

A Dark Dim Crime

THE ATOM SPIES. By Oliver Pilat.
New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 312
pp. \$3.50.

By HAROLD C. HINTON

IT SEEMS virtually certain that sooner or later the Soviet Union could have produced an atomic bomb with its own unaided resources. That it succeeded in producing one as early as 1949, however, was due, at least in part, to information treasonably given the Kremlin by certain scientists and technicians working in the United States and Canada during the Second World War. The story of how they did this, and why, has been told in considerable detail, and with admirable detachment in Mr. Oliver Pilat's book.

Unfortunately, the book's rather clumsy organization makes it difficult for the reader to grasp the narrative. For example, if he tries to follow the career of Harry Gold, one of the chief couriers in the Soviet atomic espionage nets, and in many ways the most interesting and pitiable character in the entire tragedy, he will encounter the following chronological muddle:

In the first chapter, Gold picks up detailed information on the atomic bomb from David Greenglass and Klaus Fuchs in New Mexico, in June 1945, and passes it on to Anatoli Yakovlev, his Soviet superior in New York. In the second, the life story of the neurotic, maladjusted Gold is told up to 1940; then the narrative jumps to 1946, when his activities were disrupted by Yakovlev's departure for Russia following Igor Gouzenko's exposure of the Canadian spy nets, and by Gold's own first interrogation by the FBI. In the third chapter, he appears before a New York grand jury in 1947 but is not indicted. In the fourth, which mainly concerns Fuchs, we see Gold holding one of his most important meetings with Fuchs, at Santa Fe in September 1945. In the seventh chapter Gold meets Fuchs several times in New York and Cambridge, Massachusetts, during 1944 and early 1945; a few pages later Gold is arrested by the FBI, on May 15, 1950, and decides to make a full confession. His confession, together with that of David Greenglass, played a crucial part in the sentencing to death of Julius Rosenberg, one of Gold's fellow-couriers, and Rosenberg's wife Ethel (the sentence is still being appealed).

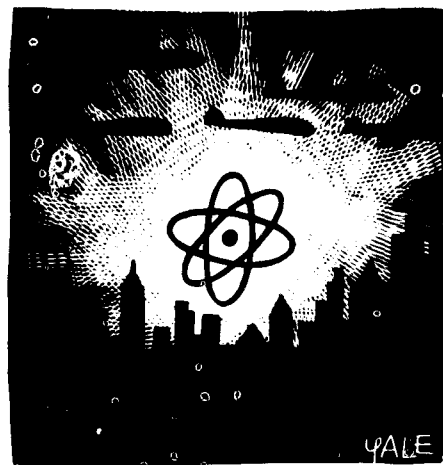
Anyone who takes the trouble to correlate the scattered facts in this book—and there is an index, fortunately—will learn a great deal about So-

viet espionage methods. The nets in Canada operated under the Red Army directed by members of the Soviet Embassy at Ottawa. The atomic espionage nets in the United States were operated under officials of the Soviet Consulate in New York.

Until 1943, the American nets concentrated on the three campuses where atomic research was being carried on—Columbia, Chicago, and Berkeley. This early phase of atomic espionage met with some success, but a daring attempt to subvert Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer, one of the key scientists in the Manhattan District Project, failed completely. After 1943, Soviet espionage fastened on the Los Alamos project in New Mexico, where the first atomic bomb was actually developed. It was during this second phase that Fuchs, the theoretical physicist, and Greenglass, the machinist, passed the essential secrets of the atomic bomb to Gold and Rosenberg.

Mr. Pilat's book deserves praise, not only for the research which obviously went into it, but for the care and understanding with which it describes the background and motivation of the various agents, consisting usually of poverty, frustration, and misfortune, and the ultimate finding in Communism of a sense of psychological fulfillment.

Finally, I commend this book to the attention of the junior Senator from Wisconsin and his supporters. The name of Owen Lattimore, whom he has called "the top Russian espionage agent" in the United States, is not mentioned once; surely it would be a strange thing if a top-ranging Soviet spy had shown no interest in the atomic bomb. Actually, of course, Lattimore's background and activities have nothing in common with those of the spies in Mr. Pilat's book. Not the least of the merits of "The Atom Spies" is the fact that, at a time when some of us seem to see spies and subversives everywhere, it has shown us who some of the real spies were.



Breezes of the New

THE NEXT AMERICA. By Lyman Bryson. New York: Harper & Bros. 256 pp. \$3.50.

By ERWIN D. CANHAM

A MAN IN his own time, says Lyman Bryson, is like a cricket strolling among the lights of a big electric sign. He cannot discover the meaning of the total sign, although it's hot and lively there. Mr. Bryson's book is an effort to hop a hundred yards away, to look not only at what the sign is patterning today, but what it is likely to be in the time ahead. This is an ambitious and indeed noble task. Cricket Bryson shows us a pattern and a rhythm which seem to me to be convincing in the present and as impressive as the next man's of the future. My principal regret is that Mr. Bryson, who knows so well how to mass-communicate, has chosen to write too much of his book in the private language of the academic specialist. Those parts are hard reading. But it is all quite exciting.

Mr. Bryson explains how the groups and collectives have taken over American democracy. "The Great Economy," he calls it. But he thinks we are learning to leave to the collectives the things which can best be done by group action, and are seeking individual outlets principally at the community level and in fields other than politics.

In a score of eloquent paraphrases he emphasizes his chief thesis: that democracy is process, not content. In earlier times, it was possible for many men to participate consciously and meaningfully in the national democratic political process. Now this has been taken over by the groups. But it is of vital importance that individuals continue to participate. Thus, we turn to the areas of human life in which we can still participate as individuals.

This means, he believes, politics at local levels. But still more, it means deeper or different strata of human experience. He thinks this has already happened "notably now in the colleges and villages of the Middle-West. . . ." If this cultural revolution succeeds, it will mean "a national community in which energy is more and more shifted from material and practical anxieties to the doing of things for the sake of greater human experience. It will be

Erwin D. Canham is editor of The Christian Science Monitor; he edited and contributed to a volume published last year, "The World at Mid-Century."

the recapture, by a whole free people, of the primitive wisdom that industrialism has destroyed. . . . It is part of our recovered wisdom to know that we live not 'to pile up comfort nor ornaments, but for the quality of experience itself.'

Mr. Bryson prudently inserts a chapter renouncing utopianism, on the ground that he knows we will never become perfect. But to many, his next America will seem utopian, at least in a less absolute sense. Yet it is a goal, and a splendidly articulated one, of a continental democracy in the age of bigness—a democracy which he believes may one day merge into an organized world society.

Despite my strictures on Mr. Bryson's academic concepts and language, I find I have marked a multitude of striking phrases and ideas. As:

"Russia is a belated experiment in an already discredited nineteenth-century idea."

"We are on the verge of major changes. . . . Some of the symptoms we show can be rationally explained; some have to be taken as a fit of nerves into which the bearers of a culture may fall when change portends, or threatens, or is hoped for."

"Democracy is a system in which the individual gets the greatest chance to be himself, to make mistakes and learn by them, and to stretch his powers."

"Wise men watch nervously when politicians succeed in their incessant attempts to enlarge the operations of government, even the 'welfare state'; the state is the one institution from which no one can resign."

"We cannot measure the difficulty in the present problems of the world by the amount of ink in today's newspaper headlines. That is rather a measure of our commercially exploitable anxiety."

These few samples, chosen from a few pages, show the quality of Mr. Bryson's generalizations. He has most interesting chapters on art and democracy, and art and the machine. He drives home the central truth of individualism, hammering desperately at the thesis that "the government is not ourselves." Politically, therefore, his solution is the enforcement of national decisions by local administration in which democracy may again escape from the groups and become process.

Here, then, stands the idealistic cricket. Perhaps someday, somehow, through this book and other means, more of us can join Mr. Bryson in hopping out of the electric sign. At least we ought to have a chance to make the next America as brave as he thinks it can be.

U.S.A. Notes

H IS FOR HEROIN. By David Hulburd. Doubleday. \$1.75. This is a sixty-minute book that does a startling effective job of infusing life into those dry, repetitious headlines dealing with teen-age narcotics. It is an extended version of "It Happened to Amy," which appeared in *Woman's Home Companion*, the case history of a single addict—Amy Burton, 15, pretty and blond, living with her parents in a comfortable apartment in a Los Angeles suburb. Through a series of episodes related with remarkable dispassion by her mother, father, and herself, it reconstructs how Amy went from milk shakes to H. H is for heroin.

"One day," Amy recalls, "Jocelyn and I rode around . . . and she started telling me all over again what kicks I would get out of blowing up a joint. (That means smoking those cigarettes.) No, they never called them sticks in our crowd, or reeferers. That's so square. I didn't want to much, I was having a lot of fun, but I knew that one or two joints didn't hurt you; it was no worse than ditching school, like I was doing anyway. So I said okay."

By the time she was sixteen, Amy was married, to a dope addict of twenty-one. Their hunger for "grass," or marijuana, and H was unquenchable; to keep themselves in "junk," they forged prescription blanks, encouraged robbery, sold their furniture, drove all the way to Mexico for supplies, and borrowed from her parents—for food, they said. The horror of their lives, their fear of being "busted," is described without any razzle-dazzle fil-

lips by Mr. Hulburd, author of "This Happened in Pasadena"; his report, written with great control, has an inescapable impact. Of all the surprises, perhaps the greatest is that neither Mr. nor Mrs. Burton had any idea that Amy was "mainlining" it—that is, pumping H into her veins. The news broke suddenly—a phone call that Amy and her husband were in jail, arrested on suspicion of using narcotics. Of her life in H-land, Amy, now back on milk shakes, says only: "No, I haven't any 'lesson' to give other kids. If they read this story, like my father and mother and I have told it, if that isn't a lesson enough, I don't know what is."

—BERNARD KALB.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE FAR EAST, 1945-1951. By Harold M. Vinacke. Stanford University Press. 144 pp. \$3. Anyone interested in a non-partisan, decently impartial, and well informed review of our policies and problems in the Far East, will find it in this book. For in choosing sides, Professor Vinacke has shown himself to be on the side of the independent scholar; he feels no obligation to defend the Truman administration's actions or to support the criticisms of its opponents. Nor—for the purpose of reviewing recent history—does he find it necessary to announce his selection of loyalties between Chiang and Mao. Thus, what he has produced is a summary and critique of our relations with the Far East since 1945 and our search for a workable policy.

Whether or not we have had a workable policy is, of course, the great question at issue between the more honest disputants of the "great debate." That there have been major shifts since 1945, with regard to both Europe and Asia, is unquestionable. Professor Vinacke records these shifts almost impassively, but remarks that "the conclusion must be drawn that policy has followed change rather than anticipating it."

In defining policy, the real problem, Mr. Vinacke believes, lay in the question of "method, means, and place of establishment of the line of containment of Soviet expansion." Here, the administration had at least one decision forced upon it by the invasion of South Korea. But there has been another which this book makes clear despite some considerable muddying by administration statements as well as by Congressional debate and "investigations"—that, whatever the course of events in the Far East, maintenance of the coalition of European nations is to be given priority. Altogether, then, a brief, objective, and valuable volume. —PETER R. LEVIN.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 470

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 470 will be found in the next issue.

ACEGK MOEGQSU QE

GAU EGUWYBGAUF BH

YQEHBFGOPU.

—DURCD YCTQY.

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 469
No pain, no palm; no thorns, no throne; no gall, no glory; no cross, no crown.

—W. PENN.