

# Trade Winds

Cleveland Amory

**Syndicate Sin of the Week**—from Ernest Thode, Jr., of Columbus, Ohio, in the Columbus *Citizen-Journal*:

DEAR ABBY: I am a widow, 47 years old, and I live with my son who is 22. For Christmas he gave me a pair of black lace panties with a red bow—the type a striptease dancer might wear. I blushed when I opened the package, but pretended I was pleased. I would never wear anything like that.

Lately my son has taken to smacking me on the rump as an affectionate gesture when he passes by. I love my son, but I do not appreciate this kind of familiarity by the child I brought into the world.

I have heard there is something called “The Oedipus Complex.” Do you think my son has one? And, if so, what should I do about it? I have started to lock my bedroom door at night in case he gets other strange ideas. Should I insist that he get his own apartment? Kindly advise me as I can’t ask anyone else these questions.

WORRIED.

DEAR WORRIED: Obviously you and your son do not communicate very well, or you wouldn’t be “worried” about his ideas and intentions. You should get to know him better in order to understand him. This will take time and effort and dialogue. “The Oedipus Complex” is the theory that all sons have an unconscious desire to get rid of their father in order to watermelon she could not afford a mother. Some buy it, some do not. In all probability, your son is a fun-loving 22-year-old boy who loves his mother in the normal way.

Sure he does, Abby, sure he does. But if he starts getting up in the *night* to go after that watermelon, watch out.

**Letter of the Week**—A while back we told you about being tour leader of a communications media group that traveled to Israel and having to enforce strict rules, including, much as we regretted it, the shooting of stragglers. “We shall miss,” we wrote, “the late Shirley Miller of the Dallas Morning News, but rules are rules.”

The other day we received a postcard from “Shirley Miller”—a card that did not have so much as a “Dear Sir.” “All right, wise guy,” it began, “the news-room has just held a High Requiem Mass for me, and I’m not even Catholic. My husband Bob has had letters of condolence from all over the country. As for your own talk down here at Southern Methodist University, in which the subject was television, but in which, as

you may recall, you discussed at some length your two favorite causes, I afterward asked a friend of mine what she thought of it. ‘It was a great night,’ she said, ‘if you were a Jew or a dog.’”

We haven’t the slightest idea who this “Shirley Miller” is—obviously an impostor. But she is dangerous. And we understand she was, when last seen, wearing a typewriter. Texas papers, please copy.

**Elsewhere** on the letter front, we had one from Gerald Lampert of Toronto, the man who dreamed up Canada’s first major writers’ workshop and is now offering the first workshop in the Bahamas (beginning March 14). Among his author-instructors is Arthur Kopit, identified as, and we quote, the author of *The Day the Horse Came Out to Play Tennis*. We tried to get ahold of the Bahama News Bureau but they were horse de combat.

**We had dinner** the other day with Roger Caras, a good friend, a fellow director of The Fund for Animals, and a man who has brought hunters to book in *Death as a Way of Life* (Little, Brown, \$5.95). Born in Methuen, Massachusetts, Mr. Caras grew up in the country and at the age of eight read *I Married Adventure* by Osa Johnson. “I gave up Myrna Loy, with whom I was deeply in love,” he told us, “for Osa. I even took Myrna’s picture down and put up Osa’s. For one thing, Osa had written me back, and Myrna hadn’t.”

At college (USC), however, Myrna Loy reared her lovely head again. He became active in college theatricals and, after college, back in New York, was tested by CBS-TV for a part in “Studio One.” “I passed, too,” he told us, “and received an invitation to come back and audition for a specific part. But I never did. The day I got the letter was the day I decided to quit acting. My ego was satisfied, even if my career wasn’t.”

“In any career,” he continued, “you take care of your ego and you take care of your career. Then I was insecure about my acting. I’d get depressed every time I saw Brando. But today I’m a ham. I love being on TV. Now that I’ve got some maturity I know I’m a good interview and I’m good in TV debates. Who’s good on TV who isn’t a ham? The ham comes first, and the getting good comes later.”

After he gave up acting, he became a

press agent for Columbia Pictures and worked up to be executive assistant to the vice president. He also worked up to marrying an “animal nut,” as he describes her, named Jill, and Osa Johnson was still there. “I put off writing seriously until I was thirty-four,” he says, “because I was afraid of mediocrity. But I made a New Year’s resolution, on New Year’s Eve, 1961, that I would become a writer. I sat down on New Year’s Day, 1962, and, having been in the Antarctic in the Navy, wrote the first seven pages of *Antarctica: Land of Frozen Time*. I mailed those pages to a publisher. ‘This is going to be,’ I wrote, ‘the definitive book on the polar regions of the South.’”

“That,” he said, “was the press agent in me talking—not the Caras of the future. Anyway, the publisher sent me back a check for \$750 and said finish the book. I couldn’t even steal that kind of money on a press agent’s expense account.”

Mr. Caras has, in nine years, done thirteen books. “I’m forty-two years old,” he told us. “If I died today, I know the world would be just an inch better because I was here. Not much better, but an inch—and that means something to me.

“You see,” he continued, “we’re always serving two gods, the thing we believe in—whether it’s that there shouldn’t be a war in Vietnam or whatever—in my case, it’s the environment and the animals. The other thing is our ego. A happy man is the one who can serve both gods. The frustrated man is the one who serves either only one or none.

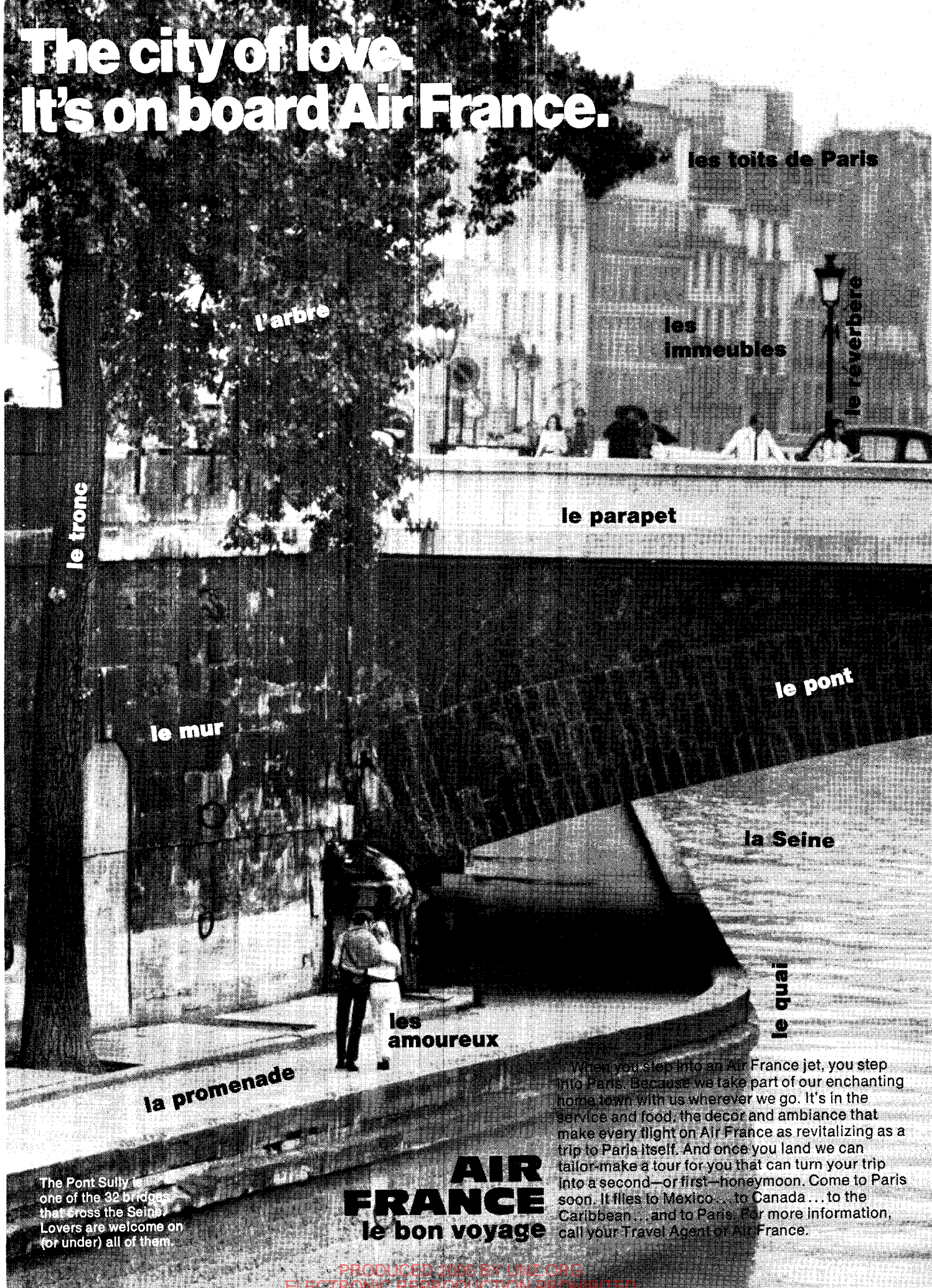
“That’s one thing I learned,” Mr. Caras concluded. “The second is something none of us has ever learned to live with, and that’s the fact that we’re all mortal and we all spend our lives on the very end of a long tunnel. We spend our lives screaming down this tunnel—writing or painting or composing or acting or whatever—shouting ‘Hey, wait, remember me, don’t forget me.’ It’s our mortality that terrifies us, because what we’re really seeking is immortality—what is, after all, a fool’s errand.”

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK’S  
KINGSLEY DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 1922)

MILDRED SAVAGE:  
A GREAT FALL

The evidence, in a trial, is like a football—it is displayed, manipulated, kicked around, clutched tight, passed forward and backward and sideways, and by the end of the game it can be quite dirty. But it is the thing the game is played with, from start to finish.

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le tronc

l'arbre

les toits de Paris

les  
immeubles

le réverbère

le parapet

le mur

le pont

la Seine

les  
amoureux

le quai

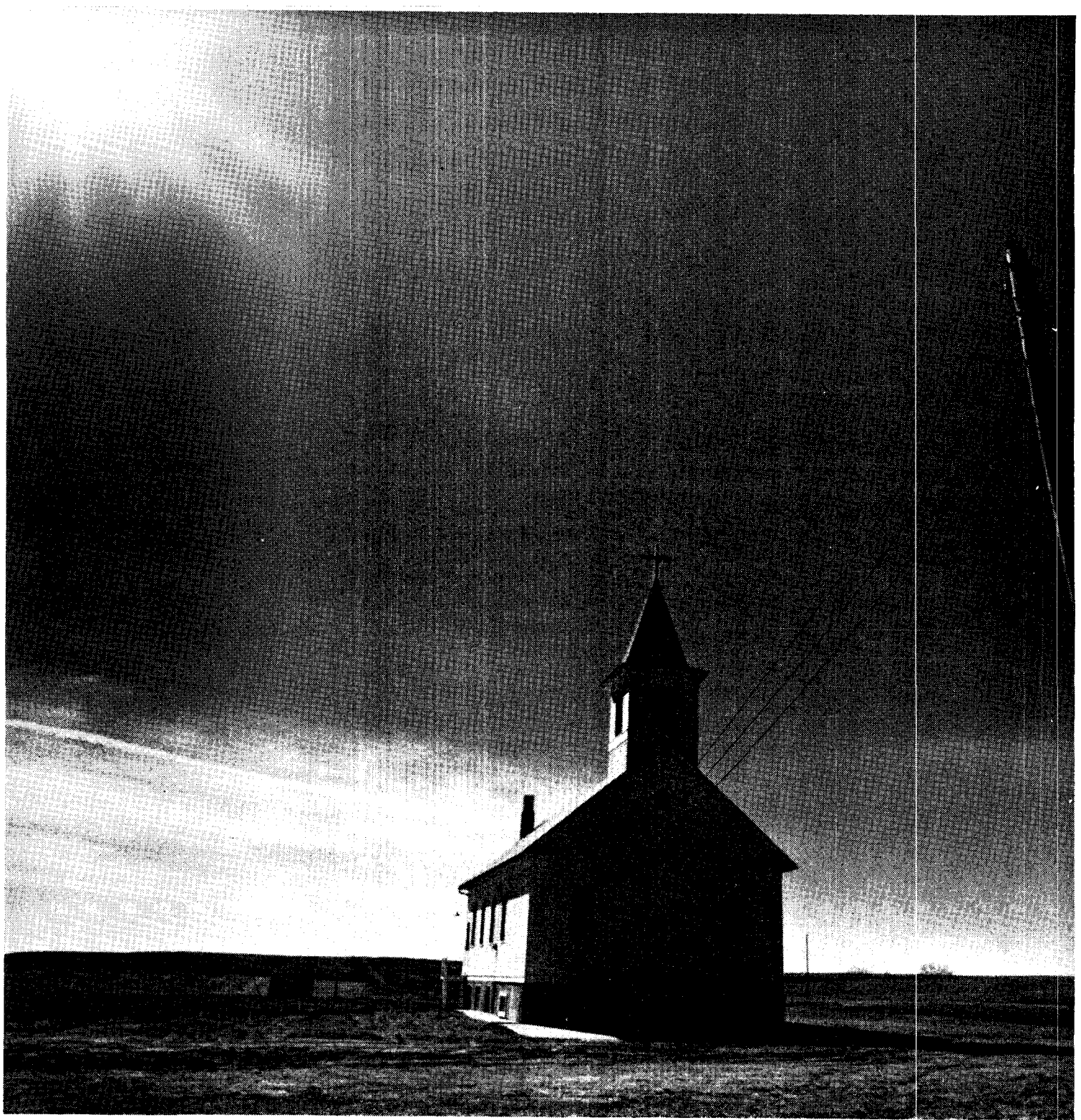
la promenade

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*"If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves  
be its author. . . ."*

—ABRAHAM LINCOLN,  
SPRINGFIELD, 1838.

# The Roots Of Lawlessness

by HENRY STEELE COMMAGER

**I**t was in 1838 that the young Abraham Lincoln—he was not yet twenty-nine—delivered an address at Springfield, Illinois, on "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions." What he had to say is curiously relevant today. Like many of us, Lincoln was by no means sure that our institutions could be perpetuated; unlike some of us, he was convinced that they should be.

What, after all, threatened American political institutions? There was no threat from outside, for "all the armies of Europe, Asia, and Africa combined could not by force take a drink from the Ohio or make a track on the Blue Ridge in a thousand years." No, the danger was from within. "If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time or die by suicide."

This, Lincoln asserted, was not outside the realm of possibility; as he looked about him, he saw everywhere a lawlessness that, if persisted in, would surely destroy both law and Constitution and eventually the nation itself. In the end, lawlessness *did* do that—lawlessness in official guise that refused to abide by the Constitutional processes of election or by the will of

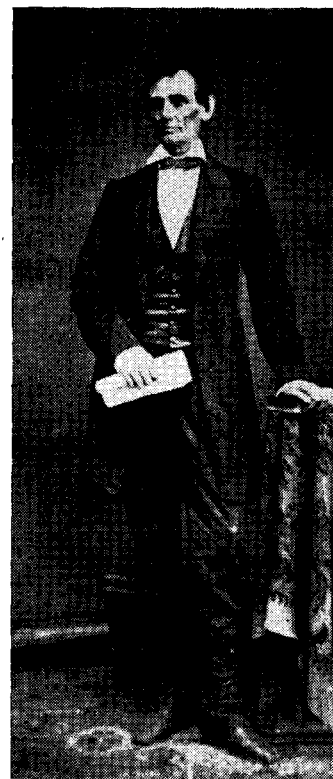
the Constitutional majority. It was to be Lincoln's fate to be called upon to frustrate that lawless attack on the nation, and to be remembered as the savior of the Union. And it has been our fate to be so bemused by that particular threat to unity—the threat of sectional fragmentation—that we have failed to appreciate the danger that so deeply disturbed Lincoln at the threshold of his political career.

**T**he explanation of our confusion is rooted in history. The United States invented, or developed, a new kind of nationalism, one that differed in important ways from the nationalism that flourished in the Old World. One difference was the enormous emphasis that Americans, from the beginning, put on territory and the extent to which American nationalism came to be bound up with the acquisition of all the territory west to the Pacific and with the notion of territorial integrity on a continental scale. The idea that a nation should "round out" its territory, or take over all unoccupied territory, was not prominent in the nationalism of the Old World. Territory there, after all, was pretty well pre-empted, and there was no compelling urge to acquire neighboring land for its own sake.

In the Old World, threats to unity had been, for the most part, dynastic or religious rather than territorial. As proximity did not dictate assimilation, distance did not require separation. But in America space and distance ap-

peared to pose threats to the Union from the beginning. Some of the Founding Fathers, to be sure, continued to think of unity and disunion in Old World terms of interests and factions, rather than in terms of territory. This was perhaps because they had little choice in the matter or none that they could publicly acknowledge, for the United States was born the largest nation in the Western world, and the Framers had to put a good face on the matter. But Europeans generally, and some Americans, long familiar with Montesquieu's dictum that, while a republic could flourish in a small territory, a large territory required a despotism, assumed that the new United States, with boundaries so extensive, could not survive.

Jefferson and his associates were determined to prove Montesquieu mistaken. From the beginning, they formulated a counter-argument that size would strengthen rather than weaken the nation. Brushing aside the warnings of such men as Gouverneur Morris, they boldly added new states west of the Alleghenies. They made the Louisiana Purchase, seized West Florida, and looked with confidence to acquiring all the territory west to the Pacific; thus, the Lewis and Clark expedition into foreign territory, something we would not tolerate today in our territory. Territorial expansion and integrity became a prime test of the American experiment, and within a few years what had been a test became, no less, a providential command: Mani-



—Bettmann Archive

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER, educator, historian, and man of letters, is at present writing a book on the Enlightenment in Europe and America.