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NOVEMBER 25, 1953

Toward A Police State

One thing made clear by the Harry Dexter White case is that the Federal Bureau of Investigation has the hidden power to convert this country into a police state.

J. Edgar Hoover's testimony in the White case shows that his bureau can build up or mar the record and actions of any government or government official, and it can do that without showing its hand or coming from behind the scenes.

The American people have supposed that such things were to be found only in Russia and other benighted countries of the Old World. Yet J. Edgar Hoover's own testimony at Washington proves that merely by "reports", never made public, can make or break any administration, while at the same time casting credit or discredit on any chosen public official, even inside the doors of the White House.

J. Edgar Hoover's testimony showed one thing further: That whereas the F. B. I. was set up chiefly to reduce crime and watch criminals, it has become a political bureau, wielding powerful secret political influence.

Attorney General Brownell's efforts to impute treason to ex-President Truman and to the dead Chief Justice Vinson have jerked the cover off the F. B. I., and revealed its possibilities as a political organ having dangerous inclinations and powers.

These illuminations of dark places must have shocked American people. It remains to be seen whether that shock will be translated into curbs on a growing police state.

Thanksgiving, 1953

Thanksgiving is the day of turkey and cranberry sauce. It is the day of big football games. It is the day of family gatherings, and of gay home-comings by young people away at school.

It is all of those—and it **should** be all of them.

But when we consider the great good fortune that has been America's in the past, and when we look about us and take into account the great dangers that threaten this country, from within as well as from without, it might not be amiss to make this Thanksgiving something in addition to those traditional surface observances—to make it what the name signifies.

For surely Americans have abundant reason to be thankful, for the freedom and the honesty and the courage and the faith of those Americans who came before us, and surely there is reason, plus, in today's world, for humble but determined rededication to those qualities, which give meaning to this distinctively American holiday, and, indeed, make the observance of Thanksgiving possible.

Strangely Familiar

Partisanship and personalities are heavily involved in the Harry Dexter White controversy. That makes it hard for the average man to appraise the situation, coolly and objectively.

But surely we should be able to consider, without emotion or prejudice, specific proposals for meeting the situation.

Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Jr. has recommended that Congress pass two new laws.

One would permit the government to grant immunity to witnesses in exchange for testimony that would help trap higher-ups in conspiracies to overthrow the government.

The wisdom of such a law, it seems to us, is highly doubtful; but certainly there are strong arguments in its favor. Furthermore, such a practice is not something new to American courts; it often has been done in the past, often is done today.

Mr. Brownell's second recommendation is that Congress legalize the use of evidence obtained by wire-tapping. That is something new to American courts. Wire-tapping is forbidden by law in many

states, and the U. S. Supreme Court repeatedly has refused to sanction the use in federal courts of evidence so obtained. Incidentally, it is not pleasant to contemplate the attorney general's argument for such a law. He said the government has failed to obtain some convictions because it could not introduce evidence it had obtained by wire-tapping; that is to say, the government's law enforcement agencies trap law-breakers by methods forbidden by law!

Wire-tapping not only would be new to American courts—it is something alien to every American tradition.

Once wire-tapping is legalized in this country, an American, when he picks up his telephone, will never know when an F. B. I. agent or a state police agent or the policeman down the street is listening in on his conversation. He will never know when some innocent or jesting remark will be misconstrued, and he will find himself under surveillance, if not actually under arrest. He will never know when a recorder has been hidden in his livingroom or diningroom or bedroom, to take down his every word, his every sigh even, almost his every thought. He will never feel entirely free to speak his mind, even in his own home . . .

Does all that sound strangely familiar? Of course it does! It is a description everybody knows—a description of the fear that grips men in Soviet Russia today.

Life's Like That

All of us like to be liked. Most of us want it so badly we try too hard to get liking; as a result, we stop being our naturally likable selves. That is, trying to be liked is not likely to make us likable—often quite the reverse. And usually we have to live a long time before we discover that the secret of being liked is—liking. A lot of us, in fact, have become so old before we learn that lesson that, by that time, we are likely to be indifferent about whether we are liked or disliked. Unfortunate! But life's like that . . .

Others' Opinions

MODERN MUST

(Christian Science Monitor)

Today's refresher courses in geography are a must—they come via the first pages of your newspaper.

THE EDIBLE LOOK

(The Richmond Times-Dispatch)

They're practical, we suppose, but somehow we know we could never wear one of those plastic rain lids on our hat without feeling like a dish of leftover pudding in the icebox.

WHY NOT?

(U. S. Coast Guard Magazine)

"For example," said the teacher to her memory-training class, "let us suppose you want to remember the name of the poet Bobby Burns. Get a mental picture of a policeman in flames. Get the idea?—Bobby Burns."

"I get the idea," replied a bright boy. "But how is one to know it doesn't represent Robert Browning?"

PRACTICAL DIFFICULTY

(Miami Daily News)

Some Midwest cattlemen reportedly want to sell the Eisenhower administration on a solution to the problem of depressed prices somewhat like the Wallace "little pig killing" program of the 1930's.

The Republicans would have to do a lot of unwinding. They've been balmng the Democrats for killing those little pigs for the last 20 years.

AFFIRMATIVE APPROACH

(Raleigh News and Observer)

Several weeks ago the Roman Catholics of Raleigh invited the people of Raleigh to attend a series of meetings which are now being held at Cathedral School, for the purpose of acquainting Protestants with the purposes and faith of the Roman Catholic Church. The First Presbyterian Church is now having a series of services on Protestantism, to which the Roman Catholics of the city have been invited.

It is not likely that either series of services will draw a very large attendance from members of other faiths, but each series has the virtue of an affirmative approach.

ISN'T IT AMAZING?

(Cleveland County Times)

Only last Sunday, on the financial page of the Charlotte Observer—staunchly, staidly, safely reactionary—we read a prominently featured article proclaiming that the "old theory about inflation no longer applies to the United States."

We've got to do some rigorous rethinking about inflation—you and I. We've got to re-examine the classical economic theory that inflation impoverishes widows, pensioners, and others who live on fixed incomes; that it steals from families who depend on salaries; that it makes life harder for wage earners.

"The theory had its roots in a property-less society. It applied to countries in which the rich were very rich indeed and the poor an overwhelming majority. . . . It does not apply to the United States of America, 1953."

Isn't it amazing! In only one short year, the Republican sages have learned how devastatingly ignorant they were even as late as November 1952!

FOG CLEANER

(Durham Morning Herald)

Only the most incorrigible Anglophile, who would not change one thing about Britain, would hope that Mrs. Jane Garner's invention fails to work. After 27 years of work on her machine, Mrs. Garner is ready for the Ministry of Supply to test her "fogga," a "vacuum cleaner" for foggy air.

The machine sucks foggy air into one end and blows it out the other defogged. The clear air from the machine creates, according to the inventor, "a cushion of pure air . . . which lifts the fog higher and higher until it dissolves."

Mrs. Garner's long and persistent work, whether it succeeds or not, refutes any opinions about a prevailing British complacency. Here is one woman not satisfied with England's pea-soup atmosphere, but determined to do something about it. If it works in England, it wouldn't be a bad idea to bring some of the "air vacuum cleaners" to this country. There are many places where and many times when it could be used to advantage.

TROOP EDUCATION

(New York Times)

Dr. John A. Hannah, president of Michigan State College, who is on leave to serve as Assistant Secretary of Defense, has announced a general shake-up in the program of "information and education" for troops.

He proposes that the instruction be simplified and that greater stress be laid on the basic tenets of Americanism. This plan has the enthusiastic endorsement of President Eisenhower.

The efforts of Dr. Hannah should be warmly welcomed in this country and he should have ample support to resist any opposition that may arise from inertia in the service branches. It is no secret that the citizenship training that has been given in the armed services has been far from effective. Under these conditions it is actually surprising and gratifying that the successes of enemy propaganda among our troops have been so meager.

Dr. Hannah's most recent statement put its chief emphasis upon a revision of the subject-matter to be used. The shake-up, however, needs to go much deeper than that. It must be recognized by those in authority throughout the services, just as it is recognized by Dr. Hannah, that teaching of any sort is never better than the teacher. What is required is a new approach that will make troop education something more than a dreary-duty to the officers who carry out the sessions and something more than "sack time" to the men who listen. There is need, obviously, to pick the instructors on the basis of real teaching ability, something that has been done only too infrequently.

Similarly, the armed services can make substantial improvement in the use of a variety of media for teaching. Some of the "indoctrination" films, for example, that were used during the war were excellently done and had a sharp impact. This field can be widened and it offers a constant opportunity for better instruction. Other visual aids can be used as well, along with group participation, organized projects and other teaching techniques.

It is because of this need and this opportunity that an eminent educator has been put in the post that he occupies. His skill can be put to use in a field in which he is really expert. He needs strong encouragement both in the services and outside them, based on an understanding of what needs to be done and a confidence that it can be accomplished.

"COMMUNISTS SEE RED", says a headline. Which means, we presume, that the Soviets now have invented the lookingglass!

STRICTLY

PERSONAL

By WEIMAR JONES

CHAPEL HILL.—So they could see news actually being made, I took a group of my journalism students to Raleigh recently to attend one of Governor W. B. Umstead's periodic press conferences.

While the students were taking notes on what the governor said, I was watching Mr. Umstead at work.

Everybody knows, of course, that he was critically ill with a heart affection early this year, and ordinarily recovery from such an illness is slow. Many persons, I among them, have wondered if Mr. Umstead's health permits him properly to discharge the duties of the big job of being governor of North Carolina; if he has the physical stamina such a grueling position requires, and if his physical condition is a brake on his mind—for physical weakness often does slow up mental processes.

How good his physical health is I do not know, but that press conference gave me the impression of a mind that works like a steel trap.

After the students and I were ushered in and introduced, the professional reporters filed into the Governor's big office and were seated, all of us facing the big, flat-top desk behind which the Governor sat.

Mr. Umstead probably is a man of medium size, but his extreme thinness makes him appear small. The thinness also accentuates the lines in his face. His hair is thinning.

After a moment or two of light, preliminary conversation, his posture and tone said as

plainly as words could have: "Now let's get down to business."

He made some observations on two topics, and then threw himself open to questions by announcing, "now the floor is yours". That business of throwing yourself open to questions—to any questions—in the presence of a score or more of smart reporters, knowing that everything you say may be printed in newspapers all over the state, and perhaps commented on editorially—it must be quite an ordeal. But there was nothing in Gov. Umstead's manner to indicate he shrank from it.

One or two questions he either answered off the record, or postponed answering. But he frankly told the newspapermen why. Several questions he answered either "I don't know" or "you'll have to ask Mr. so-and-so about that".

But most of the questions that came in a steady stream were answered without quibble and without hesitation. In fact, the quickness with which he caught what the questioner was driving at, and the promptness with which he answered, reminded me of a dog catching a piece of meat tossed to him—catching it not only before it struck the ground, but jumping for it.

Occasionally, the Governor leaned forward slightly and used the forefinger of his right hand to emphasize a point, but never once did he raise his voice; not once was there evidence of a loss of temper, or even of serious impatience. In answering a question about the

News Making As It Looks To A Maconite

By BOB SLOAN

The Dexter White case has left me with several strong impressions. Chief among these are:

Never in the history of our government has there been a greater usurpation of the functions of one branch of the government by another. Despite the remarks of Senator William Jenner and others, for the life of me, I can't find in the Constitution any paragraph under the functions of the legislative body which states that they are to be an investigating body.

Second, The ancient American principles that a man is innocent until proven guilty and the right of trial by jury are being replaced by the assumption that it is up to the individual to prove his or her innocence if faced with charges by a congressional committee which is replacing the jury system as the bench of justice in our land.

President Eisenhower is showing considerable courage in opposing the tactics of his Republican colleagues Jenner, Velde, Brownell and McCarthy in this matter. However if our traditional American freedoms are to be kept the President is going to take an even stronger stand. These men have found an easy means of gaining publicity and they are not to be denied easily.

The bills which Mr. Brownell would have made the law of the land which legalize wire tapping and reward those who turn state's evidence to the point of giving them immunity are not the kind of bills that are in temper with the true character of a nation which regards itself as the bastion of liberty.

Well there has been too much said on this subject already and everyone knows what Jonah told the whale. To a large extent that applies to the newspapers of the land.

There is brewing in this state a very hot Democratic primary for next Spring. The principal fire tenders will be Alton Lennon and Kerr Scott.

Mr. Lennon will have behind him the present administration and its state workers plus the industrial leaders support which have traditionally backed the

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Do You Remember?

(Looking backward through the files of The Press)

50 YEARS AGO THIS WEEK

Revenue Officers Enslay and Henry captured a large still last night on the Lyle Knob about four miles from town. After they were within sight of the fire in the furnace a shot from a thicket gave the alarm and three men were seen to take to the brush and make their escape.

Mr. J. G. Crawford went to Asheville Monday. He will engage in insurance business for a while.

Rev. E. L. Bain and family expect to leave tomorrow for their new home at Gastonia, N. C. They leave many warm friends here who wish them much pleasure in their new field of Christian labor.

25 YEARS AGO

Realizing the need of an organization looking to better farming methods, cow testing, hog feeding, truck growing, and to keeping of records, the farmers of Ellijay community in this county, under the supervision of the county agent, have organized for the year 1929.

Better take a trip up the Cullasaja and see the grandest scenery in Eastern America.

Once upon a time a cow kicked over a lamp and started a fire which burned Chicago to the ground. A cow would have to be an acrobat to kick out an electric light in an up-to-date barn of today. There will be a number of such barns in Macon County in the near future.

10 YEARS AGO

Miss Marie Cloer, now employed in a defense plant in Richmond, Va., is spending a two weeks' vacation with her parents, Rev. and Mrs. George Cloer.

Mrs. Van Frazier left this week to join her husband in Detroit, Mich. She was accompanied by her daughter, Jena V. Frazier, formerly of Washington, D. C., who will stay in Detroit several weeks.

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