

Flip It Over

By JANET RANKIN AIKEN

Odd how little things such as carrying a kitten will point to social solutions. Recently Donny and Twospot and I were entraining for Connecticut. We had nothing but a carton with a hole in either end for Twospot, and she showed true feline ingenuity in worming between the flaps and getting her head into the outer air.

We conferred a lot of joy on miscellaneous subway passengers between home and Grand Central—I began in fact to wonder whether one good way of edifying poor oppressed humanity might not be just to ride all day on the subway with a small boy and a box with a kitten's head sticking out of it—but somehow we got to the station and on to the high-backed seat where Donny and Twospot waited while I got the tickets.

It was while turning away from the grille that I got the idea. I found Donny with Twospot on his lap and the kitten box empty. So we

untied the cord, opened the box, popped in Twospot, and quickly turned the box bottom side up so that the free flaps made the floor of the kitten prison. After that we had peace. Twospot philosophically went to sleep and stayed so all the way out to Camp Sideshow.

Now society is like Donny carrying that kitten. Its intentions are of the best. It desires nothing but a safe and pleasant journey toward freedom, prosperity, justice, security for everyone. It thinks its box of tricks right side up—boxes are obviously meant to stand that way—look at the writing on the wall, "JACK FROST SUGAR"—why, everything must be the way it ought to be.

But—the kitten is always getting out of the box. Those loose flaps don't hold. There is confusion where order was most surely anticipated, and affairs growing worse and worse instead of better and better.

Let's turn the box over. Let us start looking toward lower prices instead of higher ones, toward removing burdensome regulations instead of piling them on, toward progressive action instead of merely carrying the social body upside-down and it is time we changed.

The really extraordinary thing about economic leaders is that while they are walking backward, they are facing the light. They know clearly what society needs and yet they seem compelled to go in the opposite direction toward its attainment. They multiply compulsions while talking and wishing freedom.

Can it be that the answer is simple—just walking in the direction we want to go? Can it be that we have the power to solve the problem of poverty, eliminate wars and depressions, by an expedient as simple as flipping over a box with a kitten in it.

I think the answer is yes.