

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE SOVIET IMPACT ON THE WESTERN WORLD, by Edward Hallett Carr. \$1.75. *Macmillan*. In this slender volume, Professor Carr has amply justified Friedrich Hayek's reference to him as one of "the totalitarians in our midst." The author's ostensible purpose is to examine the impression Soviet Communism has made on Western political, economic, social, diplomatic and ideological habits; and his record of this impact is as frightening as it is persuasive. But underlying his thesis are two hidden assumptions which in the end betray Carr's bias: the assumption that not only capitalism but democracy is incompatible with twentieth-century economics; and his quaint notion that the Soviet Union is a genuine workers' state.

COMPLACENT DICTATOR, by Sir Samuel Hoare. \$3.50. *Knopf*. Britain's wartime ambassador to Spain is probably best remembered for his collusion with Pierre Laval in trying to sell Ethiopia down the river, but his record as an appeaser should not diminish the value of this account. Like Carlton Hayes, Sir Samuel was sent to Spain for the sole purpose of keeping Franco out of the war. He succeeded, though, as he sometimes seems on the verge of admitting, there is a question whether Allied diplomacy or Franco's inability to come to terms with Hitler was the main cause for Spanish neutrality. Sir Samuel advocates a constitutional monarchy.

THE STRANGE ALLIANCE, by John R. Deane. \$3.75. *Viking*. As chief of the United States Military Mission to the Soviet Union during the war, General Deane had two years of intensive education in the art of dealing with the Russians. His job was military coordination: he negotiated on repatriation of prisoners of war, on shuttle bombing bases, exchange of intelligence, opening of the second front in France, lend-lease, surrender arrangements, and the Soviets' part in the war against Japan. His experience alone should give his opinions on Soviet-American relations a *respectful hearing*; to this can be added his obvious desire to speak with restraint and bolster his conclusions wherever possible with reference to known facts. The chief obstacle to improvement

of our international situation *vis-à-vis* the USSR, he believes, is the belief of the Soviet leaders that "the war with Germany and Japan was only the first phase in the ultimate struggle between Communism and capitalism." One feels that he would endorse the policy set by Mr. Byrnes as Secretary of State: "Soviet officials are much happier, more amenable, and less suspicious when an adversary drives a hard bargain than when he succumbs easily to Soviet demands."

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

SMALL TOWN, by Granville Hicks. \$3.00. *Macmillan*. This is an informal study of life in a small community not far from New York City. Mr. Hicks presents a friendly portrait of the men and women he meets daily; he is gentle with them even when he comments upon their superstitions, their paucity of "intellectual" interests, and certain cultural lacks. He insists, however, that city folk have much to learn from them in the way of humanity and neighborliness. Altogether, a warm, readable, and highly informative volume.

OUT OF UNIFORM, by Benjamin C. Bowker. \$2.75. *Norton*. Bowker, who was formerly a Lieutenant Colonel in the United States Army, and for a time Chief of Army Orientation, has here tried to show with some statistical evidence just what constitute the assets and liabilities of America's sixteen million veterans. He tells that battle deaths in World War II averaged 4775 a month while in World War I the average was 2658. Contrary to general opinion, moreover, it was not much safer to be an officer than a man in the ranks. Mr. Bowker also gives some interesting statistics on the morals of American servicemen.

HOW TO GET INTO POLITICS, *The Art of Winning Elections*, by Oliver Carlson and Aldrich Blake. *Duell, Sloan and Pearce*. \$2.50. The market for this tiny volume is obviously limited. The number of book purchasers in politics is relatively small, and even those who do find themselves running for office will probably find Machiavelli's *Prince* more adequate to their requirements. However, for those MERCURY readers who are thinking of making the plunge, we can only re-

port that all the instructions are provided, right down to what the precinct worker should do after the polls close on election night (eat a sandwich).

THE STRICKEN LAND, *The Story of Puerto Rico*, by Rexford G. Tugwell. \$4.50. *Doubleday*. This is Mr. Tugwell's lively and provocative report on his governorship of Puerto Rico, together with many personal animadversions on President Roosevelt, the New Deal, a number of Washington political personalities, and the future of democracy. He tells in considerable detail how his efforts to bring the New Deal to poor and neglected Puerto Rico made little headway against the opposition of the sugar interests and the apathy of the Puerto Ricans. He does not endorse independence for the island, but has hopes that within its present framework Puerto Rican government can more and more act as "an instrument of and for the people rather than the élite."

FICTION

THE AERODROME, by Rex Warner. \$2.50. *Lippincott*. More parable than novel, this story (first published in England during the second year of the war) relates how an Air Force establishment, "The Aerodrome," took over a village adjacent to it and proceeded to alter every aspect of the villagers' life. Where the village way had been wasteful, traditional, sentimental, confused and sensual, the Air Force's way was ruthless, aseptic, planned and efficient. The Aerodrome's chief expresses the "airmen's" contempt for a civilization "which, wholly indefensible as it is, it is yet part of our duty to defend. . . . We aim . . . also to transform it." The hero airman, told that he is to be freed from the "bondage of the future" no less than that of the past, concludes finally that "We had abolished inefficiency, hypocrisy, and the fortunes of the irresolute or the remorseful mind; but we had destroyed also the spirit of adventure, inquiry, the sweet and terrifying sympathy of love that can acknowledge mystery, danger, and dependence." The allegory, set forth in a skilled if highly mannered way, has the unreal, abstract atmosphere of a Kafka story.

MY PAST WAS AN EVIL RIVER, by George Millar. \$2.50. *Doubleday*. A disappointing first novel by the author of two first-rate personal-history war books. Whereas *Waiting in the Night* and *Horned Pigeon* were convincing and dramatic accounts of Millar's experiences with the Maquis and the Nazis, *My Past Was an Evil River* comes out as a contrived and flat story of one week in postwar Germany. The scene is the Tyrol; the characters include a de-emotionalized and de-Frenchified Frenchman and some diehard Nazis. The story carries little conviction.

WHAT D'YA KNOW FOR SURE, by Len Zinberg. \$2.50. *Doubleday*. A small-time assistant director in Hollywood falls in love with a star actress suffering from schizophrenia, and tries to help her. In doing so he gives up his job and opportunities. It is not until the star finds him washing dishes for a living that she is finally cured and begins again to believe in the honesty of the human race. After a torrid love affair, they get married, produce a picture that puts them both at the top of the Hollywood heap and then the actress retires to the home. Third-rate as a novel, but what a movie it would make!

GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT, by Laura Z. Hobson. \$2.75. *Simon and Schuster*. Philip Green, a feature writer, is assigned the task of writing a series of articles on anti-Semitism. In order to write an interesting series he pretends to be Jewish and is astonished to find himself reacting like a Jew to the various symptoms of anti-Semitism with which he comes in contact. While the story may be a little too pat, it is simply and honestly told, and reveals considerable insight.

ANTHOLOGIES

THE COLLECTED WRITINGS OF AMBROSE BIERCE, with an introduction by Clifton Fadiman. \$4.00. *Citadel*. This collection of Bierce's writings does not contain any of his political essays or other non-fiction, but it does include the best (and what must be some of the worst) of his fiction. The stories deal mainly in such themes as mutilation, murder, torture and parenticide, and are uniformly gloomy except for occasional flashes of sadistic wit. *The Devil's Dic-*