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Rogge: OUR VANISHING CIVIL LIBERTIES.

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OUR VANISHING CIVIL LIBERTIES. By O. *John Rogge*. New York: Gaer Associates, Inc. 1949. Pp. 287. \$3.

Here is a lawyer's trial brief, inherently unilateral, calculated to prove that the reader is in danger of losing his personal civil liberties through arbitrary government action and fascistic tendencies in big business. After sketching his background, the author sounds his keynote of attack—attack on the Un-American Activities Committee, loyalty boards, the Attorney-General's subversive list and big business. He charges that the House Un-American Activities Committee mocks the dignity of individuals appearing before it especially when the witness is deemed "unfriendly." As evidence the author cites small excerpts from case records which in themselves, without context or completeness, do seem to substantiate the charges made. He notes particularly the case of Harry D. White who died of a heart attack several hours after a committee investigation which made light of his illness, and points out the fact that the former chairman of the committee, Senator Thomas, now finds himself in a similar position pleading illness as a reason for not submitting to a grand jury investigation for defrauding the government. The Justice Department is charged with the suppression of the truth in general and specifically with suppression of a report written by the author while he was with the Justice Department concerning a German-American coalition to defeat Mr. Roosevelt in 1940. Gestapo-like tactics of

loyalty boards are reviled, especially the procedure which fails to inform the suspect of the charges against him or the identity of his accuser. Similarly, he decries mass hysteria, witch-hunting and cowardly action by schools, unions and others who, he says, are destroying our civil rights by establishing a false American front to fight Communism. Mr. Rogge's evidence is colorful and, taken alone, is convincing, but the book is replete with bias, and fails to note alternative courses of action or to foresee possible results if our government were to follow a policy of inaction. Even Voltaire's optimistic Dr. Pangloss could see, thinks the author, that our civil liberties are threatened with extinction unless the populace ceases its silent approval of anti-labor movements, discriminatory treatment of minority peoples, turmoil, and reactionism.