

## PROBLEMS OF POLITICS

THE editorial policy of MANAS, for a number of reasons, has been from the beginning non-political. We take the view that the really practical issues before the modern world are not political issues at all, but moral issues, having to do with the basic philosophical questions. It is fairly obvious, moreover, that genuine political issues usually turn on philosophical issues. That is, a man's politics depends upon the sort of respect he has for himself and others—for human beings generally.

Historically, the polar opposites of Western political thinking are represented by Rousseau and Hobbes. Rousseau seemed to think that practically everything that is wrong with people can be traced to the influence of institutions, bad institutions. Free the people from these evil institutions, he argued, establish effective public education and constitutional government, and their troubles will be over. Hobbes, on the other hand, was skeptical of the capacity of the people to govern themselves. He wanted authoritative and fear-inspiring institutions to restrain the disorderly tendencies of the great majority.

In general, political opinions, regardless of party, arrange themselves along a line between these two extremes. In periods of oppression, the truth in Rousseau's position tends to inspire movements of revolt, while after a cycle of undisciplined democracy or unruly mob rule, the views of Hobbes find many champions.

Of course, by "political opinions" we do not mean the sort of opinion which determines whether a man is a Democrat or Republican. While these parties may once have had significant locations along the Rousseau-Hobbes scale, they now belong, as some wit long ago suggested, on the scale which runs between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Self-interest of one sort or another is far too characteristic of both the major parties in the United States to dignify either one with supposed philosophical connections. Both have a vast institutional

apparatus, staffed by personnel apparently without the slightest interest in theories of human nature.

One reason why it seems to us that no political party, new or old, can for long retain philosophical orientation is that the exigencies of winning elections soon overshadow the basic philosophical issues, which are then forgotten. Genuine candor is virtually impossible in modern politics. An honest man is bound to recognize that there are extraordinary differences among men—moral differences as well as differences in capacity. These differences are without any real explanation, and are politically unmentionable. When someone attempts an oversimplified explanation, and tries to found a political party on it, the final product is a movement like Communism, which maintains that men are wholly made by their environment—the political theory of the communists being that revolutionists must seize power and proceed to build the "correct" environment. The older generation, "conditioned" by the old, "reactionary" environment, must either be liquidated or frightened into conformity to the plans for the new. This is clearly a *mass* theory of human nature, in which the individual counts for little or nothing. In practice, however, the suppressed fact of individuality asserts itself in the extraordinary hero-worship of the "Leader," who plays the part of an extra-cosmic deity and occupies the place of a deity in the minds of the people.

Another political oversimplification results when men devise a program which is almost entirely concentrated upon correcting the abuses of the existing system, without giving serious attention to the more general problems of government and justice. Such political reformers see the evils clearly enough, and are able to imagine what a society without those evils would be like, but they fail, it seems to us, to trace the evils to their origin. We do not suggest that it is "easy" to find the origins of economic and social injustice, but only that the political reformer or revolutionary has a grave

responsibility to think this question through, lest his revolution lead not to justice but to large-scale catastrophe.

This brings us to a letter from a subscriber who is concerned about certain of our observations concerning revolutionary movements:

It has long been on my mind to ask you why you sometimes intimate that socialism is materialistic. It seems to me quite the reverse,—a release from materialistic considerations. Certainly capitalism is worship of the material; socialism makes such worship irrelevant or meaningless. I refer of course to democratic socialism, a cooperative commonwealth, not State "socialism." "Give us this day our daily bread"—was Christ a materialist? "There is no ethics separate from soup, and there is no morality unlinked to bread." The early socialists were altruists, self-sacrificing—they really suffered so much for humanity, not for selfish, material gain. Marx, whatever you may quote of his, gave up his wealth and position for an unpopular cause....

We can certainly agree with this correspondent if his statement be amended to read that socialism has meant a release from materialistic considerations *for some socialists*. And we agree, also, that many of the early socialists were self-sacrificing altruists. The socialist movement in the United States, from the days of Edward Bellamy until the split into the Communist and Socialist Parties after the first World War, contained men of extraordinary character. We may mention two who were prominent enough for biographical material about them to be easily available. The life of Eugene V. Debs is given in Irving Stone's *Stranger in the House*, and Oscar Ameringer has told his own story in *If You Don't Weaken*. A still earlier period in American Socialism is covered by Arthur E. Morgan in his life of Edward Bellamy. These books should be read by any who imagine that American socialism has been led by a few disgruntled or neurotic individuals who were unable to appreciate this land of opportunity. We have frequently referred to such men in previous issues of MANAS, and will continue to refer to them, until there is no longer any possibility of misunderstanding the greatness of their contribution to American life. But this is by no means a blanket endorsement of their political opinions or the

programs which they supported. On the contrary, it seems to us that their lives were often in notable contradiction to certain aspects of their political credo.

Take Debs, for example. Debs was the sort of man who would go hungry in order to feed other people, if they needed food. He cared absolutely nothing for his own material welfare. His life was one long consecration to his fellow human beings. He learned about socialism in jail, where he had been put by the injustice of the Pullman Company and the corruption of the courts. He became a socialist because he became convinced that only a socialist revolution could bring justice to the underprivileged of the world, who are by far the majority of the world's population. Debs' motives, by no stretch of the imagination, could be called "materialistic."

Socialist theory, however, is different. Socialist theory maintains that basic human good is economic in origin. This amounts to saying that the best human beings result from the best economic system, which means that comfortable, well-fed people are bound to turn out to be wise, considerate and useful human beings. This is simply not so. The wisest, most considerate, most useful human beings are very often those who do not get enough to eat; or they are people who give very little attention to their economic welfare. This is not a complaint against the socialist demand for economic justice, but an assertion that economic justice is neither the sole nor the major way to the good society. Economic justice is important, but it is not all-important. That is, the concept of economic justice should not be allowed to replace other factors of the good life which have to do with the *ends* of living. Economics is a *means* to living, not an end. To make an end out of an economic goal is to distort one's philosophy of life. Debs didn't do that, whatever his politics. Debs' philosophy was one of service to his fellows. He didn't require to be well fed. In short, he was better than his philosophy proposed he could be.

What is humanitarian materialism? It is the theory that human beings can be shaped into better men by something other than the individual will to be better men, and the individual intelligence to learn how to become better. It is quite true that a better

material environment may often enlarge human opportunities. But there is nothing in any social environment that can make a man *use* his opportunities. That is why education is a more important factor in human life than the economic environment.

Even education—the best education—often fails to cause a man to use his opportunities. The fact that Judas was a follower of Christ does not indicate the weakness of Christ as a teacher, but only the freedom of human beings to choose whom and what they will serve. Socialism, insofar as it is allowed to become a total philosophy of life—and for most working socialists it is their total philosophy—is one variety of the conditioning theory of human betterment. And conditioning theories implicitly affirm that man is the creature of his environment—affirm it in the face of the fact that great socialist leaders were not themselves the creatures of *their* environment, but men who adopted quite other ideals and purposes.

We should repeat, perhaps, that this criticism of socialism is not to be taken as a criticism of socialists as men, but only of the theory of social progress they have adopted. Nor is the criticism of socialism to be taken as in any sense an approval of what is termed modern "Capitalism." Capitalism shares with socialism the view that the highest human good is to be found in economics, differing only in the view of how that good is to be attained. The sole advantage of good capitalism over bad socialism—so far as we can see—is that under democratic capitalism the traditional civil liberties may still be exercised in some measure, although the time may come when this distinction will be lost. This is another way of saying that capitalism, even if barbarous, is better than a corrupt and autocratic socialism with centralized government and bureaucracy. As to the "democratic" socialism of which our correspondent speaks—the only democratic socialism we can imagine would be some form of syndicalism *without* a powerful central government. This, it seems to us, requires a warless world, and we say, let's get the warless world, first.

But how shall we get a warless world? There have been plans for universal peace, from the days of

Immanuel Kant on. We see no possibility of peace until there is widespread agreement—not among "the nations," which are creatures of their past, but among the individual people who make them up—that the things that men go to war about are not worth the effort or the price, and are not won even when wars are victorious. This means a moral rather than a political revolution. It means new definitions of security, happiness, and the purpose of life.

In short, we have no faith at all in any politics which does not represent a radical change in the popular view of the nature of man. The only existing political view for which we have genuine sympathy—and it is rather *apolitical* in quality than political in any conventional sense—is the anarchist position. The anarchists, for example, believe that they should do the best they can toward living as free men, regardless of the political institutions which surround them. Theirs is a philosophy of the brotherhood of free individuals. They are unable to think that a "country" can be free while its people live endlessly "directed" lives in behalf of a freedom which remains largely a nationalist abstraction. The anarchist view of the individual, however, is not a developed conception—it is not, that is, founded in metaphysics—and its definitions of the good seem to be entirely empirical and intuitive.

Before the anarchist idea of social relationships can prevail, there will have to be a general rediscovery of the reasons for deciding that freedom is the most important thing in human life. And freedom, in this sense, means the inner freedom that rejects all lesser aims than the development of human intelligence, the widening of the area of human experience, and the deepening of the sense of fraternal relationships with the rest of life.

Freedom has been too much defined in terms of its insignificant forms. Often it means the right to be unrestrained in acquisitiveness—to gain rewards to the extent that our sagacity outruns the cleverness of our fellows in piling up wealth. This is the economic individualist version of freedom. It elevates to almost the level of supernatural revelation the doctrine that the man who sits up nights thinking about ways to make money has the right to the money he makes. Suppose he does? With

everybody sitting up nights, the going gets difficult, and because of this competitive struggle—to which many otherwise sane men respond—the making of money becomes a practical obsession. It is this strenuously pursued delusion which creates the inequities of material existence, and thus, in turn, creates the psychological strain of economic insecurity for the great majority who are not notably successful in the competition for economic achievement. Men who resist the drive to economic distinction simply from inherent character and good taste are usually poor, often very poor; likewise the millions whose abilities are in other directions, or who are simply not able to make what we call a "comfortable" living. When these differences in economic status become marked, and the sufferings of the many are contrasted with the luxury of the few, the time is ripe for a radical revolution.

Men who are skillful in acquisition and who concentrate upon applying their skill betray their fellows arrogantly, justifying their supposedly superior position by claiming to be the "elect"—the "elect" of God in a religious society, or the "elect" of the competitive struggle for survival in a society dominated by pseudo-scientific notions concerning evolution. The socialist doctrine counters these claims with the equalitarian dogma, asserting that all men have the same inherent rights, and ought to have also the same economic rights and privileges. The only way to obtain these rights and privileges is for them to be dispensed by an all-powerful and all-possessing authority, which turns out, in practice, to be the State. In default of *voluntary* sharing, some powerful authority must intervene to compel economic justice.

But the men who dream of equal rights and freedom for everyone—they do not foresee the tyranny of the all-powerful State. In his biography of the young Leon Trotsky, Max Eastman tells of the people who made the Bolshevik Revolution:

A wonderful generation of men and women was born to fulfill this revolution in Russia. You may be traveling in any remote part of that country, and you will see some quiet, strong, exquisite face in your omnibus or your railroad car—a middle-aged man with a white, philosophic forehead and soft brown

beard, or an elderly woman with sharply arching eyebrows and a stern motherliness about her mouth, or perhaps a middle-aged man, or a younger woman who is still sensuously beautiful, but carries herself as though she had walked up to a cannon—you will inquire, and you will find out that they are the "old party workers." Reared in the tradition of the Terrorist movement, a stern and sublime heritage of martyr-faith, taught in infancy to love mankind, and to think without sentimentality, and to be masters of themselves, and to admit death into their company, they learned in youth a new thing—to think practically; and they were tempered in the fires of jail and exile. They became almost a noble order, a selected stock of men and women who could be relied upon to be heroic, like a Knight of the Round Table, or the Samurai, but with the patents of their nobility in the future, not the past.

This book of Eastman's was published in 1925. Some ten years later, the purge and execution of the last of that generation began, in the Moscow Trials. These trials, perhaps, fulfilled a just if ruthless retribution for the violence and terrorism of the revolution, for terror and violence reaped the harvest of the Russian Revolution, and not the love of freedom for which the early revolutionists worked and lived.

The only revolutionist of modern times who seems to us to have had a grasp of the actual processes of constructive social change is M. K. Gandhi. Gandhi never for a moment separated economic benefits from inner human growth. He always tried to make these values serve each other. He wanted no well-fed materialists living in an economic paradise, even were it possible to achieve. Gandhi put first things first. The Gandhian way may not be the way for the modern West, but the principles Gandhi embraced and worked to apply are surely the principles for the true revolution, all over the world. And we dare to believe that if his predecessors in the revolutionary spirit could stand in the present, and read the lessons of recent history, they might now be at work, attempting to formulate new applications of his principles, which are not really "his"—but belong to all the world. Thomas Paine, Edward Bellamy, Eugene Debs, and others, we think, would be among them.

## *Letter from MOROCCO*

CASABLANCA.—Under the guise of an unfair election of the Moroccan Chamber of Deputies, five persons were killed and forty wounded here recently in the first of what promises to be a series of uprisings, brought about actually by the problem of Moroccan Independence from France. The riot occurred in Casablanca's Medina and leaves the United Nations in a difficult position when the November sessions open in Paris.

There are those who maintain that this situation is mainly caused by the Egyptian crises and that the Moslem World will shortly be on the march again. Be that as it may, President Auriol's recent visit to the United States could not possibly have been made without considerable thought having been devoted to winning United States approval of the French stand that the Arabs will ruin in four days what it has taken France forty years to build in the way of progress, enlightenment and education, etc., etc. The words are slightly familiar, but the tune still evades us.

The (French) Moroccan Press has been assuring us that the difficulty was settled, with peace again reigning, but during the night there was more shooting and French soldiers have barricaded the streets.

The trouble in Casablanca had been brought about, France maintains, by religious zealots and local agitators. The communists were lucky to get "credit," it being said that the use of children as a screen for the rioters is an old Communist trick. As a matter of fact, several children were injured during the skirmishes, but all these were described as merely arriving home late and caught in the scramble.

The American Edition of the *Maroc Presse* states that it is unwise for foreigners to take sides in an issue that doesn't directly concern them, but word spreads fast that the Moroccans have given the United Nations until November 16 to reach

some kind of decision. Meanwhile, the Arabs keep pouring in from the hills, roadblocks are up, American cars and European pedestrians molested, and several buses have been stoned, along with reported injuries to fourteen policemen.

All in all, Casablanca remains a hotbed of unrest with its vacillating population of one-fourth African and Berber, one-fourth Arab, one-fourth European and one-fourth American. It has been announced that the American Fleet in the Mediterranean has Atomic Forces At its Control to quell any disturbance; as we said, we know the words and the tune grows more familiar all the time, merely by its monotonous repetition.

CORRESPONDENT IN CASABLANCA

## REVIEW COLLECTIVE RESPONSIBILITY

IN March, 1945, Dwight Macdonald printed in *Politics* an essay on war guilt, "The Responsibility of Peoples," which did much to crystallize the unformed speculations of many people on the question of responsibility for the crimes of modern war, such as what went on in the Nazi death camps and concentration camps. If he had done nothing else, and he did much more, Mr. Macdonald would have performed a unique and immeasurably valuable service in outlining in definitive form the problem of collective responsibility. He did not offer any solution to the problem; it was rather an indictment—of us all. Later, in another paper, he presented what seemed to him some of the elements of a solution (see MANAS for Aug. 30, 1950), but "The Responsibility of Peoples" was simply a statement, and a proof, of collective guilt.

It seems a good idea to remind ourselves of this article, or this idea, from time to time. Ours is an age of guilty feelings, and a civilization with guilty feelings, unless it moves toward understanding them, is likely to disintegrate rapidly. There are two ways to overcome guilt feelings. One is to ignore them by committing bigger and better crimes, and justifying them with the rhetoric of some high purpose. The other is to face them and eradicate their cause. But, as Macdonald says:

It is a terrible fact, but it is a fact, that few people have the imagination or the moral sensitivity to get very excited about actions which they don't participate in themselves (and hence about which they feel no personal responsibility). The scale and complexity of modern governmental organization, and the concentration of political power at the top, are such that the vast majority of people are excluded from this participation. How many votes did Roosevelt's refugee policy cost him? What political damage was done by the Churchill-Labor government by its treatment of India, or by last year's Bombay famine? What percentage of the American electorate is deeply concerned about the mass starvation of the

Italians under Allied occupation? As the French say, to ask such questions is to answer them.

Guilt? We have almost all of us forgotten these things. But there will be other things—the kind of thing, for example, that Norman Cousins has reported concerning the Korean war. Some of us may not have heard about that; but if we had, what then? This makes pertinent another of Macdonald's paragraphs:

The common peoples of the world are coming to have less and less control over the policies of "their" governments, while at the same time they are being more and more closely identified with those governments. Or to state it in slightly different terms: as the common man's *moral* responsibility diminishes (assuming agreement that the degree of moral responsibility is in direct proportion to the degree of freedom of choice), his *practical* responsibility increases. Not for many centuries have individuals been at once so powerless to influence what is done by the national collectivities to which they belong, and at the same time so generally held responsible for what is done by those collectivities.

Where can the common peoples look for relief from this intolerable, agonizing contradiction? . . .

But the butcher, the baker, the mechanic, the postman—these things, we may say at once, are over their heads. What can *they* do? This, comes the only possible reply, is the nature of "collective responsibility"—to be in some sense responsible without knowing anything about it. Here, perhaps, is a partial explanation for the general bewilderments of our time, a partial explanation for that "sick" feeling, a sort of psycho-moral *malaise*, that afflicts people everywhere.

But those who *did* know what was going on—what about them? Mr. Macdonald lists a number of things for which our government was in part responsible—the betrayal of the Polish underground, the segregation of Negroes in the military forces, the detention of Japanese Americans during the war, the refusal to accept within our borders more than a trickle of Jewish refugees, leaving them to the Maidanek butchers, the toleration of the ruthless wartime rule of

India—and gives the typical reply of the American liberal:

In any case, *I* can accept no responsibility for such horrors. I and most of the people I know are vigorously opposed to such policies and have made our disapproval constantly felt in the pages of the *Nation* and on the speaker's platform....

Precisely. And the Germans could say the same thing. And if you say, but why didn't you get rid of Hitler if you didn't like his policies, they can say: But you people (in England and America, at least) merely had to vote against your Government to overthrow it, while we risked our necks if we even talked against ours....

The participation of "the people" in national decisions of importance has become increasingly "symbolic" during the past fifty years. Due to a number of factors, among them being the complexity of our technological society and the extremely large populations of modern nations, far-reaching decisions of policy are seldom thrown open to popular debate. Instead, after the decision has been made, a propaganda machine produces ready-made "justifications" for what has been done, and those who object are likely to find themselves condemned as "subversive" or charged with giving aid and comfort to "the enemy." Thus the "democratic way" soon becomes the way which has been chosen by the incumbent statesmen who, because they have no real answer to the claim the people have not been consulted, are usually willing to ignore "smear" tactics used against their critics.

Government, today, is a vastly intricate process which operates mostly by momentum for the past, so far as direction is concerned. Its bureaucratic extensions, due largely to the apparent necessities of war, and the enormous authority that has accrued to the executive branch of government—due, again, to the necessities of war—have practically eliminated the voice of the individual citizen, except in terms of the oversimplified issues of political campaigning. Thus the problem is both moral and technical.

But the technical solution obviously must await the moral solution.

Gerhard Ockel, a German psychotherapist, has written a pamphlet, *Guilt* (published recently by Pendle Hill), which discusses the question of responsibility from the viewpoint of a German who has in his mind and heart the recent crimes of the Nazis. It illustrates the mental processes which all men who disapprove the actions of their government are likely to go through, and carries the discussion forward to complete acceptance of responsibility. While Dr. Ockel's luminous contribution deals only with the psychological reactions which may follow the commission of collective crimes, the analysis applies with equal strength to all the intermediate steps of rationalized injustice which lead finally to a Dachau, a Maideneck, or a Hiroshima. Dr. Ockel writes:

As the eminent psychiatrist, Dr. C. G. Jung, said at the New Swiss Rundschau (Round Table Conference) in 1945, "Within Europe we Swiss feel that we are outside the sinister exhalations of German guilt. But the situation alters as soon as we view it through the eyes of another and more remote continent. What are we to say when a Hindu asks us: 'You Europeans who want to bring Christian culture to us—what did you do at Auschwitz and Buchenwald?' Will it do any good to explain that it did not happen in our own country but a few hundred kilometres to the east in the land of our neighbors? (In Europe everything is so close.) What if a Hindu tries to explain to us that something he is ashamed of did not happen in Travancore but in Hyderabad? We would be likely to say, 'Oh, but India is India!' And so the East says, 'Europe is Europe!'"

The world points to Europe just as Europe singles out Germany as the guilty nation. For it was in Germany and by Germans that the Nazi atrocities were committed. No German can deny this, as no European nor Christian church member can deny that it was in his house that these hideous crimes occurred. And in a broader sense the shadow of guilt has fallen over the entire western world.

Now there are two errors which most of us make when we are accused of a crime of which we are guilty. The first is to make excuses for ourselves. When someone blames the Germans in general for

National Socialist crimes, those who were not party members will try to defend themselves on legal and individualistic grounds. But the more deeply we think and feel the more we have to admit that we shared in that sin through lack of courage. Fear for our jobs, our freedom, our very lives and those of our families kept us from openly opposing wrongs which we knew were shameless.

Then, having reached the point where we admit our guilt, we make the second mistake: we try to include our accusers in our guilt. "You too . . ." we cry. Why did you Swedes keep on selling iron ore to Germany when you must have known it was going into armaments? Why did you British make the Nazis a great loan? Why did you Swiss give the Nazis a billion Swiss francs and keep on sending war materials during the war? Why was there no severing of relations with the government which the whole world knew was made up of criminals and psychopaths? What was the real reason for the official silence, the continuation of polite behavior, the fiction that one was dealing with gentlemen? Was it not fear? We cannot help suspecting that you too were afraid—afraid of losing business, of military retaliation, perhaps of Communism against which our National Socialism seemed such a useful bulwark. Without the loss of a single drop of blood you could have stopped the war, yet you blame us for cowardice because we did not risk our lives!

We could speak the same way to all the civilized peoples of the world, but it would be wrong for us to do so. For though these arguments are logical we are using them as an evasion. We must no longer argue upwards, accusing our accusers; nor downwards, projecting our anger and disgust upon the Nazi leaders. These projections only increase our guilt, creating new disaster in our own and future time.

No, we must face the essential truth. It was in our land and among our people that the concentration camps, the mass murder of Russian prisoners, the slaughter of millions of Jews took place. These crimes were committed by us. Our concern must be with our own guilt, our own change of heart.

Only one thing need be added to this treatise on responsibility, and that is that only a German has the right and privilege to write it. The concern of the rest of us ought to be with the "logical arguments" which this writer refuses to use.

## COMMENTARY NEGATIVE MORALITY

MUCH has been said recently in these pages concerning critical or "negative" morality, meaning the revulsion felt by novelists for the compulsive social neuroses of our time. Almost always, this sort of moral commentary comes in the form of an anguished cry—the cry of the perceptive but impotent man. Negative morality is never attractive, except morbidly, and seldom inspiring, and these qualities make it easy for complacent critics to mourn the absence of the positive spirit and to say that these writers are overcome with their own sense of guilt.

No doubt they are, in some measure. But even articulate despair may be a step in advance of false optimism; or rather, despair may at least look at reality, although able to see only its dark side, whereas complacency sees only illusion, and ephemeral illusion, at that.

Gerhard Ockel (see Review) takes still another step in advance, for he, unlike the depressed and depressing novelists, writes as a living, choosing human being rather than as a trapped "observer." One has the feeling that a psychotherapist with the moral courage displayed by Dr. Ockel does not regard himself as an impotent man. Indeed, there is everywhere work to do for the psychotherapist, and a man who can work is never without power.

There is danger, of course, in saying, simply, "We too, are guilty," as though confession were the same as righting wrongs. Such confession is without dignity, and is not, therefore, a truly human expression. It is only a sinner's expression, paralleled, on the psychological scale, by futile declarations of self-righteousness. So far, the discussion of collective crimes has been limited (with a few exceptions) to expressions of impotence, expressions of guilt, and expressions of self-righteousness.

What are the hopes for positive morality? They are considerable, it seems to us.

Disillusionment is a necessary prerequisite to new inspiration, and new and more enlightened resolve has no clear foundation without confession. Simply to recognize these stages of preparation for a new beginning may be a great encouragement. Exceptional self-consciousness is the almost unique virtue of our time. There have been other great periods of social and moral break-up and decay, but seldom has there been anything like the keen perception present-day writers seem to have of what is going on. We are witnessing, perhaps, important ground-clearing operations that must precede the viable rebirth of the human spirit.

## CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

A LETTER from an inquirer poses an everlasting question: How can one go about building cooperative family morale in a home where there is bickering and boredom?

Here, the first logical step would seem to be to review some of the factors obtaining in modern society which encourage *non-cooperation*. Making such a list should be the easiest part of our task.

Number One—Our society, by popular definition, is an *acquisitive* society. Number Two—Our economy is free-enterprise, each-on-and-for-his-own, by economic and political definition. Number Three—This is a technological society, in which humans are split and kept apart by specialization, often unable to feel any real interest in the final, integrated results of their labors. Number Four—Our population is predominantly urban, remarkably transient, and transient populations seldom establish the organic community relationships which are common in settled populations. Number Five—Something which the sociologists call "family disorganization" has been going on for a long time, due in large part to the various causes already mentioned. Also playing its part in this world-wide "disorganization" phenomenon, and particularly noticeable, is the breakdown of conventional attitudes. "Dutiful" sons and daughters are no longer to be expected—even less so are "nice" boys and girls.

Now, whether or not our own family can be described by all or any of the above, our family is *affected* by psychological pressures from other family units which the description fits. Whether or not our own family is transient, whether or not its earners are excessively specialized, whether or not the members profess to believe in acquisitiveness as the only normal human motive, the plain fact is that the children will be influenced by these trends.

Each one of the trends listed can be correlated with currently popular notions as to what Man himself is, and as to what are to be held desirable goals for human striving. Though we still pay lip service to religious ideals, which are presumably founded on the supposition that man is primarily a "spiritual" being, we have inclined for many centuries toward the belief that man's happiness is most sensibly sought by acquiring and enjoying material goods. This is the "materialism" about which the return-to-religion advocates speak so vaguely and fervently.

The ideal of "cooperation," however, is adversely affected by the presupposition that man's supreme psychological drive is self-interest—the dominant assumption of psychological theorists. The cooperative ideal has had to be superimposed upon the picture of man's selfish, basically animalistic nature, and the resulting double impression is confusing, to say the least. If we want to see the motive of cooperation replace the motive of personal self-interest, we must search for some conception of man which encourages the change and which establishes entirely different goals as the ones worthy of sustained human effort. We shall not find such a conception in orthodox religion, for the reason that *personal* salvation was as much the goal of orthodox theology as of that form of "materialism" which supplanted it.

This, we feel, is the only valid psychological point of departure for someone who wishes to combat the social effects of theories of self-interest or eliminate non-cooperative behavior patterns. The parent who believes that a life of the mind, or, if we prefer, a life of the soul, is the only life worth living, will have to live according to these standards himself. He will have to achieve a disciplined unconcern as to his own material security, so that his children will observe and feel this counter-current to the generally accepted preoccupations of the world. Such a parent cannot let himself dwell, morosely, on his

financial difficulties; if he does, his family sees only one more conquest of man by materialism.

On the positive side, a man may seek that work which he can enjoy for its own sake—work that seems to him worthwhile, creative, and beneficent, entirely apart from its emoluments. Next, he may learn to reject the acquisitive motive as it applies to his family relationships. "Possessiveness" is the common word for the acquisitive motive when it is well-clothed, well-fed, and well-housed. He must cease wanting his wife and children to concentrate on giving *him* the greatest personal satisfaction—he must even stop wanting them to be "cooperative," *and instead, offer them cooperative opportunities concerning which they are allowed a certain latitude to reject.*

We cannot turn back the tide of history and eliminate the crowding of urban populations. But we can do some of our living, at least, in a freer, less specialized atmosphere, by keeping our hands in at the level of basic productivity. If we raise a bit of food for our own use, make a piece of furniture for the house, or learn to repair our own automobile, we are not only helping ourselves, but are also helping our children, who may play some kind of part in the activities.

Families who have followed up a natural desire to own some workable land tend to create agreeable and cooperative relationships; their children seem naturally inclined to take on constructive responsibilities at an early age. Even if we suddenly find ourselves encountering the problem of the questioner, after our children have passed the natural age for introduction to useful work—the natural age is probably somewhere between three and five—we may still be able to regain lost ground by exercising enough patience.

Too much emphasis on the physical aspects of family responsibility can give, of course, a distorted view of the real causes of family failures in cooperation. The best of human beings would feel "cooperative" no matter what the conditions or environment. But there is some value in

indicating the sort of efforts that may be made toward rehabilitating our small familial society, particularly if they are of a nature anyone can emulate. Tilling soil, working on automobiles, and building furniture will not alone make human happiness, but they are some of the things we can do, together with our families, while we are struggling for deeper philosophical perceptions.

## FRONTIERS The New Scientific Spirit

THERE are many reasons for calling special attention to the third group of the William Alanson White Memorial Lectures, as delivered by Julian Huxley. First of all, the series itself is notable, including the opening lectures by Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan in 1940 and the second group by Dr. Brock Chisholm in 1945. The fact that a widely respected psychiatric foundation has given this sort of prominence to comprehensive problems of philosophy and psychology is of itself encouraging, and the choice of subjects and lectures gives further evidence of broadening and deepening perspectives. Julian Huxley is a famous biologist who has progressively expanded his interests through the years. Chosen as director of UNESCO, he served in this capacity until 1948. In adopting the title, "Knowledge, Morality and Destiny," for the Memorial Lectures, Dr. Huxley gives indication that he feels it to be the business of every capable scientist to emerge from the preoccupations of his particular field, with a view to making broad use of the benefits of his extensive training and background.

Dr. Huxley for years maintained the outlook which has been so loosely and interminably called "materialism." In "Knowledge, Morality and Destiny," however, we find him using expressions such as "intuitive comprehension" and "spiritual experience." Dr. Huxley is apparently not altogether a foe to metaphysics and philosophy, nor even to religion. He is nevertheless very particular in his approach to these fields, while openly granting that the exact sciences have never been able to banish "mystery" from the universe. Perceiving that Science has had to pass through its own age of oversimplified dogma, he visualizes the future of scientific investigation as being considerably concerned with "value and purpose." "All the realities which were taken out of nature and put together in the concept of God," writes Dr. Huxley, "can now be put back into the natural process. And there, if their relation to the whole

process is properly grasped, they can exert at least as much and perhaps more force than they did under the old dispensation." Dr. Huxley sees modern science in a new "emergent stage":

Human minds, critical in the light of new knowledge, are no longer able to accept the assumption of a supernatural power of a personal nature, directing or standing behind phenomena, no longer able to accept God as a working hypothesis, still less to accept Christian or any other theology as a scientific theory of human destiny. Laplace told Napoleon that God was no longer a necessary hypothesis in celestial mechanics: today God is becoming an erroneous hypothesis in all aspects of reality, including man's spiritual life.

We may note especially Dr. Huxley's last clause, for here he makes it plain that he accepts the reality of "man's spiritual life," and simply argues that the God concept stands in the way of an intelligent approach to the metaphysical realm. We now let Dr. Huxley speak for himself in summarizing the historical effects of the rejection of the God idea:

The first result of this change in attitude and organization of thought has tended to be negative. Sometimes the baby is thrown out with the bath, the rejection of the idea of a personal God sometimes comes to involve the more or less complete rejection of what are generally termed spiritual values and realities, as in orthodox Marxism, or at least the rejection of their efficacy or relevance to practical affairs, as in laissez-faire economics and in hard-shell rationalism. Very often it has led to the radical separation, both in thought and practice, of the material and practical from the sacred and spiritual, of business and politics from religion and morality. This last is the phase through which many people are passing today in the Western world, and which is characterized by the representatives of orthodoxy and established religious systems as "irreligion" or "loss of faith."

However, with the development of a fully naturalistic outlook the transformation of thought is capable of passing from a negative to a positive phase. Men can cast off the blinkers of dualism. They find that, after all, spiritual experiences, including the sense of the sacred, are an important part of reality, and can be a decisive one. They realize that it was merely the assumptions about the

relations of spiritual experience with the rest of reality which they were unable to accept.

Dr. Huxley's determination to re-think the essential core of religious theory and experience should compel those who have been contemptuous of biologists on the ground that they were "materialistic" to re-think their own evaluations of "the scientific mind." Dr. Huxley, and many others, apparently, are not all-denying materialists, but pro tem agnostics—men who will approach such questions as "Knowledge, Morality and Destiny" only when they are able to do so in self-reliant fashion.

This seems an appropriate place to reproduce another excellent summary of recent transitions in the scientific outlook, taken from W. Macneile Dixon's 1937 Gifford Lectures (published as *The Human Situation*). Dr. Dixon is speaking particularly of the impact of new discoveries and concepts in physics, but the parallel with Huxley's thesis is clear:

Matter in motion, whatever matter may be, is active and energetic either as the result of some previous motion, or from some hidden and to us unknown inner impulse. From which then?

Since the dawn of physical science all movements throughout the universe, it has been held, are the result of previous movements. The universe, in brief, was a clock, wound up once and for all at some unspecified moment in the past, and nothing occurs in the revolutions of its wheels that might not from that moment have been predicted.

That age-long opinion is not, however, the modern doctrine. For it appears that the electrons and protons of which matter is supposed to consist, the centres of electrical energy, are entities whose fluctuations cannot be traced to any previous movements; and where prevision ends, science, by her own confession, has reached its terminus. To the embarrassment of the mechanical philosophers, who think of the world as a rigid and Lifeless system of springs and levers, science has arrived at a point in its history of momentous significance, perhaps the most momentous since its day began. The determinists no longer appeal to science for support.

Many of our most ancient and most desperate problems now present a different countenance, among

them that most teasing conundrum, our oldest friend, the pivot upon which all others turn, the relation of the body to the mind. . . . A new possibility in respect of their relations has emerged. For it is no longer forbidden us to think of nature as a grand society, a hierarchy, and to say that everywhere mind acts not upon dead matter, but at all times directly upon mind.

We wonder if any age has seen such a magnitude of transition in all fields of human thought; and, above all, transition so clearly evaluated and so self-consciously participated in by numerous exceptional minds, of whom Huxley and Dixon are good examples.