

THROUGH THE FOG

An Editorial by JOHN STUART

MARCH 31 has come and gone and Greece seems to be in the same place. I think that must be a terrible blow to Mr. Truman who gave voice to a belief that if by the close of March the United States failed to take a first mortgage on Greece the country would sink and forever disappear into the Mediterranean silt. What a shame that nature is so disrespectful of the President and what a blessing that we as a people have had time to observe how badly we are led.

The White House tried to blitz the country, tried to throw it into panic and fury. It tried to say that night was day. It built its case on a structure of lies and cynicism. Clear now is the fact that an atmosphere of hysteria had been carefully contrived to make of the Greco-Turkish affair the prelude to larger adventures. Insolence is the only word to describe the conduct of men who have such disrespect for the common sense of ordinary people.

We may be sure that this step-by-step program of American imperialism will be accompanied by new discoveries of a "foreign menace" without an iota of proof. Anyone who watches Washington carefully can already see the new furies to be released from the State Department cave of winds in preparation to "protect" Korea, or Singapore, or France from imaginary monsters. This is the technique of slow aggression.

But it is far from successful. Its users had to by-pass the United Nations for the sole reason that the UN is designed to resist such techniques and purposes. And we have witnessed in the last three weeks the amazing but quite understandable phenomenon of millions upon millions of Americans protecting the UN against their own government. This is but one example of the yawning chasm between the Truman-Vandenberg Doctrine and the American people. Even the staid Walter Lippmann, who applauded Mr. Truman's message of March 12, who cheered and stomped for it up and down his columns, was compelled to acknowledge two weeks later the spectacle of a powerful executive "called into account by its own people."

So widespread has become this exposure of administration hypocrisy that Sen. Vandenberg, with the presidential bug buzzing in his ears, was forced to attach riders to the Senate bill. But it is no more palatable with these qualifications than it was without them. They serve only to underscore how the UN was tramped upon. First there was the mad rush to push the bill through because without American money Greece would evaporate by March 31. Therefore the UN had to be by-passed because recourse to it would make for delay. Now apparently Vandenberg gives the Security Council or the General Assembly the "right" to stop American action in Greece and Turkey. Thus the emergency argument never had any foundation and it is as plain as the noses on our faces that such an emergency never existed but was merely cooked up in the feverish minds of State and War Department officials.

The truth is that the Vandenberg rider will salve no honest man's conscience. It is sham to submit to UN an accomplished fact and to say to it you can vote it down provided you follow the voting procedures dictated by the American delegate and provided you are prepared to carry

on the program yourselves. Vandenberg knew full well in advance that the procedure and the conditions he outlined could never be accepted without undermining the Security Council's unanimity principle. But in 1948 Vandenberg can pose as the man who disagreed with Truman's ignoring of the UN—the hero who fought for it at the very moment that he made sure that the UN would in no way interfere with America's imperialist adventures. Senator Taft plays a similar game by expressing concern over "aid" to Greece and Turkey, but feels that not to support the measure would hurt White House prestige. When Mr. Roosevelt was alive and in the presidency Taft's concern for his prestige showed itself by repeated attacks on the Roosevelt foreign policy. Such are the cheap, immoral politics of men in the top ranks of the two parties.

THIS whole battle has revealed cracks and fissures in the American ruling class. To be sure personal political ambitions are factors making for dissidence, but they are not decisive. Looming largest in causing the differences is the opposition from below to a program of aggrandizement abroad while prices and the cost of living skyrocket here. Too many people find it difficult to see how policing the world adds to their pay envelopes. They cannot see how helping Greek and Turkish fascists brings a greater measure of economic democracy into their own land. Running hand in hand with this strong feeling at home is the sentiment abroad against American intervention. Paris sees large demonstrations against the Truman foreign policy; British trade unions and cooperatives pass resolutions against it; Wallace's talks are widely acclaimed. Throughout the world there is anxiety over what the American colossus is doing. And all this puts a restraining leash on the country's rulers.

The real differences in the ruling class arise also over differences in economic interests and outlooks—over opinions as to where and how the most can be made at the least cost. Some among those who control economic power say let Europe and Asia rot into oblivion. It is here at home and in a fenced-in Hemisphere where they can grab the most. Others, and they are the preponderant group, feel themselves strong enough to plant claims over the entire globe while using the "Communist menace" as a screen behind which to operate. Both are violently anti-democratic and both stand united in opposition to that much weaker group which believes it can obtain its share of markets and profits by friendly collaboration with other powers, by keeping frictions to a minimum. Thus the varying dissension in the Congressional debate over Greece and Turkey.

I do not say that these differences can now be used to overwhelm the Truman-Vandenberg Doctrine. But they do provide areas of maneuver to weaken that doctrine, dilute its worst features. As time goes by the fissures and cracks will inevitably widen, providing additional opportunities for the millions who place faith in the United Nations to keep the peace and not in American unilateral action that paves the way to war. The people's job is to assert and use its own great strength and not miss any chance to make it decisive.

LITTLE STEEL HATCHETMAN

Washington.

WHEN Col. John T. Taylor, \$12,000-a-year lobbyist for the American Legion, declared so feelingly, "We not only love them but we congratulate the members of this committee for their splendid work. If you have a job to do give it to us, to our 16,000 posts," most of the Un-American Committee members were willing to let it go at that.

But not Rep. Richard B. Vail. When it came time for him to ask questions of the witness at a recent committee hearing, he got down to brass tacks. Rep. Vail, the owner of a steel mill in South Chicago, is a practical man. His voice brisk, resonant, his manner engaging, he explained he'd been a member of the Legion for twenty-five years and praised it as an "unofficial arm of this committee." But then he came directly to the point. "I have received a communication

**Un-American committeeman
Vail is an open-shop boss
who makes no bones about it.**

By VIRGINIA GARDNER

from the Communist Party of the Tenth Ward. Can I assume that a Legion post of that community is maintaining some sort of surveillance over that organization?" It should be so, was the answer, but in the face of more questioning by Rep. Vail, Col. Taylor finally broke down and made what he called a "confession"—that the Legion's concentration on Communists had "relaxed during the war effort in the interests of fighting the war."

Later, in his office, during a lull in the committee hearings on the Rankin and Sheppard bills, as Rep. Vail was telling me about why he went into politics, I happened to remark—innocently enough—that I supposed the American Legion had supported him. Rep. Vail, a rather hard-looking number when seen at close quarters in his office in the glare of strong daylight, gave a short but somewhat bitter laugh.

The day's testimony, he said, "didn't tell the half of it." He appeared torn between wanting to unburden himself and wanting to maintain the *esprit de corps*, the discreet solidarity, which labor-hating industrialists preserve with their auxiliaries like the American Legion brass.

"The fact is that there are some Legion posts in my district like the Szymanski post which didn't support me," he said. "As the owner of a mill

They are defending you

Washington.

NOT enough support was given by progressives and liberals to that courageous group of anti-fascists who defied the Un-American Committee's authority more than a year ago. Now they have been indicted by a Federal Grand Jury and face trial—the seventeen leaders of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee, including its national chairman Dr. Edward K. Barsky, and Howard Fast. And, in separate cases, indictments were returned against George Marshall, who was chairman of the former National Federation for Constitutional Liberties, and Richard Morford, director of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship. Their position was that the Un-American Committee had been given literature and publications of the organizations they represented and had not proved, because it could not prove, that they were subversive; and that it had made un-Constitutional demands when it insisted on their books, records and membership lists.

In a full-page advertisement in the *Washington Post* and various other newspapers one year ago, the Citizens United to Abolish the Wood-Rankin Committee declared, of the twenty-one Americans who then had been cited by the committee: "In the finest tradition of American democracy and personal liberty, these twenty-one men and women have become a human barrier against the creeping paralysis that would throttle all American freedoms. These men and women are risking

jail sentences and heavy fines in order to uphold the liberties guaranteed by the Constitution to the American people. They are defending *your* right to free speech, free press and free petitioning of Congress."

Rep. J. Parnell Thomas' reply was to conduct, as a subcommittee, a secret hearing in New York at which the head of the advertising agency placing the ad and a *New York Times* executive were summoned for a grilling. This inspired the conservative trade journal, *Editor & Publisher*, to editorialize, in part: "If this committee has been empowered by Congress to investigate 'un-American activities,' that is one thing. Let them do it. But since when has the expression of opinion in peacetime been 'un-American' in this country?" Such an investigation, it said, "amounts to intimidation" and "is an attempt to control thought."

The men and women now facing trial are but the liberal vanguard of the entire labor and progressive movement which the committee would mow under if it had its way. Together with the committee's attack on the legality of the Communist Party it is only a prelude to the broader fight against the labor movement which is scheduled to open up soon on the Senate floor with debate over the Taft omnibus bill. Everyone who is going to get into this fight better hurry up and do so—time is growing short.

V. G.