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THE STATESMAN PUBLISHING COMPANY

| A Stand-By Warning System <br> Secretary of Defense Louis Johnson is eating crow. <br> His letter to Congressman Norblad, offering an "explanation" of Johnson's order to reestablish Oregon's war-time ground observation and air warning services, indicates the much-belabored defense boss is back-tracking on his original plans. <br> The stand-by warning system he now advocates is what The Statesman suggested in midFebruary. <br> When Governor McKay ordered reactivation of the air warning system on February 11, nothing was said about it being on a stand-by basis. Louis Starr, state director of civilian defette, said'it was supposed to make possible quick warnings for industry and residents in event of the approach of unfriendly aircraft. McKay said, Johnson requested that the warning system be put into effect again, and give the project a "high priority." There was an urgent sound about the whole business. <br> On February 14, the same day Johnson was squirming under a particularly telling criticism of his policies by the brothers Alsop (published In The Statesman), this newspaper in its pageone editorial column pointed out the Johnson's air-warning-system plan. <br> At that time, in a criticism widely quoted in press and radio; The Statesman said: <br> "It is in order, in view of existing tensions which our government's actions have helped to tighten, to pay attention to protection of civiliorganization with plans for action in event of real emergency. It ought not to call, at this stage and perhaps at no stage, for scanning the some distant fizz may be the exhaust from a Soviet jet plane. There are far better ways to use our time, our talents and our money for <br> Johnson's acceptance of the stand-by idea is Just about the only new angle mentioned in his letter to Norblad. His explanation that the ground observer corps would detect unusual oferarances, such as landings by paratroopers or gliders, was not mentioned before but was, of course, implicit. (What else would they detect -the wild goose going where the wild goose goes?) His other explanation - that the air watchers would detect low aircraft which fly radar can't operate - is nothing new. Starr thought of that long ago. So did Colonel E. H. Tolan, head of the Portland filter center, who defined that as a function of the air-warning system. <br> This newspaper's criticism still goes: to make this system really effective it would be necessary to put all aviation along the coast under controls. In case of war, that would be automa- <br> tic, anyway. <br> As for the economy angle (Johnson's favorite defense of his defense policies because evidently he never heard of false economy), Johnson emphasizes that the cost of installing a civilian air-warning service manned by volunteers would be relatively small as compared to the cost of one radar station. <br> This leaves us completely cold. Is the defense of this nation to depend on housewives standIng on the rooftops with field glasses? Are we horse? Or perhaps David and his slingshot? Midern warfare is a job for technicians. We say in: <br> "If the west coast is to be put into a state of | defense against undeclared war ft should have tection, operated by trained personal . . . And it should have at strategic positions a sufficient complement of planes to fend off a foe." <br> Meanwhile, the job for civilians to go on about their business, and calmly learn what it means to live with crisis in a world where war is a possibility but by no means an immediate probability. <br> Acheson and Gubitchev <br> Senator Kenneth Wherry of Nebraska is off his rocker, again. <br> He and another republican, Fellows of Maine, have jumped on Secretary of State Dean Acheson for alleged interference with justice. The blathermouth says Acheson is "unfit" for office because the state department requested that Gubitchev be given the choice of leaving at once for Russia or serving out his jail sentence here. <br> The accusations show just how frantic to get something on the secretary the wild-eyed members of the anti-Acheson faction are. Some of them howl that he is too rough with Russia because he refuses to run to Stalin and beg for sweetness and light in Moscow. Others weep into their beards that he is too soft with Russia, that he is appeasing Russia by letting Gubitchev get off easy. <br> Actually, our government was smart in the way it handled the Gubitchev conviction. <br> Throwing the convicted spy in the clink to sweat out his 15 -year sentence would have delighted the Kremlin, no end. Communist propagandists would have it bruited about that Gubitchev was cruelly mistreated by the dread FBI, that he was an innocent lamb led to the slaughter by the vicious capitalist bosses. Jailing Gubitchev would have made a martyr of him. <br> More important, it would have made martyrs of any Americans caught behind the iron curtain. On any pretext whatever, American businessmen or newspapermen or diplomats or Un- ited Nations employes (that's what Gubitchev was) could be picked up by the Russian secret police, charged with espionage, convicted in the same way Vogeler was convicted, and doomed to torture. <br> The state department's request for deportation has nothing to do with the diplomatic immunity Gubitchev claimed. That does not extend to espionage, anyway. In being sent home, Gubitchev is given substantially the same treatment as an unwanted diplomat. We hope the Russians will learn the lesson well and accord the same treatment to any Americans "convictted" by communist courts. <br> And it might give fellow-travellers a bit of a pause to reflect that it took Gubitchev some time to choose between going to Russia or staying in a U.S. jail. We wouldn't have been surprised if he'd taken the latter course. <br> "Flegel Flays . . ." runs a headline in an exchange. "Flays" is a favorite with headline writers-only four letters and carries punch. It's a relief though to have Flegel do the "flaying" instead of Morse. <br> Plans for Salem's spring opening on the Cinderella theme will have the local damsels all atwitter. Will they really have a glass slipper? And who will be the fairy godmother - Jim Beard of the retail trade bureau? |
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Ohio Observers Believe Taft Sure of Re-election; Presidential Nomination Still Seen as Possibility


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## Literary Guidepost

You may wonder why I have
taken such wn interest In this
proposact The reason is that
was active in the effort to keep
the capitol in Salem after the



| schools combined, the authors from which to select; and the on every page. $\qquad$ what badly needs encourage- ment: A wider interest in drawIngs. Michael Ayrton (Pitman ; $\$ 1.95$ ) Mithen <br> One of four new additions to the "Pitman Gallery," this book on the Russian - born Chagall seems to me to fllustrate very expensive art book can supply color in the reproductions and meaning in our time. Ayrton is 10 The other books, each with Gogh," by Philip James; "Cez"Royal Rortraits," by R. H. Wil series, is least helpful in his in- troduction, which is too anecdo $\qquad$ <br> The Safety Valve $\qquad$ the flying dises in your March 10 edition, we are inclined to believe that the midget man came from the moon. Our theory is that the small man was sent here to investigate our knocking Them around with radar waves. plenty mad; since they are only almost kill them. <br> Dick O. Adams, Gary Measing, Arnold A. Manke, Al West, Jim Verdick (Jrs. Salem High School). Lewis, 24, was originally Joseph a wife and two children. His hobby is filing scrapbooks with |
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