



As We See It

By DAN PATRICK

One of the Messiahs of peace will be our eventual emancipation from the spell of radio commentators.

For some seven years now — ever since the Munich crisis of 1938 — we have been on the receiving end of a virtual deluge of news advice and interpretation from commentators of various shades and opinions.

Some of these commentators have been very well qualified for their jobs. The same cannot be said of others including those who tinged their newscasts with opinions designed to advance this or that pet project.

That these men — and women — had a profound role in shaping public opinion goes without saying. Their audiences were numbered in the millions and they held full sway over these millions, taking precedence over newspaper editorial writers in many instances.

In essaying the role of the radio commentator it is well to remember that all of them depend largely on the wire service of International News, Associated Press and United Press. Without these they couldn't possibly function because you can't very well comment on the news unless you know what actually is happening.

In some cases, commentators supplemented these news reports with documentation from private sources. That these oracles of the airwaves had such sources is quite evident but not surprising. Every newspaperman worth his salt has sources of information which he calls "highly reliable" or "unimpeachable."

Others never bothered to go beyond the wire stories but simply read the straight news reports and colored them with a rising or falling voice inflections.

Perhaps the finest, fairest and most impartial newscaster of the lot is one Lowell Thomas, an old hand at the game. If you analyze a Thomas broadcast you will find it largely factual with a personal tinge gleaned from his world-circling reportorial experiences.

Thomas stresses the news and can't be classed among those who give precedence to interpretation of such news. One who has emerged from this war as a careful analyst is Raymond Gram Swing. His broadcasts show evidence of painstaking preparation and a careful checkup of all his material.

The man who started all this emphasis on newscasting — Hans Von Kaltenborn — still machine guns the airwaves with his staccato broadcasts but somehow his style has worn thin and into his broadcasts have crept too many notes of personal authority which aren't quite justified by the facts.

Then there's that man who plays on the emotions of his audience with a voice right out of Shakespeare — Gabriel Heatter. When you analyze his material, it's pretty shopworn and not too informative.

Any survey of this nature couldn't possibly exclude Drew Pearson who has been riding the Washington Merry-Go-Round for some years now and doesn't always come up with the brass ring, especially when he broadcasts his "Predictions of Things To Come."

Mr. Pearson conveniently neglects to inform his audience of his predictions that don't quite jell. We recall, for instance, that he dined into the ears of the nation every Sunday night last summer his forecast that the war in Europe would be over in September of 1944. Of course everybody, especially those men involved in the critical battle of the Bulge last December, know now that Mr. Pearson was slightly premature.

William L. Shirer of "Berlin Diary" renown, has piled up quite a reputation in the newscasting field. His voice is quiet and earnest and he commands quite an audience on Sunday evenings.

But here again is a case of a man who has wandered out of the bounds of his own knowledge. He has an excellent background of the Germany under Hitler and the mechanics of its first blitzkriegs but unfortunately his broadcasts go far beyond that scope.

For instance at the San Francisco conference last spring, Shirer turned out-and-out propagandist in an attempt to keep Argentina out of the sessions. His reasoning was simply this: Russia didn't want Argentina in and Russia's wishes should be followed.

In a recent issue of the Saturday Evening Post, Demaree Bess shed the light on this matter for Mr. Shirer's information.

Another widespread criticism of radio commentators should be directed largely at their sponsors. That is the break-in with a commercial announcement right in the middle of a broadcast.

We recall a program in which nearly a thousand American lives were lost. Then came the announcer with:

"Do you feel tired? Aren't you sleeping well nights. Well then try—"

Yes, peace is wonderful as far as we're concerned.

STRANGE BUT TRUE Vatican Paper On U. S. Democracy

By M. J. MURRAY

Copyright, 1943, by M. J. Murray

MANY OF THE MESSIAHS IN WIDELY SCATTERED AREAS WILL BE SERVED BY AIRLINES AFTER THE WAR

Chas. MESTRISTER, ABBEY LONDON, the last by the island can be largest church in distribution

It is noted that this is a voluntary movement to be undertaken as far as possible "accept it as a gift"

AN OBSERVATORY

RELIGIOUS

300,000 BAPTISTS

THE LITURGY CAVALCADE

A World to Reconstruct-II

By John O'Connor

If I run a parish study group this Fall I'd single out a handful of books and go to town on them; write them out; exhaust them. We'd try to apply some of the principles, such as experimenting with a cooperative. Where we couldn't apply the principles — honest government — we'd try to support those who did. We'd even ask editors of our own persuasion to drop the ads of pawnbrokers.

One world to reconstruct each century is enough. This is the second time we've had to pick up the pieces in 25 years.

First, I'd start with a book I mentioned last week. That's A World To Construct. I'm referring to the outline copy sold by the Thomas More Book Shop, Chicago, 3. It retails at a dollar, but John Tully tells me liberal discounts apply to quantity orders. (That sounded like a commercial; try and write it otherwise!)

If you can afford the \$3.50 for the full copy, by all means get it. The leader of the club or the teacher should have a back copy, but the outline does nicely even there.

Next — oh, dear reader — next I would annoy the Scribner firm until they advertised and printed more copies of An American Future by Neil MacNeil. Catholics seemed to have greeted this with a thunder of silence. There's more jammed into this book that has to do with contemporary situations and coming problems of economics, politics, trade, and communication than in any present day book you'll find. MacNeil has long followed world affairs from the peculiar vantage point of the desk of the Assistant Managing editor of the New York Times — the paper with the finest foreign news service in the world.

MacNeil's book has immediate value for the things of the present and of the future. It treats of many problems that are sure to arise both at the conferences to come and for years thereafter. In communications, for instance, there will be great jockeying for position. Men are influenced by the word: England, Russia, Germany and Japan have long known this. They use the word to influence with. Our press merely asks that the truth be permitted to all peoples in the world. MacNeil handles this subject very well and we should know about it because of its importance.

News books must have something in the diet or the air along

its coast that helps to breed men. But it is probably the fierce passion for social justice that has come forth from men like Jimmy Tompkins and Father Coady. It is evident in Neil MacNeil. It is equally evident in the writings of Msgr. Donald MacLean (Bruce \$2.50).

Where Neil MacNeil touches on the practical, Monsignor MacLean takes problems such as minorities, world airways, etc., always with a background of Papal messages and Encyclicals. It is a little sickening to notice just how many times Rome has warned the world — and how many times the world has gone ahead and regretted it. If there was ever a damning indictment of indifference to Christian ethics on the part of the world, it can be gleaned from this short work.

I wouldn't stop there, though. I'd take a book or two on South America such as A Padre Views South America by Father Dunne.

Then, to complete the picture on the home front I'd try to get Democracy Begins at Home by Jennings Perry. This came out a year ago, but the fight of the editor of the Nashville Tennessean against the poll tax still goes on. The system that produces the Bilbos of this country — must go. Besides, it might give many of us ideas towards political morality in our own country. It is a Lippincott book. Then, there's John Crider's book on The Bureaucrat — always a danger.

So much for a study club. No doubt all of you could throw in several sound suggestions. But these are designed towards getting a sound background on the world today — foreign and domestic.

That wouldn't be all. A World to Reconstruct would include a parish credit union, a co-operative, a theatre like The Blackfriars under Father Urban Nagle, O.P., — with several parishes combined to support a local theatre under the direction of a competent professional director. I'd run lecture series instead of bazaars, study clubs instead of bingo games, liturgical studies instead of strawberry festivals. (You can have your cake and eat it too.)

Then, with these sound programs under way I'd pull the hats down over the left-wing or political heads and let them accept or produce a better world — such as we could and should reconstruct.

Under the title, "At the Sources of North American Democracy," the Vatican daily news paper, "Osservatore Romano," published on July 25 a long article by Piero Chiosso, studying the relationship between the fundamental ideas of American democracy, as expressed in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, and the ideas on government developed in the works of St. Robert Bellarmine, S.J., the great Cardinal who contacted the scholastic traditions of St. Thomas Aquinas, O.P., and Francisco Suarez, S.J. Quoting G. K. Chesterton's phrase, "Bellarmine wrote of democracy before the people anywhere dared to be democratic," the article explains the philosophical bases of democracy, as analyzed in Bellarmine's writings.

Chiosso shows some striking parallels between the teachings of Bellarmine (who died in 1621) and the Declaration of Independence adopted by the Continental Congress 155 years later.

Bellarmino writes in "De Clericis" (Chapter VII): "In a free State all men are born free and equal by nature; in consequence, the people possess immediately and directly the political power until they transfer it to some king or other ruler." The Declaration of Independence states: "All men are created equal."

Bellarmino writes in "De Laicis" (Chapter VI): "It depends on the consent of the people to decide whether kings, counts, or other magistrates shall exercise authority over them." The Declaration of Independence states: "Governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

Bellarmino declares in "De Laicis" (Chapter VI): "The people can change a kingdom into an aristocracy, and an aristocracy into a democracy." The Declaration of Independence states the same: "... whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundations on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness."

The similarities are so striking that it is not surprising that the writer in the Vatican newspaper calls Bellarmine's ideas "the seed of the immortal... Magna Carta of free government in North America." Chiosso finds the same "liberating essence" in Saint Robert Bellarmine's writings and in the Preamble to the Declaration of Independence. In Thomas Jefferson's library, now at the Library of Congress in Washington, he points out, a copy of Sir Robert Filmer's "Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings" was found. This book, attacking Bellarmine summarizes and quotes his teachings, so that Jefferson, even if he did not read Bellarmine's works directly, was familiar with the Cardinal's basic thesis.

The "Osservatore" article points out that the scholastic teachings on people and government were given much attention at the American colleges of the colonial era, such as Yale, William and Mary, Princeton, Columbia, University of Pennsylvania, and Brown, and undoubtedly exercised a strong influence on the Founding Fathers. It adds that Charles Carroll, Catholic signer of the Declaration of Independence, Daniel Carroll, Catholic signer of the Constitution, and Father (later Bishop) John Carroll had studied at Saint-Omer, Rheims, and Bruges in Jesuit schools in which the works of Bellarmine as well as those of Suarez were used as the basic text books for the understanding and practical application of the principles of St. Thomas Aquinas.

The fact that the Vatican daily newspaper has published at this time a lengthy study on the relationship between the ideas of Bellarmine and those of the American Founding Fathers emphasizes not only the fundamental importance which these ideas have had in the past, but also their significance for democratic reconstruction in the future.

Whistling to Our Lady

An English soldier, writing to his old mother recently, cheered her heart by the following:

"For some days I had been anxious to go to Confession, but there was no priest in our party. I was walking along the road all alone, whistling your favorite hymn and mine, 'O Purest of Creatures, Sweet Mother, Sweet Maid,' thinking how the Mother of God has a care for us. She knew my want just then. Rounding a corner, still whistling, I met an officer, saluted, and he answered back:

"You're a Catholic, boy?"

"Yes, sir, I answered."

"Thought so from the tune of your whistling," continued the officer. "Been to Confession lately? I'm a Catholic priest."

"Ah, sure I'm lucky. 'Twas you I was whistling for to the Mother of God. I'm ready to confess, Father, and so are some of the other lads back there. Will you be coming to see us?"

"Gladly," answered the priest.

"And the hymn whistled to God instrumental in winning grace for us that day."

The first portion that we are to make of the mighty God is for a good confession, for health of mind, and that of the body.