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WAR AND JUSTICE

SOMEWHERE along the line in epochs of historical change, the opinions of the very few become the opinions of a strong minority. Next, the minority views are adopted by the majority, and finally, as Buckle remarked in writing about such changes, "there comes a period when these very truths are looked upon as commonplace facts; and a little later, there comes another period, in which they are declared to be necessary, and even the dullest intellects wonder how they could ever have been denied."

No one can avoid noticing that we live in a period of changing opinions about war. Few men, moreover, would have the hardihood to claim that there is much long-term hope for the survival of the human race, unless, sooner or later, war is abandoned by the nations as an instrument of national policy. Of course, there is the possibility, perhaps the likelihood, that people will have to abandon the nations—the national form of social organization, that is—before war can be outlawed, but this is only a detail of historical sequence in comparison to the basic issue of war itself.

The question, then, is *when* shall we abandon war? Or, more precisely, under what conditions will enough people be willing and eager to abandon war?

The answer to this question is usually made in the form of an abstraction: When everybody can trust everybody else, it will be safe to abandon war. While the answer is seldom couched in these somewhat ridiculous terms, this is surely the substance of the familiar replies whose practical meaning is: *not in any foreseeable future.*

The *Progressive* for October presents an editorial feature which may mark the beginning of serious attention to a new answer to this question. MANAS readers will recall our review (Aug. 17) of the American Friends Service Committee pamphlet, *Speak Truth to Power,* and the general approval this argument against war has elicited from a number of the leading thinkers of our time. The October *Progressive* starts out with a summary of the contentions of *Speak Truth to Power,* written by Robert Pickus, one of the authors of the pamphlet. This is followed by comment and criticism from Dwight Macdonald, Norman Thomas, Reinhold Niebuhr, Karl Menninger, and George Kennan. FinaIly, Pickus and Stephen Cary, the latter another of the writers of *Speak Truth to Power,* provide rebuttal.

Fortunately, there is no need to attempt final judgment as to who "wins" this argument. The importance of the editorial feature in the *Progressive* is not in any decisive issue of the debate, but in the fact that a national magazine of considerable circulation has presented the controversy as one to be taken seriously. There is no sign of condescension in the *Progressive* editors' decision to let the pacifists "have their 'say'." The pacifist writers are not presented to the *Progressive* readers as spokesmen for a pacifist sect. They are presented as men of reason who challenge prevailing liberal opinion on the issue of war.

Publication of this discussion by the *Progressive* may compel attention to the fact that the pacifist viewpoint deserves to be regarded with increasing seriousness. There is already evidence enough that the pacifist argument—at least as presented by Pickus and Cary—can no longer be dismissed as some sort of democratic luxury which the liberal world appreciates as a desirable "leavening" influence, to be tolerated, or even praised, so long as it does not get out of hand. It is our judgment that, in the *Progressive* presentation, the pacifist writers show a greater candor and a more realistic facing of the issues

than their critics. Further, we think this judgment is possible from a "liberal" as well as a pacifist viewpoint.

What do the Quaker authors of *Speak Truth to Power* contend? (It would be nice to be able to assume that all MANAS readers have a copy of this pamphlet, and that they will get and read the October *Progressive* debate, but to make sense here we shall have to quote from the Pickus summary.) First, they challenge the major assumptions on which American foreign policy is based—specifically, they reject the following beliefs:

> that it is possible in the Twentieth Century for military power to be applied rationally, and a constructive program for peace carried on simultaneously with a program for military preparedness.
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> that Soviet Communism is the source of our problems and that by achieving its disintegration or even its containment we would move toward a peaceful world.
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> that military power is the essential "realistic" means of dealing with international problems.

While there is plenty of support for criticism of exclusive reliance on military preparedness, and a variety of proposals for constructive, peace-making policies, the Government does little to implement the latter, mainly, the pamphlet argues, because of the concentration on military preparation. Therefore:

> The conditions that breed violence and the hatreds that divide men continue unchecked, despite the ebb and flow of tension at high political levels. Economic assistance programs grow smaller rather than larger and are more and more designed to meet strategic considerations instead of human need. The arms race continues unchecked, and even in the midst of disarmament discussions we proceed with vigor to plan the rearmament of Germany and Japan. The United Nations continues to languish, used too often as a cat's paw in the implementation of cold war strategy, and too little in the important moves of the great powers. We oppose movements toward freedom, support in some cases a corrupt "status quo," ally ourselves with undemocratic, even totalitarian, governments.

Pacifists always have argued that such tendencies are immoral and therefore wrong. The circumstances of today, however, enable them to argue also that these tendencies, besides being immoral, are just as wrong from a practical point of view, because they lead directly to war. It is the force of this latter argument which brings the pacifists to the foreground, requiring that they be listened to.

Other major points in the Pickus summary are as follows:

> *Speak Truth to Power* suggests that the real enemy is not the Soviet Union but the false values by which men have lived in East and West alike. The evils that have drawn the world to the present impasse, and which we must struggle to overcome, flow from man's idolatry: lust for power and the inability of power to set limits to itself; the violation of human personality and infringements on its freedom and dignity the "practical atheism" of a pervading materialism and secularism; the spreading cult and practice of violence and the poisonous doctrine that *oUr* ends justify any means. These are not evils of which the Communists alone are guilty—they are a part of the main drift of our time. These evils will not be rooted out, or so much as disturbed, even if we succeed in cutting off the heads of all the people in one geographical area or another. . . .
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> The study recognizes that our nation is clearly unready to disarm unilaterally at the present time. In a democracy, fundamental change does not come by fiat, and does not occur overnight. *Speak Truth to Power* considers the role of a pacifist minority in a transition period, both in influencing immediate decisions and in creating the atmosphere in which policy changes that appear unlikely now can be realized. . . .
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> There is a politics of time, but there is also a politics of eternity that man would ignore, but cannot. . . . Much of *Speak Truth to Power* is written in pragmatic and even strategic terms. It deals with the hard facts, puts the case for non-violence in terms of common sense. Yet its authors are aware that the man who chooses in these terms alone cannot sustain himself against the mass pressures of an age of violence. If this study's truth reaches power, if it ever speaks to the individual American, it will not be the argument that convinces Rather it will be an inner sense of integrity that impels a man to say, "Here I

stand. Regardless of relevance or consequence, I can do no other."

Dwight Macdonald is the first critic. His comment is that the *transition* from a warlike to a peaceful society is left undefined; meanwhile, pacifist opinions and even actions are politically irrelevant. Political realism must admit that a large electorate responds only to oversimplified slogans, and is insensitive to careful, pacifist analysis. Macdonald rejects the idea that Communism and Western Democracy are the Tweedledum and Tweedledee of modern amorality, insisting upon a real *difference.* He argues that pacifist argument and action "can only weaken our preparation of armed force and our use, or threat to make use, of it," and he suggests that pacifists in effect say to themselves: . . . "let the non-pacifist majority carry the burden of arming against the Soviet threat (also the moral onus of preparing the hydrogen bomb) until we are strong enough to take a new line; meanwhile, lie doggo behind the ramparts of force—after all, it's not *our* business."

Macdonald explains that he left the pacifist ranks when he realized that he could not advocate the withdrawal of American troops from Berlin after the war, since these troops were the sole protection against the MVD of the people of Berlin, "who had put up a gallant fight against Soviet domination since 1945." He adds that he cannot anticipate that a Pacifist America would have Gandhi-like success against a Red occupation, since the Communists have no respect for individuals and could be expected to use methods of repression and extermination which were morally impossible for the British. Macdonald's own position (which he quotes from *Speak Truth to Power)* is this:

> . . . an "attempt to coexist without war and without resolving the conflict. . . an indefinite armed truce in the hope that time will produce changed conditions under which a more fundamental solution will be possible." Not very dramatic, not very satisfactory, indeed, but about all I can see in the realm of the possible.

Except for Karl Menninger, who accepts the Quaker pamphlet without noticeable qualification, the other critics press various objections which, taken in sum, say that pacifism would be a fine thing if we could afford it, but we can't afford it. They present all the familiar objections to the pacifist view, arguing, as Norman Thomas puts it, that "the one great hope lies in negotiating universal and controlled disarmament from a position of military strength." Niebuhr, writing as a moralist, accuses the Friends of neglecting "the whole problem of the attainment of justice," and Kennan argues the necessity for military force to protect other peoples as well as ourselves from "oppression or subjugation or even genocide."

A word on the critics. It is fair to say that they all want peace as much as any pacifist; that they write from personal conviction, and not for any political purpose; and that not one of them contemplates the prospect of war with enthusiasm. They are also men distinguished in various ways for service to their country or culture. Dwight Macdonald has the added distinction of being a peacetime non-pacifist who was once a wartime pacifist, reversing the more familiar pattern of those who conform to popular pressure. Perhaps for this reason we have quoted from his comments at greater length, although this is not intended to signify the inferiority of the other criticisms. In any event, Macdonald's arguments are arguments which weaned him of one position and obliged him to take another. (Norman Thomas, too, was once a pacifist—during World War I—but as a religionist, whereas Macdonald became and unbecame a pacifist on rational grounds.)

We are not going to quote from the rebuttal by Pickus and Cary, which is too good to be chopped up into quotable sections. So far as we can see, it meets the arguments of the critics with a cogency that demands further discussion. At any rate, it should be read entire. Here, we propose a somewhat different field of inquiry.

Initially, it seems that non-pacifist intellectuals think that the pacifists argue from a preconceived metaphysic of history. If you say, as pacifists often do, that ends and means are not separated and distinct, but dual aspects of a single process, this sounds like a grand metaphysical formula. It probably is a metaphysical formula, since it attempts a rather universal definition of how history works (in relation to war), and if it should happen to be a correct definition, then the pacifists will turn out to be right, and their opponents wrong. Meanwhile, however, it is possible to understand the reluctance of tough-minded men to go along on this metaphysical proposition. The proposition, of course, is nothing new, nor is it uniquely Christian. The Buddhists have taught the same thing (the law of Karma) for well over two thousands years, and Emerson suggested it, also, in his essay on Compensation. The important thing is that it involves a judgment about the fundamental nature of things. Robert Pickus implies this judgment when he speaks of the "politics of eternity."

Quite candidly, the authors of *Speak Truth to Power*, while not concealing the metaphysical or transcendental roots of their own convictions, have endeavored to address their readers in terms of immediately acceptable rather than specifically pacifist values. It is as though they say, "You tell us, when we preach to you, that we are not 'practical'; well, what about these *practical* considerations." Time and recent events, in other words, seem to be on the side of the pacifist argument. The longer the world goes to war, the more it seems that the metaphysical formula has been dipped into the sea of reality and now appears clothed in the flesh and blood of familiar experience. *It begins to look as though it may be true.*

At any rate, the "practical" argument for the moral law now requires honest attention. When a non-pacifist thinks his position through, he becomes a conscious pluralist in his theory of history. We do not *know,* he may be obliged to argue that love, good, and righteousness will triumph in the end. "Other forces," he says, "may be more powerful. And if the pacifists are wrong, and we are right, we can never retrace our steps."

The non-pacifist is reluctant to make an "experiment" out of the next war. He will not say that his method is "right," or "good," but that there is no other. However, since he is convinced of this, he may succumb to the temptation to make his own method seem less hideous than it really is. Here lies the principal weakness of the non-pacifist. He speaks of war as an instrument of justice. Is it?

This is the great question. Suppose we stipulate that war *has been* an instrument of justice, in the hands of men who honestly fought for justice. Suppose we stipulate, further, that it may continue to be an instrument of justice, whenever and wherever it is fought by men who are *able* to maintain this conviction in their hearts.

Here we have another kind of metaphysic, whose ruling principle is governed by the variable of human motive. It suggests that a time may come when many men may conclude that war—modern war, the kind of war we are likely to get into—cannot possibly do justice at all, since it will accomplish almost universal destruction. Macdonald singles out the post-war protection of the Berliners by American troops as a moral necessity, so far as he was concerned, leading him to abandon the pacifist view. Abandoning the Berliners to the MVD would have been an act of intolerable injustice.

Well, if a like defect in the application of non-pacifist methods were to threaten some other city of gallant people, would he then return to the pacifist fold? This seems unlikely, since Macdonald probably also disliked the mood of "absolutism" in the pacifist position, while, theoretically at least, a non-pacifist can choose where and when war is needed and avoid it with equal freedom of decision.

But this is where we have trouble. If the non-pacifists were able to pick their wars, there would probably be a lot less pacifists. You can't pick your wars any more. Not really. Nor can you pick your military objectives. The critics of *Speak Truth to Power* hardly mention this fact, which makes them vulnerable to the charge of being metaphysicians, too, with a rival theory of historical processes. They would have us believe that military force is still amenable to the control of human intelligence. Any reader who subscribes to this sentimental relic of yesterday's political thinking ("War is a continuation of policy," said Clausewitz) is invited to read the first three articles in *Harper's* for October, collectively titled by the editors, "How War Became Absurd."

But for a man who is not willingly a metaphysician, we don't see how Macdonald's position can be much improved. He is standing up for justice, and justice is of ultimate importance. Since he is not an absolutist by nature, he may have to become a pacifist again, if another war breaks out and its crimes against justice seem to exceed the crimes the war was started to end. To be consistent in his devotion to justice, he will have to do something like this, and so will Mr. Niebuhr, who also talks about justice. But will he be *able* to change his position? Macdonald, we expect, will be able to, if circumstances demand it, since he is a man with the habit of doing what he believes in. We don't know about the others.

It might be submitted to the pacifists, not as a non-pacifist argument, but as a brief for the dignity of man, that people who do what they believe in are as great a force for peace as the pacifists—perhaps a greater force, since their behavior clears the air of personal irresponsibility, of which some pacifists—*not* the authors of *Speak Truth to Power*—have had their share. A man who insists upon choosing his wars is as great a threat to the war-making machine as the pacifists who won't have any. And the massive determinism of the war apparatus is what the authors of *Speak Truth to Power* are indicting above everything else, in their argument against any war at all.

REVIEW
"THE VOICE OF THE DESERT

THIS sequel by Joseph Wood Krutch to *The Desert Year* will be a welcome addition to libraries already containing the earlier volume. Neither the term "natural philosopher" or "philosophical naturalist" is completely adequate for classifying Mr. Krutch, who, as one reviewer notes, is above all "a man who knows that the proper study of mankind extends to all of nature." *The Voice of the Desert* includes, incidentally, the essay, "Conservation Is Not Enough," which first appeared in *The American Scholar* and was later issued as a pamphlet by the University of Utah Press.

In the space of a brief review it is impossible to give attention to the fascinating details of ecology which Mr. Krutch recounts in his usual delightful manner. While this aspect of Krutch's work is beyond the competence of most reviewers, it is at least possible to convey by quotation some idea of the type of philosophical asides at which Krutch is so adept. Running throughout *The Voice of the Desert* we find commentary upon the scheme of Darwinian evolution as interpreted by most mechanistic biologists. Krutch is not a mechanist, nor an orthodox biologist; instead, he has a deep appreciation for the relationship between biology and psychology. He prefers George Bernard Shaw's term "metabiology" to metaphysics, for reasons explained in the following paragraphs:

> People nowadays are less interested in theology than they were in times gone by. They are not interested because they do not believe that they have any facts about God upon which, or just beyond which, metaphysical convictions about Him could be based. Perhaps most people are, whether they know it or not, simple positivists in the sense that they believe that even man is a machine wholly explainable in physical terms. But there is an increasing number who feel that the attempt to account for life in purely physical terms has failed. They may continue to insist that no available evidence suggests the existence of any God. But they also insist that life is not demonstrably "merely chemical" and that biology must recognize realities not either physical or chemical. . . .
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> For them, therefore, philosophy lies "beyond" biology, not beyond physics. For them the place to start that philosophy is not with physics or with chemistry but with life itself as a fact no less primary than the facts of physics and chemistry. Because I myself make that assumption, many of the speculations in which I have permitted myself to indulge in this book are heretical from the conventional biologist's point of view. But the heresy seems to me to have a desirable consequence—it redeems the universe from that deadness which mechanistic science has increasingly attributed to it.

An interesting part in Krutch's closing chapter, "The Mystique of the Desert," is his criticism of poets such as Ruskin and Coleridge, who say that it is a "pathetic fallacy" to attribute qualities of feeling to nature itself, claiming that "feeling" is not possible except to the consciousness of man. Mr. Krutch seems more of a poet, in this instance, than either Ruskin or Coleridge, for he believes that "nature romanticizing," a tendency present in all folklore, may be more than "mere" romanticism, as a kind of perception of the interrelatedness and interdependence of all things which brings the qualities of great art into being. "Wilderness, jungle, desert," he writes, "are not magic words because we have been 'conditioned' to find them such but because they stand for things which only conditioning can make seem indifferent or alien. How could the part be greater than the whole? How can nature's meaning come wholly from man when he is only part of that meaning? 'Only in ourselves does nature live' is less true than its opposite: 'Only in nature do *we* have a being."

Returning to Darwin and Darwinism: here, we feel, are valuable and suggestive paragraphs:

> Since Darwin's day the fact that evolution did, somehow or other, take place has been made overwhelmingly clear. Because that fact could not really be doubted, most students felt compelled to accept what seemed to be the best available explanation of "how" it could possibly have happened. Yet the fact remains that a great many

students have been just a little unhappy about that "how" and that a good deal of the work which has been done since Darwin's day has been concerned with an attempt to make the whole thing seem a little more credible.

All of this helps. But one might as well admit also that the work done since Darwin constitutes a tacit admission on the part of the investigators that they would feel a bit more comfortable about the whole business if it could be made less hard to swallow, that quite possibly there is some factor operating which has not been taken proper account of.

Many would admit that most of the difficulties could be made to vanish if only we might assume the intrusion of some factor not wholly accidental and mechanical. If there were only some intelligence, however feeble; some intention, however dim; some power of choice, however weak, which the evolving organism could have used to take advantage of the opportunities which chance provided. If only, in other words, the whole process of evolving life were not assumed to be so lifeless.

Nevertheless, most of the scientists who would even admit the convenience of such an assumption are aghast at the suggestion that it might be made. They throw up their hands in horror crying, "Theology," "Vitalism," "Lamarckian nonsense," and the rest. There is no evidence, they say.

The more one comes to understand the mechanisms, the more amazing becomes the fact that they exist. And one must be very easily satisfied if one is satisfied to be told that they "evolved." With every passing year it becomes more difficult to understand why or how evolution operates. Fact after fact proves that the whole process is much more complicated than Darwin imagined, and that the great mystery is not that changing conditions called for new adaptations but that the power to respond to the demands in certain ways, but not in others, was potential in living organisms. It is not ignorance but knowledge which is the mother of wonder.

The qualities of endurance and austerity are not easily written about, yet it may be that at no time in history have men needed so much to probe their meaning. Krutch, in his desert setting, finds a manner of discussing these aspects of the heroism the world has always loved—or at the very least respected. His conclusions and feelings come, not as a kind of "hot gospel," but rather as intimate revelations which cannot be gainsaid, and which he offers because their obvious truth cries out for sharing.

COMMENTARY
DEMOCRATIC DILEMMA

THERE is one point in Dwight Macdonald's criticism of *Speak Truth to Power* which needs further development and examination. He says that the activities of pacifists "can only weaken our preparation of armed force and our use, or threat to make use, of it," adding:

> The bigger the pacifist minority (up to the time it is large enough to influence our foreign policy) the greater its value as a fifth column working in the interests of the enemy (though of course not as an agent and with completely different aims).

There is of course some truth in this. What could be worse for the emotional polarization necessary to military morale than any kind of diffidence as to whether or not the war is "right"? State policies toward pacifists and conscientious objectors reflect thorough awareness of this problem. There is a plain tendency on the part of modern governments—even liberal governments like the United States and Britain—to insist that conscientious objectors qualify on purely "religious" grounds. In other words, the pacifists have much greater hope of toleration so long as they predicate their labors for peace and their claims to exemption from military service on *irrational* grounds. Administrators of the draft laws want pacifists to be regarded as religious eccentrics whose views have no support from reason. In this way, their influence can be made negligible, even if they are not wholly sealed off from contact with the general public. During World War II, a British tribunal eyed narrowly a candidate for exemption on conscientious grounds, asking: "Are you sure you haven't *reasoned* about your position?"

This situation returns us to the problem of war and justice. If *reason* is something to be feared by governments in wartime, then not only pacifists, but any man who reasons about the war, may threaten the public morale. The pacifists, perhaps, when they seek to be rational in their objections, could be charged with being a particular menace, since their contentions may be implemented with the direct action of refusing to fight, and also, because they can hardly conceal the moral overtones of their condemnation of war, which might cause deep disturbance in the population. But similar if less stringent charges could be directed against any man who opposes a particular war on the ground that it is essentially unjust in purpose and will be unjust in consequences.

As the threat of war increasingly becomes the threat of utter annihilation, a reasoned opposition to war will thus become increasingly "dangerous," to the point where no sort of objection can be tolerated, lest the national war effort be weakened. Simple survival will then require all governments to adopt the role of infallibility, even when men who themselves harbor secret doubts are at the helm of affairs. The individual, then, pacifist or not, will not be permitted to cherish thoughts about justice. His government cannot afford to have citizens around who vaccilate on questions about justice, and he cannot afford to have such thoughts himself, if he wishes to remain at large.

Admittedly, this is a "Greek Kalends" sort of analysis. We have not yet arrived at so desperate a condition. Men like Macdonald are certainly entitled to insist upon the pluralists' right to reject this somewhat compulsive extrapolation of the rising totalitarian curve. In an imperfect world, we may be obliged to accept imperfect solutions of our problems. We dare not risk revolutionary and all-embracing measures from which no retreat is possible.

But if, on the other hand, the pacifists should be right, then all the criticisms now made against them become counter-charges against the critics themselves—charges, moreover, which are weighted with some degree of responsibility for another war, perhaps an atomic war, with its accompanying desolation of a large part of the world.

The bitter part of all this is that even the pacifists may find difficulty in acknowledging the existence of a terrible dilemma in relation to the decision about war. The non-rational pacifists can make no such admission without doubting their own religious inspiration, and the rational non-pacifists can hardly give serious consideration to the pacifist argument without entertaining, at least tentatively, precisely the sort of doubts which are prohibited by the need for unquestioning national unity.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

HAVING lately spent some time with the controversial aspects of "modern" theories of education, it is natural for us to turn to a related and equally complex subject—juvenile delinquency. The present writer was recently both startled and puzzled by discovering that the "problem" of juvenile delinquency is of absorbing interest to teen-agers themselves, as revealed by a request that it be taken up for informal discussion in a youth organization. Since none of the teen-agers in this group were delinquents or near to that classification, why an urge to read about and discuss the subject? Part of the answer would seem to be that "real adventure" unfortunately finds few outlets today, and delinquency at least *sounds* adventurous. If children who live conventionally constructive lives are curious about "anti-social behavior" among their contemporaries, it is small wonder that others brought up in less favorable environments are tempted to carry the "interest" a little further. Reports from theaters in the Los Angeles area indicate that the film version of *Blackboard Jungle* gained an emotional response in which lawlessness attained additional glamour. Clearly, it does little good to present the virtues of being law-abiding by means which dramatize lawlessness—at least, so long as psychic propensities for excitement are as high-keyed as they are today.

We have for comparison two contrasting opinions on the causes of delinquency, but before presenting them, cite the following survey of the problem from the *Christian Century* for Sept. 14:

> In a day when chemicals lay down the best screen, everyone knows that even the thickest smokes do not necessarily mean fire. But in this case not even the swirling clouds of consternation and conversation about juvenile delinquency can suggest the extent of the terrible fires behind them. In July 1953 Attorney General Herbert Brownell, Jr., warned that in 1954 one million children would be arrested for some crime or other. This summer Benjamin Fine, education editor of the *New York Times*, announces in the title of his brand new book, *One Million Delinquents (*World Publishing Co., $4.00), that Mr. Brownell was conservative in his estimate.
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> In 1955 we will have well over a million delinquents, and the prospect is for 2 million per year by 1960—now four-plus years away. The incidence of crime in the United States is way out ahead of the incidence of people: population has increased 5 per cent since 1950 while crime has leaped ahead 20 per cent in the same period. That is bad enough, but this is worse: in 1953 the adult crime rate increased 1.9 per cent, while the crime rate of children under eighteen increased 7.9 per cent.

Some writers on this subject speak with great assurance, apparently confident—with a faith not shared by the editors of MANAS—that the whole matter of delinquency is quite simply explained and controlled without great difficulty. The *Saturday Evening Post* columnist, Mario Pei, gives one example, and a Dorothy Thompson article in the *Ladies' Home Journal* supplies another, in which, however, the points stressed are considerably different.

In the Pei diagnosis and solution, which follows, how much is truth, how much half-truth, and how much misleading? Pei writes:

> As a man who once taught elementary and high-school teen-agers for close to twenty years, I know that there is one quality above all others that the growing boy wants and respects in the grown-up world. That quality is not "love." It is not "sympathy." It is not even "understanding," save in a special sense. What he really wants and respects is justice.
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> Not justice in the wishy-washy sense in which it was once outlined by a young and enthusiastic assistant district attorney to a panel of the New York grand jury on which I sat. We listened in growing amazement and skepticism while he described the wonder-working plan whereby youths of fourteen to sixteen guilty of serious crimes were given a little lecture, then remanded in the custody of their parents, and even had their crimes erased from the police blotter, so that they would not suffer "psychological traumas" comparable to the physical outrages they had visited on others.
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> The kind of justice the teen-ager wants is that which is prescribed by a code that he must follow, under penalties that need not be cruel or unduly severe, but must have certainty. To such a code he will subscribe, as proved by both the gangs and the Army. When the youngster gets into either, he does not violate their codes, because he knows they are rigidly enforced. He wants a system of rewards and punishments, with the assurance of both. This is

because he considers himself to be not a child, but an adult.

Successful teachers are those who recognize this fact, set down the law and stick to it. It doesn't have to be—in fact, it shouldn't be—a harsh law. Merely a just law, universally and rightly enforced. Treat the youngsters, from age seven up, as normal human beings. Tell them what is expected of them. Tell them what will happen if they don't live up to it. And see that it unfailingly happens.

Give the kids a sense of normal human responsibility. Don't encourage them to think of themselves as irresponsible "children," beyond the reach of law and discipline, and therefore authorized to do anything that enters their minds, without restraint or inhibition. Let them know that they are responsible for their own actions, and that "underprivilege" is no more of an excuse than "overprivilege" is a license to do wrong.

Dorothy Thompson's article seems to ignore the fact that the ideal of a "child-centered school" is now largely replaced by the conception of the "social-centered school." In any case, Miss Thompson's emphasis on patient education of the emotions towards social responsibility is very different from that of Mr. Pei. She says:

Any one who takes the trouble daily to compile from any great metropolis newspaper reports of legal misdemeanors and crimes committed by minors will be appalled at what he accumulates in a month, and national and local statistics enlarge the story. Whenever a peculiarly savage and senseless crime occurs, the public is mobilized; calls are issued for more law-enforcement agencies, more public expenditures for youth clubs, better co-ordination of social agencies, and the appointment of a new committee. Citizens assess the causes; the schools blame homes and churches; the parents blame the schools; the sociologists blame "living conditions," and so ad infinitum, in a circle that only gets back to where it started.

Yet I submit that the fault lies primarily in one place: in education; and that the basic fault is a misconception of the *purpose* of education, and the means by which it can be effected.

This misconception rests on the thesis that knowledge is the source of power, in the individual and in a society; that a sufficiently "informed" population is capable of satisfactory self-government; that conduct is primarily controlled by reason; and that the purpose of education is to create "individuals efficient in their own interest."

I put this phrase in quotation marks because it is not mine.

Fully a generation ago I read a book by the British sociologist, Benjamin Kidd, called *The Science of Power*. It was written during the early stage of the First World War and is long out of print. I only lately reobtained the volume, which had been borrowed from me and not returned.

Benjamin Kidd observed, then, the growing savagery in Western society—the savagery of class and international conflicts, the ever-increasing savagery of war and the ever-growing cult of naked force, accompanying enormous material and scientific progress. He believed the eventual result would be the decline and fall of Western civilization, in which prediction he was by no means alone.

Power in a society, he declared—the force that makes for survival—rests upon the transmission and improvement of the cultural inheritance, and this transmission and refinement is not accomplished by the training of the individual intellect, the inculcation of skills or the arguments of reason, but by the "emotion of the ideal," awakened in very small children—in whom he believed it was inherent and natural—and cultivated to maturity. The ideal is always social and sacrificial. It is the "other-regarding" emotion, that subordinates the interests of the individual to the interests of the community; the interest to succeed to the interest to achieve; the interest to get to the impulse to give; the interest of the present to the interest of the future; the instinct of aggression to the instinct of altruistic protectiveness.

Here, it seems to us, are two basically different theories of educational conditioning, Mr. Pei's implicit assumption is that a strict system of rewards and punishments offers the only sensible way of preventing destructive behavior. Dorothy Thompson, on the other hand, while also proposing a "conditioning" approach, would attempt to awaken altruism in the child by nurturing his "social emotions." We submit that the premises of most educators fall into one of these two categories—and are inadequate for this reason. So, again, discussion, please, on this ever more pressing problem of juvenile delinquency.

FRONTIERS

Authority in Child-Rearing

THE problems of child-rearing seem on the surface to be very much like the problems of government. Both involve the regulation of behavior, and both find it necessary to create some source of authority by which right or correct behavior can be determined. The fundamental difference between governmental functions and parental functions is in the obligation of parents to provide a flow of influence which reaches beyond the scope of not only restraint, but "direction," as well—which may inspire the child to the exercise of freedom and to the search for his own version of a worth-while life. When government presumes to define the "worth-while life," the society is already well on the way toward an authoritarian or absolutist type of social order. Further, since government is itself conditioned by its familiar activities in controlling overt behavior—such as police and military functions—the representatives of government, when speaking of ideals, are almost certain to embody them in the forms of social conformity and "order." By a parallel reasoning, the family which finds no better conception of the good life for their children than conformity, or obedience, is a family suffering from bankruptcy of imagination and the higher human qualities.

Whenever there is a trend of this sort in a society, theories of human development and character formation usually emerge to support it, although not necessarily inspired by Machiavellian intent. The American novelist, Conrad Richter, has recently published a book, *The Mountain on the Desert*, which has a critical passage on such theories. The protagonist of this philosophical story, Michael, answers the questions of some visiting students:

> "You sound like you don't believe in modern theories about man?"
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> "I'm just a peasant with mud from the field still on my boots," Michael said. "I've worked so long with my hands that my head's too slow to follow the leader through a lot of hoops. I have to stop and see where I'm at. Also where the leader's at. If his feet aren't standing where he thinks they are, it means he hasn't found the right answers yet. For me, anyway."
>
> "What are the right answers?"
>
> "On what theory?" Michael asked patiently, "They're good many and they change."
>
> "Some haven't changed so much," Carl said. "For instance, the theory that if you have a bad childhood, it doesn't do you any good."
>
> "He means that adult illness is often caused by suffering or insecurity in childhood," Dennis pointed out.
>
> Michael was silent.
>
> "Well, what do you say?" Carl asked.
>
> "I'd say," Michael answered thoughtfully, "that this is a very acceptable theory to social sciences and the state. All they need do is bring up children by their own approved methods. Then in another generation the whole citizenry will be healthy, normal and perfect."
>
> "It doesn't sound like you think much of it?" Carl said suspiciously.
>
> "If you mean, is it true to a peasant like me, I have to say no. Now understand, even a peasant notices that unpleasant things happen to children and that it leaves some of them afflicted. But the peasant also notices that the afflicted child may have a brother or sister who had the same father and mother and insecure home life.
>
> "The same unpleasant things happened to him. But often he stays normal and unaffected so far as you can see. He may even have been the one shown less love and affection while the one afflicted may have been shown more. . . ."

The point, here, is not that the influences surrounding children early in life have no importance, but that they are; not *all*-important. If you think that children are entirely shaped by their environment, the planning of their nurture will leave no room for the factor of unexplained individuality, with the eventual result of an educational system that is completely authoritarian in assumption and intent. Educators will feel themselves responsible for final definitions of the "good life," and politicians will require the

educators to make definitions which subserve the purposes of authoritarian government. Education and politics, in short, will become practically indistinguishable.

It would be easy, of course, to identify tendencies of this sort in the activities of people now seeking political control of education in the United States, and easier still to point to Soviet Russia as a place where both education and scientific research are oriented by political dogmas. Such pessimism, however, if left unrelieved, would distort the picture. Authoritarianism in education has been a constant factor in the educational problems of every society, beginning with the trial and death of Socrates. The truly significant thing about the present educational scene is the increasing awareness of the anti-human character of such dogmas in education. A few years ago, not many writers would go so far as to challenge not only the totalism of conditioning in the formation of children's character, but also the validity of the assumptions on which this theory is based. Conrad Richter, however, calls to witness against the conditioning theory the everyday experience of ordinary people with their children.

But if conditioning does not shape the whole man, what other factors (besides heredity) are at work? Richter is willing to leave these unknown causes to "God," as at least a tentative explanation, while pursuing the question further. A more fruitful approach might be to locate the secret of human individuality in an "X-factor" in *man*.

Recognition of an X-factor in human beings has a transforming effect on both the theory and practice of education, best illustrated, perhaps, in American culture, by the work of Bronson Alcott. Elizabeth Peabody gives this account of something said by Alcott:

> A little boy exclaimed, "I never knew I had a mind until I came to this school," and a great many more burst out with the same idea. I asked a very little boy, who I think has improved his intellect more perhaps than any other child in the school, if he knew he had a mind before he came to this school. He said, Yes. I then asked him if he ever thought before. He said, Yes. If he ever thought about his thought? He said with a bright smile, No! If he liked to think about his thoughts? He said, Yes.

Unfortunately, the abandonment of authoritarian theories of education does not lead automatically to views like Alcott's. Friend of Emerson and Thoreau, Alcott was primarily a Platonist in his conception of the nature of man. The X-factor, for him, was probably something in the nature of a pre-existing *soul* from which the teacher seeks to evoke expression. Without positive ideas about the dignity of man as an inner reality in every child, both parents and teachers are likely to fall back on an entirely different method of dealing with the young. In the United States, for example, during the past thirty years, the removal of authoritarian methods in the public schools has been salutary in the lower grades, but leaving a void in those areas of life which outside authority once governed. Erich Fromm has some interesting observations to make in *The Sane Society* on this transition, as affecting not only children and education, but Western culture generally. When authority is *overt*, he writes:

> You know who orders and forbids: the father, the teacher, the boss, the king, the officer, the priest, God, the law, the moral conscience. The demands or prohibitions may be reasonable or not, strict or lenient, I may obey or rebel; I always know that there is an authority, who it is, what it wants, and what results from my compliance or my rebellion.
>
> Authority in the middle of the twentieth century has changed its character; it is not overt authority, but *anonymous, invisible, alienated authority.* Nobody makes a demand, neither a person, nor an idea, nor a moral law. Yet we all conform, as much or more than people in an intensely authoritarian society would. Indeed, nobody is an authority except *"It."* What is *It?* Profit, economic necessities, the market, common sense, public opinion, what *"one"* does, thinks, feels. The laws of anonymous authority are as invisible as the laws of the market—and just as unassailable. Who can attack the invisible? Who can rebel against Nobody?

> The disappearance of overt authority is clearly visible in all spheres of life. Parents do not give commands any more; they suggest that the child "will want to do this." Since they have no principles or convictions themselves, they try to guide the children to do what the law of conformity expects, and often, being older and hence less in touch with "the latest," they learn from the children what attitude is required. The same holds true in business and in industry; you do not give orders, you "suggest"; you do not command, you coax and manipulate. Even the American army has accepted much of the new form of authority. The army is propagandized as if it were an attractive business enterprise; the soldier should feel like a member of a "team," even though the hard fact remains that he must be trained to kill and be killed.
>
> As long as there was overt authority, there was conflict, and there was rebellion—against irrational authority. In the conflict with the demands of one's conscience, in the fight against irrational authority, the personality developed—specifically the sense of self developed. I experience myself as "I" because I doubt, I protest, I rebel. Even if I submit and sense defeat, I experience myself as "I"—I the defeated one. But if I am not aware of submitting or rebelling, if I am ruled by an anonymous authority, I lose the sense of self, I become a "one," a part of the "It." The mechanism through which the anonymous authority operates is *conformity*. . . .

So, without a philosophy of man, we capitulate to the faceless masters of custom, habit, and mechanically applied theories of freedom and "self-expression," with the result that we bind up our minds with the subtle bonds of unoriginality, and find, at the same time, that we have nothing really important to "express." This is the tragedy of twentieth-century society—tragic in itself, and tragic, again, in the general ignorance of what has happened. One may regard the situation as the decadent phase of the democratic revolution, or, to make a more hopeful construction, say that it represents the challenge of the kind of revolution that is needed to preserve our hard-won freedoms.