

tural information between the two countries, which so far go beyond anything we know in America. One finds here Russian exhibits of many kinds in great profusion. The sense of partnership with Russia in the immediate struggle is much more intense than with us, having been fostered by two years of relief from the air war which devastated British cities.

Among the historical factors a politico-economic and a cultural one deserve mention. Britain is a capitalist, not a Communist, nation; there is little prospect even of labor gaining control after the war. Nevertheless, Britain has accepted not only planning but the prospect of increasing government control of economic processes with a unanimity quite inconceivable in America. The difference in temper upon this point is best illustrated by the attitude of our two nations toward war-time restrictions. In Britain food rationing is accepted with an enthusiasm which strikes an American, accustomed to grouching upon the subject, as remarkable. I do not know how often I have heard the hope expressed that some kind of rationing will continue after the war. The reason given is that it is just. The sense of equality between rich and poor that it creates, the feeling of the poor that the rich have no advantage over them, is constantly expressed. (The equality is not perfect, as you may note when you eat at the Savoy or the Dorchester. But there is basic equality.)

Though Britain has not finally concluded the debate on planning, which indeed will proceed throughout the whole world for decades to come, it has arrived at conclusions about minimal standards of social control which will continue to arouse acute controversy among us and between us and the Russians. Here Britain quite obviously occupies the middle ground.

The cultural factor worth mentioning is that though in Britain as in America the atheism of Russia is a hazard to a partnership, the Catholic church is much less powerful in Britain than in America. I do not mean that only Catholics are concerned about this issue. But they have an *idée-fixe* upon this subject, and most Protestants do not. In Britain there is a strong inclination to let history take its course and to hope that every kind of freedom in Russia, including religious freedom, will have more chance if Russia is in partnership with us than if it is in conflict. The strong social interests of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Temple, and his great prudence in this matter help to set the tone of religious Britain.

On one question there is a sharp difference between political and religious opinion, and that is the future of the Baltic states, which Russia claims as part of its defense system. In political circles there is an inclination to yield this point, but influential churchmen hope that some effort will be made to secure at least cultural (religious) autonomy for the Baltic countries.

I would not claim that the role of mediator and equilibrator for Britain is consciously projected by any large British public. But I have met the idea with significant frequency among thoughtful people. And the historical facts seem to give it real validity and promise. It will take "a bit of doing." But if it can be carried out, it will obviously furnish that accord between self-interest and general interest which it must be the design of statesmanship to achieve. There is every indication that Russia would welcome such a three-cornered partnership. Surely it would be to our advantage also, though it will be some time before we know whether America appreciates that fact with any degree of unanimity.

America's Pampered Husbands

BY EDITH M. STERN

AS A disillusioned feminist (from the twenties) I have followed with interest the contradictions and confusions in the press and radio campaign to recruit women for war industry. Women are praised to the skies because so many of them have entered war plants; but the situation is serious because so many more women are needed. Women with small children shouldn't work in war plants; but communities should provide nurseries so women with small children can do so. We must cut down on laundry service, restaurants, and store deliveries to release people for war work; but housewives should take full-time employment in war plants. It's marvelous how women used to only such light work as washing windows, turning double-bed mattresses, scrubbing floors,

and hanging up wet sheets are holding up at machines, and how the feminine hands that hitherto touched nothing unlovelier than garbage or soiled diapers dip without squeamishness into grease and oil. And so on.

Out of all the bunkum and inconsistencies a few clear facts emerge: that the supply of regular working girls and women—drawn from beauty parlors or schoolrooms or offices or restaurants or other people's kitchens—is pretty well exhausted; that the 3,000,000 additional women needed in war industry this year will have to be recruited among housewives; that the appeals—effective at first—of patriotism, high wages, and glamor by way of pictures of Powers-model welders aren't making housewives en masse exchange their bungalow aprons for

slacks; and that if we aren't going to lose this war for lack of woman power, something will have to be done, not about women, but about men.

For the unorganized but powerful pressure group of American husbands is the greatest obstacle to all-out employment of middle-class American wives. It isn't only, as a recent Gallup poll showed, that there are more married women who are unqualifiedly willing to take full-time employment in war plants than married men who are unqualifiedly willing to have their wives take such employment. Husbandly pressure on housewives not to enlist for the war-production front takes much subtler forms than an overt "I object." Largely, it shapes up as men's time-hallowed, unspoken refusal to share in home responsibilities, an attitude that puts an intolerable double burden on the working wife.

Women who are doing men's work in war plants today are doing men's work and women's work. The costs in physical and nervous energy have not yet been reckoned, but if we expect more women to volunteer for men's traditional work, more men must take over some of women's traditional work.

Not a hint of this clear-cut solution for a grave problem has crept into any of the women-in-war-industry discussions I have examined. An article in the February *Fortune* pointed out that even when there are provisions for care of the children, the working mother must still market, cook, launder, and clean. "These [activities] stretch her working day another four to six hours unless she receives concessions not normally given." That her husband might make some of the concessions is not suggested.

At that, *Fortune* is more realistic than most of its contemporaries. In the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *This Week* blithe gurglings have glorified the woman with a double job, have shown how merrily war-working mothers find time to do the family washing at night and to decorate birthday cakes as usual. But what housewife in her right mind, now comfortably supported by her husband and satisfying her patriotic urges by Red Cross work and by collecting silk stockings and fats and tin cans, would want to change places with welder Annie James, recently so enthusiastically pictured in the *Reader's Digest*?

Annie, we are told, thrives "on the combination of home and job. . . . Every day except Sunday . . . there is a hectic period between 4:20, when Annie comes home, and 4:40, when her husband leaves for his night shift in a metal company. In that twenty minutes her husband eats his dinner (he won't eat until she comes home), and she prepares his midnight lunch (it doesn't taste good otherwise)." Touching, of course, that Annie's husband is so devoted. But since they both work the same number of hours, at equally heavy work, it is conceivable that Mr. James might, occasionally, eat and clean up before Annie returns, or take turns fixing Annie's

lunch for her. "After he leaves," the paean runs on, "she does the housework."

Annie, who has adolescent children, was described in happy contrast to Mrs. Meng, mother of a four-year-old. She "had just finished the supper dishes when I arrived. She looked near the breaking-point. . . . Her young husband seemed worried about her." But if he helped her with the supper dishes, the article failed to mention it.

Even when the services that the average wife performs in the average household don't involve much time or physical labor, even where a servant can be obtained and held, home-making minutiae are distracting and energy-draining. When household equipment needs replacement, when the children's shoe size changes, when the toothpaste runs out, it is Mother and not Father who scribbles memoranda on scraps of paper and squeezes in the necessary shopping sometime, somewhere. Trivia? Maybe. But more women would be ready to take on full-time outside employment if they had the assurance that such trivia would not devolve exclusively upon them.

Why can't a father escort youngsters to the doctor or the dentist? Are consultations with teacher something that requires only that feminine touch now needed at grinders? If a woman can learn to run a drill press, why can't a man learn to run a washing-machine or an electric mangle? In short, if women must by war necessity work outside the home, isn't it equally a war necessity that men work inside?

It is evident that men, however much they pooh-poo housework, however loudly they proclaim, "Women make too much fuss about it" or "I could do it with one hand tied behind my back," are fully aware of the extent of the services rendered to them by their wives. If they were not, they would not so diligently rationalize their desire to keep the little woman at home. The work might be too heavy for her, for instance—though for years she has done heavy cleaning, washed kitchen walls, climbed up and down stepladders, lugged heavy coats up to the attic in summer and lugged them down again in winter. She might become tired—though she has sat up night after night with sick children while he slept, and has given him his breakfast as usual in the morning. It might not be safe—regardless of the fact that most accidents occur in homes, not in factories.

Underlying his unprecedented consideration for his wife is John Doe's unconscious fear that life would be less comfortable for him if Jane Doe were tied up in a war plant eight hours a day. And this fear is transmitted to Jane Doe. She has been so well schooled in her duties to her husband, by him, by her mother, by her grandmother, and by the women's magazines, that she would consider herself derelict if she let up on her home-making merely because she works as hard as he does. She does not envision exchanging a mop for a drill press,

but tending a drill press for eight hours a day and wielding the mop before or after shifts.

So for the present, since John is able to support her, she is settling for the mop, thank you. And you can't blame her. It is not that she doesn't want to help win the war, or that she prefers housework to shop work. She realizes that there are gaiety and sociability in a shop never found in her solitary kitchen; no iceman comes in nowadays, and even the Fuller brush boys have been drafted. She is thoroughly aware that eight hours a day at a machine is less exhausting than twelve hours at domestic drudgery. Simply, and mathematically, she realizes that she has the strength of only one person, and that there are only twenty-four hours in a day.

Two people, however, have the strength of two, and their combined hours equal forty-eight. Pulling together, wives and husbands can work both outside and inside the home. If pampered males would take on more home-making responsibilities, the American home would be not disrupted but strengthened. A new, genuine companionship would develop between husbands and wives, now separated by divergent, sex-bounded interests. Children would benefit from father-care as well as mother-care. The point is proved by the experience of the professional classes, where "man's work" and "woman's work" are not nearly so rigidly defined as in other groups. Many a career woman can testify that all she is and hopes to be she owes to her "angel husband," who trots Johnny to the shoestore when she has an important business appointment and helps with the dishes when she is just as tired as he is.

The task of reeducating men to a new role in the home will not be an easy one. It is, however, an essential task if we hope to induce women to volunteer for war industry or if we are going to draft them without destroying them. A nation becoming accustomed to rationing, to doing without a car, and to casualty lists should not find the difficulty insuperable. Indeed, it must not, or we shall deliver too little and too late!

In the Wind

AN ADVERTISEMENT denouncing anti-Semitism in textbooks has appeared under the sponsorship of the Protestant Textbook Commission in the *Philadelphia Record*, the *Chicago Sun*, and the *Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, Telegraph*. The *New York Times* did not consider it fit to print.

AT THIS WRITING the Communists have not yet seized control of Boston, though the movie version of "Mission to Moscow" opened there on July 1. A City Council resolution had called on Mayor Tobin to ban the film. Councilman Matthew F. Hanley, in a speech for the resolution, called Stalin "the greatest murderer the world has ever seen and

the greatest ambassador from the pits of hell whose name has ever been written into the dirty pages of history."

DURING THE first half of June, says the James S. Twohey Weekly Analysis of Newspaper Opinion, "out of all political comment, 53 per cent is devoted to various activities of Wendell Willkie, with 30 per cent of the papers praising him as an internationalist, 15 per cent condemning him for the same reason."

NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS are fighting any reduction in their paper allotments. But *Tide* reports: "One of Britain's chief newspaper owners is saying privately that he will never return to the pre-war type of publishing, with big editions bulging with news, opinion, and advertising. Reason: he can make more money, and have fewer problems, in eight pages."

WILL O. WALTON of the Alabama state senate has offered an amendment to the state constitution which would bar from voting, holding office, or serving on juries any person who advocates abolition of racial segregation. The legal basis for the bar would be to classify such persons as "moral degenerates."

PAN-AMERICAN SOLIDARITY was placed on a firm foundation in a recent speech by Alberto Magno-Rodríguez of the inter-American department of the American Standards Association: "Behind all human activities some selfish motive will always be found. . . . It is on this high level of self-interest, on a policy of fair 'give and take,' and on the maintenance of a free-enterprise system . . . that I should like to see the inter-trade of the Americas built up."

BRIGHT POST-WAR PROSPECTS for air transport are attracting "outsiders," to the disgust of the established air lines. Recently the Greyhound Bus Corporation applied to the Civil Aeronautics Board for seventy-eight helicopter routes covering 49,103 miles, and the Keeshin trucking interests are seeking permission for a network of aerial freight routes. C. B. Bedell-Monro, president of the Pennsylvania-Central Airlines, in an interview with *American Aviation*, denounced these applications as a menace to the industry and an attempt to "create monopolies of the worst type."

FESTUNG EUROPA: The Gestapo has burned the manuscript of a Lithuanian dictionary which had required forty years to compile. . . . A Nazi news analyst on the Prague radio offers this view of the future: "It will take the English ten years to enable Stalin to occupy Europe, than another ten years to defeat Japan, and then England and America will need yet another ten years to fight Soviet Russia and get Europe back from her in order that Jewish democracy can be installed there." . . . The Nazi administration of Brussels showed its interest in Belgian culture by arranging a celebration on the fifth anniversary of the Flemish literary magazine *Today and Tomorrow*. No one connected with the magazine showed up.

[We invite our readers to submit material for *In the Wind*—either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of \$5 will be awarded each month for the best item.—EDITORS THE NATION.]