the

DECEMBER 25, 1950 25 CENTS

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Editors: **John Chamberlain · Henry Hazlitt · Suzanne La Follette**

PUBLISHED FORTNIGHTLY FIVE DOLLARS A YEAR

the FREEMAN

with which is combined the magazine, PLAIN TALK

Editors, JOHN CHAMBERLAIN HENRY HAZLITT

Managing Editor, SUZANNE LA FOLLETTE

DECEMBER 25, 1950

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The Freeman *is published fortnightly. Publication Office, 10 Ferry Street, Concord, N. H. Editorial and General Offices, 240 Madison Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.*

Application pending for second class entry at the Post Office at Concord, N. H. Rates: Twenty-five cents the copy; five dollars a year in the United States, nine dollars for two years; six dollars a year elsewhere.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted but if return postage is enclosed they will endeavor to see that manuscripts rejected are promptly returned.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily represent the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

RUMFORD PRESS, CONCORD, N. H.

A WORD ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

FORREST DAVIS was chief *Saturday Evening Post* correspondent in Washington during and after World War II. He is author of "How War Came" (with Ernest Lindley) and "Atlantic System," and is now at work on a book to be called "Mr. Roosevelt and the Kremlin." . . . JONATHAN MITCHELL, Washington and European correspondent, is at present finishing a book on American politics under the auspices of the Institute for Advanced Study. . . . JOSEPH ZACK was one of the early Communists in the U. S. and was chosen by Moscow to study at the Lenin Institute. He was top Comintern agent for Latin America until he broke with Moscow during the Great Purge. . . . L. ALBERT HAHN, internationally known economist, has lived in the U. S. since 1941. Formerly manager of one of the oldest provincial banks in Germany, he was one of the first to criticize the German monetary policy which led to the great inflation. He is author of "Economic Theory and Bank Credit," and his latest book, exposing the fallacy of Keynesism, is "The Economics of Illusion." . . . WILLIAM A. ORTON, graduate of Cambridge and London universities, came to the U. S. in 1922, after eight years in the service of the British Government, in and out of uniform. Since then he has been Professor of Economics at Smith College. Among his recent books are "The Liberal Tradition" and "The Economic Role of the State."

Forthcoming:

The satire by Morrie Ryskind announced for this issue will appear instead in our issue of January 8. In that or other early issues, look for an article by Garet Garrett on free enterprise and one on organizing for war by Lloyd W. Mints; also Theodore Komisarjevsky's reminiscenses of GBS, and a profile of the left wing Labor Party leader, Aneuran Bevan, by Rene Kuhn.

A Correction

In "The Case Against Acheson" (Dec. 11) we stated that "On June 19, 1947, Mr. Acheson said there was no danger of a Communist defeat of Chiang Kai-shek." The date should have read March 20. Our thanks to Congressman John Phillips for the correction.

the FREEMAN

NEW YORK, MONDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1950

THE FORTNIGHT

The events of the past fortnight have once more emphasized that our greatest danger is not in Korea but in Washington. The Capital seems determined to take up second things first, to neglect what is immediate and practical and to turn to what is merely symbolic, rhetorical, irrelevant or harmful.

Incredible as it may seem, for example, even at the moment this is being written General MacArthur has still not been allowed to drop conventional bombs in the "privileged sanctuary" of Manchuria, even though this would obviously save American lives and strengthen our position by lessening Communist reinforcements of men and material. The only effect of this appeasement must be to convince the Chinese Communists that whether or not they gain anything from attacking our troops in Korea, at least they are risking no damage by it to Manchuria or to their arsenals in China.

True to the Capital's faith in solution by phrases, Mr. Truman has proclaimed a "national emergency." This in itself, of course, will not build a single added plane, tank or gun. It will merely give Mr. Truman more legal powers for internal controls. These internal controls are being seductively called "total mobilization" — though they do not "mobilize" anything, but merely entangle our economy in restrictions and red tape.

The most harmful domestic move was the imposition of price control. It can not be repeated too often that price control is not a cure for inflation at all. In the long run, in fact, it increases inflation. It discourages production, encourages consumption, intensifies shortages, and distorts the whole structure and balance of output.

Mr. Truman began with a so-called "selective" price-fixing that is bound to break down. It will break down because it is discriminatory, because it ignores the rising costs of the producers whose prices are being fixed, and therefore makes their profit-margins either non-existent or less favorable than those of the producers of uncontrolled commodities. This must mean a shift of labor as well as material away from the producers whose prices are controlled to the producers whose prices are not. It must soon "force" the imposition of over-all price ceilings across the economy.

But instead of solving anything this will merely increase the problem, because it will not lead to the production of goods in the relative quantities needed. It will divide the country by setting up a "profiteering" witch-hunt. And even more important, it will deflect public attention away from the fact that the sole cause of inflation is the creation of more money and credit, and from the fact that it is our governmental policies themselves that are creating this additional money and credit.

In the welter of confusion, timidity and compromise that has followed the crisis in Korea, the articles of Hanson W. Baldwin in the *New York Times* have stood out, for their clear-sightedness and courage, like flare signals over a dark sea. Particularly outstanding were his articles of December 6 and December 12. "Neither Asia nor Europe," he pointed out, "can be saved by any sort of Munich, no matter if called by a sweeter name." The Chinese intervention in Korea "was carefully planned; it did not result from our approach to the Manchurian frontier. It was not a defensive reflex — no matter how many well-intentioned Americans may think so." The Soviet Union has shown that it "will not shrink from war if it feels it must have one to accomplish its aims. And those aims are still unalterable and immutable — the conquest of the world by communism." Therefore: "The current talk of 'compromise,' or 'negotiation,' of 'agreements founded in good faith,' interpreted in the semantics of communism, is gibberish. For no agreement, no compromise worth the paper it is written upon is possible with communism — either Chinese or Russian — unless it is enforced by power, for in communism there is no good faith, no honor and no integrity."

Mr. Baldwin also outlined in his article of December 6 a military program which corresponds closely with the program suggested in this journal: There should be no hesitation, he pointed out, about bombing with conventional bombs the "privileged sanctuary" of Manchuria, if only to slow down Communist reinforcements. And if the Allied troops are ejected from Korea or tied down there by an endless war of attrition the United States should: 1) Bomb and blockade Red China, but only

carefully selected targets. "In other words, we should conduct a modern version of guerrilla warfare and *guerre de course* with sea and air power." 2) Rearm Japan. 3) "Strengthen Formosa, not merely to 'neutralize' it but to give it offensive power." 4) Aid Chinese anti-Communist guerrillas. 5) Aid anti-Communist forces in French Indo-China. Finally, though "any program in Asia must recognize the greater strategic importance of western Europe and must avoid the terrible danger of commitment to a large and unending land war on the continent of Asia," yet "the Western world can not save Europe by losing Asia, and heroic measures in the Orient are long overdue."

A United Press dispatch from Formosa on December 9 quoted a Chinese National government spokesman as saying that the Chinese Communists had "opened a wide gap in their mainland defenses by concentrating troops in Manchuria and in the south opposite French Indo-China," with the result that "conditions are ideal now for Chinese nationalist operations against the mainland." What prevents these operations? For one thing, the Seventh United States Fleet. American boys in Korea are being overwhelmed by sheer numbers of Chinese Communist troops. Meanwhile the U. S. Navy, by order of its commander-in-chief, continues to "neutralize" Formosa — thus ensuring Mao Tse-tung against any Nationalist attack, and thus permitting him to throw the bulk of his forces against the U. S. Army.

This macabre paradox suggests the question, How can Stalin be sure that the United States will not take the obvious counter-measures against his Korean attack? On Formosa is a Chinese army of 770,000 trained and partly equipped troops. Chiang also has a small air force and navy. On the mainland he has a guerrilla force estimated by the Chinese Communists themselves to number between 400,000 and 1,000,000 men. One way to relieve pressure on General MacArthur's troops would be for the Seventh U. S. Fleet to aid Chiang's forces in an invasion of the mainland. What makes Stalin so confident that he is safe in exposing his flank to attack from Formosa?

A Virginia hunting squire of our acquaintance deplores President Harry Truman's threat to commit mayhem upon the body of the Washington *Post's* music critic for his unkindly remarks about daughter Margaret's voice. He thinks that it has finally drained the Presidency of dignity. The editors of the *Freeman* take a different view. We need men in high office these days who have the fire of personal encounter in their hearts, men of choler and brag. The fact that Mr. Truman merely committed his fire-eating to paper is significant but not controlling. The desire to reduce the offending critic to a bloody pulp was there. The will, after all, is what counts. We should remember that the Independence of Harry Truman's youth still resounded with the personal valor of border raiders, the James boys, the bully boys of the Missouri River waterfront. Our Harry is in a robust tradition. The good of the nation calls for deflecting his personal pugnacity into wider causes. If we could only contrive to have Mao Tse-tung reflect upon the *bel canto* of a certain soprano! If only Dean Acheson would say that Margaret flats!

A COIN WITH NO TAIL

On the security of unsold automobiles in storage, the government, through its Reconstruction Finance Corporation, has just increased by $25,000,000 its loan to the Kaiser-Frazer Sales Corporation, making altogether $69,500,000. The purpose of these loans, as officially explained, is to enable the Kaiser-Frazer Corporation to go on making automobiles — and this at a time when a general curtailment of automobile production is indicated, owing to the demands of mobilization and defense.

But why at any time should the government lend the people's money to a private corporation to enable it to go on making automobiles? In Washington's book the answer goes like this:

1. Before the Kaiser-Frazer Corporation can borrow the people's money from the government it must show that its bank credit is exhausted — that it can not get the money from private sources. Such is the law of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation.

2. It follows that if Kaiser-Frazer can not get the money from the government it may have to shut down, and if it does, its employees will be out of work.

3. Therefore the government lends the people's money to the Kaiser-Frazer outfit not primarily to save the corporation but to protect its labor.

The sophistry of that answer can be made to appear in a very few words. The demand for automobiles will be what it will be, and no amount of public money loaned to the Kaiser-Frazer Corporation can increase it. The capacity of the motor-car industry as a whole to satisfy the demand is more than adequate. Therefore, if the Kaiser-Frazer Corporation does not make the automobiles, somebody else will — which is to say that if Kaiser-Frazer has to shut down, its labor will be employed by other motor-car makers, provided they need it. If they do not need it, then the case is that there are already too many automobile workers to supply the demand; and thus the more who continue to work for Kaiser-Frazer, the fewer will be wanted to work elsewhere. Therefore, the loan of the people's money to the Kaiser-Frazer Corporation does neither increase employment nor sustain it.

Henry J. Kaiser would probably cross his heart and say that he believes in free competitive private enterprise. But free competitive enterprise is a profit-and-loss system. Its first law is that those who take the profit shall be willing also to take the loss. What does he believe in when the loss appears? At his own risk he crashed the motor-car industry, as others had done before him — as Chrysler did with a shoestring of capital — and the motive was hope of profit. It is a highly competitive industry. If he could produce a better car at the competitive price, or a car just as good at a lower price, he would make a large profit, even as others had done before him. If he could not do that he was bound to lose. If he won, the profit would be his own. If he lost, whose loss should it be?

Now, on the ground that it might otherwise fail, and because no private bank is willing to take the risk, the government puts the people's money into this private adventure to save it. If with the people's money it is saved, will the people participate afterwards in the profit? Certainly not. The most they can get is their

money back, with a minimum of interest. But if in spite of the people's money it nevertheless fails, who will take the loss? The people.

Too much of the coin now current in the world of private enterprise has two heads and no tail, and in fairness to Mr. Kaiser it must be said that his faith in the power of its magic to expel the principle of loss from a profit-and-loss system, at the expense of the public, is very widely shared.

KEEPING OUT OF BOGS

Nothing is so disheartening to contemplate these days as the weakness of our opinion-makers for military clichés that make no connection with either geography, power or rationality. Take, for example, the cliché that we must get out of Asia for fear of becoming "bogged down" in China. The people who repeat this idiocy sound as though there were no steps either in diplomacy or in warfare between the poles of total abstention and total commitment of everything you've got. One would have thought that the whole fallacy of the war of total commitment and of unlimited objectives had been exposed for all time by the disastrous consequences of Mr. Roosevelt's "unconditional surrender" theses of 1943–45. Like the Bourbons of old, however, our off-the-cuff military thinkers learn nothing and forget nothing. They still fail to see that a wide area of maneuver exists between extremes of absolute peace and absolute warfare.

A hundred and fifty years ago the formulators of military opinion in the Anglo-Saxon world knew better. Caught in the maelstrom of the Napoleonic wars, England (an island power, even as the United States of 1950) nursed her resources and committed them only at the points where real leverage could be achieved with the most frugal expenditure of British lives. The whole effort of the younger Pitt was to chivvy and bleed Napoleon into ultimate defeat without decimating England's population or gutting her industry. The British finagled and bribed and intrigued and promoted coalitions; they stirred up guerrilla warfare against Napoleon at the two ends of Europe in Spain and Russia; they committed a very small army to Wellington's Iberian campaign; and they seized important strategic islands (Minorca, Corsica) in the Mediterranean. In the seventeen-nineties a tiny naval force under Nelson invested Corsica and, with the help of local brigands (i.e., "partisans") and a small British army, finally captured the Corsican stronghold of Calvi. "Never," said John Moore, anticipating by 150 years the eloquence of Churchill, "never was so much work done by so few men."

The British record in the Napoleonic wars has several lessons for our policy makers in 1950. To begin with, the United States can no more hope to send mass armies of Americans against the hordes of Stalin or Mao Tse-tung than England could have afforded to send them against Napoleon on the European continent in 1803. The main ground forces to defeat Stalin in Europe and Mao in Asia must be raised on the spot. While these armies are being raised, whether as trained infantrymen or as irregular guerrillas, the U. S. cue is to oppose Stalin and his puppets by using what we have — our naval supremacy, our power of blockade, our economic ability to create a superior air force. American foot-soldiers will certainly be needed in the struggles that lie ahead, but it would be fatal to proceed at this point on the assumption that to gain our ends in Asia we must commit huge expeditionary forces to the conquest of Chinese soil. Even if we could sustain a mass army in China, it would fail of its objective. The white man can do no more than offer auxiliary aid on the Asian mainland.

The worst thing that could happen to us in Asia would be for the UN to trade Formosa to Mao Tse-tung for southern or northern Korea. For that would be to trade a defensible bastion for an indefensible position. If necessary, we should withdraw from Korea and simultaneously announce that we recognize we are in a state of war with Communist China. We should then proclaim a blockade of the Chinese coast from Formosa and Okinawa. We should add to this that we intend to support the armies of Chiang Kai-shek with naval and limited air aid. We should then proceed to help the Chinese Nationalists conduct guerrilla warfare in China and organize raids on the China coast. We should refrain from bombing Chinese cities outside of Manchuria (after all, the cities must stagnate and come to the point of rebellion once they have been denied economic access to the sea), but we should bomb the Chinese railway system, thus preventing the movement of Red troops from south to north, and vice versa. Meanwhile, we should allow the Japanese to rearm as a make-weight in the western Pacific balance of power.

Such a program would be wholly within our means. It would be a program of limited warfare in Asia for limited ends. It would be "warfare without bogs." The "conditions" of settlement, set by Chiang, would undoubtedly be banishment of Russian influence from China. Our own condition should be freedom for Korea.

The value of such limited action on our part in the China theater would be felt not only in Asia but also in Europe. For only by diverting the Red Chinese from their intended prey in Indo-China and Malaya can pressure be taken off the French and the British in the southeast Asian corner. If the "stopper" should ever be pulled in Formosa, there would be nothing to prevent a crunching concentration of Red Chinese troops to take over throughout southeast Asia. Could Britain and France then decide to cut their losses in that part of the world and run back to Europe? They could — but the echo of such cowardice and duplicity would reverberate disastrously throughout India, Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Moslem East and Japan. Withdrawal from southeast Asia to concentrate wholly on the defenses of Europe would be tantamount to abandoning the whole eastern half of the oceanic world to communism. Such abandonment would also free the entire weight of Russia's land army to concentrate on Europe.

So far as we can determine as we go to press, Britain's Clement Attlee is against using Formosa as a base for limited naval and air commitments in the Far East. Britain's Socialist cabinet has apparently lost the sound amphibious instincts that used to be bred into British statesmen virtually from birth. But the United States, as the heir to Britain's ancient oceanic power, can not afford to let Clement Attlee deny his own ancestral heritage. The wisdom of William Pitt the Younger must prevail or the ocean-girt peninsulas of western Europe will topple along with the island barriers of the Far East.

OUR POLITICAL PARALYSIS

By HENRY HAZLITT

IF THE military disaster in Korea had overtaken any nation with a responsible parliamentary government, there is not the slightest doubt what the result would have been. The chief executive and every member of his cabinet would have been forced to resign.

The next step would have been to set up a government that had the confidence of the parliament and of the people. But the indispensable first step would have been the resignation of the existing government. It would have had to go because its incompetence and unfitness had been demonstrated. It would have had to go if for no other reason than that it had acquired a vested interest in defending, covering up, prolonging and compounding the very blunders that had brought about the crisis. It would have had to go because it had lost the confidence of the country.

And this would have been true even if its responsibility for the crisis had been less direct than is President Truman's responsibility for the crisis that confronts this country today. That responsibility is as clear and direct as it could possibly be. For it was on the night of June 26 that President Truman made the personal decision to throw American troops into Korea. In doing this he went against the long-considered judgment of nearly every military authority: that Korea was strategically untenable by our land forces if the hordes of Red China or Red Russia chose to dispute it.

In acting that night on the impulse of the moment, Mr. Truman disregarded not only this military judgment, but the American Constitution. The Constitution confers the power to declare war on Congress — and on no one else. Mr. Truman bypassed Congress with the fiction that the "United Nations" was only taking a "police action" in Korea. With the passage of time that fiction has become increasingly transparent. The "police action" has turned out to be a major war, with more casualties for us than the American Revolution. The "United Nations" turned out to mean in fact that 90 per cent of the combat forces in Korea on our side, apart from the South Koreans themselves, were Americans. We have maneuvered ourselves into a preposterous situation, in which American boys do 90 per cent of the fighting and dying, while our token-fighting or non-fighting "allies" in the United Nations tell us what we can or can't do with a victory if we ever win it and what we can or can't do even on the battlefield itself.

All this is the fruit of the theory, assiduously preached in the last twenty years, that we should have one-man government in the conduct of foreign affairs. Previous fruits were Yalta and Potsdam, where Presidents made foreign agreements not only without the advice and consent of the Senate but without even revealing to their own people what the full agreements were.

President Truman's responsibility is of course shared by Secretaries Acheson and Marshall. It is General Marshall who was chiefly instrumental in trying to force Chiang Kai-shek to take the Communists into his government — an act which would have brought the triumph of communism in China far sooner than it actually came. The quality of Secretary Acheson's statesmanship was reviewed at length in the previous issue of the *Freeman*. I will repeat here only one item from that record. On March 20, 1947, before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. Acheson said there was no danger of a Communist defeat of Chiang Kai-shek. In a letter to the President of July 30, 1949, he said that "no amount of aid could have saved Chiang."

But merely forcing an unfit executive to get rid of unfit advisers, though it may be better than nothing, is not a step of first importance. The quality of a statesman is revealed in nothing more clearly than in his choice of advisers. He is not good or bad because his advisers are good or bad; his own wisdom or folly determines the advisers he chooses and the advice he follows.

In this country, whenever a crisis or a calamity occurs, we concentrate our attack on the advisers, rather than on the top executive, chiefly because the advisers are the only ones we are constitutionally able to remove. Thus there are broadly two factions in the United States at this moment: those demanding the dismissal of General MacArthur and those demanding the dismissal of Secretary Acheson. That General MacArthur is a military genius is beyond doubt: he proved it by his Pacific campaign in the last war and by the Inchon landing in the Korean war. That he has made serious mistakes in the present campaign is probable: he has made over-optimistic statements; and his forces were caught off balance when the Chinese attack came. But his defeat has been due primarily to the fact that President Truman assigned him an impossible task. The responsibility comes directly back to the President. Yet Mr. Truman can ignore, if he chooses, even the demand for the removal of a Secretary Acheson as long as he is himself irremovable.

Nor can we take much hope in the process of impeachment. Since the effort to impeach President Johnson on purely political grounds, tremendous psychological and political resistance has been built up against the repetition of such an effort. Woodrow Wilson, in his "Congressional Government" (1885) explained what was wrong about our constitutional provisions in this regard:

> Nothing short of a well-nigh impossible impeachment can unmake a President, except four successions of the seasons. . . . A Prime Minister must keep himself in favor with the majority, a President need only keep alive. . . .
>
> Great crimes such as might speed even impeachment are not ordinary things in the loosest public service. . . . That which usually and every day clogs and hampers good government is folly or incapacity on the part of the ministers of state. Even more necessary, therefore, than a power clothed with authority to accuse, try, and punish for public crimes is some ultimate authority,

whose privilege it shall be to dismiss for inefficiency. Impeachment is aimed altogether above the head of business management. A merchant would not think it fair, even if it were lawful, to shoot a clerk who could not learn the business. Dismissal is quite as effective for his purposes, and more merciful to the clerk. The crying inconvenience of our system is, therefore, that the constitutional authority whose prerogative it is to direct policy and oversee administration has fewer facilities for getting its work well done than has the humblest citizen for obtaining satisfactory aid in his own undertakings. . . .

It is impossible to deny that this division of authority [between Congress and the President] and concealment of responsibility are calculated to subject the government to a very distressing paralysis in moments of emergency. . . . In times of sudden exigency this [division of authority] might prove fatal — fatal either in breaking down the system or in failing to meet the emergency.

This paralysis of action has brought about in our political life a paralysis of thought. I hope I may be forgiven if I quote from a book of my own, "A New Constitution Now," published in 1942:

> The constitutional restrictions on what the American people are able to *do*, affect what it is prudent for them to *say*, and this in turn unconsciously affects even what they dare to *think*. If the President turns out not to be the man best fitted to lead the country in a successful prosecution of war, if he bungles critical decisions badly and to the national cost, men fear to say so plainly. There is no immediate constitutional method of changing the executive, as there is in England. Therefore patriotic men fear that criticism which brings responsibility home too closely to the President can only divide the country without affecting the change necessary. But this fear, only partly conscious, has a further effect: it leads men to wishful thinking: it leads them to tell themselves that the situation can not be as bad as all that, and that the necessary changes can be effected by moderate arguments which do not urge a change in government but merely in the policies adopted by the existing government. Such a belief will continue to be held even though experience shows that the existing government will not modify its major policies, and may not even, however willing, know how to adopt and carry out the proper policies. The limitations imposed by a rigid constitution, in short, may pervert a nation's very thinking, leading it to a sort of national neurosis in which it refuses to face the truth about the situation that confronts it.

That we are close to such a neurosis now is indicated in the timidity not merely of Democratic but of Republican leadership in what everyone concedes to be one of the most serious crises in our history. Not only are the "responsible" Republican leaders not asking that Mr. Truman resign; they became afraid even to ask that Mr. Acheson resign.

The climax of this timidity was reached by Governor Dewey, the so-called "titular leader" of the Republican Party, when he declared on December 8: "This moment is not the time for further criticism." Not the time to criticize the policies that have brought us to the brink of disaster! When *is* the time? After the disaster has become irreparable?

The only answer to these questions is that this is, above all, the time to demand the removal or resignation of the men, and the instant and complete change of the policies, that have led us into this disaster. We have not, in fact, too much time left. It is later than Mr. Dewey dares to think.

Yet there have been many other expressions of this same psychosis. There was the strange article by Cabell Phillips, leading off the *New York Times Magazine* of December 10. This article called upon all Americans to close ranks in a "spirit of unity" — behind precisely the leaders and "selected means" that have been discredited.

The argument ran: "Our common faith must, of necessity, be placed in our chosen leaders — the President and his chief civilian and military subordinates." In other words, our faith must be placed precisely in the group whose policies have already led us to the very brink of disaster.

"As individuals," the article conceded, "we may neither respect nor fully trust either those leaders or their policies." In other words, we must collectively have implicit faith in leaders and policies whom individually we neither respect nor trust.

Admitting that its self-contradictory argument might cause some "perplexity," the article none the less continued: "But the [Truman] Administration was put in power by the mandate of a democratic majority. That mandate placed in their hands the conduct of our military and foreign affairs." What is wrong with this argument is: (1) it neglects to mention that this "mandate" was given more than two years ago, when the American people could not foresee the disaster to which it was going to lead; (2) that last November 7, though they still had only a faint and uncertain intimation of the disaster that was coming, the American people considerably modified this "mandate"; (3) that there never was a mandate to Mr. Truman to usurp the power of Congress to put us into war; and (4) the argument misses the entire point that the American people, now that the disaster is upon them, are not being given the opportunity to renew or reverse that "mandate."

The article went on: "We must accept the premise that our leaders are acting to the best of their abilities and to no other purpose than to protect our national interest." It is hard to believe that this argument was seriously intended. It is merely another version of the old Wild West saloon sign: "Please don't shoot the pianist. He's doing his best." The whole question is whether our present leaders *have* the necessary abilities, whether they *know how* to protect our national interest. We have seen the disaster to which their lack of ability and their good intentions have already led us. How much more disaster do we need?

I quote one final argument from the Phillips article about these leaders: "We may rightfully question their wisdom and try to influence their decisions. But once those decisions are made we are all, under the rules we live by, equally obligated by them." In other words, even if their decisions threaten to lead us to disaster, we must all go along with them and carry them out. It is better, apparently, to go down to defeat quietly under the old rules than to presume to change the rules. America, apparently, exists for the old rules, not the rules for America.

The *New York Times Magazine* article, like Mr. Dewey's no-time-for-criticism statement, are examples of an intellectual paralysis brought about by the inflexibility of our present constitutional machinery. All such arguments reveal a lack of understanding of the very basis of two-party government.

The shutting off of criticism is the device of a one-party system and of totalitarianism. Is the opposition going to sit quiet, continuing to mumble incoherently about "bipartisanship" while acquiescing in every blunder, in order to tell us in 1952 (if we survive till then) that they could have saved us from these blunders if they had dared to speak out? Are those who recognize the Administration's errors to be silent precisely at the moment when their constructive suggestions of what to do — which can not be separated from their suggestions of what to stop doing — are most needed?

We are already beginning to see the logical fruits of the doctrine that we must trust the very people who led us into this crisis to lead us out of it. One is a demand that a "national emergency" be declared chiefly so that still more powers can be assumed by the leaders who have already demonstrated that they do not know how to use the huge powers already granted to them. Another is a demand for "total mobilization." This phrase derives its seductive powers mainly from a misleading analogy, especially when it is interpreted to mean over-all allocations and rationing, price controls and wage controls. These controls do not in fact help to "mobilize" the economy; they do not promote flexibility and efficiency and a quick transformation to a balanced production of war goods. They merely serve to tie the economy up in bureaucratic red tape.

Well, then, I may be asked, what can the opposition do? What can Congress do? Suppose it does pass a resolution of lack of confidence in Mr. Truman? Suppose Congress does point out to Mr. Truman that, though it does not have the power to remove him, the Constitution explicitly permits him to resign, and that his resignation is necessary to preserve the unity and serve the interests of the country? And suppose Mr. Truman then refuses to resign? Or suppose, even, that he does resign. That, under our present system, means Alben W. Barkley as President. Or even if Mr. Barkley also resigns, it means, under the existing Presidential Succession Act, Speaker Sam Rayburn. Is there any good reason for thinking that either of them would be much better than Mr. Truman, that either of them would be remotely up to the tremendous world responsibilities that the task would impose upon him?

Most of us would feel forced to answer No. Neither of these men is anything much better than an average political hack. Certainly neither could be regarded as a leader capable of inspiring the unity, confidence and trust, not to speak of the hope and faith, that the country so desperately needs today.

But this is merely another illustration of the pass to which our existing constitutional machinery — plus our ill-considered Presidential Succession Act, and our irresponsible way of choosing leaders in Congress — mainly on the soggy principle of seniority — has brought us.

There are, it is true, conceivable ways out, without even amending our Constitution. Even under our existing (1947) Presidential Succession Act, it might be possible to persuade both Mr. Truman and Mr. Barkley to resign and to have the House choose temporarily in place of Mr. Rayburn a Speaker more eminently qualified to act as President. But this man would have to come from the House's own members, and the plan in any case would depend upon three great voluntary self-denying acts on the part of three different individuals.

It would probably be much better for Congress to submit immediately an amendment to the Constitution. Though this is usually regarded as a hopelessly time-consuming process, there is no good reason why Congress could not eliminate the loss of time hitherto regarded as inevitable. Congress has the explicit constitutional right to provide that an amendment be ratified or rejected by "conventions" of the several states. As part of Congress's specified right to select the "mode of ratification," it surely has the implied power (though it has never previously seen fit to exercise it), to provide that these conventions be elected and meet simultaneously at an early date set by Congress itself.

Nor would the substance of the amendment itself be difficult to outline. The Federal Government must be responsible and accountable at all times to the people. This means that the people must have potential control of their government at all times, and not simply at rigid election dates two or four years apart. The people must have the power, in short, to change their leaders at any time — above all in times of crisis when our very national survival may be at stake.

The way to make this practically possible has already been shown by generations of tested experience in, for example, Great Britain, Australia and Canada. Congress should have power at any time to vote a lack of confidence in the Executive, who would then have the choice of resigning or of dissolving Congress. If he resigned, Congress could select a new Executive immediately. If he dissolved Congress, he would force every member to go to the country for re-election, but he would himself have to stand for such re-election. If the Executive won the country's verdict, he would get a Congress pledged to support him; if he lost it, the new Congress could itself choose a new leader.

Only in this way can we assure continuous national unity, national confidence, national faith in our leadership. Only in this way can we make our leaders truly responsible and select the leadership capable of rising to a crisis.

It is so that the great countries of Europe have been able to act in a crisis. It was in the very midst of war, in 1917, when French morale was bad at the front and even worse at home, that Clemenceau, who had not hesitated to attack the failures of the previous government, came into power and led France to victory. It was in the very midst of war, in 1916, when the British people had ceased to believe in Asquith as war leader, that Lloyd-George took his place and led England on to victory. And it was in the midst of the last war that Winston Churchill displaced Chamberlain and rallied the nation to victory. Does anyone seriously believe today that England should have tried to keep the faltering Chamberlain regime in power in that crisis?

Is America alone to deprive itself of the ability to change its leaders in a crisis? Do we prefer to tie our own hands? Do we prefer the preservation of an outworn political machinery to survival? And are we sure that the effort to preserve this rigid, outworn machinery won't, as Woodrow Wilson predicted, prove "fatal — fatal either in breaking down the system or in failing to meet the emergency"?

SENATOR TAFT'S NEW DEAL

By FORREST DAVIS

Washington

THE CHALLENGE uttered by Dean Acheson to his fellow Yale trustee, Robert Alphonso Taft, in the piping days of quasi-peace last month had, as we see it across the intervening calamities, a sort of forlorn gallantry. Standing amidst the rubble of his policies, voicing a sublime petulance at those critics, notably Taft, temerarious enough to suggest dotting an i, the Secretary of State did call out the doughtiest of champions.

No statesman was fitter for the fray. Newly anointed by the voters of Ohio, "Mr. Republican" found his self-confidence as well as his hold on the Senate minority leadership confirmed by the elections. Yet there was more ahead than personal controversy. If the brilliant, ill-starred Acheson had divination as well as pique, he might have foreseen that Taft, as heir to the foreign affairs mantle of his colleague Vandenberg, was fated to become the *de facto* leader of an opposition wider than the Senate in the encompassing issues of war and peace.

The shuffle of the fates that enfeebled Vandenberg and brought on war have handed "Mr. Republican" a new deal, fixing upon him the task not only of helping repair the disasters caused by Acheson's uncomprehending, rhetorical and negative diplomacy, but mounting guard as well, at the head of the powerful Senate minority, upon the Administration's future conduct. Because the Senate has constitutional obligations in foreign relations, because the minority leader is the ranking Republican at the seat of government and because in war all roads lead to Washington, Senator Taft has loaded upon him vast responsibilities unenvisaged when he went to the voters last month. And while Secretary Acheson may soon fade from office under the innumerable pressures aroused against him (his resignation may precede these words into print), Senator Taft remains, his influence and his critical capacity enlarged by events.

That Acheson's epithet "re-examinist" would return as a boomerang to smite him might have been foreseen by a public man less blinded by faith in his own infallibility. Even the staunchest of his journalistic train (*vide* the brothers Alsop, whose elegant pleasure it has been to depict the Secretary's opponents as sweaty, Midwestern hinds) were quick to note the perverse results of his *gaffe*. Instead of quelling his critics, the Secretary found that his phrase served to focus upon himself the authorship of our misfortunes around the earth.

His timing could scarcely have been less opportune. For Taft, and all who like himself deeply mistrusted the bases of our foreign policy, it could not have been apter. Had it come ten days later the tumult of the war might have blurred the responsibility of Acheson (and the Administration) for our plight. As it happened, the massive Chinese offensive in the Chongchon Valley interrupted a stirring debate on Acheson's sally. That offensive likewise and finally swept away the Acheson-Lattimore thesis that Mao Tse-tung is a potential Tito, the Chinese Communists "agrarian reformers."

Whether it was Acheson's historic role, as has been said, wittingly or unwittingly to deliver Asia to Soviet Russia remains to the judgment of the future. What even the politically uninstructed American could see as December ushered in the bleakest of winters was that we were plunged into a full-scale war in Asia; a war which our diplomacy, tentative when not downright appeasing, had been unable to anticipate and powerless to avert. As our American looked from the fighting front in Korea to our rear across the Atlantic he was further dismayed. At the end of four years of donation diplomacy, costing fifteen billions, he could be sure of no trustworthy ally between us and the Elbe.

He saw a France, racked as usual by its polarities, which had been unwilling to arm the Germans to defend the West; the German Socialists unwilling to rearm themselves. In Britain he beheld an uncertain friend, clawing at a lost liberty of action, repeating the mentality of Munich, frivolously offering to re-enact her historic role of broker, this time between a baleful Moscow and a bountiful Washington. To many Americans it seemed that the British, unbelievably in the light of their danger, were caught up in a whirlwind of appeasement, doctrinaire socialism and a habit survival of imperial days: single-power diplomacy aimed at any ascending rival. Only Churchill's voice rose clear and familiar. As our American bent his gaze nearer home on Lake Success he was appalled at the sight of our Chinese enemies basking in American luxury, slandering the United States while his sons fought their minions in a glacial Korea. All this he might sum up as the end result of a postwar diplomacy that had failed, at all stages, to apprehend the full malignancy of the Soviet Union.

The reflection was depressing. Make no mistake, the mood of Washington in the declining days of 1950 is suited to the season: wintry and acerb. Not since Dunquerque has the capital felt so at bay. Few Washingtonians perhaps attained the cold fury of an elderly gentleman of my acquaintance, spiritual relict of the era of John Hay, Henry Adams and Elihu Root, who was heard during one of the worst days of early December muttering over the news ticker at his club: "If we had any decent standards of honor nowadays, George Marshall would be falling on his sword and Acheson drinking the hemlock."

Outside loyal Administration and pro-Soviet circles there was a deep sense of betrayal, surmounted by fear that the forces in the American and British governments that had willed Communist ascendancy in Asia could not be counted upon to stand on our side in the final struggle for Asia. Having committed themselves to a Soviet Asia, the appeasers certainly will not lead an offensive, making use of all our assets, against Mao Tse-tung's possibly precarious, assuredly vulnerable, hold upon China.

The diplomatic disasters suffered by the Administration might be forgiven in the light of the new realities if we could be sure that the Administration had learned its lesson. Of that we can not be sure. But if the diplomatic past is of only academic interest now, assuredly the old shibboleths of isolationism and internationalism have lost meaning. Communist China's intervention in Korea swept aside such concepts as it discredited Achesonism and, with war threatening our survival, "anybody is an idiot," as Taft has said, "who calls anybody else an isolationist."

What was needed now, it was evident, was a new, clear-sighted, muscular internationalism singly aimed at victory and survival and facing at long last our destiny. A policy recognizing the historic truth that the United States and Russia are locked in a struggle for world mastery. Such a policy means (a somber reflection at this season of good will) risking war in all quarters of the globe. It means impressing its dire peril upon western Europe, emphasizing the ties of the West and energizing its defense — if there is still time. It means arming for the common war of civilization Nationalist China and such martial tribes as are still amenable to us: the Germans, the Japanese, the Turks, the Spanish. When we supped with the devil in the recent war, we used too short a spoon. Hence, our need is greater now. It means going ahead without allies, if that is our lot, but meantime organizing the world to which we have access, through the United Nations if possible, for all-out war.

Above all, the new policy — to commend itself to the whole country, to bring about the unity which will be much besought — must mean the elimination on the home front of pools of potential subversion. It means excising Achesonism as well as ridding the government of all the Communists, crypto-Communists and genuinely suspected persons who have found lodgment there. This the Administration can do speedily if only it has the will to do it.

The old artilleryman Truman could sink his teeth into such a policy. For Truman the politician it is a tall order. He has given many hostages to Achesonism as well as to leftists, including, it could be, disguised Soviet sympathizers within his own circle of advisers. How the President meets the test of the Communists within our gates will have bearing on the unity he must have to fight the war. It would be well for the President to bear in mind, allowing others to forget it, that he, as well as Acheson, is held responsible for allowing war to come in Korea by the destruction of the Chinese Nationalist bulwark against communism in Asia. The people have the right to demand that he guard the home front.

If the President has grave responsibilities, so, too, has the Congress. So, too, under our system, has the Congressional opposition. If the President prosecutes American world interest singly, effectively prosecutes the war and meets the other tests, he assuredly can count upon the cooperation of the Congress. If he fails, all that is left in the field of action is the Republican representation in Congress. And among these only the Senators have a direct opportunity to affect world policy by passing upon treaties and appointments. While the conduct of foreign policy devolves in the first instance upon the White House, a resourceful leader of the senatorial opposition has a high vantage. The Senate is, moreover, still the most resounding forum in the country. And finally, only in the Senate can the opposition hammer out a coherent policy of its own.

The Senate, by and large, abdicated its responsibilities during the last war; a war during which the seeds of the present one were sowed through Presidential diplomacy. It is true that the Roosevelt wartime Administration was in a better position than the Truman Administration as it enters this war. This time the country is divided, not on the issue of fighting the war, but on the diplomacy that preceded it and the question of enemies at home. It is clear that the Senate, which to all practical effect means the Republican minority, must not abdicate this time. Only in a dictatorship does national unity mean the stifling of politics. The people are entitled to be heard through their elected representatives, especially in a crisis, and it should not be overlooked that the Republicans have quite as much at stake in this war as the Democrats.

The country may take assurance from the quality of Senate minority leadership. Taft's moral authority, his acuity, industry and grasp are commonplaces to his colleagues; but, above all, he is a steady man and seasoned. Those were the qualities, plus his patience, conciliation and capacity to consult, which brought it about that in the early days of the war, with the lame duck session convening, his leadership was broadened by consent to include the field which had previously fallen to Vandenberg. Recognition of the new circumstance came at once when the able John Foster Dulles interrupted his duties on the Security Council to hurry to Washington for a conference with Taft and his worldly and erudite coadjutor, Senator Eugene D. Millikin of Colorado, on the questions raised by the appearance of the Chinese Communists at Lake Success.

Although Taft has not hitherto exercised sway in the field of foreign affairs, it was not for lack of qualification. In a sense he was bred to foreign, as well as domestic, politics. His grandfather Alphonso, a Vermonter, acceptably served this government as minister to the court of Franz Josef and subsequently in St. Petersburg. William Howard Taft, as all know, was the first American viceroy of the Philippines and as such negotiated the Spanish friars' land dispute with the Vatican. As President Mr. Taft served the cause of international arbitration, and as a private citizen he campaigned earnestly for a league to enforce peace. Bob Taft as a boy traveled to and from the Orient during his father's proconsulship. As a young man, debarred from serving in World War I by weak eyesight, he was Herbert Hoover's counsel in the American Relief Administration.

For three generations the Tafts, large, composed, judgmatical men of peace, have known the world outside our borders. All were tinctured with old-fashioned Scriptural pacifism, and it was that tincture, coupled with a characteristic dislike of Franklin D. Roosevelt's foreign adventurism, that landed Taft in the isolationist ranks when he first came to the Senate in 1939. As a freshman Senator, Taft, a genuinely modest man, would not aspire to the rarified levels of foreign policy, but concerned himself with domestic matters. When he reached Senate leadership, Senator Vandenberg, having apostatized from his old isolationism, was exerting his gifted influence

in that quarter. The friends, Vandenberg and Taft, struck an informal compact dividing the leadership.

What effect will Taft's new tasks have on his Presidential availability in 1952? The question is natural, everything that happens to a political figure being invariably considered in the light of his political future. When he sought the Presidential nomination in 1940 and 1948 he labored under two principal disabilities, (a) opposition among Eastern seaboard Republicans to what was construed as his isolationism and (b) a doubt among practical politicians that he had sufficient political "oomph," a word meaning in this case vote-getting ability.

What will happen at the Republican national convention seventeen months hence to a Taft who is not only "Mr. Republican" in domestic affairs, but "Mr. Republican" in foreign affairs as well? As the chief architect of a made-in-the-Senate policy of vigorous internationalism in pursuit of American interest, a policy that had commended itself to the country, his claims this time might be hard to deny. Especially since the second objection seems to have been pretty well dispelled by the election results in Ohio last month.

Taft, of course, won spectacularly, producing a landslide reminiscent of the good old Republican days of the 1920s. Yet I suspect that *how* he won is of more substantial interest and affords more insight into what we may expect from his Senate leadership. He was incorrigibly, monumentally frank and he treated the voters with high respect as mature and responsible citizens.

On no issue did he spare the horses. He insisted upon full debate on the Taft-Hartley Act. He grasped the nettle of "McCarthyism," a term which the new, self-conscious cult of the intelligentsia had diligently sought to make opprobrious. Feeling no obligation to shield that voluble friend of revolution in Asia, Owen Lattimore, as did many intellectuals, he pressed the issue of Communist influence in high places. Although it was assumed to be extremely unpopular, Taft, during the campaign, opposed in the Senate General Marshall's appointment to the Defense Department, quite as much because of what he considered the General's share in the culpability of our Chinese policy as because he mistrusts generals in civil office.

The politics of our time has become such a mishmash of sham, bribery by promise and advertising-agency prestidigitation that simple political courage shines with an antique splendor.

The statists, both of right and left, have a theory of the "little people" as a faceless, irresponsible mass to be seduced, cajoled and otherwise cozened as wards of a bureaucratic elite. This Taft rejects. Respecting his fellow man, knowing that, except in the throes of disease, crushing defeat or dissolution no man regards himself as wholly bereft of a worthwhile, personal destiny, Taft cedes him his full dignity. To him the word "proletariat" is something from the Latin as unrealistic in American terms as the *aedile* of ancient Rome. So it was that in his campaign Taft plodded twice through the counties from Lake Erie to the Ohio, never talking down to the voters, expounding his views as fully to an audience of 50 as to one of 5,000. He insisted upon addressing workers as individuals precisely as he addressed housewives, farmers or businessmen as individuals. The voter belongs to various groups of interest or sentiment but, as our eighteenth-century fathers knew, it is the common tie of citizenship that binds us into a nation. Perhaps in part because of his individualizing appeal, Taft was the first Republican since 1928 to carry the eight great industrial centers of Ohio.

The gleeful minnesingers of the left formerly ascribed to Taft a desire to "return to McKinleyism." Being men of the left, whose history begins in October (oldstyle) 1916, they did not sufficiently delve into the past. Had they done so they would have found that of all the men in high public station today Taft most nearly resembles the forthright, rational and dutybound men of our eighteenth-century heyday. Lacking Hamilton's personal vindictiveness, his *arriviste* pretensions, Taft has as sure a grasp of the principles and workings of the government of 1950 as Hamilton had of our fledgling establishment. As sternly dutiful as Washington, as clearsightedly blunt as John Adams, as frugal and pragmatic as Franklin, Taft reminds his day of the days of the great tradition. Wasn't it Spengler, never explicit about the future of America, who hinted that we alone of the West might defer or escape its decay if we held fast to the sturdy, organic, pre-romantic rationalism of our origins? In a time of world upheaval, which we may be fated to face alone, the thought may be something to ponder.

THE TEAMSTERS DROVE OFF

By JONATHAN MITCHELL

AT THE CIO's recent convention in Chicago, discussion of the 1950 election was frowned on. The matter was too painful. However, there was considerable corridor talk about Mr. Reuther's proposed nation-wide labor party. One venture has failed, so let's try a bigger one.

The election need not have been a bad labor-union defeat. Tafthartley — supposed to be more sinister pronounced as one word — was nowhere as important as Korea, treason or rising prices. But for the first time in their respective histories, the AFL and CIO set up a joint political command, and a list of Senate and House candidates was to feel their massed displeasure. They put their prestige in play, and lost.

What did they do that was wrong? Perhaps their worst defeat was in Ohio, where for two years they had been uttering threats against Mr. Taft. But in New York, where they backed Mr. Pecora against Mr. Impellitteri for the city's mayor, their defeat was nearly as humiliating, and in California, where they backed Mr. Jimmy Roosevelt against Governor Warren.

Ohio's case is not wholly clear. During the campaign, an understanding was reached between Taft's Republicans and the regular Democratic organization of Governor Lausche. The election results show that hundreds of thousands of good union members must have voted for Taft and Lausche, ignoring the official union candidate, Mr. "Jumping Joe" Ferguson. Are we to believe there was a complete break between Ohio union officials and their members — that the officials felt and voted one way, and the members another? It seems much more probable that, while Reuther's United Auto Workers

and its close CIO allies backed Ferguson doggedly and to the end, other unions — particularly AFL unions — did not.

The case in New York is somewhat plainer. Pecora was the unions' chosen candidate, but when the New York joint AFL-CIO political committee was summoned to endorse him, Mr. Lacey of the Teamsters abruptly announced himself for Impellitteri, and the committee fell in pieces. In California, the state representatives of Mr. Dave Beck, again a Teamster, similarly failed to back Roosevelt, and backed Warren.

In New York and California, Lacey and Beck clearly asked themselves two questions — first, which candidate was likely to win, and, second, with which one they could hope to improve their competitive position vis-a-vis other unions. In New York — to anyone who understood the concealed workings of Tammany — Impellitteri had the better chance, and so in California did Warren. Pecora's victory in New York, moreover, would merely have reaffirmed the already-existing influence at City Hall of Mr. Dubinsky, the head of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union; it would have done nothing for Lacey's Teamsters. Now — with Impellitteri — Dubinsky is out, and Lacey in. In California, Beck had previously had influence with Warren; he preserved his competitive position.

There is, however, more to the matter. Lacey's support of Impellitteri was a great help to Governor Dewey in his campaign for re-election. It was one of the things that enabled him to come within a hundred thousand votes of carrying the city. It will be recalled that, in the crucial 1948 Oregon primary between Dewey and Stassen, Beck threw his strength to Dewey's side, and the two have remained political friends. Beck established a claim to Dewey's gratitude in 1948, and this year Lacey doubled it.

The Teamsters, as a union, are on good terms with Mr. Truman, although ranking well below some of the CIO unions. Their aging head, Uncle Dan Tobin, has long been chairman of the Democratic Party's labor committee. If Truman should be re-elected in 1952, they would be as well off as they are now. If, on the other hand, a Republican should win, they would have Beck's and Lacey's relationships to Dewey and Warren to work on. It is quite likely that Beck — if he could be persuaded to leave his rich West-Coast empire and succeed Uncle Dan — would become the most politically influential American union leader. The Teamsters have acted very prudently. They have fixed things so they can not lose, and a political change will work to their advantage.

What, now, is to be said about Reuther, Dubinsky and the other union leaders who formed this year's AFL-CIO political command and backed it to its miserable finish? What did they do wrong? They were deserted by the Teamsters — and probably many other unions — and were deserted because the Teamsters and other unions judged they would not win. Their predicament was inherent in the nature of the American political system. While continuing to be the representatives of a special interest — the unions' interest — they tried to be politicians, and supersede one of the regular political parties. This has been attempted many times, by many sorts of Americans, in the past. Remember the late Mr. Raskob's Liberty League, the representative of the country's chief corporations, in 1936? Representing a special interest has almost never worked.

To be successful, what must a politician do? He has to entice into his party citizens who, up to the moment of the enticing, disagree with him. Taft's campaign in Ohio was a classic example of the politician's art. His whole energy was given to finding common ground between Ohio's anti-union citizens, whose votes he had, and Ohio's union members, whose votes he wished. He sought this common ground in his proposals for changes in Taft-hartley, for subsidized housing and for aid to education and health. Back in 1936, the Liberty League proudly refused to consider the views of citizens who disagreed with it. Keeping what it regarded as its principles immaculate, it led the persons who would have voted for Mr. Landon anyway to his support, and it and Landon were horribly beaten. In this year's campaign, Mr. Keenan, the AFL's political director, reportedly went on his knees to Reuther and other CIO heads to have at least the Brannan farm plan put aside; their proud gesture of refusal was remarkably like that of the Liberty Leaguers.

Long before a campaign ends, trouble strikes within a special-interest group's own ranks. In 1936 various corporations — General Electric and Dillon, Read are examples — doubted Landon would win, or his winning benefit their competitive positions. The corporate Becks and Laceys quietly made arrangements to support Mr. Roosevelt, and were later able to claim, and get, substantial advantages. The representatives of a special interest can often aid a political party from the outside — as in the last few years the unions have the Democrats, and a large section of business, the Republicans. But no special-interest group can act in a party's place — and in this lies one of the strongest guarantees of our common freedom.

A word is needed about Reuther's proposed nation-wide labor party. Reuther — and other CIO leaders — have the British Labor Party as a model. From next to nothing thirty years ago, it today holds power, and its leaders are world statesmen. A case may be made that the Labor Party is an historical accident — that, if the mountaineer feuding of Lloyd-George's and Asquith's followers had not shattered one of Great Britain's proper political parties, the Liberal Party, to its foundations, the Labor Party would have stayed a small, a doctrinaire faction. Perhaps more pertinently, if Reuther had observed the Labor Party's recent Margate conference, he would have discovered, in an acute form, the same strains that bedeviled the American unions in this year's campaign — the pseudo-politicians under Mr. Aneurin Bevan shouting against reconciliation or compromise, and the practicing union leaders silently plotting the advantage of their particular unions. At least a few experienced persons left Margate believing the parliamentary Labor Party and the Trades Union Council can not long be held together.

Great communities do not lend themselves to easy prophecy, but it is possible that the Labor Party, as now constituted, will never again hold office, and that in America we have seen the unions' most ambitious attempt to take political power.

STALIN'S NEW WORLD STRATEGY

By JOSEPH ZACK

ON November 1, 1950, in broad daylight, two Puerto Rican nationalists, Oscar Collazo and Griselio Torresola, tried to force entrance into Blair House, the temporary residence of the President of the United States, with the avowed purpose of assassinating him. One was killed; the other and his supporters alleged that the attempt was made in retaliation for President Truman's failure to fulfil promises of independence made to the people of Puerto Rico.

The two gunmen were prominent members of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico, which at the same time was fomenting an insurrection on the island. This uprising fitted into a wider pattern not at all related to "nationalism" or to actual conditions in Puerto Rico. Along with the attempted assassination, it was staged as part of a new form of "class struggle" directed from Moscow. In all countries, including the Soviet satellites, the old mossbacks of communism are being replaced. Their methods of agitation are out of date, for communism is being militarized. Stalin's war-making machine, in and out of uniform, is edging into position for an all-out war, with a part of the front already ablaze. The rest of the forces are moving into tactical position, Trojan-horse fashion, under the smoke screen of a "peace" campaign. It is the Ho Chi Minhs, the Mao Tse-tungs, the Luigi Longos — rather than the William Z. Fosters — who are coming to the fore.

In Puerto Rico Moscow's chief standard-bearer is Pedro Albizu Campos, leader of the Nationalist Party. To get to the bottom of the insurrection he directed, one must trace the pattern of events and of violence for some years back. Is there a genuine movement for national independence, led by the Nationalist Party? The party of Campos, at its height in the early thirties, polled 7,000 votes out of a population of more than two million, and has been declining ever since. The reasons for its decline are obvious. The United States has left it to the Puerto Ricans whether they want to pull out of the union, and by crushing majorities they have voted to stay in. They have, in fact, acquired all the practical attributes of independence — their own legislature, their own elected governor, their own constitution — plus the citizenship and protection of a great democratic nation. A superbargain, except, of course, to the fifth columnists of Moscow.

The present governor of Puerto Rico, Luis Muñoz Marin, has introduced, with the help of the United States, reforms of deep economic and social significance, likely to have a tremendous long-range effect. So why would genuine nationalists want to assassinate him and President Truman?

If national independence to the point of separation can be accomplished by the ballot, as the *Independistas*, another group on the island, aim to do, why should one attempt it by bloodshed? Obviously another ideology, parading under the flag of nationalism, has intervened — the same ideology that moves the Communist-led Hukbalahaps who aim to "liberate" the Philippines from the West and subjugate them to Moscow.

To be sure, there are economic problems in Puerto Rico. The standard of living is considerably below that of the United States, but above that of the Soviet Union. Independence does not always solve the economic problems of a country; in fact, it often aggravates them, as the countries of the East Indies found out. The Communists, the real power behind the Puerto Rican uprising and its aftermath at Blair House, know that as well as anyone, but they are not interested in economic solutions except as propaganda for disruption. "Nationalism" serves, of course, the same purpose. It is a part of their grand strategy of disruption and conquest of the West.

Governor Muñoz Marin characterized the Campos party correctly when he said:

> It . . . does not represent ideals of liberty, but the fascistic ideas and tyranny of a small assemblage of armed fanatics who desire, with grotesque and tragic futility, to impose upon two million Puerto Ricans their own ideas of alleged freedom.

As usual, there is little *prima facie* proof that the Communists were behind the Puerto Rican uprising. The method of insurrection by surprise attack with small guerrilla detachments (Commando type), in order to take over key government buildings and to decapitate the government by assassinating or forcing compliance upon the principal leaders, is typical of the methods taught at the Lenin School in Moscow, which I attended.

The party of Campos seems to have disregarded, however, one essential fact taught in Stalin's universities — that in order for such a rebellion to succeed, the country must be in a crisis and the party must have the more or less active support of at least five per cent of the population. In Puerto Rico, this would mean a following of at least 100,000, instead of fewer than one thousand. Without such support a few hundred men organized in Commando groups may take key places by surprise, even destroy some strategic installations, but they can not hold their gains. Albizu Campos and his staff must also have known that, even if the coup succeeded, the United States would not allow the usurpers to stay in possession. So the revolt, in the minds of the real engineers operating behind the scenes, had purposes different from those customarily associated with earnest Communist efforts at seizure of power.

There is the possibility, of course, that Puerto Rico's Communists thought that they might get away with it. During the New Deal and a great part of the Fair Deal, the "nationalists" have been appeased ad nauseam under the pretense of freedom of association and of speech — to the extent that Campos could maintain a quasi-military private army.

In a manifesto distributed in justification of its action, the Nationalist Party claimed, North Korean fashion, that the insurrection was staged in "the self-defense of party leaders against aggression by the government of the United States."

That Moscow looked upon the affair approvingly is evident from an item in *Pravda* of November 1, which pointed out: "The revolt was headed by the Nationalist Party, the Communist Party and the *Union General de Trabajadores* [General Workers' Union, a splinter group of the CIO]." The same story stated: "The rebellion had been caused by sending of Puerto Rican youths to fight in Korea and the forcing on the island of a new constitution by the United States."

For a movement in any country to win *Pravda's* approval, it must be cleared by the corresponding bureau of the Comintern — in this case the Latin American Secretariat, of which I was a member at one time. Movements, parties or any other organization not controlled by or associated with the Communists are smeared and disparaged no matter what they do.

There are many instances of coordination between the U. S. Communists and Campos's party. For example, Vito Marcantonio was successful in 1943 in having Campos released from the Georgia Federal Penitentiary, where he was serving a ten-year term for previous insurrectionary attempts which had not been so well organized. Earl Browder, when general secretary of the party, appeared on the same platform with Collazo, Puerto Rican "nationalist" leader in New York City and one of the would-be Blair House assassins. Then there is the letter of July 17, 1943, signed by William Z. Foster as chairman of the Communist Party, and Earl Browder as general secretary, in which Pedro Albizu Campos is addressed as "brother," and the support of the American Communists is pledged to him and his party.

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Long before the United States became the direct world target of the Moscow propagandists, they had started to snipe at us through the South American Communists. American-owned enterprises below the Rio Grande, goods imported from the U. S., even the dollar loans we made to South American governments were played up as symbols of "Yankee imperialism." The purpose of this campaign of hate has been to create a rift between the Americas, as well as to split South America itself, with the Communists posing as authentic "left" nationalists who want to keep their countries out of war.

South American politics has always been rather generously interlaced with physical violence and the technique of the *coup d'état*. Organized minorities can play there a role quite out of proportion to their numbers. So the Latin countries present a fertile terrain for the new type of Stalinist warfare. In Machiavellian fashion the Communists have learned how to utilize for their purposes both the right and left factions in South American politics. By making promises to power-hungry politicians and inciting the masses at the same time, by introducing superior organizational and insurrectionary techniques, plus potent propaganda, Stalin's fifth column in Latin America may produce more and worse surprises than it has in Colombia and Puerto Rico.

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Today communism, or whatever passes for it under Stalin, is in transition from purely psychological warfare and peacetime organization and disruption to a war footing, in which various forms of physical struggle will play an ever-increasing role. The rebellion in Puerto Rico and the shots at Blair House were part of the new Kremlin pattern. They were a demonstration to expose the weakness of American "imperialism." The coming trials of Albizu Campos and his associates, and of Oscar Collazo, will offer an opportunity to expose to the world the putrescence and horror of Stalin's black-hand politics in Latin America.

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As is well known, the quantity theory states that when the quantity of money is increased, the price level must, other things remaining the same, move up. So what the president of the Reichsbank meant was that the Nazis were able to finance the war by new money created by the Reichsbank, without inflationary effects on the economy.

This "victory" was achieved by direct controls. A complicated system of rationing and allocations, coupled with price and wage fixing that embraced the whole economy, prevented the open price and wage rises that the increased quantity of money would have brought about. Unable to spend this increased money on goods or services, the owners could only either hoard it or invest it in government bonds. Other means of investment were no longer legally or practically available to the masses of the people.

The Nazi "victory" over the quantity theory turned out to be as Pyrrhic as their victories on the battlefield. For a certain time the system seemed to work. People acquiesced in the idea that money could be spent only if, so to speak, a ration coupon was attached. But as time went on and the money without such an attachment piled up, the idea slowly took hold of peoples' minds that the important thing to own was the ration coupon, and that the money attachment was secondary to the coupon. As most people had enough money to buy what their ration coupons entitled them to, they saw little use in working or in selling anything for money.

Money began to lose its function as a medium of exchange. The economy reached a state of petrifaction. People kept what they had and worked little, because they were not able to use the money they received. Only on the "black market," where the quantity theory still reigned, were goods and services exchanged against money, at inflationary prices. It was this much-abused black market, in which finally everybody was dealing somehow (even labor was bought and sold on the black market) which prevented the people from starving in an economy that had come to a standstill outside of the black market sector.

As is well known, this so-called "repressed inflation" ended with the German currency reform of 1948 in which roughly 90 per cent of the "victory money" was destroyed. For the remaining circulation the quantity theory was allowed to work. All suggestions to reintroduce controls were declined by the government of western Germany, truly liberal in the economic field. The result was recovery with a strength and suddenness that made

In a manifesto distributed in justification of its action, the Nationalist Party claimed, North Korean fashion, that the insurrection was staged in "the self-defense of party leaders against aggression by the government of the United States."

That Moscow looked upon the affair approvingly is evident from an item in *Pravda* of November 1, which pointed out: "The revolt was headed by the Nationalist Party, the Communist Party and the *Union General de Trabajadores* [General Workers' Union, a splinter group of the CIO]." The same story stated: "The rebellion had been caused by sending of Puerto Rican youths to fight in Korea and the forcing on the island of a new constitution by the United States."

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it seem a miracle — and a somewhat embarrassing one — to all those who still believed in a controlled economy.

The Nazis were not the first or the only ones who aimed at victory over the quantity theory, and failed. The first World War was financed by all European countries, with the help of the money-issuing authorities, at interest and taxation rates far below the rates necessary to balance supply and monetary demand without inflation.

These countries had been warned in positive terms. In 1915, the eminent Swedish economist, Wicksell, wrote his famous article "Raise the Discount Rates." In that article he cautioned governments against financing the war at artificially low interest rates rather than at what he called "natural" interest rates. By the latter he meant an interest rate at which supply and demand for credits would balance without the issue of new money. He predicted that the "savings" to the taxpayer of artificially low interest rates would prove illusory, because inflation would ensue. And he explained that inflation was a tax, too, and a very unjust one, because it hit one-sidedly the owners of government bonds, of other fixed-interest securities and of currency — generally the economically weakest part of the population.

No government heeded Wicksell's warnings in either the first World War or the second. In every case governments blamed "speculators" and "profiteers" for the skyrocketing prices, which were really only the inevitable consequence of their own money supply policy. Instead of trying to heal the disease at the source they tried to suppress the symptoms. They forbade price increases. They set up a huge bureaucracy to enforce laws that in the long run proved unenforceable.

In the end the quantity theory won in one way or another: either prices had to be adjusted to the money inflation, or the money quantity had to be adjusted to the prices.

In the second World War all belligerent countries, and some neutrals, duplicated the mistakes of the Nazis, if only on a more moderate scale. In this country it was the Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, and his advisers, who succumbed to the fallacies of the cheap interest way. The abolition of OPA in 1946 saved the country, however, from the most damaging consequences of "repressed inflation."

At this moment the United States is again facing huge government expenditures. Attention is concentrated on the budgetary question, how far these expenditures should be financed by taxes and how far by loans. While this question is of extreme importance, it is concerned with only one part of the problem — how to limit the demand for credits by the government. There remains the question whether and how the demand for private investment can be limited. For, as in all times of prosperity, huge amounts of credits are now demanded by the private section of our economy. One need merely consider the increase of business loans since the outbreak of the Korean war — roughly $3,000,000,000 — to recognize that this is so.

No amount of taxation whatever, but only a restriction of the credit supply, can check inflation under present conditions. Credits are, generally speaking, granted by banks through establishing checking accounts to their debtors. The supply of credits is restricted if banks are prevented from expanding their loans. Banks can expand loans only if the money-creating authorities (in this country those in the Federal Reserve System) go along with them.

The banks need cash for payment of a part of their loans, and American member banks are, furthermore, required by law to hold deposits with the Federal Reserve Banks as coverage — the so-called reserve requirements. By fixing the rates at which it is prepared to buy commercial paper (and nowadays, the prices at which it is prepared to buy from the banks government bonds and notes bearing certain interest rates) the Federal Reserve System has, for all practical purposes, power to determine the interest rates charged by banks for loans.

For many years the Federal Reserve System has pursued a policy of stabilizing interest rates at very low levels. This is called an "easy money policy." A more correct name would be a "policy of unlimited credit supply at artificially lowered interest rates." It has transformed our dollar from a gold standard dollar, or even a soundly managed paper dollar, into something of a rubber dollar.

In effect, the Federal Reserve System, by being prepared to buy any amount of 2.5 per cent government bonds at a fixed support price of over par, has given to every holder of the billions of such bonds the option of creating money at a cost of not more than 2.5 per cent per annum. Not to speak of the option to the holders of short and middle term notes, whose costs would be even smaller.

Can inflation be checked as long as this policy is pursued? As is evident from the discussion which has been going on for quite a time, opinion is divided. A minority of officials, among them prominent members of the Federal Reserve System, consider a fundamental change of policy a necessary condition of any fight against inflation. A majority of officials consider the interest-rate question of minor importance. Other conditions seem to them more important. The combat can be waged, they think, without substantial change of the interest structure. This is the official viewpoint of the Treasury.

Let us examine some of the arguments presented by the latter group. It is said, especially by union leaders, that inflation could be prevented if the important and basic industries of the country would refrain from raising the prices of their products. The contrary is true. If, for example, the producers of automobiles did not adapt their prices at least to some extent to the prevailing abundance of purchasing power and make the customer pay what he is willing and able to pay, the purchasing power would simply flow to other markets. It would not just disappear. Raising prices is the normal way of absorbing purchasing power. Under these conditions prices of motor cars and steel may well be even too low.

According to others, especially some close to industrial management, the wage policy of the unions is the real culprit. This is, however, correct only in an indirect way. Without a high monetary demand higher costs can not be shifted to the consumer. Under the prevailing system of unlimited credit and money supply, the price level would rise anyway in times of high credit demand, even if wages were not pushed up with, or even in advance of, inflating prices.

In times of deflation Keynesians advocate higher wages in order to shift income from those with a lower to those with a higher "propensity to consume," and thus to increase the aggregate purchasing power. It is characteristic of the hypocrisy with which the purchasing-power argument is used — and the proof that it is really political and not scientific in character — that nothing is heard of it in inflationary times, when it would favor a shift of income to those with a lower propensity to consume.

Some authorities advocate so-called "qualitative" credit controls — the restriction of credits to some groups of borrowers only. The tightening of consumer credits, for instance, is believed by some people to have a stabilizing effect on prices.

Qualitative credit controls have been tried frequently in inflationary times. They create at first a sort of shock effect; this, however, is never of long duration. Money markets are not independent of each other; they communicate. As long as conditions on such important markets as those for government bonds are kept "easy," money will flow from there over to the "qualitatively controlled" markets. Qualitative controls, finally, by hitting only a few sections of the economy, create resentment among and provoke protests by those who suffer.

Some favor the status quo because they deny that high interest rates would deter credit demand. It must be conceded that homeopathic increases of one-eighth or one-quarter of one per cent for short or middle term loans — the victories until now won by the Federal Reserve System over the Treasury — will have no influence. But it can not be denied on theoretical grounds — and it is proved by practical experience — that energetic increases of the supply price of credits have a very definite restricting effect. It should not be forgotten that high interest rates not only burden the debtors of banks but, by depressing the stock market, render risk capital more costly and often unobtainable.

Some think that raising the reserve requirements of member banks would have a deflationary effect. But as long as member banks can create any amount of reserves by just selling some of the billions of government securities they own to the Federal Reserve System, it is difficult to see how higher reserve requirements can force the banks to limit their loans. True, the costs of granting credits then become somewhat higher. But as long as rediscount rates are 1.75 per cent, and 2.5 per cent bonds are bought above par, the increase in costs will be only nominal. Even if the reserve requirements were raised from, say, 20 per cent to 30 per cent, this would lift the costs only by 10 per cent of maximal 2.5 per cent — i e. a maximal 0.25 per cent per annum. This would hardly influence the supply price of loans.

There are, finally, those who advocate rationing credits rather than making them more expensive. The only effective way of forcing banks to ration their credits is to ration the amounts of securities or bills that the Reserve Banks are prepared to buy from them. This brutal way of limiting the circulation has often been tried. But as is shown by the experience in England during the middle of the last century, it leads not to stabilization of the value of money, but to a serious monetary crisis.

Against all these and similar arguments, we should face this simple fact. In times of high credit demand, by the government as well as by the private section of the economy, there is only one way of keeping money sound. That is to make it scarce and expensive.

In 1810 David Ricardo, in his pamphlet, "The High Price of Bullion" — very worth while reading even today — proved to the directors of the Bank of England that a sound discount policy is not only quite sufficient but also absolutely necessary to maintain the purchasing power of money, internally and against gold and foreign exchange. This is not less valid today. It seems to have been forgotten by a generation which, while speaking constantly of stabilizing the economy, has destroyed the most potent means of stabilization, the flexibility of interest rates.

It must be acknowledged that once a country has become accustomed to artificially low interest rates the return to "natural" interest rates is not easy. It is unfortunately much simpler to get accustomed to the poison of easy money than to get away from it. But once it is recognized that it is really utopian to try to finance the present war at the rate of 2.5 per cent — as it was disastrous to finance the last war at this rate — and once it has been decided to give to the creditors what is due them — to the old ones, if necessary, through revaluation of their coupons — every difficulty is only technical in character and can be overcome.

The return to a sound monetary policy is not only necessary, but overdue. In every inflation three periods are distinguishable: the period when people believe in, the period when they are in doubt about, and the period when they despair of the currency. We are clearly entering the second phase. For quite a time the workers, being the most powerful group, have shown that they are no longer willing to carry the burden of inflation. They have succeeded in obtaining contracts providing for wages sliding upward with prices — the so-called *Gleitlöhne* (sliding wages) of the great German inflation. Other classes of the population are beginning to follow. Investors, considering the interest rates much too low for inflationary times, are switching at least part of their bond holdings to higher-yielding shares which also promise a certain protection against capital depreciation. As a consequence, in order to reattract capital to the bond market, proposals crop up to create bonds with interest and capital payments dependent on the price level at the time of payment, the *wertbeständige Anleihen* (value-keeping loans) of the German inflation. Such provisions have always helped to discredit all other money obligations, especially the paper money itself.

Such a "second period" of inflation can last a long time. It might be of very long duration in this country. It might even be interrupted by a period of deflation — if demand would dwindle suddenly for one reason or the other. In this case a serious crash will be the aftermath of a boom that the authorities have not damped but always fanned anew by their anti-stabilizing, pro-cyclical, easy-money policy.

There remains, nevertheless, always the danger that in the course of some sudden and unhappy event the third period of inflation may begin. In this period nobody will take the risk of remaining a creditor with any form of money obligation. A general flight into so-called real values — in Europe it has been into gold and foreign

currency — begins. People try to get rid of money as soon as they receive it for fear that it will depreciate even in a matter of hours. The result is a terrific increase in the velocity of money, leading finally to the total destruction of its value.

The adoption of a sound money policy in this country would involve a radical break with all that has been advocated, taught and practiced during the last two decades. Its probability, therefore, is not very high. We shall most likely remain in our 2.5 per cent interest-rate dream world during the cold and even during a hot war.

As things stand, the consequence for a long time, however, would not be open inflation, already bad enough, but repressed inflation. To try to correct the mistakes at the source of the money supply by suppressing the symptoms of the disease, through introduction of so-called direct controls, has always been the choice of those uneducated in economic theory and history.

Before acquiescing in such a choice, people should know that price controls and ceilings, instead of and without control of the quantity of the currency, will, at best, lead to a Pyrrhic victory over the quantity theory. The worst of such a victory is not that prices will have to be adjusted ultimately to the inflated money supply. The worst is that in the meantime our economic system might be transformed into something not unlike the Russian. Direct controls have a tendency, even if at first applied only to certain basic industries, to mushroom all over the economy. They lead, as has been shown again and again, to an intolerable growth of bureaucracy, including a huge economic police to enforce market prices that do not conform with the natural law of supply and demand. They are accompanied by total demoralization of the public.

And they end with the loss of the very liberties which we are arming ourselves to preserve.

EASTWARD, HO!

If Stalin professes to be such a great lover of peace why does he not sign a friendship pact with the imperialist Truman? After all, he did sign such a pact with the Nazi Hitler.

The following advertisement appeared in the National Guardian: *"Festival House. The Place for Progressives. Informal congenial living in former Morgan mansions."*
There is no escaping Wall Street, apparently.

They say in Poland that Moscow has better business sense than Washington. Instead of putting the whole Polish Army into Russian uniforms, Stalin put one Russian Marshal — Rokossovsky — into a Polish uniform.

A French court offered a group of Spanish Communists sentenced for underground activities the choice of being sent to a "people's democracy" or to a desert in Algeria. An overwhelming majority expressed a preference for the desert. Communists know something fellow-travelers do not; even praising Moscow is much safer from a distance.

ARGUS

FROM OUR READERS

News from the ACLU

In the November 13 issue of the *Freeman*, Robert Cruise McManus writes about the warning from John L. Lewis to Senator Taft not to campaign in the Ohio coal mines. He asks: "Any protests about this from the Americans for Democratic Action? Any cries of pain from the Civil Liberties Union? . . ."

To set the record straight, the American Civil Liberties Union issued a public statement on September 21, condemning Mr. Lewis' statement as a violation of Senator Taft's free speech. It stated:

> We deplore and condemn this suggestion, just as we have recently condemned the cancellation by General Foods of Miss Jean Muir's scheduled appearance on a television program. We oppose the suppression of free speech, no matter who does it.
>
> We would equally oppose any attempt to coerce the miners into listening to Senator Taft, or to curb their right to protest. But, if they are free to listen or not to listen, then he should be free to speak.
>
> The American Civil Liberties Union is nonpartisan, and has always been — as shown in the records of the United Mine Workers, among many other unions — a staunch defender of labor's constitutional rights. But we defend those principles for everybody. Democracy requires unobstructed discussion, especially in an election campaign.
>
> We urge you to reconsider your position.

I point this out to indicate the Union's non-partisan devotion to civil liberties, no matter where the chips fall.

New York City ALAN REITMAN
Director, Public Relations
American Civil Liberties Union

The Mayor Resigned Later

I have read with interest the article in the *Freeman* for October 30th entitled "Cops and Gamblers," and there is one reference which I believe deserves comment.

In the last paragraph the author makes a point that in 1895 — an election year — there was an investigation, and that the present investigation is also in an election year. It is apparently intended to infer that there is a political significance in the present investigation. I wish to point out that our investigation was commenced in December of 1949, immediately after the mayoralty election of that year and when there was not the slightest indication that there would be a mayoralty election in 1950 — in fact, the resignation of the Mayor did not occur until eight months after the investigation commenced. In addition it may well be pointed out that both the Mayor of the City of New York and myself were members of the same political party and that the Police Department of the City of New York has had a career commissioner since the first LaGuardia administration.

New York City MILES F. McDONALD
District Attorney, Kings County

Keep It Controversial

You have an able staff and a well-edited magazine, a worthy successor to *Plain Talk*. It must be controversial, by all means. That is what stimulates the interest of the readers and makes them think. . . .

Waukegan, Illinois G. EDWARD LIND

MID-CENTURY SURVEY

By WILLIAM A. ORTON

BIRTHDAYS, saints' days and similar anniversaries are perhaps no different from other days in the cosmic calendar. But their invitation to pause a moment, looking before and after, has its value; and the mid-point of a century is a natural time for reconnaissance.

Of this century in particular, and for a particular reason. There is a gulf between us older ones, to whom the past fifty years are matter of living memory, and the younger ones to whom a relatively peaceful world is quite unknown. They have been "conditioned" to violence, even while they have been schooled in theory to deplore it. They are inured to scenes of desolation and destruction. Brutality and sadism are nothing new to them. Chivalry and sentiment they find merely amusing.

The shrinking number of those to whom the past half-century is actual experience have not only a right, but a duty, to speak their piece. They do not pretend to unanimity of prescription; but on one point of diagnosis they are unanimous, namely: the decline of humane values. No words can impart, no analogies depict, the spiritual shock that has been suffered by those who grew to manhood before 1914: the bitterness of heart, the temptation to despair, that spring from the experience of amazing progress cancelled out by more amazing regress. But when men as diverse as Albert Einstein, Franz Alexander, Osbert Sitwell and many another make precisely the same protest, we had better take note of it. Einstein stresses the "moral decay" he has witnessed along with the "terrifying efficiency" of the new technology. Alexander, one of the pioneers of social psychiatry, says: "In Europe I saw the world of my youth rapidly disintegrate, and standards and ideals that had become second nature to me vanish. What would follow was not clear, but much clearer was what was specifically disappearing, the highest values I had known." Our very English Sitwell thus concludes the record of his life and all that went into it: "I take my farewell . . . before my world closes down, and the rending cry 'Rags and Bones' becomes no longer prophetic, but universal and of the present time."

Of course the Pollyannas will say that the past always looked brighter; there were always, for aging people, the Good Old Times. Yes, we know it, we have said so ourselves; but the present facts are too grim for any such cheap evasion. Judged strictly on the record, the first half of the twentieth century shows a deterioration of human relations that for scope, intensity, and especially speed is historically unprecedented. Beneath the veil of programs, pretexts and rationalizations, the facts are astounding and appalling. Many previous forms of society, some of great extent and antiquity, have collapsed or been destroyed in a remarkably short span of time, involving in their ruin considerable structures of manners and mores, of social and spiritual values. Granting that in some of these societies the equilibrium was none too stable, the outstanding characteristic of the succeeding structures has been their instability. The very bases of human community have suffered shock at a level deeper than twenty centuries have known; and it is a question whether that rift in the foundations can ever be mended.

There are some very general long-run considerations that may be invoked against a short-run pessimism; but they contain no definite assurance of any kind. We may conclude that the human species as such will probably survive for some time to come; but how, where, or in what condition is anybody's guess. Few philosophers of history seem to be putting their money on the survival of our own culture or civilization; and it is cold comfort to be told that another one will probably turn up somewhere, especially when we have no reason to think that it will be any better. For the sake of perspective, however, and of what it may suggest, let us take a brief glance at these long-run considerations.

Suppose we take a yardstick to represent the duration of all life on the planet since the earliest fish, polyps, trilobites and such (neglecting a couple of yards before that during which still more primitive forms like worms, bacteria and the earliest crustaceans enjoyed life in their own way). We tie a piece of string round the end of our yardstick. The thickness of that string will represent the duration of any form of life we would call human, or even proto-human. If alongside the string, at the very end of our yardstick, we lay a hair, that will *over-represent* the duration of any and every form of human culture since the stone age. Truly, a thousand years are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night. The boy Tutankhamen was here just now, weeping over his still-born child; and the great czars of the Euphrates left us only this morning.

From the amazing brevity of the human appearance on this planet we can infer — nothing with certainty. Some take it as evidence that the human era, with its vast potentialities, is only just beginning; some see its future as not confined to this planet. The very fact that we can speculate, and calculate, and even already act to some degree on such a scale, is in itself significant. It may be a warning to extra-terrestrial intelligences to be on their guard against us. Others among us find in the brevity of the human phenomenon the suggestion that it is also ephemeral: just another, though very interesting, evolutionary experiment that failed — probably, as in previous cases, because of some imbalance in the faculties of the creature that prevented a continuous dynamic adjustment. On the record, so far as it goes, there is strong support for this view; and some, like H. G. Wells, who once adhered to the former interpretation, have switched to the latter. The fact that the problems of planetary adjustment have become social rather than ecological does not mean that they are *ipso facto* soluble. The species may be meeting its limits on precisely that plane — as others have done.

Of man as animal our human record has very little to

report. The type seems to be stabilized, though of course the period is too short to say so with any finality. No important physiological changes seem to be in process. There were just as good individual specimens 5000 years ago as there are today, and perhaps better — *but not nearly so many*. Any American college campus will show a higher average of biological quality over large numbers than the planet has yet seen; and the average is steadily rising. The type may not be changing, but the proportion of good specimens certainly is, here and elsewhere. This may surely be credited to the species as a success, if the word has any meaning whatever; and what is most significant about it is that it is not the result of any blind "evolutionary" or quasi-mechanical process, but the product of fully-conscious intelligence persistently and cooperatively applied.

Regarding the whole field of contrivance, we may fairly claim that man as a tool-making animal is a success. From the Roman galley to the Queen Elizabeth, from the burning-glass to the Palomar telescope, from the mill-wheel to the giant power-producing dam, everywhere are tangible examples not only of the scope and the power of the tool-maker, but of the amazing speed of his progress. Yes, the word progress is decidedly out of fashion. Our own self-criticism — notice carefully that it is our own, not blasted at us by any *deus ex machina* — has induced a widespread intellectual defeatism. One of our most urgent tasks is to clarify the grounds of this self-criticism. But the tool-making animal, objectively regarded, has a record of amazing progress.

Why in fact do we hesitate? Because, in the light of certain criteria that are no less deeply rooted in our minds than the "instinct of contrivance," we are dissatisfied with some applications, or effects, of our tool-making. We have good reason to be. Some of the most powerful tools are lethal, and rival "powers" extort from their reluctant subjects much time and effort to produce them that might be better spent. Therefore, many good humanists have argued that we should discard and abandon the tool-making process itself. We should go back to the spinning-wheel and domestic weaving and subsistence farming and the pre-machine era generally.

The dream of going back is both futile and dangerous. There is no compelling reason why any society, whatever its form or ideal, should reject the potentialities of such a fundamentally human instinct as that of tool making. While we may fully recognize that the rapid development of the tool-using instinct has brought tremendous problems, we must also recognize that the idea of solving the problems by suppressing the instinct is fatuous. It is the collective form of the castration complex.

Why is it then, we must ask, that the biological and technological progress of man seems to have landed us all in a bloody cul-de-sac? Let it suffice for the moment to note that this is not the result of the contriving instinct as such. Let us keep the issues clear. Millions of human beings in America and Eurasia now have a more comfortable and abundant life (between wars) than their ancestors could have dreamed of; and this is directly due to our tool-making propensity. Critics may point out that it is no great advantage to go in a Buick instead of a buggy if you know you are going to hell. But that does not alter the fact that the Buick is an improvement on the buggy; it simply raises the question, Who or what is at the wheel?

Bertrand Russell once asked, If thinking is not a good in itself will someone tell us what is? The question runs counter to the most influential of American philosophies, or creeds. But the fact stands firm that even — indeed, especially — in America, some of the greatest achievements of the instinct of contrivance have been dedicated to no utilitarian purpose. Has the reader ever visited a planetarium? We took that cue from the Zeiss people in Germany, so apparently the Germans had the same kind of interest. Historically speaking, it appears that both the Hindus and the Moslems had. It seems to be generally true that to follow the stars over the earth's great spaces, or watch the northern lights where they can really be seen and felt, evokes a human response that is definitely not pragmatic. The heavens declare the glory of God (whatever that may mean) and the firmament offers a curiously satisfying challenge to human arrogance and presumption. Whether in macro- or micro- physics, some of us devote their lives to it; and many who are not experts strive to follow their progress. Why?

The simplest answer is the best, indeed the only one: because we are interested. As far back as human records go, we have evidence that pure intellectual inquiry, and esthetic creation, have been fields of major interest to human beings. They are no modern innovation or contemporary fashion. Intellectual and esthetic contemplation seem, on the record, to be no less characteristically human attributes than copulating or contriving or killing. And we may surely say that if pure research, and free esthetic appreciation and creation, were to be prohibited, life would lose all meaning for a great many people.

Let us pair this observation with one previously noted, namely: that we have an innate propensity for self-criticism. We are at it all the time — or as much of the time as we can spare from criticizing the other fellow. We criticize ends as well as means, our own as well as everyone else's; and though our criteria are never fully clear or conscious, two of them stand out just now with striking sharpness: Truth and Compassion.

The most popular mode of international invective is to call the other party a liar. Fortunately we need not here attempt to decide which group tells the most and the biggest lies. What is significant is the common assumption that truth is a universal value. Similarly, groups in conflict accuse each other of needless brutality, and collect evidence to show it. What is here significant is the common assumption that compassion is a universal value. One would like to say the same about justice; but the specific meaning of the term is not, and probably never will be, commonly agreed upon. The agreement we must seek is upon the sources or principles of justice; and here the prospect is by no means hopeless.

Perhaps enough has been said, or suggested, to indicate the conclusion to which the above considerations clearly point, namely: that the *conception* of human nature and social motivation on which most of our international policies and procedures are grounded is radically inadequate. That, and that alone, is the root of our tragic failure to achieve any tolerable equilibrium. *We have to lift the sights.* But the fact that we all continue to assert and apply the inadequate conception makes it that much

harder to change, despite the abundant evidence of its fatal and futile consequences. Is it not significant that so many of our most gifted people will have nothing to do with current forms of national or international life because they find in them no adequate expression of a genuine humanity?

The warning is plain. *Human nature and society are now such that a steady movement toward planetary community is the primary condition of survival.* Primary, not secondary: not a sentimental camouflage for power politics, but the dominant issue in every situation. No group or organization, however well-founded; no policy or procedure, however well-intentioned; that stands in the way of this movement can be other than self-defeating. Such abstract ideals as peace, security, justice, freedom, will become actual and operative only in so far as the living sense of community is developed; no farther and no faster, because that is the very stuff of which they are embodied. If this sounds remote, let us reflect that if one half, or even one quarter, of the money and energy that were devoted since 1930, or 1940, or 1945, to preparing the masses for war had been devoted to preparing them for mutual understanding and accommodation, the collective problems could have been lifted above the level of mutual slaughter, and to that degree made soluble.

The contrast between the bloody record of the twentieth century and its genetic and technological progress is obvious to everyone; particularly as it is reflected in simultaneous planning for mass welfare on the one hand and mass warfare on the other. The result is a vastly heightened and extended sense of crisis; which in the absence of any therapeutic solution ("with healing in its wings," so to speak) must find pathological modes of expression.

The most familiar are exaggerated fear and exaggerated hostility. Now there are plenty of things in life to be afraid of or get mad about; but half of them are inside us — which is why the other half has to seem bigger than the whole. We do not dare wholeheartedly to trust our outgoing and fraternal impulses — witness the schizophrenic nature of American foreign policy — yet we resent being unable to do so. So we project that resentment onto all who disagree with us; and they do precisely the same thing. In more than an abstract sense, we should all prefer to scrap the guns and share the butter (especially in America, where we have more butter than we know what to do with). The reason why we can not is pathological rather than logical. We do at least agree that people who bank exclusively on guns (or atom bombs, or "preventive war" which never prevented anything but peace) ought to be shut up. But beyond that we find ourselves — *not only in America* — trapped in a sense of our own inadequacy, which expresses itself by a blind battering at the bars, and a cry for more and more force; though we all know that force is not the way to the wider community we all desire. Like the hysteric, we feel that we are compelled to act so; and the psychologist therefore calls such behavior compulsive. Back of it lies a reluctance to face the genuine demands of adult adaptation. The first of these is an objective view not only of our problems, but of ourselves. The latter is preliminary to the former; for if one's view of oneself is cockeyed, the rest of the world will seem even crazier than it is, and one's efforts to deal with it will be that much more abortive. Then a vicious circle is set up.

For example, the current popularity of pessimistic and fatalistic philosophies is a neurotic symptom expressing a general sense of guilt, which arises from feelings of strain or inadequacy to cope with the collective problems of maturation. God knows, the problems are real enough. They are also inevitable. But there is no reason to assume that the cards are stacked against us. The urgency of the challenge increases with human potentiality; perhaps the ratio was always about the same. The current question is always of the plane on which and the methods by which we choose to meet it — for we do, since we are human, have a perennially recurring choice.

Any such analysis as this, in so far as it commends itself to the reader, should issue in some sort of prescription. Accordingly, this essay will conclude with some categorical observations directed to the sphere of action.

First: the reporting of events from "enemy" societies has in our time been grotesquely biased to suit the requirements of the local psychopathology. The "enemy" can do nothing good or right or reasonable. Popular attention must be focussed exclusively on those acts and interpretations which fit his role as "the enemy." It is always argued that this procedure is necessary to national unity, security, etc. That argument begs the question and seals the trap. The responsibility and opportunity of reporters and commentators in the international field can not be overemphasized.

Second: the cult of excessive secrecy in regard to intellectual, technical and even medical advances in the respective national enclaves must be recognized as pathological. Not only is it blocking practical and useful progress on all fronts: it is choking the life out of the growing world-community in precisely those channels where we expect that life to be most tenacious and most fruitful.

Third: our own and all other efforts to foster expanding community in every field of humane endeavor must be increasingly liberated from the current exigencies of power politics. We have already seen how inconstant and unstable are these latter; and we have already seen what waste and frustration arise when the two aims are confused. Over short periods and in specific situations it is difficult to maintain the long-run view; and life consists mostly of short-run periods and specific situations. Those who are working in the various international agencies of long-run community know by experience how difficult it is; but our future lies mainly in their hands. Training for combat makes the headlines — and the headstones; only training for community lays the hearthstones of the world.

Many more considerations arise as we stand at the mid-point of this fatal century; but these few are among those we can apply without waiting for every other party to act first. Most of our collective aspirations are wrecked on the safety-rule of "after you." These can avoid that. But they demand a new-world kind of courage. Courage enough to recognize that world-community is now the goal ineluctably set before us, which we can accept to our salvation or reject to our annihilation. Courage enough to admit that our destiny lies not in our stars, but in ourselves.

LAMENT FOR A GENERATION

The Class of '36 Reports

By RALPH DE TOLEDANO

WE WERE not beautiful or damned. We did not dance to the sad, mannered jazz of Scott Fitzgerald's generation, nor did we kick the dust of the Ritz with silver slippers of disillusion.

No one called us a lost generation; to be lost, there must be something to be lost from. If we had a poet laureate, it was T. S. Eliot whose "Wasteland" left us more dismayed than shattered. But even Eliot was not really ours; he represented the revolt of an earlier generation against the sandy bohemianism of the Left Bank and the clatter of Hemingway's prose style.

But we were marked, all right. Though some of us left college before and some after, we were the Class of '36.

It was clear then that many of us were to die, or failing that, to live in the shadow of abrupt and violent death. History was a hot gust blowing us to the destruction of war. We knew that our days as undergraduates or as figures in the larger world were numbered; and the hours and days and months we spent together had a poignancy later to be recalled as we sat in barracks waiting for the order to go overseas. We were aware that our time was running out. The crucial year was 1936, as 1912 and 1919 were crucial for other generations. In 1936, the second World War started, presenting a challenge to all we had lightly assumed as eternal and verifiable truth. In 1936, the Moscow trials broke over us, destroying the wishful dream of social progress and order to come.

Until that year, we had strolled carelessly on the bright campus. We had listened to the neat lectures and filed them away for table conversation. Coming out of Hamilton Hall at Columbia, we had listened to the pounding polemics of Jimmy Wechsler as he preached the gospel according to Stalin. Dark, intense, and sure unto damnation, he had excited us in a remote way. He and the other young Communists who surrounded him were fighters for a cause which we could accept with affection and not too much seriousness. Massed on South Field, under the distant gaze of Alma Mater, we tried to sound earnest and dedicated as we took the Oxford Oath never to bear arms in any war. We were not quite sure what bearing arms meant, but we had read "Farewell to Arms" and "All Quiet on the Western Front."

Looking back at those days, it is hard to say that the Moscow trials were much more than an off-stage noise; their impact came later. The Spanish Civil War was something else. The rifle-fire that crackled in Madrid's Montaña barracks, the bombs that fell on Guernica, the rousing tramp of the International Brigade as it moved into University City — these were all directed at us; the explosive charge was a series of question marks. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to call it a delayed-action bomb.

At first, the Spanish war was a heady adventure. Farewells were said to those who had the courage to fight. The issues were clear-cut and simple; good and evil had come to grips. At innumerable cocktail parties we reveled in the mythology of the cause, the tales of heroic fighting, of peasants rising to leadership in the Loyalist armies, of Lexington and Concord revisited on the sun-baked plains of central Spain. And when our friends — the young artists and writers, wide-eyed Communists and pure-in-heart democrats — fell in hand-to-hand combat with Franco's Moors, we did not pray for their souls because we knew they had died well.

It was only later that we learned miserably how some of them had died, victims of Communist orthodoxy, in GPU abbatoirs or more subtly in hospitals where their healing wounds had been plucked open by Stalinist doctors. The Spain we loved had been pierced, like the Poland of 1939, in the double embrace of Hitler and Stalin. In the rising sense of personal involvement and the anguish of a world gone, it was impossible to cleave to the blithely accepted mechanics of historical materialism. And the Menckenish worldliness we had somehow synthesized with devout dialectics showed itself cracked and tawdry. In the heat of the conflagration, it began to peel off. In the thirties, we turned to a universe made up of pluses and minuses and dollar signs, of class hate and class destruction, of pat answers — and in the crucible of our fears, we found it desperately wanting.

We still got drunk, self-consciously as college men have always done; we made love to girls we thought pretty; we read the books and poked fingers into ideas. As no other generation, we made a cult of jazz. Night after night we hung over the bar at Nick's, listening to the loose surge of Eddie Condon's band and the sweet, clean line of Bobby Hackett's cornet. We sat about in John Jay Hall, drinking cheap sherry or warm gin-and-juice, clustered about record players. And some, like the tragic young critic, Eugene Williams, may have found absolution in Louis Armstrong's hard, moving cadenzas. But the disturbed faces of the men who sat at lectures with me, who discussed life or read their poetry at meetings of Philolexian, seemed imprinted with a pathetic resolve to make each moment count.

And the questions echoed and re-echoed. In the cold tension of those years, we asked them silently, but many times: Can we stand up to what inevitably awaits us? Can we handle the job which history and the bungling of our leaders have thrown in our laps? With death and terror in the air, we doubted our strength and were dubious of our purpose. Hating the fascist-hearted, many of this shapeless generation still envied the Nazis and the Communists for their absolute faith in symbol and direction, for the blueprint and the catechism.

The young Communists were still with us. We applied to them St. Augustine's description of Cataline who "loved

not his own villainies but something else which gave him the motive for committing them." But the move away from them had definitely begun. Jimmy Wechsler had departed on a wobbly tangent which eventually plumped him in the editorial chair of the anti-anti-Communist *New York Post*. Robert Paul Smith, a brilliant and tortured young man, sadly gave up trying to find sense in the Communist Manifesto and wrote three brilliant, tortured, and inconclusive novels of personal examination. John Berryman, who had once amused us by his one-track devotion to a rigorous esthetique, began to emerge as the poet of stature he has since become.

It was at this time that young men everywhere turned to Huxley or to Aquinas, rejecting Freud for St. Augustine, and those that clung to Marxism did it only by a visible throttling of the critical faculty. In the bloody truce between Spain and Danzig, sharp and irreverent minds realized that something was lacking without which all is lacking. With almost cold-blooded deliberation, they began searching for God. But for them, there was no dark night of the soul, no period of ironic revulsion in which the hollow world echoed in the mind and heart. No vision of the body robbed of its flesh pervaded them, no view of the skeletal man wallowing in an in-created Hell. There was no faltering comprehension of God's abounding grace, suddenly and irrevocably and incandescently revealed as faith.

Yet the search was there, and its leading apostle was Tommy Merton. Like many of us, he had subscribed to that operating trinity of hot jazz, liquor and sex. Merton was a man-of-all-work on the fourth floor of John Jay Hall, where the college publications and the college intellectuals centered. He drew good risqué cartoons for the humor magazine; he wrote with competent wit; he edited that necessary chore, the yearbook. When many of my generation turned Catholic, it was not enough for Tommy Merton. As war pushed always nearer, he fled to the strictest of all monkish disciplines, the Trappist, not for fear of death but because he could not face the neuterizing touch and discipline of uniformity without dignity — to him the final and extreme brutality — of military bureaucracy.

The Class of '36 was to suffer one last, terrible blow at the structure of its old faiths before the time came to fight the war which had begun in Spain. After the Hitler-Stalin Pact (after Molotov proclaimed to the stalwarts that "fascism is a matter of taste," and the stalwarts tasting found it good), we could no longer deny that the brave new society we had clung to so tenaciously had been syphilitic from birth. The Moscow trials, in retrospect, hit us hard. We amputated the Soviet dream from the body of our hopes, but how many ever fully recovered from the surgical shock? We watched the Vincent Sheeans, the Malcolm Cowleys, the Louis Fischers, and the Ralph Bateses leap nimbly from the Moscow Express — and we watched some of them leap as nimbly aboard during the war years — but they were another generation. They had committed fornication; we had been seduced. The gap between was too great.

Shaken by the events of August, '39, there was time before the moment of Induction, to come to some small decisions. Deep in the projected nostalgia of those who leave but may never return, tying a tourniquet over the slit veins of our precious and humdrum civilian life, wrapping our wives and sweethearts in the longing of love, and patting *Lares et Penates* fondly, we edged toward the meaning and the prayer. Perhaps it took the Selective Service Act to make philosophers of us. Facing the totality of army life, there was a need for a moral bravery which could meet the emptiness we felt within ourselves. Many found this bravery not in a system but in a way. In a valedictory piece I outlined it then:*

> For myself, writing on the eve of a new phase in my life, I find that I can leave the -isms and the -ologies to those busy thinkers who are all head and bottom. They have weighted down with distinctions the truths that I seek and tied them to earth with a Lilliputian weave of split hairs. They have used Promethean fire to heat their tea. They have befuddled us with dialectics and saddled us with the base fiction that men's acts are solely of economic motivation.
>
> I prefer to turn to such outmoded words and concepts founded on the spiritual needs of people as honor, dignity, hope, love, courage, common sense, brotherhood, decency, the holiness of man. These words have been met by snickers in a time of glib complexities. They are starting to have a new significance for me. I believe profoundly that each man is a holy vessel, too often corrupted by his own weakness and bearing the seeds of his own destruction, but holy nevertheless since the good of society is held within him.

Several months later, somewhat similar sentiments were expressed by Walter Lippmann in his column: "In the supreme moments of history terms like duty, truth, justice, and mercy — which in our torpid hours are tired words — become the measure of decision." Lippmann's statement was, perhaps, the last moral flutter of his torpid generation, whereas mine might have been the first uncertain efforts of ours to unbutton truth. Yet both reflected the inarticulated though pervasive feeling of those who saw their old criteria crumbling and who found themselves with wry chagrin turning to ethical values which, for all the confident talk, the Leninists had been unable to demolish or supplant.

The aspect of man as a function of godhead, the return of faith in man's unique dependence on God were to come later. But in the early days of the war, the contemplation of so much evil unleashed had its reaction in an awakened curiosity in the moral nature and the ethical anatomy of man. The question was naive in its directness: Why does man, so susceptible to evil, proclaim the worth and the dominance of good? We had not reckoned with the fact of good-and-evil as something apart from either good *or* evil, or the tendency in times of stress to relinquish the good. Merely to proclaim an affection for the traditional virtues was not enough — we knew this. Orations could not mend our faith — we knew this too. It was easy, so easy, to flounder in the vague rhetoric of good intentions.

Our words, bright and untired, were hardly the measure of decision. For ideologically we were living from hand to mouth, in quiet frustration, lacking the positiveness of the Hemingway-Dos Passos "lost generation" which at least had contour. Service in the Armed Forces, whether as combat troops or as part of the military bureaucracy, came first as a jolt and then as a narcotic.

Young intellectuals, to the adjective born, we were forced into the groove of action. Out of conviction and

* Notes for a Farewell. *The New Leader*, 10 April 1943.

out of pride, we tried to become good soldiers. We learned to fire rifles, to dig foxholes, to march all day with 60 pounds of equipment on stiffening backs. We learned to sleep on hard ground in wet clothes, to crawl under barbed wire, to accept the hot and cold manifestations of death. We discovered a strange joy in the mechanical perfection of a machine gun. We shot craps on pay day and studied the whorehouse manners of the proletariat in rut. And we envied and pitied the 4-Fs, safe at home with their women and their creature comforts — but out of it.

They lived without the narcotic which sustained us, the sense of being part of a motivated effort, a purposeful lunge, an almost sexual seizure of experience. They did not share our manic-depressive existence, the boisterous ups and the glum downs. For the unrooted feeling persisted, as if we had come halfway through psychoanalysis and then joined the Christian Scientists. Emotionally, we came to a boil quickly. Tears sprang to our eyes at banal movies of courage and self-sacrifice. The sight of the flag, rippling over a battleship, evoked a rush of patriotism. The beautiful words and their conceptual superstructures possessed us, though lurking in the back of our minds, like a messenger in the wings, was the realization that the new reliance on traditional values must be more than a cozy association.

And some of us fought and some of us did not. Some of us lived and some of us died. Some of us felt the sharp bite of a bullet in the soft underbelly of life. Some plunged from the skies in planes and were seen no more, and others died in a hell of flaming water. Some of the gentle, gay, witty and brave — like Murray Kempton who fought a guerrilla war in the Philippines — watched speeding death pass by. And many, many of us lived in comfortable billets, rear echelon troops, never firing a shot in anger. And yet, for all this, we were soldiers; we had a reason for being; we were dedicated.

Where does the utterance end and the word begin? At what point do we mount Blake's "chariot of fire"? In the days of our Demobilization Tremens, we stood Hamlet-like and surveyed a murky world. Ridding ourselves of the uniform, we had also lost those non-competitive friendships and affections, that sense of order and fitness and dedication, which existed in the barracks and more vitally in combat. We had lost the sense of purpose and direction and found in its stead the high-pitched chaos and impersonality of the civilian world. The sentimental word "buddy" which we had applied to friends in the service once more made us self-conscious. Dreaming of decency at home — and the comradeship of decency — we were confronted with the old clambering for place. Utopia still meant nowhere.

We returned to our homes and patted our household gods. We returned to our wives and some of us to children conceived in the haste of hope, born without a father's nearby benediction. We picked up old jobs and old habits and renewed the old bitterness. We were back at the old stand. The obscene jabberwock of those who betrayed honor and simple purpose was more strident than ever, the betrayal of sense on the liberal front twice as blatant. The old men still formed their committees of death and made their obeisance at the appointed times, now to the blunt-edged star newly-risen in the east.

But the years of internal struggle had given us strength; the small and tentative steps began to point a direction. We had discovered one fact of paramount importance: that although no man is an island, as John Donne had preached, yet every man in affirming his ties to humanity remains, as an individual, a fortress. And we realized further, in assaying the individual, that though the whole of society is greater than the sum of its parts, each part must be as great as the whole. We even learned that the sins of the flesh turn inward and can be absolved; but the sins of the spirit are mortal, for they move outward and affect the body politic.

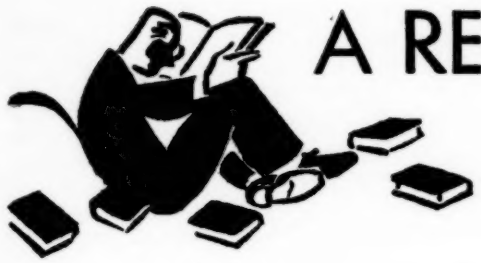
To realize that in the salvation of each man's spirit lay the world's salvation was not merely a poetico-metaphysical flight. To us, innocent and bereaved, it was a concept of vast importance, the foundation stone of a political credo. Now as in the years of the war when obliteration reeked in the newspapers, we some of us knew that no system of ideology which held the individual lightly and submerged or destroyed him for the "social good" could stand the moral test, and that the wretched evangels who tried to gloss over this fact had sold their dignity as human beings for a spoonful of porridge and a pat on the head from their masters.

In the postwar years, the Class of '36 disbanded. Born in one war, participants in another, its life-span marked by depression and upheaval, it could no longer call itself "young." There was grey in its hair, and the Great Mushroom cast an even greyer shadow on its face. It had entered the middle limbo. Not only history pressed forward now, but the spectre of age. This is how we split up: In the face of Russia's vulgar and arrogant aggression, of the Republic's steady abasement at Yalta, Potsdam, and in the UN, some rollicked off to accept the bread and circuses of Fair Deal "liberalism." Some of us, who had learned to know good by evil, buckled on the heavy cross of God and freedom. For without God, there could be no morality; without freedom, there could be no hope. Without this duality, there could be no defense against the invading evil.

The hoddypoll liberals laughed. The three little monkeys laughed with them. War in Korea, and the spreading smell of death, stopped the laughter, but it taught them nothing. For the explanation was theological, not empirical.

In the past, when too much evil filled the world, God rained destruction and terror on humanity. With the passage of time, God developed a taste for irony. He put the punishment in man's own hands by letting him create the atom bomb. God let us manipulate destruction and terror and struck us with fear, not of His wrath but of ourselves. For the Class of '36, this was the word to be preached. But in the wilderness of our time, in the Year of Our Lord 1950, the only sound was the distant, rising note of requiem.

News from the Boondoggling Front: *A December 10 dispatch from the Netherlands reports that Queen Juliana sent a letter of thanks to a U. S. educator, Dr. William A. Burns, who has been working in The Hague for the past four months under the "leaders and specialists program" of the Smith-Mundt Act. His assignment: to teach Dutch Boy Scouts to carve Indian totem poles.*



A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK

By JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

Some years ago I wrote a rhymed review of the seed catalogues and subscribed myself the Squire of Soursoil Farm. Whereupon Mr. E. B. White of the *New Yorker*, who loves a good compost heap only slightly less than he loves the pavement of West Forty-fifth Street, complained that anyone whose soil was sour had only himself to blame. I could only say, "Touché."

Well, the years have passed, and I can now report to Mr. White that the Chamberlain garden is all he could desire. Practically everything has gone into it, from horse-hoof parings to the ash content of a decade of subscriptions to the *New Yorker*. I wish I could say that I had done everything according to that Hoyle of gardeners, Sir Albert Howard, whose "The Soil and Health: A Study of Organic Agriculture" (Devin-Adair, $4) is perhaps the classic exposition of how to utilize vegetable and animal wastes in restoring land to good heart. Sir Albert, who learned the secrets of composting old vegetable matter from the Chinese and from the Hunza tribesmen of northwestern India, counsels a most scientific blending of elements in the manufacture of humus for the garden. But Sir Albert is a professional, which means that he has time to spare for his specialty. The amateur who has only week ends to devote to gardening must hit upon a rule-of-thumb (preferably a rule-of-green-thumb) adaptation of Sir Albert's micrometer precision if he is to save both his vegetables and his sanity and still have time for swimming and tennis and reading and a thousand other things for which the proper week end should be reserved.

When I first began to garden I listened to grandpa's "practical" advice. I pursued weeds relentlessly, ripping even the tiniest patch of purslane from between the rows. My back ached from bending over, and I got blisters from the hoe. Then one summer, I went away for three weeks in late July and early August. The latter part of the three-week period happened to be a time of bad drought. I came home from vacation expecting to see the garden burned to a crisp. Strangely enough, however, I had wonderful tomatoes. They nestled down among some high weeds which had got a good start before the drought had come. The weeds had kept the tomatoes cool in the hot afternoons. On the other hand, my neighbors who had stripped their gardens of weeds had very poor tomatoes. I concluded then and there that it was a mistake to weed vociferously. I never had any scientific answer to gardeners who insisted that weeds rob the contiguous vegetables of both the food supply and proper moisture. All I had was some empirical observation, to which I added in subsequent years.

It was not until this past fortnight that I learned that science in the matter of weeds is on my side, not on the side of some of my neighbors. Joseph A. Cocannouer, who teaches botany at the University of Oklahoma, has just published a book called "Weeds: Guardians of the Soil" (Devin-Adair, $2.75) which actually advocates allowing a certain number of "mother" weeds to flourish in the vegetable patch. Weed roots, says Dr. Cocannouer, are deep divers; they penetrate deep into the subsoil and bring minerals up to the surface, where tomato and cabbage roots can make use of them. They also make channels into the deeper earth where corn roots, for example, can follow their probings. A pig weed growing in a potato hill will not rob the potato plant of nourishment. It will, on the contrary, loosen the soil around the potato plant and thus enable the potato roots to spread into crevices which they could not normally reach.

Naturally, Professor Cocannouer does not advocate drowning one's vegetables in weeds; he merely advocates cultivating the science of "weed control." My own method of weed control probably derived from laziness as much as from anything else. Like other amateur gardeners, I read Edward Faulkner's "Plowman's Folly" when it came out a decade back. The Faulkner recipe for garden success, as the reader will remember, is to leave all the trash — dead weeds, old sunflower stalks, last year's leaves, any old thing of an organic nature — around the plants and between the rows. Trash isn't pretty, but it keeps moisture in the soil and provides a continual decomposing supply of fertilizing elements. This business of trash farming is the logical extension of E. B. White's perennial effort to discover God in the compost heap. It completes the so-called nitrogen cycle right where it begins: in the garden itself.

In his zeal to keep the trash on the garden surface Faulkner is against plowing, which turns up bare soil to blow and wash away. This makes admirable sense from the point of view of abstract theory. But as anyone who has tried to work an unplowed field can tell Mr. Faulkner, plowing is a necessary evil. You simply can not get anywhere in spring with a field that has been merely combed by a harrow; the weeds and last year's stubble still remain a refractory element that is enough to break down the strength of a Tarzan.

Nevertheless, the basic Faulkner idea can be preserved even with plowing. The trick is to plow, then get a new cover of trash on the garden as soon as plowing and planting are done. My own method has been to plow, then plant, then throw a blanket of hay, straw, dead leaves or whatever between the rows. The hay keeps the weeds from growing during the early part of the summer. Rain, of course, will slip through a porous trash blanket, so there is no worry on that score.

A fair proportion of weeds will eventually push through a surface clutter of trash, but the weeds will not be thick — and one can control them easily by thinning out the weed growth that threatens to suffocate any given plant. Long before the Joe-Pye is up in August the corn and tomatoes will be big enough to go it on their own no matter what the weeds may do. By use of a trash blanket I have got by with little weed-pulling and a minimum of labor with the hoe. As a rule-of-thumb proposition, I should say that it is a mistake to touch a weed after July 25 or August 1. If you are afraid that you won't get enough tomatoes under this system, just put in a few extra plants. As for lettuce, it will last well into the summer if it is permitted to hide a bit in the shade of a thin forest of ragweed.

When it comes to composting, which is the standard way of developing humus for the garden surface, I am afraid that I would never have the patience to follow the advice offered by Sir Albert Howard in "The Soil and Health" or by Leonard Wickenden in his fascinating "Make Friends With Your Land" (Devin-Adair, $2.50). The so-called "Indore process" of making compost which is advocated by Sir Albert and Mr. Wickenden involves piling dead leaves, garbage, grass cuttings, weeds and animal manures in a pit. The pit must be wet down from time to time, and its contents must be turned at intervals to help speed the mysterious magic of decay. To build a good compost heap takes two years of piling and turning; then it must be lugged in a wheelbarrow (a deplorably clumsy conveyance) to the garden. The labor involved in all this may be commendable, but where is the garden-loving commuter who has time for it?

My own lazy-man's method of saving vegetable waste is to dump it directly on the garden throughout most of the year. True, it is unsightly, but in a vegetable garden, as distinct from a flower border along a driveway, it is the produce alone that counts. Anyway, once the corn is tall it hides old beet tops and orange peels that are dumped on the inside rows. During the long winter months the snow covers ugly grapefruit rinds, and by the time the snow is off the ground in March the rinds have bleached to an inoffensive, neutral brownish white. In April they can be plowed under, thus infiltrating decaying vegetable matter into the ground directly without putting it through the laborious composting process. By the time a second April has rolled around the orange and grapefruit skins have become dark humus. The plow which Faulkner scorns then turns this humus up to the surface, where it becomes available plant food. Some value may have been lost by burying the trash with the plow, for undersurface leaching undoubtedly carries good minerals down into the subsoil; and a buried grapefruit rind may stop moisture from rising by capillary action to plant roots near the surface of the garden. But in gardening you must balance loss against gain and settle for the best compromise that is available. At any rate, it is comforting to learn from Dr. Cocannouer's book on weeds that the deep roots of the ragweed will pull the leached minerals to the surface again.

No doubt my own approach to weeds and humus will be set down as shiftless by E. B. White, who is never happy unless his own compost pile is as tall as a young Maine pine. Nevertheless, my garden patch grows richer with the years. We eat well all summer, and enjoy fresh kale and brussels sprouts direct from the garden even into mid-December. We also have good frozen stuff for the winter. A pleasant and nourishing dinner table, not a comely garden surface or a completely scientific approach to composting, strikes me as the main reason for raising food. (Incidentally, for Mr. White's benefit, I do compost my maple leaves directly alongside my garden, but not in a pit.)

A final bit on weeds: there are weeds which the Japanese beetle prefers even to soy bean plants and tender corn silk. A few of these weeds left standing in your garden will play the part of the lightning rod in deflecting the bolt from the thing you want to preserve. Dr. Cocannouer has not gone into the subject of offering weed hostages to save one's corn and soybeans. But he does have a few fascinating pages on the kinds of weeds that may be picked and used for human foods. Purslane — or "pusley" — grows so well in my garden that I am glad to know that it can be considered as a food crop in itself. As Indian John, Dr. Cocannouer's Pawnee friend, says, "All wild plants good. Indian eat 'em and live long time!"

THE AGE OF WONDER

The Eyes of Discovery: The Pageant of North America As Seen by the First Explorers, by John Bakeless. *Philadelphia: Lippincott. $5.00*

Mr. Bakeless has set out in the tracks of the first explorers to see with their eyes how America looked in the beginning — before its scenes became familiar and domesticated to the white man's purposes. The discoverers or their successors told of what struck them on their travels in letters, journals and reminiscences, and Mr. Bakeless has made use of these chronicles and of a considerable first-hand knowledge of the latter-day countryside to describe its early fascinations and rigors. He tells the story for the most part in his own words, with liberal quotations from the more lively sources.

All are agreed that it was a country of huge dimensions; everything was on a grand scale — the herds of buffalo that ranged as far east as Pennsylvania, the catfish weighing up to 110 pounds, the nine-foot sturgeon that threatened to overturn Indian canoes, the oysters that had to be cut in three pieces to be eaten, oaks and cypresses that rose 20 yards in the air before they branched, migrations of passenger pigeons that darkened the sky, hordes of mosquitoes with incomparable appetites, schools of fish so dense that shad and whitefish were caught by the thousand. It was a dangerous country where even friendly Indians could change their minds and set the torture fires going, but it was a beautiful country, too, and men could smell its fragrance many miles at sea.

Mr. Bakeless pursues the explorers in geographical sections, starting with Columbus and the Spaniards in Florida and the Southwest, returning east to Canada and the French explorers, following the English discoverers of Virginia, the first sighters of New England and Manhattan, and then moving west through Pennsylvania and

the mid-country to the Mississippi and on to the coast.

He is a critical observer of the findings recorded. He notes how Father Garcés and Coronado's lieutenant Cárdenas failed to comment on the marvel of the Grand Canyon, both having their minds on other matters; he makes good guesses as to the strange things travelers reported on (including an elephant that may have been the last of the mammoths); and he is tolerant of those who, seeing great wonders like Niagara Falls for the first time, described them as four times their actual height.

The book is filled with lore, observations, and memorabilia long since forgotten by those who inherited the country. Pearl Street in Manhattan winds because it follows the margin of the old East River; prairie grass, being relatively short, was said to be injurious to animals' hooves, and since it stood up again soon after trampling made a trail hard to follow. Hurons, fearing the ghostly effect on their hunting, would not roast meat or let bones fall into the fire; Indians on the Saguenay never let their dogs have bones, and the Montagnais had the same tabu but only for animals taken with nets. The expression "By the great horn spoon" came from the Mandans' use of buffalo horn to eat with; the southern use of "branch" to mean "brook" is recorded by the earliest historians. There were many local signs of the white man's concern with improving his fortunes: *Un diamant de Canada* meant something worthless; Indians massacred a company of Frenchmen and cut off their heads, wrapping them in beaver skins — the white men had been looking for beaver. In later years Americans were killed and their mouths stopped with earth since the Indians knew them well as seekers after land. Indians used to catch sturgeon (so it is said) by slipping a noose over the fish's tail and hanging on, coming up for air whenever possible, until the fish was more exhausted than the fisherman and could be dragged to land.

White riflemen were so proficient that they called squirrel indigestible unless shot through the left eye on the top branches of a tree, and Daniel Boone scorned a target of even that size. Audubon, for whom Boone gave a demonstration, describes it as follows:

> The whip-like report resounded through the woods and along the hills in repeated echoes. Judge of my surprise, when I perceived that the ball had hit the piece of bark immediately beneath the squirrel, and shivered it into splinters, the concussion produced by which had killed the animal and sent it whirling through the air.

The book is a storehouse of such information, and it has only minor flaws as far as I can see. The sensible device of following the explorations by regions makes for repetitions; birds, beasts and plants unavoidably reappear and so do some of the comments on them. Champlain would doubtless be surprised to find himself quoted speaking the language of sixteenth-century England as well as modern English forms and his native French. Within a few pages the reader is told that the Indians looked on a black man with enthusiasm because of the color of his skin, and as a menace.

Not much of the country of the early explorers is left; there are remains of it in the diminished forests, although the great trees are nearly all gone. The mountains and canyons, despite their being well-advertised, are substantially the same; streams have been harnessed, as we say, and in some of them fish have managed to survive. In New Hampshire on the top of Mount Washington there is even a fragile relic of the ice age, as Mr. Bakeless tells us — the White Mountain butterfly *Oeneis semidea* — and there is one other survivor of that period, the Kadiak bear. Mohawk Indians are now in great demand for building skyscrapers and bridges, being unperturbed by vast heights, and Navajos were used during the war for communications work, the army correctly inferring that few of the enemy would know their language. One tribe of Indians is especially noteworthy — the Havasupai. They have lived right along at the bottom of the Grand Canyon and they may now have the best address in the United States.

EUGENE DAVIDSON

THE VITAL ITALIANS

New Italian Writers: An Anthology, edited by Marguerite Caetani and selected from the pages of the review, Botteghe Oscure. *New York: New Directions. $3.50*

In the heart of Rome, not far from the Piazza Venezia where Mussolini once harangued the multitudes, is the little Street of the Dark Shops. Like many streets of downtown Rome it has a long and colorful history but in recent years it has come into special prominence. For one thing, the headquarters of the Communist Party are located on it and, for another, it houses the editorial office of the vigorous new review *Botteghe Oscure*, founded in 1948 and already established as the vehicle for many of the most interesting writers of postwar Italy. (It is only fair to add hastily, the temper of the times being what it is, that the connection between the two offices is purely topographical and not ideological and, if further reassurance be needed, it is sufficient to mention that the headquarters of Christian Democracy are also near by.) The anthology at hand is a fair specimen of the contributions to the review and should give the American reader a good notion of what is going on in contemporary Italian creative writing.

Seven of the fourteen writers represented are poets, though the verse selections naturally take up relatively few pages. I am afraid their claim on the reader's attention will be more in proportion to their bulk than to the number of poets. One has the impression that Italy's new poets have been trapped in the techniques of the old imagist school; one may find in these selections some striking images and here and there a deft use of symbols, but in total effect the verse seems undistinguished and somehow out of date. Atillio Bertolucci's "The Indian Hut" is the most successful long piece, in my opinion; Giorgio Caproni's "The Funicular" is ambitious but its significance escapes me; Roberto Roversi's "Poems for a Print Collector" are sharply outlined and have a certain freshness of approach. Roversi is the youngest of the contributors and may bear watching. But in the main the verse is indifferent. Of course all poetry suffers in translation and perhaps modern poetry most of all, depending as it so often does on connotation and color. Yet I must say, if only in justice to the translator, that my reading of some of these verses in the original has not altered the impression I have of their relative unimportance.

The prose selections are much more interesting. We did not need this anthology to persuade us that Italian fiction is worth reading these days — the large number of recent translations afford ample proof of that — but it could surely supply additional evidence if such were needed. Each selection merits individual comment, for each author has his own individuality. Vasco Pratolini's "The Girls of San Frediano" is another slice of Florentine life somewhat similar to the larger and more varied study offered to us in the "Tale of Poor Lovers," which has already appeared in English. Pratolini's turbulent adolescents have real blood in their veins and the salty sharpness of Florence on their tongues. The short novel presented in this collection has no great message to offer but it displays in relatively few pages the author's skill as a narrator and as a creator of real human characters. It has, as well, a mischievous ending with a kind of Boccaccian flavor. From Tommaso Landolfi we have a queer tale, half science-fiction, half horror story, in the tradition of Edgar Allan Poe (as Landolfi himself indicates) and set forth with an artistry that makes the most of the sense of uneasy suspense inherent in the plot. The two short stories of Joyce Lussu are studies of familiar situations, the selfish mother who sacrifices her daughter to her own power complex and the pathetic problems of the poor couple to whom babies come all too frequently to stay all too briefly. "Angel Island" by Giuseppe Dessì is a forceful treatment of the soldier's return, a theme more realistic than romantic in present-day Italy.

These are all good but there are even better things. "The House is Moving," Guglielmo Petroni's portrait of the austere and taciturn aristocrat caught up in spite of himself in the maelstrom of cataclysmic events, is perhaps the most interesting of the prose pieces, for it has universal moral significance. I suspect there may be something of Kafka in the writer's inspiration but his work is made genuinely Italian by painstaking attention to detail both in the treatment of the background and in the analysis of the central figure. Unobtrusive allegory is most successfully united with sensitivity and humanity in the first story of the book, "The Window" by Mario Soldati. This story of the infatuation of a middle-aged Englishwoman for a "typical Italian" has elements of perception and compassion that set it apart; the author is equipped, too, with a pictorial sense that gives his descriptions something like the visual effect of actual illustrations. Giorgio Bassani's "Love Story" of a jilted girl who makes her compromise with life is another tale of universal significance built on simple realism, but I find it a little too muted in key for my own taste.

If we look at these prose selections as a whole we can see a great variety of talent; what all the writers have in common is simply narrative skill and the ability to make their characters live. These are old-fashioned virtues and one looks in vain for any new-spun philosophy or emergent school. Therein, I think, lies the strength of Italian fiction today, for schools and cults all too soon degenerate into parochialism or affectation. This is not to deny the validity of freshness of outlook or originality of technique — and indeed both may be found in this collection, but subordinate always to the classical principles of sound observation and conscientious reproduction, each writer being faithful to his own vision. It would be possible to find among contemporary Italian writers some examples of more spectacular innovations but they too would be personal and not manifestations of a clique. It may be noted that while the subject matter of these tales is Italian, as it should be (although the heroine of the first novel is an Englishwoman) their significance transcends their framework and, with the possible exception of "The Girls of San Frediano," which may stand on its own merits, all have a scope that is anything but provincial. The war has a specific role in only two of the selections — this may be because these new writers, while young, are not as young as one might imagine. The average age of the contributors is about thirty-eight. Eight of the authors published their first works before the war.

In general the translations are adequate if not particularly distinguished. The book was printed in Italy and set up by the same printer who is responsible for the printing of the review from which the stories are taken. Whether such a plan was dictated by sentiment or economy I can not say; it has resulted in a number of misprints which may have affected my judgment of the translations. In any case, these are minor blemishes in a good book.

THOMAS G. BERGIN

SPEAKEASY DAYS

The Great Illusion, by Herbert Asbury. *New York: Doubleday. $4.00*

Herbert Asbury, who has achieved a well-merited reputation as an informal chronicler of the seamier aspects of American life with his popular books on gangsters, bordellos, gambling and thievery, has turned his keen reportorial eye to the history of prohibition. And, as befits a descendant of Methodist Bishop Francis Asbury with a good sense of the past, he has also produced a highly engrossing account of what led up to the eighteenth amendment and efforts to enforce it. There is no moralizing, only facts on a subject which — it is now hard to believe — aroused considerable emotion, heat and passion for decades.

Mr. Asbury's account rightfully begins with colonial days when drinking was indulged in openly and wholeheartedly by almost everyone without the puritanical restraints that might be imagined. For strong drink, according to some colonial statute books, was "The Good Creature of God." And the men of God, making their weary rounds administering to the spiritual needs of their flocks, often resorted to "a quick one" to keep going. "It is small wonder," comments Mr. Asbury, "that many preachers were continually in a more or less pleasant state of befuddlement."

The rise of the temperance movements and the evils they sought to overcome are brilliantly detailed. If you think the Communists know how to infiltrate, the political antics of the "drys," as described by Mr. Asbury, will prove an eye-opener. Long forgotten names — Moe Smith and Izzy Einstein of the Prohibition Bureau, for example — and their zany efforts to enforce prohibition — are recalled. Racketeers who made many a fast buck rum running, speakeasy owners who of late have become social arbiters — they're all here in a vivid book which is well worth reading.

VICTOR LASKY

HITLER AS STRATEGIST

Hitler Directs His War: The Secret Records of His Daily Military Conferences, selected and annotated by Felix Gilbert. *New York: Oxford. $3.25*

In a hole in the ground outside Berchtesgaden, members of the American Counter Intelligence Corps found what was left of Hitler's private copy of the stenographic transcripts of the daily conferences he had with his officers during the war. An effort had been made to burn them and the greater part were in fact gone; but toward the bottom of the heap there were many pages merely charred and some undamaged ones.

This is a selection from the rescued pages — Hitler receiving the reports of his generals and revealing in his own words his ideas and decisions at various points in the war. The record by no means makes him out the military idiot solely responsible for German defeat, even though that is the picture presented by the growing body of tradition which a people trying to escape their own responsibility had been hugging to their bosoms. *Der Fuehrer* had a keen appreciation of small details of tactics and equipment, and his strategic sense was at least as good as that of anyone around him. Where he failed was in coordination and in the inflexibility with which he clung to positions and lines of action, in his singular delusions about every subject with which he had no personal contact. His ideas on the United States, for example, were gathered almost wholly from having seen the movie version of "Grapes of Wrath." And, as the introduction points out, when Hitler was not making a dress-shirt appearance before thousands, but was actually engaged in the kind of work he enjoyed, he showed himself a singularly mean and vulgar creature who believed in an egocentric world.

The book is thus an historical document of some value. The trouble with it is that there is only enough of the picture to fill in some minor gaps regarding Hitler and to make us regret that no more has been presented here. The generals, as might have been expected, are merely puppets whose factual reports furnish the background for the Hitlerian monologue. The really serious failure is that, whether through selection or (more probably) destruction of the original material, the conferences here represented cover none of the important crises of the war save those during the closing days of March 1945, when such matters as flying planes from the streets of Berlin came under discussion.

The first conference represented is that of December 1, 1942 — long after the decisions to attack through the Balkans and not to attack through Spain, long after the vital decision about the invasions of England and Russia, even after the Allied landings in North Africa had changed the face of the war. There is one other conference in that month; then a jump to February 1943, when it is all over at Stalingrad. Then we are in mid-1943 and it is all over in North Africa; and then in October 1943, with Sicily gone. There is a minor fragment from May 1944. The next real text comes from August, when the Allied invasion of Normandy and Bradley's break-through at Saint Lo are already memories.

Thus at every point where we would really like to know how Hitler and his generals reacted, the text is missing. Even from the purely psychological angle we learn of Hitler's reactions only after he had had time to observe the impact of a defeat. He may have been quite a different man when the news first came in, and more different still when the news that arrived was favorable.

FLETCHER PRATT

NOVELISTIC HYBRID

The Sign of Jonah, by Nancy Hale. *New York: Scribner's. $3.50*

Whatever her lapses, and this time she has lapsed, Nancy Hale is rarely dull. Bad as her new novel is — pretentious, flamboyant, bafflingly confused — it still has gleams of Miss Hale's special sensitiveness; and the bizarre story it tells is unlikely to bore the reader even though it may, in some cases, repel him. This, however, is about all that can be said for "The Sign of Jonah," which is almost startlingly inferior not only to "The Prodigal Women" but to the bulk of Miss Hale's earlier work. What she was trying to prove in this book is totally unclear, and neither as social satire nor as a dramatization of the race issue does "The Sign of Jonah" get to first base. In fact this tale of the Crocker-Buswells, who took New York by storm, is so fantastically unreal one does not believe a word of it, and is inclined to wonder who possibly could.

When one first meets them, the famous and fabulous Crocker-Buswells, as Miss Hale persists in calling them, are running a kind of communal project somewhere in the South dedicated to the uplifting of the Negro. Originally the family came from New England, and old Enoch Crocker, the patriarch of the clan, belongs to the breed of Bronson Alcott and his ilk. Among the many theories he holds is his belief that assimilation, cross-breeding, is the answer to the race question — a theory which one of his two beautiful granddaughters takes all too literally, though for reasons less admirable than his own. Granddaughter Hope, however — a human dynamo — sloughs off the consequences of her indiscretion with a characteristic lack of scruple, and it is only much, much later that the ghost of her past walks, ruining not only her own happiness but that of her sister, Felicity.

After the death of the old man, meanwhile, the family moves to New York, where the two exquisite sisters and their brilliant but dubiously sexed brother become a sensation in café society. Even their scatterbrained mother — on the whole a deft caricature — shares in the adulation that awaits them. Success, however, and the febrile social climate of the late twenties and the thirties, has a disintegrating and corrupting effect on the four, who in their upward climb manage to lose their souls. . . . All this adds up to a story of extraordinary garishness, and one that dwells particularly on the fortunes of the lovely, ruthless Hope, who is the glamorous and hard-boiled career woman par excellence. As the scene shifts from New York, to Reno, to the aristocratic South, one gathers that Miss Hale has attempted to depict a whole social milieu and an era notable for the gaudier sins.

She has not succeeded. When one thinks how J. P. Marquand, for example, might have handled the same material, one realizes how brittle, how unconvincing this

whole novel is despite its superficial smartness and knowingness. These people are not real. Neither is the world they inhabit. Both are overdrawn to the point of burlesque. More serious, however, is the complete confusion of purpose which characterizes "The Sign of Jonah," its tastelessness, its vague windy mysticism. Miss Hale has so far abandoned her usually sure artistic instinct as to be guilty of didacticism and pompousness. There are hints throughout the book that she has perhaps been betrayed by her interest in the psychology of Jung. Whatever the reason, she has produced a hybrid novel which is far below her standard, even though its sensationalism may commend it in some quarters.

EDITH H. WALTON

FREEDOM TO MOVE

American Immigration Policy: A Reappraisal, edited by William S. Bernard, Carolyn Zeleny, Henry Miller. *New York: Harper. $4.00*

More than one thoughtful American has expressed his sense of personal shame at the existence of a restrictive, racist United States immigration policy as vicious as any doctrine promulgated by fuehrer or commissar. In the period 1933–44, when almost 8,000,000 innocent men, women and children were being roasted, gassed or butchered in the Nazi death camps, American immigration quotas remained 77 per cent unfilled because our laws discriminated against immigrants from eastern and southern Europe — the people who most desperately needed a refuge as their only alternative to slaughter. During this entire period of mass extermination fewer than 250,000 East and South European refugees were admitted into this country. A million more could have been saved if they had been allowed to fill the annual unfilled British, Irish and Scandinavian quotas. As it was, the miserable people perished. Their blood is on our hands almost as surely as though American bayonets had prodded them into the crematoria and the soap-factory cauldrons.

This is not too bitter an indictment — particularly since this country, even now, continues to follow the very same immigration policies, policies which may well have influenced Hitler's Nuremburg Laws. The passage of the recent displaced persons laws did nothing to change the essential nature of the National Origins Act of 1929, the immigration law of the land.

In 1945 the National Committee on Immigration Policy was set up by representative leaders in business, labor, education, diplomacy and social work to study America's immigration policy, with special reference to the relationship between that policy and the basic economic, social and political needs of our time. The product of this study is a sober, documented and scathing denunciation of the preferential quota principle underlying our immigration laws. It condemns this principle as being racist, anachronistic, unscientific and a flat negation of our democratic ideals.

The objectives of the Quota Acts of 1921 and 1924 and the National Origins Act of 1929 — to reduce total immigration drastically, and to discriminate especially against the so-called "new" or southern and eastern European immigrant — were both achieved. But the rationalizations behind these laws were maliciously false. On the basis of the record the "new" immigrants found jobs as quickly, obeyed the laws as fully, became naturalized as readily and lived up to the health and education standards as completely as did the "old" immigrants and native-born Americans. The "new" immigrants have contributed to this country their proportionate share of talents, energies and cultures.

The experience of 25 years under the quota system has shown that the northern and western European immigrants who are favored are not coming in; the others, who want to, cannot come in. Results? Almost no net immigration, and a growing suspicion of our basic sincerity.

> It has been customary [says this report] to speak of the problem of the immigrant; the real problem today is concerned . . . with the harmonizing of our attitudes and policy toward the immigrant within the democratic structure of our society.

To achieve this end the editors of this book recommend: increasing the present 153,000 yearly immigration maximum up to double the figure; shifting unused quotas for one country to another country and permitting a "carry-over" of the unfilled total quotas; giving some consideration to occupational criteria; granting quotas to all Asiatic and Pacific peoples; working with international agencies to coordinate immigration policies; and setting up a joint congressional committee to recommend a democratic alternative to the national origins system.

"There are reasons to believe," the editors state, "that a healthy flow of world immigration in the years to come can make a valuable contribution to economic stability and world peace." At a time when repression and restriction of individuals are the rule in the Communist world, America has a dramatic opportunity to vindicate its tradition of freedom and asylum. The time to change the racist character of our immigration statutes is *now*. This authoritative report points the way.

MILTON EDELMAN

FAMOUS AND FANTASTIC

Purple Passage, by Emily Hahn. *New York: Doubleday. $3.00*

This is a novel about Aphra Behn (1640–1689), feminist, novelist, Restoration dramatist, forerunner of George Sand. It is most timely inasmuch as there is a project afoot to reissue Aphra Behn's collected works. Miss Hahn has sub-titled her tale "A Novel About a Lady Both Famous and Fantastic."

That Aphra Behn was famous is attested by the fact that she was buried in Westminster Abbey. That she was fantastic no one will gainsay after reading Miss Hahn's purple account of her doings. She was not only beautiful but fearless; her love affairs ranged from a liaison with the son of a regicide to a somewhat prosaic marriage with a stolid, unimaginative Dutchman; her adventures included a sojourn among the Indian tribes of Surinam and a go at being a spy. She seems to have been a heroine after Miss Hahn's own heart, for the author has succeeded admirably in making this somewhat shadowy figure emerge as a living woman.

ALIX DU POY

THEATER ON A BROOMSTICK

By RICHARD McLAUGHLIN

PLAYGOERS these days can not help but note a tantalizing air of enchantment around Broadway, particularly in the neighborhood of the Royale and Ethel Barrymore theaters where Christopher Fry's "The Lady's Not For Burning" and John van Druten's "Bell, Book and Candle" continue every performance to testify to the existence of witches, warlocks and their familiars in our midst. I suppose if I were as blithely trusting in moonlight fancies as my Irish ancestors, I could dismiss all these thaumaturgical goings on as so much *pishogue* and sit back and enjoy this spritely turn of events occurring so early in the theatrical season. But every one who recognizes this age for what it is — the era of scientific impedimenta — must also know that a critic is no less free of charts, graphs and trends than a weather forecaster. It seems to me, therefore, that the current drama marks the beginning of a new and — could it even be? — a brighter trend.

Only the other day a bookseller friend pointed out to me that the demand for books on Nostradamus, and sundry volumes dealing with the occult, theosophy, necromancy et al., far exceeded his supply. Furthermore, it was not difficult to agree with his assumption that any writer who satisfied the public's avid curiosity about the supernatural would become the whiteheaded boy of the hour. So if readers nowadays seek a release from their troubled minds in the sheer magic of fictional coincidence or a touch of legerdemain on the part of an author, then why shouldn't they look for the same form of escapism when they go to the theater? In fact, they apparently do, to judge by the long queues outside the box offices of "The Lady's Not For Burning" and "Bell, Book and Candle." The Fry and van Druten plays appear to be the right tonic for these jittery times, and may very well set the pace for the shows yet to come this season.

In "The Lady's Not For Burning" laughter and the dulcet ring of lyric poetry or nonsense verse offer a novel treat to senses dulled by so much flat prose on the contemporary stage. Actually Mr. Fry is an extremely pleasant newcomer in the modern theater. His poetic flights and lush imagery are curbed or sharpened by a dry, crackling wit and a cynical, biting commentary that is seldom lost on us, thanks to the brittle acting of an expert all-English cast headed by John Gielgud and Pamela Brown. Mr. Gielgud has staged his delightfully romantic fifteenth-century comedy with his accustomed flair for style. On occasion I felt that a medieval tapestry had come to life, so exquisite were the actors in their response to the nimble and airy mood of the play. John Gielgud as a misanthropic lover and Pamela Brown as his beloved are an engaging pair in an awful predicament. He can not stomach humanity any longer and wishes to be hanged, while she, condemned as a witch for no other reason than, as she says, "I speak French to my poodle," quite sensibly does not wish to be burned. Needless to say, both go scot free, for Mr. Fry desires that we come away from his lyrical satire titillated, even entranced, but not sobered.

I suppose it is all a matter of how one prefers one's witches. Pamela Brown is only a playful excuse for a witch, but in her performance there is at least a radiance that remains with us long after the curtain has gone down. Unfortunately, this can not be said for Lilli Palmer's fully employed twentieth-century sorceress who, complete with a familiar in the shape of a Siamese cat named Pyewacket, a witch-aunt and a warlock-brother, does her bewitching best, however, with John van Druten's harmless but embarrassingly thin farce about witchcraft on Murray Hill. Miss Palmer, starred with her husband, Rex Harrison, has the almost superhuman task of trying to keep us entertained through three acts of strained fun-poking at voodoo spells and the complications that arise in a witch's career when she falls in love. Mr. van Druten's characters are too earth-bound to do anything but play at make-believe exorcism in their fashionably appointed drawing room.

Although it is Thalia who rides the broomstick in the theater today, I frankly would have preferred Melpomene. For the tragic muse would surely have chilled us to the marrow, and possibly driven home the terrible impact of that mysterious unity of good and evil which we find all too rarely in our present-day drama. I imagine the first acquaintance with witches for most of us goes back to the Witch of Endor in the Bible. As for theatrical sorceresses, perhaps the most famous are the Three Weird Sisters whose prophecies started Macbeth off on his ambitious courses of treachery and murder. A footnote on witchcraft that furnishes a grim contrast to the featherweight treatment in the two current Broadway offerings belongs in the department of historical statistics: It has been computed that since 1484 nearly 9,000,000 persons have suffered death for witchcraft. In Salem, Massachusetts, "witches" were hanged or pressed to death. (No "witch" was ever burned, despite frequent assertions to that effect.)

One thing the recent arrival of witchcraft on the boards has done for this aisle-sitter is to make him comb through his old theater programs. I was amazed to find, for example, that John Masefield's "The Witch" has never had a Broadway showing. It was produced in the twenties in Greenwich Village, with Alice Brady, Maria Ouspenskaya and Earl Larrimore, and caused Alexander Woollcott to unleash his indignation on commercial managers uptown who had passed up this real work of art. Nor was London, in 1936, enthusiastic toward the Old Vic's "The Witch of Edmonton" by Thomas Dekker, John Ford, etc. True, Dame Edith Evans gave a memorable portrayal of Mother Sawyer, the witch; but this Elizabethan tragicomedy had a short run in the West End. Lately rereading "The Witch of Edmonton" in the Mermaid Series of Dekker's plays (A. A. Wyn) I came across the following speech of Mother Sawyer. It eloquently paves the way for Christopher Fry and John van Druten or any other dramatist who may wish to try his hand at prestidigitation across the footlights, since it suggests that all witches need not be hideous crones:

> "Upon whose eyelids lust sits, blowing fires
> To burn men's souls in sensual hot desires
> Are not these witches?"

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