

**We Need Those Lie Detectors In Washington More Than in Saigon****The Most Hopeful News of the Week: LBJ (and Russell) on Civil Rights**

The most encouraging news of the week was President Johnson's forthright endorsement at press conference of the civil rights bill as passed by the House and the defeatist tone of Senator Russell's appearance on CBS "Face The Nation" next day. Russell's admission that Johnson can nevertheless carry Georgia and his complaint that "brain-washing" has brought about increased support for civil rights in his State indicate that while the white supremacist Old Guard may not surrender it knows itself defeated.

The President's press conference, the first of its kind in his career as a political leader, went off well and should cure him of his nervousness about facing the press. His English was good (we were guilty of unfairness and intellectual snobbery a few weeks back in a slighting smart-aleck reference to his prose style). His conciliatory remarks about Panama, his tamping down of alarmist speculation about Vietnam and his remarks about world peace were encouraging.

**Less Hopeful Indicators**

One could breathe more easily, however, if it were not for less hopeful indicators behind the scenes. It was the White House itself which stimulated press reports that an extension of the war to North Vietnam was under contemplation. Johnson's hand-picked coordinator for Latin affairs, Tom Mann, in private speaks a very different language from that which the President used at press conference about Panama. Mann expresses "tough guy" views more suitable to the era of "dollar diplomacy" than to contemporary Latin America. He is arrogant and simple-minded—the kind of American diplomat who feeds stereotypes about Yanqui Imperialism. So will Johnson if he lets the Commerce Department go through with the plan to interfere with lard shipments to Cuba. We have made a big show of humanitarianism in exempting food and medicine hitherto from our embargo.

At his press conference, as in almost every speech he has made, Mr. Johnson emphasized the awful power a President now has to "destroy 100 million people in a matter of minutes" and added "our opponents can do likewise." He said simply, "I don't think the people of the world want that to happen and I think we are going to do everything that we can to avoid its happening." \* But a recognition of the brink on which mankind stands requires more than caution in our

\* It is indicative that it was a Polish reporter, the able Zygmunt Broniarek of Trybuna Ludu who elicited this statement from the President and that the U.S. press paid so little attention to the answer.

**The Phantoms That Bedevil Peace**

"New Communist advances in Laos that brought a strong U.S. protest on Friday, were touched on only briefly in the news conference. . . . Informed sources, however, said nothing very encouraging about Laos came out of talks held in Moscow Friday between Ambassador Kohler and Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko."

—Washington Post Mar. 1 on Johnson press conference

"Vietiane, Laos, Feb. 29 — A neutralist military spokesman said today that a neutralist reconnaissance company dispatched to Phou Khe Mt. found no trace of reported units of Pathet Lao or North Viet Minh. . . . It was on the basis of these reports that the U.S. charged on Friday that the Communists had committed a 'flagrant' violation of Laotian neutrality."

—Same paper, same day, same page

"A right-wing military spokesman said Thursday . . . that six North Vietnamese battalions had taken part in the assault, though most military observers here were skeptical of the report. . . . Neutralist officers have been critical lately of what they consider highly exaggerated right wing reports of North Vietnamese participation in Laotian fighting. They have also indicated a belief that the right wing troops had fled their positions at Phou Khe before any infantry assault had been launched."

—New York Times from Vietiane, same day.

bipolar relations with Moscow. It also requires a new flexibility and a new magnanimity in areas where we continue to impose suffering on native populations (as in Vietnam and Cuba in frustrated stubbornness).

Almost as an afterthought, in his press conference of February 27, Secretary of State Rusk let slip the truth about Vietnam when he said "no miracle in the North is going to suddenly transform or eliminate the problem in South Vietnam." But if the war in South Vietnam is simply a case of aggression from the North, an effort to impose Communism on a helpless people "struggling for its freedom" (our official mythology), then of course a miraculous shift in the North *would* solve the problem. Rusk's remark implies that the problem is local, deep-seated and not to be solved from outside. This contradicts all that he and McNamara and the White House have been saying about the war for three years. There are reports from Saigon that we are going to use lie detectors on the prisoners we capture there. A pity we cannot use those lie detectors on our own top officials at home. Do they really believe what they continue to tell us?

**The Senate's Clearest Voice for Common Sense in Vietnam**

"It is apparently France's purpose to work for a diplomatic rather than a military solution to the problems of the peninsula once known as Indochina . . . we should not spurn the participation. France has advantages here we do not have. Language, culture, and capital are hers. She could make good use of these advantages. . . . Our policy should be flexible enough to allow, even to encourage such exploration.

"Our policies need reevaluation, and central to this reevaluation is the defusing of Red China as a domestic policy

issue. We must be able to discuss Red China as we discuss other nations, Communist or free.

"France is now attempting to draw the Chinese Communists to something closer to normal diplomatic relations. If this serves to better the exchange of information on attitudes and policy, then this will be to the benefit of all. . . . If we are to have anything like a peaceful resolution of southeast Asia, China must be party to the resolution."

—Bartlett (D. Alaska) in the Senate, Feb. 19.

## Apparently Some British Officials Feared Too Many Jews Might Be Saved

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other countries by flooding them with alien immigrants." Milton Friedman of *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, the only Washington correspondent who paid attention to these documents, commented "It would appear the concern existed 20 years ago in some high places that too many Jews might escape from Hitler and burden the democracies with their presence."

### Neither Jewish Gospel Helped

His Majesty's Government in the same memorandum said it was ready to take 4500 Jewish children and 300 women from Bulgaria but could not accept adult males from enemy occupied countries in Palestine owing to "the acute security problem" and the White Paper of 1939, which severely restricted Jewish immigration to the Holy Land lest this antagonize the Arabs. The British were not alone in this kind of thinking. The same volume at p. 296 contains a memorandum from the U.S. Chiefs of Staff objecting to a plan to move 4500 refugees from Spain to camps in North Africa lest this "cause resentment on the part of the Arab population." From a Jewish point of view, it was not the Pope alone who failed the test of conscience. Neither the Gospel of Jesus nor the Gospel of Marx prevented their highest respective spokesmen from making pacts with Hitler. In all the great capitals, political expedience came before humanity. The whole bitter story still feeds Jewish nationalism. When our people were thrown to the furnaces, few really cared.

It helps to heal our hearts that a young German should have written "The Deputy." It is also a good sign that the play should have aroused such animosity—like a painful memory dragged unwillingly from the subconscious of a whole generation. The protest and the shame indicate that under the hypocrisy and the cant there lives on a concern for human and moral values. The crematoriums should not be forgotten. That one set of human beings could do this to another set condemns our whole species. There are savages within us against whom we must be on guard. The excuses of race and statecraft that are used to justify murder, and silence about it, now threaten the entire human race with a "final

### This Alone Will Posterity Remember

"It could harshly be said: It was not the highest duty of the Pope to rescue Jews. The Pope can't save everybody. But it was his duty to keep Christendom in a literal sense from going to the devil: that in the middle of his West, Christians should do Satan's work, with which not only Germany but all Christendom will be forever stained. Posterity will over and over again look at this Pope and wonder about his silence. . . . Just as one can already see that of the whole history of Hitler and the Second World War, only two words will remain in the memory of mankind—Auschwitz and Hiroshima—so one also feels that of Pius XII there will survive only the memory of his silence."

—Sebastian Haffner, writing of The Deputy in the German illustrated weekly, Stern, April 7, 1963, quoted at p. 235 of *Summa Iniuria oder Durfte der Papst Schweigen?* (Rowohlt) a collection of German articles about Hochhuth's play.

solution."

For the play as presented in New York, Herman Shumlin deserves a high mark for courage, a lesser one for artistry. His version is an oversimplified and sometimes vulgarized shadow of the original. Gerstein, Jacobson and Fontana are all debased from Hochhuth's original conception. In the original, the SS man, Gerstein, who tried to help the Jews, was not a hysteric. Jacobson, the Jew hiding out in his apartment, was not the vulgar creature in Jerome Rothenberg's adaptation. Fontana, the young Jesuit who goes to Auschwitz in protest, is also diminished in the New York version. But Emlin Williams is magnificent as the Pope. Severely shortened, the play as produced also focuses too narrowly on the moral responsibility of the Pope while Hochhuth's original brings the German people into the full orbit of guilt. But to see the play is still an experience we recommend as a moral and political duty, though the play in book form (excellently translated by Richard and Clara Winston for Grove Press) is essential to grasp the author's full design and memorable intention. It is Hochhuth's achievement so painfully to have twisted the conscience of the Church and the world.

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