i will have difficulty following its guidelines one day. it stays within certain bounds, precisely because bounds are there to be exceeded.

22 jan 42

real use of dialectics: to permit you to work with contradictory units. ie not just to be relativistic. dialectics more or less force you to seek out the conflict in all processes, institutions, ideas (russio–british alliance, british–american alliance, germano–japanese alliance, soviet democracy, tory strategy etc etc) and to use it. on the other hand (at the same time) the opposing classes operating together in nazi germany etc.

23 jan 41

wriggles the bun-thief, helli watched the dog stealing 3 buns from a paper bag on the doorstep and burying them in the garden. she doesn’t eat buns. when the buns are dug up she manifests great uncertainty and dismay, clearly feels guilty, or at least this is how we see her behaviour (helli is not outraged at her but laughs). later, in the evening, when i point to the spot where the buns were buried, wriggles turns her head away in anguish and crouches lower to the ground.

i can seldom resist it when dogs come asking to be tickled under the jaw. it seems to me that their appeal should not be ignored since it is an appeal which, once disappointed, will possibly not be repeated, and this would put an end to any relationship and indeed would switch off reason itself. no answer, no question.

24 jan 42

met emil ludwig at the feuchtwangers’. ‘people expect a forecast from me. fine, i make a forecast. i can do it with quite different prospects from an astrologer. i predict that hitler will this year be assassinated by his generals. i say this year, but it can just as well be the spring of next year, that i can’t know, but it will be soon.’ then the man who attributed the first world war to kaiser wilhelm’s inferiority complex, which in turn was caused by his having a short left arm, has a few more goes at the astrologers who are so highly regarded in these parts. then he tells me anecdotes about goethe, very good ones, with the pride of a collector who will stop at nothing to get hold of rare specimens, a very inhibited, slightly inebriated, not very self-confident person, but one who has the ‘spark’, absolutely devoid of personal philosophy, unoriginal, but

wholly in thrall to originality, stupid, but full of respect for wisdom. i ask him about frank warschauer, a very sensitive, not very productive type who is immeasurably superior to him in human terms, and he says abruptly, with annoyance, ‘a nephew of mine who has never done anything, insignificant, never could see anything in him. i hear he committed suicide in holland when hitler marched in, so i mustn’t say anything against him, now that he has paid the supreme penalty.’ and he took his glass and with an ‘if i may, dear lady’ carefully splashed some red wine on the parquet floor, a drawing room libation. martha feuchtwanger afterwards wiped it up with a rag, so that it would not be trodden into the carpet. such is the world-famous historian of the weimar republic.

25 jan 42

i have always been interested in the eye-witness accounts of lenin’s public appearances. many of course simply try to romanticise his ascent from ‘obscure refugee’ to ‘red czar’ by exaggerating his ‘colourlessness’ in switzerland. but there are too many accounts from the time when he was already established in the kremlin and still ‘colourless’. in his case great deeds do not seem to have produced an ability to communicate a spontaneous impression of greatness. his colleagues had not so much an impression of him as experiences with him. that he was often right no doubt lent weight to his advice, but he continued to supply them with supporting evidence. his intelligence had nothing superhuman about it, but the superhuman is always inhuman. he was authoritative, he had the authority of usefulness. he was mainly a functionary and proved himself by functioning.

Sonnets to the Critics

In Rebuttal

Good critics who reject my fairest song,
And spatter my fine shirt with printer’s ink
I’d bellow bitterly you do me wrong
Were I not suffocated by your stink.
Imperfect am I, full of faults, I know;
And when I sing, a shade off key at times—
As who is not who rashly tries to blow
A paean from his lungs; but all my crimes
Are amiable when matched beside your own—
You theatre moles with inattentive ears,
A cough and now and then a kidney stone,
A bristle with your dull but fearsome spears—
Who come to drama not to drink or sup
But more to shine your little egos up.

Ben Hecht
1 feb 42

ruth finds chinese characters very good and suggests a poem about a few of them. peace is a woman with a roof over her; home is a pig under a roof; harmony is a mouth close to rice etc. maybe i ought to draw up a catalogue of characters myself, like this:

\[ \text{sin = anfall} \]
\[ \text{dich = gebildet} \]
\[ \text{herzchen = ein halm, vogel auf einem kopf} \]
\[ \text{vornellen = fluss regulieren, also} \]
\[ \text{gut vornellen = abtrieben} \]
\[ \text{selbst vornellen = vorbem} \]
\[ \text{arbeit = hand wegzehren} \]
\[ \text{hilfreich = manm} \]
\[ \text{mann = manm} \]
\[ \text{schlechter mann = manm ohne arme} \]
\[ \text{lee, sehen, lesen, verstehen = niemand mahmen} \]
\[ \text{dring = appelliert, offne hint} \]

Translation: beautiful = upright, ugly = bowed; to rule = a bottom sitting on a head; administer = control the flow of a river; so . . . good administration = prolong; worker = give a hand, helpful = man; man = man; bad man = man with no arms; read, see, hear, understand = take in hand; clever = on call (open door).

by asking many people you could devise a social script. in the BUCH DER WENDUNGEN discussions about a script might make a good chapter.

7 feb 42

KLINE, who made a film about Mexico with Steinbeck (Music Eisler), was here in the evening. he thinks a certain resistance to fascism can be expected from the americans' sense of democracy. leonhard frank and kortner were sceptical. now it is true that there is something here called 'democratic behaviour'; probably because the whole of society here was improvised from the start, there was no feudalism and militarism was superfluous. but that only means that the class struggle here goes on without any messing about in drawing rooms, i.e. that the winner does not go round raising eyebrows to express his contempt for the loser, and that profits are squandered with a certain vulgarity. american fascism would take these forms or the absence of forms into consideration and be correspondingly democratic in the american fashion (the vigilantes didn't do it just for the uniforms either).

9 feb 42

KLINE showed us his film-reports (crisis, czechoslovakia 38, spain, britain 39), really grandiose documentary material. difficult to forget how the polish peasants after the declaration of war dug little trenches with little spades, or even with their bare hands, to stop the monster german tanks.

13 feb 42

reyher invites us to dinner. he went down to the farmer's market for his shopping and made a soup containing every vegetable in the world. he also served a virginian meat-loaf with macaroni. all in honour of the german fleet sailing down the english channel, which he expects to result in a decisive weakening of the tories. of course he predicts the war to end in 1948-50. - he is a good guide to the states when, squatting on his left shin with his right hand scratching his armpit under his shirt and his jet-black eyes sparkling in his foxy yellow face, he explains the peculiarities of that giant baby, america. i casually remark how undignified a great number of american women look, sexagenarians strolling around tarted-up and dressed like flappers, forced by the cosmetics industry and the movies to remain sexually competitive unto death. he is quick to dispel my worries with the reply that america has extended women's youth by 10-20 years so they don't just throw 45 year olds on
morose thoughts, and I stand up to fetch a cigar.

25 mar 42

About 100,000 Japanese (including American citizens) are being evacuated from the coast here for military reasons. Wonderful how humanity pulls through despite all these psychoses and panics. In the office where we too had to register as enemy aliens I saw an old Japanese woman, half-blind, and not looking at all dangerous. She had her companion, a young girl, apologise to the people who were waiting that she was taking so much time to write. Everybody smiled: the American officials were very polite. For the first time little people are buying their vegetables from the niseis (Japanese born here) something they never did before because they did not think it hygienic; their markets are so empty. Now a town is being built for tens of thousands. The military constantly stress that the escorts are only there in case Americans molest them. The Japanese can police themselves, an outcry in the correspondence columns of the times shows what the authorities have to contend with.

Mad?

What is the matter with this country that we are paying the Japs union wages to build their barrack buildings where they are to be concentrated? When our boys are inducted into the Army at $21 a month and are made to put up buildings, etc., with one saw and one hammer to 150 men, and a superior officer comes around and gives a command to finish it in a week—it's about time the people got mad.

E. Jackson,

Los Angeles.

26 mar 42

A good counter-play to U1 and fear and misery might be called the market of nations. Beneš, who announces with a flourish that he has a plan, and then it turns out to be an aeroplane, and he escapes in it. Daladier who has to sell out Czechoslovakia because he has sold out the French popular front. The Tories send their expeditionary force to France without planes because Nuffield the car king wants a monopoly for making bombs. Manchukuo, Spain, Abyssinia are sold out, then France (by Frenchmen), running through it all scrap-iron, oil, rubber. In Munich the Soviet Union is sold out, Finland too in 1939 (to the USSR). Next thing Daladier is already in prison and chamberlain in Westminster Abbey, and Hess flies to England. The winter in Russia is cold, but the weather in the Channel is bad for 8 months. Fog comes down, and German battleships slip through the Channel to threaten the Atlantic supply lines. Singapore, the police-station of the Pacific, falls, the British troops had never held manoeuvres in paddy-fields and rubber plantations. India is only fortified against the North, a thousand million pounds have been invested there. If there were a clearing house for all sales, a few officers' commissions would have been sold to 'second sons' out there.

Army Tightens Control of All Aliens

8 a.m. to 6 a.m. curfew

The curfew orders forbid the thousands covered by the decree to leave their homes between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. During other hours the aliens and the·niseis may travel between their homes and place of employment at within a radius of not more than five, miles of their homes.

26 mar 42

From Planck's determinism or indeterminism (1938):

'so the law governing the reflection of electrons from crystal is a statistical one. it determines the behaviour of large numbers of electrons, but fails when it is a question of the behaviour of single electrons.'

'it is impossible to sound out the interior of a body if the sounding instrument is bigger than the entire body.'

Historical materialism also shows this 'imprecision' in relation to the individual.
and so their neediness had something classical about it, for people’s movements become simplified and ennobled by poverty, just as they do by prolonged hard work. the cottagers and the men bringing the timber down the rivers still reminded you of the shepherds in homer’s epics, and in a certain sense their lives have become like part of literature: they live in stories and their lives take courses which are known to themselves and to the village, even the workers in the towns have not become speculators. they fought against mannerheim.

7 may 42

in marlebæk, hella wulijoki’s estate, they used to tell of the following event: the manager and the swiss woman were rowing oxen across the sound on the ferry. for some reason the boat began to sink, to reduce the load the manager pushed the girl into the water. she couldn’t swim, so he had to go back for her as soon as he had the oxen on the bank, and she almost drowned in the process. that same evening the two of them cycled into the village to go to the cinema. they were lovers. the swiss girl was not uneducated, she had spent two years at the agricultural school in helsinki.

8 may 42

the finns are still fighting. human patience is enough to make you despair, when i think of the hunger there a year ago! the battle to get my hands on an orange for grete, or an egg – i would bring that orange, or that egg back as if her life depended on it.

9 may 42

eisler does not like the song und war bekam des soldaten weib. the sneer in it displeases him. he says, ‘and what if i did send my mother a piece of salami from italy in 1917? the generals purloin pianos and carpets, the privates take the chance to buy shoes for their wives. that’s what they get out of the war, not much.’ – it is a difficult one. i could say that i did not make him send his wife food, just clothes, looted junk. but that doesn’t really make much difference, she needs that too. i could say, i would not have written the poem if the widow’s veil had come from paris. but the question remains, how can i support the people’s claim to lead and at the same time condone its irresponsibility? what i had in mind when i wrote it was probably: and what did the mail bring to the sa-man’s wife? that is what it will have to be called.

9 may 42.

eisler quite rightly recalls how dangerous it was when we were putting purely technical innovations into circulation, unconnected to any social function. the postulate then was rousing music. you can hear rousing music on the radio here 100 times a day, jingles encouraging the purchase of coca cola. it’s enough to make you call for l’art pour l’art in desperation.

when i poured scorn on the unnatural declamation of texts by the school of schönberg, adorno defended them as being brought about by the ‘development of music’, which required large and abrupt intervals. so it is exclusively constructional, almost mathematical considerations and postulates of pure logic in the assembly of tonal material that force musicians to whiny like dying warhorses . . .

10 may 42

how coldly this war is being fought! you might say, the conduct of the war was icing up. as long as it produces a profit, this huge machinery for annihilating material has as little need for ideological inspiration as the machinery for producing that material. appealing to the lust for revenge would be as superfluous as is an appeal to the joy of creation in ‘normal’ industry. how stupid these tank battles are in which so much technical intelligence is invested. one formation of tanks rolls towards another and when they meet they shoot at one another; the old hand-to-hand has become machine-to-machine, then in the evening the tanks roll back to have their destructive capacity restored etc etc. the hostility at the top is exactly like the hostility between rival firms thrashing out the conditions for a merger.

10 may 42

the du nant theme is throwing up tremendous difficulties. the satirical aspect (in this world humanitarianism is as hazardous for a bourgeois individual as, say, alcoholism) does not open up any way into the timon phase. a problem of warmth. what you have is the transformation of the well-brought-up young man into a ruthless geriatric, the philanthropist-misanthropic dialectic, the opportunistic character of the red cross. the young du nant sets out to capture a concession for mills in algiers and finds himself forced to struggle for a concession for mercy towards the