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THE ATTACK ON THE SCHOOLS

IT is obvious and, of course, natural that the schools of our country should be the concern of the parents of the nation. Because parents are concerned, they often become the prey of individuals or groups who are using criticism of the schools for their own personal gains. Our purpose here is to urge parents to look at their school systems from the teachers' and the school administrators' point of view, so that all may work in cooperation for the sake of our children.

The ripening of war fears will probably go on for many years, and with it will proceed a shriveling of democratic processes. This, not only as a result of outer controls—by government and economic circumstances—but as a result, too, of the inner restriction of each individual's desire to express himself. It is the attitude we associate with the older generation—conservatism. Youth feels free to lead crusades, to rebel, to revolutionize. Age is afraid of these impulses, for they mean change and uncertainty. There was a preponderance of the youthful attitude when our nation was founded. We were young as a nation; we wanted freedom, our place and rights in the world. Everything was before us. Youthful minds with high hopes and ideals and fertile imaginations placed before the people of the new nation, and before the world, the first document of its kind: the United States Constitution. But now, after almost two centuries, we are "mature." We have much to hold in our grasp, and much to lose, if we lose. We want to keep things as they are. So we begin to fear.

Such fear can be dangerous, for it induces a secondary psychological state. Like the fascination with which the eye of a snake can hold the senses of another animal, fear has a paralyzing effect. Thus, while we watch the spread of an unhealthy system of thought—Communism, for example—and wring our hands, and fear, we become paralyzed. We become afraid to make changes—to allow ourselves to think creatively. We are fatally enthralled. We may truly want to hold to our democratic principles, yet while we stand still, those principles gradually slip away.

The reaction to fear is negative and passive, and is not this reaction evident in our attitude toward public affairs? Should we not revitalize our democratic way of life, and turn by our own efforts from the negative to the positive course of action? Such action need not depend upon political reforms, banner-waving and the like. It is rather a matter of taking steps in the small, the seemingly unimportant, avenues of human actions. One of these avenues is the work done with children in our public schools. It will never be enough to just *tell* children about democracy. We must help them to b*e* democratic in every little way.

The principle of democracy cannot be made into a slogan or a label to be displayed for all to see. Democracy is not a political theory, so much as it is a quiet conviction in the heart of every man who loves his fellows. It may well be called a philosophy of life, for no man can merely profess it or preach it, or sign his name to it—he must live it every day in all ways. This kind of democracy is a matter of conscience in the individual citizen; it needs to be a constant conviction, a prevailing attitude of mind. This, then, is the aim of the practice in living democracy which begins with the youngest child in school.

The learning to exemplify in daily life the truest of our national ideals is what we mean today by Education. For we have come a long, long way from the days when learning meant to memorize some verses and read from a New England Primer, to do sums, and translate Latin. Men whose names have become great in the field of education have evolved a philosophy of education, as they watched children. In some cases they have seen geniuses become criminals, happy children become morbid adults, in passing through the deadly routines of the little red school house. These educators have tried new ways and methods. Some they have discarded; others they

have retained. It has not been easy—the struggle to find a vital education for our youngsters. Always there have been those to criticize, to say that all is lost and education is a failure. Besides, our way of life has changed so rapidly that not only have these men had to find what was vital in education, but, at the same time, they have had to continually change the methods and practices in order to keep pace with our changing civilization.

We may use one example—reading. Time was when reading was taught so that children could read the Bible. Later on came an interest in the essay, fiction, and the newspapers. The child learned his ABC's, then short words, and finally the longer words. Many children, as Horace Mann discovered, could glibly read the words in a newspaper, but could not understand what they read. This was a matter of concern to some educators. They struggled for years with the problem of teaching the meanings—the ideas—behind the printed words. At the time they began this struggle, reading was a major pastime and the chief means of gathering information. But while they worked with this problem, what happened to the reading public? Magazines became abundant, then came the picture magazines, the movies, the radio, television. At present we have virtually a reversal of the original situation. Today, a child's speaking vocabulary far outdistances his reading one, and, furthermore, there is much less incentive for him to read. Somewhat the same problem is encountered in every phase of education. Arithmetic is put in the shade by the adding machine. Spelling seems almost obsolete, since the written word is no longer our chief mode of communication over distances. We telephone where possible, or obey the commercial mandate: "Don't write—Telegraph!"

While pioneering educators have worked, the critics have talked. They are still talking, more loudly than ever. Today education is being criticized all over the nation. We are told that our schools are failing the needs of children; the three R's are no longer taught; children just don't know anything. The favorite springboard for most accusations is, "When I went to school. . . ." Many of the critics are well-meaning, but do they see the whole picture? Are they looking at education as it belongs in our present civilization *today,* or do they see it in the context of the world of 1850?

Constructive criticism, we know, is a healthy sign, and educators everywhere welcome the public interest in education. Teachers *want* parents to be concerned with our schools. But the other kind of criticism—narrow-minded, not founded on facts—is beginning to eat into the heart of our public school system, tearing down all progress in educative fields, in much the same way as the worst features of Communism have affected some political, labor and racial groups. Such criticism does not come from honest investigation, but is rather fanned into a fire of mass meetings, protests and newspaper editorials by those who have some personal or political ax to grind. Unsuspecting parents are led by unscrupulous critics to believe that nothing is right in our schools today. Uninformed or biased writers have made these critics seem right, when actually they know nothing of school practices, and do not understand the methods, the ideals, the real business of teaching in the classroom. Granted, there are many teachers who are not fit, many principals and superintendents who do not carry out the best of educational policies. This fact, however, does not excuse the general, unthinking, unfounded criticism that is nowadays so prevalent.

One city or school district after another has become a target for ignorant or unjust complaints. The most dangerous factor in the situation is the timid attitude of administrators and teachers. They are criticized; they see the public before them as antagonists; they owe their jobs to public support—therefore they begin to fear this criticism. Then, sadly enough, they take the same attitude as a group that we as a people take toward Communism: they stand fascinated, and do nothing. Worse than that, they begin to bow down to the critics and to compromise their own ideals. One district superintendent sees another district under fire. Rather than subject his educational program to the same ordeal, he announces a "return to the three R's," and thereby abandons fifty years of educational progress. Does this mean that learning the three R's is not part of the modern school program? No—

decidedly. Anyone who visits a classroom where an earnest, well-trained teacher is working, will find the "tool subjects" in every part of the daily program. But the skillful teacher today seeks to bring meaning into the child's school life. After all, the child is living in the schoolroom. Why shouldn't his activities have meaning to him now, not just for the far-away time when he is "grown up"?

Yet the older methods are revived. Children learn by rote; regimentation enters the picture again. The child no longer may think and choose for himself. He must wait to be told what to do. He goes through school a puppet, unable to ponder, to think creatively or to weigh ideas. He must simply believe what he is told; he must not question—just recite. And the teachers, too, find that the holds begin to tighten. They dare not try out new methods; they may not use their creative abilities; they must be careful not to step beyond the narrow limits of daily schedules and the printed word. They are told what to do and how to do it. They are no longer *teachers* in the true sense of the word.

One much-abused term, "progressive education," has thus become almost a term of derision. Yet in spite of its misuse in many classrooms, the idea behind it has meant that there should be freedom *plus* responsibility—freedom for the children to initiate enterprises, carry on projects, confer with one another, understand each other, and live together as human beings. Just here is the place where democracy comes to life in the schoolroom. When children sit in rows of seats all day, reciting lessons, studying alone, each child in his own little world, there is much less, if any, opportunity to come to an understanding with other children, than when there is helpful working together, committees for research, discussion, and the like. The three R's are used in dramatic play, creative writing, and in searching for information.

Our critics speak and write and complain in mass meetings. Our educators retrench and retreat and return to the three R's. If the trend continues without change, our children will be left to grow up into unthinking, unimaginative, easily-led adults. Then when some fiery orator speaks of the "security" promised by this or that "ism," these children who have become adults without becoming mature citizens will be unable to think for themselves, unable to reason or criticize sanely. They will form the poor, misled multitudes who are the prey of dictators.

The picture, of course, is not so black as this—yet. But will it become so? It will, unless parents ignore the pressure groups who tell them that the schools are a failure. It will, unless parents observe their schools first-hand and inquire intelligently into the practices in use. It will, unless educators throw off their fears of panic-rousing critics, and keep tight hold of the progress already made in educational fields, while continually striving to raise the standards of the teaching profession. Our American parents want more than anything else the best for their children, both now and in the future. But so do the educators. This is the best basis on which both groups can unite and understand each other. Above all, it is a challenge to both parents and teachers to preserve, though every other bulwark fall, this great stronghold of American democracy—the public school.

Huntington Park, Calif. MARTHA T. GROVER

Letter from **JAPAN**

TOKYO.—The new postwar Japan is extremely hard on old people. They are the most unfortunate victims of the uncertainties, the inflation and the reforms which followed Japan's defeat in war. The plans of a lifetime have been swept away by the new social conditions, and for far too many people the securities they worked so hard for to lighten their declining years are gone.

The great inflation of the postwar period wiped away savings by reducing their value by about 1000 times. Those who saved their earnings so they might live comfortably on the interest from their deposits now find they cannot make ends meet. Before the war, one could live well on 30 yen a month. Today a pack of inferior cigarettes (ten thin sticks) costs 30 yen; the monthly subscription rate of a vernacular newspaper is 75 yen; one chocolate bar costs 40 yen. Thus a man who saved 30,000 yen before the war and deposited it in a postal pensions fund with the expectation of having the monthly allowance of 30 yen see him through his old age now finds that his plan has failed completely. Despite the inflation, the amount of the pension remains the same.

Another example is that of a man who invested his earnings in rice paddies which could be leased to tenant farmers for a rental sufficient to provide him a comfortable living. But he did not reckon with the Farmland Reform Law which forced him to sell all land he could not cultivate himself at a price entirely out of proportion to the inflated values. One cannot deny the justice of the basic principle of this reform measure, which gave the right of ownership to hundreds of thousands of former tenant farmers. But its application without taking into account the fact that the compulsory purchase of land by the Government deprived many people of their very means of livelihood, cannot be considered just. Old people thus found that they must continue themselves to till their land or else that too would be taken away from them.

Then there are a great many public officials, teachers, army and navy officers who had expected their life pension following their retirement from active service to provide for their support. But the amount they receive—sufficient in former days—is now woefully inadequate, and they find that they must work to support themselves.

Again, those who invested their earnings in the education of their children are discovering that under the present difficult economic conditions the young people have their hands full just supporting themselves, to say nothing of their parents. And, at the same time, the old family system which firmly bound the relationship between parent and children is gradually crumbling under the impact of new ideas, with the young people feeling less and less their filial duty to care for the old.

The Government, to be sure, is doing what it can through its social welfare system to provide for the aged. But those efforts are hamstrung by the woeful lack of public funds. The budget is bloated far beyond the prewar figure—despite the fact Japan does not have to bear the burden of a heavy military set-up. In view of the great need to put economy back on its feet, the nation finds it difficult to allocate sufficient funds for social welfare. Another difficulty is that so many of the aged, although in dire need, feel ashamed to seek help from the Poor Protection Law, which is being administered at best in a haphazard manner. And the poor house is as inadequate as it is crammed.

Thus it is that the majority of the old people, through no fault of their own, are suffering severely as the innocent victims of war. Japan's new way of life cannot be called a success unless the old people are given adequate care.

JAPANESE CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
"PSYCHOANALYSIS AND RELIGION"

THIS new volume by Erich Fromm (Yale University Press, 1950) may prove to be one of the most interesting and valuable books of the decade, so far as regular MANAS readers are concerned. It comprises the text of the Dwight Harrington Terry Lectures, "On Religion in the Light of Science and Philosophy," and is the twenty-sixth of the Terry series. Dr. Fromm's contribution to the problem of synthesizing the field of psychiatry with the fields of ethics and religion is outstanding, and may be ranked with the most notable of the Gifford lectures on "natural religion."

Psychoanalysis and Religion is an imposing title, and prospective readers may be pleased to note that the volume contains only 119 pages. Yet the striving for a synthesis broad enough to encompass both "religion" and "science" does not encourage Dr. Fromm to indulge in either harsh or sweepingly complimentary generalities. The point of view, throughout, moreover, resists identification with any prevailing school of either psychological or religious thought. A student and devotee of Sigmund Freud, Dr. Fromm first produces a succinct and clear defense of Freud as a man whose ethical views were similar to those of Buddha, Jesus and Plato—a provocative though perhaps startling contention. Freud, according to Fromm's arguments and evidence, refused to be an ethical relativist. His uncompromising attacks on authoritarian religion stemmed from his refusal to accept a superficial eclecticism in regard to human values. Jung, who is generally thought to have been more concerned than Freud with religious values, does indeed show a notable tolerance of religious ritual and custom. But in Dr. Fromm's analysis, Jung emerges as a not too personally concerned observer of religious folkways, one who studies religious attitudes chiefly to support his thesis of the instability of "ultimate values." The important differences between Freud and Jung can only be realized if we note that those psychologists who are more "tolerant" of authoritarian religion are usually less concerned with positive convictions, of any sort, of their own. But these "disinterested" eclectics make easier the apologias of such men as Fulton Sheen, who argues, for instance, that psychoanalysis need be in no conflict with the concept of a personal God, since tangible objects of religious devotion are "normal" and "necessary."

The real issue, however, is not whether religious beliefs are necessary safety valves for the human psyche, or whether they can be dispensed with now that we have psychoanalysis, but rather, *what kinds of religious beliefs are good for man and what kinds are not.* Freud could find *nothing* good to say about the personal God idea, for the simple reason that it localizes the source of human strength and power outside man's own periphery, Jung and many others who have followed his lead have been content to leave the matter to personal decision or taste, as though it were a choice such as whether or not one likes apple strudel. But Freud and Dr. Fromm insist that the psychological effects of any view involving a personal, external deity subverts the full expansion of man's own moral capacities. The argument runs something like this: By projecting all "good" beyond the confines of human personality and localizing it in God, we weaken our faith in and our respect for ourselves:

> When man has thus projected his own most valuable powers onto God, what of his relationship to his own powers? They have become separated from him and in this process he has become *alienated* from himself. Everything he has is now God's and nothing is left in him. *His only access to himself is through God.* In worshiping God he tries to get in touch with that part of himself which he has lost through projection. After having given God all he has, he begs God to return to him some of what originally was his own. But having lost his own he is completely at God's mercy. He necessarily feels like a "sinner" since he has deprived himself of everything that is good, and it is only through God's mercy or grace that he can regain that which alone makes him human. And in order to persuade God to give him

> some of his love, he must prove to him how utterly deprived he is of love; in order to persuade God to guide him by his superior wisdom he must prove to him how deprived he is of wisdom when he is left to himself.
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> But this alienation from his own powers not only makes man feel slavishly dependent on God, it makes him bad too. He becomes a man without faith in his fellow men or in himself, without the experience of his own love, of his own power of reason. As a result the separation between the "holy" and the "secular" occurs. In his worldly activities man acts without love, in that sector of his life which is reserved to religion he feels himself to be a sinner (which he actually is, since to live without love is to live in sin) and tries to recover some of his lost humanity by being in touch with God. Simultaneously, he tries to win forgiveness by emphasizing his own helplessness and worthlessness. Thus the attempt to obtain forgiveness results in the activation of the very attitude from which his sins stem. He is caught in a painful dilemma. The more he praises God, the emptier he becomes. The emptier he becomes, the more sinful he feels. The more sinful he feels, the more he praises his God—and the less able is he to regain himself.

The implications of Dr. Fromm's reasoning are plain. Man cannot build moral confidence in himself, nor a society based upon moral confidence, if he insists upon his own powerlessness, sinfulness and "emptiness." We have to trust other human beings—and respect ourselves—in order to believe that social or political agreements may honorably be kept—or even that the vows of man and woman can be believed.

Dr. Fromm finds no contradiction between the proponents of *humanitarian* religion—listing, again, Buddha, Jesus and Plato—and psychoanalysis. For here the effort was made, on the basis of exhortations *to the power within man,* to show that human destiny is fulfilled by the transcending of dependence and fear. The humanistic religionist believes in independence of thought, unorthodoxy of creed, and in cherishing all those qualities which encourage man to be more than a member of a herd. Such thinkers will tend to respect minority opinions, to learn from them, and to distrust mass formulas; therefore humanitarian religionists are both the historical and present opponents of authoritarianism in any form. But the minute we assume that man must depend on some external power to find happiness, we ready ourselves for the acceptance of an authoritarianism in which we may be blissfully submerged. As Dr. Fromm shows, the ideals may be those of Power, Wealth or the State, as well as the ideals of God, the Church, and Heaven—in all these cases, the fundamental psychology is the same.

This line of cleavage, which separates the conglomerate "unity" of all psychologists and religionists into two distinct schools, is a very important one to consider. On the basis suggested, we will tend to stop viewing "religion" on one hand as opposed to "psychology" on the other, and recognize that the religious devotee *may* be a defender of individual freedom, and the psychologist *may* be a fellow traveller of the authoritarians. Although Fromm's brief summary of Jung's views is probably too categorical to be taken as an adequate characterization of the Jungian school, the analysis does encourage us to rephrase that most important question—what values does a man really believe in? This is what is really crucial, not whether he practices psychiatry while patting a personal God on the back, or worships an *impersonal* deity while simultaneously being annoyed by psychiatry.

Dr. Fromm's own conclusions may be liberally rendered as follows: Every man has a set of values to which he professes devotion, and in a psychological sense we may call these values "religious." Some men's values strengthen confidence in themselves and faith in their fellows, while others do not. Freud, Fromm and many others can legitimately call themselves men of Religious Devotion, and express part of that devotion in an unceasing warfare against authoritarianism, *whether it be religious, political or social.* The usual arguments in favor of a

personal God are well handled by Dr. Fromm. We quote one example in conclusion:

> From the spirit of authoritarian religion stem two fallacies of reasoning which have been used again and again as arguments for theistic religion. One argument runs as follows: How can you criticize the emphasis on dependence on a power transcending man; is not man dependent on forces outside himself which he cannot understand, much less control?
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> Indeed, man is dependent; he remains subject to death, age, illness, and even if he were to control nature and to make it wholly serviceable to him, he and his earth remain tiny specks in the universe. But it is one thing to recognize one's dependence and limitations, and it is something entirely different to indulge in this dependence, to worship the forces on which one depends. To understand realistically and soberly how limited our power is is an essential part of wisdom and of maturity; to worship it is masochistic and self-destructive. The one is humility, the other self-humiliation.

Of victims of the latter, we may conclude with the author of *Psychoanalysis and Religion* that, "actually they are driven by one of the most irrational tendencies to be found in man, namely, by an unconscious desire to be weak and powerless; they tend to shift the center of their life powers over which they feel no control, thus escaping from freedom and from personal responsibility." This last sentence repeats the idea of Dr. Fromm's best known work, *Escape From Freedom,* published by Rinehart in 1941, which is excellent supplementary reading to *Psychoanalysis and Religion.* Here is one of the most comprehensive analyses available of the totalitarian mentality—the largest ingredient of which Fromm shows to be the yearning for sufficient authority to make personal moral choices unnecessary.

COMMENTARY
FOR PARENTS AND CITIZENS

WHILE this week's leading article makes no mention of specific cases, its point could easily be illustrated from recent events in the public school systems of California. The widely publicized attack upon and subsequent enforced resignation of Willard E. Goslin, superintendent of the Pasadena public school system, last year, followed exactly the pattern described by Mrs. Grover. The critics of the Pasadena schools used materials prepared by one Allan Zoll, a former associate of Gerald K. Smith, and the line taken to gain emotional support for any and all attacks on Dr. Goslin was the implication that, through his advocacy of the methods of Progressive education, he had somehow injected a "communistic" note into Pasadena education. The charge was, of course, nonsense, and Zoll's activities have been thoroughly exposed in excellent articles in the *Christian Century* and the *Nation.*

Unfortunately, the behavior of Pasadena teachers, even in their support of Dr. Goslin, shed no particular glory upon the integrity of the teaching profession. The entire incident might be reviewed by those interested as evidence that the welfare of the schools can never be entirely entrusted to either professional patriots or professional educators. No more than morals can education be left to the care of "specialists." Parents and citizens have a natural part in preserving the freedom of the schools, and the schools cannot do their work well without the intelligent participation of parents and citizens.

NO ESP DETECTION

It is better, of course, to check statements of fact before instead of after they appear, but it is also better, it seems to us, to check them afterward, than not at all. Accordingly, when a professor of psychology questioned the statement that Maurice Fogel, a professional "mindreader," had given assistance to the British CID (quoted from a newspaper article in MANAS for Sept. 17, 1950), we asked a friend in England to check up. His reply, long in coming, is conclusive:

> This morning I went down to Scotland Yard and saw a chief superintendent I know. He said that it is absolutely untrue that the Yard has ever had help in any way from Maurice Fogel and that so far as the Yard is concerned he is merely a music hall entertainer.

Although the point of the MANAS article in no way depended upon the authenticity of Mr. Fogel's claim, it seems just as well to keep such matters straight.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

LAST week we reprinted an entirely new sort of Loyalty Oath, formulated by the American Federation of Teachers, admiring both its spirit and its specific formulation, in special view of the hand-in-glove cooperation of the Commissioner of Education with the Armed Services.

It seems to us that the indictment against the recent capitulation of the Commissioner of Education and the educators, who have accepted the Loyalty Oath without question, has little to do with whether a broadly worded loyalty oath, *as such,* is good or bad, or whether or not our colleges should be geared to war preparation. What is clearly tragic is the fact that the machine-like organization of our institutions of higher learning has standardized so much of professorial and administrative thought. Opposition to the introduction of military training courses in many institutions, which could have been extensive if professors had expressed their natural inclinations, has been noticeably slight. The top administrators, who receive substantial sums of money from the government for introduction of the new programs, have simply indicated what the "party line" is to be, while subordinates bob assent with little thought about such considerations as those represented by Mr. John Eklund's letter to *The Nation,* in which he introduced the AF of T Oath.

Last week's subject deserves continued discussion, partially because it is impossible to demonstrate conclusively in one short column the extent to which the educational machinery of this country is being psychologically geared to militarism. The question is not, as we have argued, whether or not national defense is the most important issue of the day, but rather whether we can afford to become so one-sided in respect to our educational ideals that we unwittingly become militaristic in an ideological as well as in a temporary "practical" sense.

Wholesale capitulation to the government's firm request for intensive preparation for the science of war in the universities spreads out in many directions at the secondary school level. We have already discussed the pros and cons of the atom-bomb-drill program, but it seems important, also, to note a tendency towards regimentation of opinion through restriction of sources of learning. The Los Angeles *Daily News* for Jan. 25 reports that even such magazines as the *Nation* and *New Republic* have recently been removed from the open shelves of city school libraries. Such censorship is almost unprecedented in this country, although a preview of the arguments which will be used on such occasions was furnished by the banning of Paul Blanshard's articles on the totalitarian implications of modern Catholic organization, also in the *Nation.* It was not argued by the officials responsible for this original *Nation* ban that Mr. Blanshard's material was untrustworthy, nor were errors pointed out; it was simply asserted that the effect of such forthright writing might be a weakening of faith among the presumably contented members of the Church. The *Daily News* item shows that the Board of Education line of reasoning is implicitly based on the same argument, except that in this case the happy faith in danger of being weakened or destroyed is faith in the infallibility of our government. It is of special interest to note that the *Nation* and *New Republic* are less critical of government policies today than they have been at any time during their history, except for the long period of devotion to the Roosevelt administration.

The spokesman for the Board of Education, an Associate Superintendent of City Schools, stated that the "editors and writers [of the *Nation* and *New Republic*] are guilty of biased presentation and interpretation of events." While it is perfectly obvious that all writers are "biased" in some sense, the free circulation of magazines critical of various steps undertaken by the government is the much lauded democratic way of reminding citizens that government officials may

also be biased, and that infallibility has no place in our concept of a free society.

While very few students would read the *Nation* and *New Republic* in any case, we seem to be dealing here with a very important principle: the men who take the *Nation* or *New Republic* off the shelves are not the men best fitted to educate our young people in that tolerance of divided opinion which has meant the protection of individual belief and difference.

To drive home the points we have been trying to make, we recommend the reading of a distasteful item in the "Local News" section of the Los Angeles *Times* for March 5. Comment is superfluous. We make a confident prognosis that any reader who can stand *this* column will have difficulty stomaching what appears under the heading, "Uncle Sam Goes Into the Classroom." Here are a few sample paragraphs to warm up on, telling how Army officers love children, *besides* being Patriotic:

> Uncle Sam is reaching into grammar and high school classrooms for his future military personnel, but he wants them specialized to fit his needs. He wants them to be educated.
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> "Find what you are best fitted for, for the ultimate advantage of your country," Mast. Sgt. Leonard Wheeler, U. S. Air Force, told a class of 17-year-old boys at Montebello Senior High School.
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> "We want round pegs for round holes. If we don't have the proper man for the proper slot, we might be defeated by the ogre of the world, a man named Stalin," the sergeant, a veteran of the Army, Marine Corps and the Air Force, said.
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> Sgt. Alpha Styles, a Wac, told the girls of the school the same story.
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> "America needs her girls as well as her boys in this emergency," she said.
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> "Don't stop going to school," Sgt. Wheeler told the students. "You are all going to be in the service, anyway."
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> "There are personnel experts in various branches of the service," he told the young men. "They will know for which you are best suited."
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> "The Army is planning on a war, hot or cold, lasting at least seven years—maybe 20 years," Col. Leslie W. Jefferson, head of Army and Air Force Recruiting, said. "And we want our youngsters to be the best . . . just like they always have been. We want them educated, so they can serve our country better than any other young people in the world."

FRONTIERS

The Growth of an Institution

ONE conclusion that might be reached by a reading of Max Lowenthal's *The Federal Bureau of Investigation* (William Sloane Associates, New York, 1950) is that this federal police force or detective organization represents a sinister threat to the free exercise of the traditional liberties of American citizens. This, it seems, is Mr. Lowenthal's view, after fifteen years' study of the history, operations and practices of the FBI. Our own view is that his book is most valuable as a study of how, if not why, an institution like the FBI comes into being in a democratic society—how its authority grows, what it feeds upon, and the sort of events which make seasoned (if not hardened) liberals such as Roger Baldwin and Morris Ernst speak of the FBI in flattering and approving terms. The FBI is *not,* be it said, a Gestapo or a GPU. It is the sort of national secret service which Americans have evolved for themselves, and which, doubtless, they deserve. The "right" frame of mind in which to read Mr. Lowenthal's book, we think, is with the wish to decide how Americans can learn to deserve something better. "Something better," according to some of the well-informed critics of the FBI quoted in this volume, would be no FBI at all, and this, it should be added, is far from being an expression of anarchist disgust with the whole theory of police investigation. It is a fair question to ask, after reading *The Federal Bureau of Investigation,* whether or not the FBI has any real job to do—any job, that is, which previously existing federal agencies could not do, and perhaps do better.

The Bureau of Investigation, renamed the Federal Bureau of Investigation in 1935, was established with a small force of detectives on July I, 1908, by Attorney General Charles Joseph Bonaparte, one month after the adjournment of a Congress which, according to a contemporary newspaper account, had just expressed "an utter abhorrence of such a scheme." The next session of Congress promptly investigated his action, a number of legislators being vehemently critical of this assumption of power on the part of the Attorney General. Congressman Sherley of Kentucky went on record with pertinent comments which were widely approved. As summarized by Mr. Lowenthal:

> "All forces have a tendency to grow and . . . the zeal . . . of a good officer frequently carries him beyond the needs of the service." This tendency, Mr. Sherley indicated, would be particularly marked, and particularly dangerous, in the case of persons at the head of a central police bureau, "an instrumentality which, in the past history of the world, has been frequently used for oppression and for the continuation in power of men having the instrumentality at their command." . . .
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> "In my reading of history I recall no instance where a government perished because of the absence of a secret service force, but many there are that perished as a result of the spy system. If Anglo-Saxon civilization stands for anything, it is for a government where the humblest citizen is safeguarded against the secret activities of the executive of the government. . . . "

Somehow or other, the Bureau survived Congressional criticism, mostly because the objecting legislators soon became preoccupied with other matters. The first real problem of the Bureau was to find something to do. Bureau operatives investigated crimes on Indian reservations and some District of Columbia cases. Offenses in interstate commerce also fell to the federal detectives. The first big assignment, however, came with the passage of the Mann Act, which enabled the Bureau to place agents in every large city. A notable achievement of the Bureau under this law was the imprisonment of Jack Johnson, heavyweight champion of the United States, for transporting across a state line a white woman whom he later married. Mr. Lowenthal sums up the chapter on the Mann Act:

> Besides its effect in greatly augmenting the business of the FBI, the Mann Act of 1910 has had an important effect on the dossier collection of the FBI. Distressed citizens from all over the country write in to give the detectives all kinds of information about the travels of strangers, acquaintances, relatives, or

even themselves. Hundreds of thousands of such communications have found their way into the swelling permanent records of the Bureau, registering and perpetuating the names, the failings (alleged or real), and the private affairs of as many victims and victimizers.

> This collection of data—not intended for use in criminal prosecutions—has done something to the FBI itself. It now possesses the very power which the Sixtieth Congress of 1908 feared it might acquire. It now possesses, actually or potentially, the materials referred to years before by Attorney General Bonaparte when he conceded the impropriety "of the use of a detective force . . . for the ascertainment of mere matters of scandal." His concession was no longer applicable; after the law of 1910, ascertainment of such matters fell legally within the power of the Bureau of Investigation.

Mr. Morris Ernst, writing in the *Reader's Digest* for last December, finds reasons for defending this procedure of amassing miscellaneous "data." He says that it is quite right for the FBI to turn in everything it can find out about a man or a suspect—"including unverified tips, rumors, gossip"—suggesting that police agents should not be permitted to withhold evidence on their judgment of its value. "Far better the present system: the complete reports go to the responsible official; everything is in the dossier, with a careful comment on each item, whether it is a fact, probability or rumor." It will be necessary, of course, for the reader to examine Mr. Lowenthal's book, to determine the character of these "careful comments" and to see what happens when the "complete reports" go to "the responsible official." Naturally, Mr. Lowenthal has picked some pretty bad cases for his examples. You could argue that there are probably hundreds and thousands of cases illustrating fair treatment of accused persons, for every one of those which reveal injustice or apparent persecution. Yet the problem, in a democracy, is not simply to strike a fair average of just action in administration—the idea, as we see it, and as Mr. Lowenthal discusses it, is to avoid all systems of administration which make it *easy* for power to be abused. It is the *power* of the FBI—and the tendency to an "anything goes" psychology, such as the denial of the right of suspected persons to know the identity of or to confront their accusers—that is at issue, and not the personal virtue of J. Edgar Hoover and his fellow public servants in the FBI.

After World War I, the FBI concerned itself with bomb plots and "radicalism." On Aug. 1, 1919, the anti-radical division of the FBI known as the GID (General Intelligence Division) was created, with Mr. Hoover as its chief. At once it began collecting radical literature, of which it must by now have many tons stored away. Among radical organizations investigated was the IWW, composed, according to a GID report, "of a mixture of bumptious, fanatic elements, partly blind disgruntlement, partly radical socialist, partly anarchist, but mostly syndicalist." The IWW's, the GID contended, were "fomenting unnecessary strikes" and sang songs described to Congress as having an "un-American character." The GID called the IWW "a vicious revolutionary effort," but the chairman of President Wilson's Mediation Commission, Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson, had this to say after investigating labor disturbances in the state of Washington:

> The forests and lumber mills of the Pacific Northwest have . . . about 70,000 men. . . . The unlivable condition of many of the camps has long demanded attention. . . .
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> Efforts to rectify evils through the trade union movement have largely failed because of . . . the bitter attitude of the operators toward any organization of their employees. . . . The IWW is filling the vacuum created by the operators. . . . The hold of the IWW is riveted instead of weakened by unimaginative opposition on the part of the employers to the correction of real grievances. . . .
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> It is almost the only large industry on the coast in which the basic eight-hour day does not prevail.

Regarding the IWW-sponsored strike at Butte, in 1920, the GID noted in a report that the first of the ten strike demands was for "the freedom of all political and industrial prisoners," and added—"which demand is not a proper strike demand, being entirely beyond the control of the employers." In short, the IWW sought, the GID

contended, to bring about "the revolution." Describing the strike, the GID said:

> . . . Butte, Mont., was an armed camp, there being approximately 11,000 employees in the copper mines who were not permitted to work because of the IWW, which in that city numbers nearly 1,000.
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> This movement was brought about entirely from the Butte *Daily Bulletin,* IWW newspaper . . . members attended their meetings with rifles. There were open expressions to the effect that this is the last stand of the IWW, and they intend it to be the beginning of the revolution. Wholesale raids were made by mobs and there was firing from concealed points.

Mr. Lowenthal, however, has sought out the view of these disturbances presented in court by Federal Judge Bourquin, in his summary of the evidence that had been taken. In part, his conclusions were:

> The Industrial Workers of the World was dissatisfied with working places, conditions, and wages in the mining industry, . . . and [discussed] ways and means [of remedying conditions], including a strike if necessary. In consequence its hall and orderly meetings were several times raided by employers' agents, Federal agents and soldiers duly officered, acting by Federal authority and without warrant. The members, men and women, . . . made no resistance save oral protests, no retaliation, and there was no disorder save by the raiders. These, armed, forcibly entered, broke and destroyed property; searched effects and papers; seized papers and documents; cursed, insulted, beat, dispersed, and bayonetted members . . .; and in general in an orderly and populous city, perpetrated an orgy of terror, violence and crime against citizens and aliens in public assemblage, whose only offense seems to have been peaceable insistence upon an exercise of a dear legal right. . . .
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> . . . Evil advocacy and teaching . . . is a far less danger to this country than are the parties who [acted] in violation of law and order, of humanity and justice. . . . They are the spirit of intolerance incarnate, and the most alarming manifestation in America today.

Here, we have stressed the past history of the FBI, as illustrating the background and growth of an institution which is today much larger and more powerful than in the "Red Scare" days of the 1920's. *The Federal Bureau of Investigation* is a book which ought to be read by everyone with a serious interest in the social processes and government of the United States. The contemporary material is as informing as the historical data, and Mr. Lowenthal is, if anything, conservative in his judgments, which appear only through the selection of the facts which he presents. There is no rhetoric in his book, and we doubt if much besides rhetoric can be presented in criticism of what he has done.

One last note: A few weeks before his book appeared, Mr. Lowenthal was called to Washington for investigation by the Un-American Activities Committee, and, by curious coincidence, the record of his hearing was made public just one day before his book went on sale. The hearing showed only that Mr. Lowenthal has been an eminent lawyer for many years, serving both the Government and large corporate interests. The story of this episode is told in the *Nation* for Jan. 27, under the intriguing title, "The FBI Reviews a Book."