



The BOOK TRAIL

IT'S A SMALL WORLD, AFTER ALL

"One World," by Wendell L. Willkie. Simon and Schuster, New York, 1943. Paper, 85 pp., \$1.00. Cloth, \$2.00.

[Wendell Willkie's "One World" is proving to be a sensation—no less. It is fitting, therefore, that THE FREEMAN offer its readers not one but TWO reviews on so important a book. It is equally important that the reviews be capably done. The biographical sketches of the writers we have been fortunate enough to secure for the task will suggest their competence; the reviews themselves will confirm it.—The Editors]

MORGAN HARRIS teaches economics at the University of California at Los Angeles. Before taking his present position he was an educational director for consumer co-operative societies both in New York City and San Jose, California. He is interested in the Student Christian Association work and had been directly connected with the conference at Asilomar as Publicity director. He is a member of the Society of Friends. Mr. Harris is deeply concerned in the possibilities for a post war amity between nations. He has been speaking and writing for the Federal Union organization of which he is an active member. He writes: "People who struggle 'against' this or that situation usually do so under the illusion that there is only one alternative. We sometimes think that if we can defeat fascism we will thereby establish democracy; if we can destroy the existing evil, the good-we-have-in-mind will automatically take its place. But the number of things that may take its place are unlimited. It is therefore a waste of time to 'attack' this or that evil; it is a more effective use of time to work 'for' the superior alternative which we envision. Many people in this war know what they are fighting 'against'; but how many know what they are fighting 'for'?"

If you can't take an airplane trip around the world yourself this season, the next best thing is to read this book in which Wendell Willkie tells in vivid and dramatic writing what he did and saw and heard in his 49-day, 31,000-mile globe-encircling tour. The importance of this report grows out of his ability to understand the people he met, and the meaning of what he saw, and in his ability to share this understanding with us in such compact language.

In seven weeks en route, they spent only 160 hours—less than one week—in the air. The balance of the time was spent talking with all sorts of people—many of whom we would not get to talk with if we made the trip ourselves—Stalin, Chiang Kai-shek, kings, prime ministers, pashas, soldiers, workers—in all sorts of out-of-the-way places from Brazil to El Alamein, from Kuibishev to Tashkent, from Sinkiang (which is twice as big as France) to Yakutsk (which is twice as big as Alaska).

Willkie does not try to tell us all about Russia after only two weeks there. He tells us only of what he saw and heard, and what that means to him. He is impressed by the dynamic character of the country—in some ways similar to our own country in its early days. Its survival ability, demonstrated by its resistance to Hitler, its

size and its power make it a nation to be reckoned with, not overlooked, in the post war world. While Willkie sets forth unequivocally his opposition to Communist doctrines, he believes that our free economic and political institutions are so superior to anything Communism has to offer that we have nothing to fear from contact with Russia. That "the freedom of our economic and political institutions" is going to depend on who owns and controls and gets the income from our natural resources is a point, however, that has apparently escaped him.

Three big ideas, which we have often heard, are made vividly real by this book; they are: that the world is small, that its people are interdependent, and that the world is a unit.

The world is so small, and has become so easy to get around in, that Mr. Willkie made a date with the president of a central Siberian republic to fly back some week-end in 1945 for a day's hunting—and he intends to keep the date!

We may live in ignorance of the people of Sinkiang and Yakutsk and Iraq, but nevertheless what they think and do is already affecting our lives, and will continue to do so increasingly. Spengler warned us of the decline of the West; Willkie has given us a preview of the rise of the East.

The millions of the near and far east are becoming conscious of their power. Of every four people in the world, only one has (that questionable asset) a light skin. The other millions are learning that they are a majority in this "one world." Willkie reports, "Men and women all over the world are on the march, physically, intellectually, and spiritually. After centuries of ignorance and dull compliance, hundreds of millions of people in eastern Europe and Asia have opened the books. Old fears no longer frighten them. They are no longer willing to be slaves for Western profits. They are beginning to know that men's welfare throughout the world is interdependent."

Of Egypt and the Middle East, Iraq, the Lebanon, and Iran, he says, "... one senses a ferment in these lands, a groping of the long-inert masses. . . Their lives will change more in the next ten years than they have in the last ten centuries."

We have brought to these people technological knowledge and machinery; we have given them the concepts of freedom and democracy. They know that they have the right and the power to determine their own lives. We cannot take these things away again. We must now learn to treat these neighbors of ours as human beings and equals.

"One of the finest problems in legislation is what the State ought to take upon itself to direct by the public wisdom, and what it ought to leave, with as little interference as possible, to individual discretion."

—EDMUND BURKE

Mr. Willkie did not get into India. President Roosevelt, who authorized the journey as an official mission, forbade this—which hardly seems strange when one reflects on Mr. Willkie's forthright, outspoken character, and the trouble our administration has been put to in keeping quiet public criticism of Britain's treatment of India.

This book gives us clear and meaningful pictures of the world we are living in but know so woefully little about. Of even greater interest to many people in this country, however, is the insight it gives us into the mind of Mr. Willkie. One gets a glimpse of his understanding from this paragraph:

"It is all very well to say, as some people did say to me in Cairo and Jerusalem, that 'the natives don't want anything better than what they have.' That is the argument that has been used everywhere for centuries against the advancement of the underprivileged, by those whose condition makes them satisfied with the *status quo*. Yet the history of civilization shows that the creation of economic conditions under which those who have little or nothing can improve their lot, is not a dividing process but a multiplying one, by which the well-being of all society is advanced."

In arguing for free trade, he says, "There will be no peace, there will be no real development, there will be no economic stability, unless we find the method by which we can begin to break down the unnecessary trade barriers hampering the flow of goods. . . .

"It is also inescapably true that to raise the standard of living of any man anywhere in the world is to raise the standard of living by some slight degree of every man everywhere in the world."

This book is snappy, first-hand reporting about the places, things, and people in which we are all interested. It sparkles. Mr. Willkie's bouyant humor is incisive. When he was in Turkey, the Axis radio complained about his presence, so he suggested that the Turkish government should invite Hitler to send to Turkey, as a representative of Germany, his opposition candidate.

The major importance of this book is in the solid foundation it establishes under the idea expressed in its title. We may be grossly ignorant of the other people who inhabit this world, nevertheless we are sharing it with them and if we want to enjoy it we will have to learn to get along with them. Physically, biologically, spiritually, economically the world is united; politically it is still divided.

The world has become a community, and this book calls to our attention certain common problems which its people share. Like any other community, the world must have a government to deal with its problems. "One world" establishes the premises which make this conclusion obvious. To those who are afraid that if we enter a world government, the peoples about whom Mr. Willkie writes will outvote us, one would put the question: Would you rather have them outvote us in a world congress, or outshoot us on the battlefields of the next world war?

Mr. Willkie is more realistic than "post war" recon-

structionists, in that he realizes that now—before the peace treaty is written—is the time to influence what shall go into that treaty. He says, "A war won without a purpose is a war won without victory. We must know that we shall win in the future peace only what we are now winning in the war—no more and no less. . . . What we must win now, during the war, are the principles."

Mr. Willkie's faith in democracy is evidenced by the fact that he calls on the people themselves to win the peace. He says, "Agreement on principles must exist, not just among the leaders . . . it must be established among the allied peoples themselves." However, "neither the proclamations of leaders nor the opinion of the people of the world, can accomplish anything unless we plan while we fight and unless we give our plans reality . . . the United Nations must become a common council, not only for the winning of the war but for the future welfare of mankind."

The book closes with the statement that the peoples of the east, "and other peoples, not yet fighting, are waiting eagerly for us to accept the most challenging opportunity of all history—the chance to help create a new society in which men and women the world around can live and grow invigorated by independence and freedom."

In meeting this challenge, which Mr. Willkie puts to us as individuals, we may well keep in mind the Russian general who was asked by Mr. Willkie how large a section of Russia's 2000-mile front he was defending. Somewhat offended, the general replied, "Sir, I am not defending. I am attacking."

—MORGAN HARRIS