

THE BOOK SHELF

A HORRIFYING STORY

by Brad Lee

IN EVERY WAR BUT ONE. By Eugene Kinkead. W. W. Norton & Company, Inc. New York. 219 pp. \$3.75.

IT is a regrettable and painful truth that many so-called "liberal intellectuals" minimize the threat of Communism to America. In their parlance anti-Communism, not Communism, is the greater danger to our precious liberties. As is their wont they invariably have blind spots regarding Communist subversion or penetration while anti-Communists are castigated again and again for their often futile and vain efforts to awaken Americans into a realization that Communism is a nightmare reality that could happen here. While the liberals worry about the civil rights of Communists the much more important morality of western civilization is breaking down.

That American morality is disintegrating is an implication that one cannot miss in reading Eugene Kinkead's important book, *In Every Way But One*. This work was made possible by the Defense Department which granted Mr. Kinkead permission to report on an intensive five-year study made by the Army of the effect of Commu-

nist indoctrination of men held prisoners of war in Korea.

Mr. Kinkead's findings are shocking, disturbing, and thought-provoking. Never before in history had American captives repudiated their own country. Yet in the Korean War 21 Americans actually chose to stay with the Chinese Communists. Moreover, collaboration of prisoners with the enemy was so widespread that one out of three was known to have aided the Communist cause, thus contributing to the enemy propaganda. Furthermore, this country had a higher prisoner mortality rate in the Korean War than in any previous war. Other ugly details presented are the brutality of prisoners to fellow prisoners and the unbelievable fact that not a single American prisoner escaped during the conflict—again a tremendous contrast with World War II.

Upon digesting these facts, many readers will immediately want to attribute these conditions to "brainwashing," but Mr. Kinkead points out that officials in the Defense Department and in the Army consider "brainwashing" a catch phrase which does not have a precise meaning. The Army

prefers the term "indoctrination," which it defines as "an effort to change a man's viewpoint while he is still a thinking individual by regulating his thoughts and actions."

Those captives whom the Chinese Communists could persuade to attend classes on Communist theory were known as "progressives." Those who resisted the enemy interrogations by giving only their name, rank, service number, and date of birth in accordance with the Geneva Convention of 1949 were labeled "reactionaries" and surprisingly enough were left alone. Those who broke down during interrogation and talked got the full treatment of Communist indoctrination.

The overriding message of the book is the vital need for a renaissance of American morality. This is clearly apparent when Mr. Kinkead quotes the following statement of Hugh M. Milton II, Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Forces: "Overcoming Communism is not simply an Army problem . . . It's a truly national problem . . . The Army would like to see every American parent, every American teacher, and every American clergyman work to instill in every one of our children a specific understanding between our way of life and the Communist way of life, and, even more important, work to give every child, in the blunt, old-fashioned spirit, a firm regard for right and an abiding distaste for wrong. The Army's period of training is too brief to make changes in the habits of a lifetime. By the time a young man enters the Army, he should possess a set of sound moral values and the strength of character to live by them."

AMERICAN SAGA

FLYING TIGER: CHENNAULT OF CHINA.
By Robert Lee Scott, Jr. Doubleday,
New York. 286 pp. \$3.95.

THIS IS A STORY of fliers and flying. It is also the saga of one of the greatest soldiers of our times, Claire Chennault.

Of few men can it be said that they deflected the course of history. Chennault did that. Without his spectacular leadership, at the darkest hour of its struggle against Japan, China could easily have collapsed. Had this happened, militaristic Japan might still be ruling in all East Asia. Today's world would be different.

All his life, Chennault was an innovator. He was also a defier of military tradition and traditionalists. His career was marked by a succession of embittered feuds with authority, in most of which he came out winner. Two of these feuds are described without reticence—the Chennault controversies with "Vinegar" Joe Stilwell and with the unpleasant Maj. Gen. Clayton Bissell. All his life Chennault's efforts to create an air force for China were dogged by the sniping and malice of less gifted men of rank.

A few extraordinary facts are revealed by General Scott's book emphasizing Chennault's achievement. One of these is the pitifully small air force which the General commanded while he was racking up his sensational strikes against the Japanese. Thus, his American Volunteer Group (Flying Tigers), between December 18, 1941, and July 4, 1942, never had more than 49 combat planes capable

of operation, and never more than 70 pilots trained to fly them.

But with this meager force, the AVG was officially credited with the destruction of 299 Japanese planes, with 300 more probably destroyed but not authenticated. It killed at least fifteen hundred Japanese airmen, pilots, navigators, gunners and bombardiers. Against these terrific enemy losses, the AVG lost only 15 pilots in action.

How did Chennault do this? The answer is to be found in his extraordinary military imagination. Throughout his career, the Flying Tiger chief was at war with the routinier in the army. He was an astute student of tactics. He was the first to recognize that the Lafayette Escadrille concept of World War I—the individual dogfight—was passé. In place of this he insisted upon team fighting—two or more fighter planes attacking the enemy in close coordination. In those days before radar, he recognized the importance of observation. In China, he set up the amazing air warning net which so often confounded the Japanese despite their control of the air.

Chennault was one of the first China hands to realize the deadly danger of Communism. Before he joined the Chinese as adviser in 1938, he had been offered a similar job with an attractive five year contract by Russia and rejected it. He was never deceived by the Yalta mentality in dealing with Red China.

General Scott is admittedly a Chennault partisan. This is a book of appreciation rather than disparagement. General Chennault, despite his denigrators, occupies a secure niche in the

American gallery of heroes. This book explains how he got there.—H. L. V.

UNPLEASANT TRUTH

by John Lines

PERPETUAL WAR FOR PERPETUAL PEACE. By Harry Elmer Barnes. Caxton, Caldwell, Idaho. 680 pp. \$2.00.

DR. BARNES has performed a badly needed service in bringing between the covers of one book the essential facts about the shameful Roosevelt years which took us into World War II.

The reality has been so twisted and expurgated by the trained seal historians of the Establishment that most of the myths and half-truths of the period have been accepted by Americans as facts. They have passed into textbooks approved by our schools. They have surrounded one of the most discreditable episodes of our history with the halo of the heroic.

We owe it to Dr. Barnes and a little handful of courageous American scholars that this dishonest picture of the years 1939-41 has not been allowed to go unchallenged. Their reward has been the deep freeze of a literary boycott so profound that the busy reader has to hunt for their writings in obscure places to discover them.

Briefly the myth presents Franklin D. Roosevelt as a great and wise patriotic President trying to keep war away from American shores by various forced acts of intervention. The reality, which Dr. Barnes sets forth in his book, is something less noble. The real Roosevelt of this period was a

Janus-faced schemer who, with the advice of the international tricksters who surrounded him, put over one of the most dishonorable frauds upon the American people in our nation's history. Dr. Barnes, and the other authors who are reproduced in this anthology, cite verse, chapter and book to substantiate their revelations.

The final evidence of Roosevelt duplicity was reputedly contained in the 1,000 transcriptions of Roosevelt-Churchill communications which were included in the so-called "Kent documents." To prevent these papers from becoming public, Tyler Kent, an attaché of the American Embassy in London, was railroaded into a British prison and his documents apparently confiscated. Kent himself has never talked since his release. But Dr. Barnes and his fellow-authors have pieced together the story from other sources. It confronts the American people in damning irrefutability.

Some of the other authors who contribute to Dr. Barnes' book are William Henry Chamberlin, Percy L. Greaves, Jr., George A. Lundberg, George Morgenstern, William L. Neumann, Frederick R. Sanborn and Charles Callan Tansill. But probably the strongest chapters of the volume are the first and final ones in which Dr. Barnes sets forth the case against the "historical blackout," and then summarizes all the facts which have been assembled in the volume.

This is exciting and informative reading for any patriotic American. Dr. Barnes published the book several years ago amid a reviewing silence so profound that few interested students of the Roosevelt years have had access to this mine of historic facts. The

MERCURY is happy to bring this challenging book back to public notice.

AMERICAN ELITE?

WHO. By Cedric A. Larson. McDowell, Obolensky, New York. 390 pp. \$5.00.

IN THE MINDS of most Americans, inclusion in *Who's Who* is a cachet of unique distinction. As nearly as we have such a thing in the United States, the *Who's Who* names are America's intellectual elite. Unlike the *Social Register*, to which one is born, *Who's Who* insists upon some evidence of achievement. As a directory of the higher circles of the American intelligentsia, plus a selection of industry heads and top government officialdom, this biennial has become almost a must for the library table. It is a working reference-book of Americans who have achieved fame.

How many Americans qualify? The first 30 volumes (*Who's Who* was launched in 1899) contained the names of 127,000 Americans. Of these, 77,000 are dead. The number of biographies in the current volume total a little over 50,000. In brief, 2.91 out of every 10,000 Americans make the book. It is a surprisingly high ratio.

"The Marquis editors (who compile the book) are quick to admit that their biographical dictionary undoubtedly has sins of both omission and admission," the author writes. "Still they contend, it is probably as nearly satisfactory a compilation as could humanly be expected."

Out of the 60 year history of the Marquis organization in compiling *Who's Who*, Mr. Larson has confect-

ed a charming book. Living with celebrities, as the editors do, they have had an adventurous time. The author recounts many of the interesting *Who's Who* experiences.

One of the most engaging chapters of his book is entitled, "How to Get Your Name in *Who's Who*". The author points out that some Americans whose names are household words (he cites Babe Ruth and Jack Dempsey) never qualified, under the editor's rigid rules for inclusion. He describes some of the subterfuges which aspirants have used to break into the volume. Outright bribes as high as \$5,000 have been offered and refused. The editors have learned to recognize the tricks of the would-be *Who's Who* crashers.

An interesting section recalls some of the incidents when the book has been used as a public opinion sampler. In such instances, a wide divergence between *Who's Who* group thinking and general national public opinion has been revealed.

The reviewer recalls his own experience in the 1936 Presidential campaign when he was asked by a group of Hoover enthusiasts to poll the *Who's Who* names on a possible third Presidential race by the ex-President. The straw vote brought in a surprisingly high pro-Hoover tally. The delighted Hoover friends, emboldened by the figures, proceeded to make ambitious preparations for a Hoover stampede at the convention. Of course, the stampede never materialized. It was another illustration of the unreliability of *Who's Who* names as a gauge of public opinion.

Mr. Larson's book must be read to savor its real charm. As a study of

high level American behaviorism, this very readable book is worth a dozen academic treatises. It is a view of contemporary America through an unusual lens.—H. L. V.

THE BITER BITTEN

THE UNSPEAKABLE SKIPTON. By Pamela Hansford Johnson. Harcourt Brace, New York. 250 pp. \$3.95.

MISS JOHNSON (Mrs. C. P. Snow) has written a picaresque novel in the modern style which assembles probably the most gruesome cast of characters currently on exhibition. Like Aldous Huxley, who apparently is her mentor, Miss Johnson has the gift of making even pleasure seem repulsive.

Her characters, from the sink of literary and artistic failure, devour each other. Daniel Skipton, a shabby literary has-been, is living in Bruges, Belgium, where he preys upon all the visiting English. Between times, he writes alternate insulting and begging letters to his London publisher. In the end, the author gives him his comeuppance at the hands of a fellow-Englishman more venomous than he.

Miss Johnson's style is engrossing although flawed by a continuous effort to heighten her text with forced and unusual twists of language. Her book is suffused with a dark atmosphere of corruption and predestined doom. Had she introduced even a single character with whom the reader could identify himself, *The Unspeakable Skipton* would have been less depressing. For those who enjoy the macabre, this novel is an experience. It is not for the light of heart.—J. L.

THE MERCURY FORUM

Sir: I am proud of the fine work that your magazine is doing to disseminate the truth to the American people. It is tragic that more of our Americans cannot enjoy this truthful magazine. It is tragic, also, that more well-educated citizens have not demanded that it be placed on all the newsstands.

Please don't surrender. I realize that there are segments of society that will fight you all the way. However, when your type of reporting is lost, we in the South are doomed.

HOWARD C. DAVIS
Ruston, Louisiana.

Sir: Flood Control. How many times have I heard those two words which mean so much? In 1913, after flood waters of the Scioto and smaller rivers of Ohio had brought death and destruction amounting approximately to 150 lives and millions of dollars, prominent citizens again called attention to the simple, comprehensive method advocated generations ago, whereby each river would have a series of dams to hold back flood waters instead of high levees and concrete walls to speed the swelling torrents onto the communities downstream.

During the 46 years that have elapsed since that time, flood control has been a prominent plank in the platforms of both parties. Why then has so little been done to bring this great benefit and security to actual accomplishment? Why delay flood control measures because of budget

limitations? Why not issue non-interest bearing notes to finance each part of the nation-wide project, these notes to be lawful currency, same as the notes of the Federal Reserve Bank at present? If government notes cannot be used for financing essential public improvements, something is radically wrong.

FRED M. BAKER
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Sir: After reading several of your magazines and a few of the back copies, I can no longer wait for the next AMERICAN MERCURY to come on the stands. Here is \$4 for my subscription. Finally, America has a magazine for Americans. Thank you.

MARGARET C. SCHMIDT
Sarasota, Florida.

Sir: What do you mean, keeping up with the Russians? Our educational crisis is getting more and more out of hand, our thinking clouded by Russian material advances. Let's stop.

I say this as a Russian-born American teacher. Trying to imitate only the superficial, we are headed for trouble unless we are also prepared to embrace the Communist philosophy. Let's pause and consider: What we are trying to imitate is an educational crisis worse than our own! Recently the Presidium of the Communist Party's Central Committee decreed the scrapping of the whole educational system, thus giving official recognition to a long-existing problem—overcrowding. Not as we know it, due to