

# the world looks at the U.S.A.



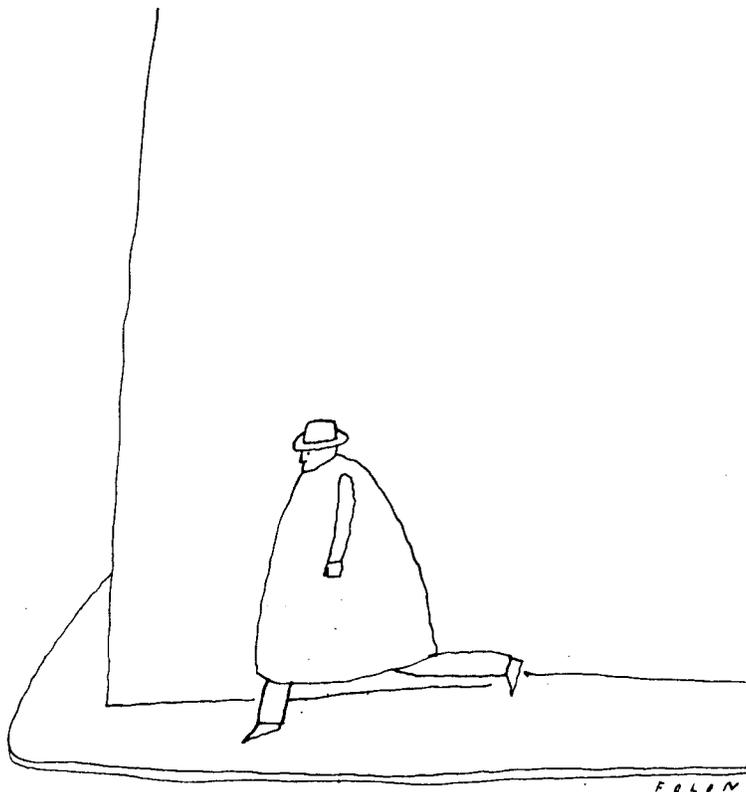
## 'AMERICA BURNS'

Translated from TRIBUNE DE LAUSANNE, Lausanne

The mystery unfolded slowly, but it was not yet solved. Who wrote *L'Amérique brûle* ("America Burns")? Not James Hepburn, the name on the cover. Actually, the French newsweekly *L'Express* reports, a group of American intellectuals, some of them, at least, allegedly identified with the late President Kennedy, had written the often scorching attack on the American Establishment. Who were they—and why the effort? No one knows the camouflaged writers, but *L'Express* suggests their initial purpose was political, designed to show the "necessity" of electing the late Senator Robert F. Kennedy, to the White House. Editors in the U.S. had rejected the manuscript—it had reached their hands too clandestinely, it invited a crush of libel suits. But now *L'Amérique brûle* is in print—published in both French and English by a private organization in Liechtenstein (*Nouvelles Frontières: Vaduz*)—and it has aroused lively interest in Europe. Robert Curtat reviews the mysterious book in Switzerland's *Tribune de Lausanne* . . .

**A**MERICA, that daughter of Calvin rededicated by Wesley, still revolving in her sacred circle of profit: I earn, you earn, he earns. At the end of this conjugation, encouraged by the holy writ—"We exhort the Christians to amass as much wealth as they can . . . in other words, to grow rich"—the Titans appear. We know the names of the ancient Titans from the façades of public buildings: Andrew Carnegie, Solomon Guggenheim. The modern giants are perhaps less obtrusive, but they are no less real. Their creed is still that which was once succinctly stated by Harold Laski: "A strong president is a moral menace."

It was in this America that there appeared, on the brink of the Sixties, a millionaire with ideas and a taste for politics: John Fitzgerald Kennedy. Soon the other millionaires realized he did not share their beliefs.



Folon in LE NOUVEL OBSERVATEUR, Paris

But it was a bit late! J.F.K. was in the White House and the electors had doubled his mandate. At this point the citadels nourished by the Titans, those James Hepburn exposes—politicians, military men, businessmen, oilmen, Texans—began to formulate their counterattack. Their interests were too important to allow scruples to interfere with their tactics of defense (or survival). They would develop their counterattack right up to the end, up to the assassination on Elm Street.

In its entirety, James Hepburn's book is a long exposure of the "machine" that the giants set working to suppress J.F.K. With Hepburn we penetrate the citadel and follow the "natural" evolution that led directly to the assassination. Thus it is not an investigation, nor is it an investigation of an investigation such as over twenty authors and several hundred journalists have already

conducted. James Hepburn's goal is both subtler and more decisive than that of Epstein (*Inquest*), Léo Sauvage (*L'affaire Oswald*) and Richard Popkin (*The Second Oswald*), and all the others who have become involved with the varied details of Elm Street in order to retrace one or another of the trajectories of the death machine—which were as plentiful as those of water from a watering can. Hepburn centers his investigation on the time be-

fore the assassination and the following confusion of true and false tracks—at a point where it is still possible to understand and differentiate the multiple pressures that brought the assassination about.

**S**OME of his arguments, due to their abruptness, have aroused the criticism that he sorts out the assassins as though they were beans . . . with a fork! However, the assembled evidence is largely documented in footnotes. If James Hepburn had to make a choice, he would undoubtedly prefer to see his book described as an etching of America in the Sixties than as a chiaroscuro with a backdrop of pastoral hills, the sort of work of art he would attribute to Earl Warren.

Everyone should read these passionate pages about the America that is burning. With or without reservation, according to your visual appetite and your thirst for knowledge, Hepburn will introduce you to certain personalities of interest to all, from William Bobo, known as "Two-Revolver Pete," whom they buried like a dog the morning after Oswald's murder, to the millionaire who found it convenient to be absent from Dallas between November 22, 1963 and December 23, 1963. And who lived in his voluntary retreat with about fourteen companions under the indifferent gazes of F.B.I. agents!

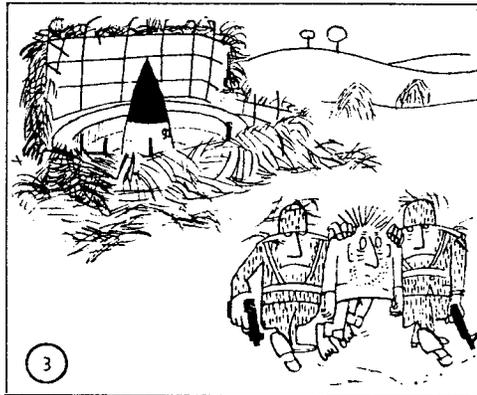
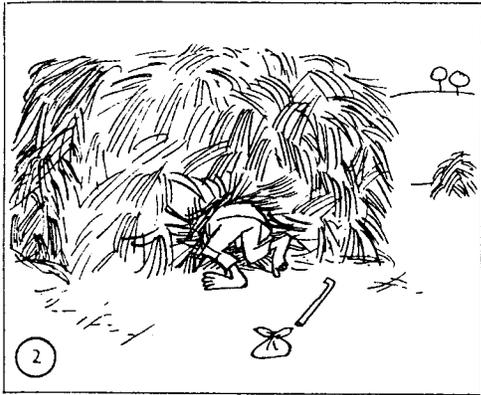
Paraphrasing our friend Clavel, the 1968 Goncourt Prize-winner, one might say that Hepburn had no need to romanticize this story. The truth is fantastic enough!

By Robert Curtat

#### Act of faith . . . act of hatred—a French view

*This book is mystical as well as political. It is an act of faith in America's mission and in her youth; it is an act of hatred for the Establishment. It is a curious mixture of facts and sermons, employing the very American technique of alternating a clear, simple narrative with lyrico-religious flights. L'Amérique brûle is the most violent indictment a man has ever written against his own country, out of love for his own country.*

From L'EXPRESS, Paris



Eduard Hájek in DIKOBRAZ, Prague

The Kerala Government, in the best Communist tradition, decided to strike back with both police and political action. Ministers and party leaders went "down to the countryside" to make contact with the masses. Although the Communist coalition which made up the Government of Kerala by this stage was badly split over the rebellion, the Chief Minister showed himself more effective in crushing the revolutionary rebels than any other state ruler. Within a fortnight, the revolution was a total failure, its ringleader in custody.

**T**HE note of farce was repeated even in the arrest of the revolution's mastermind. On the run, he trekked nearly ninety miles through the forest to reach one of his district headquarters. Here he checked into a local hotel without any difficulty and tried unsuccessfully to make contact with his followers. Eventually, he was forced to make a factual assessment of the state of the revolution based on back numbers of local newspapers. The next morning he paid his hotel bill, walked down to the police station and surrendered to an astonished band of police officers. He has not given up all hope of final victory however as his last words were: "The revolution has temporarily failed."

The police took a sadistic ideological line in interrogating the former revolutionary commander. They insisted on questioning him about certain alleged links with

the CIA. (This paralleled the charges of Red Guards in Peking that disgraced Chinese leaders had been working for the Russian revisionists.) Alternatively, they suggested, he was a secret agent of the reactionary New Delhi Government's Central Bureau of Investigation. To these "slanders," he replied calmly but steadfastly: "I have no party; Mao's Thoughts are my politics." His own explanation for the failure of his plans was curiously non-Maoist—shortage of funds.

The political campaign against the revolt was a clumsier effort than the police operations. Commenting that the Maoist leader Kunnikkal Narayanan had recently visited Western Europe, Marxist Communists alleged that he had established contacts with CIA agents while he was in Paris and had hatched a conspiracy to provide an agent-provocateur. Before leading the revolution he was an export executive of an Indian company—a fact which according to Marxists clearly proves that he is a "bootlicker of the capitalists." Kerala's Communist Revenue Minister, Mrs. Gowri Thomas, who was the first to call the Maoists CIA agents, had an impeccable record as revolutionary in her own life. She was the leader of an armed uprising in a coastal village in 1948, which she had lost after a week-long battle with the police. As a disciplined member of the party she accepted a directive of the Politburo which demanded

that she leave her "revisionist" husband. Her charges of CIA help for the Maoists—although quickly dismissed by outsiders—won some credence among party members.

Mrs. Thomas was an important member of the 1957 Communist Government of Kerala which was overthrown by what was claimed to be a conspiracy hatched by Moral Rearmament—a claim enthusiastically accepted as true by jubilant Moral Rearmeters themselves. Leaders of the 1959 anti-Communist struggle were soon offered all-expense-paid trips to Europe by the Moral Rearmament as tokens of their gratitude. The CIA scare has become an obsession in Kerala and every wandering hippie is regarded as a potential American spy. But Indians found it difficult to believe that the CIA was behind an uprising so obviously dedicated to the purer theories of Maoism—and its lack of finance did not suggest an "invisible American hand."

The analysis of the Party Secretary General was that the revolt amounted to "leftist adventurism" as it so clearly conflicted with the "objective" conditions needed for revolution. He also pointed to the absurdity of the Indian revolutionary situation, where the theoretician of the Naxalbari movement is able to live openly in an apartment in Calcutta and receive visits from "underground" operators seeking his guidance. This point highlighted another absurdity of the Indian Communist scene. The Marxist Communists would dearly love the New Delhi Government to find some legal pretext for banning the extremists and so remove them from the open Communist movement. This would make life much easier for the Marxist Communist leaders who are now forced to wage a tough ideological struggle against the Maoists. However, the Central Government has no intention of getting the Marxist Communists off the hook; Home Minister Chavan repeated last month that the Maoists will be penalized only when they break the law and take to violence.

By M. P. Narayana Pillai