

INSIDE AMERICA

1—Mr. Hooper of Washington
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AS I WRITE, the halting tones of Winston S. Churchill Jr., the young journalist who carries an important name, are bathing me in moderation. It is a rebroadcast of a lecture given earlier this year at the University of Massachusetts. He is talking about Rhodesia, how he thinks that Britain "must never send troops" because "we must remember that thousands of Rhodesians fought by our side in the War. But too, we must never forget that many thousands of Rhodesian Africans also fought bravely . . ."

He is going on to say that the only way we would be justified in sending British troops to Rhodesia would be in case of "racial unrest", "then," he says, "without doubt we must send troops to restore peace and order."

In the U.S. Churchill's lecture hits dead centre. Such is the emptiness of American awareness of what is at stake with Ian Smith.

There are three main reasons why America views Rhodesia so blandly: First, general ignorance, and in that ignorance the assumption that Great Britain must know best. Second is the fear of becoming "mixed up" with intervention in still another part of the world. (Even though, in de Gaulle's words, the U.S. has developed "a taste for intervention", intervention has notably only been employed to ensure the status quo wherever Washington has seen fit to use it.) And the third reason for America's casual acceptance of Rhodesia's post-independence status is H. J. C. Hooper, Ian Smith's man in Washington.

SOME WEEKS AGO I searched in the spring sun for 2852 McGill Terrace, Washington, N.W., the operating base of Mr. Hooper. The address is a private house with the downstairs fitted out as an office. I rang the buzzer and was admitted by a girl with a distinctly Salisbury south accent.

Except for the United Press International teletype banging away in the corner, the office is appointed about in the manner of a small university newspaper. There are some desks, three secretary-clerks, a dusty display of Rhodesian export products, a few piles of recent and outdated Rhodesian Government publications and a file for press photographs, the four tiers of which are labelled

enigmatically: MINING, INDUSTRY, HISTORICAL, CHIEFS.

Mr. Hooper's office is on the other side of the front hall. He welcomed me and ushered me in.

Hooper entered the U.S. on a British passport which has been rescinded. Since at least February the State Department has been trying to find some way to ease him out of the country without throwing him out. He has been sent a series of notices informing him that he must leave because, according to *The New York Times*, "The United States regards the Smith regime as a rebellion against Great Britain, the legal constitutional authority". But Mr. Hooper has not gone away.

THE MORNING OF MY VISIT he was full of observations on his position. He summarised by saying that he was merely "planning to sit tight and see what happens." To this date nothing has happened except that he continues to turn out weekly propaganda mailings to the American public.

He is a big man, voluble and friendly when he makes his reverse logical assertions. In response to my question about the degree of white resentment against Wilson in Rhodesia, he answered that it was not the whites who resented Wilson but the Africans. I nodded. But he continued, "They, the Africans, resent Wilson for not recognising the Smith government". After that statement I decided to merely sit back to listen and watch.

The green carpet under his desk was thoroughly dusted with cigarette ash. He chain smoked through our long conversation, tapping the ashes directly on the carpet below the right arm of his chair. When I finally rose to leave, he was caught in a paroxysmal smoker's gag, his face reddening dangerously. I honestly feared for him, but he recovered, shook my hand, thanked me for my interest in Rhodesia's problems and took my address for his mailing list.

One sinister bit of information came my way during the interview. He told me that in the U.S. there were over forty private groups working in one way or another to help Smith's government survive. And judging from the material I have been receiving in the mail recently, he must have passed my name on to all of them

Books & the Arts

Ebbtide chronicle

Patrick Duncan

The Passing of French Algeria by David C. Gordon (Oxford University Press, 42s)

SOME WEEKS AGO, as I was motoring through the farmlands of eastern Algeria, I passed through one of the great estates created by a French *colon* during the century of occupation. The estate is now administered by a *comité de gestion*, a workers' self-management committee. It is clearly still highly productive, with lush orange groves, cleanly-cultivated vines, and neatly-trimmed hedges. The principal visible change since the nationalisation of French farms in 1963 is that the seigneurial mansion is now lived in by Algerian families, rich principally in football-playing children.

Somehow this sunlit scene symbolised for me the drama of the Algerian revolution, a drama as important and as interesting as any of the twentieth century dramas. I realised that there lay, in the human and material relations now existing in that estate, and in the changes that it has seen in ten years, the materials for a book which might lay bare the inner meaning of the movement of decolonisation which we are today participating in.

This movement does, after all, pose some pretty important questions. Why did the European tide, that swept up to its spring-tide high in about 1914, ebb when it did? Indeed, in 1914 it covered the habitable globe, save for islands in Japan, Persia, and Ethiopia. In the context of this ebb, was