

# If War Comes

*M-DAY. By Donald Edward Keyhoe. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1940. 96 pp. \$1.*

*M-DAY AND WHAT IT MEANS TO YOU. By Leo M. Cherne. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1940. 103 pp. \$1.*

Reviewed by PERCY W. BIDWELL

**W**ASN'T it Stephen Leacock who observed, "You can't dramatize the Interstate Commerce Act"? Mr. Keyhoe's subject, the Industrial Mobilization Plan, certainly lends itself more readily to dramatic treatment. In a succession of imaginary news bulletins and conversations, he presents vividly the alterations which war will bring in the daily lives of ordinary people, clerks, small business men, lawyers, contractors, housewives, farmers, etc. The theme is control—control of all types of business activities directed from Washington for the purpose of making the most effective use of our manpower, our industrial equipment, and our raw material resources.

Actually the Plans for Industrial Mobilization, as published jointly by the Secretaries of War and Navy, are rather general; they indicate only vaguely and in broad outline what measures of control will be applied to labor, to business, and to the expression of public opinion. The author's active imagination has filled up the gaps in the Plan, but he has not taken pains to warn the reader when he makes the transition from fact to fancy.

Mr. Keyhoe tells us, for example, that the Industrial Mobilization Plan will be put into effect immediately upon the declaration of war. Maybe his guess is right, but the War Department holds differently. According to Department Plans, some of the controls may be introduced even before war is declared, others several months later when need for them has become apparent. But of course it is more in the Hollywood style to have regimentation descend like a cloudburst.

The description of the elimination of cancerous fifth column activities on M-Day is presented in the best Western thriller style. Bloody uprisings stimulated by enemy agents mark the opening days of war. But their instigators are swiftly dealt with by the F.B.I., aided by World War veterans. All over the country, front organizations topple, the camouflage is ripped away from anti-loyal youth organizations, peace societies, and civil liberties groups. After some 500,000 hostile aliens and disloyal citizens have been put in concentration camps,

the national morale is restored. "Open sedition becomes almost unknown, as the death penalty for spies ceases to be a novelty."

Mr. Keyhoe is right in stressing the fact that war would inevitably bring the extension of government control over many aspects of civilian life, but he gives the reader no understanding of the difficulties which underlie the fixing of wages and of prices, of the serious problems to be solved in installing a war economy within the framework of our system of democracy and free enterprise. The task is represented as much too easy. The implication is given that the mere exercise of force will win every battle on the home front.

Mr. Cherne's book shows a closer acquaintance with War Department Plans, particularly those which are not given general circulation. For the melodramatic approach of Mr. Keyhoe, he substitutes the "brass tacks" question and answer method. Thus in half the book he supplies information about conscription in the next war;

who will be called, what exemptions will be allowed, what pay will be received, what are the chances of deferment in various occupations, what will happen to conscientious objectors. The answers are based partly on the draft of a Selective Service Act which has been prepared by the War Department, and partly on the experience of 1917-1918. An outsider, viewing the struggle now going on in Congress over the military conscription act, might doubt the reliability of some of Mr. Cherne's predictions.

The picture of price controls, priorities, and possible commandeering which Mr. Cherne paints will not be pleasant reading for the business man. But these controls will be tempered to essential industries. Consequently, it will be of advantage to every business man who can possibly do so to make his enterprise an essential one. Specific advice is given on how to accomplish this purpose.

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*"A novel  
as solid as  
a wooden shoe!"*

*S. R. L.*

*"A fine study of a people with whom most of us are acquainted only through 'Hans Brinker' and our nurseryman . . . forthright, cheerfully bawdy in places and as vigorous as those Dutch items we have brought into our language, love, uncles and the people who are beaten only in extremis."*

SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE

By

**ANTON ROTHHAERT**

\$2.50 at all bookstores.

MACMILLAN

# Republic vs. Democracy

**TWO FRONTIERS OF FREEDOM.**  
By John Corbin. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1940. 420 pp. \$3.50.

Reviewed by RAYMOND G. FULLER

THIS, even in these times, is not a book about saving democracy. The dictators are right, according to Mr. Corbin, in saying that democracy, as a form of government, makes nations weak and futile in dealing with problems of defense and internal welfare. But he does not believe in autocracy, either. There is a *tertium quid*, namely, the kind of government which was in the minds of the framers of the American Constitution. It was a republic, not a democracy, which they sought to establish—and did, though we have since departed in thinking and practice from that conception. Mr. Corbin deals at length with the distinctions between a republic and a democracy, chiefly by means of an historical discussion of events preceding the Convention of 1787 and the later degradation (or democratization) of the republican plan, especially during the nineteenth century. "Back to republicanism" (with a small "r") is his thesis; or, in the words of one of his chapter headings, "Forward with the Constitution."

To readers who, like the reviewer, adhere to "the democratic dogma," which to us signifies rather a democratic tradition and growth, many of the attitudes expressed in this book toward the people and their participation in government will be irritating and stimulative of argument. Nevertheless, there is a good deal of truth, perhaps too much, in what the author has to say about the imper-

fections and shortcomings of democracy. He is apparently just as much concerned as we democrats over such present unsolved problems as employment for all the able and willing, and if Mr. Corbin's republicanism can help make democracy work, that certainly ought to be all right with us! He has not only philosophical but practical suggestions to offer.

Too much stress, he thinks, is put on individual liberty and not enough on collective liberty. Individual liberty is self-destructive unless controlled by regard for the general welfare, and this means method and organization for collective control. Resolution of the conflict between freedom and control is the essence of republicanism, says Mr. Corbin; and if that isn't one of the vital requirements of successful democracy, what is? What Mr. Corbin would do is to put more of the management of public affairs into the hands of the wise and good, the competent and qualified, leaving less to the legislators, politicians, and voters. In other words, he is for intelligent bureaucracy, or more specifically, for administrative tribunals somewhat on the order of the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Recognizing the growth of industry since the Constitution was framed and adopted, and the rise of "industrial states," he would bring these industrial states under the Constitution,

and give them equal recognition with the geographical or political states and at least an equal measure of self-government. The basic idea of the NRA was sound, badly as it worked out: the idea, that is, of industrial self-government aided and controlled by a central authority in the interest of the general welfare. To carry out this idea properly we need an industrial clause in the U. S. Constitution paralleling the commerce clause, and we need truly representative tribunals composed of the great leaders in the several industries, both of management and of labor.

In a few concluding chapters Mr. Corbin writes of our foreign relations and of the possibilities of a reconstructed and republicanized League of Nations. "The time may come when the NRA, and for that matter the League, will stand forth in a light of glory denied to those who have scoffed at them—may come, that is, if we take thought, and only so."

## SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 335)

W. A. WHITE  
A PURITAN IN BABYLON

In the terrible decade when he was in his place of greatest power, Calvin Coolidge lacked the vision to exercise the highest judgment. He was handicapped by his background, circumscribed by his life's pattern. . . .

## The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	Crime, Place, and Sleuth	Summing Up	Verdict
THE FOUR DEFENCES J. J. Connington (Little, Brown: \$2.)	Corpse in blazing car on English highway presents nice problem to Radio Counsellor Brand who revels in difficult crime solving.	Fairly bulging with plot, shrewd villainy, keen deducing and bright conversational byplay—all making up for paucity of movement.	Puzzling no end
THE SPIDER AND THE FLY R. A. J. Walling (Morrow: \$2.)	Jewel robbery in English country house starts Mr. Tolefree on trail that leads to murder, and discomfiture of astute plotter.	Triumphant exception to usual rule that early murder is needed to hold reader's interest. Late killing here comes almost as relief.	Unexceptionable
MAIGRET ABROAD Georges Simenon (Harcourt: \$2.)	Insp. Maigret in two more short masterworks. First has Dutch background; in second Maigret commits deathless suicide to break case.	Shrewd sleuthing of both tales overshadowed by realistic and psychological passages—but it's there in bountiful measure.	Vive (live, or, long live) Maigret!
WE WILL MEET AGAIN John and Ward Hawkins (Dial: \$2.)	Death of corrupt deputy sheriff blamed on mouthpiece who socked him. Lawyer goes to jail but inflexible copper rights wrongs.	Prison scenes—presumably in San Quentin—are best part of story. Rest of it follows familiar lines of gangster-politico opera.	Adequate thriller
THE UNCOMPLAINING CORPSES Brett Halliday (Holt: \$2.)	Miami realtor involves red-headed investigator Shayne in three nasty killings. Sleuth quaffs cognac liberally and reveals slimy plotter.	Pretty scurvy lot of characters, considerable slugging, rough language, and solution that is not quite unexpected.	Torrid

"It seems more than likely that

## VERDICT OF TWELVE

a first novel by Raymond Postgate will be judged the best mystery of the year and many years to come . . . VERDICT OF TWELVE is a superb piece of writing and makes other horror stories seem flat and un-discerning." \$2.00

SALLY BENSON  
in the New Yorker

THE CRIME CLUB

