

# THE REPORTER'S NOTES

## Hydrogen and Hot Air

The chilling news from Moscow about Malenkov and the hydrogen bomb he says he has come too soon after the end of Congress's unimpressive labors to be good for our morale. The United States government will have to do much, much better if it is to frustrate the implacable hostility of the Kremlin.

On foreign affairs, Congress plodded reluctantly along in established paths—the Truman-Eisenhower foreign policy. In a world desperate for new ideas, Congress mostly clung to the old ones, reduced in scope by a few billion dollars.

The courage that produced a Korean armistice and sent food to Berlin didn't need to be ratified by Congress. On Capitol Hill, the most heartening action was a negative one: the decision of the Senate leadership to elbow the Bricker Amendment off the legislative calendar.

To counter the fusion bomb that the Russians may or may not have, the free world desperately needs the fusion of common purposes and collective action that it definitely does not have. Instead it watches successive blows of the Congressional economy ax, and is left to ponder the effect of reduced air force appropriations, reduced foreign aid, reduced funds for atomic energy, and the emasculation of laws intended to lower American barriers to foreign goods and peoples.

The unkindest thing about this first session of the Eighty-third Congress has been said by the Administration's closest friends: Ike got nearly everything he asked for. The other side of that coin is "nothing ventured, nothing gained."

We have mentioned the root of the trouble several times during

these months: "Whenever he shows his mettle as the leader of the free world," we said of the President on May 12, "he is bound to strike at the unity of his party. The President must choose: He cannot live up to the task he has assigned himself [in his April 16 foreign-policy speech] and at the same time keep the Republican Party united." And again: "Only through a coalition of responsible Republicans and Democrats has the President any chance of leading the country."

Mr. Eisenhower can have this coalition for the asking. The *Congressional Quarterly* figured that the President would have lost in the Senate fifteen out of eighteen "clear issues" if he hadn't had Democratic help. In the House, the same was true of eight out of thirteen victories. And of the five House votes where he did not need the Democrats, four were noncontroversial matters of organization and the fifth was the proposal to pack the Tariff Commission with a seventh member, which was an Eisenhower proposal only in the sense that the President had once again agreed to something of which he thoroughly disapproved.

What prevents the President from governing openly as the head of a stable coalition is the political black-mail practiced by the Republican group (buttressed by a few Democrats such as McCarran) that even the *New York Times* has taken to calling the "extreme right wing." In the luminous afterglow of its votes and words in the *Congressional Record*, this wing emerges as the not-very-loyal Opposition. Its members will remain powerful only as long as the President persists in treating them according to their party labels instead of their voting records. After Malenkov's August 8 speech, the future is too appallingly risky to be trusted to any party caucus.

## Unhappy Secretary

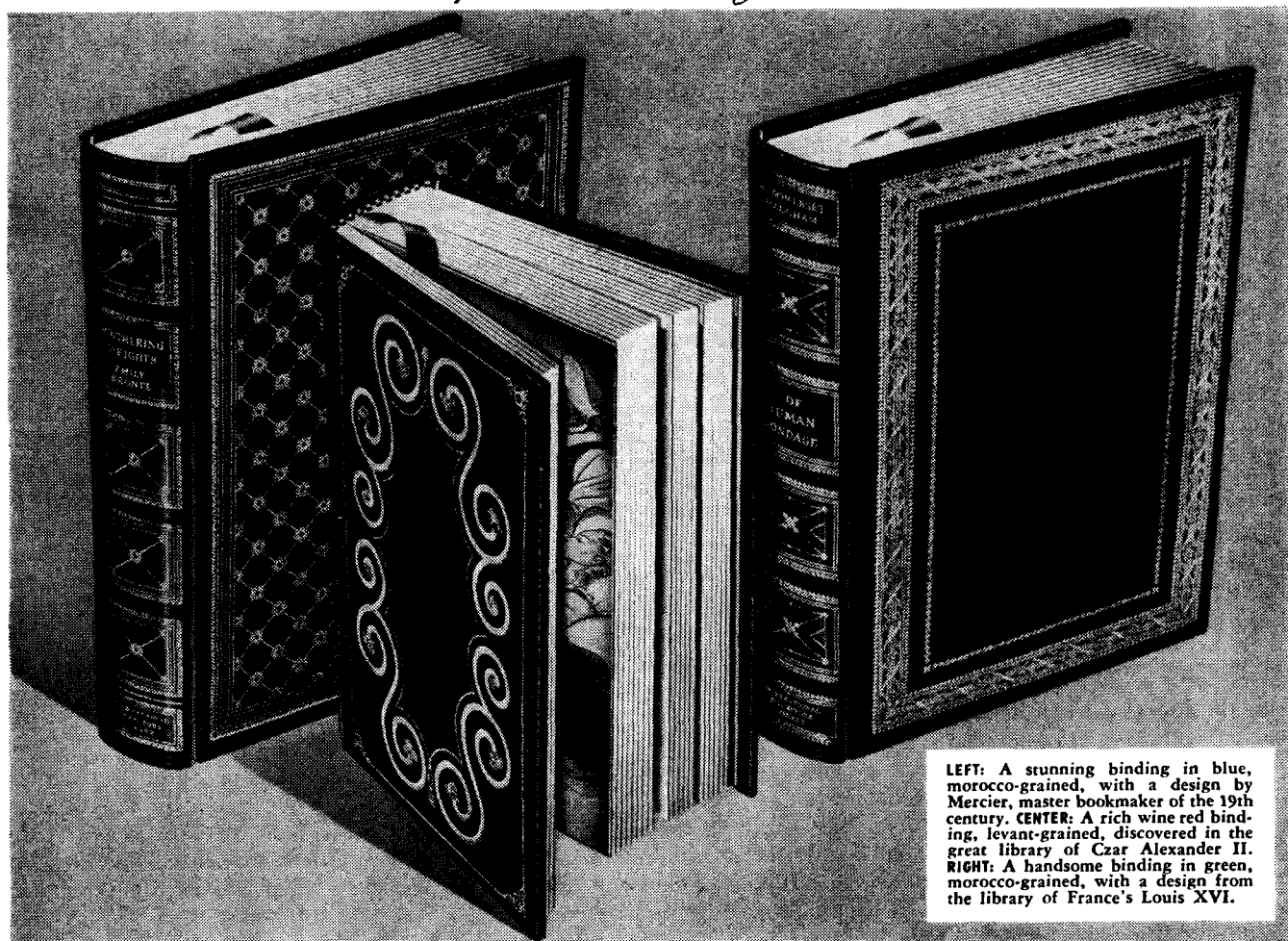
When Andrew Mellon was Secretary of the Treasury he was a man without worries—except, one recalls, about his income tax. His job did not worry him at all. When the government wanted money there was money for the asking. All he had to do was to call up a friend in a bank. In a pinch—but there was never a pinch—he could have borrowed from himself. That is perhaps why they called Mellon "the greatest Secretary of the Treasury since Alexander Hamilton." He sat there in Washington happily reducing the national debt. Those were carefree days.

The present Secretary, George M. Humphrey, has to get hold of \$30 billion before Christmas—there is no use waiting for Santa Claus—and he is running around from bank to bank, from insurance company to savings bank, from plain citizen to plain citizen, as if a bailiff were waiting at the door with a truck to take away the furniture. He needs \$8 billion to pay for the difference between what the government is currently spending and what it is receiving. The rest of the \$30 billion must be used to pay our debts.

Thirty billion dollars. That's eight hundred dollars for every head of family in the United States. If George Humphrey could sell long-term bonds, that would be fine, because these bonds—at three and a quarter per cent—do not mature for a quarter of a century, by which time there will be some other George to pay them off. And it would be all right if he could sell a lot more Series "E" Savings Bonds at three per cent, for although these can be cashed in at any time, the people who buy them generally want to hold on to them.

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buy the long-term bonds can make more money lending money to industry for expansion, to state and city governments for improvements, or to individuals.

Moreover, banks have to have cash reserves, and some of them are already loaded up with loans close to their legal limits. The Federal Reserve Board recently lowered reserve requirements for commercial banks so that they can lend more money both to private borrowers and to the government. But when you lower the reserve requirements you are making credit easier to get, and that means a step toward inflation.

So if you think you're an "average head of family," take a look at your checkbook and see whether you have eight hundred dollars to lend Mr. Humphrey. If you don't, then at least you know how hard it will be for him to be even the second best Secretary of the Treasury since Hamilton.

### Disgruntled, Inc.

Your dictionary will show that "disgruntle" means "To put in bad humor; to arouse peevish dissatisfaction in." In Washington, this verb is being used more and more in its active form, as members of Congress go about disgruntling one executive agency after another.

The big disgruntle of the year was Senator McCarthy's infiltration and destruction of the Voice of America, which was described at some length in our July 21 issue. The techniques popularized by Cohn and Schine are now gaining favor with other opponents of the Administration. The play-by-play procedure for disgruntling an executive agency was recently illustrated, on a small and unpublicized scale, by Senator Styles Bridges of New Hampshire, Chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, in his attack on Harold Stassen's Mutual Security Agency (recently renamed the Foreign Operations Administration).

First step was to find a disgruntled employee of MSA. One volunteered. A lawyer-banker with the respectable name of Bernard S. Van Rensselaer had been eased out of MSA's Industry Division and naturally had some grunts for sale.

Step No. 2 was to set up the ex-

employee as a committee investigator. Van Rensselaer started work with commendable vigor by summoning MSA people to his office. Time was when investigators on Capitol Hill would do their own legwork. But Cohn and Schine have now popularized the system of bidding employees to appear before them, to bear witness in a kind of short-order Congressional investigation without benefit of Congressmen. Van Rensselaer improved on this by insisting that each employee come alone. "If you don't come alone, I'll subpoena you to come alone," he has been quoted as saying.

In this way Van Rensselaer cut deep into the working time of fully sixty or seventy members of the foreign-aid agency. He even summoned before him the men who had eased him out last fall. To supplement the interviews, Van Rensselaer lined up some informants inside the agency. An hour after the arrival of a classified cable from Ankara, Van Rensselaer was asking for it.

As it turned out, Van Rensselaer couldn't find anything very sensational, but he produced a report full of names of the people he didn't like, charging them with being overpaid and not qualified for their jobs. The report of Senator Bridges's investigator dealt mostly with the industrial part of MSA, the part in which he himself had worked. But the substance of the report didn't matter. The important thing was that it gave the Senator the hook on which to hang the demand he then lodged with Mr. Stassen. The committee report "directed" that no further funds be used for research aimed at promoting new industries in undeveloped countries. But Bridges himself went further: ". . . you are hereby advised that no further expenses are to be incurred, or commitments made in connection with this program, or any other new program, until specific appropriations are made for such purposes." (Italics ours)

Senator Bridges has been trying for years to establish the principle that foreign-aid agencies should clear with his committee before they start any new program. These agencies are already harassed during the first half of the year while they concen-

trate on persuading Congress to give them some money to work with. The Bridges principle, widely applied, would paralyze them all year round.

Maybe year-round paralysis is what the Senator has in mind. As if to confirm that it is, word now comes that Van Rensselaer is being sent abroad to develop more grunts to sell to the Senate.

### Purloined Letter?

We regret to report that Senator McCarthy's "loyal underground" network in the State Department is still bringing home rancid bacon. The Senator revealed this himself by putting into the record a State Department letter that he could only have secured from his own private sources inside the State Department.

During the hearings on funds for the government's battered information services abroad, McCarthy said that the State Department (many of whose libraries abroad subscribe to *The Reporter*) was recommending our magazine for "must" reading. Never at a loss for a document of some sort, he inserted in the record a letter from a State Department branch chief to one David A. Kerley, a student at the Tennessee Polytechnic Institute in Cookeville. The student had asked in April for some information on the economics of free multilateral trade; and two months later the Department answered him, obligingly listing pamphlets and articles that he might find useful. One sentence read: "Also, in *The Reporter*, March 31, 1953, there was a discussion of our trade policy." In that issue, Helen Hill Miller had written an amusing piece on how our tariff and customs laws work.

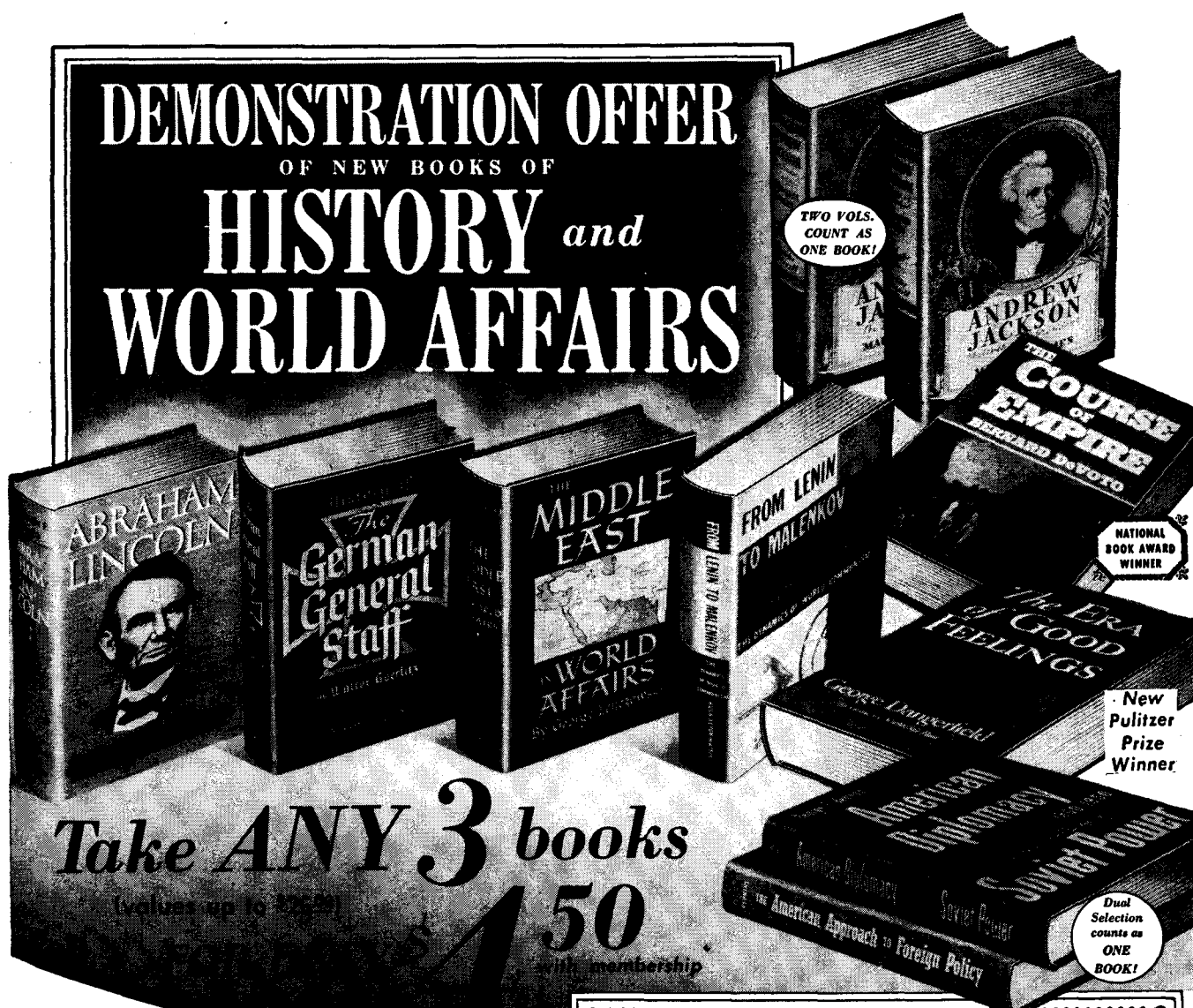
We were mildly curious about this letter. Of course, we said to ourselves, Senator McCarthy got it from the Tennessee student. But we checked with the student, and it turned out that Mr. Kerley had never gotten the letter at all. We then learned that the original letter had been returned to the State Department by the post office because the address was incorrect and that it was still resting comfortably in the Department's files.

So where did McCarthy get the letter?

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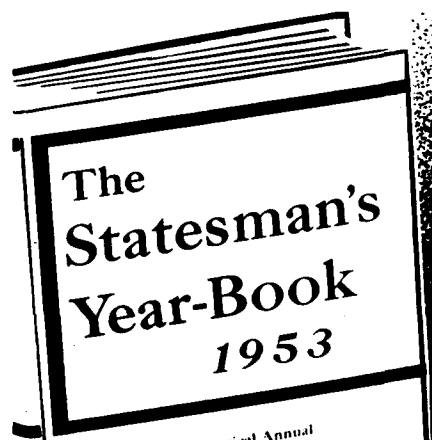
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# WHO— WHAT— WHY—

**N**orbert Muhlen's account of the uprising of the East German proletariat against the dictatorship of the proletariat represents reporting in its true and classic form: When something happens you find someone who was there and you ask questions. The best results come, of course, when a trained reporter fully provided with background information questions an intelligent witness. Mr. Muhlen, a German economist who opposed the Nazis and subsequently became an American citizen, was in Berlin and knew what questions to ask an east Berlin worker after the events of June 16 and 17. Mr. Muhlen has written for *Reader's Digest* and *Commentary*, and this year published *The Return of Germany*.

Isaac Deutscher, internationally known expert on Russian affairs and regular contributor to these pages, needs no introduction to our readers. His latest book, *Russia: What Next?*, was reviewed for *The Reporter* (July 7) by George F. Kennan. The article we now publish dealing with the situation as Mr. Deutscher sees it after Beria's fall is an abridged version of a supplementary chapter he has written for his book.

**A**NOTHER regular *Reporter* contributor is **Ralph E. Lapp**, a nuclear scientist who has taken part in many of the government's atomic-energy programs. Preoccupied in his latest article with defining proper and improper areas of secrecy, Mr. Lapp wrote *Must We Hide?* His most recent book, *The New Force*, reviews the present situation in atomic energy and deals with industry, government, and the production of energy for nonmilitary purposes.

Living in New York one meets, these days, a lot of disappointed Republicans—and not a few Democrats—who would have liked having Representative **Jacob K. Javits** as mayor of their city. But it looks as if Mr. Javits would remain in Wash-

ington continuing his constructive career as a Congressman. His views on how Congressional investigations can be regulated are of special interest.

**N**ow on a visit to this country, **Hugh Gaitskell**, former British Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Labour Government, writes for us about the Labour Party's new manifesto. The increasing talk about a possible general election in Britain this fall makes Mr. Gaitskell's article particularly timely. With his party now in the opposition, he is an active frontbencher and a leading anti-Bevanite. Only forty-seven years old, Mr. Gaitskell, an economist in a country where economists can go far in government, has made an international name for himself.

The fastest-growing profession in Washington seems to be that of the snooper. **Ralph Robin's** short story is more than the portrait of an unpleasant young man; it points to a public danger. The author is a chemist who has become a successful writer of science fiction. He has also been published in the *Yale Review*.

**T**HE STAFF of *The Reporter* spent a busman's holiday this summer sampling the fare available in paper-bound books. In preparing a section on paper-backs, we had valuable assistance and advice from people in this highly competitive business. One thing we learned was that the industry is older than we thought. In a 1952 Bowker Lecture published by the New York Public Library, from which we reprint an extract, **Freeman Lewis**, executive vice-president of Pocket Books, Inc., tells some of the ancient history of his business.

**Meyer Levin**, who provides a general survey of the field, has direct experience with paper-backs: His *The Old Bunch* is about to be issued by Permabooks; Signet is doing his *Frankie and Johnny* (retitled *The Young Lovers*).