

Record of Response

HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE have written to us about our October 27th issue, Preview of the War We Do Not Want, and all the millions who read it surely had something to say about it. It was the kind of magazine that called for an opinion and, judging from the press and radio reaction and our mail, most of the opinion was enthusiastically favorable. One of the few people who didn't have a positive comment was the man who asked us, "What do you think you accomplished by the issue, anyway?" We answered him more or less as follows:

We think, first of all, that Collier's accomplished its stated purpose "to look squarely at a future which may contain the most terrible calamity that has ever befallen the human race." We gave the considered judgment of a panel of distinguished writers as to what the American people would have to prepare for and endure, and what they might hope for, in the event of war. We did not say or suggest or think that a third world war was inevitable—quite explicitly the contrary. We did try to stir up the thinking of people who speak casually or despairingly or even eagerly of such a war without much regard for the assets and liabilities on each side, or

much idea of how and where that war would probably be fought.

We know that we succeeded in stimulating thought and discussion because of the requests that came from all over the country for dozens, hundreds and even thousands of extra copies. Here are just a few who sent orders: an Air Force unit in Georgia, the civil defense organization of Monroe, Michigan, two New York City police precinct station houses, the Kelly-Springfield Tire Company, Rollins College at Winter Park, Florida, the civil defense organization at Bamberger's department store in Newark, New Jersey, the employees' union of Wanamaker's department store in New York, and public schools in New Jersey and New York State. There were many others, and we are sorry that there were not enough copies to fill all the requests. However, we are glad to say that the editorial contents of the issue will shortly be published in book form by Simon & Schuster.

Besides giving the American people a thoughtful appraisal of the chances of war and of victory, the Preview of the War We Do Not Want was also, as we stated in the issue, "an appeal to the reason of Joseph Stalin and the men around

him." In fact the Preview was written quite definitely with the Kremlin in mind.

We tried to tell Stalin & Company, if they don't know it already, that they cannot win a world war if they are so rash as to start it. We tried to show them the historical fact that tyrannies produce the seeds of their own destruction, and that their eventual downfall comes as much from within as from without. We tried to convince them that peace is possible whenever they abandon their policy of actual and potential aggression.

We don't know, of course, what impression the October 27th Collier's made on the Kremlin's collective mind. All we know is the Kremlin's official reaction, as conveyed by its propagandists. And we may assume that, as usual, Soviet comment is dictated by convenience rather than by conviction.

One thing at least is certain—the Soviet big shots did read our magazine. Mr. Vishinsky attacked us in the best Vishinsky tradition. Radio Moscow fumed and ranted. So did the New York Daily Worker, which called the issue a "nightmare Collier's blueprint for war," a "premeditated crime" by our "wicked editors," and much more in the same vein. Other Communist publications in this country parroted the line. This was to be expected, and we may dismiss it for what it's worth. We may also dismiss the overhasty criticism of a few of our subscribers who wrote us that they took one look at the magazine and then threw it in the fire without reading it.

But there are also people who did read it and afterward wrote and spoke to us in fear or in anger. Some unwittingly followed the Communist line with the careless charge that, by admitting the possibility of a third world war, we were also admitting its inevitability, if not actually trying to foment it. Others thought that the issue would damage Soviet-American relations dangerously, and even provoke Stalin into starting this unwanted war.

A complete, careful and honest reading of the Preview will, we believe, refute the first charge. As for the second, perhaps we can offer some reassurance with a question or two. Was Stalin provoked by the press or, for that matter, by the governments of the Baltic republics, of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Albania or Bulgaria into seizing those countries and turning them into Communist puppet states? Did the press or government of the Republic of Korea provoke Stalin into launching the Soviet-directed invasion?

The answer, we believe, is obvious: Stalin has a timetable. He moves when he is ready and the time seems ripe. He cannot be hurried. But he can be detained. And, if peace is to be a reality, he must also be deterred. To detain and to deter is the purpose of the United Nations action in Korea, of the French and British action in Indochina and Malaya, of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and other defensive alliances among the free nations. We hope that Collier's issue of October 27th helped to advance the achievement of that purpose. For, to return to our friend's question in the first paragraph, that is what we set out to accomplish.

Add Russian Inventions

Polish official deposed by Moscow for complaining about "heavy volume of needless paper work."—News Item.

Maybe Russia invented Red tape, too.

Collier's for December 15, 1951

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So give the grand old-fashioned brand That they themselves would choose—



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Blended whiskey. 86 Proof. 70% Grain Neutral Spirits. Hiram Walker & Sons Inc., Peoria, Ill.

