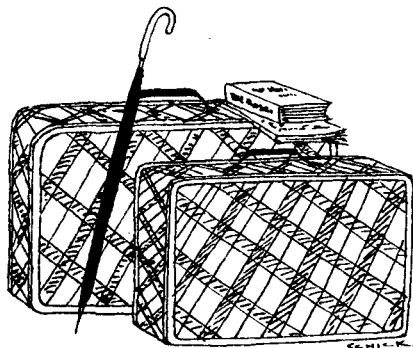


limit our vision. At times Mrs. Barrett even seems to take refuge in the child's ignorance; but she neither incorporates the child's naïveté into the novel nor plumbs the resources of the double point of view—Sally as girl and woman.

As for the mysterious bond between Sally and David, predictably enough they were lovers some summers later, but their plans to marry were scotched when David's uncle committed suicide and David abandoned Sally. Safe in the present, David explains his flight by repeating what his Uncle Jake had told him: gripped by jealousy, Jake killed Sally's mother and her lover. Who wanted another Ralston messing things up, thought romantic young David. But did Jake do it? David's mother claims Jake was with her the night of the murder. These revelations are intended to suggest the ambiguity of all character and action. It's a hollow claim.

So Sally goes to France and marries the French lover's nephew, whose charm is right out of *Esquire* ads. But what kind of woman is she beneath her sophistication, her nostalgia, and her bikini? And why has David such Gothic fears of a Ralston curse? In Mrs. Barrett's hands the technique of delayed exposition becomes, unfortunately, an empty device. Instead of deepening character, she proliferates surfaces; instead of insight, information.

AT the novel's end Sally whispers ecstatically to her mother's portrait: "What were you?... What am I?," thus making "search for identity" and "ambiguity" the novel's official themes. But they are faked, like that hurricane which scourges when nothing in the book calls upon nature to exert moral force. The story will, I think, appeal to the woman whose life is complex and whose emotions are disorderly, who wants a bit of vicarious life but no challenges; for despite the fashionable trappings of its themes *Castle Ugly* will not give her the radical perspective on ordinary life that is found in more serious novels. This is "ladies' magazine fiction": it shocks no one and hence cannot enlighten. Mrs. Barrett, for all her talent, gives no answer to Sally's breathless question.



Proposers of Reform

Ombudsmen and Others: Citizens' Protectors in Nine Countries, and When Americans Complain: Governmental Grievance Procedures, by Walter Gellhorn (Harvard University Press. 448 pp., \$6.95; 239 pp., \$3.95), examine the roles of official "watchdogs," or complaint-receivers and proposers of reform, here and abroad. Charles Hogan has been a member of the United Nations Secretariat for more than twenty years.

By CHARLES HOGAN

SINCE the probabilities are increasing that we shall live longer and become recipients of state benefits, we ought to inquire how these can be courteously, speedily, and efficiently managed, and how their purposes and methods may be altered or improved. It is now agreed that beneficiaries benefit more and are happier and more contented if they are able to complain against either real or fancied abuses and express their views on the formation of policy and its operation. Watching and listening can lead the wise and willing into sensitive perception that may mean improvement.

We shall not reduce government. How can we make it better?

This is the subject of two detailed, on-the-spot studies by Walter Gellhorn of Columbia University Law School. The first, *When Americans Complain*, covers the United States. The second, *Ombudsmen and Others*, deals with Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, USSR, Yugoslavia, Japan, and New Zealand. Gellhorn confines his analysis to officially established watchdogs, or "ombudsmen": complaint-receivers and proposers of reform. He is not concerned with the detection of corrupt office-holders or with the work of private lobbies pursuing the interests of special groups.

The systems vary as much as the countries that have established them. Some have long histories; others are quite new. The Scandinavian nations have different rules governing both the numbers and powers of ombudsmen. Some may observe the military; others may not. Some may check on the courts; others may not. Their relationship to the government varies. In general, they have had marked success in overcoming the resistance and fears of civil servants, and have even become popular with them,

since complainants frequently learn only from the ombudsmen of further remedies available to them. Further, they will take a negative answer and explanation from an ombudsman and stop griping about the supposed callousness of civil servants.

An ombudsman cannot issue an edict. He suggests, persuades, reports, even negotiates. And many cases can be remedied without the expense of a lawyer, a court appearance, and the rest of the elaborate machinery.

One must know Japan's history to understand why a large and accessible system of local complaint offices has not taught the Japanese to criticize public administrators. The one-party states (USSR, Poland, Yugoslavia) face special problems, because opposition as such is not tolerated; watchdogs have been supplied, since these governments are worrying about their public images. The single party is itself a watchdog, and the press is full of specific criticism, which is encouraged and is distinguished from



In the Beginning

By Norma Farber

GET up! said Mary to the three grown men on their knees. And since her child was newly born, they rose, somewhat stiff, to please

the serious mother, who was shooing assorted nosy animals. Shoo! shoo! that sniffed her infant's toes.

Sh! (with severity) It's too much commotion for so small a thing. Let him breathe. Don't touch! O what a frightening stable-ful.

Go now, all of you. Let me raise him as one among others, a regular boy. Thanks for your praise, and what you say about a star. I mean—these first few days; don't make me look too far.

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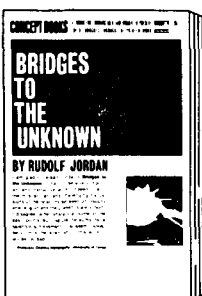


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opposition. All three countries have suffered from régimes where this distinction was not made. It appears easier to run quietly an economy of scarcity than one that is expanding.

In the United States we are given to complaint, and we have many avenues for this at various levels of government. Each member of Congress is given a staff in Washington and an office and staff in his district to work out details with the aggrieved. Every government department has a parallel staff which processes their questions speedily. No expense to the complainer is involved. These two sets of officials are eager to explain, to produce results if possible, and to avoid giving the opposition any ammunition. The General Accounting Office is not merely a Federal accountant supervising expenditures; half of its staff is deployed around the world examining the soundness and efficiency of operations. It is a respected diagnostician and therapist, and therefore effective. Farmers are chronic complainers the world over, and the new office of Inspector General in the Department of Agriculture appears to have the power to update a huge governmental instrument. And the Post Office, we are assured, is trying. Space precludes even a synopsis of Gellhorn's detailed analysis and evaluation of the critical and corrective process here and abroad.

The emotions aroused in the controversy over the civilian police review boards, and the recent overwhelming rejection of the idea by New York City, make it clear that great care must be

exercised in the establishment of new machinery. There is now talk of an ombudsman, instead, in New York. Present feelings about whether minorities can obtain fair treatment are so deep and explosive that policemen and social and welfare officers often feel they are the ones who need protection. To be effective in such a situation an ombudsman would have to be free to hear complaints against a wide variety of public servants and policies. He would have to earn and enjoy the respect of those with the least education and economic opportunity—those most susceptible to disgruntlement. He would be taking on this country's number one current problem. No ombudsman elsewhere has yet faced so much. As Gellhorn observes in *Ombudsmen and Others*:

For one who thinks in American terms, the ombudsman system seems a useful device for achieving interstitial reforms, for somewhat countering the impersonality, the insensitivity, the automaticity of bureaucratic methods, and for discouraging official arrogance. To rely on one man alone—or even on a few men—to dispense administrative wisdom in all fields, to provide social perspectives, to bind up personal wounds, and to guard the nation's civil liberties seems, on the other hand, an old-fashioned way of coping with the twentieth century. Ombudsmen, no matter how accomplished they may be, cannot replace all other mechanisms that make for governmental justice and wisdom. They must be viewed as supplementers of, not as substitutes for, legal controls.



"I'm rich, young and handsome. I've just asked you to leave your poor but hardworking husband to cruise the Mediterranean on my yacht. What would you say?"

SR's Check List of the Week's New Books

Business, Economics

MONEY AND INVESTMENT PROFITS. By A. Hamilton Bolton. Dow Jones-Irwin. \$8.50.

YOUR INVESTMENTS: 1967 Edition. By Leo Barnes. Prentice-Hall. \$4.95.

Crime, Suspense

ALWAYS KILL A STRANGER. By Robert L. Fish. Putnam. \$3.95.

CALLIOPE REEF. By Howard Rigsby. Doubleday. \$4.50.

WHAT SHOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT DYING? By Tobias Wells. Doubleday. \$3.95.

Current Affairs

METROPOLIS ON THE MOVE: Geographers Look at Urban Sprawl. Edited by Jean Gottman and Robert A. Harper. Wiley. Hardbound, \$6.50. Paperback, \$3.45.

THE WRONG MAN IN UNIFORM: Our Unfair and Obsolete Draft—And How We Can Replace It. By Bruce K. Chapman. Trident. \$3.95.

Essays

OF HUMAN FREEDOM. By Jean-Paul Sartre. Edited by Wade Baskin. Philosophical Library. \$4.75.

THE TEMPER OF OUR TIME. By Eric Hoffer. Harper & Row. \$3.95.

Fiction

THE ANCIENT POND. By Courtney Browne. Harper & Row. \$4.95.

THE ARCHDUKE. By Michael Arnold. Doubleday. \$4.95.

THE BEAUTIFUL LIFE. By Edwin Gilbert. Putnam. \$5.95.

THE BRITISH MUSEUM IS FALLING DOWN. By David Lodge. Holt, Rinehart & Winston. \$3.95.

BURN THEN, LITTLE LAMP. By Margaret Banister. Houghton Mifflin. \$4.95.

JOHNNY COME JINGLE-O. By Richard B. Etho. Crown. \$4.50.

THE LOVE DEPARTMENT. By William Trevor. Viking. \$5.50.

THE MAN WHO GREW YOUNGER AND OTHER STORIES. By Jerome Charyn. Harper & Row. \$4.95.

NOTES OF A HYPOCRITE. By Christiane Singer. Dutton. \$3.95.

THE RAVISHING OF LOL STEIN. By Marguerite Duras. Grove. \$3.95.

TAKE HANDS AT WINTER. By John Peter. Doubleday. \$4.95.

Government, Politics

THE HISTORIAN AND THE DIPLOMAT: The Role of History and Historians in American Foreign Policy. Edited by Francis L. Loewenheim. Harper & Row. \$6.95.

History

CHIHUAHUA: Storehouse of Storms. By Florence C. Lister and Robert H. Lister. Univ. of New Mexico Press. \$6.50.

THE TRIAL OF THE GERMANS: An Account of the Twenty-two Defendants Before the International Military Tribunal at

Nuremberg. By Eugene Davidson. Macmillan. \$12.50.

Literary Criticism

CELINE AND HIS VISION. By Erika Ostrovsky. New York Univ. Press. Hardbound, \$7.95. Paperback, \$2.25.

Miscellany

THE ART OF CASSEROLE COOKERY. By William I. Kaufman. Doubleday. \$4.50.

THE ART OF SHAPING SHRUBS, TREES AND OTHER PLANTS. By Tatsuo and Kiyoko Ishimoto. Crown. \$3.95.

A CHILD IS BORN. By Lennart Nilsson. Delacorte. \$12.50.

Natural History

THE PLAINS OF CAMDEBOO. By Eve Palmer. Viking. \$6.50.

Personal History

CLIMBING BLIND. By Colette Richard. Dutton. \$4.50.

EDGAR CAYCE—THE SLEEPING PROPHET. By Jess Stearn. Doubleday. \$4.95.

THE FURIOUS PASSAGE OF JAMES BALDWIN. By Fern Marja Eckman. Evans/Lippincott. \$4.50.

VILLAGE OF THE OUTCASTS. By Robert M. Wulff. Doubleday. \$4.95.

Poetry

THE POETRY OF VISION: Five Eighteenth-Century Poets. By Patricia Meyer Spacks. Harvard Univ. Press. \$6.50.

Religion, Philosophy

A HUNDRED YEARS OF PHILOSOPHY. By John Passmore. Basic Books. \$10.

JESUS OF THE PARABLES. By Eta Linne-mann. Harper & Row. \$4.95.

TREASURY OF THOUGHT: Observations Over Half a Century. By Dagobert D. Runes. Philosophical Library. \$6.

Warfare

FIGHTING SHIPS. By Arch Whitehouse. Doubleday. \$5.95.

A HISTORY OF WAR AND WEAPONS, 449-1660: English Warfare from the Anglo-Saxons to Cromwell. By A. V. B. Norman and Don Pottinger. Crowell. \$6.95.

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