

the case exactly: "If the source of her images was personal or neurotic, she transformed these images into meaningful general symbols; if she used the resources of supernatural terror, it was to provide metaphors for the all-too-real terrors of the natural." In *The Sundial* a group of people become convinced that the world is coming to an end and that only they are to be saved; what Miss Jackson reveals about these people before she is through with them is a dreadful commentary on humanity in an age of imminent disaster. In *The Haunting of Hill House*, which makes more direct use of conceivably supernatural phenomena than any of the other novels, the first sentence indicates the true character of the book's theme: "No live organism can continue for long to exist sanely under conditions of absolute reality; even larks and katydids are supposed, by some, to dream." Her last novel, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, which ought to have been in this collection, shows her at her most skillful, making the not quite credible as real as this typewriter of mine. It also suggests, perhaps a little more ruefully than was customary with Miss Jackson, some desperate truths about mankind.

Miss Jackson was certainly not the first writer to assert that there is evil in everybody, but what might be merely a platitude becomes a great truth because of the depth and consistency of her own feeling about life and because she was so extraordinarily successful in making her readers feel what she felt. She plunges the reader into a world of her creating and leaves him wondering about what he has always believed to be the real world.

—GRANVILLE HICKS.

FRASER YOUNG'S LITERARY CRYPT No. 1206

A cryptogram is writing in cipher. Every letter is part of a code that remains constant throughout the puzzle. Answer No. 1206 will be found in the next issue.

D WMEDO ITCOJ: DO COJTO-
CKMQ DQQT EIPN KV BKHYDIPT
BPMEICOJ.

—UWHCQYKBWTH EKHPTN

Answer to Literary Crypt No. 1205

The historian must have some conception of how men who are not historians behave. —E. M. FORSTER.

LETTERS TO THE Book Review Editor



NRA for S. 1975

IN AUGUST OF 1963 *The American Rifleman*, the journal of the National Rifle Association, discussed in an editorial the problem of "unscrupulous gun merchants" who were shipping by common carrier guns to "juveniles, criminals, and mental defectives," and an amendment to the Federal Firearms Act to curb such traffic in guns was proposed. This editorial argued that "Steps must be taken to stop the traffic of mail-order guns into unauthorized hands. At the same time, due caution must be exercised so that law-abiding citizens are not severely penalized or deprived of their individual rights." To this end the NRA supported Senator Dodd's bill (S. 1975) introduced on August 2, 1963. In another editorial of March 1965 it was stated that "Most Americans agree that under today's conditions, some guidelines must be established for the control of firearms. Juveniles, criminals and mental defectives should not be allowed to contravene local laws by mail-order purchase of guns." . . . This editorial outlined Senator Dodd's newer bill, S. 14. In May of 1965 an editorial . . . endorsed again S. 1975, and stated support of "properly drawn legislation to outlaw dangerous devices such as bazookas, bombs, and anti-tank guns . . . properly drawn legislation to curb the flood of cheap foreign firearms that are being dumped in America . . . properly drawn legislation to impose heavy penalties for crimes involving the misuse of firearms . . . [and] strict enforcement of existing laws at all levels of government." In an open letter to the NRA membership (*American Rifleman*, Dec. 1965) Executive Vice President Franklin L. Orth again described a problem "to which a solution must be found":

It cannot be wished away or swept under the rug. It is a fact that known felons, juveniles, and other unfit persons have been able, with relative ease, to purchase concealable weapons by the mail-order route in circumvention of state laws. This situation will no longer be tolerated in our society. Public opinion demands that some control be applied to this traffic, and public opinion will be served.

These are typical statements of the organization which Harold Lavine [in his review of *The Right to Bear Arms*, SR, Aug. 27] characterizes as "assiduously" spreading the misconception that the Second Amendment "protects the right of teen-age hopheads to carry pistols." Mr. Lavine goes on to say, "The reason for the NRA's attitude is simple greed: addicts are just as good a market for guns as anyone else." Mr. Lavine must know that the NRA does not sell guns and is a nonprofit organization. . . .

He states that only two federal laws exist which legislate guns. The one prohibiting

automatic weapons and machine guns, he says, "does not touch pistols, revolvers, rifles, or shotguns." In fact, Section 5848 of this law (the National Firearms Act) prescribes the legal barrel length of rifles and shotguns; the intent of this law was to regulate the creation of gangster-type weapons. Also Mr. Lavine completely ignores postal laws which make it a crime to mail concealable weapons (pistols and revolvers), U. S. Code, Title 18, Section 1715. . . .

WILLIAM E. BAILEY.

Tucson, Ariz.

Twelve Tribes

JOHN K. HUTCHENS's article [SR, Aug. 13] gives the impression that *Indian Legends from the Northern Rockies* is devoted entirely to the Flatheads of western Montana, near whom Mr. Hutchens lived as a boy. My Introduction begins as follows: "In this anthology, the general reader of any age will find . . . myths, legends, personal narratives, and historical traditions from the tribes whose homes in historical times have been in the present states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming." In the second paragraph, I name those *twelve* tribes and the Sioux, who told some legends about landscape features in the region. . . .

From the twelve tribes of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming, I offer the reader seventy-one legends that have not appeared in print until 1966. This number, more than half of my varied collection, does not include the fragments of almost-forgotten myths, told me by Indians, which I include in the historical-ethnological introductions to six sections [of the book]. . . .

This collection of folktales, accompanied by factual material, is my third contribution to an understanding and appreciation of our long-abused native "minority group." *Indian Legends from the Northwest Rockies* was preceded by *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest* (1953) and by *Indian Legends of Canada* (1960).

ELLA E. CLARK.

La Jolla, Calif.

Seeds of Our Way of Life

IT WAS SICKENING to read the review of Pearl S. Buck's *For Spacious Skies* [SR, July 23] laudatory, rightly, though it was of Mrs. Buck. To have revealed the growing number (in the hundreds of thousands!) of illegitimate children of American paternity must be revolting to every decent American, and give pause for deep reflection and question. Are these the growing fruits of the seeds disseminating "our way of life"? . . .

We live in an age of endless research in preventive measures for all ills. Would not these spreading evils be, at least, curbed without our military presence in that unfortunate small country?

LENORE TARNOPOLL.

Brooklyn, N.Y.

The Publisher as Diplomat

THE READER is invited to begin this column by answering the following multiple-choice question: Since 1962, delegations of American book publishers have traveled to Eastern Europe 1) to "break down cultural barriers"; 2) to sell U.S. books behind the Iron Curtain; 3) because they like to travel and counterpart funds are available to help finance the trip; 4) to study publishing methods under Communism; 5) to scout out books for possible publication in this country.

The correct answers are 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

The success with which these aims were accomplished, while not total, has been encouraging. Traveling in delegations ranging from four to six persons, with an assist from the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, three groups of publishers visited, separately but equally, the USSR (1962), Yugoslavia (1963), and Rumania (1965.) The delegations consisted of top executives of both trade and textbook houses, plus an official of the American Book Publishers Council and, on one trip, the president of *Publishers' Weekly*. A major objective was to determine if such person-to-person contact could increase the trade in books between the United States and Eastern Europe. Practically speaking, some delegates did come back with contracts as well as contacts, and one U.S. publisher bought a piece of property on the Dalmatian coast; but the chief value of the exchanges for the Americans was in the "opening to the Left" which gave them an insight into the problems and rewards of state publishing. (Separate reports on book publishing in the USSR, Rumania, and Yugoslavia—not state-controlled—prepared by the delegations, are available from the American Book Publishers Council, 1 Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. The price is \$1 for each report.)

This brings us to the second multiple-choice question: Eastern European and Yugoslav publishers came to the United States 1) to promote the sale of "socialist realism" in this country; 2) to see the Grand Canyon; 3) to sign up American books for translation into their own languages; 4) to try coexistence on for size; 5) because it is easier to talk to a capitalist directly than to bug his office.

Again, the correct answers are 1 through 5.

Delegations from the three aforemen-

tioned countries came here as guests of the American Book Publishers Council. The State Department provided interpreters, a per diem of \$20 a delegate, and its official blessing. The most recent group, from Rumania, made the crossing this summer and I was privileged to meet them at a reception. It was obvious that they were not about to defect, but withal the twenty-one-day tour had been salutary. They had attended the ABPC's annual meeting at Pocono Manor, Pennsylvania, and the ABA convention in Washington, where two days of sight-seeing hinted at the permanence of American democracy. Visits to schools and universities around the country were taken in stride, and so were the cable cars in San Francisco. A day was spent at the Grand Canyon. The delegates arrived with ten pieces of luggage and went home with eighteen. "You must come to Rumania and drink some of our plum wine," a member of the group remarked to me over his martini. Was there anything the delegates would



like to see that they hadn't been shown? an American publisher asked. "Harlem," was the reply.

The visits have been useful, in an inverse and unintended way, in demonstrating just how far a country will go in letting itself be culturally influenced against the grain of its ideology, or what it will and will not export in its own interests. We wouldn't sell the Rumanians a rubber factory (strategic goods) but are quite willing to supply the books of John Updike (nonstrategic). Any thinking man knows that ultimately it is the writer who is strategic and the factory that is harmless; in the long run, the Communists will be better off with our authentic authors than with our synthetic rubber. Or our pop culture. (Too often we have sent Earl Hines to Russia and got the Bolshoi Ballet in return.) Contemporary American fiction appeals to a large part of the Communist world because it is more genuinely revolutionary in spirit than the didactically "correct" works of their own writers. The opening to the West is the real revolution in European Communism, and anything our publishers can do to hasten it makes the world that much safer. When

it comes to books, we'd rather switch than fight.

The Communists, moreover, are not the young intellectual rebels who might be expected to lend a sympathetic ear to their creative counterparts in America; they are the state-appointed custodians of culture. The receptivity of these men to U.S. literature enjoys official sanction. For example, the Publishing House for World Literature (one of seventeen major state-owned publishers in Rumania) requests hundreds of review copies of American titles, with a view to translation; it buys the rights to about one out of four titles so requested (and, unlike the Russians, pays royalties). This year, the House will do Faulkner's *The Hamlet*, Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, and a three-volume edition of that perennial hero of the Eastern world, Jack London. Katherine Anne Porter, Truman Capote, John O'Hara, Saul Bellow, and John Cheever are all scheduled or being considered.

Yugoslavia and Poland are even more receptive, principally because the United States Government, through the Informational Media Guaranty Program, buys with dollars specific amounts of blocked dinars and zlotys owed the U.S. for services and goods. We use the "soft" currency thereby acquired to defray various of our expenses in the two Communist countries, such as those of U.S. Government personnel. The dollars thus accumulated by Yugoslavia and Poland are earmarked for the purchase of American books and translation rights.

Beyond this, the Yugoslavia Technical Assistance Administration distributes American textbooks to universities and libraries, while the USIA, working with the American Embassy in Belgrade, sponsors inexpensive reprints of the classics—Melville, Poe, Henry James. Yugoslav publishers are also eager to co-publish books in English with American firms, and a few such deals have been worked out. Part of the edition is sold locally, the remainder exported.

In terms of money, the trade that can be generated between Eastern European and American publishers may never be very great. In terms of ideas, the exchange is still lopsided: with the exception of the Russians, we translate few authors from these countries. (There are, of course, relatively few to translate.) In terms of good will, the program has to compete with the ill will generated by conflicting attitudes toward world problems. The primary value of the contacts at this point, one American publisher-delegate said, is simply better public relations. We showed the Rumanians Harlem, they bought the rights to *Donald Duck at the South Pole*. What was at best a cultural détente fifteen years ago has become a hopeful dialogue.

—DAVID DEMPSEY.