

NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

Portrait of a Reactionary

BY DOROTHY DUNBAR BROMLEY

FROM a hundred platforms Nicholas Murray Butler has extolled liberty and condemned compulsion. Yet he stands accused of harboring Fascism on his own university campus. On November 1, 1934, the *Nation* published an article which charged that the Casa Italiana, an integral part of the University, is being used as a center for Fascist propaganda. The anonymous author of the article, evidently a person in close touch with affairs at Columbia, claimed among other things that the head of the Italian Department, Professor Dino Bigongiari, is an avowed Fascist, that the Italian Consul-General in New York contributed in 1933 \$3,000 for the maintenance of the Casa, that the educational bureau of the Casa sends out speakers to spread the Fascist doctrine, that Professor Arthur Livingston was transferred from the Italian to the French Department on account of his political beliefs, that no anti-Fascist had ever spoken at the Casa, and that student gatherings for the open discussion of Fascism are forbidden at the Casa.

In replying to the *Nation* President Butler neither denied the charges specifically nor repudiated the policy of his Italian Department. He merely stated that the Casa had "entertained" in its rooms men of all political faiths, that it had on one occasion invited Senator Guglielmo Ferrero to speak before it, and that other anti-Fascists would be invited in the future. On at least one

point Mr. Butler spoke inaccurately. Senator Ferrero, in a personal communication to Professor Salvemini of Harvard, denies that he was ever invited.

Mr. Butler further protested that "no member of Columbia University is ever questioned as to his political opinions," and that the Casa Italiana, like the French, German, and Spanish centers on the campus, "is wholly without political purpose or significance." If that is so, why are its activities exclusively Fascist in character, and why did President Butler refuse to discuss the matter with a student delegation?

It is no secret that Mr. Butler is a great admirer of Il Duce, to whom he pays court whenever he is in Rome. While he has deplored before American audiences the element of compulsion in Fascism, he has also pointed to its "long series of genuine improvements in the public life and policy of the nation." Does he approve, by any chance, of the Fascist policy of militarizing boys from the age of eight years on? And how can he, the great apostle of peace, admire a dictator who calls pacifism "an act of cowardice in the face of sacrifice"?

One suspects that Mr. Butler tolerates Fascism and castigates radicalism because Fascism, with all of its compulsions, means the intrenchment of the capitalist system, under which he lives and has his prosperous being.

One of the phenomena of our public life

is the ease with which a man can trade on a reputation for liberalism if he has at some time supported a worth while cause. Many otherwise thinking Americans are inclined to idolize as genuine liberals the Al Smiths and the Nicholas Murray Butlers who, either through honest conviction or a canny sense of self-aggrandizement or a mixture of both motives, fought the good fight for the repeal of prohibition.

Mr. Butler has himself said, "The word liberal has proved so attractive that it has been given many meanings and its possession has been fought for by widely different groups." This is doubtless the reason why he urges that "the existing social, economic and political order be given the name of liberalism."

In his book, "The Faith of a Liberal," published in 1924, he declared, "The true liberal is a believer in liberty, whether that liberty be intellectual, civil, political, economic or religious." This is a sound enough idea on its face. But what does it mean in terms of human welfare? That it means precisely nothing, and has been invoked by Mr. Butler and others to obstruct measures of social welfare, is the reason, no doubt, why a young man from Oxford rudely said to Mr. Butler's face, "It bores me, sir, to hear you discuss liberty."

II

Men who sat under Nicholas Murray Butler when he was a young professor of philosophy say that even then he showed a driving ambition, and had a mind that seemed impervious to ethical or metaphysical convictions. Lecturing to his students on Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason," he demonstrated the impossibility of any valid knowledge concerning immortality or a First Cause. Yet he was confirmed in

the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1897 at the mature age of thirty-four. Five years later he was made President of Columbia University, whose charter requires that the head of the institution be an Episcopalian. Since then Mr. Butler has regularly paid lip service to the church. He tells us that the man who says there is no God is "a supreme egoist," and that faith is the only cure for the world's unrest. Yet those who know him say that he is in no sense a religious man. As the economic-social order has shown signs of disruption he has become increasingly vocal in his praise of religion and the church, which he doubtless looks upon as a bulwark of the present scheme of things. Recently he made the surprising proposal that the public schools be closed for one afternoon each week so that children may be given religious instruction. This proposal has the earmarks of coming from the Roman Catholic Church, of which Mr. Butler's second wife is a member.

He appears always to have been overpowered in the presence of the wealthy and the famous. The son of a Paterson, New Jersey, merchant, he went to a public high-school, and after a meteoric career in the undergraduate and graduate schools at Columbia, he studied in Europe for two years. Here he followed Samuel Johnson's advice "to talk with the wise and dine with the rich," and he has ever since been at the game of stalking the great and the powerful. In his inaugural address as President of Columbia he said, "The university must, to fulfill its high calling, give and give freely to its students, to the world of learning and scholarship, to the development of trade, commerce and industry . . ." Would Abélard, whose name Mr. Butler frequently takes in vain, have considered the development of trade as one of the concerns of a university? But Abélard

was not accountable to a board of trustees on which sat J. P. Morgan the Elder, Newcomb Carleton, president of the Western Union, Robert S. Lovett, president of the Union Pacific, and other railroad owners, financiers, industrialists, and corporation lawyers. With these men as masters, it was natural that the incoming president should mention "trade, commerce, and industry," in the same breath with "learning and scholarship." It was natural, too, that he should revere big business since his ambitions for Columbia depended, first, upon gifts from men of wealth and, second, upon the profitable investment of these great sums in railroad bonds and industrial stocks and bonds. The university, with its affiliated institutions, has today capital resources of \$152,594,964, a very large vested interest indeed in the *status quo*.

Mr. Butler's personal interest in the economic structure is also considerable. The former public school boy now lives in an impressive mansion on Morningside Drive which the trustees erected for his use. As president alike of a great American university and of the \$10,000,000 Carnegie Endowment Fund, he is received in the chancelleries of Europe as a kind of permanent American ambassador. His opportunities for investment have, of course, been many. When the individual income tax returns were published for the year 1923—a move which he denounced as a violation of personal rights—it was found that he had paid a tax of \$6522. And when the Harriman Bank of New York failed in 1933, it became known that Mr. Butler had deposited with this bank securities worth \$500,000 in 1932. These were restored to him by order of the court.

Mr. Butler is listed in *Who's Who* as a publicist and educator. He likes to think of himself as a mold of public opinion,

and it is for this reason, no doubt, that he is so ready to make speeches and be interviewed. Upton Sinclair has said, with a good deal of penetration, that Mr. Butler considers himself the intellectual leader of the American plutocracy. His Christmas cards, which are always cast in the form of a didactic little homily, show with what solemnity he plays this rôle. In 1930 he apostrophised the higher patriotism that seeks "to inspire, to succor, and to serve"; and in 1934 he announced that "moral principle rather than force must protect liberty against compulsion."

III

Mr. Butler's yearly speeches before the élite of Southampton at the Parrish Art Museum give as clear a picture of his mental processes as a fluoroscope gives of digestive processes. On September 3, 1934, the *New York Times* carried the front page headline, "Dr. Butler Scores Radicals on Wide Poverty—Charge of Non-Distribution of Wealth Held Sheer Invention." By an ironic coincidence there also appeared on the front page of the same issue of the *Times* a column dispatch from Washington carrying the caption, "Richberg predicts 5,000,000 Families on Relief Rolls This Coming Winter."

The winter will show whether Mr. Richberg was over-pessimistic in his prediction. But so long as the relief problem is so stupendous a one, it is a little foolish of Mr. Butler to declare that "the distribution of wealth in the United States, while by no means all that it might be and will be, is nevertheless very wide indeed."

This speech of Mr. Butler's was shot through with intellectual dishonesty. He characterised the claim made by the radicals that some three-quarters or more of the national wealth is owned by perhaps

2 or 3% of the population, as "sheer invention." Yet he produced no figures to prove his charge, and he deliberately disregarded such careful studies as Doane's "The Measurement of American Wealth," which shows that in 1929, at the peak of prosperity, 83% of the total liquid wealth of all individuals was in the hands of those having incomes above the \$5,000 grade, with the remaining 17% distributed among the remaining 99% of all the people. Since income is even more vital than wealth, Mr. Butler should also have consulted the analysis of the income tax statistics for 1932, which shows that of the 3,760,402 people who filed tax returns in 1932, only 339,407, or less than 1% of the gainfully employed, had annual incomes of over \$5,000.

To prove his point about the distribution of wealth Mr. Butler gave statistics on the number of savings bank deposits, life insurance policies, and building and loan investments, as of two years ago. He also gave figures on families who owned their own homes, automobiles, radios, etc., when the 1930 Census was taken. These data are interesting, but they prove nothing at all about the *relative* distribution of wealth. Furthermore, they are misleading in the light of present-day conditions. As every one knows, thousands upon thousands of people have lost their savings, investments, and homes during the past few years. Between 1931 and 1932 the savings banks alone lost seven million depositors who withdrew more than three and three-quarter billions of dollars—a fact which Mr. Butler chose to ignore in painting his cheerful picture.

Most amazing of all was his assertion that the number of unemployed in 1931-32 had probably not risen "for any considerable length of time, if at all, above seven or, at most, eight millions." Unfortunately,

the government has kept no statistics on unemployment, but the extent of public relief has shown that the A. F. of L. figure of 13,100,000 in January, 1933, was, if anything, conservative.

Mr. Butler is obviously anxious to have us believe that the mass of the American people are better off than they really are.

As the self-appointed intellectual leader of the American plutocracy, he now calms the fears of the wealthy, now chides them gently when he wishes to do a little discreet begging for Columbia University. At Southampton in 1930 he must have jolted his audience a trifle when he deplored the fact that "the old economic liberalism, or laissez-faire doctrine, carried with it great power over the lives of other men." Lest "a class despotism be established under the name of liberalism," he called for "a change of heart and a change of point of view." But how was this moral regeneration to be manifested? Through a liberalization of wage policies? Not at all. He merely urged that men of wealth devote a share of their fortunes "to public service through public benefaction." "Then," he said, "they will find little jealousy or resentment, no matter what their accumulation."

Can Mr. Butler seriously think that donations to universities and libraries by the great industrialists mean anything to exploited workers?

Far from being worried about the "beneficiaries of liberalism" misusing their "great power," Mr. Butler has always got the jitters whenever any measure has been proposed that would curb their power. In 1912 he denounced his old friend Theodore Roosevelt as a demagogue because he had proposed judicial recall, and he campaigned against him as Vice-Presidential candidate on Taft's ticket. The election, he said, would decide whether "our govern-

ment was to be Republican or Cossack." Already in 1911 he had urged that "the associated business men of the United States unite to demand that the existing political campaign be conducted with a view to their oversight and protection." The big business men, not the people, have always been sacrosanct in Mr. Butler's eyes. Woodrow Wilson's brand of progressivism was no less anathema to Mr. Butler. He called him a "charlatan." And the Adamson law, which established collective bargaining in the railroads, he condemned as "a menace to our political institutions." Could he have been thinking of Columbia University's extensive holding in railway bonds?

The position Mr. Butler has taken from time to time on questions of taxation plainly reflects his class bias. Of the Sixteenth, the Income Tax, Amendment, he said, "Interpreted literally, it levels to the ground all the immunities that hitherto existed to surround private property." In 1920 he inveighed against the excess profits tax. In 1924 he attacked the law permitting publication of income tax returns as "an outrageous violation of the rights of privacy"—one that "could serve no public interest."

Mr. Butler is against an income tax "so high that it becomes a class tax, a vehicle for 'attempting a redistribution of individual wealth.'" Like Al Smith he is fearful lest the "rich be soaked." In passing, he has naïvely confessed one reason why he is so disturbed over high surtaxes. He trembles for the security and the future of the great university which he has built up out of the largess of men of wealth. He tragically foresees the extinction of universities, libraries, museums, etc., if their "sources of supply from big-hearted men and women are to be dried up."

We sympathise with his predicament, al-

though Columbia University is still far from bankrupt. But the idea that the present economic order should be preserved with no fundamental changes, so that institutions like Columbia may continue to flourish "in the field of Liberty," is a little fantastic, when viewed from a broad social viewpoint. Columbia serves a vast student body, now some 40,000, and it sheds its light far and wide as a center of learning. But little of this light filters through to the victims of the industrial set-up which has made Columbia and similar institutions possible.

Mr. Butler is fatuous in his insistence that wealth more often than not brings with it a sense of social responsibility, "particularly in America," as he loves to point out. He believes, one gathers, that a rich man will be judged in heaven not for the way he has made his fortune, but only for the way he has disbursed it. "Whether a great fortune," he has said, "is to the public advantage or not, depends not in the least upon its existence or its amount, but upon how it is used . . ."

Mr. Butler, for all of his quoting from the Greek philosophers, is regrettably American in his veneration for the "golden calf of money," which he has deprecated in his more spiritual moments. He says that "the right to hold and dispose of one's own just gains, is one of the incomparable blessings of liberty under law." Also, that "property is an attribute of personality and individual property is essential to liberty." This is a strange identification of a man's personality, or his spiritual self, with his worldly possessions. He has said, too, "Property is the name given to that which belongs to an individual because by his own effort he has produced or acquired it." Would he concede, then, that inheritance of property, which represents something other than one's own "just gains," is so-

cially wrong? On the contrary, he has condemned high inheritance taxes. Mr. Butler will have to admit that if "individual property is essential to Liberty," it must follow that the millions of Americans who have no property have no liberty.

IV

Since the depression Mr. Butler has found a new theme song, and that is the "service motive." He has said, "If helpful service to one's fellowmen be the dominant motive, then the greater the legitimate profit one makes, the more he will be applauded." He has, of course, never defined "legitimate profit." He has however fluently praised the Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Harkness families. Are we to assume, then, that the beneficiaries of big business should be allowed, through taking a "legitimate profit," to accumulate far more wealth than they can possibly spend? Nor has he defined that frequently exploited word "service." If patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel, certainly the slogan "service" is the last refuge of a reactionary.

When he was asked how he would prevent "the exploitation of one man by his fellows," without resorting to government regulation, he looked down on the university buildings and said complacently, "It can be done the way we do it here." The answer hardly seemed a solution,—or one had not thought it was,—since Columbia University is not an industrial or a profit-making organization.

Fundamentally, Mr. Butler's attitude is that of a man who hates and scorns the people. "An educated proletariat," he said years ago when he was a rising young educator, "is a continual source of disturbance and danger to any nation." Can this be the reason he has turned on the Child Labor Amendment and made common cause

with the interested industrialists and newspaper owners? His linking of this Amendment with the Eighteenth Amendment is a piece of intellectual sophistry. The Eighteenth Amendment was a sumptuary law that sought to regulate our habits of life. The Child Labor Amendment seeks to free a submerged and helpless group of the population. To this end it would give Congress the power to "limit, regulate, and prohibit the labor of persons under eighteen years of age." When Mr. Butler says that this would give Congress power "to send Federal agents into every home, school and church to see what any one under eighteen years of age was doing," he is talking arrant nonsense—to use one of his own favorite phrases. Congress has done many foolish things, but it could have no reason for interfering with the ordinary household tasks or farm chores of children under eighteen. The word "labor" in common usage means gainful toil, generally of a manual nature, and this meaning has been confirmed by the Supreme Court. How it could be made to mean education or religious worship, is hard to see. A certain section of the Roman Catholic Church, fearful for its parochial school system, has raised this canard about the Amendment. Can it be that Mr. Butler's connection with this church through his wife, and his annual audiences with the Pope, have biassed his thinking?

Mr. Butler has a way of flatly denying facts, which can only be characterised by an ugly monosyllable. He says for instance that child labor before the N.R.A. "was on the point of becoming almost non-existent."

Yet the 1930 Census showed that there were 264,774 children between ten and fifteen years of age gainfully employed outside of their homes in sweatshops, mills, and other occupations.

With a gesture as dictatorial as Il Duce's, Mr. Butler declares that the proponents of the Amendment "will not be allowed to have their way." Can it be that he, the apostle of liberty, is privy to the concerted campaign which the newspapers have launched against the Amendment in their zeal to protect their own distribution systems?

The welfare of the people, as one of the professors on his own faculty has penetratingly said, is only an intellectual concept to Mr. Butler. He never comes in contact with the rank and file—neither in the exclusive men's clubs which he haunts, nor at the bankers' associations, Chamber of Commerce meetings, or bar associations which he so frequently addresses.

Radicalism of all kinds has always struck terror into Nicholas Murray Butler's soul, and so he has lashed about him making the most absurd and unjust statements. Back in 1912 he characterised the Socialistic conception of government "as a sort of glorified lynching." Of recent years he has in one breath denied the possibility of a class struggle, and in the next breath scorned it as "a revolt of the unfit, due to an inferiority complex." Unlike those liberals who have seen great good in the Soviet experiment even while they have deplored its excesses, from its beginning Mr. Butler has taken a ghoulish delight in prophesying its collapse. Now, however, he says we should at least inform ourselves of what is going on in Russia. Bigness and power never fail to impress him.

He castigates the radicals of all categories as "guilty of selfishness to the nth power, interested solely in obtaining economic security for themselves." It hardly behooves Mr. Butler to deprecate the common desire for economic security. Any man who is so well fixed that he carelessly leaves half a million dollars worth of secu-

rities with an institution like the Harriman Bank, must be very secure indeed. It is just this passion for security which blinds him. He cannot see that such unworldly souls as John Dewey, Norman Thomas, Henri Barbusse, and Romain Rolland are actuated not by self-interest or a "joy in tearing down," but by a passion for social justice which is foreign to such a nature as his own.

V

On his last Christmas card Mr. Butler said that "he who supports and defends the principles of the Magna Carta or of our own Bill of Rights, is a liberal." He disqualifies himself by his own definition.

He fought, it is true, for the repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment. His speech at the Missouri Society dinner in 1924 was an epochal affair, delivered as it was at a time when the Amendment was still considered to be a moral issue in many quarters. If ever in his life he can be said to have shown courage, this was the time. But we must remember that he stood to lose very little. New York City had never been dry, and the Columbia trustees undoubtedly approved of his move. Trustee Frederic R. Coudert, whose firm has represented the French government from time to time, was among the first to congratulate him on his stand. France, as everyone knows, had felt the loss of our wine business. Furthermore, the feeling in his own church, the Protestant Episcopal, had been decidedly against prohibition. Finally, it should be remembered that repeal was the one liberal issue of the decade which in no way threatened to undermine the economic structure. What probably happened was that Mr. Butler, honestly convinced of the evils of prohibition, seized upon repeal as a God-given opportunity for leadership.

He has not been so ready to defend other liberal causes. The medieval Comstock law, which has prevented millions of women from getting the contraceptive information which they need for the protection of their health, is most certainly a violation of the First Amendment. Yet the birth control advocates have had no aid and comfort from Mr. Butler.

Where was he when the Mooney and Billings and the Sacco and Vanzetti and the Scottsboro cases were being tried before the court of public opinion? His silence in regard to the Mooney and Billings case is particularly hard to condone since he was in San Francisco at the time of the bombing and was not more than 500 feet away from the scene of the crime.

Was Mr. Butler heard from when the vigilantes of San Francisco raided the headquarters of radical and striking groups during the waterfront strike last summer? Even the New York *Times* objected to this abrogation of the Constitutional guarantee against unreasonable search and seizure without warrant. But Mr. Butler remained silent.

Still another great liberal cause, the right of women to the ballot, was fought for without benefit of Nicholas Murray Butler's support. Time and again he has shown, in the things he has said and the things he has left unsaid, a blind spot where a man's passion for justice ought to be. Without such a sense of justice, a man can hardly claim to be a liberal, "a believer in the spiritual freedom of mankind," to quote the definition of the Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences.

VI

If Mr. Butler is capable of self-criticism he must wish sometimes that he could wipe out his war record. Although he had been

a leading spirit in the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace ever since its inception in 1910, he became in 1917 one of our most vociferous jingoists. In the fall of 1918 he went so far as to urge universal military training. In an article written for the National Security League he said, "Every youth approaching manhood should be required to submit to training for part of a year or of two years, in order that he might get a new and vivid sense of the meaning and obligation of citizenship." The military training was to be combined with vocational training, so as to silence criticism, and he urged that the net of military cantonments over the country be made permanent. He foresaw that "there would be a quick demand for national training of young women as well." If this article had appeared fifteen years later, and in German, one might believe that Hitler had written it.

Wiser men than Mr. Butler lost their perspective during the War. But a man who had been a special pleader for peace and for the rights of the individual might have been expected to preserve at least a tolerance for other men's views. This is just what Mr. Butler did not do. Columbia University was almost immediately turned into an armed camp, and there were a number of conscientious objectors among the students. Of the several who were expelled, one brought an unsuccessful court action to compel his reinstatement. The judge, in denying his suit, referred scathingly to "the forces of destruction that hide behind the mask of the constitutional right of free speech." President Butler hailed the judge's decision and said his words "should be burned into the consciousness of every American citizen."

Mr. Butler's invective against "traitors" was in the best war fashion. Speaking of Robert M. LaFollette at a bankers' meet-

ing in September, 1917, he said, "What are they thinking about, those honorable patriotic men in Congress, to sit there and be contaminated by an object like that?" LaFollette had earned his enmity by calling him a "handy man of privilege," and a "bootlicker of men of fortune."

Columbia University itself was to be purified. Dr. J. McKeen Cattell, a distinguished scholar and head of the Department of Psychology for many years, had always been an inveterate critic of trustee control. In the summer of 1917 he wrote a letter to members of Congress urging them to support a bill for prohibiting the sending of conscripted men to fight in Europe against their will—on the ground that this would be contrary to the intent of the Constitution. He was forthwith dismissed by the trustees who accused him, in the daily press, of treason and sedition. At the same time Professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow Dana, associate professor of History, a capable scholar and a popular teacher, was dismissed for his activities in the People's Council. This latter body had been convicted by the irresponsible press, but not by government agents, of obstructing the War.

These dismissals were followed within a week by the resignation of Professor Charles A. Beard. The year before he had been catechised by Messrs. Coudert and Bangs of the Board of Trustees, in the presence of President Butler, on his economic interpretation of the Constitution. He now declared that "the status of a professor at Columbia was lower than that of a hired laborer."

At least two of the Trustees were vitally interested in our entering the war. Marcellus Hartley Dodge, director of the Midvale Steel and Ordnance Company and of the Remington Arms Union Metallic Cartridge Company, had been Trustee since

1907; while Herbert L. Satterlee, counsel of the House of Morgan, and son-in-law of J. P. Sr., had come on the Board in 1917 to fill up the gap left by the latter's death in 1913. The Morgan banking house had backed the Allies so heavily that any criticism of our full participation from the Columbia faculty was an act of *lèse majesté*.

President Butler saw eye to eye with the Trustees in the Cattell and Dana affair. "Security of tenure," he said righteously, "is desirable, but competence and loyalty are more desirable still. . . . A professor's freedom is limited by the traditions and objects of the university." He found it deplorable that distinguished scholars should "act in utter disregard of ethics and good conduct." Mr. Butler has long had a trick of setting himself up as God.

The war dismissals were not the first persecution of the faculty under President Butler. There was the case of Professor Harry Thurston Peck, the distinguished Latin scholar, who was dismissed in 1911 when a Boston woman threatened to sue him for breach of promise. There was the case of Professor Joel E. Spingarn who protested Professor Peck's dismissal and was himself dismissed. There was also the case of Mr. Leon Fraser, an instructor in the Department of Political Science, who had at the same time held a position under Mr. Butler, with the Association for International Conciliation. He was dropped in 1916, after referring, while lecturing at another college, in a derogatory way to the Plattsburg military camp. He had been carrying on peace propaganda at Mr. Butler's behest, and yet he was sacrificed.

The academic atmosphere at Columbia has cleared since the War. Members of the faculty no longer have to whisper their convictions. The trustees, a more tractable and less powerful group than formerly, are under President Butler's

capable thumb, and he has given his faculty complete autonomy of action. Indeed, his manner of governing Columbia today is his only real claim to being a liberal. But we may look for a return of his war psychology if he remains in office during the next few years. For the lines are tightening and the left-wing groups are becoming increasingly active on his own campus and throughout the country. There have been a few straws in the wind at Columbia. In 1933 Mr. Donald Henderson, an active worker in Communist groups, was dropped from the Department of Economics. It was claimed that he had been neglecting his work. Mr. Addison T. Cutler, another Communist sympathiser, is still on the faculty of this Department.

For the moment the Columbia students are free to hold meetings and express their views, and the editorial policy of the student daily, the *Spectator*, is decidedly to the left. But three years ago the editor of this paper was expelled after he had brought charges of corruption against one of the dining-halls and had accused the football administration of commercialism, a brand of disloyalty which the alumni could not stand.

President Butler's last annual report to his trustees suggests that he would like now to circumvent freedom of speech in the undergraduate college if not in the rest of the university. While he admits that academic freedom "is an essential characteristic of true university teaching and research," he says that "the situation in respect to the elementary school, the secondary school, and in large part to the college, is quite a different one." In tax-supported schools, he goes on to say, no teacher has a right to discuss the merits and defects of various systems of government, since such a discussion "might undermine the government upon whose

support the schools rest." Like William Randolph Hearst, who has recently taken to baiting college professors on their Socialistic views, Mr. Butler would apparently like to introduce Nazi conformity into our public schools, if not into our graduate universities.

VII

Since his early days Mr. Butler has proudly attended Republican conventions, and has fancied himself one of the elder statesmen of the party. The pathetic truth is that he has never succeeded in leading the party, while the party has led him on more than a few occasions.

Take the matter of the League of Nations. During the War years a society of nations was one of Mr. Butler's favorite international concepts. As late as March, 1919, he said that President Wilson's plan "must not be treated as a matter of personal or party politics . . ." But by July, 1919, he was echoing the views of Senator Lodge *et al.*, and in 1920 he signed the statement of the thirty-one irreconcilable Republicans endorsing the stand of Senator Harding. His pusillanimous action was in sharp contrast to the stand taken by Charles W. Eliot, who characterised some of the arguments advanced by the Republicans as "ignominious and dastardly."

As the League gained in power, Mr. Butler changed his views once again. In a speech before the League of Nations Non-Partisan Association, delivered in 1926, he referred to the failure of the two parties to agree on the League as a "tragedy" and admitted that he had been privy to the negotiations. He had, he said, "examined the records covering those months of intimate confidential negotiations," and he could say, with Lord Beatty, that he was not going to write a book, "because

he had done nothing which needed explanation or apology." The gentleman did protest too much.

Twice in his life Mr. Butler has forgotten himself and shown by his utterances that he was well aware of the "close alliance between business and politics." Back in 1899 he used these very words in deploring the fact that the "entrepreneurs who donate to party chests are given public franchises." And in 1920, after the Republican Party had laughed at his Presidential aspirations, he lashed out and said that "the purpose of the convention had been to prevent the sale of the Presidential nomination to the highest bidder." General Leonard Wood's supporters he characterised as "a motley crew of stock gamblers, oil and mining promoters and munition makers." His tirade shocked New York and the entire party. What the trustees of Columbia University thought of it is not a matter of public record, but the outburst must have grieved Trustee Marcellus Hartley Dodge, director of ordnance and arms companies. Whether or not pressure was brought to bear on Mr. Butler, he apologized five days later and said that he had spoken "under the stress, turmoil and fatigue of the convention," and that his words were "unbecoming and unwarranted."

Meekly he slid back into the fold of the party. "The Republicans," he said, "had rarely had a ticket which they could support with such confidence." Three years later, when the oil scandals broke, Mr. Butler was not so anxious to be identified with the Harding Administration.

Mr. Butler's loyalty to the party has at times seemed almost disingenuous. In 1924 he declared that "the nomination of General Dawes and President Coolidge insures the cleanest, finest, and most intelligent campaign we have ever had . . ." Cool-

idge's administration was to encourage speculation to the point of insanity, and to exact from our former allies repayment of the "money they had hired," while Congress barricaded the country behind a tariff wall,—all policies which Mr. Butler deplored.

When, in 1928, the Republican party refused to listen to him on the subject of repeal, Mr. Butler's loyalty was strained almost to the breaking point. But he could not bring himself to support Governor Smith, much as he admired him, and important as he thought the issue.

In 1932 he inveighed heavily against the party's stand on both prohibition and foreign affairs, but he remained a Republican nevertheless.

Some hopeful people had thought that Mr. Butler had emerged from his 1920 Waterloo a wiser and a better man. Since the slogan, "Pick Nick for President and Picnic in November," had got him nowhere at all, it was said that he had given up his life's ambition and was now his own man. His fight for repeal confirmed this impression. Even such a liberal organ as the *Nation* said in 1924, "Left to himself away from wars or political conventions he is likely to behave with liberality and decency." In this same year the usually disillusioned *Freeman* found "an accent of sincerity in his words." Again in 1928 the *Nation* cheered his declaration that the scholar must be allowed complete freedom of thought and expression; the editors saw in his words an implicit confession of past sins.

True to the liberal fallacy, the *Nation* forgot to look for the inevitable economic implications in Mr. Butler's temporary regeneration. He could well afford to champion academic freedom during the 1920's when capitalism appeared to be firmly in the saddle.

VIII

One of Mr. Butler's claims to liberalism is his international-mindedness. He shared the Nobel Peace Prize with Jane Addams in 1931, for his part in the drafting of the Kellogg Pact, and he has been decorated by almost every civilized country. But if we look over his record we see that he has shown neither prescience nor sound judgment in foreign affairs. In 1898 he told the teachers of the country that we had entered upon the Spanish-American War "in the most unselfish spirit and from the loftiest motives."

Before the War he was one of the Kaiser's greatest admirers. He boasted of having breakfasted with him, and displayed as trophies the badge of Commander of the Order of the Red Eagle of Prussia, and a large autographed photograph of the Kaiser which remained on permanent exhibit in his drawing-room. On the Kaiser's twenty-fifth anniversary as emperor, he cabled him that he "rose almost to the miraculous," and that if he had not been born Kaiser he would have been elevated by popular vote to be ruler of any democratic people. During the War Mr. Butler spoke very differently of the Kaiser and of all things Prussian.

The Nobel judges should have examined the works of Mr. Butler's alter-ego, the \$10,000,000 Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. In 1910 Andrew Carnegie set up this foundation "to hasten the abolition of international war." To attain this end the directors have devoted the Endowment's half a million dollar annual income to futile conferences, exchange fellowships, good-will tours, and the publication of such documents as "Prize Cases Decided in the United States Supreme Court 1789-1918," and "Problems about the War for Classes in Arithmetic,"

not to mention Mr. Butler's own speeches on a wide variety of subjects, which are faithfully printed and widely broadcast. A large part of the Endowment's income has gone to a colossal 155-volume work on "the Economic and Social History of the World War," prepared under the editorship of Professor James T. Shotwell. The separate volumes cover such subjects as "Hydroelectric Forces during the War," "The Textile Industry in France during the War," "Effect of the Enemy Occupation on Roumania," etc., etc. The aim of this work, according to the editor, is to show the social and economic dislocation caused by the War, while the political history of the war has been disregarded. No such dangerous questions as the economic rivalries which brought on the War, nor the profits reaped by bankers and munitions makers, are within the scope of this gargantuan work. How such a study "will hasten the abolition of international war" is a little hard to see.

Of recent years Mr. Butler has joined the popular chorus and spoken disapprovingly of the greed of the munitions makers. But he and his Endowment left it to the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom to instigate the Senate Investigation into the activities of the arms manufacturers in this country. While he has deplored the expansion of our Navy under Coolidge and now under Roosevelt, he has not launched any such country-wide campaign against our big navy policy as he has against the Child Labor Amendment.

The only large purpose which the Carnegie Endowment has served, apparently, is to provide rich sinecures for a favored group, and to aggrandize Mr. Butler who draws a salary as its President and tours Europe every year presumably at its expense.

A good part of the gentleman's international-mindedness is an insatiable appetite for consorting with the famous of all countries. It gratifies him to return to this country every fall and to announce pompously in an interview with the press what the best minds in Europe are thinking. His loyalties and associations have more often than not been those of a time-server, both at home and abroad. Warren G. Harding was a great President until the oil-scandals came out. Today the Kaiser grows old at Doorn, with no word of cheer from him. Mussolini, should he ever find himself on an island of Elba, need look for no friendly message from his former admirer.

There is little in his record, apart from his fight for repeal, to suggest that he thinks for himself, or that he has the quality of leadership. The Treaty of Versailles is a case in point. He had no criticism to offer of its economic provisions until English statesmen and American bankers tardily came to agree with John Maynard Keynes that it was suicidal for the victors as well as the vanquished. He has blown hot and cold on the idea of war. Were there to be another world conflict, he might again be found in the camp of the militarists.

He has been widely honored as a scholar. Yet his scholarship would seem to consist of a phenomenal memory and a facility for quoting the classics. While the list of his published works is longer than that of any member of his faculty, none of these works makes any contribution to political or philosophic thought. They are merely compilations of his public ad-

resses—those interminable miasmas of guff.

His conceit is consummate; yet he is today a bitterly disappointed man. In 1926 he had the bad taste to boast that he had had the "offer of every nomination worth having at home and abroad." He forgot for the moment that he has never been able to persuade his fellow Republicans to nominate him for the Presidency, his life's great ambition. He has the bearing of a Roman emperor and he honestly believes that he was born to lead if not to rule.

Yet he has done nothing to justify his preposterous hope that he may one day "stand with those other great names in the English-speaking race who have for 300 or 400 years, been, one after the other, making epoch-marking contributions to the history of free institutions . . ."

The freedom he demands is freedom for the privileged class alone. He is interested in property rights, not human rights. As for prohibition, the perspective of history will show that it was but an incident in our national life.

"The sure mark of the reactionary," Mr. Butler has arrogantly said, "is unwillingness to make use of past experience or to read the lessons of history and apply them to the problems of today. The real reactionary, who is always an egoist, insists that his own feelings, his own desires, his own ambitions, shall take precedence over those of others."

I give you Nicholas Murray Butler, who looks with nostalgia on "the once civilized world"—a reactionary par excellence by his own definition.

JAPAN INVADES LATIN AMERICA

BY CARLETON BEALS

JAPAN is actively endeavoring to gain control of the Latin American market.

The whole weight of the imperial government has been thrown behind this effort. Subsidized propaganda, trade commissions, artists, cultural missions have endeavored not only to popularize Japanese goods but to create sympathy for Japan. Given Latin America's traditional suspicions of the United States, this has not been difficult. Ever since the World War Japanese exports to the Southern countries of this hemisphere have been increasing, and in recent years, despite world depression, the consistent efforts of Japanese firms, backed by the Japanese government, have secured for the empire not merely a larger percentage of the market, but the disposal of goods greater in quantity and value. Drugs, food-stuffs, ammunitions, textiles, glass-ware, pottery, crockery, shoes, tennis slippers, paper, celluloid products, handbags, trunks, cheap jewelry, neckties, shirts, rayon silk, buttons, brushes, toys, art objects—such are some of the numerous products being dumped by Japan at low prices into Latin America.

It has been a spectacular achievement, reminiscent of the efforts of British Prime Minister Canning a century ago, when the former Spanish colonies first became independent, and of the days in our country when Hoover headed the Department of Commerce and made such valiant efforts to hold the market against its being recaptured by Germany and Great Britain.

Japan's success has been due to a number of factors. The country can sell cheap for two reasons, low labor costs and depreciated currency. Japan has consistently refused to adopt the Geneva labor codes. The standard of living of her people is closer to the low standards of most of the Latin Americans than is that of the American workman. Japan has actively attempted to develop this vast cheap market, to help make Indians consumers of civilized goods. Also, Japan has been more adaptable in making goods that appeal to the Latin American, rather than following the American custom of merely attempting to dispose of surplus. Likewise, she has been clever in packing her goods in ways convenient to the buyers and to meet shipment requirements. For instance, the llama in the Andes cannot carry over a hundred pounds; any case of goods weighing more must therefore be repacked. Whereas the average American exporter stubbornly insists on shipping goods in the same kind of container he uses to ship from New York to Atlanta, the Japanese have painstakingly followed local shipping instructions.

Latin American capital, currency, and tariff restrictions have also been adroitly met. Japan, even before the depression and the accentuation of these nationalistic competitive measures, had been negotiating special commercial treaties, and her traders were quick to resort to the barter method so common since the general break-down of international trade relations.