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From The Hilltop

A COLUMN OF VIEWS AND OBSERVATIONS

(By F. J. Picking)

Just a few months ago an amazing
number of Toronto voters marked X
against the name of Communist Stew-
Smith on their ballots at the annual
civic elections. So many, in fact,
that for a time it looked as if Smith
might make the running for a seat
on the Queen City's Board of Con-
trol.

Many of those who gave Smith a
vote were dyed in the wool "Com-
mies." But, on the other hand, there
is little doubt that some of the
thousands of votes given Smith, an
avowed Communist who has received
Russian training, came from people
who feel that the man "has some-
thing" and is working in the inter-
ests of the supposedly downtrodden
and oppressed.

To them — and to others who are
likely to be hoodwinked by the spec-
tacularly advanced "reds," "pinks,"
their "fellow travellers" and others
who are convinced that they can re-
make the world overnight, I recom-
mend close study of an article ap-
pearing in a recent issue of the Sat-
urday Evening Post entitled "I
Learned about Communism the
Hard Way."

Puts Hitler To Shame
In recent months, in spite of Com-
munist efforts to prevent it, much
information has trickled from be-
hind the "Iron Curtain" — infor-
mation which has revealed in stark
reality a system of organized rob-
bery, brutality and oppression which
would put even a Hitler to shame.
Among such information the S.E.P.
article ranks high. Written objec-
tively and calmly, without passion,
it tells what happens when an or-
ganized minority determined to
serve only its own ends — and to
serve those ends by any means
which secure the desired results,
gets into the saddle.

The author, Paul Ruedemann, is
an outstanding geologist and oil
technician who became general man-
ager in Hungary of the Standard
Oil subsidiary which developed oil
production in that country. He saw
his company's employees there grow
from three people to over four thou-
sand.

Under his management hundreds
of wells and pipe-lines to supply
Hungarian needs came into being —
with something left over for export.
He returned to Hungary after the
war and was there two years before
and one year after the Communists
took over.

Possibly because it was a big cor-
poration which lost its properties to
the reds there will be those who are
inclined to take a somewhat lenient
view of the situation. But it isn't
the story of what happened to Stan-
dard Oil that makes Ruedemann's
recital a fascinating one — it's the
story of what happens to the ordi-
nary man — the "man in the street" —
when Communist bosses take
control, that gives it its real punch.

First of all the company was sub-
jected to control of its methods.
That control was exercised by people
who, according to Ruedemann, were
evidently picked for their lack of
knowledge of the highly technical
business.

Refusal Meant Dismissal
But the real pressure began when
three "trade unionists" from outside
the business appeared one day and
summoned all the office staff to a
meeting. Reading a list of employ-
ees considered to be "antisocial, of
rightist mentality, of antiworker
behaviour," the leader announced
that these people were to be dismiss-
ed. The pressure continued, spear-
headed by Communist agents within
the company who made no bones of
the fact that refusal to join the
Communist party meant dismissal,
or, worse, an early morning visit by
the secret police.

Gradually, through a policy of

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terrorism, a wedge was driven be-
tween the management and employ-
ees. Little by little Communists
were placed in key positions. The
fact that by training or experience
they had no qualifications for their
new positions was of no account.
Fear was the dominating and com-
pelling factor by which they ruled.
Finally a bolt from the blue, an un-
heralded expropriation of over six
hundred businesses, placed com-
munist squaresly in control of a large
portion of Hungarian industry. Private
property of dismissed employ-
ees was confiscated. Many were
left penniless, without even money
for food. In one stroke men and
women found themselves reduced
from comfort to abject poverty. A
wave of suicides and nervous break-
downs followed.

A Rule By Fear
Then followed a "squeezing out"
of smaller businesses. Workers,
long promised the earth and the full-
ness thereof, were bluntly told that
henceforth they would have no
voice in management — would do
exactly as they were bidden. Spy-
ing ran rampant. Refusal to take
part in Communist affairs; to
preach Communist doctrines, meant
instant dismissal. And, for the dis-
missed, there was little hope. Fear
turned brother against brother. Help
to one up against it because of his
treatment by the Communists meant
that the helper, too, became a mark-
ed man who, in turn, suffered the
penalties which the red bosses im-
posed without recourse to legal
methods. Secret police, at any hour
of day or night, took men and wo-
men from home or work — men and
women who disappeared behind the
veil, their location or treatment un-
known to relatives or friends.

Finally, in an account which must
be read to be believed, Mr. Rued-
emann tells the story of his own ar-
rest — an arrest which even the
strength of the United States gov-
ernment was powerless to avert. He
learned, he says, who thousands had
learned before him, why the accused
in Soviet countries sign "confess-
ions." The mind and body can stand
only so much. Finally the breaking
point comes and another "confes-
sion" is broadcast to the world. A
tale of incredible cruelty and bad
treatment is told by the writer —
told in such a restrained way that
the total effect is only enhanced by
his matter-of-fact account of such
a brand of "man's inhumanity to
man" that would almost put Dachau
and Belchen, of Nazi ill-fame, in the
shade.

Almost Unbelievable
Finally, after being convicted,
Ruedemann and his associates were
freed through the work of the U. S.
State Department.

In the space of a short review it
is impossible to do more than con-
dense the long and detailed account
of Communist practices revealed by
Ruedemann. The tale is an amaz-
ing one. It would be almost unbel-
ievable except for the supporting
information of Communist methods
which has been revealed to the world
in recent months.

It is, as I have already said, not
a story which lays stress on the
thievery of a big corporation by the
reds. But it is a story which tells,
in plain, simple language, what hap-
pens to the dupes of the Communists
— the gullible men and women who
listen to the fairy tales of the Stew-
art Smiths and the like who are the
"front men" of Communism in this
country. It is a story which, before
Smith makes another attempt at a
Toronto controllership, should be
placed in the hands of every man
and woman who thinks that he and
those he represents can offer them
anything but misery, suicide and the
return of the Dark Ages.

The Smiths of Communism in
Canada are dangerous. Make no mis-
take whatsoever about that. They
have a plausible, ingratiating way
with them that would deceive even
the most alert. I have attended
meetings of ex-service men in Tor-
onto — men whose loyalty to this
Dominion is beyond any question
whatsoever — and have seen them
give Smith a reception which far
exceeded that given to any other
visitor. And those men who gave
such an outstanding reception to a
Communist were not "have-nots" —
they were men employed by the City
of Toronto on a permanent, well-
paid basis. It is to be hoped that
every one of them, too, reads the
Saturday Evening Post article be-
fore Fred Smith appears before them
again.

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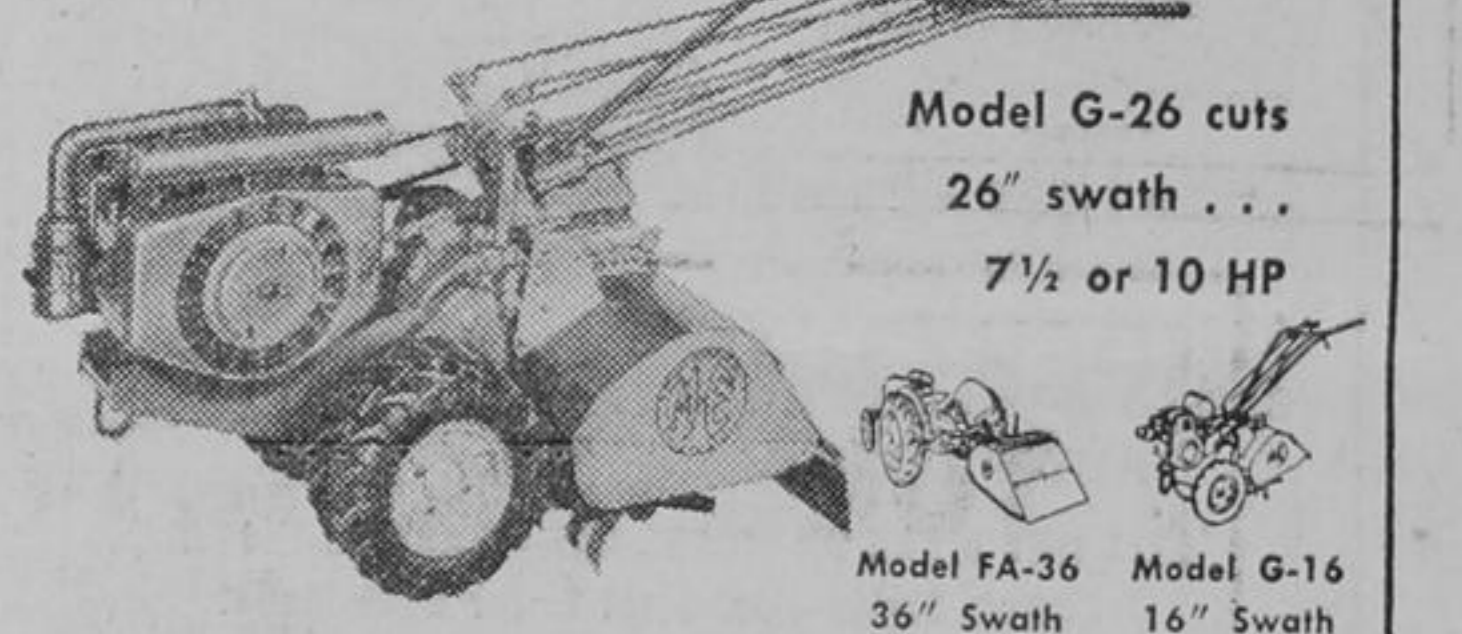
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