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## Not With a Bang but a Gurgle

Rita Meredith

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# The War Goes On!

Entering a new year, predominant feeling is agony over the war in Southeast Asia. What can I, we, all of us do to stop it? All war is futile—lives are lost, children burned and made homeless, and \$25,000,000 a day squandered by the United States in this mistaken horror.

What editorial could I write to move us to effective protest and action? End all war! Get out of Vietnam! Eliminate economic causes of war—end land and money monopoly! I've written these things over and over; our files bulge with editorials, pamphlets, literature. Little of it is used; the war is accelerated; people continue in daily jobs, in their homes and on their homesteads as if World War III were not already upon us!

A wise friend once said to me: "If you see you are not getting results by one method, why not try the opposite?" This is what I'm doing. Instead of a sober, impassioned appeal to end the war (see next issues of *A Way Out* for this), to plead, demand and storm our government officials to stop it, to urge study and practice of new economics, I'll try humor. I publish the following whimsical story. It is intended to release tension, add to our sanity, and bring us flickers of new ideas, new energy, new commitment that we may better turn toward peace.—M.J.L.

## Not With A Bang But A Gurgle

By Rita Meredith

President Smith was called President Smith even before he became president. For his parents (John and Mary Smith of One Horse, Alabama) decided their firstborn son should have a memorable first name to make up for his commonplace surname. So they christened him President, not foreseeing that he would one day actually be the president of the United States. After his election he was therefore known as President President Smith, or P.P.S. for short.

P.P.S. was passionately interested in international affairs. "I must," he told his Foreign Advisor, "I simply must have a foreign policy."

"Yes," said the Foreign Advisor, "you must."

"What would you suggest?" asked P.P.S.

"Well," said the Foreign Advisor, "I think you should try and bring East and West closer together."

"O.K.," said President President Smith, beginning at once to work on the problem. Unfortunately, he was of a very literal turn of mind. He had studied geology at the One Horse Public School and was well versed in the theory of continental drift.

"Millions of years ago," he informed Congress, "America was joined to Europe and Africa. If you study your atlas, you'll see they fit together like a jigsaw. But when the center of the earth expanded, owing to its colossal heat, cracks appeared in the surface. Gradually these cracks widened, and bits of land broke off and went floating across the sea to become separate continents.

"If East and West once were united," declared P.P.S., "why can they not be united again? Why should the United States not float once more across the seas and nestle amicably beside the Soviet Union? Would not this physical closeness generate a new cordiality, a neighborliness, a rapport, between the Communist Bloc and the Western Alliance?"

"But how," asked Congress, "how do you propose to move the United States across the Atlantic Ocean?"

"Well," said President President Smith, "we could row across. Let every able-bodied American be equipped with an oar, and let him stand on the coastline and paddle. That ought to get the continent moving."

"O.K.," said Congress.

"If Canada and Latin America will cooperate," added P.P.S., "we should be able to shift the whole western hemisphere over to the east. Truly a triumph of international diplomacy."

"Uh-huh," said Congress.

So every able-bodied North or South American was equipped with an oar, and he stood on the coastline and paddled his oar. And gradually, in accordance with the fundamental geological principles expounded at One Horse Public School, Alabama, the entire American continent began to float eastward across the Atlantic.

"How very encouraging," said President President Smith, "to see such a marvelous rapprochement between East and West. Let us continue our efforts with unremitting diligence."

The able-bodied Americans continued their efforts with such unremitting diligence that their continent began to skim across the seas with truly remarkable speed. In fact, they were unable to slow it down when Europe and Africa hove in sight, and they collided with the said continents with such tremendous impact that Europe and Africa completely capsized. Yes, Europe and Africa turned upside down, and all their inhabitants were drowned.

When the able-bodied Americans heard the crash of colliding continents, they all ran across to the east coast to peer at the underside of Europe and Africa. The sudden transfer of their weight from west to east was too much for the continent of America, so it too capsized, and all its inhabitants were drowned.

"Perhaps," reflected John and Mary Smith (of One Horse, Alabama) before their final inhalation of Atlantic brine, "perhaps we should simply have christened him Senator."

# Letters to the Editor

## From the White House

To the Editor:

Thank you for your thoughtfulness in sending me a copy of *The Green Revolution* which describes some of the activities of

the School of Living.

How refreshing it is to learn of this movement toward wholesome living relationships with Nature! Our Nation has been blessed with a rich scenic heritage, and as our civilization

grows it is up to all of us to have the wisdom to preserve Nature's corners of beauty and channel our growth in ways that enhance—and do not diminish—our natural surroundings.

All across the Nation there is a stirring of intent to restore and increase the beauty of our great land. For some this beauty will be a petunia in a tin can, for others it will be an urban fountain or a row of trees, for many it will be nothing more precious than a whiff of clean air, for others it will be bold wilderness tracts, or a home site nestled in the quiet hills. Natural beauty cannot be set aside for summer vacations or for the few. It is the birthright of every American, and the task of our times is to labor together to make our visions of a wholesome beautiful land possible for all Americans.

Thank you for all that you are doing. Sincerely — Lady Bird Johnson

## Thanks for Paper Doll Item

To the Editor:

May I say thanks for such a beautiful editorial in November *Green Revolution*, entitled "Paper Doll People," by Jean Ohman? I have never read a piece that told so many truths.

Also such a good title in Grace Lefever's "Labors of Love." So many people today do their job only for the money and not really liking the work. My work at a hospital helped me realize that most people needing care were needing mostly love and attention. Someone has said, "We all have learned about sex these days. Now it's time to learn about love. Love is the nucleus of life." — Marie Nash, Rt. 1, Columbia, Mo.

To the Editor:

On a recent visit with the editor of *Appalachian South*, I was shown *The Green Revolution*. We need it! The poem on "Paper Doll People" is extraordinary. Tell Jean Ohman I will use it in my classes. — D. West, Teacher Training, Lexington, W. Va.

## Land in Connecticut

To the Editor:

En route home from the New Hampshire seminar I stopped at the Ernest and Joy Martin home (152 North St., Danielson, Conn.). They own a 225 acre farm near Canterbury, Conn., that they would like to see used as a Center and Homestead for the School of Living. Some woodland and bottom land near a river (a brother farmed it for several years as a dairy farm); apple orchard (they picked apples this year); good water, large house and barn in need of improvements. Good climate. It would need homesteaders who had skills in building, plumbing, electrical work, gardening, etc. Can we find a good director with some capital willing to take over next spring, and some pioneers to put the necessary work into it? — James Iden Smith, New Hope, Pa.

## Simpler Technology

To the Editor:

Renew my *Green Revolution* but not *A Way Out*. I cannot share the enthusiasm of the various authors in *A Way Out* when there are so many problems of a practical nature crying for better solutions. Our great need is a technical manual for modern homesteaders. . . .

I read with dismay of the backbreaking labor and high costs involved in providing a septic system for the Old Mill at Heathcote Center in Maryland. The modern septic system is costly, wasteful of water, may pollute the drinking supply and returns no fertility to the earth where it can be used. On page 30 of Spring 1965 *Compost Science* is an illustrated waste disposal system developed in Sweden. It is just the thing we need to work on at the School of Living. It provides for an indoor toilet, accepts all food wastes and converts it all into a finished compost without the addition of water.

Also I felt there was a brilliant combining of ideas in an article in *Green Revolution* for

November, 1964, in the Wendell Thomas house, Sunnycave. He uses the all-year even temperature of the earth to warm the house in winter and cool it in summer. This too needs development by School of Living. Regretfully our age is not ready for the ideas in *A Way Out*, but for technology—we gain immediate recognition! — Sam Eisman, 1551 158th, Miami, Fla.

[Editor's Note: Mr. Eisman contributed a good plan for an organic privy in the June 1965 *Green Revolution*. One of our readers, Elizabeth Haswell, had this duplicated and submitted to several agencies working in the Appalachia O.E.O. program. The School of Living emphasizes attention to all problems of living (public as well as personal, and philosophical as well as practical). Your editor regrets a tendency to specialize or withdraw to some problems to the exclusion of others.—MJL]

## Appreciate Book

To the Editor:

I enjoyed your talk at the N. E. Festival immensely, and am enjoying your *Go Ahead and Live!* even more. It is most stimulating and thought provoking. I only wish that we had had it in our home 15 years ago. I certainly intend to find a way out! — D.S.F., West Acton, Mass.

To the Editor:

*Go Ahead and Live!* was read and greatly enjoyed by our family. We especially enjoyed June Burn's chapter on health. Please send us four more copies, and thanks for sponsoring this important publication. — Mrs. Cecil Cook, Valdosta, Ga.

[Editor's Note: Mrs. Cook issues a useful and interesting *Health News Letter*, and her bibliography on health has more than 100 titles.]

## McCaffreys Touring

To the Editor:

Our trip is going fine. Since seeing you in Michigan in August we have met School of Living people in Chicago, Madison, Wis., St. Louis and the Sons of Levi in Mansfield, Mo. Interest in School of Living is particularly strong among Catholic Worker families and college students. Students at University of Oklahoma, including a young priest and the nucleus for a nationwide intentional community of students, were impressed by the *Community Newsletter*, by *Go Ahead and Live!* and particularly by September *A Way Out*. Send more literature. . . . Wife Pat is well, baby growing and alert as breast-fed and non-drug babies are. — Barney McCaffrey, c/o Gebar, Bayview, Los Fresnos, Texas.

## Want Stove Item

To the Editor:

As a result of the article in the Oct. 31 *Boston Globe* about our New England Frontiersmen Festival, I received several letters asking for a copy of my "book" on Heating Your House For Less. I'm flattered, of course, but the *Globe* feature writer misled his readers into thinking my rather sketchy item in *Green Revolution* was more than it is. Please send me some extra copies of the October issue to service such inquiries. Too bad we can't afford to hire some clerical help for you. I enjoyed the Festival immensely, and intend to visit the School of Living soon. Thanks for all the work you poured into our meeting. — Howard Bloom, North Montpelier, Vt.

## Sane and Insane?

To the Editor:

Thanks for *Green Revolution*. I'm with you in this world that's rapidly going insane. American Samoa is a U. S. territory, with U. S. postal rates; send mine airmail! It may possibly be the sanest place in the U. S. sphere of influence. These so-called backward people have not yet "progressed" beyond a simple economy. There is enough on this island for everyone's need. Everyone makes a contribution of labor and skill toward the well being of family, neighbors

## The Green Revolution

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and village. There is no very real sense of private ownership, and because of our simplicity many problems do not exist. If we "civilized" folk could capture some of the Polynesian principles we would be happier. I'm learning great lessons about solving problems, about give and take, and about the joy of non-ownership. I can't ever go back to the rat race again. When my tour of duty is over here I hope to find a group of concerned folk and work at some of the utopian Green Revolutionary ways of life. I'm a school teacher, a printer, broadcaster, musician, liberal. Where can I make a contribution?—William Wiley, Pago Pago, American Samoa.

## Ideas from Kansas

To the Editor:

I get so many good ideas from School of Living publications, but I feel we should reach many more people. It needs to be taken on a house to house visitation, talking and explaining the ideas we stand for. I do not believe in mass education. We must catch the individual. People can be changed, but we must go to them personally; few will come to you because they believe they are right too. As members of the School of Living we should take our materials to others personally, after we have read them, talk with people who need to get out of the rat race, or write letters. I think your program is wonderful and want to help all I can. I'm sending a few ideas for *Green Revolution*. — Mrs. Charles Wickware, Richland, Kans.

**Yarn Maker.** I have seen a picture of a little machine that will make yarn from any material. I think from Textile Handicraft, 7317 Wise Ave., Dept. 31, St. Louis, Mo.

**Honey** is good for asthma and hay fever.

**Insect Spray.** 1 tblsp. sulfur, 2 tblsp. quicklime, 1 gallon water. For plants and lawns.

**Animal Repellents.** Peanut butter and red pepper (in equal amounts) will keep red squirrels away. Putting a pan of water in the garden will keep rabbits from eating the vegetables.

**Watermelon Rind.** It's good cooked as squash is cooked—with onions, tomatoes, peppers and meat. Also can be used to make pie and in fruit cake is very good.

**Plant A Few Mung Bean,** asparagus and okra seeds in wet sand in a winter window box; let grow 3 to 5 inches and eat a few stalks every day.

**Bamboo Facts.** The Bamboo Man, Box 331, Saddle River, N. J., tells the interesting story of bamboo and sells it and other rare plants, books, oriental stone lanterns and basins.

**Denmark's Open Air Museum.** Six miles north of Copenhagen, on 40 lovely acres, there are rebuilt homes, cottages, mills, furnishings and equipment of original farmsteads, around square or rectangle cobblestone courtyards. On the north is the dwelling house, on the east the farmer's workshop, servant's quarters, cow and wagon shed, on the south is the stable and entrance, and on the west the barn and threshing floor. Some use the U shape, leaving one side open and some the L plan, with the long house and outbuildings in one wing and the dwelling house in the other. I think the long house would be good for modern homesteaders; a house with covered breezeway, and the outbuildings on from that. I wish someone would write about customs and farmsteads in other countries.