars for "Back-sheesh" are heard; the beautiful princess enters carried by her servants, (she is represented by a theme, given at first to clarinet and cello, then repeated by full orchestra)—she stays to watch the jugglers and snake charmer. The Caliph now passes through the market and interrupts the entertainment, the beggars are heard again, the princess prepares to depart and the caravan resumes its journey; the themes of the princess and the camel-drivers are heard faintly in the distance and the market-place becomes deserted.

"In a Persian Market." Moore indicates:

"The camel-drivers gradually approach."
"The beggars in the market-place."
"The beautiful Princess approaches."
"The jugglers in the market-place."
"The snake charmer."
"The Caliph passes through the market-place."
"The beggars are heard again."
"The Princess prepares to depart."
"The caravan resumes its journey."
"The market-place becomes deserted."
Before we hear the next number by the orchestra, I am happy to present Dr. Louis B. Salomon, of the Department of English, in a book review. He has selected *Forerunners of American Fascism* by Raymond Gram Swing, published by Julian Messner, Inc. Dr. Salomon.

It may seem strange to be reviewing a book which appeared some six or seven months ago, but the fact is that Raymond Gram Swing's *Forerunners of American Fascism* is just as timely now as when it was published. In fact, interest in the subject has been rapidly growing during the last six months, as evidenced by a number of other books and articles, including Sinclair Lewis's recent novel *It Can't Happen Here*. The title of this novel, of course, is ironical, the purpose being to show that it not only can happen here, but that the more we ignore the possibility, the more we are smoothing the way for it—-that is, for the kind of social organization now existing in Italy and Germany, a ruthless dictatorship and an absolute denial of the principles of democracy. Mr. Lawrence Dennis, in an article in *The American Mercury* for December called "Portrait of American Fascism," and in a book just published called *The Coming American Fascism*, not only suggests the possibility of such a movement in this country, but even advocates it, or a modified form of it, as the best solution of our problems. Among many studies of European dictators, which are of course very closely bound up with this subject, I should like to mention at least George Seldes's admirable expose of Mussolini, under the title *Sawdust Caesar*. 
Now, fascism is a term which Americans are liable to use with a certain vagueness, but which in general denotes a nationalization of man-power and economic resources under the absolute control of a single leader, or at most a small group of leaders, who are not responsible to the people in any way, and are not checked by any constitutional limitations in the exercise of their power. There can be no doubt that under the direction of an enlightened, civilized, and benevolent dictator this form of government might prove highly efficient in times of crisis; there can also be no doubt that in actual practise it results in oppression, in brutality, in intellectual stagnation, and in perpetual international jealousies, since each dictator is forced to bolster up his popularity by stirring up base prejudices in order to distract the attention of his people from their own troubles.

Needless to say, the principles of Americanism—freedom of speech, equality of opportunity, responsibility of government officials—are absolutely at variance with the philosophy of fascism, which naturally is founded on force and intolerance. Anyone who believes, however, that there is no danger of a successful fascist movement in America is simply ignorant of the way in which such movements gain headway, and for those people I strongly recommend a reading of Mr. Swing's book or of any of the others I have mentioned. Mr. Swing, as a newspaper correspondent in Europe during and after the War, had ample opportunity to observe the symptoms of incipient fascism—and, as he points out, it is a sort of social disease which can be prognosticated according to a certain pattern; The broad outlines of that pattern are already abundantly observable in our
social behavior for those who have eyes to see. There are
even, according to Mr. Swing's analysis, very definite
fascist tendencies in the New Deal, whether they are intended
to be so or not. The president, he says, might easily become
a fascist leader if it lay in his nature to appeal to passion
and prejudice for his authority. Fortunately it does not.
But the same cannot be said for certain other popular leaders
who are either potential Hitlers or Mussolini's themselves or
are paving the way for dictators who can easily take advantage
of the violent, unreasoning passions which these demagogues
have been so skillfully arousin.

Mr. Swing presents very revealing thumb-nail sketches of
five such leaders, one of whom has since been eliminated. Huey
Long, the most dangerous of the five, was put out of the running
by a bullet just a few months after this book appeared, but his
spirit, like that of John Brown, goes marching on. The subjects
of the other four sketches are: Father Coughlin, the radio
priest; Senator Bilbo, the rabble-rouser from Mississippi;
Dr. Townsend, the visionary benefactor of old age; and William
Randolph Hearst, the newsprint baron.

The writer admits that no member of this singular quartet
is likely to seize the reins of government himself: Hearst is
too old; Father Coughlin has certain obvious disadvantages;
Bilbo has not a sufficiently colorful personality to appeal
to the people at large; and Dr. Townsend is a harmless, if
impractical, idealist, by far the most sincerely altruistic
of the lot. The danger lies rather in the condition which the
popularity of these men reveals: that is, the general credulity
and unreasoning emotionalism of the American people in times
of stress. An electorate which will overlook the vagueness and
inconsistency of Father Coughlin’s economic program; which will disregard Bilbo’s more than questionable record in previous offices; which will swallow Hearst’s blatant propaganda and thrill to his Red-scares; and which will refuse to face the cold economic facts which stand in the way of a realization of Dr. Townsend’s dream—such an electorate does not give us much ground for hope that it would make an intelligent choice if some picturesque figure, some Napoleonic ex-corporal with leather lungs and a vivid imagination, offers them a glowing picture of what would happen if he were running things and those shilly-shallying representatives of the people were swept out of the way. As a matter of fact, it is no longer necessary for a rabble-rouser to have strong vocal cords, since electrical amplification and radio will carry a mere whisper to an audience of millions scattered over forty-eight states.

No, it is not blind optimism and a comfortable trust in the permanence of our institutions that will stave off an American repetition of the fascist conquest in Italy or the Nazi conquest in Germany. That is the kind of soil in which potential dictators flourish. They do not present constructive programs to the calm consideration of thinking people; they must wait until critical intelligence has been lulled into a feeling of false security, or else eliminated by the barbarous method of "liquidation" or "blood purge"; then the loud speakers are turned on. As a reviewer of Mr. Dennis’s book suggests in the New York Times; The danger from fascism in America is not that sensible readers will be convinced by twisted logic. The danger is that violent and unscrupulous men may take advantage of a time of disturbance to force upon us, not a fine philological
fascism, but gang rule.

The concluding chapter of Mr. Swing's book points to the alarming current trend toward the suppression of freedom of speech, especially on the part of teachers and editors, who of course have most to do with molding public opinion. The insidious thing about this tendency, always associated with dictatorship, is that its supporters carry on their campaign of suppression under the name of patriotism, thereby befuddling the minds of those who do not look behind the name. It should not be forgotten that in Italy the word patriotism means wearing a black shirt and bombing Ethiopians; and in Germany the word patriotism means wearing a brown shirt and beating up Jews. Obviously it is a term that is open to a good deal of misinterpretation, and we in America would do well to remember that to the founders of our country it meant a genuine, unselfish, intelligent devotion to the welfare of one's fellow-men. In other words, an organization might call itself The Old Glory League or The George Washington Association and yet not necessarily be actuated by motives of the highest patriotism; while, on the other hand, it is possible to be patriotic even though one does not have the dictator's portrait on every schoolroom wall, and though one does not perpetually fan the flames of intolerance and hatred.

Moore

The College Symphony Orchestra continues with Roberts' arrangement of Jarnefelt's "Praeludium."

Orchestra

"Praeludium."

Strings

"College Heights," fading for:

Moore

This is the program of Western Kentucky State Teachers College, in Bowling Green, which comes to you regularly on Tuesday afternoons at this hour. You have heard to-day the
College Symphony Orchestra, under the direction of Dr. R. D. Perry, and Dr. Louis B. Salomon reviewing Swing's 
Forerunners of American Fascism. Tomorrow afternoon from 2:30 to 3:00 WHAS will present the Western Men's Glee Club in a program of choral numbers and solos from the main studios in Louisville. The Glee Club will appear in concert at Fern Creek, Kentucky, tomorrow evening and at Greensburg, Kentucky, on Friday evening. Earl Moore speaking. We wish you Life More Life.