

I'VE HAD A preliminary glimpse at the "Freedom-to-Read Bulletin," edited by Roland E. Burdick for the American Book Publishers Council. Although I experienced a slight involuntary shiver I did so, I devoured avidly the section dealing with the attacks on books



in U.S. schools in 1961. It's only when you read about the hundreds of such cases in one compilation that you realize how continual-last year as in the years before-were the efforts, often successful, to remove certain books from reading lists and from school library shelves, to cut pages from texts, and to discharge teachers who assigned socalled un-American or obscene books for reading.

From coast to coast, businessmen, housewives, clergymen, students, politicians are leaping up and objecting to titles and authors and demanding that they be censored. In many cases they haven't even read the objectionable books and admit it, but there are circulating throughout some areas of the country lists of disapproved books which give excerpts of the obscenities or else point out the subversive connections of the authors.

They draw aim on the same old targets, as a rule: Salinger, Orwell, Richard Wright, Uris, Steinbeck, and so on. But there are, as usual, some delightfully original attempts at censorship. Samples:

► PHOENIX, ARIZONA: Placed on the restricted shelves: "Brave New World," "The Magic Mountain," "Short Stories of Hemingway."

► PACIFIC PALISADES, CALIFORNIA: A student was told to take home his copy of "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz" because L. Frank Baum allegedly "had Communist sympathies."

► EAST BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA: The parish school board set up a threeman committee to censor all books, magazines, and films for school use. One member told a board meeting he had stopped subscribing to *The Atlantic Monthly* and *Saturday Review* because they were "objectionable." ► PONTIAC, MICHIGAN: Fifteen parents objected to "pornography" and "obscene language" in these books assigned students in the tenth and eleventh grades: "The Scarlet Letter," "The Good Earth," and "Drums Along the Mohawk." In "Drums" they complained that a half-wit servant girl went to live with an Indian. "The girl is punished for her sins," one woman said, "but I think she wound up well satisfied with the Indian."

► LEVITTOWN, NEW YORK: The local school board voted to ban "A History of the United States from the Age of Exploration to 1865" because the description of the Colonial practice of bundling was "in bad taste and immoral." This was done even after the chairman of the social studies department cut the offensive pages from the texts.

► CHANNELVIEW, TEXAS: In this Houston suburb a storm was aroused over "Living Biographies of Great Philosophers." The female leader of the drive to have the book removed from the high school library centered her complaint on the treatment of Plato, who, she reminded us, was a student of Socrates whom the people poisoned "for the ideas he was spreading." Plato talked about free love and communal living and, she added, "I can't help but believe that this is one reason we have so many sex maniacs walking around."

In Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the *Journal*, noting this, said it had heard so much about how Johnny can't read that it was startled to find Texas school children delving into Plato. "Educators everywhere ought to find out how Houston does it."

(The "Freedom-to-Read Bulletin" is available free of charge by writing to American Book Publishers Council, 58 West 40th Street, New York 18.)

IN DETROIT Mark Beltaire told about the seven-year-old daughter of a teacher who was supposed to draw the Nativity scene for the class. She did a fine job, complete with Jesus. Mary, Joseph, and all the scenery. But in one corner was a short, fat man who didn't jibe with the original. Asked to explain him, the girl answered:

"That's Round John Virgin."

GOOFS: Readers are always cooperative enough to point out the mistakes I make and I don't mind, for they are always so nice about it. Like I said "hep" a little while back and a whole bunch jumped on me for being a square from another generation. "I am forced to inform you," admonishes Richard von Hallberg, "that hip replaced hep some years ago, making hep about as square as 'corny.' And 'square,' by the way, is currently employed only by those to whom it might well apply. The new term is 'clyde.'"

Mr. von Hallberg writes from Hollywood, where they are either way ahead or way behind the rest of us. He also objects to a recent report by an economist who said "there has been a definite downgrade in the upturn." And someone else, James Kirby of Wilmington, Delaware, tells me my column "fills a much-needed void," a phrase he discovered in SR some time back and which he has been saving for me.

From Ephraim, Wisconsin, comes a plaint from one of the 244 residents that when I wrote "north of Concord" I was not being very specific. It seems there are eighteen Concords in the U.S. And what do you know? There are two Ephraims.

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Look, we are not alone. The University of Chicago Press wrote me a letter that referred to the enclosed "accordian circular." And a University of Michigan Press release used the word "acedemic." And Fleet has just brought out Alfred Sheinwold's new book which, accordian to the jacket, is titled "A Short Cut to Winning Bridge." And executive recruiter John L. Handy told an interviewer on a television show that he was looking for bold, challenging thinkers who could "meet a problem, get it off the ground, carry it through and wrap it up." How's that sound to you, Clyde?

-JEROME M. BEATTY.

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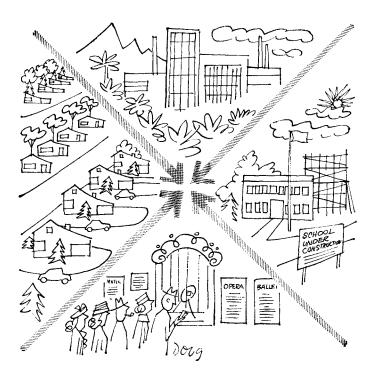


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Saturday Review

JANUARY 27, 1962

A DIRECTION FOR THE WEST



By BARBARA WARD, British economist and political analyst, author of "The West at Bay" and the forthcoming "The Rich Nations and the Poor Nations," among other works. This article is published by special arrangement with the editors of General Electric Forum, a quarterly devoted to the discussion of national and world issues.

F WE could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could then better judge what to do and how to do it." The words are Abraham Lincoln's but the dilemma is our own. Over the last decade, we in the Western world have become more and more aware of being under steady, undermining attack. We have felt our institutions threatened, our aims thwarted, our pretensions mocked. After 300 years of world-wide dominance, nothing in our experience prepares us for this sense of insecurity; our temptation is to lash out at it blindly and angrily. But there is no safety in such reactions. We must know "where we are and whither we are tending.' Otherwise, we shall fight against symptoms, not causes, and battle with shadows whereas our real struggle is with the angel of history itself.

The point can be quickly illustrated.

Just over a hundred years ago, Western power in the Far East began to seem virtually irresistible. The Western merchants with their new goods and vessels, the Western soldiers with their new weapons, moved inexorably in. It was the first rising, in the China Sea, of the great tide of modern science and technology. In China, the Westerners were dismissed as "barbarians" and blamed for all the disruption they brought with them. Their techniques were ignored while a passionate rearguard action was fought to keep old Mandarin society unaltered down to its last ceremonious particular. Within fifty years, Chinese society all but collapsed and then entered on another fifty years of anarchy.

In Japan, on the contrary, the West had been studied by leaders and soldiers long before Commodore Perry arrived to demand the opening of the Hermit Kingdom. Westerners were seen not as "barbarians" but as representatives of a new type of society which, to resist, Japan would need in some measure to assimilate. Heroic readjustments - including profound structural changes such as the abolition of feudal land tenure-were made, and within fifty vears the West regarded Japan as an equal. In short, the Chinese suffered history; the Japanese controlled it. A similar choice confronts the West today.

Communist pressure on our contem-

porary society to some degree resembles Western pressure on the Far East a century ago. We can, like the Manchu dynasty in China, regard our adversaries as "red devils" and attribute all the disruption they cause to an immoral and violent conspiracy. Or we can, like the Japanese, look at the pressure not so much as a pressure exercised by malevolent enemies but rather as a deeper historical pressure of change and upheaval which they simply project and exploit.

Which of these interpretations should we choose? Let us look at three areas in which we are most keenly aware of Communist competition and challenge. They force us to confront the issue of a working world order for mankind, in part by their boasts that it will be Communist ("We will bury you"), in part by the frightful dangers of the arms race in which both sides are engaged. Again, they compel us to consider the future allegiance of the "uncommitted" third of humanity by their claim that capitalism simply exploits the underdeveloped peoples whereas Communism offers them the way to both equality and abundance. And this claim is in turn part of their more fundamental credo-that only Communism has the secret of long-term economic expansion and can confidently promise its people standards of living which by 1980, so goes the boast, will be half