VOLUME VIII, NO. 25
JUNE 22, 1955

INQUIRY INTO RELIGION

WE have for discussion a complaint which we earnestly hope is not legitimate. Our critic puts his objections clearly, and since there may be other readers who have felt similar reactions to recent MANAS articles, we quote them practically in full:

> This is a protest against so much religious stuffing. As a long, constant, and frequently delighted reader, you shall hear me out.
>
> It would be foolish to deny there is a God, but it is just as hard to prove there is one. Some things are destined to remain forever on a mere mathematical basis—maybe a billion to one against guessing the right answer, like the predetermination of sex.
>
> Most religions are a hangover of "conditioning" from childhood. In trouble we call on Mama, and later we will call upon God in our extremity. I probably will because I have, yet I am convinced it is a result of the first two years of babyhood.
>
> At nearly seventy-three, I have had lots of time to reflect. I lost all religion in the active sense, during the first War, because I saw how billions of prayers throughout four years had no effect and no answer. Prayer is futile if you are looking for tangible results.
>
> No experience that we can not remember is of any value. I have had six operations, three of them under pentothal, which produces profound sleep, and I remember nothing of what took place during the cutting. I may have transmigrated and become another soul during that sleep, but if I did I don't recall it in the slightest degree, therefore it is no good to me. A niece in an auto accident remembers nothing of how it happened. "They said I moaned, but I can't remember it."
>
> Now I'm not mad at anybody. But I find it disappointing when I had expected the reward of a mind-stretch to have three quarters of your space expended on unsolved "religion." Ethics, yes, for those who were brought up to be "sober, honest, and clean," but mere speculation is footling.

We can begin with the basic inquiry implied by this reader: Is religion worth writing about? He apparently does not think it is. We do. Yet we share several of the opinions which make him feel that writing about religion is not worth while. We think that the endeavor to "prove" the existence of God a waste of time, and that the idea of a personal God is a weakening psychological influence. We also think that prayer—supplicatory or petitionary prayer, at any rate—is the practice of a delusion.

Where, then, do we differ from this reader? We differ in contending that human beings can no more avoid the subject of religion than they can stop breathing. They may of course avoid the term "religion," but the problems of good and evil, of right and wrong, of freedom and predetermination, of life and death, beginnings and endings are eternal problems which men must think about whether they want to or not, or whether or not they call such thinking religion.

By this time our reader is probably becoming impatient. He is saying, "Of course I don't exclude such matters; the most important of these things—questions of good and evil, right and wrong—come under the heading of Ethics, which I admit is important."

Ethics relates to attitudes and behavior. Ethics defines the values from which right attitudes and right behavior may flow. Ethics—naturalistic ethics, that is, for this is obviously what our reader means—is adequate for a reasoned account of the good in human relations, but there are moral problems which quite conceivably depend for their solution on questions which cannot be settled by unaided, speculative reason. Naturalistic ethics may provide a workable basis for arriving at values in human relations, but it is silent in respect to the natural world around us. Ethics has to do with purposes; since we know something of human purposes, we may develop an ethics limited to man; but what of an ethics which includes all the wide world?

Has Nature any purpose? Or, if not a purpose, an order or end? Has Nature, in short, a comprehensible *meaning?*

Science does not help us here. But if nature does have ends, then man, as a natural being, has some relation to those ends, and that relation is bound to have a bearing on the meaning of his ethical ideas or principles.

The importance of religion, then, if it has an importance, lies in the possibility that religion may supply us with an account of the meaning of the world around us, and thus increase our knowledge of ourselves and our ethical responsibilities, beyond the point that reason and what we regard as "scientific knowledge" have made possible.

Thus religion is here defined as the possibility of a special kind of scientific knowledge relating to the larger meaning of human life and existence in general.

Conceivably, science may expand its fields of inquiry to include the regions traditionally presided over by religion. We shall not then need religion, because it will have become a department in science; or, science will have become a department in religion. But until this happens, the term religion is useful to designate an area of human reflection in which we are obliged to use our imagination; a region in which we are compelled by our nature to adventure, yet where we lack the sort of certainty we have become accustomed to in the world of established scientific knowledge.

There are two or three ways to regard this region. Some take the view that we have been supplied with blueprints of its unknown terrain by the Deity himself. From this view develop all the dogmatic religions and theocratic orders of society, past and present, based upon revelation.

Another view is that the mystic, by inward communion, may explore the region of religious truth and gain a knowledge that is comprehensible to himself, if obscure in his communications to others. This obscurity is sometimes explained or justified by the claim that religious truth is ineffably subtle and enwrapped in paradox—that the dark sayings of the mystics are necessary, if language is to be used at all. Religious truth, according to this view, is conveyed only by inspiration and overtone. The poet captures our understanding by incantation; the artist intimates by symbol. The creative person has some of this truth, which is always mummified by the interpreters and literalists.

The skeptic will ask, "How do we know that all this is not just so much moonshine—transcendental romancing?" We don't, of course. We don't know it, that is, as we know what we call "public" truths. But we may publicly *suspect* it. We are entitled to this suspicion by the evidence left by the great minds of the past. Too many wise and good and great men have thrilled to the reality of mystical perception for it to be discarded with a superior smile. Then there is the fact that an irrepressible longing to speculate about the unknown exists in most men, although it may seldom find articulate expression.

There is still another view of the meaning of religion, to the effect that not only mystics but also men of disciplined intellectuality and moral excellence have been able to reach to personal certainty of religious truth. These become the founders of great religions—or, they are the teachers around whose names religions are founded. The difficulty, of course, in relation to this view, is in verification. How do we know that they taught the truth?

Well, we know no more about this than about the deliveries of the mystics. We do, however, have tools of inquiry. We have our own intuitive capacities, and we have the discipline of metaphysics. One could argue that the intuition—which quite possibly is the power used by the mystic in a more developed way—is the tool of scientific research in religion, and that metaphysics is the application of scientific reasoning to the data of religion so accumulated.

A man may not want to accept all this. We can think of no really persuasive reason why he should, except that his own hunger of mind may cause him to work on such propositions, some day.

There is one other aspect of this subject that ought to be examined—the historical aspect. We are

all somewhat acquainted with the atheist or agnostic reaction to the Western religious heritage which set in with the rise of modern science. The kind of reasoning which led our correspondent to object to "religious" articles in MANAS was the foundation of the revolt against any kind of religious orthodoxy, and, by general momentum, against any kind of religious thinking at all. However, there are a lot of reasons why this kind of argument no longer has the same force. The barrenness of Materialism as a philosophy of life is one reason.

But the important point to notice, here, it seems to us, is that Materialism has not seemed "barren" to thinking men until quite recently. Materialism is not just an epithet. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries it stood for the high faith of men who were busy making discoveries by the scientific method. It was a kind of "religion of nature" for the pioneers of our technological civilization. The pursuit of physical discovery engrossed the imagination and the inventive capacities of men. Materialism was for them a *functional* religion. The expressions of great scientists on the subject of their work are filled with the kind of reverence that used to be associated with religious searching; and, in the written works of the scientists, it has the added attraction of being utterly without any pomp or ostentatious piety.

We here reach the point of our historical review, which is to note that science is now branching out to investigate the subjective side of experience, and the subjective region of human life overlaps the area of religion or religious experience. Further, scientific reason has developed extensively the implications of materialistic assumptions about nature and man, and does not like the result. Finally, the materialistic assumption no longer seems important as a club to beat down the assertions of religious dogma. People with a claim to common sense and the practice of reason no longer believe literally in the dogmas of religion. In other words, we are free, culturally speaking, to think about religion without prejudice for or against any particular creed or tradition.

The evidence supporting this analysis lies in the fact that more and more men of obvious ability and impartiality are discussing the meaning and content of religion—not any particular religion, but the problems with which religion is wont to deal.

Why do we write so much in these pages about religion? Well, being human beings, we are interested in these things, too. It seems clear enough that the scope of modern knowledge is not adequate to deal with the problems of the modern world. There is even the likelihood that, if enough reasoning people do not think about religion, the unreasoning people will embrace some of the old dogmas all over again. We don't want this to happen.

It seems intelligent to propose that *something* of tremendous importance lies behind the incredible drive which causes men to pursue either the will o' the wisps or the verities of religion. The will o' the wisps certainly exist, but are there verities? If there are verities, then an exercise to help us to distinguish between will o' the wisps and verities is very nearly the most important thing we can attempt.

If there are no verities . . . well, if we are honest in our inquiries, we shall some day find it out. The point, here, is that it would be terribly wrong to let these questions go to the dogmatists simply by default.

Letter from CENTRAL EUROPE

INNSBRUCK.—The (so-called) State Treaty between Russia and the Western Powers on the one hand, and Austria on the other, has been concluded. It lasted more than ten years and caused hundreds of meetings, until the Allies honoured their promise to return sovereignty to this small country.

There was jubilance in Vienna, after the "Big Four" had signed the contract, and this is understandable, especially since the people of Eastern Austria really felt free for the first time again, and were now confident that the Soviets would leave in the near future.

But any neutral observer could see that this was the only reason why the Viennese were so happy. There was no interest in the other parts of the Treaty and no feeling of participation in Western Austria at all. Many people who had studied the Treaty did not feel very comfortable about it. While a rather large part of Austrian industry, especially the USIA factories, will be returned and become Austrian property again, their entire production during the next six years belongs to the Union of the Socialistic Soviet Republics, free of charge. Moreover, there is—especially in the Russian occupied parts—so much to build up, to repair and to alter that many hundreds of millions, even billions of schillings will be necessary to make the towns and villages ruined by World War II, and for ten years used by Russian soldiers, habitable again.

Where, asks the average man, will this tiny country—once one of the leading civilized empires in the world—find the huge sums needed for this purpose? There is no doubt that Austria herself lacks the resources, and who will assist her, without asking for guarantees, and probably political ones?

Another unsatisfactory feature of the Treaty is that Austria has not received much liberty, so far as her connections with other countries are concerned. One paragraph, for instance—demanded by the Soviets—prohibits Austria from at any time joining the Western European Union. After signing, Molotov exulted in the fact, that—besides Switzerland—another Central European country had become neutralized, and he hoped that others would follow suit.

This might sound "reasonable," except for the fact that only several days before, Molotov had concluded a military convention between Russia, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Hungary, etc., and that those countries are arming to the teeth.

Another shortcoming of the Treaty has already had its effects. The Germans, officially and privately, have since 1938 invested many hundreds of millions of marks in Austria. As a matter of fact, a major portion of present Austrian industries has been built up by German enterprise. The Austrian Government had assured us that a *modus vivendi* will be found, through diplomatic conversations, to solve this problem in a manner acceptable to both, but the Russians insisted that nothing—except a few private properties—could be refunded to the Germans. This led to a protest by the present government of Western Germany, before the ink on the State Treaty had dried. Since nearly the whole of Western Austria depends for its economical existence on German tourists, this event seems to hold threatening consequences. The German press has already warned German holiday-makers not to visit a country which appropriates the possessions of people whom they expect at the same time to bring more money into Austria, and the businessmen and hoteliers in Salzburg, the Tyrol, Carinthia, and Steiermark are afraid that the Germans, under these circumstances, will now prefer to travel to Italy, Switzerland, France, or even Yugoslavia, instead of visiting Austria. It is to be hoped that further negotiations will lead to an agreement.

So, the Austrians cannot rejoice too much about their "liberty." They feel caught, like a pawn, between the endeavours of the East and West to outwit each other.

CENTRAL EUROPEAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
THE COMMONPLACES OF ATOMIC WAR

MANAS readers who are also subscribers to *U.S. News & World Report* (who are likely to be many, since the phenomenal growth of this businessman's weekly has made a notable "success-story" in contemporary publishing) owe it to themselves to obtain and read carefully the May 1955 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists.* We last referred to *U.S. News* in MANAS for April 13, the occasion being a notice of the news magazine's effort to make the threat of fall-out from nuclear bombing sound as harmless as possible. Since that time, we have noticed several other stories in *U.S. News* which seem to have the same general purpose of "reassurance" concerning the dangers from fall-out. For this reason, the articles in the May *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* are important for a balanced view of what Americans may expect in the way of danger from radiation poisoning, in the event of atomic or H bomb attack.

In particular, the article, "Fall-out and Candor," by Ralph E. Lapp, should be read for specific criticisms of the Atomic Energy Commission's official release on fall-out, made public on Feb. 15, 1955. It is plain that Dr. Lapp regards the AEC's version of the danger as misleading. We are not going to "argue" this matter, since it is a subject on which experts should be consulted, but simply suggest that when experts disagree on a question of such vital importance to the entire population, *all,* and not just selected or "official" experts, should be heard. Dr. Lapp, for example, has the following objections to the AEC report, which are listed as section headings in his article:

1. The AEC report is not candid on the persistence of fall-out.

2. The AEC report does not define the nature of the super bomb.

3. The AEC report glosses over the internal hazard of fall-out particles.

4. The AEC report is irrelevant with respect to genetic effects of fall-out radiation.

These statements may stand without comment, except for item No. 2, which requires a slight explanation. No "secrets," Dr. Lapp says, need be revealed in order to inform the public of one important fact about the super-bomb. A single sentence would be enough, and Dr. Lapp gives it—"The fall-out radioactivity is the same as that from the simultaneous detonation of several hundred Nagasaki type A-bombs." One thing more: In connection with the Lapp article, an extract from the Congressional Record, reporting the Kefauver Hearings (Feb. 22, 1955, Civil Defense Subcommittee on Armed Services), should be of special interest, since it tends to show that individual scientists writing for *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* and the liberal press are providing better information to the public than the releases of the Atomic Energy Commission.

We have heard a great deal about the death-dealing capacities of atomic bombs—so much, perhaps, that we are sated with the horror of it all. Scientists, however, anticipating conditions which must be met if America suffers attack, have been obliged to consider every aspect of this kind of warfare. In the issue of the *Bulletin* under review, Donald N. Michael writes on "Civilian Behavior under Atomic Bombardment," being concerned with the preparations needed to ease the almost impossible task of evacuation in case of bombing, and to face the problem of medical care for the wounded. Mr. Michael draws on the available literature on European behavior under "ordinary" bombing and Japanese reactions to the atomic destruction of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, but concludes that the information is "almost useless as a basis for predicting whether, in the period immediately preceding the attack, Americans will panic wildly, be reduced to terrified paralysis, or carry out a disciplined evacuation." He feels a

similar uncertainty as to how Americans will react to actual bombing:

> One can speculate about the sustaining virtues of the pioneer spirit of cooperative assistance in times of crisis. But one can also speculate about the traumatic consequences of finding that there is nothing to assist with. As the bombs grow bigger and more numerous, will our capacity to cope with the physical and psychological consequences of atomic war grow apace? If not, then this writer fails to find anything in the literature which leads him to believe that we can predict for us a more encouraging state of morale than existed for the Japanese. Will our morale even be as good?

Reviewing the work of eye-witnesses of the atomic bombings of the Japanese cities, Mr. Michael quotes from *We of Nagasaki*, by T. Nagai, concerning the break-down of moral values among the survivors. Nagai writes:

> We did wicked things like wolves and foxes to stay alive, and even those who had always been gentle people began doing petty little bits of evil. In a Crisis like this God will just have to overlook petty sins—that was the way we felt. . . . This new thing, this atom bomb, one thing it did was to make us unashamed of doing wrong, mean things.
>
> Most people just began watching out for themselves; they gave up their jobs or whatever they were supposed to be doing and headed into the mountains with their families. Soon there weren't any more people living the regular way.

While the victims helped one another in some measure—especially the members of their own families—this was not the rule. Nagai reports:

> In general, then, those who survived the atom bomb were the people who ignored their friends crying out in extremis; or who shook off wounded neighbors who clung to them, pleading to be saved. . . . in short, those who survived the bomb were lucky, in a greater or lesser degree selfish, self-centered, guided by instinct and not civilization . . . and we know it, we who have survived.

This is not a pleasant subject, but there is no reason to restrain ourselves from examining the uglier aspects of an atomic attack. No nation which contemplates using atomic weapons should let itself be ignorant of what happens when such explosives are released over inhabited places.

Nagai has this to say of the tragedy at Nagasaki:

> Hundreds, perhaps even thousands, of corpses lay in the fields around town, the ground completely covered by them in some places. They were already swollen round, and looked a little like watermelons in a patch; and some people were saying as a joke, "If only they were watermelons you could eat them."
>
> The doctors and nurses . . . had been working without sleep or rest for five days. I went upstairs to see Hatsue. I had to hold my nose—regular streams of filth were pouring down the stairs and I had to hop from one clear spot to another. Some of the people on the second floor were on the point of death, and had no control over their functions; many had thrown up on the concrete floor, and the whole place was one foul pool. The patients lying on the floor were bathed in it. It poured over the floor and down the stairs.

This is the sort of thing that is invited by those who are eager for atomic war, or eager to do things which may make atomic war inevitable. Michael comments:

> Bear in mind that these descriptions refer to a people who place a deep ceremonial emphasis on cleanliness and on the proper treatment of the dead. Other descriptions reveal a helplessness and hopelessness engendered by the mysterious, delayed appearance of radiation sickness and death. Moreover, if to all this is added the jump in miscarriages, abortions, and premature birth from 6 to 27 per cent, a not unlikely prediction would be that these people or any others subject to such experiences would bear psychological scars for the rest of their lives. . . .

In another place, Michael cites a passage from Nagai telling of the psychological disorientation which overtook persons who were relatively unharmed. They did not hear when they were spoken to, could not stop searching the sky, did senseless things without meaning. "From that time to the end of the war," said Nagai, "everybody seemed to be going crazy." This persistent excessive state of anxiety, Michael notes, afflicted those who lost loved ones and who themselves barely escaped death or serious harm.

He also remarks that the more powerful weapons of the present would greatly enlarge the number of "near-miss victims" of this sort, "because of the expanding periphery of partial destruction."

Michael says one thing which has a bearing on the policy of the AEC in respect to the danger of radiation poisoning from fall-out, explaining, perhaps, the official tendency to minimize this hazard. The Japanese, he points out, being victims of the first atomic bombing, knew nothing of the radiation sickness, while Americans not only have information on the subject, but are also "health-conscious," or, as Michael puts it, "anxious about disease." He expects, therefore, that atomic bombing of American cities will bring serious emotional disturbance from fear of poisoning: "pseudo-radiation sickness, presenting a serious morale problem which, by the very nature of the situation, will be an unprecedented one."

Can this anticipation be taken as justifying a hush-hush policy concerning the dangers of radiation poisoning? In the Kefauver Hearings, there was this interchange between Senator Symington and Dr. Willard F. Libby of the AEC:

> *Senator Symington:* What I was wondering is why there is so much classification around this question of how much people will be hurt if a bomb exploded. Why isn't it something that should be given more freely, and, following Senator Kefauver's line of thought, why does it sort of leak out, you might say, instead of being announced by the various responsible people in the government?
>
> *Dr. Libby:* Well, the only general answer I have is that we have a great responsibility to be correct.

Over against the argument that care must be taken to prevent national hysteria is the view that, without full information concerning the effects of atomic bombing, those in charge of preparing to meet such a disaster are left in the dark as to what to do. At the hearing in which the above question was asked by Senator Symington, Governor Val Peterson, Federal Civil Defense Administrator, told the members of the subcommittee:

> "I might mention that this is the first time that as Civil Defense Administrator, I have even been called before the Congress, other than the Appropriations Committee, at the time we were requesting funds for the ensuing year."

Dr. Lapp remarks that the facts of the fall-out observed at the Bikini test have been available "to those inside secret circles" since March 1, 1954, but that almost a year intervened before some of those facts were made public. His final comment is this:

> Civil defense, armed with the facts, must now face up to the staggering magnitude of the fall-out hazard. In making its evacuation-to-shelter plans it must take into account more than the "first 36 hours" after the detonation. Let us not hamper this planning, already delayed over a full year, by forcing local communities to use half-facts or unofficial information.
>
> The shadows of time now stretch almost a full decade since Hiroshima, when one bomb stilled the life of that city. Ten years later the Hiroshima bomb appears as a primitive and puny weapon. The bombs of today are a thousand-fold more potent. Three nations possess them by the hundreds and the thousands. Yet the United States clings to the straws of secrecy. Its lack of candor conceals the true situation both inside and outside our government. Secrecy barriers multi-sect our bureaucratic brain, isolating one part from another and preventing the intercourse of ideas and initiative. Thus the Bikini data on fall-out fell into this mare's nest. We now know the result. The lives of fifty million Americans were at stake, yet the grim facts were withheld.

The writers in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* are chiefly concerned with government policy in *how* atomic war is prepared for. This Department takes another view, the view embodied in the question—Ought atomic war to be even contemplated, much less prepared for?

COMMENTARY
THE COST OF "SECURITY`'

A LITTLE over a year ago, MANAS (July 14) took notice of a French critic's review of a Japanese film, *The Children of Hiroshima*, quoting the remark of Alexander Werth, the *Nation's* Paris correspondent, that although the story concerned events some eight or nine years after the bombing, it was "an infinitely sad film." The picture showed the after-effects of the bomb—the crippled, the maimed and blinded, the misery of sterile young couples, and the children affected by the bomb illness.

From all reports, this picture was an exquisite work of art, making Werth say that if he could, he would make seeing it compulsory education for all mankind.

Now comes another film from Japan, named simply *Hiroshima*, which is reviewed in the *Nation* for May 21. The critic, Robert Hatch, does not find the same excellence that was reported of the earlier picture, but notes that its makers intended no accusation or expression of grievance, attempting rather "to provide a record, as accurate as possible, so that the world can judge what *is* in store if it proceeds with this type of persuasion."

The motive is admirable, yet again we are confronted by the paradox that those who deliberately set out to "instruct" or "improve," when they finally deliver, offer only a second-rate piece of art. Hatch says:

> *Hiroshima* could be better . . . its plot development, and its sermonizing are on the rather obvious level of a United States information film. Watching it, you never quite forget that you are being shown a conscientious re-enactment designed to make you a better citizen, and for that reason you can evade a good deal of the emotional impact. The sad fact is that it will principally terrify those who have lively imaginations and quick sympathies, and they are the ones who least need frightening.

One portion of the film, however, brought lasting tremors to Robert Hatch—the part dealing with the effects of atomic radiation:

> In one scene a group of hospital patients, in rags and half-rotten with the sickness, cavort about a little bean patch when the first sprouts give them hope that at least the earth is not poisoned. Later, adults and children begin to show slower symptoms and those as yet untouched look on in a terror too great for much pity. This new leprosy is the special horror of atomic warfare; it is the part of the film I cannot get out of my mind.

Elsewhere in this issue of the *Nation*, an advertising man, Joseph Seldin, reports on the psychological research done by those who want to know more about the thoughts and feelings of people who buy goods and services. There is now, apparently, a "depth psychology" of selling:

> The true reason for the purchase [writes Mr. Seldin] is buried in the subconscious and is associated with the consumer's innermost frustrations, fears, repressions, and need for security. Dr. Ernest Dichter, president of the Institute for Research in Mass Motivations, tells firms selling consumer goods that they must either sell emotional security or go under.

Much of this article is devoted to the research techniques enabling investigators to reach this conclusion, but what interests us here is its corollary in propaganda techniques. It seems plain enough that the policy-makers of the AEC (see Review) and the editors of *U.S. News & World Report* have been guided by a sure instinct in their efforts to dull public anxiety about the dangers of atomic fall-out radiation. Never mind the threat of radiation disease, sterility, or genetic disaster . . . emotional security is the thing we must have!

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

WE have for this week some selected quotations on the subject of education from David Riesman's *Individualism Reconsidered.* This is a lengthy volume and the sections dealing with educational problems might not otherwise be noticed by some readers.

Mr. Riesman, who has been raised to popular eminence by his famous *The Lonely Crowd,* must sometimes be puzzled by his own situation—or, at least, amused. For his chief thesis is that modern man characteristically fails to develop "autonomy"—that is, the capacity to select his own social and philosophical values. But if the "crowd" is oddly appreciative when Riesman calls attention to this fact, this must mean that man's longing for independent judgment is never completely buried.

A man whose sociological referents are far off the beaten track, as Riesman's undoubtedly are, is apt to be constructively provocative on many subjects. In discussing family attitudes, for instance, the author of *Individualism Reconsidered* examines typical "family expectations," noting that in our own society, a hundred years ago, parents tended to set up fairly simple criteria for the "success" of their children. If a youth's entrance into the economic world was well rewarded—if tangible accomplishments marked his course, or showed promise of doing so—his parents were reasonably content. Further:

> If the child delivered the goods according to these reasonably clear criteria, it mattered rather less what he was like as a person; parents neither knew enough to observe his psychological make-up nor were they very interested in it. As a member of society's work-force the child would be expected to produce, rather than to be a particularly well-adjusted or even happy person. Thus both his character, with its implanted goals, and his situation, as he turned to make his living or his mark, combined to intensify the demands made on him as a producer, while the demands made on him as a person were slight. This gave him a certain freedom to be different, provided he did his work adequately.
>
> What matters about the individual in today's economy is less his capacity to produce than his capacity to be a member of a team. Business and professional success now depend much more than ever before on one's ability to work in a team in far-flung personnel networks; the man who works too hard or in too solitary a way is, by and large, almost as unwelcome in the executive offices, the universities, or the hospitals of urban America as he would be in a union shop. He cannot satisfy society's demands on him simply by being good at his job; he has to be good, but he has also to be cooperative. When translated into child-rearing practices, this means that parents who want their children to get along and to succeed will be quite as concerned with their adjustment in the school group as with their grades or with their industry on an after-school job.

This, of course, is an application of Riesman's thesis that people are today chiefly "other-directed,"—"popularity" has become the greatest concern of all. But even popularity is not a simple objective. Parents don't want their children to be just "ordinary," for they are fairly well propagandized about the dullness of too much conformity. All of this places the child himself in a very delicate position, with nothing definite to cling to in regard to the sort of behavior most apt to meet parental approval. Riesman continues:

> Parents can no longer prefer to have a child who is diligent to a child who is "one of the gang." So parents, too, though perhaps with some misgivings, share the concern with popularity. Unlike their predecessors of the Victorian Age, they know—from the teacher, the P.T.A., their own children—what the popularity score is.
>
> Matters would be relatively simple for parent and child if the market demanded complete conformists. Then, at least, expectations would be clear—and rebellion against them equally clear. But matters are not simple. What is expected of children and adults, in the middle and upper educated strata at least, actually is difference, but not too much. That is, one must be different enough to attract attention, to be a personality, to be labeled and tagged....
>
> Progressive parents, taught for the last several decades to "accept" their children, have learned to welcome a certain amount of rebelliousness or

> difference. Likewise, business and the professions, especially perhaps in the growing number of fields catering to consumption and leisure, welcome a certain amount of eccentricity, if this goes together with a cooperative team spirit. Thus children often find themselves in the paradoxical position in which their "difference" is simply evidence that they are conventional and up-to-date. Perhaps more important, they are compelled to learn to find their way among exceedingly subtle expectations on the part of others. They are expected both to be spontaneous and not to disrupt the mood of a particular group; to a degree they must conform and yet maintain the personality they have already built up. . . .
>
> And the parents themselves become concerned and anxious, and understandably so, if the child's age-mates reject him; they fear his differences are of the wrong sort, and perhaps, too, that their differences from their neighbors are of the wrong sort. Are they to defend their child's differences, then at the cost of his undoubted present and possible future misery?

This sounds like a striving after some sort of pseudo-originality—"Let's have our children *appear* to be distinctive, without being so 'different' as to bar general approval. We can hardly let them express a fervent faith in Socialism, but perhaps they can safely defend a few socialistic 'ideals,' so long as they go along with their parents, reaching a final total in favor of competitive Capitalism." Illustrations of this sort of compromise are innumerable, and can also be based on attitude and practice concerning relationships between the sexes. A Bertrand Russell, for instance, who became quite radical on the subject of marriage, must be gently disapproved, but it is presently allowable to discuss Russell's opinions with a show of equal-mindedness, this being some kind of transition from the time when parents expected their children to detest the astounding proposals of Judge Ben Lindsay on "companionate marriage."

Children, like parents, can become "lonely" when they run too much with the crowd, causing Riesman to say:

> I think the answer to this crucial question depends at least in part on whether the parents are secure enough and capable enough to provide the child with an environment that will give him some protection against the expectations of his peers. They must offer him a way of life which will help him suffer less from his loneliness and his fear of it. They do this in part by altering the valuation put on loneliness and in part by encouraging interests that, while making his adjustment to his present group no easier, make his adjustment to a future group no more difficult.

Riesman's most important suggestion is that it may be possible to find "a way of life" which will "alter the valuation put on loneliness." It is, after all, the *fear* of standing alone or thinking differently that needs to be overcome. "Aloneness" may even have a unique value, for it is adequately established that Socrates and Gandhi—to employ familiar symbols—were not discontented in mind. There is all the difference in the world, we are sure, between a purposive and deliberately chosen "loneliness," and a loneliness which originates in lack of direction.

FRONTIERS

Believe it or Not

WE are presently staring, with unwilling belief, at a local news report whose implications are world-wide. Another teacher has been fired by a school board because his *private* views are not in entire agreement with opinions held by the majority in his community.

The Santa Ana *Register* for May 12 tells in great detail how the citizens of a small California town—Costa Mesa—finally succeeded in "ousting" school principal Theodore Neff. (A friend of Neff's, Harrison Sanborn, business manager of the district's schools, resigned in protest.)

What turned the Costa Mesans against Mr. Neff? Well, in the first place, it became known that this deceivingly personable fellow, regarded by teachers and pupils alike as an excellent administrator, had been a "conscientious objector" to service in World War II. Not only this, but investigation disclosed the further fact that he had contracted affiliations with both the American Civil Liberties Union and one of the leading Christian pacifist organizations of the world—The Fellowship of Reconciliation. Now, Neff's impromptu investigators reasoned, a pacifist is clearly a threat to the proper upbringing of the young. Moreover, did not California Senator Jack Tenney have something to say about both the ACLU and the FOR?

Yes, Senator Tenney did. Under the protection of legislative immunity, he remarked that "un-American attitudes" were characteristic of both associations. This was enough for the crusading citizenry of Costa Mesa. No one, it appears, stopped to find out what the ACLU and the FOR really did for a living, how long they had been doing it, and in behalf of what ends. Had such research been undertaken, it would have been discovered that the ACLU, a few years ago, spent considerable effort and money trying to restore the property rights of the displaced Japanese-Americans whose land had been summarily seized just after Pearl Harbor, and subsequently misappropriated. Since the Japanese are now our allies instead of our enemies, Costa Mesa citizens should recognize, in retrospect, that the work of the ACLU may have won more Japanese sympathy for the U.S. in the present struggle between America and Russia than the efforts of any other group of comparable size. The Fellowship of Reconciliation, a nondenominational Christian group, has throughout the years done nothing more shameful than argue against violence on all occasions, both local and international.

A few highlights from the news report are instructive—reminding us that not all of today's "issues" are "abstract." Principal Neff, unfortunately, is but one of many who, when assailed by charges of "Up-Americanism," had no opportunity to discover just exactly what his accusers had in mind. In this case the *Register* notes:

> Backers of Sanborn and Neff flared at the board's decision and a public motion was entered asking the board members to individually explain their actions. However, this died quickly when Brown explained, "The reasons were numerous and the situation was much more complex than some of you might think."
>
> Neither man was charged with incompetency or subversive action. Both were commended for performing their jobs capably.

Further explanation follows:

> Although the issue was granting tenure to principal Neff, the public arguments centered around controversies over the ACLU ant the FOR.
>
> It was because of membership in these two groups a year ago that the two teachers came under fire from a citizens' group. At that time they resigned from both organizations. However, in the meanwhile both attended a March 1 meeting of the FOR. This action created new disturbances in the community and led eventually to their release last night.
>
> Atty. Tietz charged, "The ACLU is not among the 300 organizations cited by the attorney general's office. Sen. Jack Tenney used legislative immunity

when he said it was. If anyone here tonight says it is subversive there will be a law suit. Because here you don't have legislative immunity."

Rev. Taylor followed and explained he was a member of the FOR and in answer to questions about the group being cited by un-American activities committees he said, "I have never been on any list—Los Angeles County has repudiated Jack Tenney and his report. If you take this attitude against these men because of their beliefs the whole educational system is in danger."

So at least a few responsible citizens converged on Costa Mesa from various parts of Southern California, and had something worthwhile to say. But their efforts were of little avail. "Aroused" public opinion expressed itself in miscellaneous weasel words. One man declared: "The rights of these two men are certainly important. So are the rights of my children. I'd rather see these two men's careers ruined than take a chance with my children." Another remarked, "I won't say they're [the ACLU and FOR] un-American. I won't say they're communists. I will say they're questionable." "We've got to draw a line some place," he continued. "Now is the time to stand up and be counted as an American."

Sentiments such as these carried the day, despite the distinguished members of other communities who came to Neff's defense, and despite the fact that one hundred of Neff's students signed a petition endorsing Neff and asking that he be retained. "We need him," they said.

An excellent comment on such happenings is provided by Charles Frankel in an article, "Are We Really Crazy?," in *Harper's* for June. We append one paragraph as the next to last word:

> An increasing number of people in Europe . . . are thoroughly perplexed by the American emphasis on internal subversion; they seem to have concluded that we are all off our rockers. What leads to this impression, of course, is the obvious fact that we are the richest country in the world, with the most contented population, and that we have fewer Communists and fellow-travelers per capita than any other nation. Here again, it is the radical dissimilarity of public events with the ordinary round of men's experience which discourages us from using what common sense we have. Our present obsession with the danger of internal Communists has not happened *in spite of* the fact that we have so few Communists. It has happened precisely *because* of that fact.
>
> We do not take Communists in stride as Europeans do because, in America, they are strange, unknown people who are dearly cut off from the mainstream of national life. The average Frenchman is likely to know at least one Communist personally; and most Frenchmen, as a result, have been able to judge from direct contact just how dull of intellect, boring in manner, and clumsy in action the normal run of Communists are. We, on the other hand, do not have the Frenchman's advantages. And so we continue to treat Communists as men apart, whose qualities elude the categories we normally apply in our judgment of human beings. We ascribe to a handful of Communists supernatural powers to undermine our lives. We are not crazy. But on this issue we act crazy.

The last word should be spent pointing out that anticommunist frenzy not only pillories the communists themselves, but is also apt to preclude understanding of any unorthodox minority opinions. What, in a democracy, is so terrible about children learning—in case they do—that a respected school principal is a pacifist? An original intention of the Constitution of the United States was to encourage the broad education of all its citizens by protecting honest divergencies of opinion. If one pacifist in a community *could* exert more influence upon the young than all other teachers, and parents, he would, to be sure, be "dangerous," but only, perhaps, as Socrates was "dangerous."