

Another Lesson from History

By ROBERT A. MILLIKAN

Members of the meteorological branch of the fighting forces of the United States:

Yesterday you were students of meteorology in an American university or technical school. You are today officers in the armed forces of the United States. In spite of that metamorphosis you have in no way altered your fundamental character as citizens of the United States, as voters on every fundamental issue that comes before a free country for decision by its citizens, at least 51 per cent of whom must be thoughtful, intelligent voters if the American way of life is to survive.

It is not, then, as university students and not as Army or Navy officers that I address you today. The momentous significance of events now transpiring makes distinctions of that sort unimportant. I wish, rather, to address you in your character of most supreme importance—that of citizens of this great republic in the greatest crisis in its history.

To understand what is involved in that crisis, I wish to direct your attention, first, to the words of one of the most penetrating political historians and philosophers of all time, a Frenchman, Montesquieu, who wrote in 1748, long before our American republic had been dreamed of, these pregnant words, which point out his conclusion as to the only way in which free representative government may be maintained.

"If a republic is small it is destroyed by a foreign power; if it is large, it destroys itself by an inner vice. So it is very likely that men would have been forced to live always under the rule of one man had they not imagined a constitution which combines the advantages of a republican government and the external force of a monarchy. I mean a federal republic. Made up of small republics, it enjoys the high political quality of each (such small republic) and toward other powers it has by virtue of a federation all the advantages of monarchies."

Let me rephrase those principles as they now apply to the great republic of the United States. The principle of the federation of small republics was introduced by our founding fathers, and the federal government of the United States was created, primarily to give us the strength to defend ourselves against external aggression. The principle of state's rights and local self government was introduced to educate our citizens in self government and to enable each small community, when the cancer of political corruption gets started, to cut it out in the place in which it appears through the agency of the local community which is closest to it and suffers immediately from it, and thus to prevent that malignant disease from spreading throughout the whole country.

Today these two menaces to the life of our great republic, the "external foe" and the "internal vice," are threatening us at the same time more menacingly than they have ever done in our history. Listen to the recent voice of a distinguished Congressman from Texas, Hatton Summers:

"Our whole political system is based on the principle of local self-government. But two forces have been destroying this principle. One is the demand of the people for the Federal government to intervene in problems of every community and every class. The other is the ever-growing practice of passing all these problems on to the government in Washington. The last war gave this a big push. The postwar dislocation hurried it. The Great Depression raised it to ava-

lanche proportions. The present war is completing the job. Every town and State, every trade association and trade union, every class and group of desperate minority, brings its problems to Washington. And Washington is gladly accepting that responsibility."

At this hour fortunately the prospect that we shall not be destroyed by a foreign foe is brightening. But is our great republic, then, to be destroyed after the war by its internal vice? That depends, if Montesquieu was right, upon how you and I vote after the war in the preservation of local self government.

But what concrete evidence have we that Montesquieu was right? I quoted his lines, not to hold him up as a superman. Indeed, if his spirit is here in invisible form in this coliseum today, as it may well be, I can see him entering a protest at the importance I have apparently been attaching to his statement of one of the greatest truths of human history. I think I hear him say:

"Pray, do not believe that I would for a moment arrogate to myself the authorship of the ideas behind those lines of mine. The words chosen may indeed be mine, but the ideas represent the sum and substance, the distilled essence, of both the thinking and the experience of mankind in its age-long struggle to eliminate the despot—the totalitarian state—and to achieve free, stable, representative government on earth. Pray, do not for a moment assume, for example, that those extraordinary men who devised your constitution got the ideas that underlie it from me. They were all, on their own account, profound students of the best thought and experience of mankind. That is where those ideas came from. We all drank from the same fountain of history. That is why they, on their own account, came to devise a federation of small republics, now numbering 48, and reserved to these and their constituent local communities all powers not specifically delegated to the central government which was to exist, as they clearly planned it, primarily for defending these United States against external aggression—federal government which was not designed to encroach in peace upon the powers of the states or of their constituent communities. If now the 150 years of history which you have had in developing, on the sound basis of those ideas, the highest standard of living for the common man that has ever existed anywhere in history, if that is not enough to establish their validity, then give the credit for these ideas not to me, but to the parallel history of the oldest, and unquestionably the most successful people in the exercise of parliamentary government, the British Commonwealth of Nations. For Britain has guarded the principle of local self government throughout the last hundred years more jealously than has the United States, and it has also kept itself much freer in that period from political corruption than has the United States. Probably the greatest political document of all history is the Statute of Westminster of 1931 which created the British Commonwealth of Nations, whose constituent parts are federated practically only for one purpose—a defense against a common foe, but which are otherwise a world encircling group of completely independent communities. Nowhere in history has the principle of local self govern-

(Continued on Page 24)

W. A. DIEHM is field service engineer for General Electric Aviation Equipment being used in the bay area.

1940

FORREST H. HALL is the father of a daughter, Janet Kylene, born August 16. For the past two years he has been in ship work, being employed at the present as hull technician of the Mariner Corporation in Sausalito, California. When this yard was started a little over a year ago he was sent up from the California Shipbuilding Corporation in Wilmington, California, to be in charge of

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912.

of ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE MONTHLY, California Institute of Technology, published monthly at Pasadena, California, for October, 1943, State of California, County of Los Angeles, ss.

Before me, a notary public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared the editor of the ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE MONTHLY, California Institute of Technology, DONALD S. CLARK, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the editor of the ENGINEERING AND SCIENCE MONTHLY, California Institute of Technology, and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation) etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, Alumni Association, Inc., 1201 E. California St., Pasadena, California; Editor, Donald S. Clark, 1201 E. California St., Pasadena, California; Managing Editor, R. C. Colling, 124 West Fourth St., Los Angeles, California; Business Management, Colling Publishing Co., 124 West Fourth St., Los Angeles, California.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Alumni Association, Inc., California Institute of Technology, 1201 East California St., Pasadena, California; no stock, a non-profit corporation.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is (This information is required from daily publications only.)

DONALD S. CLARK, Editor.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 7th day of October, 1943.
(Seal) Ida A. Ritchie.

(My commission expires April 8, 1945.)

all design in connection with launching and supporting the ship while under construction on the building ways. He personally performed all of the launching calculations.

SHERWIN AVANN is instructor in mathematics at Yale, replacing Robert P. Dilworth.

CYNDOR BIDDISON is a civilian with the camouflage branch of the Engineering Board at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia.

1941

WILLIS E. DOBBINS is a first lieutenant in the Signal Corps and is stationed in England, where he is in charge of a mobile installation crew connected with the air force.

OLIVER K. JONES is a major with the U. S. Army Air Corps and is stationed overseas, where he has been assigned to duty as a weather officer.

1942

VICTOR BRUCE is employed as a staff member at the M. I. T. Radiation Laboratory. Other members of the Class of 1942 who are working there are WARREN PROCTOR, FRED ASHBROOK, JACK IRVING, and DWAIN BOWEN.

LIEUTENANT FRANK FLECK visited the campus in September. He is stationed at San Marcos, Texas.

AL LANDAU is attending Ordnance Officer Candidate School at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds.

CAROL VERONDA is with General Electric at Bridgeport, Connecticut.

CARL SAVIT is employed as teaching fellow in the mathematics department at Caltech.

1943

ROBERT BRAGG and JAMES BLAYNEY are in Army Air Corps Special Training and are stationed at Boca Raton, Florida.

BOB BASHOR is on the U. S. S. Prairie State at New York City.

BILL FAIR is with Sperry Gyroscope, Garden City, New York.

LEROY WELLER, who is with Ingersoll Rand in New York City, visited the campus early in September.

JOHN MILES and Herberta Blight were married on June 19. He is employed as instructor at the Institute.

SHELTON STEINLE is with the Shell Development Laboratory in Berkeley. He visited the campus recently.

RAY TEDRICK is with Pan American Airways System in San Francisco. He recently visited the campus.

ROLFE LAFORGE is a statistician on a war project at the Institute.

ROBERT BENTON is employed as a teaching fellow in the mathematics department at the Institute.

OCTOBER ISSUE

The October issue of E. S. M. was not published due to problems connected with the editorial and pro-

duction schedule in starting the new publication. These difficulties have now been taken care of and the December issue will come from the press on December 5.

ANOTHER LESSON FROM HISTORY

(Continued from Page 4)

ment been more strikingly or more beneficently applied."

Now, having listened to the spirit of Montesquieu supported by the teachings of history, let me try to apply the foregoing to the critical problems of the ensuing peace.

For the sake of winning the war, as we are going to do, we have had to become very largely, for the time being, a totalitarian state. We knew that in war this was inevitable, but if we retain in peace this now highly centralized totalitarian government, if we do not combat at every opportunity this insidious, this terrible centralizing tendency, and restore, insofar as present conditions make possible, the principle of local self government, then if history means anything we shall quickly be destroyed by the inner vice of all totalitarian states, a governmental patronage system, instead of a government of laws, and our sons will have died in vain.

The greatest and most insidious danger lies in my own field, the field of education, which must be kept practically completely free from the influence of the central government. Look at what within the last two decades the control of education by central governments has done in Europe! It has substituted for education the *indoctrination* of whole peoples in the ideologies of the group in power and in the interests of their retention of that power. It is that kind of indoctrination for world conquest that has destroyed the souls of great peoples and made two world wars. Your votes alone, and your influence, American citizens, can prevent that kind of a catastrophe from happening in the United States. Remember this when you come back from the victory.