

# BOOKS and REVIEWS

## Defense of the Middle East

John C. Campbell. 359 pp. New York Harper Bros. \$5.00.

Reviewed by BYRON FARWELL

John Campbell's book is not and will not be a best seller, and this is unfortunate. "Defense of the Middle East" is a book as important as it is timely. It presents perhaps the most concise and accurate account of the main threads in the complex problems of the Middle East written in modern times.

Historically, the problems of the Middle East arise from the continual pressures southward of the Soviet Union, the collapse of the British Empire with its power and influence in this area, and the rise of Arab nationalism. Militarily, this area is important because it straddles the main routes between the East and the West. Economically, it is the source of oil—not needed by the United States, but vital to Western Europe.

IT IS IRONICAL that Russia—without spending vast sums, without soldiers or bases—is winning from us the friendship and support of those in the Middle East who are young and have wood with arms, money and treaties. We are set out to build a military alliance system against the Soviet threat—and provoke a counter-attack among some of the very nations we hoped to include. We help support hundreds of thousands of destitute Arabs in refugee camps—where they grow more and more bitter against the West. We seek peaceful settlement and compromise between the Arabs and Israel—only to see passions and tensions rise day by day. We take a stand against aggression—

and thereby strengthen those very elements which have done the most to bring Soviet influence into the Middle East.

Why? PARTIALLY IT IS Arab nationalism as personified by Gamal Abdel Nasser which has nursed the hatred of the West in the breast of the Arab and turned his face to the smiling Russians with their soft words of encouragement.

This book appeared just after the revolt in Iraq which panicked the American government into sending troops to Lebanon. But reading Campbell's words, it is impossible to see how our statements could have been surprised by the revolt in Iraq. His government had been going against the tide of popular feelings for years and had been subjected to constant attack from Nasser's Cairo radio station. That Iraq joined the northern tier countries in the Baghdad pact was a freak of history brought about by the will of the now dead prime minister, Nuri en-Said. That the United States should have accepted this old man's will for solid diplomacy seems almost unimaginable to anyone familiar with the unstable and irresponsible governments of the Arab states.

CAMPBELL DISCUSSES all the aspects of our relations with the Arabs and outlines ways in which we might possibly improve them. But neither Campbell—nor apparently our statesmen—realize that the always fragile egg of Western domination of the Middle East—hatched and patched by military, economic and political force—is now broken, and all the President's soldiers, diplomats and politicians can never put it back together again. Furthermore while the author returns again and again to the lack of rapport between the United States and the people of the Arab world, he never discusses what I feel is the most important way of reaching these people—that is propaganda.

## Part of a Long Story

Eugene O'Neill As A Young Man in Love By Agnes Boulton. 381 pp. New York Doubleday. \$4.50.

Reviewed by HERB FISHER

The stature of Eugene O'Neill has never loomed larger than it does today. The posthumous appearance of "Long Day's Journey into Night" increased his importance and at the same time offered revelations into the origins of his thought, his sensitivity, his obsession with the parent-child relationship. It is with great promise, then, that this book by Agnes Boulton, O'Neill's first wife, appears. Here is the expectation of digging further into the soul of the dramatic genius, a chapter two of O'Neill's "long day's journey." As his wife of 10 years, during which Miss Boulton holds a rich abundance of insight into this mysterious figure, she tells only partially fulfills its promise.

WE DO GET a graphic image of O'Neill's isolation, his desperate fear of human contact, his manic depressive moodiness, his struggle against alcoholism, his jealousy, his dominance of his wife, his love of Nietzsche and Strindberg, his need to break through the barriers and find meaning in life. "This is good, but we want to know more: What prompted the plays? Why, if life has no meaning, did O'Neill create so feverishly? What was he reaching for? How did he work out through the plays the tangled relationships with his parents and the tragic Jamie, his brother?"

MISS BOULTON, unfortunately, is more concerned with how O'Neill affected her. This is really a part of her own long story. The book is an abstract from that story, selected for timely publication by Doubleday. We learn much more about Miss Boulton than we care to, and not enough about O'Neill. If interested, the reader may have among other things, the author's recipe for fish stew, introduced into the story during a description of one of O'Neill's sobering up periods. The reader may also enjoy some bawdy gossip, but what do such facts as John Reed's ("Ten Days That Shook The World") impotency have to do with O'Neill's story? Miss Boulton has apparently lived a very exciting life, but the reader would far prefer to learn more about O'Neill's.

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THE COLD WAR is a war of ideas fought with words, and these words must be directed to peoples. It is no longer enough for diplomats to talk to diplomats. It is necessary to wage psychological warfare, to use propaganda, both white and black, and fight with symbols, signs, pictures, but above all with ideas couched in emotion-producing words. Strangely, Americans, certainly among the world's people, have not been successful in this field. They have, in fact, scarcely competed. For Americans, with all their advertising genius and salesmanship, have never learned to sell ideas—not even to themselves, let alone to others. Few of us would disagree with the concluding statement in John Campbell's book: "We cannot concede that the continuing successful defense of the Middle East is beyond our capacities in the future, for our survival as a nation may depend upon it."

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