

Ideas for Waging Peace

AN AMERICAN PROGRAM. By Wendell L. Willkie. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1944. 58 pp. \$1. Paper-bound pamphlet, \$.25.

Reviewed by SENATOR JOSEPH H. BALL

WENDELL L. WILLKIE'S hoarse, vibrant voice is stilled forever. News of his sudden death caused a sharp tug of loneliness and fear in the hearts of millions of people. Loneliness because a great lover and champion of the people was gone. Fear because a stalwart and resolute fighter for liberty, justice, and peace had fallen, and the fight would be the harder for his absence.

But even though his voice will not be heard in the closing weeks of this national campaign, though his big, clumsy figure is gone from the political arena, Willkie still fights on for those principles to which he dedicated the last years of his life. He fights on in the little book, "An American Program," put together a few weeks before his death.

"An American Program" is a compilation of seven articles outlining the positions Willkie believed the Republican Party should take on major issues and a suggested platform draft, written before the Chicago convention, and two articles written subsequent to the party conventions analyzing the weaknesses and evasions of the Republican and Democratic platforms on foreign policy and the issue of racial minorities.

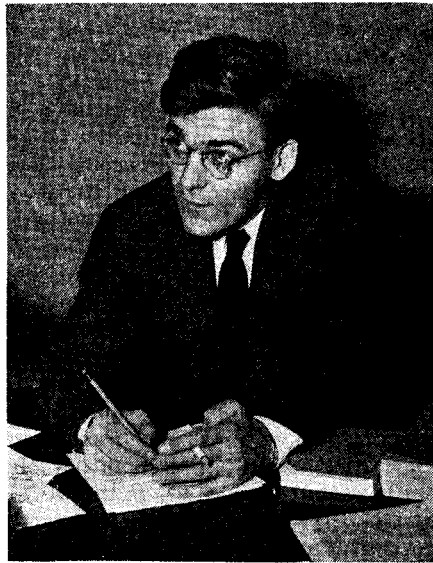
That Willkie himself regarded the book as a continuation of his fight for honesty and principles in politics, and particularly in this campaign, is clear from this final paragraph in his brief Foreword, written September 25, 1944:

Believing that the influence of an aroused, informed public opinion is of incalculable value in a democracy, I once more urge that we demand now, while there is still time, meaningful statements on these matters from those who would be our leaders; and that in the future we continue watchful and alert that our purposes may be effective. For our attitude on our racial minorities and on our international obligations will constitute a test of our sincerity at home and abroad and of our ability to bring about, with other nations, a world of peace and security.

"An American Program" is not a great literary achievement. It is not too easy to read. It lacks the drama and color, the rich description, vivid characterizations, and sweeping narrative that made "One World" one of the great books of our times. "An American Program" is just what its

author says it is: political pamphleteering. It is political pamphleteering at its best, by a man who used words forcefully to express ideas and ideals. It is the kind of political pamphleteering that laid the foundation for the Declaration of Independence, that secured the ratification of the Federal Constitution over the fears and doubts of the Tories, and that is now a cherished part of American literature.

To serve his unswerving passion for human liberty and justice and his boundless faith in the people, Willkie brought a keen mind, hard-won experience in American partisan politics,



—Harris and Ewing

Senator Joseph H. Ball: "It is not easy to remain an honest liberal in the hurly-burly of active political life."

and a tremendous knowledge and perception of history. As he so graphically demonstrated in "One World," he is convinced that the United States and, with us, the world are in the midst of a period of revolutionary political change as critical historically as that which occurred at the end of the eighteenth century. Only if the people and their political leaders courageously think through the fundamental issues facing us and find and support solutions in accord with our principles of liberty and justice, can we come through this crisis without grave impairment both of individual liberties and the whole democratic process.

Willkie's "An American Program" should be required reading for every American voter before the November 7 election, and its perusal by all candidates and party workers might help to raise the present low level to which American politics have sunk. I hope particularly that it will be read widely

by all high school and college students, because the future is theirs, and it is to the future that we must look for the vindication of the principles for which Willkie fought so valiantly.

It is easy to be a liberal in the quiet seclusion of study or classroom, in the polite atmosphere of drawing rooms and salons, or in furthering some pet project where personal interest and liberal principles march together. It is not so easy to remain an honest liberal in the hurly-burly and rough give-and-take of active political life, working within a political party (either one) run for the most part by individuals to whom principles are a strictly secondary consideration, and subject to the cross-fire of huge and well-organized pressure groups.

Willkie was a liberal who took off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and battled it out in the political arena, coming through four years of the bitterest kind of political fighting with his principles still nailed firmly to his masthead. Willkie lost, and was greater in defeat than most men in victory. Though he died in the midst of the fight, his example will inspire others, and in the end his battle for integrity and principles in American politics may be won, indeed it must be won.

Nothing would contribute more to that much desired end than that every American should read and ponder "An American Program" between now and November 7. Not that all of us would or should agree with every position Willkie takes. That isn't the important thing. Willkie has defined clearly and succinctly the great fundamental issues facing us and the world in the decades immediately ahead and has stated unequivocally what he believes the liberal solution to be. What is important is that each of us define the issues as clearly and demand that our candidates for public office take as unequivocal a position on them. It is only in that way that this nation can chart a course for the future and do it through the democratic process. Failure to do so is all too likely to lead to a repetition of the policies of expediency and drift which landed us and the world in the present mess.

In his first chapter, "Federal Power and States' Rights," Willkie pays his respects to the states' righters in this typical fashion: "It is not the worn-out issue of states' rights versus strong Federal Government. That is not an issue; that is a relic." Asserting that the United States cannot be divided into forty-eight separate economic units, he insists that vast Federal pow-

ers are essential. The real issue is their use and abuse, he says, and the solution is not a weakened central government, but assurance of proper use of power by clearer and more definitive law.

Very close to Willkie's heart were the rights of racial minorities and particularly of thirteen million Negro citizens. He deals with this issue in two chapters, one written before the conventions of the two major parties, and the second analyzing the platform proposals of both parties. For Willkie, there is no middle ground on this issue, and there can be no evasion. America's toleration of the discrimination against its Negro citizens, he insists, is not only a disgrace at home, but already has weakened our prestige and influence abroad and will weaken it still further unless speedy measures are taken to correct it.

"One of these basic rights is the right to vote," Willkie says in a paragraph summary of the race issue and his position. "Another is the right to live free of the haunting fear and the too-frequent actuality of mob violence. The first can be guaranteed, under the circumstances existing today, only by a Federal statute eliminating state poll taxes and other arbitrary prohibitions against the free exercise of the voting franchise; the other, only by a Federal statute making the crime of lynching tryable in Federal courts and punishable by Federal law."

Willkie's brief argument on the constitutionality of these two measures, always the basis of the filibusters against them, is incisive and convincing.

Willkie leaves lazy and legalistic minds no easy escape. He has an uncomfortable habit in his argument of driving right to fundamentals and basing his position on the sort of bedrock thinking in these two paragraphs on social security:

For a long time our society left the education of children to the individual parents' ability to pay. Then it made a decision which changed civilization. It decided that all children should be educated, regardless of their parents' income.

We are now faced with a decision as logical and as necessary about which we must begin to think. We have left the feeding, clothing, shelter, and medical care of our children to be determined by their parents' income alone. It hasn't worked and can never work, for a man whose skills may permit him to earn only the minimum wage may have five or six children to rear on that wage. No wage or income based upon the value of the economic contribution of the individual can ever be made to take into proper consideration the needs of his dependents.

The chapters on economic demobili-

zation, labor, and taxes pack a great deal of concentrated thought in a few pages. They reveal the student side of Willkie which often has been obscured in the public's absorption with the crusading Willkie.

The crusader of the 1940 Presidential campaign, and *One World*, however, is with us again in the chapters on tariffs and foreign policy written before Chicago and his devastating criticism of the platform evasions on foreign policy titled "Cowardice at Chicago."

General reduction of tariffs, currency stabilization, immediate creation of a United Nations Council, and no boggling over use or delegation of sovereignty in this interdependent world are some of the issues Willkie demands be faced unequivocally.

"Finally," he concludes his pre-Chicago exposition, "the Republican platform should state the conviction that, Mr. Churchill to the contrary, the ideologies for which we fight have not become blurred for us in the course of the fighting but have become clearer every day; and that, Mr. Roosevelt to the contrary, in becoming wiser we have not become more cynical. We know that the sacrifice of our men and women in this war has not been made simply in order to defend ourselves against brute force. We are fighting a war for freedom; we are fighting a war for men's minds. This means that we must encourage men's just aspirations for freedom not only at home but everywhere in the world."

Quoting Disraeli's definition of a practical man as "a man who practised the errors of his forefathers," Willkie opens his criticism of the foreign policy planks adopted at Chicago with this biting paragraph:

Meeting at a moment the import of which for our country's future



—Ding in the New York Herald Tribune.

"Courageous public service without reward."

is scarcely less than that in which our government was born or that which saw the great crisis of the Civil War, these men and women chose to borrow from the past neither the bold, imaginative spirit which moved our forefathers to launch the untried experiment of a republic, nor the kind of courageous meeting of issues and problems of the day which will make the name of Abraham Lincoln imperishable in our history. Instead, they borrowed from the past the timidities, the outworn doctrines and mistakes long since rejected by history.

Willkie then proceeds to demonstrate clearly the fatal consequences to the effectiveness and power to act of any international organization established if the reservation of complete national sovereignty written into both platforms is followed strictly. He argues that the Republican platform insistence that international agreements as well as treaties be ratified by the Senate under the two-thirds rule would nullify any attempt to develop a strong and positive foreign policy for the United States, and he cites the unhappy fate which has befallen most major treaties in the Senate, particularly those having to do with international collaboration, under that two-thirds rule.

Reading the uncompromising, hard-hitting political argument of "An American Program," it is easy to understand why Wendell Willkie was at once the most hated and reviled, and the best loved political figure of recent times. His blunt honesty in exposing their shabby tricks and his unshakable devotion to principle made the run-of-the-mill politicians distrust and dislike him. You never knew where a fellow like that was going to land next. And his power in exhortation, his influence with people who felt his integrity and high purpose, made those who opposed his political principles hate and fear him. They must have been relieved when he withdrew from the Presidential race. Perhaps they rejoiced too soon.

"An American Program" is the last, ringing shot of a great American liberal. As I read it, two stanzas from Matthew Arnold's "The Last Word," which had been running through my mind since the first news of Willkie's death, kept recurring to me. I know of no more fitting epitaph for Wendell L. Willkie:

They out-talked thee, hiss'd thee,
tore thee.

Better men fared thus before thee;
Fired their ringing shot and pass'd,
Hotly charged—and broke at last.

Charge once more, then, and be
dumb!

Let the victors, when they come,
When the forts of folly fall,
Find thy body by the wall.

The Saturday Review

Bernard Shaw's Fabian Platonism

EVERYBODY'S POLITICAL WHAT'S WHAT? By Bernard Shaw. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. 1944. 380 pp. \$3.

Reviewed by ERIC RUSSELL BENTLEY

THIS book is an exposition of the whole philosophy of life which Shaw has advanced piece by piece in his plays, especially in the last cycle of plays which begins with "The Apple Cart" and ends with "In Good King Charles's Golden Days." This philosophy has a hundred ramifications but, as a summary kindly provided for reviewers insists, only five main branches: economics, politics, science, education, and religion. Shaw is, with Voltaire, the greatest of pamphleteers, and he argues in his new book, with a good deal of his old wit and all his old felicity and simplicity of phrase, that "in all five [branches] we are dangerously behind the times and will go to pieces like all former civilizations known to us unless we give our institutions a thorough overhaul pretty frequently." Slight misquotations, numerous repetitions, and uncontrolled digressions betray, perhaps, the slackening grip of the author. Yet at a time when professional communists are bidding godspeed to capitalism, professional educators returning to the Middle Ages, and professional economists bowing to an inevitable Power Age or Managerial Revolution or what not, it is heartening, and in part enlightening, to read a reaffirmation of Shavian radicalism.

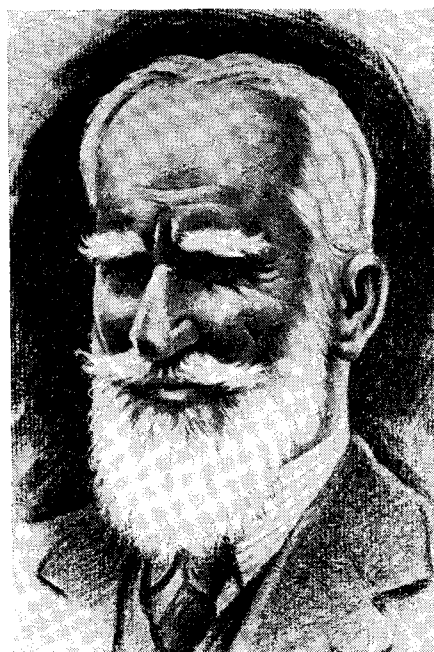
There are no *new* affirmations in the book. The economics is the socialism of the Fabian essays, a socialism which leans heavily upon Jevons's theory of value and which stresses less the injustice than the waste and absurdity of capitalism. The science consists largely of scolding the "half-wit" Pavlov and others in the Darwinian tradition. The educational theory is a not very novel attack on the classical educators and a sound defense of disciplined but modern training. The religious argument is a plea for religion, provided that it be universal in appeal and capable of change by way of creative evolution. It is the political sections which will arouse most interest. They elucidate and elaborate the so-called reactionary tendencies of Shaw as they have been revealed in his last plays. The long and short of it is that Shaw believes in government of the people, for the people, but not by the people. In this he is probably at one with more political thinkers and practitioners than would care to admit it; and he fortifies his posi-

tion by the acutest criticism I know of the two-party system. He even makes concrete suggestions, such as the disfranchisement of all who cannot pass examinations in political science, the creation of panels of experts in every branch of national life, the abolition of parliaments except as discussion clubs. In fact the Shavian system sounds very like the Soviet.

Now, even if one grants the title of Democracy to Shaw's system, and even if one agrees to his criticism of current parliaments, one cannot see that he has answered some very old practical questions which every critic of majority rule must face. We are to be ruled by groups of professionals, all certified in their special field. We may choose between one expert and another if we ourselves qualify as well-informed voters. What could be more desirable? Yet how is it all to be done? If the examination questions and their adjudication are to satisfy Shaw they will clearly have to be set, and the answers adjudicated, by experts who somehow are already in power and who were therefore not themselves certified. *How* do the wise men become kings? Like Plato, Shaw is silent on the point, and his silence makes a more serious hiatus in his political philosophy than even the old conundrum: *Quis custodiet custodes?* to which also the philosophers of aristocracy have no answer.

Anything that Shaw writes tends to make most current commentary look like the hopeful efforts of the twelfth grade. How is it, then, that he cuts so little ice? My generation, born during the First World War and after, has hardly been touched by Bernard Shaw, and the fact cannot be explained away by observing that most of his teaching had been done by 1914. The fullest dramatic statement of philosophic Shavianism—"Back to Methuselah"—was written after the war; the only full-length Shavian defence of socialism—"The Intelligent Woman's Guide"—came out in 1927; in his plays of the thirties Shaw followed the course of contemporary politics much more closely than in his pre-war plays; and now in 1944 he gives us a 380-page treatise. An amazing feat for a man of eighty-eight, a performance that would establish a permanent reputation for any new writer, the latest book, being characteristic Shaw rather than Shaw at his best, is the key to his lack of impact in our time.

Three main reasons for this lack of impact emerge: Shaw's fads, his growing estrangement from the contemporary world, and the nature of his dia-



G. B. S. "still has a firm grasp of the reality of thirty years ago."

lectic. "Everybody's Political What's What?" would be a superb introduction to sociology, and a likely book to convert one of the younger generation to Shavianism, were it not constantly interrupted by comical diatribes on subjects by no means central in political science, such as vegetarianism, vivisection, and vaccination, performances which are not only impertinent but cranky and utterly unconvincing.

Assuming that fads may be permitted to a very old man, we cannot forgive any political adviser for being out of contact with contemporary reality. Some might plead that Shaw isn't. To be sure, his intelligence and tough-mindedness show him to be in contact with reality, contemporary and otherwise, at a thousand points where our professional statesmen can only puff and blow. But this, I would retort, is largely because many things have not changed at all in thirty years, and Shaw still has a firm grasp of the reality of thirty years ago. When, however, he left public life and retired to Ayot St. Lawrence, only emerging to take holiday trips to distant countries or to see his own plays at Malvern, Bernard Shaw, in becoming adviser-in-chief to the universe, in some ways lost touch with this particular planet. I do not write out of political animosity, for I agree, for instance, with his interpretations of Nazism and Soviet Communism as far as they go. But they don't go very far. To undertake to tell everybody what's what in modern politics should be to explain the nature of fascism in more than a couple of sentences and to analyze the Soviet system beyond the stage of merely shouting for joy.

Shaw's picture of politics is little