



THE CHARLOTTE NEWS

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WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 1958

Editorial Book Review

The Wit And Wisdom Of Harry Golden

ONLY IN AMERICA. By Harry Golden. Foreword by Carl Sandburg. World Publishing Co. 317 pages. \$4.

THE strange thing about Harry Golden is that he exists at all. If it were not for his own prodigious outpouring of prose one might be tempted to believe that he was invented by some latter day Dickens or Hogarth.

In appearance, personality and philosophy, he bears only casual and accidental resemblance to the real-life Americans in such weedy abundance. He is too exasperatingly original to be real.

But here he is—a Jew—a refugee from New York's Lower East Side—a product of Tammany Hall—a child of old Socialist, a non-conformist *extra ordinaire*, an integrationist and self-styled Friend of Man editing the CAROLINA ISRAELITE in a city noted for its Proper Presbyterianism and its political and social orthodoxy. "Abba," as Golden would say, rolling his cigar, "it could happen only in America."

A few hardened types would have argued a generation ago that it couldn't. The fact is that it has.

FOR those who have watched the ISRAELITE grow into a journalistic legend of sorts, this book is only a verification of an old truth. Golden has been turning out the most flavorful and provocative one-man journal in America. Once in AMERICA is a distillation of the ISRAELITE's best—which is to say Golden's best, for he writes it all. For good measure, the author has added several highly seasoned pieces originally prepared for COMMENTARY, MONTAINE and the AMERICAN JEWISH CONCERN. The result is a rather remarkable extravaganza of humor, opinion, reminiscence, whimsy and erudition that is typically Golden and uniformly delightful.

Whatever is human interests Harry Golden writes. Carl Sandburg with wholly justifiable admiration. "Honest men, crooks, knuckleheads, particularly anybody out of the ordinary if even a halfwit, any of them is in his line. He writes about them. He drops the sheets of writing in a barrel. Comes the time of the month to get out his paper, the CAROLINA ISRAELITE, he digs down into the barrel and finds copy. As you go along in this book or in copies of his paper you may be saying, 'That fellow doesn't miss anything—he has ears to hear and a pencil to write it down.'"

WHAT comes out in ONLY IN AMERICA is an utterly disarming mixture of toughness and sentimentality. Only Golden can call Dostoevski a "guy" and get away with it. Furthermore, few writers today are equipped with a better nose for paradox. He searches it out wherever it exists—in relations between the Christians and the Jews, in the plight of the southern Negro, in the gray-funnel world of Madison Avenue and the Organization Man, in contemporary politics. Yet Golden is no soapbox artist. He is, we suppose, primarily an entertainer—but an entertainer with a point of view. Laughter is his weapon and he uses it deftly. He frequently has his readers chuckling at their own social villainy—just as Twain did years ago and Mort Sahl does today. If the villainy is not dissolved it is at least diluted.

Golden's range is positively immense. It is a seemingly unending stream of well-ordered consciousness that includes Cain's hangover cure ("five or six raw cabbage leaves"), Sen McCarthey's Charlotte politics, Aaron Burr's virility ("Aaron actually accomplished that which most men dream about at least once a week throughout their lives, to be convicted of adultery at the age of 80"), the younger generation ("A clear and present danger to our society lurks in the corridors of our new ranch-type schools: Bubble gum comes with the terrazzo tile," prostitution, marriage, the Ku Klux Klan and how to buy cigars).

He can be appropriately sociological on the question of the Jew and the Negro in the South and merely logical on the matter of dying. Says Golden in his "Causerie On Death":

"Monday is the best day of the week to die. The folks have a clear field ahead of them, and can give their activities and the arrangements the respect of unhurried dignity. Tuesday is not too bad, but Wednesday and Thursday come close to the danger point, and Friday is completely out of the question. The first thing the folks will think of when death enters their lives on a Friday is that their weekend has been completely smashed up."

GOLDEN has his own theories on other Big Issues, too—such as why other planets have not contacted us. "In our space literature," he writes, "we automatically picture the Martians or the other Visitors From Outer Space trying to wipe us out and grab our money Big Deal. We are always worried about someone carrying off our women. This is *clashpoth* (arrangence). I believe the reverse is closer to the truth. I think the Martians and other Visitors From Outer Space are afraid they'll get killed the minute they set foot on this nervous, inhibited, frustrated and trigger-happy little Earth."

They keep watching and keep saying, 'Not yet, Charlie. They have decided to wait.'"

Whole slices of ONLY IN AMERICA are devoted to the Lower East Side and reminiscences of life among the Jewish immigrants. These are among Golden's more ambitious pieces and he deals with local color and exotic situations with great zest and humor. We meet his Uncle Koppel who managed a large hotel chain on about 150 words of broken English, his father who "got into the sixth grade that I learned that the correct pronunciation was 'lounge.' My mother called it a 'lunch.' Everybody's mother called it a 'lunch,'" his brother ("A guest came in and was told, 'If a man comes available would cost \$2.50. The guest said, 'You've got \$1.50 on the sign, and my brother told him, 'Try and sleep on the sign.'"), the shadchan (marriage broker), the "pullers-in" at the clothing store in the Bowery ("If a man stopped to look at the window display of the store he was a dead duck. When an immigrant went in to one of these establishments, the first thing they asked him to do was take his pants off to try on a new suit. The fellow never saw his pants again, unless he made a purchase.") among others.

THE South is present and accounted for, too, and Golden has not neglected to include his Vertical Negro Plan. Noting that whites and Negroes have been standing up together at store counters and bank teller windows for years without incident, he wryly suggests that desks be provided in Dixie's integrated public schools—but no seats. Pupils would be commended to stand. And, reasons Golden, "since no one in the South pays the slightest attention to a vertical Negro, this will completely solve our problem."

Golden is sensitively concerned with the "Negro problem" but recognizes that it is not confined to the South. "In San Francisco I learned that the Negroes call the South Egypt," he writes. "Later on I cited the Negro editor. I said how come—over in Oakland I hear the same old story—children of Italian immigrants moving out of neighborhoods as Negroes move in. The editor smiled and said, 'We call the South Egypt but you didn't hear me calling this the Promised Land did you?'"

YET Golden is at his best when dealing with men rather than Man. The characters who crowd his essays are undeniably real. That includes "our new breed of knuckleheads" (the quiz champions), the mediums ("Why La Fayette should have talked to me and why some old relative from Galicia hadn't made contact puzzled me, naturally, but I suspected the reason for it was that none of these mediums or their confederates could speak Yiddish"), and everybody else.

It's all here in 317 pages. In fact, Golden leaves but one really vital question unanswered in ONLY IN AMERICA—when can we expect another book?

How The U. S. Saved America From An Irrational War

By WALTER LIPPMANN

BARRING a new development, such as an invasion of the Lebanon from Syria, there will not now be, indeed there cannot now be, a British-American armed intervention in the civil war. The report of the U. N. observers has cut the ground from under intervention at the request of the Lebanese government.

The thesis of the report is that the fighting is an internal Lebanese civil war. The idea of landing the British paratroopers who are now in Cyprus and the American Marines who are now with the Sixth Fleet has, therefore, been opposed in advance.

REPORT CHALLENGED
President Chamoun's friends are, of course, challenging the U. N. report. They claim that the United Arab Republic is in fact a Lebanese state, and is sending in arms, and is of course conducting a virulent propaganda campaign.

There is encouragement, however, in the fact that more and more community leaders, and scientific leaders are recognizing the necessity for this freedom.

At the June convention of the American Medical Association in San Francisco the House of Delegates of the AMA passed a resolution which includes the following statement:

"That the House of Delegates reiterates its commendation and approval of the principal voluntary health agencies... That it is the firm belief of the American Medical Association that these agencies should be free to conduct their own programs of research, public and professional education and fund-raising in their own particular spheres of interest."

The major voluntary health agencies concur that this necessary freedom cannot be maintained in a federated fund-raising program wherein an inadequately informed budgeting committee has the option of increasing or decreasing voluntary health budgets in all phases of work.

Dr. Robert W. Wilkins, president of the American Heart Association, in an address in February of this year said:

"Just when we begin to glimpse where and how the answers to cancer, coronary disease and hypertension may be found, we are turned aside from our main task by the necessity of defending ourselves against an organized effort designed to renege on its single plan of fund-raising."

Speaking for the Mecklenburg County Chapter of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis, we are gratified that the local United Appeal and the voluntary health

by way of the radio. There is no doubt that the rebels are being helped and encouraged, and that this is intervention by Nasser in Lebanese affairs. But the question is whether this intervention is as the Chamoun government claims, "massive" or whether, as the U. N. observers report, it is not enough to be significant and decisive.

CLAIM DESTROYED
For the American bystander, asked to choose between these two conflicting stories, there is one undeniable fact that argues convincingly in favor of the U. N. observers. This is the fact that the Lebanese Army is passive, doing little more than to subside them, refusing to intervene. This destroys the claim that the Lebanon is defending its national independence against foreign aggression. It supports the judgment of Mr. Hammarskjold and the U. N. observers that the real opposition to Chamoun is by Lebanese forces who are in open rebellion, and by those who, including the Army, are refusing to help put down the rebellion.

STEREOTYPES
There are some who believe in the necessity to intervene actively in support of Chamoun, we are participating in another "Munich."

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or whether it shall line up with Nasser. The crucial question is whether the Christian community and the Moslem community can live together. If they can, the Lebanon will not be absorbed by Nasser even though it abjures the Eisenhower Doctrine. If the Christian and Moslem community cannot live and work together, there is to solution in sight and every prospect of the endless misery of an endless war.

CHIEF OBJECTION
The fundamental objection to British and American armed intervention in favor of Chamoun is that it would destroy the chances of restoring and maintaining the Christian-Moslem pact. Western intervention on behalf of the Christian president of the Lebanon would surely arouse the implacable opposition of the Moslems. In all likelihood the internal war would become what, happily, it is not now, a religious war.

TRUE INTEREST
Our true interest is to defend the independence of the Lebanon by using our influence to preserve the integrity of the basic Christian-Moslem pact. Insofar as Chamoun stands in the way of a political settlement of the civil war, we should advise him to step aside, we should warn him not to prolong the struggle by jamming on a British-American armed intervention.

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People's Platform No Federated Fund-Raising For Polio Fighters

Editor, The News:

YOUR interest in the March of Dimes organization which prompted your editorial "Come On In, The Fund-Raising's Fine" on July 18 is appreciated by those of us who serve as volunteers on the program of the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis in Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

We are pleased that you share with us a sense of pride in achieving the goal of the fight against polio, and that you look with us hopefully in an enlarged field of helpful service in which even greater accomplishments may be attained.

It is distressing, however, to note that there is still a "blind spot" on the part of some as to why it is necessary for major voluntary health organizations to remain free from community federated fund-raising programs such as our local United Appeal.

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"But You Ain't S'posed T'Kotch Me Too!" Say Brer Fox.
Brer Tar-Baby, He Say Nothin'."



groups in Mecklenburg County are friendly and are experiencing "little or no warfare." The "strife" will maintain as long as voluntary health groups are faced with the necessity to compromise or limit the freedom we enjoy in carrying out our respective programs.

Since the question of the future fund-raising policy of the March of Dimes was raised by your editorial, we wish to state that the volunteer board of trustees of the National Foundation, composed of all of the nation's leading business men, has ruled that the fund-raising policy which has proved so successful in the fight against polio will be maintained in the expanded program of the National Foundation which will be announced July 22. This ruling is not made by Mr. Basil O'Connor, president, as your editorial inferred.

Volunteers of the Mecklenburg County Chapter of the National Foundation are in complete agreement with this ruling.

—ROBERT L. JONES
Chairman
Mecklenburg County Chapter
National Foundation
for Infantile Paralysis

Buy Fourth Street Land For Center

Editor, The News: Charlotte
THE bar (in renewing its proposal for additional court-house facilities) is correct. Mr. William E. McIntire—no man to me—is 100 per cent correct in furnishing these facilities (in furnishing these facilities) on property on E. 4th St., opposite the courthouse, should be purchased at once for a government center.

Gentlemen, purchase the land, tear all the buildings down and make a metropol parking lot there until you are ready to build. I am a taxpayer and I will not let the bar return the process of justice.

—WILLIAM C. MCINTIRE

Gilbert And Sullivan Gave Fair Warning

Editor, The News: Charlotte
GILBERT and Sullivan, in "The Pirates of Penzance," tell us what we need to know: let the bar return the process of justice.

"Come, friends, who plough the sea. True to Navigation, Take another station, let's say, pirates. With a little burglary!"

Appropriately, the music to this classic passage is popularly known as "Hail! Hail! The Gang's All Here!" The bar will rally like a flock of crows with a scandal, generates a crusade

If the pact is preserved, his successor would also be a Christian Arab, and there is no present reason to think that he would be any more ready than is Chamoun to be absorbed into the United Arab Republic. He will be all the less ready if we have played the part of mediators for a settlement rather than of partisans of Chamoun personally.

If our commitment to Chamoun personally has been as explicit as many reputable reports say it is, the outcome is of course ineluctable, however prudent. In fact, Chamoun's is the third conspicuous case in recent history when, in order not to be drawn into irrational war, we have had to disentangle ourselves from client governments.

RHEE AND CHANG
The other two cases are that of Syngman Rhee in Korea and that of Chiang Kaishek in Formosa. Both in Korea and in Formosa there was a time when each of the two leaders believed that he could lead us into war—Syngman Rhee for the reconquest of Northern Korea, Chiang for the reconquest of the mainland. These were dangerous entanglements and in both cases we have managed to disentangle ourselves.

A similar entanglement with Chamoun seems to have existed until, thanks to the U. N., we have found a way to disentangle ourselves.

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Men who possess opinions and a will. Men who have honor, men who will not die.

Men who can stand before a man. And damn his treachery. Butlers without winking. Tell men, whenever, who his above the fog. In public duty and in private thinking. For while the rabble, with their thumb worn creeds. Their large professions and their little deeds. Mingle in selfish strife, lo! Freedom weeps. Wrong rules the land, and waiting Justice sleeps.

PETER TWINKLE

Drew Pearson's Merry-Go-Round Cleveland's Grandson Is Alaskan Hero

WASHINGTON

WHILE senators were making speeches on the Alaska statehood, the grandson of the late President Grover Cleveland was one of the unsung heroes of the Alaskan wilderness.

Tom Cleveland, grandson of the 22nd and 24th Presidents who defeated James G. Blaine in 1884, was defeated by Benjamin Harrison in 1888, but elected over Harrison again in 1892, is an Episcopalian missionary at Holikachuk, Alaska. This is a small Eskimo village far from civilization with no means of transportation except dog sled and an occasional plane that lands at a makeshift airport.

Eloquent Report
By Cleveland made no speeches about Alaskan statehood, but he has written an eloquent report to his family regarding life in the new state. It indicates what citizens of the other 48 states will encounter when they go touring through the latest addition to the union.

"A lot of snow and ice has melted since I last wrote in December," Rev. Cleveland told his family in June. "This is really a land of contrasts. There are only a few hours of light in December, but a few nights ago the moon landed at midnight in almost broad daylight. Come the end of May, because of long days and a great deal of moisture, the trees and grass grow from buds to greenery in three days. The change from death to life seems almost instantaneous."

Poor Beaver Season
"Beaver season was poor, and the price was low again so at the season's end everyone was looking for work. Unemployment was as high in Alaska as anywhere, so the men who used their beaver money to go to the city to get work had many disappointments. The economic situation for natives in the villages looks like it's getting worse with

low fur prices and a real lull in seasonal and out-of-the-village employment.

"We were hit last winter with some form of distemper among the dogs, and we must have lost 30 or 40 dogs in this village alone. This is like having almost every car and truck in a city out of commission. For this reason I was happier than ever to see the bishop arrive for his visitation. He brought us three full grown dogs from Fort Yukon and two pups from Nenana. Two of our dogs had died, including my dog, and I was quite a sight to see the bishop squeezed in his little plane with five dogs, six Eskimo dogs, and fresh groceries for three villages."

Tractor Needed
"The one great need we have within the mission and the village is a tractor. You have asked me about a some kind of tractor. For several years we have had our eye on the old tractor at our mission in Arvik, but now it has broken down

and won't seem to run at all just when we were going to get it. There is no way around the tractor except by brute force, wheel barrow, or dog sled, and a tractor would be a tremendous help to us all. Anything of you would like to do to help us obtain this modern convenience would be greatly appreciated."

Deserted Village
"There is not a soul in the village now except for the school teacher and the postmaster and ourselves. Everyone left about 10 days ago for the Yukon and the Yukon is a very busy camp. We will stay here most of the summer."

Rev. Tom Cleveland doesn't know that I and quotes from his letter and will be surprised when he reads this. However, I seemed to me important not only that the American people know about their new state, but that they also know how a grandson of an American President is serving mankind.

From The Raleigh News & Observer

THE TWILIGHT OWLETS

IT HAS been recorded on this page previously that the owl is a stupid stick-in-the-mud, an utterer of discordant nonsense, a mask of ugly and shiftless indifference waiting for a hapless insect to deliver himself up as a welfare check.

The little screech owls will grow ugly and stupid eventually, alas, but along about now they are a tremendous improvement upon the arch provincial parent who is glued to the limb. When the weather is silky after supper, when the color curling from the woods is a sort of greenish blue, the owlets take off much in the manner that the Wrights did at Kitty Hawk. There is more of prayer than hope in these first flights. Ecstasies are bound with fear as the owlets flail, quiver, fall, rise, and flounder dead at slight altitude.

You like to believe that the pull of youth and summer kicks up the mischief of exploration in the owlets. It is a marvelous show for one who is town and city chained. The poet in us is torn and these rosters will finally hole up on a limb, premature supernaturals doing their best to master the ignoble art of immobile stupidity. Like father like son. Too soon too soon.

Little Johnny proudly announces that when he runs for president his motto will be "A rocket in every pocket!" —MIAMI HERALD

It's an adult Western if the hero fires only 10 or 12 times before he reloads his six-shooter. —GREENVILLE FIDMONT