



Draughts of Old Bourbon

WILLIAM BRADFORD HUIE

A Word About the Poll Fakirs

From now until election day the literate American is going to be badly put upon with prophecy. The radio oracles and global columnists will make all sorts of tours, talking with taxi drivers, bell-men, waitresses, and Pullman porters. The soothsayers will be consulted: the astrologers, the numerologists, the readers of tea leaves, the seers of visions, and the diviners of goose entrails. Each of the weekly magazines will poll some group or other and publish tables and analyses; and the "scientific samplers" will have a new sampling ready for every Sunday edition of the papers.

Each of these prophets will present two paragraphs of "proof" that

his "survey" is the "informed" one. Drew Pearson will claim that his predictions are 88.44% accurate. (Or is it 84.48% or 44.88%: I'm always confusing Pearson's percentages with those of soap, laxatives, and little liver pills.) And Dr. Gallup will be in there trying to extend his syndication, "proving" that his pratfall of '48 was due to a 1.13% error in calculating the "variables" of the 14% vote which he had "reported" as "undecided."

None of this prophecy is likely to do much harm, because surely there aren't many literate Americans left who take it seriously. Two types of it, however, should be recognized and denounced wherever they appear.

1. The prophecy which is made

with an obviously deliberate intent to mislead. Pearson, of course, is the most notorious practitioner of this tactic. His listeners know that he is a fabricating liar and that his predictions are only another weapon in his arsenal of slander. In 1950, for instance, Pearson "predicted" the defeat of Senator Bourke Hickenlooper, of Iowa, and the Senator was reelected by the largest majority in the history of his state. Pearson's "prediction" was no more than a device by which he hoped to aid the campaign against the Senator.

A warning in Pearson's case is unnecessary, but there are several little Pearsons around who try to imitate him. They will be heard "predicting" the defeat of every candidate who doesn't seek their favor.

2. The pretentious prophecy made by some of the "scientific samplers."

There is nothing wrong, boring, illegal, or particularly objectionable about any citizen's undertaking to predict the result of an election. Nor is there anything wrong, boring, illegal, or objectionable about his selling his predictions for all he can get. The making and selling of predictions is a practice at least as old as the pyramids.

However, whenever a group of predictors start claiming that their predictions are "scientific," then the time has come for ordinary, non-scientific predictors to protest that the predictors' code has been vio-

lated. And the time has come for purchasers of predictions to be more alert than usual.

Dr. Gallup and all the "scientific samplers" will sell many dollars worth of predictions in 1952; and these predictions should be read for amusement, for diversion, perhaps for some degree of information. But they should be regarded as no more "authoritative" or "scientific" than the predictions in the astrology columns.

The same news syndicates that hire Dr. Gallup also hire the astrologers. The only difference is that the astrologers are paid a higher rate.

Shall We Kill The Atomic Scapegoats?

The government of the United States, it seems, has at last discovered the foul fiends who gave the atom bomb to Stalin. There are two of them: a Mr. and Mrs. Rosenberg. They have been duly tried and convicted. The Circuit Court of Appeals has confirmed their conviction. And sometime before election day you can bet that Mr. Truman and Mr. Acheson will see to it that the Rosenbergs pay "the extreme penalty of the law."

Once the Rosenbergs have been electrocuted, then the President can stand before the multitude and proclaim: "Yes, it is tragically true that we had among us traitors who delivered our dearest secrets into the

hands of the enemies of freedom. We at first tried not to believe it. We yelled 'red herring!' at the efforts to apprehend these traitors. But, alas, the charges proved true. So what did your government do? We leaped to the challenge. We spared not a horse nor a cent until we had ferreted out these traitors — both of them! — and prosecuted them to the full limit of the law! Now they are dead! Our community has been purged! And we can relax in the knowledge that justice has been done, that the guilty have been punished, and that the innocent have been proved so."

The thoughtful American will be disturbed, not comforted, by this performance. He will be reminded of an old, old drama — a goat stumbling through the streets of a village; villagers shrieking, hurling stones at the goat; medicine men gesturing toward the helpless goat, loading him with all the sins of the community; then the goat being driven over a cliff, carrying with him the sins and leaving behind only cleanliness and godliness.

Here are some of the disturbing elements in the Rosenberg case:

In 1941 President Roosevelt and Mr. Acheson were informed that a Communist cell was operating in Washington for the specific purpose of delivering our secrets to Moscow — and that Alger Hiss was in that cell. The bearers of this information were derided, while Mr. Hiss and the Communists were promoted.

In 1943 Harry Hopkins was placed in control of our atomic effort. While Major General Leslie Groves strove to impose the strictest secrecy, Hopkins kept the Russians informed of our progress and shipped them quantities of "heavy water" for their own experiments. This is a matter of unchallenged record.

From 1943 until 1946, in the Manhattan Project, there were scores of persons in positions of authority who held in contempt all the efforts to keep our secrets "from our great ally, Soviet Russia."

In 1946 Mr. Acheson and David E. Lilienthal drew up a plan and urged this country to deliver its atomic secrets to "international control" — meaning, to make them available to all nations, including Russia.

In 1946 FBI agents overheard a conversation between John Stewart Service, another Acheson lieutenant in the State Department, and two men who have been identified as agents of the Soviet Union. Service, in his own words, was imparting "top secrets" to the Soviet agents. He was arrested by the FBI, then reinstated, and *promoted* by the State Department. It was not until 1951 that Service was finally deprived of his job.

In 1943 officers of our Counter Intelligence overheard one Steve Nelson arranging to deliver secret information on the atomic bomb to the Russian consul in San Francisco.

Our government was so informed. Nelson was observed in the actual delivery of the information; yet he was not arrested, and he is a free man today.

From 1947 to 1949 Mr. Lilienthal, as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, defended every atomic employee who was accused of being a Communist. In 1949, before the United States Senate, he defended the propriety of the granting of fellowships in atomic energy to *known* members of the Communist Party.

In 1946 the Canadian government moved swiftly and effectively against its atomic spies. Our government refused to move in a similar manner, but chose to deny, cover up, and excuse. No objective student can reach any other conclusion but that, from 1943 to 1949, our government had a "soft" or "understanding" attitude toward all persons who tried to make American information available to the Soviet Union.

Can we, therefore, in good conscience in 1952, execute an obscure man and his wife who thought that it was unjust for us to keep secrets from "our noble ally"? Can we, in good conscience, kill the Rosenbergs in the same year that Mr. Hiss walks free to resume his frontal association with his good friend, the Secretary of State?

If the American people want to mete out justice to those responsible for the delivery of our secrets to

Russia, then we should start at the top, not at the bottom. We should demand a commutation for the Rosenbergs, and, on next November 4, begin dealing with the men whose actions and attitudes encouraged the Rosenbergs to treason.

Minute Women To The Rescue

One of the most effective political organizations in 1952 promises to be the Minute Women. It already has chapters in twenty-seven states, and it will be nationwide by the time of the party conventions. About two million women will be enrolled as members.

The stated objectives of the Minute Women are:

- » To fight Communism actively in every form.
- » To demand the removal of supporters of Communism and Socialism from our Federal and State governments, as well as from our educational system.
- » To demand efficiency and economy in all government agencies, with the adoption of the Hoover Commission Report.
- » To try to restore the soundness of our currency.
- » To sustain our belief in states rights.
- » To promote the belief that women can be effective for good in their communities and in their nation.

The national leader of the Minute

Women is Mrs. Suzanne Silvercrux Stevenson, Belgian-born sculptress and lecturer. She has been traveling by both airplane and trailer, and she speaks to large audiences an average of five days a week.

Mrs. Stevenson is the daughter of a chief justice of the Supreme Court of Belgium. She came to the United States during the First War, and has been a citizen since 1922. She is the wife of Colonel E. F. Stevenson, Army Reserve, and their home is a farm near Willimantic, Connecticut.

The Minute Women's plan of organization and attack is somewhat like that of their enemies, the Communists. There are no dues, though members may contribute from one to one hundred dollars. Contributors receive a pin and a regular news letter. There are no elections: the national organization appoints state chairmen, who in turn appoint district chairmen, etc. Members are gathered by the chain-letter method into "clusters."

The group aims frankly at becoming a powerful force to influence elections and legislation. Their device is the post card — thousands of postcards cascading onto the desk of a Congressman.

Other than Mrs. Stevenson, the best known of the Minute Women is Mrs. Hester McCullough, the Connecticut woman who was sued for libel by the entertainers Paul Draper and Larry Adler after she had objected to their proposed appearance

on the grounds that they were Communist sympathizers. Mrs. McCullough is director of the Minute Women's Committee Against Subversive Activities. She precipitated another controversy when she objected to the television appearance of actress Jean Muir, with the result that Miss Muir was dropped from the cast of "The Aldrich Family."

The Minute Women do not expect to take a position on the national elections in 1952, but they expect to support legislative efforts to limit the income tax and to preserve states rights, as well as to combat inflation.

On Whisky and Student Revolt

Two of the most popular articles ever published in THE MERCURY have been our "revolt" articles: *A Call for Revolt on the Campus* and *For a Second Whisky Rebellion*. Because of the demand for them, both these articles are now available in reprint form at the regular prices.

The popularity of these pieces would seem to be due to the spreading realization over the country that the time has come for freedom-loving Americans to have a showdown with their government.

The story of freeman versus government never changes. The men who created the government of the United States were suspicious of their creation. They submitted to the government they created only

after granting it very narrow and specific powers. And they warned their sons to be on guard lest they become enslaved by the government their fathers had created.

For twenty years now the Americans who want more and more government, more and more taxes, more and more community responsibility and less and less individual responsibility — these Americans have been in control of the expanding government. Now, in 1952, we have what may be our last chance to arrest the growth of government. This is a year for revolt, for free men to fight their government. This is the year for young men everywhere to understand that liberty is still the most revolutionary idea on earth — to understand that liberty can be preserved only as long as the spirit of revolt lives in the hearts of men.

The essential conflict in 1952 is the conflict between those Americans who are trying to persuade us that there is something *good* about expanding government — and those Americans who know, as Woodrow Wilson knew, that “the history of

liberty is the history of limitations of governmental power, not the increase of it.”

The time has come for Americans, young and old alike, to fight their government: to impose limitations on tax rates and state debt, to demand a strict accounting, and to oppose any further invasion of private responsibility.

Mr. Buckley Joins The Mercury Staff

MERCURY readers will be interested to learn that with this issue William F. Buckley Jr. joins THE MERCURY staff as an Associate Editor. The 26-year-old author of *God and Man at Yale* will write regularly for the magazine as well as work full-time as an editor. He will also do considerable traveling in order to meet our authors and readers in all parts of the country.

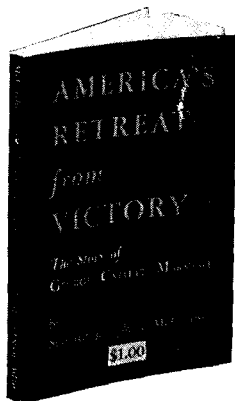
Those who have not yet read his provocative book may obtain it by writing either to THE MERCURY or to Henry Regnery Company, 20 West Jackson Blvd., Chicago 4, Ill. The price is \$3.50.

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