VOLUME VIII, NO. 24
JUNE 15, 1955

REDISCOVERY OF ASIA

THE Western World has twice discovered Eastern thought and civilization—once by conquest and now by revolution. The mood of the first discovery is well illustrated in the writings of William Jones, one of the earliest English orientalists, whose translation of the Laws of Manu—the scriptural basis for the theocratic social order of ancient India—was first published in 1794. In his Preface to this work, Jones appealed to his readers to value his study of Hindu religion because of its usefulness in the colonial administration of the conquered empire. Knowledge of Indian beliefs, he argued, would enable the British to reform the system of jurisprudence established by Manu, and to "accommodate it justly to the improvements of a commercial age."

Anticipating indifference from the British, Jones concluded his apology for interesting himself in a heathen religion so obviously "filled with strange conceits in metaphysics" and "idle superstitions" with these words:

> Whatever opinion in short may be formed of Manu and his laws, in a country happily enlightened by sound philosophy and the only true revelation, it must be remembered, that those laws are actually revered, as the word of the Most High, by nations of great importance to the political and commercial interests of Europe, and particularly by many millions of Hindu subjects, whose well directed industry would add largely to the wealth of Britain, and who ask no more in return than protection for their persons and places of abode, justice in their temporal concerns, indulgence to the prejudices of their own religion, and the benefit of those laws, which they have been taught to believe sacred, and which alone they can possibly comprehend.

It is impossible to think, after a little attention to the life and accomplishments of William Jones, that these sentiments reflected his own motives in a lifework of the translation of ancient Eastern literature and scriptures, but he understood his time and his countrymen well enough to know that the suggestion that a knowledge of Eastern thought might be valuable in itself would seem ridiculous to the latter.

Today, a little over 150 years later, a very different attitude prevails in the West. No modern writer, least of all an eminent scholar, would dream of using a phrase like "the only true revelation" in regard to the Christian religion, and, increasingly, the new interest in Eastern thought represents a hunger for spiritual certainty which is born as much from recognition of the profundity of Indian religion as from rejection of the provincialism of the faiths of Christendom.

The scientific revolution has slowly undermined the stolid Victorian complacency which permitted the national conceit mirrored by William Jones' Preface, while the second world war has brought a new intimacy between East and West under conditions which represent a practical reversal of the political situation which existed when the first discovery of Eastern religion took place. Most of all, Mohandas K. Gandhi has made the West reconsider religious thought. While scholars have continued the work of translation and appreciation throughout this century and a half—bringing a slowly rising tide of infiltration of Eastern thought in the West—Gandhi demonstrated the tremendous moral power implicit in these ancient philosophies. It is not that Gandhi himself stirred men to a course of Eastern studies, but that his career and achievement gave an intangible but very real *validity* to the idea of respect for and interest in Eastern modes of inquiry.

This interest is first of all philosophical. It manifests chiefly for Hinduism and Buddhism. The religion of Islam, while claiming many millions of followers, has not excited the same

attention, probably because Mohammedanism is really more like Christianity than other Eastern faiths. Islam is dogmatic and militant—an Eastern twin of the dogmatic, militant religion of the West. But Hinduism and its great reform movement, Buddhism, are essentially philosophical religions which can be studied without a preliminary commitment of "belief." Buddhism, indeed, declares that uncritical belief is an obstacle to the growth of the individual in knowledge, so that the historic impulse begun by Prince Gotama 2,500 years ago is today receiving continual reinforcement from those who seek religious truth, yet are unwilling to accept any religion at the price of intellectual abdication.

A particularly impressive example of the rediscovery of Eastern thought by Easterners is the new magazine, *Philosophy East and West,* published quarterly by the University of Hawaii, now in its fourth volume. The contributors to this journal include both Eastern and Western scholars, and the extent to which scholars and thinkers of both hemispheres attempt to join hands in the common quest for truth is rather exciting evidence of a new spirit in world thought. It is plain that Western thinkers are gaining the capacity to be as critical of Christian "superstitions" as William Jones was of Hindu "absurdities," and that they are also willing to look behind the exuberant foliage of oriental imagery for the strong trunk of philosophic principle in Eastern religion.

This is far from meaning that there is any surrender on the part of Western thinkers to Eastern "authority." On the contrary, in those for whom an eye to the East is a new, or at least a novel, experience, an air of condescension is sometimes perceptible. For example, in the April 1954 number of *Philosophy East and West,* Van Meter Ames, professor of philosophy at the University of Cincinnati, compares Zen Buddhism with modern Pragmatism, exhibiting almost a flair for missing the point of Zen, while implying that Pragmatism has nearly everything that Zen ever had, plus the added blessings of modern science. But Ames concedes this interest in Zen:

> The engaging thing about Zen to a Westerner is its promise of a path that may be found and followed by the individual apart from or in addition to the vast enterprise of science which no individual can master or take over alone: a path out of the worries of his little limited self. The Zen path seems accessible and available to the ordinary person if he can make an extraordinary effort. It short-cuts the complexities of science while being naturalistic, it is sober and practical while poetic and exciting, it is even mystical without being spooky. The Zen road without much reading appeals to one swamped with reading. Yet, its texts have charm. They can be read for inspiration though rejected as texts for the quest each man must undertake for himself. . . . the fascination of the philosophy of Ch'an or Zen lies in its being both transcendental and pragmatic, unthinkable as such a combination would be to a gross materialist or to a pure supernaturalist: this living of life for all it is worth and finding it worth infinitely more than people suppose possible on the natural level—when they are not enlightened by what may as well be called *prajna*-intuition. . . .
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> In our desperate need to find our path we may learn from Zen's enigmatic and pragmatic masters. We are coming to see that we cannot do without either science or kindness, that with them, we might do much. Zen teaches the joy and the joke of doing what needs to be done, shows how simple and good life could be if emancipated. Perhaps we could all have a Zen life if Buddhist compassion were made more pragmatic through science and democracy. . . . With Dewey we can overcome the dualism of sacred and secular, through his "intense conception of a union of ideal ends with actual conditions." Then, as Rinzai [an ancient Zen-master] said, nothing would be needed but to go on with our life as we find it: with "no hankering after Buddhahood, not the remotest thought of it."

Mr. Ames' effort to "understand" Zen Buddhism is, we fear, an attempt to re-tailor it to conform to Western notions of the good and the true. Manifestly, what he wants of both Pragmatism and Zen is help on the way to the Good Life, and the Good Life seems to be pretty much what humanitarian idealists of the West say it is—a kind of cultural-material Utopia. This is not at all what the devotees of Zen are after, and

even an irenical attempt to "unite" East and West in philosophy should not be permitted to hide this fact. Zen Buddhists—all Buddhists—are after enlightenment. When Rinzai speaks with praise of being able to live with "no hankering after Buddhahood," he does not mean to suggest that the fully enlightened man is not a Buddha. Enlightenment is the Buddha condition. Rinzai wants it understood that the hankering—the "ambition"—to be a Buddha is what is wrong, for this is a desire for status, an "attachment" which prevents the realization of true freedom.

Ames' amiable flirtation with Zen is very much like C. Wright Mills' attraction to Socrates. "Not the epistemology of," said Mills, "but the therapy resulting from, the Socratic maxim is perfectly sound," which is to say, "Never mind the Socratic souls and dæmons, let us have only the Socratic common sense and persistent questioning." So, when it comes to Zen, the Westerner wants its practical genius and devotion to the immediate truth of life, without having to consider the super-physical intentions of Eastern philosophy.

We pause here for a moment of history. Gotama Buddha, it should be remembered, was a reformer of Hinduism. He rejected none of the inspiration of Hindu scriptures, nor even, so far as we know, any of its doctrines. He added nothing to India's ancestral teachings except the majesty of his personal example and the emphasis of immediate ethical application. He *became* what the ancient Hindu books spoke of in ideal terms. It is from his practice and warnings that the Zen Buddhists obtain their disdain for metaphysics:

> OM AMITAYA! measure not with words
> Th' Immeasurable; nor sink the string of thought
> Into the Eathomless. Who asks doth err,
> Who answers, errs. Say naught !

If Hindus had lost themselves in metaphysical ritual, he would show that the true way is not discoverable in words. But Buddha certainly preserved and enshrined in his heart the idea that *there is a Way,* and that men, if they want to be free of their sufferings, must learn to pursue it. He did not deny the reality of the way, but endeavored to make sure that no one would conclude from what he taught that the Way and "teachings" about the Way are the same thing. Gaining the way is a matter of inward realization. Definitions and rules and directions may help, but they may also become traps and delusions. Likewise the routine "devotions" of religious orthodoxy:

> Pray not! the Darkness will not brighten! Ask
> Nought from the Silence, for it cannot speak!
> Vex not your mournful minds with pious pains!
> Ah! Brothers, Sisters! seek
>
> Nought from the helpless gods by gift and hymn,
> Nor bribe with blood, nor feed with fruit and cakes;
> Within yourselves deliverance must be sought;
> Each man his prison makes.

In the history of every great religion, a time comes when the "adventitious aids," the guide-books and compromises in the interest of the weak have to be thrown away, and human aspiration directed once again to the primary truths of life. When religious bureaucracy and its pious appurtenances assume a greater importance than the *search* they represent, or are allowed to appear as religious ends rather than religious means, a revolution is in order. Buddha led such a revolution, and the Zen Buddhists are faithful adherents of the iconoclastic aspect of his reform.

Zen is traced by historians to an Indian Arhat of the sixth century A.D., who was named "Bodhidharma" by his teacher, "to mark his understanding (bodhi) of the Law (dharma) of Buddha." In *The Spirit of Zen,* Alan W. Watts has this to say of the origin of Zen:

> Zen was first introduced into China by Bodhidharma in A.D. 527. Practically nothing is known of its history in India, and it is probable that Bodhidharma himself only suggested it to the Chinese who evolved it into its present unique form. A story is told that Bodhidharma was brought before the

Emperor Wu, who was anxious to see this great sage and to obtain from him some approval of his own devout works. Therefore he asked Bodhidharma:

"We have built temples, copied holy scriptures, ordered monks and nuns to be converted. Is there any merit, Reverend Sir, in our conduct?"

"No merit at all."

The Emperor, somewhat taken aback, thought that such an answer was upsetting the whole teaching, and inquired again:

"What, then, is the holy truth, the first principle?"

"That principle exists in everything. There is nothing

"Who, then, are you to stand before me?"

"I know not, your majesty."

The exemplars of Zen are like the Existentialists in their disrespect for all pomp and pretense, and in their contempt for status. But unlike the Existentialists, who cherish their philosophy of despair in what seems a mood of cultural melancholia, the Zen Buddhists declare the reality of a truth beyond conceptualization. Their war on concepts, on all "names and forms," is more than a nihilist's gesture of defiance; it is a "shock" technique of instruction of disciples. The Zen teacher is intent upon a single point—to free the inquirer from the delusion that knowledge is contained in words. Dr. Daisetz T. Suzuki, professor of Buddhist philosophy at Otani University, Kyoto, writes of the Zen method in instruction in a recent volume, *Studies in Zen* (Philosophical Library, 1955, $4.75):

The teacher may request the pupil to present his views on such cases as these: "What is your original face which you had even before you were born?" Or "The object of Buddhist discipline is to have an insight into the nature of mind, and thus to attain Buddhahood. Where, now, do you locate your mind?" Or "All things are said to return to One. Where, then, is the ultimate home of this One?" Or "When an ancient master of Zen was asked what was the essence of Buddhism, he said: 'The cypress tree in the garden.' What is the signification of this?"

When these questions are given, the pupil will try his best to solve them. He may think that the "original face" means the ultimate reason of experience, or that the "One to which all things return" is the absolute ground of things, and has nowhere else to turn to but itself. According to these views, he will approach the teacher, displaying before him all his precious stock of philosophical and religious knowledge. But such demonstrations will call forth but a cold reception at the hand of the Zen teacher, though they might be in accord with a conventional interpretation of Buddhist theology. For Zen is not out to demonstrate or to interpret or to discuss but to present the fact of faith as it is. Those who are generally addicted to talking on things which they have never experienced personally, who have taken symbols for things and intellectual representations for realities, will for the first time in their lives realize, when they are so bluntly treated by Zen teachers, how superficial and confused their minds were, and how unsteady was the foundation of their faith.

Dr. Suzuki is probably the most eminent living exponent of Zen, although, if we were to ask him if this is so, he would doubtless reply after the manner of Bodhidharma to the Emperor Wu, saying "How can there be 'eminence' for what is wholly unseen? It does not matter!" At any rate, he has ample difficulty in making clear to his Western readers what he is getting at in writing about Zen, chiefly for the reason that what is important about Zen is what cannot be written about at all. As he says in a somewhat mournful article in *Philosophy East and West* (July, 1954), in which he attempts a reply to Dr. Ames: "As long as conceptualization goes on, there will be no discovery of the real self."

One point of all this discussion is that Zen Buddhism does not seem to be the best form of Eastern philosophy for Westerners to try to absorb, simply because it can be so easily trivialized by those who are ignorant of the tremendous scope of Eastern metaphysics and psychology, which Zen assumes without saying very much about. For all its contempt for verbal philosophy, Zen is still a *gnostic* system. It maintains that truth exists, and that it may be known. The Zen contempt is not for the idea of

ultimate truth or knowledge, but for the conceits and delusions which hide truth from view. Truth, according to Zen, is the heart of self-conscious *being*, and not a "relation" between subject (the knower) and object (the known).

Western systems of skepticism have the same insistence as Zen upon the practical and immediate realities of existence: the pragmatist also wishes to draw the individual down from the clouds of metaphysical speculation; but the analogy is misleading, since the philosophical assumptions of Zen are very different from the philosophical assumptions (if any) of pragmatism. Ames, for example, complains:

> Americans singing about "the old oaken bucket" seem truer to Zen than Suzuki when he puts the bucket in a "world of defilements," meaning the world of "the practical affairs of daily life where utilitarianism rules."

This comment is wide of the mark, whatever the homely charms of the American song. Zen is in the Buddhist tradition of a scheme of human evolution which ends in perfect self-knowledge. We may think that "world of defilements" is pretty strong language, as, no doubt, it is, but it is no stronger than what Western critics of "acquisitiveness" have said about the commercialism of modern civilization. Buddhist thought endeavors to put first things first, as authentic religious reflection ought to do.

A pluralist in philosophy—and pragmatists are certainly that—can hardly comprehend the meaning of Zen iconoclasm, which is reaching after the infinite that lies within—that cannot be "reached after," but simply *is*. This sounds like "nothing" to the pragmatist, and here, doubtless, the teachers of Zen would wisely agree.

REVIEW

MAN VERSUS THE MASS

INDIVIDUALISM RECONSIDERED, by America's most provocative popular sociologist, David Riesman, is clearly a natural for MANAS review. We have been much concerned, here, with the emergence of "philosophic man"—philosophic, in this instance, implying the man who is determined to define his own values as he goes along, in all fields of human activity. Since a great deal of evidence presently exists to support the judgment that ours is "the age of conformity" (to borrow Allen Valentine's title), the philosopher, of necessity an "individualist," is bound to feel out of step with most of his contemporaries. Hence the importance of Riesman's essays on "individualism versus groupiness"; his advocacy of "autonomy" is in welcome opposition to the campaign for "adjustment" implicit in so much social writing of the past.

Riesman is far from stuffy. He has been known to ask students in his University of Chicago classes why some of them don't cut his lectures more often—in a forthright attempt to make them question the role of conformity in their own young lives. He suspects that youths who are too afraid of failure or nonconformism to find something more important than class attendance, at least once in a while, are not apt to be original enough to learn anything about anything. As a reviewer in the *Reporter* (Dec. 16) remarked, "Professor Riesman would say that the only weapon we have (against oblivion in conformity) is an active mind, irreverent to received ideas and all intellectual handouts. Thus, he will remind mass man of the individual inside him, and he will beg the individual not to be snobbish about his corporate self."

Riesman, like Lyman Bryson, has been appalled by the popular assumption that America stands for a framework of settled values upon which all can and should agree. Both Bryson and Riesman feel that democratic society fails precisely when there is *too much* agreement in the matter of values.

Since it is our wish to give Riesman's book the best possible send-off, we have selected extensive quotations from the chapter entitled "A Philosophy for 'Minority' Living." Here the reader may enjoy Riesman's coinage of unusual terms, as well as his subtle psychological argument

> The "nerve of failure" is the courage to face aloneness and the possibility of defeat in one's personal life or one's work without being morally destroyed. It is, in a larger sense, simply the nerve to be oneself when that self is not approved of by the dominant ethic of a society.
>
> In America, "success" is central; we are provided with a catalogue of what is success and what is failure, and nothing matters except achieving the first and avoiding the second. Whoever accepts the prevailing social standards of our times is not alone, not morally isolated; even if he is a "failure" he remains related, if only in fantasy, to the dominant theme. Such a person has no more need of the "nerve of failure" than a gambler who has had a bad day at roulette: for him life is centered on the wheel, and he remains related, though anxious and miserable, so long as he can go on watching the others who are still in the game. The "nerve of failure" is needed only for really heretical conduct: When one renounces even the company of misery and takes the greater risk of isolation—that is, the risk of never rejoining the company.
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> The "nerve of failure" is akin to the traditional virtue of "courage in defeat," praised in a number of ethical systems. But it differs in this sense: it comes into play before defeat is actual, when it is only a possibility. To be sure, one may have a good deal of the "nerve to fail" and still be cowardly in extreme situations. But, on the other hand, while many can find courage in defeat only when others are defeated too, those endowed with the "nerve of failure" have the capacity to go it alone.
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> A man may maintain a lonely course by other means. He may not realize that he is heretical—Rousseau, the "primitive" painter, seems to have thought he was painting just like everybody else. He may be more or less crazy, constructing an elaborate system to justify himself—as did Fourier and Comte. He may attach himself to nature and to imagined

> transcendental forces—as did William Blake. He may overestimate his personal influence and the extent to which others are listening to what seems to him self-evident and reasonable—as did Robert Owen, the English manufacturer and utopian socialist, whose later life was on the surface one long series of failures. He may convince himself that history, or science, is inevitably on his side—as did Karl Marx. He may protect himself from aloneness by remaining conventional in many spheres—as Darwin did. He may surround himself with a small body of ardent disciples and limit his contact with contemporaries—this also was Comte's way. Only very rarely will an individual with enough originality to disturb society be able, without such adventitious aids, to face his situation realistically and yet be unshaken by what the majority considers "failure."

One is apt to react in contradictory ways to such a discourse. First, the reader is enjoined to recognize that very few of those who claim to be individualists—especially those who like to think of themselves as utterly independent—are actually "autonomous" in the full sense of the word. Men like Gandhi, Schweitzer—perhaps Nehru—are examples in the public eye. But Riesman endeavors to make it clear that a man does not need public acclaim in order to be a success at independent thinking. While eminence may be difficult for a creative and original thinker, eminence is not something a balanced man should be interested in, in the first place. It may come, but if it does, this will be the result of favorable societal or political circumstances. The independent man ought not to seek such favorable circumstances, but should, instead, be ready to accept them with equanimity, and without egotism, should they develop. In a sense, "eminence" is often an accident of history, while the independent judgment and intellectual integrity are no accidents, but within reach of every person who makes sufficient effort and who rejects the deadening influence of mass-standards.

Riesman is particularly unimpressed by church and civic leaders who bewail the present "loss of values" in America. He writes: "those who bewail the loss of values seem disingenuously to bewail the loss—that is, the replacement—of their own values; and in many cases I believe this applies quite literally: for many of the men whom I find to be most hysterical about the loss of values appear to me to lack confidence in their own ongoing processes of valuation; they do not enjoy making choices, and their effort to escape from freedom is writ larger than life in their overly subjective appraisal of the society as a whole."

Following is a succinct commentary on Utopianism, Communism, Socialism, etc.:

> I suggest that the utopian tradition has gone sour because of collectivist, especially Communist, abuse, and gone stale (especially in America) because so many of our earlier hopes for equality and abundance have been attained—leaving us either to try to put meaning back into outdated struggles or to find a political one. Many writers and statesmen have pointed out that America now has world responsibilities for the less fortunately situated countries, but it also needs pointing out that we have responsibilities to ourselves, to improve the quality of our own daily life, even while we concern ourselves with the miseries of the less fortunate parts of the globe. Otherwise, all we shall succeed in doing is to level down. Similar issues, of course, face the Socialists in Britain and in Scandinavia, for whom the old-time Fabian and social-democratic slogans have so patently worn thin.

Admirers of Erich Fromm will be especially interested in Riesman's chapter, "Freud, Religion, and Science." He pays particular attention to Fromm's work, *Psychoanalysis and Religion,* sharing the analyst's criticism of the "original sin" conception of religion. The following is a good summary of Fromm's position:

> In two books, *Man for Himself* and *Psychoanalysis and Religion,* Erich Fromm has made an effort to grapple with these moral problems as they present themselves in analysis, within an evaluative framework that finds much in common with what he terms "humanistic" religion. He takes religion much more seriously as a source of illumination for psychotherapy than most psychoanalysts (including Jung) have hitherto done. At the same time, he employs the Freudian methods to understand the hold over men of both humanistic and "authoritarian" religion, and its value for them. Thus he regards himself, not incorrectly, as working in the tradition of

> Freud, but (like John Dewey) he regards certain elevated ethical attitudes and cosmologies as truly religious, which Freud, when he adverted to them at all, regarded as too highbrow to be given the name of religion. Fromm represents a number of contemporary analysts who are preoccupied with theological questions, not simply as Freud was—i.e., as "evidence" of human weakness and as sources of historical data—but on their merits and in their own terms.

"Preoccupation with theological questions" is, truly, a legitimate part of the work of analyzing man's bondage to authority. New analytic insights free the human mind—or at least a few human minds—from such bondage; in the last analysis, as Riesman puts it, "religious and scientific advances must usually occur as relatively powerless movements within a precarious setting." To challenge contemporary opinions necessitates questioning a number of current theological notions, which is one reason why a psychologist like Fromm, a scientist like Einstein, and a sociologist like Riesman, challenge "God"—when the term is used as a symbol of authority.

COMMENTARY
EASTERN PSYCHOLOGY

THIS week's lead article, we are informed, started out as a review of Dr. Suzuki's latest book, *Studies in Zen,* but turned out to be a lengthy discussion of the passage of Eastern philosophical influence Westward, with very little notice of Dr. Suzuki's excellent volume. This book is a collection of essays on Zen, ranging from work done as early as 1906 to recent articles published within the past two or three years. The editor, Christmas Humphreys, president of the London Buddhist Society, mentions that Dr. Suzuki was born in 1869, which makes him eighty-six years old, but no one will find any lack of vigor in his later articles.

These discussions of Zen are of a sort which convey the mood and spirit of this Buddhist sect. We take from a 1906 paper a portion of a long quotation from the Rev. Soyen Shaku, a Buddhist abbot who is cited by Dr. Suzuki for an account of the meaning of *Dhyana.* This passage illustrates the general level of the book and the quality of its inquiry:

> *Dhyana* literally means, in Sanskrit, pacification, equilibration, or tranquillization, but as a religious discipline it is rather self-examination or introspection. . . . it is the habit of withtrawing occasionally from the turbulence of worldliness and of devoting some time to a quiet inspection of one's own consciousness. When this habit is thoroughly established, a man can keep serenity of mind and cheerfulness of disposition, even in the midst of his whirl-wind-like course of daily life. . . . it discovers in us the presence of a spiritual faculty which bridges the chasm between the finite and the infinite; and it finally delivers us from the bondage and torture of ignorance, safely leading us to the other shore of Nirvana.

This shows both the practical value and the metaphysical implications of Zen Buddhism. A further passage offers a pertinent comparison between East and West:

> *Dhyana* is physiologically the accumulation of nervous energy; . . . In all departments of Oriental culture a strong emphasis is placed upon the necessity of preserving the latent nervous energy, and of keeping the source of spiritual strength well fed and nourished. Young minds are trained to store up within, and not to make any wasteful display of their prowess and knowledge and virtue. . . . The Occidentals, as far as I can judge, seem to be fond of making a full display of their possessions with the frankness of a child; and they are prone to a strenuous and dissipating life, which will soon drain all the nervous force at their command. They seem not to keep anything in reserve which they can make use of later on at their leisure. . . .

There is more in this vein, but the foregoing, whatever its philosophical value, is certainly a suggestive comment on Western methods of education and child-rearing. Here is a view of the resources of youth of which modern Western educational methods take little or no account.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

EDITORS, "Children . . . and Ourselves":

One of Ed Murrow's recent television presentations focussed upon the problem of book censorship in school libraries, and made me begin to wonder about the origin of the assumption that error is contagious or infectious. This notion seems to be very compelling to some people. Why?

This particular censorship campaign started with a woman in the San Francisco area. She was interviewed on the program, and willingly showed a number of copies of books she considered subversive and a long list of writers she thought subversive. The day after the program I could have named for you a number of these titles and authors, but the only one I now remember clearly is Dorothy Canfield Fisher. However, a large number of the authors were standard, popular American writers (I think one was Sinclair Lewis) and I found it hard to believe that many people would take the woman's charges seriously. If she is correct, then many people have unwittingly been reading Communist propaganda for many years!

Three school librarians were interviewed on the program. They would not allow themselves to be shown directly—their silhouettes were thrown on a screen and shown as they talked. These ladies made it clear that responsibility for determining which books should be left on library shelves and which ones should be removed had been abandoned to them, so to speak. That is, their superiors were leaving to them the whole responsibility for dealing with the self-appointed censors, and were giving them no backing of any kind.

Two male administrators of the libraries were also interviewed. They acknowledged that the individual librarians had been left to decide for themselves which books to keep on the shelves and which to remove. When asked if librarians might be penalized for "mistakes" they might make in the selection of books, these administrators made replies which were so rhetorical, general, and indirect as to be meaningless. Again I have forgotten names.

In his concluding summary, Murrow remarked that, under the conditions described on the program, a number of books had "mysteriously" disappeared from the shelves of many school libraries. As he expressed it, "Some of our books are missing."

Of course, it is easy enough to argue that those who favor censorship don't have much faith in the ability of people to think for themselves. If a man had no critical ability at all no background of ideas that he could use for evaluation, no reasoning power, he *might* be susceptible to any new idea he encountered, true or false. But the sponsor of censorship on the program expressed a faith in the reasoning power of others *present* and showed considerable of it herself, I thought. *Why* was she wholly committed to the need for censorship?

There's nothing infectious about ideas, so far as reasoning people are concerned, but there is something infectious in some partisan presentations of some ideas—emotion. Anyone who has been a member of a football crowd or other mob, or who has heard an emotionally effective speech, or even a very effective sales talk, will agree that emotion can be contagious. Maybe the people who think they fear ideas are actually afraid of the emotional accompaniment of some presentations of ideas. Possibly they are expressing a subconscious knowledge of a weakness of their own—an abnormal susceptibility. Could they be demonstrating what the psychiatrists call projection—the ascription of their own weakness to everyone else?

This comment on the Murrow program seems of considerable value. In the first place, it reminds us that not all of those who believe in censorship are childish demagogues. Even "nice people," in other words, may sincerely believe that we need more censorship than we have had before, and that one reason for our present political confusions is that we haven't previously had enough. The paradox suggested by our correspondent—that the woman sponsoring extensive censorship of school library material in San Francisco talked like a "reasonable" woman while actually in the throes of discussion—is perhaps partially explained by the reflection that those who feel that censorship *is* unnecessary believe strongly that correct reasoning *can be taught.* The opposite assumption—that only some people can reason fairly and wisely, while others cannot—seems, on the other hand, at least at first glance, to be borne out by daily experience. From observation of "unreasoning" people—who apparently exist in considerable numbers—it is easy to assume that the ability to think with mature deliberation is a sort of "God-given" capacity—not too well-distributed. One may argue further that children and others of limited reasoning ability or experience need to

be protected against the conspiracy of scheming intellectuals.

It is difficult to state with confidence that there is no truth in this point of view. Children, for example, do need protection from the worst examples of "crime comics"; Dr. Frederic Wertham has made this conclusion inescapable. However, if you believe that every human being is susceptible to philosophic warning, if everyone, no matter what his IQ, is at least a *potential* reasoner, then you may argue that censorship should never be considered as more than a temporary restraint to be used only until education is able to bring latent evaluative powers into focus.

Robert Hutchins does not believe in censorship because he has a very clear idea of how a philosophic or evaluative education can proceed. In other words, he has faith in the capacity of men to teach and to learn philosophy. The philosopher, or even one who has but an elementary idea of what evaluative thinking means, will respond to any conception or claim he regards as abhorrent in a constructive manner—he wants to step right up to the idea or the contention and wrangle with it, in the open, and in the presence of all interested. But if he has no such faith in his own capacity, or in the *potential* capacity of those who may be listening, he will wish to vanquish the idea or claim by some other means than that of reason.

So it all comes back to one's theory of education, and to the unfortunate predisposition of most Westerners to accept a "conditioning" theory in respect to the process of learning. Mediaeval pedagogy was strictly a "conditioning" system—a little "reasoning" being allowed under the proper conditions. Modern psychology, at least until quite recently, has also leaned heavily in the same direction so that many intelligent people have accepted the first premise of the "conditioning and adjustment" point of view. Anyone who believes this—such as the woman on Murrow's program—may actually live more philosophically than her views will allow, yet, when thinking of others, will demand "protection" for the outlook that she has herself been conditioned to accept.

In the defense of such would-be censors, it might be added that, even if we do hold faith in the ultimate success of truly philosophical education, we must still face the fact that very few of our teachers receive the sort of training that will enable them to help adolescents evaluate much of anything. For one thing, philosophy has to be made attractive to the young before evaluation will grow, as it should, spontaneously. Yet whatever stretches the imagination, whatever makes the young feel a welcome invitation to think for themselves, will help toward this end.

For our part we see—or think we see—a distinction between censoring ideas and proposals seriously voiced and censoring material which is purely emotional in appeal. Perhaps Plato had something like this in mind when he argued for the censorship of some of the poets, but stood for free and hot political and philosophical debate. Strangely enough, few who criticize Plato because of his proposal to control the poets pause to note that nearly all of Plato's writing revolves around the admired character of Socrates, and Socrates is clearly given this position by Plato because he stands as a symbol for unconfined Reason.

The best sort of censorship would be that enforced against any remarks, either verbal or written, which express personal hostility. After all, the psychologists point out that the man who evidences hostility is incapable of stating his case fairly, and, on this ground, any type of hate campaign, and any appeal to the allied emotion of fear, can hardly be calculated to do anyone any good. On this ground, we would have denied the right of public expression to a good many communists—unless and until they learned to make their appeal to reason rather than to hostility—but we would also have cut down to size a number of staunch "Americanism" politicians, including Senator McCarthy. You don't have to hate anyone to argue vehemently against his contentions, and this, we think, is a point of view advocates of censorship should first demonstrate by the *grounds* on which they seek to restrain public utterance. Even the crime comics could be neatly fitted under the heading suggested, for the appeal there is to pictorial violence—thus encouraging some already distorted emotions of the young.

FRONTIERS
Military Necessity

A GERMAN correspondent living in the West German section of Berlin has sent us a copy of a letter he addressed to General Schuyler, commander of the NATO forces in Europe. Since we had heard nothing of the "Schuyler Plan," we thought it likely that most of our readers were similarly ignorant of the program of practically indiscriminate destruction involved in atomic war. We print this letter, therefore, not to suggest that any especial horror is connected with the plans of the NATO forces, but to indicate what are likely to be the "routine" operations of any and all wars to come.

When we "vote" for war, this is what we are involving ourselves and others in. The letter follows.

* * *

Mr. Cortlandt Schuyler
U.S. Army
Chief of staff NATO Forces, Europe

Dear Sir: Recently your name as Chief of Staff of the NATO Forces for Europe has been in the press over and over again. Considerable unrest has been caused by utterances attributed to you.

I write to you because I think it is only fair to call your attention to these facts directly.

The papers report about a "Schuyler Plan." According to this, an unlimited number of atomic bombs, A or H or whatever, will be dropped in case of war on part of this country. The region of Germany between the actual demarcation line and the Rhine may become a battlefield, for some 36 guns, each able to fire shells with a destructive power equal to that of the Hiroshima bomb, are going to be busy there. If each gun fires only a single shot, it will mean for the part of my country situated some miles to the East of the atomic guns the 36-fold destruction of what the world with horror has seen at Hiroshima.

You will admit that such prospects can hold little attraction for those who happen to live in the area that will be bombed. Berlin, from where I am writing, is geographically within the Soviet Zone, although under Western administration, but I think atomic radiation will not stop at an administrative frontier.

There is further news even more appalling. In November, 1954, you are said to have declared to the officers of your staff (I re-translate from German):

"We have to reckon with the mass flight of civilians, whose chaotic traffic would confound all prepared military operations. In such a case only radical measures will help, such as the closing up of all big cities by barricading their entrances, wiping all civilians off the roads by means of special tanks, using violence when pushing through masses of motor cars."

Of course, I keep in mind that from the military point of view such measures seem to be justified. I remember what happened in Belgium in 1940. Practically the whole Belgian nation was on the move. Masses of civilians, mixed up with units of the Belgian Army, blocked all the roads, and no orders could get through. German bombs were dropped into that confusion, and King Leopold simply had to surrender, if he did not want to sacrifice the whole Belgian nation.

I understand that you, being a general, are not willing to surrender under any circumstances whatsoever, and therefore try to make preparations for such an eventuality. On the other hand, you will understand, I hope, that we are neither willing to be suffocated by atomic heat in our own cities in order to preserve the "American Way of Life," nor to be wiped off the roads when trying to save our lives by your special tanks manned by our sons, who are from now on to be summoned to join the NATO forces. But if your plan is put into practice, this would be our fate. We should not have the slightest chance to survive.

We do not like to be governed by the Communists. However, a good many people think even that would be better than the alternative you have to offer, which is to be singed by atomic heat.

I distinctly remember the world-wide indignation, when, in 1915, a German submarine sank the British liner *Lusitania.* Munitions for war were on board, but also civilians, and in those glorious days the killing of civilians was still considered to be an abominable crime. I was a German naval officer at the time.

During World War II, those who had blamed us for the sinking of the *Lusitania* were no longer so squeamish about the killing of civilians. The latter were killed by the millions, by the Germans at Coventry, Rotterdam, Warsaw, by the British and Americans at Berlin, Dresden, Hiroshima. But these were enemy civilians. The Schuyler Plan, however, as mentioned above, seems to at least make possible the mass extermination of allied civilians. . . .

One recalls that military institutions once were created to protect civilians, but see what has come of that!

Your utterances will not further the relations between our two countries. Nor will they make the recruiting of our boys for the NATO Army an easy task. You know that opposition against conscription is already very strong. It will increase. What you have to offer to the Germans is the wholesale destruction of their beautiful country and possibly the extermination of their race.

Your words are now being spread all over Germany. I think you owe the German nation an explanation of what you really mean, and what in your opinion their fate will be.

* * *

It is difficult to add to a statement of this sort, except to point out that while the prospect it suggests is intolerable, for many people—doubtless the majority—any alternative is unthinkable. For any alternative, given an actual state of war or attack, would have to be pacifist, and the pacifist reply to the threat of war is not one to which either Europeans or Americans have given much reflection.

Meanwhile, war is becoming incredibly ruthless and inhuman. Modern military weapons are of such potency that ancient notions of "chivalry" or any sort of "humane" code are completely out of the question. Modern war is an impersonal contest of technologies, with paralysis of the enemy's sinews of industry the only key to certain victory.

Yet it would be a mistake to single out military commanders as the authors of this inhumanity. Civilians expect their soldiers to produce victories, and General Schuyler has probably described the procedures which are necessary if victory is to be even possible. An alternative to the methods he describes, then, would also be an alternative to victory. Unless we are prepared to consider a solution of international issues short of war, there is no escape from the inhumanity of military programs like the Schuyler Plan.