

VI - 73 C - 27. Smedley, Agnes, "Behind the News in China" book review of China's Wartime Politics: 1937-1944, by Lawrence K. Rosinger, New Republic, November 27, 1944.

before the last of the collaborative books by Charles and Mary Beard appeared, another project was under way. Up in their Connecticut hills, away from all the quick answers, Mr. Beard is asking questions about the words which social thought has used and confused during his seventy years, words like economic and correlation as well as liberty and individualism. The results will be his next publication. They will almost certainly mean that another generation of American liberalism, like its fathers, will build on the Beards.

ERIC F. GOLDMAN

Behind the News in China

China's Wartime Politics: 1937-1944, by Lawrence K. Rosinger. Issued under the auspices of the Institute of Pacific Relations. Princeton: The Princeton University Press. 133 pages. Paper, \$1.50; cloth, \$2.

WITHIN 60 pages of readable narrative and 60 additional pages of supporting historical documents, this short book incorporates the clearest and most concise description of China's major political problems to appear in this country. A brief sketch of prewar conditions in which the present tumultuous problems are rooted precedes a clear and direct analysis of every phase of unity and resistance since the war began. This is followed by a study of the Chungking government, its leaders and supporting institutions. Included under three general sections are discussions of the growth of national resistance, the nature of national unity since 1936, guerrilla warfare, the "Peace Party" of which the quisling Wang Ching-wei was, until his recent death, the leader, and rifts in Chinese unity since 1939.

The material is brought up almost to the present, including Henry Wallace's visit to China last summer, the trip of our correspondents to the guerrilla regions, a discussion of the popular democratic movements against Kuomintang policy, and the liberal opposition within that party as led by Dr. Sun Fo, president of the Legislative Yuan.

Mr. Rosinger—who is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association—explains a social phenomenon which has always baffled conservative "Old China hands" about the weakness of the pure nationalist movement in the decades preceding the present war. It sprang from the middle class, he says, but was politically weak because this class participated in a more or less subordinate capacity in foreign-directed enterprises, such as banks and industry. With such a large personal interest in China's existing status, it sometimes wavered in its spirit of nationalism. The dependence of this class upon foreign support, primarily American, further explains many of its actions today. Mr. Rosinger supports the expert knowledge of such men as Dr. Sun Fo by stating that the rural landlords, gentry and officials have the greatest stake in the existing order and oppose all social change.

Propagandists who deny that the Chinese government appeased Japanese aggression until actually forced to fight in 1937, will find many uncomfortable facts and documents in these pages. Outside Communist ranks were powerful national revolutionary and democratic movements against appeasement, such as the prewar All-China Federation of National Salvation Unions, which, after 1941, was

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blended with the Federation of Chinese Democratic Parties. Mr. Rosinger has confined himself to the narration of facts and has devoted no space to the bitter struggle and human tragedies which hover behind such opposition movements to governmental policy.

The analysis of the personal and social motives which led Wang Ching-wei, Premier of the Chinese government until late 1938, to desert to the Japanese, makes appalling but factual reading, especially since the same motives are by no means absent from many leading reactionaries in the government today, who, however, have not gone over to the Japanese.

The section on "Chungking and Political Change" will provide excellent understanding of the various political cliques and personalities within the ruling party. Mr. Rosinger believes that Generalissimo Chiang's position approximates that of a dictator, but that the country lacks the technical means of maintaining a centralized dictatorship. Many of the provinces and armies are semi-independent, and have become progressively more so in the past few years. This, in part, explains why the Generalissimo throws his weight first in one direction, then in the other, in an attempt to keep himself on the crest of the wave.

Despite criticism of the Chinese government in our press the author declares that America does not minimize China's role in the war and that the American public welcomes every action pointing toward a democratic, progressive China playing her proper part in international affairs.

Though a scientific research document, this volume is easy and fascinating reading. It is difficult to see how specialists and teachers about China can well do without it and its valuable historical material. Among the latter are all the main pronouncements of the Communists and the government on the vexatious Kuomintang-Communist conflict, the manifestoes of the democratic parties, the government's draft constitution of 1936 and its Program of Resistance and Reconstruction, drawn up in 1938.

AGNES SMEDLEY

The Schools and Democracy

Your School, Your Children, by Marie Syrkin. New York: L. B. Fischer Publishing Corporation. 224 pages. \$2.50.

MISS SYRKIN has written a provocative book which is obviously meant to stress only one side of the picture, since its subtitle is, "A Teacher Looks At: 'What's Wrong with Our Schools.'" The author believes the schools have failed in both their intellectual and social functions. According to Miss Syrkin, the reasons for their failure to produce zealots for democracy lie in the tradition of American schools against indoctrination, which has led to a spurious respect for all opinions, even those which would undermine our democratic institutions, and in the timidity of the school in taking a role of leadership in meeting social problems such as those caused by racial and religious prejudices. On the intellectual side, she says the failure is caused mainly by adapting the theories of progressive education without adequate provisions for putting them into practice. As a consequence, standards have fallen. The student who does not have a particularly high IQ suffers the most, and the vocational education now offered him does not meet his needs.