

BOOKS—Continued

A BROOKINGS FACT-BOOK

"World Minerals and World Peace," by C. K. Leith, J. W. Furness, and Cleona Lewis. The Brookings Institution, Washington, D. C., 1943. 253 pp. \$2.50.

As the war continues, and more men are drawn into its vortex, the race to supply these men with the tools of destruction becomes grimmer. All of these tools are wrought from the minerals of the world—land, in its economic sense. That a detailed story of world minerals need not be dreary is illustrated by this book.

The Brookings Institute supplies not only the expected charts and data on the distribution of minerals (metallic and non-metallic), but discusses them from different viewpoints. It breaks them down into high-grade and low-grade deposits, their influence on the economy of nations, their domestic and international development, the common trade routes, the end-uses, and the political acts of nations regarding them. A plethora of information is supplied on the basic wealth of the world.

Today the United Nations control roughly 75% of the minerals of the earth. The 25% in the hands of the Axis is even less effective, because of our dominance over sea lanes between the ends of the Axis. Neutral nations like Turkey, Spain, and Portugal control less than 1%. Considering, as well, the fact that our enemies have long ago intensified their production, while ours is still on the upswing, we see that in a merely holding operation we can bring our weight to bear with time. Any recovery of territory makes us so much stronger, and causes our enemies to deplete their stock-piles. The United States alone outstrips the rest of the great producers of mineral wealth, and is four times as large a producer as Russia, the country of second rank. We have the land, we have the labor.

Half of the book is given over to a detailed study of political acts, mining companies, and trade. Every page is a clear lesson that restrictions on free trade have discouraged production, caused distress, and enriched a few at the expense of many. The cartel system is investigated for most of the minerals, and it is shown that there was a temporary price rise in each case that curtailed production. The cartels were usually failures unless the government backed them up, and this could be done only when a near monopoly of ore existed. Germany se-

cured a large stock-pile of minerals by subsidies that depressed the living standards of its own people. The use of force became necessary to obtain minerals when the economy could no longer be lowered without danger.

On tariffs the authors show the great harm done to both the enactor and the exporter alike. Nowhere do the expected benefits ensue, and the cost of commodities becomes higher for the enrichment of a very few favorites. Tariffs assume the status of moral crimes. Henry George made the point succinctly when he termed the Customs House an institution of legalized robbery.

Because nature has distributed minerals about the earth in a seemingly haphazard manner, neither nations nor continents can be independent. Every part of the earth has its natural advantage; and it should be utilized. The interdependence of nations will provide each of them with needed minerals, but international free trade of these minerals must be attained to achieve world peace.

A. B.

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GOALS OR SHOALS

"Goals for America," by Stuart Chase. The Twentieth Century Fund, New York, 1942. 134 pp. \$1.00. (Delayed.)

This volume is the second published in a projected series of six. The Twentieth Century Fund has sponsored it under the general title, "When the War Ends."

Stuart Chase looks over our national productive capacity and finds it ample to supply us and part of the world with its requirements in food, shelter, clothing, health, and education. His statistical work, based on official reports, shows that in pre-war America we came nearest to having enough clothing, but we were sadly lacking in the other necessities. But most people know that!

Mr. Chase, however, is not impressive as an economist. He sees unemployment as a great evil, but approves the statement of another "economist" that unemployment is not an economics problem, but a social and political one. The market is a strange phenomenon to him. He thinks that while the market was not great enough before to absorb increased production, it is great enough today, and should be kept so by government edict and spending. With a perfectly straight face he says, "Most economists now agree that any depression involving large numbers of unemployed men can be broken, if somebody spends enough to put citizens to work."

Mr. Chase talks about producing in the future for need, not profit. As if producers made articles that were not for sale, and met no need! And if the government can now order produced 125,000 war planes in 1943, it can order produced 1,500,000 houses in 1946. Just like that!

The most dangerous note is a direct plea for government regulation of our individual efforts in peacetime. Chase would have our youth spend a term in a youth corps. He has a sort of Five-Year Plan percolating. He insists on government directives, because "laissez-faire is dead." This prolific American writer would profit greatly by reading George's "Progress and Poverty."

A. B.

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ANOTHER TRUE PROPHET

"Mitchell: Pioneer of Air Power," by Isaac Don Levine. Duell, Sloan & Pearce, New York, 1943. 420 pp. \$3.50.

Billy Mitchell was court-martialed in 1925 for his attempts to make the army and navy aware of the future of air power. This war and most of the victories achieved to date have proven the correctness of Mitchell's theories, including his Pacific and Alaska war plans.

This book tells the story of the development of aviation in World War I, and bridges the gap between the two world wars.

It is interesting and documented with great care, presenting what to me is one of the greatest problems that faces the world, but more particularly the United States—freedom, shall it be lost by too much centralized government?

Isaac Don Levine's book shows how Brass Hats and bureaucracy with its errors—and the hiding of those errors plus regimentation, destroys individuals like Billy Mitchell, who challenged their power. It also shows how that power endangers the safety of the country.

The English people and the American people have reserved to their parliaments control of the army and navy by controlling the purse strings. They should also know all the facts of what the army and navy are doing, and the army and navy never should be treated as "sacred cows."

I propose "Mitchell: Pioneer of Air Power" for the Pulitzer Prize for biographies for the year 1943, and for all other prizes that may be given for this type of book.

HARRY WEINBERGER.