

ernment jurisdiction and concern. In fact, they see as much danger in government "development" as they would see in its private counterpart. They have spent more time in recent years fighting Reclamation and the Engineers than they have fighting private power or the lumbermen. And any of them would assure Mr. Smith that the "preservationists," whom he patronizes, have had a major role in forcing the American public to adopt a more responsible attitude

toward land and water. It is not inconceivable that in future disputes over projects, these preservationists could find themselves opposing Mr. Smith.

Nevertheless this is an important book, and one that all conservationists and legislators should read carefully. If the author fails to admit that, having pushed the old car to start it up a hill, we have the obligation to steer and even to stop it, he describes with authority and clarity how we got it going.

## The Business and Politics of Crime

***The Secret Rulers***, by Fred J. Cook (Duell, Sloan & Pearce. 373 pp. \$6.95), documents the growth and corruptive influence of organized crime in the United States. Joseph Haas is an editor and staff writer for *Panorama* magazine of the *Chicago Daily News*.

By JOSEPH HAAS

WITH his earlier study, *The FBI Nobody Knows*, Fred J. Cook performed admirably a long-overdue public service. After reading his exposé, only the most blind fanatics of the extreme Right would still be able to maintain the fiction that J. Edgar Hoover is a sort of third person in a new trinity of Americanism, just below God and Columbia.

Because no one else had dared attempt it before, Cook's was an essential book, presenting much new evidence. The author made significant use of known facts: the arrogance, autocracy, and incredible bureaucracy of Mr. Hoover and of the agents who are indoctrinated to worship him in a dangerous personality cult.

Unfortunately, these virtues cannot be found in Mr. Cook's latest reportorial effort, *The Secret Rulers*. While this is a thorough history of the crime syndicate's operations in New York and New Jersey, with side trips to Youngstown, Ohio, and other points west, the book doesn't advance our knowledge of organized crime.

It is not completely just to fault Mr. Cook because he was unable to turn up startling new information about the Mafia as he was about the FBI. For one thing, it has been open season on the

Mafia for generations, and just about anything that is written on it, fact or fiction, is published. For another, an Abe Reles or a Joe Valachi seldom comes along to try to tell all he knows about the Combination's operations. The Mafia frowns on informers, over the muzzles of .38-caliber revolvers or the din of dynamite blasts.

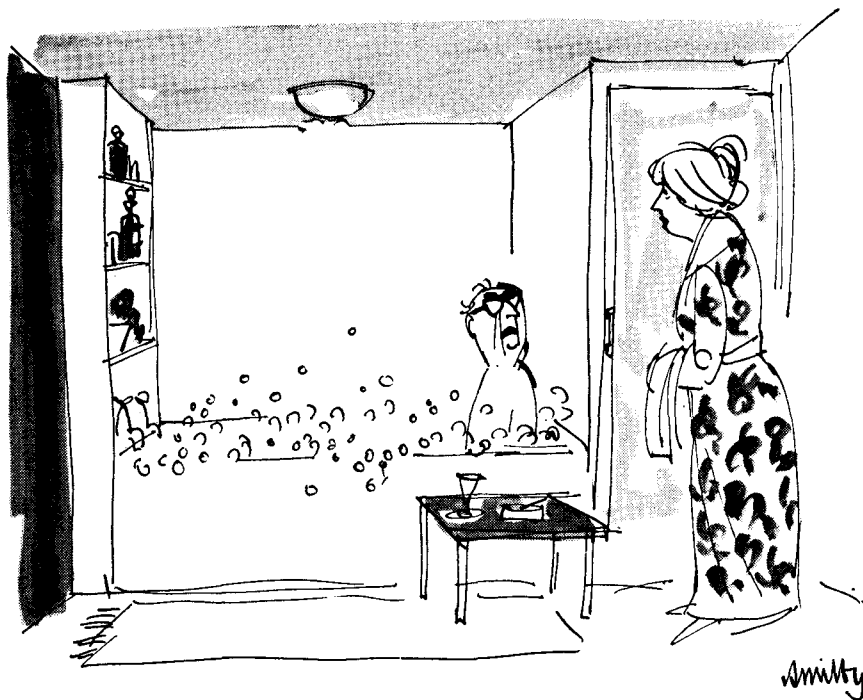
But, to justify another book on organized crime, Mr. Cook should have furthered our understanding of it somehow. And what does he tell us, beyond the cruel facts of the Mafia's history? That by utilizing perhaps half of its \$9 billion to \$11 billion annual take for bribery payoffs it corrupts thousands of public officials. That it is systematic, savage, often immune from justice.

What does Mr. Cook recommend to combat it? Stiffer penalties for bribes and removal of the statute of limitations on this offense; regular, mandatory income tax investigations of public officials; reform in political campaign financing. All certainly needed, and suggested for years by honest anti-crime agencies, but, because politicians make the laws, never significantly put into effect.

The book's organization and prose are competent; perhaps workmanlike would be a better word. As journalism *The Secret Rulers* is excellent except for Mr. Cook's frequent lapses into some of the crime reporter's weaknesses: Reles is described as a "squat, repulsive thug" but a photograph shows him as just another face in the crowd; Mr. Cook keeps speaking of the "enormity" of the syndicate's take when he means the "enormousness," and every ranking underling is some Mafia leader's "right bower" or his "right arm"; "quid pro quo" pops up everywhere to mean almost anything. Then, too, in this kind of work an index is essential if the book is to have continuing utility.

To be sure, if you have not yet read a history of organized crime in the United States, Mr. Cook's book would provide a good starting point. Everyone should know how the syndicate works, how its moneyed tentacles reach into governors' offices, the courts, police departments, and city administrations. In this colorful, violent story one may follow the machinations of such figures as Lucky Luciano, Frank Costello, Joe Adonis, Vito Genovese, and other Mafiosi in the continuing struggle for power.

But if you have kept reasonably informed through earlier accounts of the business of crime and through revelations by Joe Valachi, Abe Reles and others before investigatory bodies, Mr. Cook offers little. It's a pity that a reporter with his skill as an investigator cannot find the backing to give him a real shot at attempting to bring members of the Mafia to justice.



"No it isn't a bubble bath—that's the way it came out of the tap."

## The Week's New Books

### Anthropology

**LAW AND WARFARE:** Studies in the Anthropology of Conflict. Edited by Paul J. Bohannon. Natural History Press/Doubleday. \$2.50.

### Crime, Suspense

**THE CRIMSHAW MEMORANDUM.** By Lionel White. Dutton. \$3.95.

**HEDGEROW.** By Florence Engel Randall. Harcourt, Brace & World. \$5.95.

**THE 9TH DIRECTIVE.** By Adam Hall. Simon & Schuster. \$4.95.

**SMILING THE BOY FELL DEAD.** By Michael Delving. Scribners. \$3.95.

**TAKE MY LIFE.** By Winston Graham. Doubleday. \$3.95.

### Economics

**THE ECONOMICS OF POVERTY.** By Thomas Balogh. Macmillan. \$7.95.

### Fiction

**BELINDA.** By Katherine Blake. Reynal. \$3.95.

**A CERTAIN ISLAND.** By Robert Murphy. Evans. \$4.95.

**THE EYE OF THE NEEDLE.** By Ben Stoltzfus. Viking. \$4.50.

**RAKOSSY.** By Cecelia Holland. Atheneum. \$5.75.

**THE SCORPIONS.** By Robert Kelly. Doubleday. \$3.95.

**STORY TELLER.** By MacKinlay Kantor. Doubleday. \$5.95.

**WHEREVER SHE GOES.** By Richard Scowcroft. Lippincott. \$4.95.

### Government

**LAWMAKERS IN A CHANGING WORLD.** Edited by Elke Frank. Prentice-Hall. Hardbound, \$4.95. Paperback, \$1.95.

### History

**THE COLONIAL EMPIRES: A Comparative Survey from the Eighteenth Century.** By D. K. Fieldhouse. Delacorte. \$8.

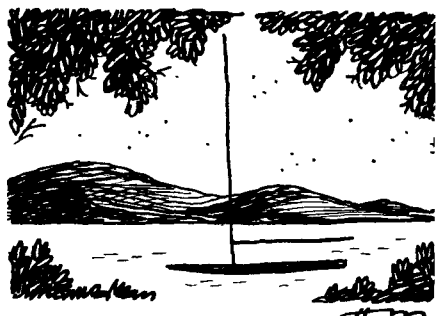
**KASSERINE PASS.** By Martin Blumenson. Houghton Mifflin. \$5.95.

**THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND JAPAN.** By Raymond A. Esthus. Univ. of Washington Press. \$7.95.

### Miscellany

**THE INVENTOR'S PATENT HANDBOOK.** By Stacy V. Jones. Dial. \$5.

**READER'S DIGEST 1967 ALMANAC AND**  
(Continued on page 94)



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