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REBIRTH OF THE SAVIOR

SOME years ago, writing admiringly of the Soviet attempt to replace the traditions of Greek Orthodox Christianity with the doctrines of Marxian Materialism, Corliss Lamont observed that the anti-religious movement could never rest on its laurels. He suggested that there must be some deep quality in human nature which seek a religious expression, obliging the "anti-gods" to maintain a constant struggle against religious revival. As a convinced materialist, Mr. Lamont was somewhat mournful about this. It did not seem to occur to him then, nor has it since, that the hunger for religious expression may be basically natural and good—a part of the life of all human beings. He gave the impression that religious longings are a sort of philosophical "weed" which must always be pulled up and destroyed, to keep the way clear for "true" human progress.

It is perhaps a bit amusing that materialist opposition to religion seems to resemble, in psychological terms, the strivings of orthodox Christians to eradicate the sin of heresy and rebelliousness. Theologically speaking, the origin of evil may be traced to the crime of Pride. Lucifer fell from Heaven because of his rivalry with the Most High. He then appeared at the beginning of the human drama in the Garden of Eden, and has since been the inspiration of all sinfulness. All men, the dogmatic Christian relates, sinned in Adam, and continue to do so until they are "saved," finally and irrevocably, by the "blood of the Lamb." While the materialist has no overt theology to offer, he usually claims that the religious instinct in human beings represents an innate tendency to "error," which must be corrected by a proper education in the teachings of science.

This particular sort of materialism, it is true, has in many quarters given way to a less aggressive skepticism, but the analogy remains to throw a revealing light upon the undertakings of all doctrinaire groups, whether religious or anti-religious.

There are other analogies. The "savior" idea, for example, certainly plays as central a role in any *developed* system of materialism as it does in the great religions of the past. The lowly Jesus, born in a stable, followed by semi-literate disciples—fishermen who belonged to the working class of his time—is replaced in the Bolshevist system by awakening sons of the proletarian masses.

Jesus cast out the enemies, the money-changers, from the temple, and the Bolshevists would do the same. For many millions, the image of the plotting revolutionist, geared to towering determination by the sufferings of the common man, became the symbol of salvation—a salvation in *this* world, not in the next. Nikolai Lenin is probably the archetype of the revolutionary savior (for a full appreciation of the magic of Lenin's life, and its impact on the imagination of Western man, the chapters devoted to Lenin in Edmund Wilson's *To the Finland Station* are important reading), and in time, as the Bolshevist cause was transformed into a modern orthodoxy, Stalin took the place of Lenin as the "savior" of all the peoples within the Soviet orbit. This latter development is carefully recorded by André Gide and was one of the causes of Gide's break with the Communist movement. A similar transformation had already occurred, centuries earlier, in the Christian system. Jesus became increasingly a "symbol," while the person of the Pope—the wielder of temporal authority—became the source of practical power. The Pope could save a man or damn him, in *both* this world and the next.

The "Savior" idea, of course, did not begin with Christianity. It entered Christian teaching from Hebrew sources, for the Jewish teaching of the periodic appearance of Messiahs antedated the founding of Christianity. The great Oriental religions of Hinduism and Buddhism both expounded the doctrine of *avatars,* in which it is taught that at the beginnings and endings of great human cycles, extraordinary beings come among men as teachers

and reformers. In the East, the doctrine of the Incarnation is really a doctrine of Re-Incarnation, for the avatars of Vishnu are numerous, and the Northern Buddhists believe that the spirit of Gautama, or some aspect of his spirit, returns again and again, to this day, in the guise of high Lamas of the Tibetan system. Further, there were other great Buddhas (Enlightened Ones) who came before Gautama. Actually, an avatar is a partial embodiment of the Supreme Spirit of the Universe, according to mystical Eastern religion.

Modern psychologists such as Carl Jung would probably admit or affirm that a belief of this sort, with its origin extending so far into the past as to be beyond the reach of history, must be rooted in some profound reality of human nature. It is even possible—although few if any psychologists would agree to this—that the savior myth has cosmological significance and validity, for there seems no good reason to think that *human* nature is an alien intrusion into the natural world. Human nature, one could argue, is the region in which *all* nature begins to become self-conscious, so that the moral "instincts" or intuitions of human minds may be regarded as, quite literally, the first faltering articulation of the "voice" of the natural world.

In any event, the idea of the savior seems practically indispensable, regardless of the various and opposing forms which human beliefs assume, across the centuries. When the belief in one savior dies away, another rises, almost immediately, to take its place. It is here, in the analysis of modern thought, that the novel becomes important. The novel, unlike the partial scientific theory or abstract contentions of economic and social reformers, must deal with human characters in the round. The novel must complete the circuit and show how human beings are affected by their ideas and enthusiasms, and what they do with them. The novelist, therefore, tries to develop the implications of incomplete propositions about the nature of reality. The problems which confront the novelist are set by the age in which he lives. He chooses from the assumptions of his time those which seem to him to contain essential truth and gives them to one or some of his characters, and then tries to show how they work out as actual motives in the lives of human beings. The "opposition" is represented by other characters whose actions are determined by "old" beliefs and the habitual compromises which the author would like to see overcome.

It is in novels of this sort—we speak of serious writing, arising from genuine conviction in the authors—that the temper of an age, its theories of "truth," its hopes for the future and its appraisal of the strife that will be inevitable or necessary, become manifest. Such books, of course, although "serious," can easily become superficial. This happens when the writer has seized upon some oversimplified doctrinaire thesis and uses Procrustean methods to force his characters to arrive at a predetermined end. The "class struggle" stories of the 1930's often fall in this category. An honest writer, however, who accepts a doctrinaire formula only to the extent that it "fits in" with his understanding of human nature, will resist a pat conclusion, as Steinbeck, for example, resisted it, in his book, possibly his best, *In Dubious Battle.* But in *Burning Bright,* a more recent work, Steinbeck attempts to examine the human problem in more primitive terms, without the confusions and complexities of a "political" setting, and here, it seems to us, he fails as an artist, even as he succeeded in *In Dubious Battle*—fails because he accepts one of the current orthodox versions of human nature and treats it as though it offered the "whole" truth about man. In this case, it seems to us, the intensity of his feeling actually blocks out a higher vision of the human drama.

Some kind of "savior" figures in almost all serious writing. For decades, now, we have been presented with the image of the "scientific" savior who labors unceasingly at his researches to uncover secrets that will end all human misery and transform the world into a material paradise. A "savior" story, we may note, always implies a theory of knowledge. Jesus afforded hope to mankind through faith and belief in the true religion—which might be called "knowledge of God." The accompaniments of this story are miracles, sudden illuminations, prayer, and conversion, and personal reformation leading to saintly conduct and example. The scientific savior seeks to know "Nature" and to lead others to this

knowledge. The "consecrated scientist" moves austerely through the pages. He is impersonal and sententious, and when the "ministry" aspect of his life is represented, the writing generally weakens into a verbal imitation of wisdomism which fails of conviction because of the mechanical background of scientific ideas.

Increasingly, of late, the "savior" stories have had psychiatrists or similar professional men for heroes. This is certainly a step in advance, for the psychiatrist seeks to know *human* nature, which is, after all, the central problem. One rather unusual book in this category is *Mine Own Executioner* by Nigel Balchin. Here, too, however, although the setting of the problem in the psychiatric novel seems very much to the point, the formulas inherited from previous theories of human nature often chain the inquiry to yesterday's clichés in tendentious storytelling. We have in mind a recent book which traces the career of a young psychiatrist through numerous disappointments and setbacks to a final achievement in establishing a mental hospital where his progressive methods are applied. Then, at the peak of his career, he is defeated and "ruined," professionally, because he dares to say publicly that he believes that psychiatrists should interest themselves in social changes and reforms. He expounds his psychiatric theory of the origin of evil before a professional gathering:

> There is no wickedness in all history that did not come from the social environment and there is not an act of heroism or goodness that did not issue from a social cause. We must move back from symptoms to real causes. Of course, even without this radical step, we have had cures. . . . We have sent out patients who have been retrained not to insult the mores of their social betters. But these are not cures in any scientific sense. They are substitutes for thorough-going changes, and we are forced to provide substitutes so long as we do not recognize man's real role in society, and our own role, too. The task of science is to help undo the misery of history. Science is one of the social forces that must liberate the human spirit from its social prisons. But the spirit is a spirit of the flesh, the flesh of society, and so in the end we are forced to act actively within that society as part of our system of cure. Every honest psychiatrist should long for the day when his branch of medicine, like epidemiology, is a minor field within the area of human knowledge, an old memory of horror and pity such as we sometimes feel when we look back on the miseries of the past. I do not believe in original sin, and therefore I believe psychiatry must some day disappear into a general science of human life and become one of the minor branches of biology and history.

There he stands, a brave man, an honest man, the target of the salvos of orthodoxy and reaction. He has the role of savior in the literature of this epoch, and he is "shot down" by a Congressional committee which fears his "political" motives. The book ends with him visiting friends of his dead brother who had been active in the labor movement—symbol of another generation's "saviors"—and together they consider their alliance for the salvation of man.

The fire of idealism is in this book, yet it burns in a setting of hard, even crass, materialism. The white rat of the vivisector serves as a symbol of the progress of science at the outset; the emotional experiences and amativeness of the characters give no hint of the nobility which love may embody and inspire. The theory of human nature explicitly proposed is nineteenth-century mechanism, almost without qualification. It is hardly a book that we would recommend for reading, despite its fervors for the betterment of man.

Nevertheless, this book suggests what we have been trying to point out: that the "savior" quality is an essential ingredient of human nature. It flowers everywhere, leading, when its form is distorted, to moral confusion and even public confusion and terror; but the quality is *in* man, not outside of him. It gives even delusion and limitation a Promethean aspect, and contains therefore, the promise of some far-off day of "salvation."

Letter from GERMANY

BERLIN.—A vacation visit to the island of Ruegen in the Baltic Sea brings one into closer contact with some of the rural problems of the East zone of Germany. To illustrate the complexity of these things, it seems useful to speak of four different trends in the development of agriculture in Germany during recent decades.

(1) Growing *industrialisation* has brought many disadvantages for the farm population, despite the gift of machinery to ease the burden of heavy physical work. For example, there is the sharp difference between prices for foodstuffs and those for industrial goods (the former tend to be low, the latter to rise). Whereas from 1945 to 1948, prices for agricultural products were abnormally high—because of the conditions of scarcity after the war—they are now low again, with devastating results for the "New Settlers" (German refugees from the regions East of the Oder River), who have stopped construction of necessary buildings. Needed cattle cannot be bought, and people lose courage and are attracted by the cities with their high wages. This "flight from the land" is an old story in Germany, with her backward agricultural techniques and low farm wages. Thus we see that the old problems which industrialisation brought to the European farm population are now accentuated in East Germany. The extreme favoring of industry over agriculture is underlined by one outstanding example: Industrial plants in East Germany take most of the electric current; power plants cannot be built because of lack of machinery, of construction materials, and so forth; in consequence, frequent switching off of current occurs in the country during both day and night, and farmers are compelled to thresh their grain during the night to save electric power.

(2) North and East Germany—now occupied by the Russians—was once a mass of big estates with *feudal owners.* Those estates are now broken up, the owners disappeared (dead, driven out, simply vanished). With the inauguration of "Land Reform" the Russians and their German collaborators caught at least "two birds with one stone"—they destroyed a class of hostile people and they removed the last remnants of feudalism in Germany, giving the land to millions of German refugees from the East. But at the northern tip of Reugen, we found that although a mass of people have their own land, nobody is satisfied. Buildings and machinery on the former big estates are neglected and rotten and the general efficiency is bad. There are too many small farmers who are poor and completely subject to State requirements such as obligatory sowing of certain plants, delivery of produce to State officials and organisations, high taxes, etc.

(3) Thus another important trend in German agriculture is the growing *influence of state power* exercised on the life of farm population. It began with the Nazi rule and has continued since. Here we have the problem of thickly populated modern industrial nations with inadequate agriculture to feed the people in time of war or to accumulate reserves as part of war preparation. Although East Germany has for the time being no substantial war potential, she is nonetheless included in the great system of military preparation which has its heart in Moscow and affects all regions under its influence. For example, sugar is still rationed, although East Germany grows sugar beets in abundance. (This summer a Ruegen paper announced the reward of four pounds of sugar—a month's ration—to the finder of one Colorado beetle—dangerous to potatoes, which are, after grain, the most important food product in Germany.)

(4) Under Russian occupation the process of State influence becomes *collectivisation.* The outer evidence of this process of mechanisation of the relation between man and soil is the omnipresent tractor and the "Machine Center" for a circle of villages. Fields are still privately owned, but this ownership is so weakened, the grip of State power already so tight, and the cultivation of the small plots of land so inefficient that the next step of direct collectivisation of man and soil looms around the corner. Preparatory steps are the "Grain Battles" at harvest time, the sort of competition introduced in agricultural areas, the making over of the rural population into one of industrial workers, and the growing bureaucratic organisation in town and

village. By breaking up the land of large estates into many small plots, these being given to former agricultural laborers, and especially to millions of German refugees from the Eastern regions, successful farming, especially with declining prices, was made impossible. The small plots, which could satisfy neither their owners nor State authorities, are now a forceful argument for collectivisation. Many of the owners are at the end of their rope and are literally "fleeing" from the land (by night, without giving notice). This picture is not entirely gloomy. The State, of course, tries to ease the situation, and praises the "New Settlers." Germany is in many respects overcoming her backwardness with regard to farm techniques (on the other hand, the soil is being depleted by the "grain battles" for record production.) The feudal class has gone forever, and we have to remember that the feudal lords of Prussia were a most military and aristocratic class.

But in general, agriculture in East Germany is in a serious crisis, with dissatisfaction widespread and deep. The peasant culture of Europe is in steady decline, and taking its place is the totalitarian machinery which makes most people into simple workers—agricultural and industrial workers. What will be left, after this ugly period has been brought to an end, remains to be seen; at least, industrial methods and techniques in agriculture have come to stay. And the breaking down of "natural" ownership will perhaps have the effect of a lasting interest in cooperative work. But this future cooperation can only be voluntary, with—as we hope—men of the future deciding their own fate and work.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
PHILOSOPHIES OF THE EAST

HERE and there, among the scriptures of the great religions of the world, past and present, are to be found passages of exceeding beauty and depth. And here and there, among the various renderings into English of these scriptures, one sometimes finds versions which seem to do full justice to the poetic genius and philosophical profundity of the originals. These are matters of opinion, of course, but about all a reviewer has to offer is his opinion, in the hope that an effort to see justly and to report accurately will be of some value to others, whether or not they agree.

We have for review a small book which seems to embody both these qualities of excellence. It is *Selections from the Upanishads, and the Tao Te King,* and is published at $2 by the Cunningham Press, 3036 West Main Street, Alhambra, Calif. (or Los Angeles 32), which, it may interest some readers to know, is also the printer of MANAS. While the first part of the book is comprised of portions of four of the Upanishads, the Tao Te King, the work of the Chinese philosopher, Lao Tze, is presented complete.

This version of the Upanishads was done in English by Charles Johnston, whose interest in Oriental scriptures probably grew out of his lifelong membership in the Theosophical Society. He served for many years in the British Civil Service in India, and for a time taught at Columbia University. Western interest in the Upanishads came rather late in the history of Indic studies by Europeans. It was probably Arthur Schopenhauer who first attracted widespread attention to these philosophical treatises, by virtually founding his *World as Will and Idea* upon them. As he says in his Preface:

> If the reader has also received the benefit of the Vedas, the access to which by means of the Upanishads is in my eyes the greatest privilege which this still young century (1818) may claim before all previous centuries, (for I anticipate that the influence of Sanskrit literature will not be less profound than the revival of Greek in the fourteenth century,)—if then the reader, I say, has received his initiation in primeval Indian wisdom, and received it with an open heart, he will be prepared in the very best way for hearing what I have to tell him.

The Upanishads, as Max Muller has explained, represent the highest mystical and transcendental knowledge of Indian religion. "Most European scholars," he remarks, "are agreed in deriving *upa-ni-shad* from the root *sad,* to sit down, preceded by the two prepositions, *ni*, down, and *upa*, near, so that it would express the idea of session, or assembly of pupils sitting down near their teacher to listen to his instruction."

There is certainly a quality of intimate communication—almost communion—in the portions of the Upanishads Prof. Johnston has translated. And yet, unlike so much of Western devotional literature, the Upanishads breathe an impersonal spirit—a spirit of freedom of mind and heart. Doubtless a number of allusions to the religious doctrines of Hinduism will remain obscure to the American or European reader, but enough that is clearly comprehensible remains to charm with its austere beauty and to inspire with its gentle but profound thought. In the Chhandogya Upanishad, for example, is described the return of a youth, Shvetaketu, who has been away from home as a student for twelve years.

> His father addressed him:
>
> Shvetaketu, you are conceited, vain of your learning, and proud, dear; but have you asked for that teaching through which the unheard is heard, the unthought is thought, the unknown is known?
>
> What sort of teaching is that, Master? said he.
>
> Just as, dear, by a single piece of clay anything made of clay may be known, for the difference is only one of words and names, and the real thing is that it is of clay;. . . just like this is the teaching that makes the unknown known.
>
> But I am sure that those teachers did not know this themselves; for if they had known it, how would they not have taught it to me? said he; but now let my Master tell it to me.
>
> Let it be so, dear; said he.
>
> . . . . These eastern rivers, dear, roll eastward; and the western, westward. From the ocean to the ocean they go, and in the ocean they are united. And there they know no separateness, nor say: This am I,

this am I. Thus indeed, dear, all these beings coming forth from the Real, know not, nor say: We have come from the Real. And whatever they are here, whether tiger or lion or wolf or boar or worm or moth or gnat or fly or whatever they are, that they become again. And that soul is the Self of all that is, this is the Real, this is the Self. THAT THOU ART, O Shvetaketu.

Let the Master teach me more; said he.
Let it be so, dear; said he.

The Katha Upanishad has these exquisite lines:

The Self-Being pierced the opening outwards; hence one looks outward, not within himself. A wise man looked towards the Self with reverted sight, seeking deathlessness.

Children seek after outward desires, they come to the net of widespread death. But the wise, beholding deathlessness, seek not for the enduring among unenduring things.

Chinese philosophy seems far less metaphysical and "systematic" than the religious literature of India, yet, as Lionel Giles, the translator of the *Tao Te King*, says, the work of Lao Tze presents a "well-defined though rudimentary outline of a great system of transcendental and ethical philosophy." The first paragraph of this small work on "the way of virtue" sets the keynote:

The Tao which can be expressed in words is not the eternal Tao; the name which can be uttered is not its eternal name. Without a name, it is the Beginning of Heaven and Earth, with a name it is the Mother of all things. Only one who is eternally free from earthly passion can apprehend its spiritual essence, he who is ever clogged by passions can see no more than its outer form. These two things, the spiritual and the material, though we call them by different names, in their origin are one and the same. This sameness is a mystery,—the mystery of mysteries. It is the gate of all spirituality.

Here are offered the ideas of the Manifest and the Un-manifest Deity, an intimation of the solution of the problem of good and evil, and the moral foundation of spiritual perception. Generally, however, Lao Tze speaks in quaint paradoxes or "riddles." He has a venerable wisdom which moves from vague abstraction to sharp particularity.

The way of Heaven is like the drawing of a bow: it brings down what is high and raises what is low.

It is the way of Heaven to take from those who have too much, and give to those who have too little. But the way of man is not so. He takes away from those who have too little, to add to his own superabundance. What man is there that can take of his own superabundance and give it to mankind? Only he who possesses Tao.

Lao Tze seems most practically acute on the subject of government. His advice, like Machiavelli's, is directed to the ruling prince, yet the feeling and implication are the very opposite of the intent of Machiavelli's manual for dictators; and opposite, too, in many ways, to the habitual attitudes of those who govern modern democratic States:

The greater the number of laws and enactments, the more thieves and robbers there will be. Therefore the Sage says: "So long as I do nothing, the people will work out their own reformation. So long as I love calm, the people will right themselves. If only I keep from meddling, the people will grow rich. If only I am free from desire, the people will come naturally back to simplicity."

If the government is sluggish and tolerant, the people will be honest and free from guile. If the government is prying and meddling, there will be constant infraction of the law. Is the government corrupt? Then uprightness becomes rare, and goodness becomes strange. Verily, mankind have been under delusion for many a day!

Lao Tze seems to have no awareness at all of what many people now speak of as "modem progress." Yet he is very much aware of the forces which threaten to destroy both "modern progress" and the peoples who have made it. His "Sage" is opposed to war and his "military commander" despises victory. "Peace and tranquility are what he prizes. When he conquers, he is not elate. To be elate were to rejoice in the slaughter of human beings. And he who rejoices in the slaughter of human beings is not fit to work his will in the Empire."

Lao Tze's objective, rather than progress, is inner serenity. Even a little application of his counsels, today, would produce a great deal of serenity.

COMMENTARY
OLD WEST, NEW EAST

READERS will recall notice in these pages of the *Nation* articles by Paul Blanshard concerning the inroads of Catholicism in public education in European countries. (MANAS, May 16.) We now learn from a *Christian Century* editorial that the French National Assembly last month managed to circumvent the constitutional separation of Church and State in France (established in 1905) by voting a "family allowance" to the parents of children of elementary school age. The parents may give this money either to a private school or a public school. However, as the *Christian Century* points out:

> . . . there is no doubt in anybody's mind that the principle of separation has been violated, and that it was done because the Catholic hierarchy was determined that the principle should be overthrown. During the Vichy regime the leaders of the church induced Marshal Pétain to disregard the constitution and illegally to grant outright subsidies to parochial schools. When-the war ended, the subsidies stopped and these expanded institutions fell into financial trouble. In their effort to resume their schools and at the same time keep control of their operation, the hierarchy repeatedly risked leaving France without a government. Now they have won access to the public treasury, at what cost to French democracy remains to be seen.

It is estimated that the "family allowances" which will reach the Catholic schools in this way will total about $8,500,000 a year.

In contrast to this development is the success of Prime Minister Nehru in gaining the presidency of the Congress Party of India. On Sept. 8, the Congress Party national committee forced the resignation of Purshottamdas Tandon, leader of the Hindu "Old Guard," which is inclined to favor theocracy rather than the secular State which Nehru succeeded in establishing. Again, the *Christian Century* comment is pertinent:

This realignment changes the prospects for the first general election in India, which is to be held next January. The ruling party may be expected to present a very different slate of candidates, now that Nehru is in control, than it would if Tandon were at the helm. The Western ideal of a state which is free from domination by a religious group has a better chance of being realized now, although the Hindu conservatives have not retired from the field. Since the January elections will bring to the polls more people than ever voted in a democratic election before, it is good to have some assurance that they will have opportunity to vote for candidates who are worth the trouble.

Apparently, the Western ideal is losing out in Europe—especially in France—long regarded as the stronghold of freedom and republican virtue—while it is gaining a new birth in the Far East, in a country which has long been a synonym for religious extravagance and caste autocracy.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

THERE are times when the best service a discussion column on education can perform is the modest function of recommending something appearing in another periodical. *McCall's* for September contains an article by Arthur D. Morse, "Who's Trying to Ruin Our Schools?", which should be read by every parent and educator in the country. It is a research article on the origins of many of the fantastic attacks currently being made against the public schools and school teachers.

The smear-tactics used recently against Willard Goslin, former Pasadena School Superintendent, was but one episode in a weird campaign on the part of many neurotic personalities and misinformed enthusiasts to label Progressive Education "Communism." Allan Zoll is the name of the man who presently spearheads the attacks on school administrations, textbooks and teachers. His pamphlets were widely quoted in the course of the Pasadena debacle which ended in Goslin's forced resignation. And the fact that a man such as the *McCall* article shows Zoll to be is able to exercise great influence in community affairs should really make us think. His vitriolic attacks have never been supported by reliable evidence, and the only conclusion one can draw is that our cultural soil is quite fertile for proto-fascist movements. Also, we have proof positive in this article that innumerable "average Americans" have never informed themselves adequately about the schools their children attend.

We might, assuming a sweetness and light demeanor, claim that irresponsible attacks such as those directed by Zoll and his colleague, Lucille Cardin Crain, editor of *The Educational Reviewer*, will eventually force parents to acquaint themselves with what their children are being taught and how it is being taught. But unfortunately, the atmosphere generated by community witch-hunts for "pro-communist teachers" is not one to encourage rapport between worried parents and understandably fidgety teachers. To quote Mr. Morse's account of what happened in Englewood, New Jersey:

> Though charges against the schools had not been substantiated, a subtle and distressing change was creeping over Englewood. The teachers were jittery. They were afraid the healthy open discussion that had previously characterized their classes would somehow be misconstrued. Several teachers told Dr. Stearns they were sure that some students, under instructions from their parents, were trying to trap them into making incriminating statements.
>
> This atmosphere of uneasiness was not confined to the schools.
>
> "There is a community menace that is growing here like a cancer," the Englewood *Press Journal* said in an editorial, and went on to observe: ". . . it is arousing religious hatreds . . . Catholic against Protestant against Jewish."

Some enlightened communities, when beseiged by Zoll propaganda, formed counter organizations with membership including both educational conservatives and radicals—the Progressives and the anti-progressives, churchmen and agnostics. It must be recognized that this is not an issue of progressive education at all, but rather a matter of inflammatory politics at its worst level, expediently using some of the obvious criticisms of Progressive education as a point of departure for promoting profitable "patriotic" organizations while capturing public attention. Zoll, phony "Ph.D." and prominent former member of an alleged fascist organization, was discovered to have given considerable misleading personal advice to those who launched a campaign denouncing supposed Englewood "communists" and "socialists." Neither Zoll nor Lucille Crain can lay claim to any genuine educational status, and while there is nothing of criticism in this fact of itself, the evidence that pretensions of educational training figure largely in claims to leadership informs us as to the moral tone of the "crusade."

We all know that there are ambitious, small-bore demagogues like Zoll, whose genius for organization gives them apparent "standing," and

we also know that such characters have their counterpart in every community. But the important question is one that we have already posed in a different form: *Why* are such techniques so successful? Why is it possible for hundreds of excited people in a community to accuse teachers of Communist or Socialist sympathies they have never had? Getting rid of or exposing Zoll, we think, is not the real solution. What we need to get rid of is our capacity for vindictive phobias.

It is what used to be called a "moot" question whether or not conditions such as those described in Mr. Morse's article can ever get better before they get worse. A case might be made out for the necessity of open discussion on the communist ideology in which fair and sympathetic treatment would be given to the development of both Russian political philosophy and the present Soviet regime. Few teachers are presently capable of this. Probably a great many of those who have been accused of being pro-communist are actually too *anti*-communist to do an impartial job. Therefore, the basic problem of anti-communism, and the fascist attitudes of mind which so easily accompany it, may never be solved until our universities handle the communist problem less gingerly.

Yet where, today, can we find a university willing to seek for and introduce an avowed communist apologist to give a few lectures to political science students? For were this to happen, innumerable Zolls would rise up to demand the beheading of the entire college administration. Yet somewhere, somehow, we have to learn, and help our future teachers to learn, that there will never be sane politics without complete impartiality of mind.

We don't suspect for a moment that the communists have the better side of the argument, but we certainly do suspect that most Americans lack the faintest idea of the communists' best points and our own worst ones. Until we see both, and discuss them intelligently, we will always be the victims of fears about the things we *don't* know. A vague, shadowy Communism, the current personification of evil, is a much harder thing to handle than a truly depicted, many-sided communism, with its various shades of both good and evil.

This is not really a problem of Communism versus Democracy, any more than it is a problem of Progressive education versus anti-progressive education. Whether or not there were communists or fascists or progressives or anti-progressives, there would always be the need for the impartial attitude of mind that befits a culture ostensibly dedicated to freedom of inquiry.

FRONTIERS

Outspoken Psychiatrist

THROUGH the courtesy and interest of a subscriber, we have recently come into possession of a truly remarkable series of commentaries on "World Health and Survival of the Human Race." They are presented in the form of a 32-page mimeographed pamphlet prepared by members of the International Forum in Geneva, giving extracts and condensations from articles and lectures by Brock Chisholm. Dr. Chisholm is a member of the William Alanson White Psychiatric Foundation, and also serves as Director General of the World Health Organization.

The compilation was prepared in the hope that either community or institutional study groups might benefit from discussion and amplification of the suggestive and challenging statements it offers. We, for our part, wish it were possible to see all this material in print and available to MANAS readers. Partly with the thought that some means may eventually be found to bring this about, we endeavor to indicate Dr. Chisholm's main points of emphasis.

Dr. Chisholm is an outspoken man, making it easy for the layman to understand what he is talking about. His thesis is plain: No well-intended world organization can possibly succeed in regulating human affairs without an accompanying effort to eliminate or reduce personal, social and religious immaturities at the psychological level. Such education, according to Dr. Chisholm, requires recognition that the familiar reasons for fighting wars are pathological, no *essential* distinction being allowable between the war-willingness of "Nazis," "Communists," or even "Democrats." What is the common denominator? Dr. Chisholm insists that immaturity is most serious in respect to morality, and that when we base our evaluations of persons and of conduct on preoccupation with "evil" or "sin," we begin to claim the righteousness of ourselves—and the moral corruption of those who disagree with us.

Dr. Chisholm, in other words, is no friend of sectarian religion. However, he sees that moralistic bias is produced by something far deeper than religious indoctrination over the course of centuries. He feels that there is a primal moral problem which we have so far failed to solve. The first temptation to do evil, as Dr. Chisholm has it, is the temptation to localize Badness somewhere outside ourselves, while we attempt to feel secure in some kind of organized agreement as to what the Good Moral Standards are.

But Dr. Chisholm should speak for himself on this phase of his thesis:

> The necessity to fight wars, whether as aggressor or as a defender who could have, but has not, taken steps to prevent war occurring, is as much a pathological psychiatric symptom as is a phobia or the anti-social behaviour of a criminal who has been dominated by a stern and unreasonable father. They are alike irrational behaviour patterns resulting from unsuccessful development and failure to reach emotional maturity. It is evident that this failure is usual in the whole human race, and has been so throughout historical time. . . .
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> To use a medical analogy, the human race is socially, desperately and dangerously ill. The first necessity is a clear diagnosis of the type of illness, with an identification of the causes and then a prescription of treatment. Using all available knowledge of the human being and his functioning, it should be quite possible to do this with some confidence in our ability to reach sound conclusions. The real difficulty will come—as in prevention of diphtheria, tuberculosis, and many other diseases—from the probable unwillingness of the patient, the human race, to take the medicine or treatment because it tastes bad, or smells awful, or is painful, or involves giving up some of his present certainties, or because he still has faith in one or other of the old medicines which have never been effective. Any change drastic enough extensively to modify perhaps the most consistent behavior pattern of the whole human race throughout thousands of years, is going to be very painful indeed. Extensive surgery is not pleasant, but a persisting cancer is worse in the end.

Next, Dr. Chisholm turns to an examination of our unquestioned, "last-resort" justification for going to war—"defense":

> Can we identify the reasons why we fight wars, or even enough of them to perceive a pattern? Many of them are easy to list—prejudice, isolationism, the ability emotionally and uncritically to believe unreasonable things, excessive desire for material or power, excessive fear of others, belief in a destiny to control others, vengeance, ability to avoid seeing and facing unpleasant facts and taking appropriate action. These . . . are all well known and recognized neurotic symptoms. The only normal motive is self defence to protect ourselves from aggression, but surely we should be able to see the aggression coming long before it breaks out in warfare, and take appropriate action to satisfy or suppress it. Even self defence may involve a neurotic reaction when it means defending one's own excessive material wealth from others who are in great need.

Dr. Chisholm makes impressive arguments for the complete elimination of the "Good versus Evil method of personal and social evaluation:

> What basic psychological distortion can be found in every civilisation of which we know anything? . . . In the old Hebrew story God warns the first man and woman to have nothing to do with "good" and "evil." It is interesting to note that as long ago as that "good" is recognised as just as great a menace as "evil." They are the fruit of the one tree- and are different aspects of the same thing.
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> We have been very slow to rediscover this truth and to recognise the unnecessary and artificially imposed inferiority, guilt and fear, commonly known as sin, under which we have almost all laboured and which produces so much of the social maladjustment and unhappiness in the world For many generations we have bowed our necks to the yoke of the conviction of sin. We have swallowed all manners of poisonous certainties fed us by our parents, our Sunday and day school teachers, our politicians, our priests, our newspapers, and others with a vested interest in controlling us. "Thou shalt become as gods, knowing good and evil," good and evil with which to keep children under control, with which to prevent free thinking, with which to impose local and familial and national loyalties and with which to blind children to their glorious intellectual heritage. Misguided by authoritarian dogma, bound by exclusive faith, stunted by inculcated loyalty, torn by frantic heresy, bedevilled by insistent schism, drugged by ecstatic experience, confused by conflicting certainty, bewildered by invented mystery, and loaded down by a weight of guilt and fear engendered by its own original premises, the unfortunate human race, deprived by its incubi of its only defences and its only reasons for striving, its reasoning power and its natural capacity to enjoy the satisfaction of its natural urges, struggles along under its ghastly self-imposed burden. The results, the inevitable results, are frustration, inferiority, neurosis and inability to enjoy living, to reason clearly or to make a world fit to live in.

These quotations are sufficient to indicate that Dr. Chisholm is not content with walking around the edge of a problem. His claims, be they right or wrong, are certainly a challenge to our thought, and it is for this reason that we are so much in sympathy with the attempt made by the International Forum at Geneva to encourage study groups in discussion of such passages. However much we take exception to Dr. Chisholm's attack on "the concept of right and wrong," we must recognize the force and logic of his views. His interpretation of the "forbidden fruit" in the garden of Eden as being that of moralistic self-righteousness is, to say the least, interesting. As a closing note, we may observe that Dr. Chisholm has made an attempt to consult not only the symbology of religious scripture but also the great philosophical minds of the Western world. He uses Emerson to express the psychological fact that man cannot have "truth" and "repose" at the same time, that security and self-righteousness can never accompany either social progress or individual enlightenment.