

DUNDERHEADS Over America

THOSE of us who care deeply about America's future often have our black moments of disheartenment when we are stalked by the question, "Why?" Why, we ask ourselves, must stupidity and unreason rule so many well-meaning educated Americans when they enter politics? Why, in specific situations, must they almost invariably choose the wrong course and spurn the right? Why, with all their educational background, must they be such pathetic patsies for the untrue?

The answer, I believe, will light up the baffling question of what is the matter with the United States in this year of our Lord, 1955.

We have had a veritable epidemic of such inverted thinking by American intellectuals in recent political events. We have seen it in last year's obscene hysteria against Senator McCarthy. We have seen it in the academic reaction against the popularly favored Bricker Amendment. We have seen it in the college hue and cry against the Federal security system. We have seen it in the bo-

By
HAROLD LORD
VARNEY



gus cry of "book-burning" raised by the nation's librarians. We have seen it in the dishonest twisting of the "civil liberties" issue by such citadels of the egghead as the Ford Foundation. On such issues the major body of American intellectuals seem to take leave of all objective truth-finding standards. They become a vengeful mob, ready to rack their political adversaries upon the political torture-wheel.

When their pet concepts are affronted, they revert to the ugly code of Ortega y Gasset's "mass-man" which they excoriate in their classrooms.

Touch off a political discussion in almost any cocktail party or kaffeklatsch where intellectuals gather and you will invariably find vehement arguers of Oppenheimer's non-Communism, of Nehru's nobility, of Tito's devotion to the West and of the eternal rightness of Downing Street.

The same men will damn Joe McCarthy, shake their heads at Senator

Knowland ("He will get us into war"), denigrate J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI, and froth at the mention of Douglas MacArthur. There is a predictability about their political likes and dislikes which is almost robot-like.

The tragedy is that most of these men and women are sincere and well-meaning non-Communists, who are firmly persuaded that they are articulating true Americanism. What they are actually doing is parroting a hate chant.

IN MY acquaintance is a scholarly figure — a former university professor — who, for years, has unwittingly served me as an idea-test in reverse. Whenever I am in doubt concerning the logic of my attitudes, I have a bull session with the professor. His reactions have never yet failed me. He is always wrong.

If I find that he accepts my judgments, I quickly reverse them because I know that they are faulty. If I find that he aggressively disagrees with me, I know that I am right and I persist in my course. The professor himself is a transparently sincere individual, who brings to his opinions a great array of scholarship and acquaintance with precedents. And yet there is some quirk in his thinking which, with compulsive force, leads him to an incredible misreading of all his data.

I find this professor and his judgment failings multiplied on a staggeringly wide scale among present-

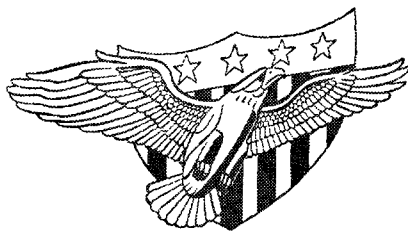
day American intellectuals. He is the prototype of a vast army.

Some of the professor's wrong guesses have been classics. He was for a long time an admirer of Mr. Truman, but he parted with Harry when the piano player precipitated war on North Korea. The North Koreans, the professor said, were not Communists at all — they were Korean patriots. But Syngman Rhee was a crook. "He's the one I'd like to fight," the professor used to say bellicosely.

On China he was wrong on every turn, although he had lived in China and prides himself upon being an Orientalist. Mao Tse-tung, in his book, was the George Washington of China. "Just a democrat in the American model," he used to say while Mao was still fighting for power. But he hated the Kuomintang, with a particular venom for Chiang Kai-shek. "Watch Mao turn against the Russians once he gets in," was his repeated phrase. When Mao attacked us in 1950, the professor had another wiggle. It was all our fault: We should recognize Peking and take it into the United Nations and Mao would play ball with us. Of course, in the professor's book, General MacArthur was a Stygian black figure. "Kick him out of Tokyo and things will again go our way," he used to say before the Truman-Marshall duo pleased him by firing the General.

He was for "one worldism" and carried a card in Clarence Streit's

Atlantic Union Committee. But we mustn't admit Spain to the Atlantic Union he warned, because Spain can't be trusted. But when Tito's admission to NATO was proposed, he was for it. "We can count on Tito," he assured me heartily.



HE PULLS out all stops in his hate of Joe McCarthy and he thinks that if Senator Flanders were a younger man, he would be of Presidential stature. "But I don't like that fellow Nixon," he says. At times, the professor hints darkly that he isn't quite sure that Alger Hiss was really guilty. "That Chambers was a psychopathic liar," he likes to intone.

He is strong for give-aways and he thinks that if we would just hand out a few hundred million dollars of American benefactions to India, Indonesia and Pakistan, together with a small army of American Point Four experts, they would reward us with unlimited markets. But he would stop giving money to Japan. Red China won't like it.

He thinks England has a better understanding of world realities than we and he wouldn't oppose Downing Street on any important policy. "What would we do without allies?" he asks plaintively. His deepest scorn is reserved for such newspapers as the Chicago *Tribune* and the Hearst chain, which sometimes question the value of our British alliance. They are "ignorant rags" in his book.

He doesn't know what to think

about Eisenhower. He feels that Ike is on the right track since he retreated from the 1952 platform pledge of "liberation." But his man, if he could get him into the White House, is Estes Kefauver. He says he will string along again with Stevenson, if Adlai runs in 1956.

He doesn't like Catholics. "Bishop Oxnham is my idea of a useful churchman," he likes to say. But he reads *Commonweal*, along with the *Nation* and the *Reporter*. "They are making democracy live," he Drew Pearsonizes.

All in all, a pretty muddle-headed figure is the professor. A constipation of ideas and insights, and a diarrhea of enthusiasms, is the way a mutual friend describes him.

But the pity is that the professor is not a rare phenomenon in current America. His duplicate is found conspicuously in every American community and social group. He sits on the faculties of our colleges and high schools, and he is certain to be found in our teacher-training institutes. He is in the Ivy League colleges and universities as well as among the bushers. He is in the pulpit of the local fashionable church,

or he is the top layman in church conferences and convocations.

He writes books which find a ready publisher among the top three. He elucidates on the professional lecture platform and he has been on the Chicago Round Table and the Town Meeting of the Air. He has been invited to one of the Eisenhower stag dinners, where he has rubbed shoulders with Tex McCrary, Clifford P. Case and toyman Louis Marx. He has received an advisory committeehip from the Ford Foundation.

He is the 1955 reincarnation of Henry L. Mencken's *Homo Boobius* of the forgotten 'twenties.

The multiple presence of this hopeless, educated fool in our American electorate is the dead hand which stops our government from making effective and rational decisions both in the foreign and domestic theaters.

Because he is articulate, egregiously active in his community, and quick to threaten reprisals, politicians don't like to tangle with him. It is safer to appease him and win his good will.

And so he implants his addled ideas and vetoes upon all the higher policy decisions of Washington. To the average timorous legislator, the professor *is* American public opinion, which must always be placated by a watering-down of every forthright legislative proposal.

The appalling extent to which the misconceptions and crotchets of

the eggheads have been allowed to palsy our top government policies may be seen in some recent Washington decisions.

ONE OF THE most glaring is the Washington fright over the proposal of preventive war. Every Pentagon planner who is worth his salary knows that, under atomic war conditions, the nation which refuses to strike first is doomed to annihilation.

Such Soviet writers as Marshal Alexander M. Vasilevsky, Deputy Defense Minister, Marshal Pavel A. Rotmistrov and Lieutenant General S. S. Shatilov have frankly told us what we must expect in recent articles in the Russian military journals, in which they have stressed "surprise" as the factor of victory in the next war.

And yet, knowing these facts, Washington permits the very survival of the nation to be placed in jeopardy by a categorical declaration to the world that we will never start a preventive war. It does this because it fears the fury of the egghead, who has declared that America is too moral ever to start a war.

It is extremely doubtful if an honest cross-section of the American population would be horrified by a preventive war, if it realized that the alternative was the threatened destruction of the nation. And yet the United States cannot even contemplate such a course because ac-

tivists like the professor have the *idée fixe* that America doesn't do such things.

When Secretary of the Army Matthews and General Anderson spoke up honestly and declared that a preventive war was imperative, both were quickly hustled out of authority.

AGAIN the educated dunderheads exhibited their Washington power on the issue of the Federal security system. On this issue the country as a whole has been consistently sound, but the eggheads, with their civil liberties mental block, have shrilly terrorized the administration and the Congress into placating them.

That the eggheads do not speak for the majority on the security question was shown as late as January 1954, when the Gallup Poll revealed 50 percent of its samples favoring the policies of Senator McCarthy. Then the dunderheads went to work on McCarthy.

When they were through, the offensive against Communists in the government had ground to a standstill. Everything which has happened since has been in the direction of a weakening and discrediting of the whole Federal security apparatus. A relatively small minority of eggheads was thus able to bring a halt to the whole anti-Communist drive which had gripped Washington since 1948.

A third glaring instance of ir-

responsible egghead power was the panicky retreat which the muddled ones forced upon the Eisenhower Administration in its Formosa policy. Eisenhower and Dulles began their rule with the proclaimed policy of "unleashing" Chiang Kai-shek. It was assumed generally that this was to be our supreme bargaining point, to use to secure an American peace in the uncompleted Korea negotiations.

A howl of protest went up from the eggheads at this vindication of the MacArthur policy, and its echoes alarmed the White House. Chiang's putative mainland offensive was not used as a threat at Panmunjom and proud America retired beaten from the Korean war. And in the face of the judgment of Admiral Radford, Assistant Secretary Robertson and General Clark, Chiang and his American-equipped armies were re-leashed and put into cold storage. Red China was thus guaranteed in her once shaky mainland position. The fruit of this American Hamletism came quickly in Red China's new expansion into Indo-China.

This was another case where American interest lost humiliatingly, but where the eggheads scored a triumph for their brain-trusts.

Where, it will be asked, do the eggheads get the queasy ideas which they endeavor to foist upon America?

Unfortunately, the greater part of the apparatus of thought forma-

tion in the United States is in their hands, or in the hands of those, like Murrow, who pander to them. The popular magazines of large circulation, with a few honored exceptions, are staffed by editors and writers whose minds are encased in so-called "liberal" claptrap. The universities (as William F. Buckley, Jr., so impressively showed in the case of Yale) are breeding grounds of liberal socialism. The foundations, with their billions, offer a golden reward to professors and writers who will walk in the egghead goosetstep. Radio, television and the movies play safe in controversial programs by making certain that they please the eggheads.

The young man in 1955 America who wants to get ahead in the intellectual world finds a hundred aids available from "Liberal" agencies to one from the camp of realism. The foolish ideas which are in the

minds of our egghead fraternity arise from the miasmic swamp of falsehood which engirdles our whole intellectual life.

CAN WE STOP the dunderheads, in their career of folly? Sometimes it seems to be the labor of a Sisyphus merely to hold our own against them. Armies of good men have been smeared, worn out, discredited and thrown upon the scrap pile in trying to halt them. And yet the effort must go on, in increasing tempo, if America is to be safe in the decade which lies before us.

The supreme struggle of the American people is not the struggle against Russia, but the struggle against the fools in our own midst who would give away all our pawns before hostilities commence. The dunderhead grip upon Washington must be relaxed. Otherwise our future will be written in tragedy.



IV—Must or Wust?

☞ California Assembly's Judiciary Committee took note of an old law that stated the necessities of life include three cows, four horses, bed, bedding, washing machine, stove, furniture, shotgun and rifle and decided to add these words: "one television receiver."

☞ The Boston City Council OK'd an order to have the city publicized by television. But the Council exempted its own meetings on the grounds that it would be "a cruel and unwarranted punishment to inflict on the public."



Firemaster

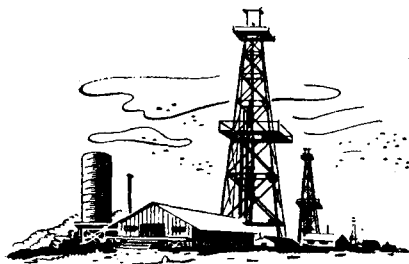
OF THE OIL FIELDS

A TERRIBLE FIRE in the natural gas field near the town of Bordolano in Northern Italy, some twelve miles from the famed city of Cremona, was lighting up the countryside not long ago. In the daytime it sent billowing clouds into the blue sky, representing a loss of about \$50,000 every 24 hours. It was an economic tragedy to a nation which, with American aid, was still trying to rebuild its war-devastated industries.

But it was a gay carnival to the thousands of people who came by bus, on bicycles or afoot to gape at the soaring column of flame shooting from the earth to a height of 250 feet and fed by a force equal to three thousand pounds to the square inch. The roaring fire could be seen in Brescia, Piacenza and Mantova thirty miles away. The inhabitants of these towns came to see the sight, and then remained to enjoy the traveling circus that an enterprising operator had brought to the place for some easy money.

This was no occasion for rejoicing, however, by the Italian government, which saw in the waste of gas

BY ALLEN ROBERTS



an irreplaceable power and fuel loss for Italian industry. Every available firefighter in Europe experienced in the ways of oil and natural gas had been called in. All had failed and the fire seemed to have every intention of going on forever — or until the gas reserves of the field were depleted. In desperation, an appeal went to the Mutual Security office in Rome. From there it was relayed to Washington and, as fast as transcontinental communications could connect with the telephone instrument in a palatial home on West Los Angeles' Bel Air Road, the urgent call reached the man who holds the uncontested title of America's No. 1 Oil-Fire Fighter.