

BOOK REVIEWS

Communism Aired By J. Edgar Hoover

Communism has produced a vast literature. That literature has now been notably enriched, with J. Edgar Hoover's newly-published "Masters of Deceit" (Henry Holt & Company, New York; \$5.00).

Mr. Hoover's book carries the subtitle "The Story of Communism in America and How to Fight It." No man is more familiar with that story. He was made director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation during the Coolidge Administration, has been retained in office by every president since, and has done an outstanding job in keeping the bureau free of political influence, inefficiency and corruption. And, in recent years, Mr. Hoover and the Bureau have become more and more involved with the Communist conspiracy.

The purpose of "Masters of Deceit" is intensely practical. It is to explain the facts about communism—what it is, how it works, what its aims are, the dangers it poses, and what loyal Americans must do to protect their freedom. Mr. Hoover provides a short account of communism's beginnings and goes on to explain why American Communists are and why they adopt the ideology. He shows how the party is organized, and deals with its subtle and devious strategy and tactics. Espionage and sabotage — weapons which trained Communists are extraordinarily adept — are given careful attention.

Mr. Hoover is particularly concerned with the danger of discounting the menace of communism in the United States. It is true that party membership has declined.

It reached its peak of 80,000 in 1944, dropped to 22,600 in 1955, and has gone down farther since then. However, no less an authority than William Z. Foster has said: "... we no longer measure the importance of revolutionary organizations by size. In some places where there are only one or two men, more results are obtained than where they have larger organizations. . . . If conditions are ripe, a comparative handful can take over a nation—and they have done exactly that time and time again. To quote Mr. Hoover: "Under communism, a tiny minority, perhaps 10 to 20 men, would rule the United States. An open dictatorship called the 'dictatorship of the proletariat' would be established." Communist party henchmen would take over, and opposition would be ruthlessly liquidated.

What can the individual do about the danger? Mr. Hoover's answer is "a lot." He must know the answers to communism's false claims. If what appears to be subversive activity comes to his attention he should report it, sticking to the facts, to the nearest FBI office—and the FBI, incidentally, is as much interested in protecting civil rights, including the right to hold unpopular opinions, as it is in combating those who would destroy us. He should be alert and informed. No one can fight communism if he doesn't know what to look for. In this connection, "Masters of Deceit" contains a glossary, in which terms frequently used by Communists are listed and defined, which will be especially valuable to those whose familiarity with the movement is sketchy.

The Wily Old Indian Fighters Were World's Best Guerrillas

Sycamore Men, by David Taylor (Lippincott): The third of David Taylor's novels of the American Revolution. It tells of the handful of Americans who proved in the swamps of South Carolina that they were fit to rank with the world's great guerrillas — 30-odd years before the word had been invented.

The wily old Indian fighters, Francis Marion, Thomas Sumter and Andrew Pickens, harried the Redcoats back and forth across their state, raiding outposts, ambushing patrols and hijacking supplies. They took 10 lives for every one they lost, whether in guerrilla skirmishes or on the few occasions when they could muster enough strength for pitched battle — at King's Mountain, the Cowpens, Guilford Courthouse and Eutaw Springs. They won no single decisive victory — but they drove the British out of South Carolina except the base city of Charleston, and they set Cornwallis on the road to Yorktown.

Because their operations were necessarily secret and often unrecorded, the guerrillas' story offers Taylor more latitude than the more conventional fighting he described in "Lights Across the Delaware" and "Farewell to Valley Forge." He has taken advantage of this license to interweave an exciting fictional account with his historical details, describing the romance of Col. Dixon Blakely, one of Marion's "Swamp Foxes," and Jewel May Ward, patriotic daughter of a Tory.

"Sycamore Men" is an exciting and inspiring account of daring and triumph against heavy odds. Sex and love are topics that have fascinated men since the dawn of mankind. They have been treated in a vast variety of ways from Homer to Mickey Spillane, but in few places have they been examined so analytically and dispassionately as in India.

Anand (better known as Arthur) Lall, India's permanent delegate to

the United Nations, makes an interesting contribution to the tradition with "Seasons of Jupiter," (Harper) a fictional biography of a man who devoted his life to a search for a satisfying relationship with women.

Pages That Breathe

By W. G. ROGERS
THE MAGIC BARREL. By Bernard Malamud, Farrar, Straus & Cudahy. \$3.75.

What is so rare as a writer whose second book can compare with his first, and whose third with both? That rare bird, as rare as a whooping crane and a much more whimsical whooper, too, is Malamud, with two novels, "The Natural" and "The Assistant," for which he won the National Institute's Rosenthal award, and now this collection of a dozen short stories.

One of them, "The Lady of the Lake," doesn't quite measure up—the man can't be perfect all the time, and there ends my fault-finding.

The various other plots, incidents or happenings come from the rich and, I hope, inexhaustible wellspring of the corner store, the basement shop, the dingy tenement, the small neighborhood: The shoemaker wants his daughter to marry the college boy though she secretly loves her father's employee; an egg candler repents for deserting his family, and the landlord repents for ousting him; a writer excited to read is disappointed in person; a prayer is answered, an apartment is found, a child is caught stealing candy, a beggar proves to be a leech, an old friend begs a loan, a boy pretends he likes to read, charity and love are rejected, and in the little story a rabbinical student asks a marriage broker to find him a wife.

Hiss Story Is Relived

Alger Hiss was convicted of perjury eight years ago, and he has served his five-year sentence. But the Hiss case is still a matter of controversy as to the guilt or innocence of the man concerned and especially as to the circumstances of his conviction.

The real charge against Hiss was treason, that he gave secret State Department documents to Whitaker Chambers, as a fellow-Communist, for transmission to Soviet Russia.

Fred J. Cook has written a penetrating and disturbing analysis of this dramatic case in "The Unfinished Story of Alger Hiss" (Morrow). Cook is a veteran newspaper man, a star crime reporter for the New York World-Telegram and Sun. Nobody can accuse him of any leftist slant. He wrote his book because, like many others, he questions Hiss' conviction.

Hiss wrote a book in his own defense. It was not a good job. Cook has done better. There are some exceedingly ugly implications in Cook's book. One quotation will give an idea of them:

"Either Alger Hiss was a traitor to his country and remains one of the most colossal liars and hypocrites in history, or he is an American Dreyfus, framed on the highest levels of justice for political advantage."

FIRST, BUT LAST

Rhode Island was first to declare its independence from England (two full months before the other colonies), yet was the last of the 13 original colonies to ratify the Constitution.



Science Bottleneck Laid To Schooling

By DOUGLAS LARSEN
NEA Staff Correspondent

WASHINGTON — (NEA) — The bottleneck regarding America's efforts to regain a clear-cut lead in weapon technology can be found in the American school system.

This is the belief of colorful Adm. Hyman Rickover, the developer of atomic submarines. He is now fighting for reforms in the American school system in the same unorthodox, flamboyant manner that he has run the A-sub program.

He says: "In my work in nuclear energy I have interviewed more than a thousand young college men and officers. But I never found more than a very small percentage who had the necessary qualifications for this work. I could not but come to the conclusion that something was radically wrong with the schools and colleges to whom the education of these young men had been entrusted."

The reaction to Rickover's freewheeling, outspoken entry into the field of education has the nation's top educators upset and condemning him "for talking about something he doesn't know anything about." In reply he says:

"As long as I kept to the line about American teachers needing higher salaries I got nothing but praise from them on how well informed I was on the subject. But as soon as I said things which might have the effect of making them work harder and making them think, they started a campaign against me."

Rickover's office is in a creaky World War II temporary build-

ing behind the World War I temporary building, which used to house the main Navy offices on Constitution Ave. The confusion of the somewhat shabby offices is undoubtedly ordered. He discusses the schools between frequent barked, terse long-distance calls:

"They say I don't know what I talk about. That's bunk. I know the schools don't give me the people I need. I'm a customer of their product and I'm not satisfied. That's fact. We know that European kids of comparable age and grade are two and three years ahead of American kids. That's a fact which experts have established. So I do know what I'm talking about and have the right to talk about it."

Rickover's most controversial recommendation is that U.S. schools should be made tougher, in the European tradition. He explains:

"Europe has always demanded more of her children than we have of ours. To attain a high standard of living — given a similar level of technology — a country must either have a favorable ratio of people to land and resources, or its people must work harder and more intelligently. They must acquire more competence. We are approaching Europe's situation in this regard."

"The Dutch school day is 10 per cent longer than ours, for example. Their school week is six days, or 20 per cent longer. Their school year lasts 240 days, or 33 per cent longer. The Dutch class period is 50 minutes and the homework required is a minimum of four hours daily."

Rickover's critics charge that Europe's schools are undemocratic and that the Admiral's recommendations would make U.S. schools the same.

"And that's nuts," he insists. "It's the other way around, because with the U.S. public schools getting worse, the wealthy people are all sending their children to private schools to get a better education. That's about the most undemocratic thing that can happen to education. This is really creating a class society, with only rich kids getting better educations."

He adds: "Furthermore, U.S. educators some years ago decided among themselves that they would start teaching kids how to adjust to life and live together happily. They arbitrarily took over the functions of the home and church to make happy little ants out of American kids, without anybody's permission. This was undemocratic."

"What's Europe's schools do, and ours fail to do, is develop in the most intelligent youngsters the desire to make the best use of their good minds," he charges. "Hence we see 200,000, or the top quarter of our high school graduates lost each year to higher education while the nation suffers the most acute shortage of trained professionals in all fields."

William P. Odum, in 1947, made a 19,645-mile flight around the world in 75 hours, five minutes and 11 seconds.

Life Changed By Sled Accident

A sledding accident in February, 1884, nearly maimed for life its 7-year-old victim, Robert Nelson Spencer, and barred him from an education until he was practically a grown man.

But the acute suffering drove him to seek comfort in religion. He listened avidly to his mother's Bible readings and went on to become one of the outstanding churchmen of his day.

His story—the fight to save the arm, the carting of slop buckets to get an education, his eventual consecration as a bishop whose program was simply "to help make the Episcopalians of West Missouri Christians"—is told dramatically by Lee Hastings Bristol Jr. in "A Seed for a Song" (Little Brown).

Among the highpoints are Spencer's verbal joustings with Clarence Darrow and Sinclair Lewis, his campaign to loosen the Pendergast machine's grasp on Kansas City and a tangle with the notorious Tully gang of Chicago.

Bristol, a director of public relations for Bristol-Myers, wanted to enter the ministry himself but was convinced his duty lay with the company his family helped to found. He wrote his book while commuting between his home in Princeton, New Jersey, and New York.

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