of Governor Bricker, who complained that the charge was "political" and continued to look the other way, stubbornly refusing to summon the state legislature or to take any steps to alleviate the misery. The Ohio tragedy, as the President pointed out, is a dramatic illustration of "economy" in practice. It is also, as he did not point out, an example of the chaos in our relief system. The only encouraging item in the whole episode is the nation-wide revulsion which Bricker's performance has aroused.

RESIDENTS OF NEW YORK CITY WILL HAVE an opportunity to insure themselves against the costs of medical care under a plan just approved by the State Insurance Department. The scheme is modeled closely after the 3-cents-a-day hospital plan which has enjoyed wide popularity in the city and throughout the state. A subscriber pays $18 a year, for which a new organization, the Associated Health Foundation, Inc., agrees to meet all doctors' bills. The fee for married couples is $30 a year, and children under sixteen are included for $7.50 each. Another organization, the Medical Expense Fund of New York City, Inc., is expected to announce a similar scheme in the near future, and a plan is already in operation for twelve upstate New York counties. The launching of these organizations represents a notable step in the fight to make adequate medical care possible for the average family. Voluntary insurance of this type must not be regarded, however, as a substitute for health insurance or tax-supported medical care. Experience with the hospital plan shows that no such scheme can reach the lower third of the population. The average family in this group cannot begin to afford $30 to $45 a year for a doctor's services, and will in most cases take a chance of avoiding sickness rather than lower its already depressed standard of living. With this fact in mind, the American Association for Social Security has drafted a bill for introduction in the New York and other state legislatures providing for compulsory health insurance for employees earning less than a minimum to be fixed either at $1,500 or $2,000 a year. It has been charged that the voluntary plan has been introduced as a "backfire" against compulsory insurance. We believe it should be regarded rather as a demonstration on a restricted scale of a technique that should have much wider application.

ADD TO THE LIST OF FRANCO'S VICTIMS Dr. Moyer S. Fleisher, dismissed from his post of professor of bacteriology at St. Louis University after almost twenty-five years of service. The Committee on Academic Freedom of the American Association of University Professors finds that Dr. Fleisher lost his position because he sponsored a meeting addressed by the Reverend Michael O'Flanagan in support of the Loyalists. St. Louis University is a Jesuit institution, and the Jesuits are fond of tracing the free American ideals expressed in our Declaration of Independence back to the writings of two obscure sixteenth-century Jesuits, Suarez and Bellarmin. But they seem better at providing a Jesuit genealogy for Americanism than at applying its principles, for Dr. Fleisher's dismissal is a violation of the right of free speech. The Committee on Academic Freedom blames Archbishop Glennon of St. Louis and the Catholic Club of that city for bringing pressure on the university to dismiss Dr. Fleisher. The most ignominious episode in the case is that Dr. Fleisher was forced to write a letter of apology to the Very Reverend Harry B. Crimmins, President of the University. President Crimmins seems to have hated to dismiss Dr. Fleisher, but was compelled to do so. For the Archbishop we prescribe Matthew 5:7 and 44.

The Finns at Geneva

WHEN von Ribbentrop was in Moscow he seems to have won Stalin over to the tactics, if not the tenets, of the anti-Comintern. The Moscow correspondent of the New York Times reported on December 10 that if Russia were attacked for blockading Finland "at the request of the Kuusinen government," the Soviet government intended to retort with references to "Italy's blockade of the lawful Spanish government at the request of General Francisco Franco." Mussolini's conduct in Spain is not the most admirable of precedents for a government that purports to be anti-imperialist and a union of socialist republics. If Stalin is to model himself in the future on the Duce, he has much to live down, as Rudolf Holsti's address to the Assembly of the League eloquently demonstrated. For a large part of the Finnish delegate's speech was made up of quotations from the plea made by Litvinov before the Assembly two years ago. Litvinov asked the League's aid in halting the attack on the Spanish Republic under circumstances strikingly parallel to the attack on Finland. The Assembly of the League wisely decided to attempt mediation of the Russo-Finnish war rather than take the more dramatic step of expelling the Soviet Union from the League, for which it is doubtful that unanimous consent could have been obtained. The League's belated intervention and weak action in past instances of aggression provided too sardonic a background. Perhaps the greatest deterrent to so drastic a first step was the opposition of Russia's neighbors, fearful of its ill-will. The Finns themselves asked for mediation rather than a move that could only intensify the Soviet attack. In general, the warmth of anti-Soviet denunciations on the eve of the Assembly meeting seems to vary with the distance of the denunciator from the Russian border. The South American countries were
loudest in their demands for Soviet expulsion, but since none of them are likely to bear the brunt of an anti-Soviet war, their views were at least temporarily overruled.

The Russians have been given twenty-four hours to reply to the mediation proposal, and by the time this issue of The Nation appears, Moscow's decision will be known. The answer is not expected to be favorable, although Russian demands, as revealed in the Finnish White Paper, do not seem to us so extreme as to make a compromise impossible unless the Soviet government is looking for expansion rather than security. If the attack on Finland is part of a larger scheme for a Russian or a joint Russo-German attack on Scandinavia, mediation will of course be rejected, and the rejection will serve as a warning of what is to come. But if the Russians are merely concerned with control of the entrances to the Gulf of Finland and Leningrad, the fighting which has already occurred should have left them in a mood for mediation. For it should be clear to them by now that Finland is no easy conquest. The puppet government set up at Terijoki has evoked only derision within Finland. The Finns are fighting for their homeland; the Red Army is an aggressor; morale is on the Finnish side. The wide lakes and tangled forests, the Arctic twilight and the deep snow are the Finns' best allies, and the weight of numbers counts for little along a front that is a succession of Thermopylae passes, all of them difficult of access. These are not the dusty Polish plains over which the Nazi juggernaut swept to an easy victory, nor is there any evidence that the Red Army compares in efficiency or equipment with the German, officered by the ablest military caste in Europe.

The Soviets seem to have bitten off more than they will be allowed to chew in security. Should they conquer Finland, the iron ore of both Norway and Sweden would be at their mercy, and the Nazis are dependent on this ore. If they then move into Rumania, their objective will be not merely Bessarabia, which seems already evacuated, but Bukovina to the north and Constanza in the south, controlling the mouth of the Danube. To succeed in both objectives would truly be to encircle Germany, and to drive it into making the best bargain it could with the Allies. The Italians seem determined to fight if the Russians go south of the Danube or much beyond Bessarabia, though the Yugoslavs are unwilling to be made an Italo-Russian battleground. The Italians would like to keep Russia embroiled in Finland and away from the Balkans. The Germans would like to divert them to Constantinople, and the Mosul oil line: a Russo-Turkish war would be to their liking. But Moscow's present program of expansion in both Finland and Rumania seems designed to give the Rome-Berlin axis a new common interest, and plays into the hands of those who are already beating the drums for the anti-Soviet crusade that has been one of Moscow's phobias. Daladier's hint that the Germans as well as the French must condemn the invasion of Finland will not go unnoticed in the Kremlin.

Realpolitik is carried on with mirrors and sometimes is best understood by reading its messages backward. Thus the sudden appearance in the Russian press of an article attacking Germany for aiding Finland and another presenting Britain in a friendly light may have been calculated to raise hopes in Britain of a Russian rapprochement and fears of it in Germany. The British, in contrast to their failure to send planes to Poland when that little country was under attack, have ostentatiously sent twenty planes to Finland, but otherwise seem to be playing a cautious game. But if the Finnish war goes on much longer, Russian freedom to sell out to either side is likely to grow more and more limited. On the horizon is the bogey the Soviets have always feared. They seem to have outsmarted themselves.

The Far East

While all eyes are on Europe, developments are under way in Asia which may be in the long run of even greater significance for the United States. On the surface there have been few changes of a tangible nature since the signing of the Soviet-German pact. Japan is still bogged down in the vastness of China, and its recent minor victory at Nanning has not offset its defeat at Changsha. Politically, the Japanese suffered a setback in the death of the old war lord Wu Pei-fu, whose cooperation was desperately needed for the establishment of the long-projected puppet government under Wang Ching-wei. But beneath the surface there is intense activity. The Japanese militarists have apparently become convinced that a pact with the Soviet Union would solve their difficulties. While presumably they might have to surrender much of China in such an arrangement, they would be freed from the bogey of Russian planes over Tokyo and could take advantage of Britain's preoccupation to extend their empire in the South Pacific. The Dutch East Indies are particularly tempting because of their rich oil resources.

An attack on the Dutch East Indies would upset the existing balance of power so violently that the United States might eventually join the British and Australians in their defense. Whether Russia would become involved is problematical. But it is not impossible that a Japanese offensive in the South Seas would be paralleled by a Soviet attack on India. In such an event we might find ourselves embroiled in a world conflict, not, as most people expect, through European entanglements, but through our long-standing interests in the Pacific.

So far the Japanese government has resisted pressure