

IN a rocking, rhythmical spiritual FRANKIE LAINE tells the story of Noah who at Divine Command built a flood-proof ark. The number is very appropriately titled:

"RAIN RAIN RAIN"

Frankie is accompanied by the Buddy Cole Quartet, and the Four Lads, who contribute some effective dry bones-type choral work.

The reverse side —



FRANKIE LAINE

"YOUR HEART — MY HEART"

is the German Waltz with specially written English lyrics. Frankie Laine is accompanied by Paul Weston and his orchestra with the Norman Luboff Choir. Catalogue No. is B21409H.

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- B21263H "After You've Gone"—"Lullaby in Rhythm"
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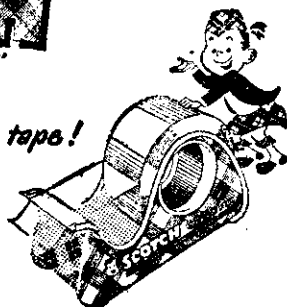
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News from East and West

ONE of the hardest tasks in a divided world is to broaden the flow of information. Because it is tied up with politics, the problem is seen too often in black and white, as an issue created by a conflict between ways of life that are irreconcilable. We are inclined to see the world as two large camps, one of which is amply supplied with all the news that matters, while the other is so heavily guarded by censors that news from outside is sparse and unreliable. This is only partly true. Newspapers in Western countries are free to obtain and print full information from their own side of the Iron Curtain, and a limited amount from beyond it; but in practice they are subject to restrictions, some of them self-imposed, and others brought about by economic strains. Communist papers, although rigidly controlled, are not cut off from Western news if they want to print it.

The situation is described in a valuable booklet, *One Week's News*, published by Unesco*. A comparative study is made of 17 major dailies in Europe (including Britain), Asia, North and South America, Australia and South Africa. It reveals, among other things, that "the Communist papers . . . have access to a plentiful flow of information from non-Communist countries." The use that is made of this news is another matter. Yet it is worth noticing that in the period covered by the Unesco survey—a week in 1951—*Pravda* used 58 foreign items, whereas papers in Western Europe and elsewhere carried between one and four items from Russia and her satellites. An exception was a Brazilian paper which published 12. The discrepancy can be explained partly by the restriction of news services from the East. If the information is not supplied, it cannot be printed. But what would happen if news were universally available? Can

we be sure that the West would learn much more than it does today of what is happening throughout the world?

Certain difficulties are caused by the conditions under which newspapers are produced. Western newspapers, competing with one another for circulation, try in every way "to please the reader and stimulate his interest and curiosity." A large amount of space is therefore given to crime stories and to special features of doubtful value. The Communist papers, which have no competitors, do not need to entice readers by "entertainment." Further, the high price of newsprint, and sometimes its scarcity, compels newspapers outside the United States to ration their space. When room has been found for home news and special features, it is necessary to select and condense the news from abroad. Finally, the shortage of foreign exchange has made it harder to maintain correspondents, so that most journals are relying on agencies much more than in the past.

"In the international news market," says the Unesco survey, "national voices are becoming more and more inaudible." This leads to "ready-made judgments, and though it may be compatible with 'freedom of information,' it seriously hampers 'freedom of opinion.'" The final conclusion, a disturbing one, is that the journalistic diversity "which has been the pride of the Western world may be said to be disintegrating, not under government pressure but hard economic necessity." It is true, of course, that economic conditions can change, whereas once the newspapers have become instruments of government policy they are cut off from all hope of healthy growth. The Western Press is still free to print uncensored news; it is also free to decide whether to print news or "entertainment." But the sources of information need to be drawn upon more fully than at present if the freedom to use them is to remain undisturbed.

* *One Week's News*, by Jacques Kayser; published by Unesco, Paris.

N.Z. LISTENER, MARCH 11, 1955.