

the Welfare State, as we have had it since Franklin Roosevelt.

A reasonably watchful reader might begin to be slightly puzzled at this point. Is Hamilton, with his acid reminders of the spirit of 1776, offering us the same picture of American life and destiny that Johnson does? Hamilton warns us against present restraints on inventive genius. Johnson sees the greatest creative period in history ahead of us, when the governmental interventions of the Welfare State will give the common man his chance. Perhaps with more space they might have brought their ideas into closer harmony.

David Riesman, who takes the American soul apart to get a good look at it, and J. K. Galbraith, who scrutinizes our economy more closely, help to bring things together, although one cannot be sure that either Hamilton or Johnson, representing two sides of an older liberal tradition, is in agreement with either one of them. Riesman describes most Americans as helplessly "other-directed." We depend on external authority, all of us except for the "saving remnant" who can still call their souls their own. In the same history where Alvin Johnson sees the inevitable and glorious rise of the common man to his hegemony and self-realization, Riesman sees, even in democratic countries, a change which has made the state "so overwhelming that even martyrdom—the last despairing appeal of the individual human spirit against the group—is no longer possible." Most of us want to escape from freedom; only a few have courage. Is the Welfare State a mirage of safety for those who are afraid to go on their own? Or is it the new condition in which independence will be recaptured? The interstitial notes in this book do not say.

Galbraith, who has a distinguished record as a New Deal-Welfare State official, shows more than do most of the contributors what we have always thought of as one of the typical American traits, a cool, informed common sense. He is about as free of dogma as a positive man can get. He believes with Johnson that the growth of government in Western countries in recent years has been accompanied by a change of government intentions from malevolence to good will. But he is not afraid of large-scale private enterprise and he expects the struggle between big government and big business to go on. In the meantime, we shall get on fairly well because the basic technological problems are solved anyhow, and in a context like ours almost any system could be made to work fairly well. So Galbraith swings us back again to a relaxed optimism.



—Burke in Chicago-Sun-Times.

"Lead Kindly Light."

Perry Miller is also among the optimists. He has well-documented doubts about some phases of American education but he thinks the schools are still the best means we have of keeping our inventiveness alive and to that end he urges teachers to hold on to their own freedom. Harrison Brown issues the kind of warning we have come to expect from socially sensitive makers of atom bombs. Erwin D. Canham urges us to be more vigorous in getting our ideas into European and Asiatic heads and General C. T. Lanham describes a kind of American army very different from what we have been told about soldiering by our young novelists.

The last essay in the book, well placed because it does more for synthesis than the others, is the account of his own re-education by Norman Cousins. He was a member of an unhappy generation and his American education did not give him a very clear picture of America, either as it was or as it should be. The war did that work. New powers of destruction compelled him to find an ultimately adequate frame of action which he discovered in working toward world government. The "Years of the Modern," then, come out in the thinking of a serious and sensitive young mind as the years in which America has to accept leadership in uniting the world in practical peace. There are hints in the other essays that indicate what right we have to take such leadership and what qualities there are in the American character that others might try to imitate. After some deliberation on the variety, the unevenness, and the energy of these twelve essays, one is inclined to accept with contentment the idea of the modern American as a character so complex and free that only a polyphonal voice can speak for him. The older cultures have wanted too much shape and uniformity in human life.

Koestler & Israel

PROMISE AND FULFILLMENT. By Arthur Koestler. New York: The Macmillan Co. 335 pp. \$4.

By THOMAS SUGRUE

THE Palestine story from 1917 to 1949 is an allergy test for the emotions of an historian; the most objective of men, examining its parts, have found themselves alternating between rage and melancholy, lapsing occasionally into a cynicism they mistake for perspective. Arthur Koestler, in addition to submitting his adrenals and myocardium to the steady pricks of British colonial and foreign policy, Arab political intransigence, and Zionist idealism, has exposed himself to another hazard; he has endeavored to examine Palestine under the Mandate from what he calls a "psychosomatic" point of view. The result is a noisy, uneven book, in which the author races up and down a ladder of attitudes, shouting from one rung, peering into the distance from another, and muttering to himself while standing on a third. The reader finds himself watching, not the epic of the return to Zion, but the man who is telling him the tale. It is, to choose a mild word, confusing.

In view of this predicament the average person approaching the book will find it helpful to read the epilogue first. In this ultimate section Mr. Koestler discusses the meaning of Israel for Jews in other parts of the world, particularly those content with their situation and innocent of any urge to emigrate to the new homeland of their people. From the moment the State of Israel became a reality there existed, for the first time in 2,000 years, a way of escape for Jews who did not wish to be Jews. During the long centuries of the Diaspora, when the Jew carried his state with him, there could be no emigration—the Jew who tried to assimilate was running away from himself. After May 14, 1948, the situation was reversed; the Jew who lived outside Israel and was not orthodox in religion faced the curious fact that he was a Jew without definition, subject to discrimination and persecution for a "differentness" which no longer existed. Mr. Koestler examines this point fully and expresses this opinion:

The conclusion is that since the foundation of the Hebrew state the attitude of Jews who are unwilling to go there, yet insist on remaining a community in some way apart from their fellow citizens, has become an untenable anachronism. . . . Now that the mission of the Wandering Jew is completed, he

must discard the knapsack and cease to be an accomplice in his own destruction. If not for his own sake, then for that of his children and his children's children. The fumes of the death chambers still linger over Europe; there must be an end to every calvary.

Since Mr. Koestler is not a citizen of Israel, and is now in France working on a novel, it is obvious that he has abandoned the knapsack.

These conclusions [he says], reached by one who has been a supporter of the Zionist movement for a quarter-century, while his cultural allegiance belonged to Western Europe, are mainly addressed to the many others in a similar situation. They have done what they could to secure a haven for the homeless in the teeth of prejudice, violence, and political treachery. Now that the State of Israel is firmly established, they are free at last to do what they could not do before: to wish it good luck and go their own way. . . .

With this in mind the reader is equipped to follow Mr. Koestler through the devious paths which lead from the Balfour Declaration to the vote in the United Nations Assembly on November 29, 1947, when the partition of Palestine into Jewish and Arab states was approved. The sequence of events is difficult to follow under any circumstances—drama, chicanery, and heroics are packed into those thirty years like bandage on a wound—and it is easier to keep an eye on Mr. Koestler, who selects what suits his purpose, comments, or submits a conclusion, and moves on, studying the Jews of Palestine as “a specimen of humanity to be examined under the social microscope.” Now and then the microscope gets turned around and Mr. Koestler finds that he is examining himself.

The first part of the book is devoted to the background of the Mandate. The gentiles who sponsored the idea of a Jewish national home in Palestine were, as Mr. Koestler points out, Bible readers—Wilson, Lloyd George, Balfour, etc. The men assigned to carry out the Mandate were members of the civil service, colonial servants who found the Jews less attractive than the easy-going, colorful, backward Arabs; the Foreign Office responsible for British policy in the Middle East considered Arab friendship more important than Jewish allegiance. Gradually Arab pressure on England forced a showdown, and when it came, in 1939, the British abandoned the Jews, issued the infamous White Paper forbidding all but a trickle of immigration to Palestine, and thus condemned the Jews in Europe to death by cutting off their

last way of escape. The Mandate from the beginning had been difficult to administer, since the Arabs claimed they had been promised the land given to Jews, but had the national home been peopled by gentiles the story might well have been different. Mr. Koestler believes that the great sin of the Jews, as Dr. Weizmann pointed out, is that they exist. In the end this fact seems to have pushed the British into an attitude of stubbornness, so that they backed the Arabs to the hilt, sure their Moslem friends would overrun the new state in a few weeks.

It was a wrong guess, militarily; when Mr. Koestler arrived at Haifa



in June 1948, the Israeli Army was more than holding its own against the invading Arabs. He visited old friends, went to a few quiet points along the front, and listened to anecdotes of the early battles. Excerpts from his diary comprise this section of the book, along with quotations from his newspaper dispatches, written at the time. It is a sloppy bit of reporting, poorly organized, loaded with pointless personal details. Here Koestler is definitely the central theme of the book, and Israel and the war are lost to the reader. In the final section the author takes the stand and delivers his now familiar opinions on the new state. He wants the Hebrew alphabet latinized; he wants the orthodox clergy to clear out of politics; he wants the Eastern Jews who dominate the Israeli Government to Westernize their methods and point of view.

Perhaps the book was hastily written; if so, it should have been rewritten. Its style is a mixture of slang, psychological terminology, and political jargon. Its middle section, which is the heart of the story, is inexcusably bad. After a fashion it tells the Palestine story from 1917 to 1949; it should be filed, however, under K for Koestler, not I for Israel.

People in Ferment

CHINA SHAKES THE WORLD. By Jack Belden. New York: Harper & Bros. 524 pp. \$5.

By RICHARD E. LAUTERBACH

JACK BELDEN has written one of the best books ever published about the Chinese people. It is a source book of such consequence that no diplomat, historian, businessman, or wishful thinker can fully comprehend what has happened in China, and why, until he has read “China Shakes the World.” If John Reed’s “Ten Days that Shook the World” had been as rich and detailed in its newsreel of the Russian Revolution as Jack Belden’s documentary of China’s, the average citizen as well as assorted foreign offices might have been spared many dangerous misconceptions.

Few writers are as well equipped as Jack Belden to make an explosion of history as exciting as a novel of suspense. John Hersey did it for the atom bomb; Belden has done it for the Chinese Revolution. To accomplish this he had to be a fine craftsman and an amazingly perceptive reporter with a deep understanding of men and politics. Belden had these assets, plus a background of contact with the Chinese that made him the perfect instrument to interpret China’s upheaval to the West.

In 1933 Belden, an Able-Bodied Seaman, jumped ship in Hongkong to see the Orient in a couple of weeks. He stayed nine years, learning snatches of the Chinese language, marching with Chinese troops, sharing rice bowls with them, noting signs of the developing internal struggle. In 1946 he returned to China, an established war correspondent and writer with a personal legend half-Hemingway, half-Lothario. Avoiding the populous port cities and the Communist mecca, Yenan (“a tourist center”), Belden took off for the Communist-controlled regions of the North China plain by truck and mule cart.

Behind the changing lines of the Civil War, Belden lived and talked with the people—Communists, non-Communists, anti-Communists—and in understanding them and their experiences, understood China and the revolution which the people, themselves, were making. In his account of that revolution Belden has recreated not only his own adventures but the lives of many dozens of unforgettable Chinese: a wandering beggar writer, a revengeful farm wife, a village landlord, a guerrilla assassin, a young Communist cadre, a power-