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HOME ECONOMICS—EAST AND WEST

THE last *Harijan* (dated Feb. 1**)** to go to press before the death of its editor, M. K. Gandhi, has just arrived in this country by ordinary mail. This issue, like any other, is rich in common-sense discussion of the practical problems of the new nation. One article in particular, although not by Gandhi, is of special interest because it deals with what most Americans regard as the "eccentric" side of Gandhi's movement—the spinning of yarn for hand-woven fabrics known as *khadi.*

The *Harijan* article reports the results of experiments in yarn-production. Figures on hand-spun yarn production mean little to one unacquainted with industrial production, the fact of significance being that in centers where spinning and weaving are going on, a considerable supply of garments is becoming available to people who formerly had "to wait for one precarious piece of mill *sari* or *lungi* [a wrap-around garment for men] month after month." And in a school in Noakhali, every one of the children "is dressed in immaculately white *khadi* uniform of his or her own spinning."

What critics of Gandhi's spinning program have not realized is that comparisons with industrial productive capacity are simply irrelevant. To minimize *khadi* is as silly as condemning American women for knitting in their spare time—sillier, in fact, for spinning and weaving may mean the difference between self-respect and complete economic impotence for countless Indian villagers.

When, in 1931, it was pointed out to Gandhi that his principle of buying no British cloth was increasing the misery of the Lancashire mill workers, he replied:

> You have three million unemployed, but we have nearly three hundred million unemployed for half the year. [Farm workers are idle between agricultural seasons] Your average unemployment dole is seventy shillings. Our average income is seven shillings and six pence a month. . . .
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> Whilst conducting a strike I would not brook the strikers remaining idle for a single day and got them to break stones or carry sand and work in the public streets, asking my own co-workers to join them in that work. Imagine, therefore, what a calamity it must be to have three hundred million unemployed, several million becoming degraded every day for want of employment, . . . if I appear today before the British public in my loin cloth it is because I have come as the sole representative of those half-starved, naked, dumb millions.

A little economic history is here very much to the point. A study of the Indian economy during 1813-1820 led to the conclusion (reported in Dutt's *History of India)* that next to agriculture, hand-weaving and hand-spinning were the great national industries. This did not last. Hungry for markets for the products of English mills, the British effectively liquidated the artisan class in India. As early as 1834, Lord Bentinck, Governor-General of India, reported: "The misery hardly finds a parallel in the history of commerce. The bones of the cotton-weavers are bleaching the plains of India." The liquidation, however, continued. In the middle of the nineteenth century, some 55 per cent of the Indian population was dependent upon agriculture, but before the recent war, this figure had risen to 74 per cent. While the rest of the world industrialized, India was forced to become increasingly agricultural.

It is commonly supposed that India has always been improvident and "backward," the hapless victim of economic disaster. This is untrue. As Lalita Kumarappa has said:

> For centuries before the advent of British rule in India, our villages were isolated but self-sufficient economic units with standing arrangements to satisfy all their requirements. There was a complete division of labor and the village economy was "balanced" owing to a sufficiently large number of villagers

> finding employment in other occupations and crafts. Occasionally, internal peace was disturbed by internecine wars and foreign invasions, and sometimes devastating famines swept the land. But on the whole, the people were busy, contented and happy.

A great change came about with the sudden advent of the Industrial Revolution in the closing years of the eighteenth century. This led to a reversal of the policy of the East India Company, which had originally been established, first to "loot," then to buy, Indian goods for England. But as the factory system developed in England, it became desirable for the East Indian Company to export English goods to India. Indian products were barred from England by legislation, and various measures (duties, etc.) were introduced to prevent trade in Indian goods even in India itself. Within a generation, millions of Indian artisans became unemployed. Many died of starvation, while others were driven into a "compulsory back-to-the-land movement," giving India a disproportionately agricultural population. Even today, despite the introduction of modern manufacturing methods in some parts of India, there is still an enormous disparity between the needs of the people and the industrial capacity of the country.

While the *khadi* program was adopted by Gandhi primarily for the regenerating influence of individual craftsmanship, the program also has an intensely practical side. As its founder wrote in 1920:

> The *Leader* considers that I am putting back the hands of the clock of progress by attempting to replace mill-spun yarn by hand-woven and hand-spun yarn. Now, I am making no such attempt at all. My views are incredibly simple. India requires nearly 13 yards of cloth per head per year. She produces, I believe, less than half the amount. India grows all the cotton she needs. She exports several million bales of cotton to Japan and Lancashire, receives much of it back in manufactured calico, although she is capable of producing all the cloth and all the yarn necessary for supplying her wants by hand-weaving and hand-spinning. India needs to supplement her main occupation, agriculture, with some other employment. Hand-spinning is the only such employment for millions....
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> India cannot live unless her homes become self-supporting. They cannot become so unless they have a supplementary occupation. . . . No one has ever said that spinning can be a means of livelihood except to the very poor. It is intended to restore spinning to its ancient position as a universal industry auxiliary to agriculture and resorted to by agriculturalists during those months of the year when agricultural operations are suspended as a matter of course and cultivators have otherwise little to do.

Americans obsessed by certain obvious economic arguments on behalf of mass production need to realize that for millions of impoverished Indian farmers, it is a question of hand-spun and hand-loomed cloth or no cloth at all. The economics of extreme poverty plus the sufficiency, by the constructive use of idle time, are the valid arguments for the *khadi* program.

The facts about *khadi* are surprising enough to the average westerner, but the facts of what might be regarded as a corresponding program for people in the United States will be so bewildering as to be almost unbelievable. In 1920, about the same time that Gandhi was leading his first non-cooperation movement in India, an American economist named Ralph Borsodi, then in New York, resolved to live no more in the city, and invested all his savings in a small farm within commuting distance of his job. In 1929 he wrote *Flight from the City*, the account of an experiment in living as far-reaching in some respects, as the story of Gandhi's vast enterprise in national rebirth for India. What becomes evident in a reading of *Flight from the City* is the applicability, in principle, of much of Gandhi's "home economics" philosophy to an industrial society as well as to the problems of the millions of ill-clothed Indian agriculturalists.

Borsodi is no visionary with a hidden subsidy to make subsistence farming "work." He is a hard-headed economist with a gift for simplicity, and a man who was determined to live like a human being, even in the twentieth century. Getting back to the soil was for him a means of getting more comfort, more "prosperity," as well as building for himself and his family a life of creative activity and

fundamental productiveness. The important point is that you don't need *much* money to do what Borsodi did. He started with a shoestring, as did others who have followed his example. In time, he took full advantage of the labor-saving devices made possible by the industrial genius of the West, but in the Borsodi household machines are really the servants of human beings, and not symbols of the enslavement of man to the factory system.

The Borsodi program is *not* an all-out return to farming, but a balance between subsistence farming and some other type of employment. The small farmer, as Borsodi points out, has almost no chance in America today. But with intelligence and planning, a family can supplement its income with farm products, raised only for home consumption, substantially below the cost of buying them, and in this way make a modest salary do almost double duty.

Flight from the City was republished last year by the School of Living, Suffern, New York. It is at once a voice of hope for depression-haunted men who want to start planning, now, for the years ahead when jobs may be impossible to find—men who now see no escape from their personal bondage as wage-earners to an increasingly unstable economic system. The human values inherent in the life Mr. Borsodi describes are so important and so obvious that one can only conclude that the American people would long ago have launched scores of independent movements in this direction were it not for an extraordinary provincialism and lack of imagination. Here, at least, is one practical scheme for decentralization that has proved its advantages on a score of counts. It represents, too, a vast field for the industrial development of small units of machinery for home production use—the practical American counterpart of Gandhi's spinning wheel. So far, as Borsodi says, "little real thought has been devoted by our factory-dominated inventors and engineers to the development of household equipment and domestic machinery." He found this especially true of looms for home operation, having to invent a flying shuttle himself, for efficient production.

Mr. Borsodi's experiment grew to include much more than subsistence farming. His book covers problems of nutrition and health, with a devastating analysis of commercial food products. Why, he asks, should American consumers pay for bleached flour, buy a by-product of flour milling—the middlings—for breakfast food, and then pay a third price for bran to overcome the dietary effects of debilitated white flour? The Borsodi family buys wheat, grinds its own whole-wheat flour at a total cost of 1-1/2 cents a pound. In contrast, at the grocery store—

> When we buy wheat after it has been split into three parts by our milling industry, we pay about 2 cents per pound for the white flour; about 13 cents per pound for the middlings in the form of breakfast food, and 20 cents per pound for the bran. [Prices, of course, are higher today.]

Of equal interest are the methods of home education forced on the Borsodis by the inadequate rural schools of the region. (Incidentally, the Borsodi children had ample opportunity to become integral to the economic life of the family, much as suggested recently in "Children and Ourselves.") A careful reading of *Flight from the City* could easily be the means of bringing about a functional revolution in the household life of many an American family. Economic security, increasing self-sufficiency, and an ingenious versatility in the solving of problems and the meeting of needs—these are some of the fundamentals of intelligent home-making which are shown to be attainable by any determined American family. The balanced life described in this book might also become the basis for a balanced society, economically speaking, if enough families had the daring and the imagination to work consciously toward this end.

Letter from ITALY

NAPLES.—Let us remember three dates in the history of Italy. First, 1516, when the first edition of Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* appeared. In this chivalric work the great poet reproached Italy in wonderfully resounding stanzas, comparing her with a drunken woman, the prey of wild and wolfish German and Swiss foot-soldiers. Eleven years later, Rome—*Caput Mundi*—was taken and plundered by Georg von Frundsberg during the Papacy of Clement VII. Finally, let us keep in mind the year 1562, the opening of the Tridentine Council, in which the Roman Church undertook to cajole and enforce, if need be, the return of the riotous sheep to the fold.

This is Italy—a conglomeration of beauty and ugliness, of wealth and misery, of faith and superstition and tolerance. Why this recalling of the past? Now we are in 1948, not 1548. But to speak with justice, we must enter the soul of Italian people, and people are an expression of their history.

Italy has experienced all kinds of policies and governments, but no one of them has satisfied the nation as yet. We can say that in Italy lives the soul of three ages: the ancient world with its materialistic estheticism; the Middle Ages, both mystical and barbarous, and, finally, the modern baroque and romantic epoch.

It may sound ironic, today, to assert that Italy is the heir of the greatness of Rome, but do not judge too quickly. We have ignorance and misery, crimes and swindling to contend with, nor can we say that our present conditions are similar to those existing when Rome first started to build its might.

The Italian is not insensitive to the virtues, but beside the deepest faith you find scepticism toward religion; beside respect for the law, sly circumvention of justice. Nevertheless, because of the Italian's feeling of right, he derides Catonian rigor and mocks at martial pomp. That is why Fascism, in contrast to Hitlerism, could not eradicate common sense in Italy, and there were few Italians who wished that German armies might overcome Western civilization and put an end to liberty.

Evil does not always bring only harm; after the terrible experience of war, we can now say that many changes have occurred in Italian minds; the needs of Italy are now different and no discouragement has penetrated into the soul of this people; rather a great hope moves us all to rebuild our social relations with the whole world. It is from such ideals and purposes that Italy may recover soon after the collapse of her fascist armies. Italy lost the war, but made some of the old Roman virtues revive: sobriety and industry.

There is now opportunity for Italians to feel that a new synthesis is possible for the world, and they will be faithful and humble followers of the new ideal. But the ideal must rest in pure and honest hands. Neither the world, nor Italy, can sustain another cycle of betrayal. If the priest dissembles, if the governor is unjust, if the statesman lies, then will be all-encompassing disaster. We think not to err when we assert that, after the reign of so many false ideas and depraved habits, this is the appropriate time to lay the foundations of brotherhood, to begin a life that knows neither violence nor ignorant hate.

ITALIAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
THE GAMUT OF CIVILIZATION

WE have a theory about the comic books. It will not, we suppose, offer any great comfort to the 250 parents and other citizens who last January endorsed a New York psychiatrist's attack against the comic books as "obscene" glorifications of violence and aggression. These parents, some of them, argued for government censorship of comic books—of which 10,000,000 circulate weekly—asking that the publishers be compelled "to clean up their horrible crime pictures and reading matter to an extent where these books would be fit for our children to read." Our theory, on the contrary, includes the proposition that State authority to set legal limits to the perversion of reading-matter for children would only establish a scale of the "permissible" corruption of childhood values, ending in one more version of the attenuated barbarism that is already typical of many Hollywood films.

Children, like their parents, are going to read what they are interested in. Prohibitions in the home have proved more or less futile, and pious substitutes in the form of "constructive" comics will no more take the place of their blood-and-thunder originals than the offerings of the religious book club will outsell *Forever Amber*. The fact is that the comic book and the murder mystery and the pornographic novel feed the unbridled hunger for sensationalism of millions of children and adults—people, young and old, who know no good reason for reading anything else.

Getting down to our theory, human behavior seems to be limited or affected by three major forces. One of these is the physical and biological environment, governed by what the Darwinians have named the Struggle for Existence. Another is the power of Conscience, sometimes called intuition or the "religious instinct," which, unlike the external laws of nature, presents its demands internally, exercising over men an influence which varies among individuals, depending upon their capacity for moral perception. Finally, there is the cultural structure of human thought about both the physical environment and the inward moral sense, and the attempt of men to relate the two in some unifying scheme of explanation.

This last of the three influences is the power of Civilization. The civilized man conducts his life according to rational values which he has come to acknowledge as representing the meaning of his existence, both physical and moral. The logical justification of those values forms his philosophy, which contains, for him, a greater sense of reality than any of the instinctive drives or emotional compulsions of the physical side of life. Civilization, then, in essence, is measured by the capacity of men to act in good faith on the basis of the ideal principles of conduct which they have adopted. The integrity of the civilization is indicated by the willingness of men to re-examine and test the validity of their principles.

Historically, it may be said that the function of literature, of drama and the arts, has been to provide a general or cultural sense of reality for the ideals of civilization. Together with religion and philosophy, they infuse the "atmosphere" of society with the logic of an inner discipline. All criticism operates from premises established by this cultural acceptance of discipline. An object or a story or a declaration of faith is praised because it adds substance to the intangible realities upon which civilization depends. For ages, the *Brahmacharya* has been honored by the popular imagination in India because he has pledged himself to the pursuit of truth, without reservation. In China, the military general who wishes to be remembered by his people turns to the writing of verse, for the poet embodies much of China's traditional idealism. The picture of Abraham Lincoln, struggling through borrowed books by flickering firelight, downing village bullies, winning the Presidency, and then, in the midst of war, declaring black men as free as white men, is an ideal that gives scope and meaning to the intuitive faith of Americans—it girds and supports their conviction that the things Lincoln did were worth doing.

But when the vital ideas of a civilization are no longer renewed by original expression and illustration, the connection between everyday experience and ideal values gradually becomes merely symbolical. Concepts of discipline fade into shibboleths and art becomes sectarian and exclusive.

Literature itself tends to be subdivided into "classical" and "modern" schools, the one claiming the dead form of idealism, the other its vigor. Then, with the progress of decay, impatient men declare that a crisis has arisen and that the cultural discipline, once creative and voluntary, must now be "inculcated" through insistent propaganda backed by legislative threat. Meanwhile a "popular" literature celebrating the lower limit of human action—the physical and physiological—has sprung up to fill the vacuum in the moral life of the masses. Philosophy and morals become a series of easy compromises with the law of the jungle—pseudo-justifications of the spontaneous impulse and the casual lust. Religion, by reaction, glories in irrationality and prophetic pessimism, decrying man's rational sense as the source of intolerable egotism and urging penitence without understanding.

With this general decline, taste, of course, is abolished. The vocabulary of esthetics loses its meaning in the onrush of the new barbarism. Time-honored customs are drained of moral significance and questions of manners become inconsequential. An act which cannot be immediately and lucidly related to an intuition of meaning is contemptuously discarded. Every old formality is by definition, often in fact, the creaking puppetry of a hypocritical past. Speech loses its refinements, humor its subtlety. The minds of men will no longer accept intellectual and moral orders of abstraction, identifying the real with the "physical," the ideal with the "practical." In short, the gamut of cultural idealism disappears. There is no longer any sense of reality to uphold its structural scale of the fitness of things—its justification of the inner disciplines of civilization.

That is why there is no valid argument, today, against the comic book. With what authority can a member of a civilization which uses atomic bombs to win its wars tell his children that comic books are vulgar and inhumane? The comic books only complete the logic of our cultural disintegration. If we do not like the comic books, we shall have to evolve a civilization capable of producing something better—and put our hearts into it, not just a moralizing fear that our children may grow up to be more neurotic and barbarous than ourselves. We shall have to develop implicit standards of excellence in human behavior that will lead our children to reject the comic books for better reasons than their parents have for fearing their influence. The comic books can be defeated only by recognition that the adventuresome spirit they exploit is not more, but less, than human life affords; that the circumstances of their dramas are artificial and unconnected with any real flight of the imagination; that their plots are stereotyped and stupidly constructed, and their goals unworthy and unreal.

To win out against the comic books, we shall have to question the basic assumptions of our wasting lives and be ready to begin at the beginning, if need be, to build civilization all over again. It will do no good to burst with indignation at the publishers. Our self-righteousness is no better than their cynicism, and less informed, perhaps, if not less sincere. Then there is this last and perhaps disturbing consideration in our theory: that the improbable heroes and villains of the comic books are at least people with some sort of purpose in their lives—they know what they want and are going after it with a refreshing determination. Quite possibly the children of this age can find no clarity of purpose anywhere *except* in the comic books; certainly, they will not find it in the typical modern home. So we end with the idea that the comic book is not a literary problem, that the search for "better reading" for our children, while something to talk about, and a little something to do, is at best the least of the task before us. More important than better books is a better world for our children—a home where the spirit of true adventure resides, where the good, the true and the beautiful are hungered after and sought, where children can find happiness to remember, courage to honor, and a vision to renew.

COMMENTARY
BASIC HUMANITY

THOSE who write the "Letters" from other countries for MANAS are not professional journalists, but friends who live and work in these countries. Several are teachers, one or two are officials, and all have spent their lives in the quarters of the world from which they write. For each of them, contributing to MANAS is a labor undertaken in the spirit of international understanding, thus to be distinguished from conventional journalistic activity. It may be said, therefore, that our foreign correspondents are animated by the same motives as writers for MANAS in the United States, all sharing in the common attempt at foundation thinking.

The ideal, of course, would be to obtain through these letters from other lands a deeper sense of the basic humanity of the people in all countries—and this, not as an abstract sentiment, but in the more intimate terms of daily thought and experience. The difficulty, here, is in being able to conceive of daily life as lived by others whose problems seem quite different at first glance.

But already, although MANAS is in only the fourth month of its existence, it is possible to generalize on the impressions gained from the correspondence from Germany, Austria and Italy. Our writers in these lands, it seems, have quite naturally and independently all expressed a current of reflection that we suspect is virtually omnipresent among the thoughtful men of continental Europe: it is that in their countries—those that have suffered defeat in war—there is a deep sense of obligation to regenerate and rebuild their civilization anew, but that without an equivalent movement toward self-reform in more fortunate lands, the chastened spirit of the vanquished will easily and inevitably turn to bitter cynicism.

This is a simple idea. It is entirely separate from the surface-events of current politics. It will remain a true idea regardless of political expedients. It says simply that men need grounds for trusting one another, if strenuous moral effort is to be required of them.

In every aggregate of men there will be a handful to live by what is inside them, while the great majority give way to outside compulsions. Some day the handful may be able to teach the mass how to draw on that inner strength, but that will take time —ages, perhaps.

Meanwhile, we have to help one another to remain human. We have to risk a little to gain much. We have to do *something* to prove that we believe in this human essence in all men. We have to stop sneering at it, quoting statistics and history against it, lest we, like the masters of the concentration camps, stifle it to death in other men—men we have never seen.

It seems to be a heart-sickening fact that in this epoch, governments, even the best of them, give only lip-service to the idea of the human essence in men. They know and use the mechanics of power, neglecting, increasingly, the living processes of humanity. We hope, as time goes by, that our correspondents in other countries will write increasingly about the processes of humanity, making us know that they are the same everywhere.

For generations, we have absorbed the habit of thinking about people in other countries according to their publicized institutions. We accept the stylized portraits written by journalists who follow instructions from their editors to deal in sensation. We learn of foreign "systems," but almost nothing about other men. Between the headline and the sentimental "human interest" story remains a great abyss of ignorance. With all our systems of communication, there is no meeting of minds among the *peoples* of the world. With all our talk of world federation, there is no sense of world community, no common ground except the abstract idea of human brotherhood, and an abstract idea, though basic, is not enough.

Those who have corresponded with Europeans since the war, in connection with sending packages or for some other reason, have ample reason to know that the hunger for human solidarity exists in us all, and that a larger sense of being results when it is fulfilled. Between individuals, the bond of humanity is so easy to establish, but between nations it seems almost impossible. This is the great contradiction of the age, the negation of every assumption of "national" progress. For it seems that the greater the nation, the more impotent the man.

So let us start, wherever we can, to think and act as men, and not as nations. And, doing what we can, we may find ourselves able to do more and more.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

WE have been attempting, here, to stimulate parental philosophizing by questioning the validity of some of the psychological habits of conventional home-life. Our methods, like all methods, are of course in need of improvement. Yet there seems to us to be a continuous value in the presentation of sharply contrasting ideas. We claim that effective education always considers ideas *in contrast,* for this leads to the extension of free and conscious choice. We have no illusions, we think, about offering the "last word" in educational clarification, and hope only to provide some sort of focus for the independent searching of interested parents and teachers.

Apart from the debate on "parental love"—largely a matter of definitions—which has received attention in the last two installments, the column has apparently stimulated two entirely different kinds of reaction. We do not think, however, that criticism from those who adhere to two opposing schools of thought indicates an attempt on our part to be "middle-of-the-road," chiefly because the criticisms are forceful. This we like. Such vehemence should indicate either (*a*) that we are completely wrong from *anyone's* point of view, or (*b*) that the assertions of "Children and Ourselves," implicit or plainly made, intersect all conventional lines of thought in certain specific instances, and therefore cannot maintain a continuity of agreement with any established position.

The four "assertions" in the column which seem to have stirred up the most response are these: 1. That men, even the small ones we call children, are essentially supra-physical, *i.e.*, "souls." 2. That it is psychologically harmful to teach a child that he is the creation of the Christian Deity—"God." 3. That those "materialistic" or "atheistic" doctrines which suggest that refinements of sensual enjoyment are the chief end of life neither produce the men nor the society that we say we want—*i.e.*, "sensualism" is bad." 4. That the logical way to come to terms with both the sensory and the moral capacities of the human being is to attempt a purposeful synthesis of the two.

The column, it seems, sounds suspiciously religious to Pragmatists and to Progressive educators when we use the word soul. Possibly the reason for this is not because man does not want to have a soul, nor to consider his children to be souls, but because the word is identified with theological usage, and those who reject theology instinctively reject likewise its entire catalogue of terms. Perhaps a simple clarification is called for: We use the word "soul" only because we cannot find a suitable equivalent in the English language. Our usage of soul does not mean that we favor either Christian or any other theology. Of course, among any who speak seriously of "soul," there must be a feeling, similar to our own, that there is something more to man than his body and his environmental conditionings.

Our second quarrel, apparently, is with the religionists, who urge that the very thing we need most to do is to tell children they are "of God," in the belief that the "God" form of transcendentalism is the only alternative to the "sensualism" encouraged by materialistic thought. Here, we can only repeat that we have never been convinced that the teaching of a humanized *personal* God serves to provide man with *any* transcendental ideals; although it undoubtedly does give him a few transcendental fears.

Those of our readers who pursue what they consider to be a scientific rather than a religious train of thought have another quarrel with us on the matter of "sensualism." They feel that we are supporting the notion that there is something about physical existence which must be shunned and that the pleasures of the senses are in themselves degrading and evil. But we have not actually said this. We simply insist that when men concentrate their attention on sensual enjoyment rather than upon the establishment of workable

moral principles, the general result is unmistakably bad. And we do *not* incline towards a belief in any sort of "original sin."

Finally, the "men of religion" are back at us again for our implication that there is nothing essentially wrong in the physical desires of a child, that he need not fear these influences as "sinful," simply needing to know, instead, how to harness them to some goal possessing rational evolutionary significance.

These are the chief criticisms, so far. Religious people feel that we are "tending away from God," and agnostics and atheists do not like our wanderings in the realms of religion because they fear that these encourage reliance upon an other-world authority for the regulation of their lives—and because ideas of being the "chosen people" have been back of so many wars in Western history. To the religious we are unaccountably subversive; to the realists, inexcusably vague and mystical on certain points. It is possible that we also have readers who belong to neither of these major schools, and yet who shake their heads in wonderment at some of our suggestions relative to the rearing of children. These readers may be convinced that we are slightly mad, or at least far too light-hearted toward certain traditions relating to "family." But if some of our more "radical" propositions sound like a new variety of insanity, so also do the current statistics on juvenile delinquency. Any experimental thinking concerned with helping children and parents to recognize mutual needs should be able to hold up its head without shame or shyness. The Greeks were skilled exponents of experimental thinking, and what we have been trying to do, we suppose, may be explained by our preference for the ways of thinking of the Greeks over more modern motions of the mind. No one can think creatively without experimentation, and the failure to find an impulsion for thinking creatively about our relationships with children leads to that curious remoteness within the majority of modern families which makes it difficult for a child to feel that he belongs in any other role than that of a pet.

FRONTIERS
The Garrison State

WHETHER or not President Truman's recent demand for compulsory military training and for "temporary" re-enactment of Selective Service legislation reflects some basic decision in national policy, precipitated by the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia and the portents in Finland, Greece and Italy, or is merely the propitious climax of the long and so far unsuccessful drive to establish peacetime conscription in the United States, the pattern of life implied by these proposals is all too clear. The name given that pattern more than seven years ago by Harold D. Lasswell, psychologist, is "The Garrison State."

Writing on this subject in the *American Journal of Sociology* for January, 1941, Lasswell described the Garrison State as that form of social organization which results when "the specialists on violence are the most powerful group in society." Specialists on violence rise to power when an atmosphere of constant danger gradually converts the popular mind from its previous objectives—trade, prosperity, etc.—to the military ideal of "fighting effectiveness." As Lasswell says: "With the socialization of danger as a permanent characteristic of modern violence the nation becomes one unified technical enterprise."

It would be possible, today, to illustrate certain of the once-speculative predictions of this article with actual policies either favorably considered or adopted in the United States—policies demonstrating the principle of Lasswell's predictions, if not the full-blown practice of military rule. "The Garrison State" should be read side by side with a recent report, *The Militarization of America* (published as a pamphlet by the National Council Against Conscription, 1013 18th St., Washington 6, D.C.), issued by Albert Einstein, Dorothy Canfield Fisher, Arthur E. Morgan, Ray Lyman Wilbur and seventeen others. This pamphlet, among other things, summarizes the plans for industrial and economic mobilization which may be expected to go into immediate effect whenever war is seriously expected.

In Prof. Lasswell's article, the discussion of "morale" will be of particular interest to MANAS readers. While the morale of a self-governing, democratic community is self-generating, arising from the vigor of individual thinking and the spirit of voluntary cooperation, in the Garrison State the psychological unity of the people will depend upon factors external to themselves. Prof. Lasswell delineates the duties of psychologists in a Garrison State with the usual "objectivity"—in fact, as he warms to the task, one wishes for a little less scientific neutrality toward this society wholly absorbed in the technology of violence. "Concerted action," he points out, in a society engaged in the multiple activities of modem technology, "depends upon skilfully guiding the minds of men; hence the enormous importance of symbolic manipulation in modern society." The morale-builders of the Garrison State will be "compelled to consider the entire gamut of problems that arise in living together under modern conditions." First will come "an energetic struggle to incorporate young and old into the destiny and mission of the state." There will be no unemployment:

> In the garrison state there must be work—and the duty to work—for all. Since all work becomes public work, all who do not accept employment flout military discipline. For those who do not fit within the structure of the state there is but one alternative—to obey or die. Compulsion, therefore, is to be expected as a potent instrument for internal control of the garrison state.

The spectacle of compulsory labor gangs in prisons or concentration camps will be useful to identify obedience with virtue, refusal to "serve" with guilt. The familiar democratic institutions of political debate and regular elections will be replaced in the Garrison State by symbolic or "ceremonial" democracy—mass plebiscites will ratify the decisions of the military e1ite. Political

expression will be limited to popular, unanimous demonstrations. State control will affect every phase of community life: "In the garrison state all organized social activity will be governmentalized; hence, the role of independent associations will disappear, with the exception of secret societies (specifically, there will be no organized economic, religious, or cultural life outside the duly constituted agencies of government). "

Fundamentally, the rulers of the Garrison State will rely upon dread of war to maintain their authority. The people, therefore, will be kept in constant fear of external attack. But, as Prof. Lasswell points out, "War scares that fail to culminate in violence eventually lose their value; this is the point at which ruling classes will feel that blood-letting is needed in order to preserve those virtues of sturdy acquiescence in the regime which they so much admire and from which they so greatly benefit." So war, despite every vigilant preparation to "prevent" it, becomes inevitable.

Prof. Lasswell wonders what the "friend of democracy" can do to preserve fragmentary "democratic values," should the garrison state become "unavoidable." Somewhat gloomily, he appeals for "experimental and case data about successful and unsuccessful civilianizing of specialists on violence," and concludes: "If the garrison state is probable, the timing of special research is urgent."

So far, research indicates that all the progress has been in the opposite direction. According to *The Militarization of America,* the industrial mobilization plan developed by the Army and Navy Munitions Board involves registration of every civilian, eligible or not for military service; total conscription for either military or labor battalions, according to individual skills and production needs; strike prevention, enforced by the Army; government control of all important industrial production, transportation, finance, sources of industrial power, all avenues of communication, wages, rents, salaries, currency and credit, banking and securities; strategic dispersal of industry in accordance with military defense plans; and finally, drastic rationing of all necessities, reducing the "requirements of the domestic civilian economy to a minimum." These and other provisions of the industrial moblization plan all seem to be a logical development, in the terms of practical detail, of the integration of industry as a "general staff operation in peacetime" that was advocated by Charles E. Wilson, former Vice-chairman of the War Production Board, in an article in the *Army Ordnance Magazine* for March-April, 1944. The program, Mr. Wilson then said, "must be, once and for all, a *continuing* program, and not the creature of an emergency."

The striking difference between Prof. Lasswell's anticipation of the internal structure of the Garrison State, written in 1941, and the several developments which threaten to make it contemporary fact is the absence of any *published* blueprint dealing with "morale"—the factor which figures so largely in Lasswell's sociological description. While it is true that during the war, psychiatrists called for "pageantry, patriotic displays and festivals" as specifics for strengthening national morale, and that today schemes of peacetime censorship are already in the offing, the program for psychological mobilization is in a fragmentary state when compared to the elaborate plan for industrial control. There are probably two explanations for this. First, the similarity to nazi and fascist ideology of any coherent development of a psychological counterpart to industrial mobilization would be at once apparent. Second, it is reasonably certain that many of those engaged in scheduling the future integration of industry with military organization look upon the problem with an engineer's preoccupation with operational efficiency, and recognize simply, given another war, that there is no other way to provide for effective military defense. The political and psychological implications of the Garrison State they are so effectively planning seem insignificant or remote, compared to the practical requirements

that are before them. The full meaning of Lasswell's phrase—"the enormous importance of symbolic manipulation in modern society"—has not occurred to them at all, and when it does, there will no longer be a choice, but only the perhaps unpleasant necessity of using such means of "thought-control" as psychological science can devise, and when this fails—unequivocal compulsion.

Various comments could be made concerning these unfolding events of the twentieth century, but the one that seems especially pertinent relates to the apparent incapacity of social scientists to imagine the characteristics of a free and peaceful society. Prof. Lasswell found it easy to predict with accuracy not only the dynamics of the Garrison State, but the intimate details of its structure. What about the Open Community? Is it that our scientists have specialized too much in the mechanisms of social failure, and know nothing of the ingredients of social success?

"Data" are wanted on how to civilianize "specialists on violence." A literate man like Prof. Lasswell should be familiar with the great Buddhist reform accomplished by Asoka. And Gandhi, while not a contributor to the *American Journal of Sociology*, did not entirely fail in the civilianizing project he conducted for some forty years. The fact is that Prof. Lasswell once presented a radio program on Gautama Buddha, subjecting that great man to the sort of glib praise and psychological classification which we have come to expect of psychologists on radio programs. Gandhi, too, has probably been "dealt with" in a similar fashion, if not by Prof. Lasswell, by someone equally competent to minimize moral genius to the point where it can be ignored with equanimity. If Prof. Lasswell wants an answer to his question, he will not get it by waiting for "additional research," but by himself joining the ranks of the "terrible meek"—the men who can be imprisoned, assassinated or legally condemned by the Pontius Pilates of every age, but who can never be made to serve the less than human purposes of a Garrison State.