

BOOKS FOR OUR TIME: III

RECOGNIZING that all reading lists are of necessity arbitrary, representing the temperamental and philosophical predilections of the compiler, we have nonetheless contended that the importance of certain *types* of books to all thinking men is plainly demonstrable. Our list of recommendations for the purposes of this series, published in MANAS for Feb. 4, focussed on writings which offer easily understandable explanations of transformations of thinking which are taking place—and which were inevitably due in our time. The volumes so far considered here, Macneile Dixon's *Human Situation* and Erich Fromm's *Psychoanalysis and Religion*, are both concerned with that basic reevaluation of thought demanded by a culture which has discovered the inadequacy of both orthodox religious and orthodox scientific traditions.

Since 1937, when *The Human Situation* was first published, more and more people have apparently come to realize the importance of Dixon's observations, as the slow awakening to man's present internal "alienation from the orthodoxies" has proceeded. The original printing of Dixon's volume, for instance, sold so poorly that, despite its scholarly prestige as one of the famous Gifford Lecture series, copies were being peddled by over-stock dealers at the price of a dollar. Eventually, however, new requests for the book began to filter in to the publishers, finally in such number that orders could not be filled. Today *The Human Situation* has been through ten printings in both British and American editions, while with each year the puzzled publishers must have wondered when the volume would pass out of public interest. Erich Fromm's works, too, not only yearly, but even monthly, are receiving wider and wider attention. If, then, these books have the importance which we have attributed to them, it seems fair to say that the twentieth century is becoming interested in understanding what kind of a world of ideas may now be coming to birth.

Karen Horney, author of *The Neurotic*

Personality of Our Time, is a key transitional figure in the history of psychoanalytic literature, her work partially stemming from and nicely complementing Fromm's philosophic treatises. So far in this series we have chiefly emphasized those aspects of Dixon's and Fromm's works which hold forth the hope of a future in which man, for so long and in so many ways "Prometheus bound," may become Prometheus liberated. Dixon held that "the stage of full reflective self-consciousness" had not arrived, and that the foreshortened views of man's nature and destiny to which we had become accustomed were simply the consequence of too much theology and too little "reflection"—of too much submissiveness to pretentious moral authorities and too little "casting of our own spears" of aspiration. Dixon saw the possibilities of the human future as just barely beginning to unfold possibilities of the mind and spirit. Erich Fromm obviously feels, too, that man—just plain, individual man—is worth infinitely more than he has usually thought himself to be worth, and that he has immense hidden resources waiting to be tapped. Fromm also suggested the ways in which a universal language of the soul might be developed. Such a language, if successful in eliminating unnecessary boundaries between "religion" and "science," "philosophy" and "psychology," would be able to unite men in a brotherhood of mutual understanding beyond divisive creeds and ideologies.

But both Dixon and Fromm were well aware that the glorious future they envisioned as possible was not just around the corner. Authoritarianism, in subtle as well as obvious shapes—in any dogma, for instance, proclaiming man's innate weakness and hence *need* for authority—inhibits us from honouring ourselves or trusting our fellows. There is, then, a strongly entrenched host of psychological "enemies" to be vanquished before the majority of humans can emerge into sunlight. Karen Horney shows what these enemies, holding sway over long centuries, have done to distort interpersonal relationships, just as Dixon showed their effect upon man's imaginative

powers, and Fromm their effect upon religion and psychology. We practice the authoritarianisms in our daily lives, and are both victims and victimizers of our social surroundings. Our family existence, the loves and friendships from which we expect so much, are frequently tainted—but unnecessarily so.

Dr. Horney's *Neurotic Personality*, her first major English work, suggested broad sociological and ethical extensions of modern psychological discovery. Her clinical experience had convinced her that a philosophical rendering of psychiatric knowledge could inspire *self-discovery*, and become a major liberating force for the deeper human aspirations. But "self-discovery," she perceived, is never possible until one has learned to consider the dominant values of one's society in critical perspective, since man unaware of the confining ideas which tend to condition his own values is man in bondage to the limitations of his culture. Thus *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* is an examination of the interrelationship of personal and social trends towards neurosis. The neuroses of Society are simply the neuroses of the individual writ large, while, conversely, the originally "sane" man may easily succumb to the insanities of his environmental heritage.

Dr. Horney's first work has been followed by several supplemental volumes, but it is interesting to note that, while nearly all libraries have it, *The Neurotic Personality* is often virtually unobtainable due to continual demand. (The Los Angeles Public Library recently told a prospective borrower that all seventeen of its copies of *Neurotic Personality* were signed out.) Apparently, Dr. Horney's book, issued in 1937, as was Dixon's *Human Situation*, has been attracting greater interest with each passing year among thinkers and writers, and serving as an educative reference-point for psychiatrists and laymen alike.

Dr. Horney says little in *Neurotic Personality* that has not by this time been repeated by a score of psychological writers. Nor was she the only one to sense some of the broad, social implications of discoveries made in study of psychological abnormalities. Harry Stack Sullivan and Trigant Burrow, for instance, shared her views, and

proffered their own valuable developments of the same central thesis. But although it is difficult to single out as unique any one of the important transitional volumes in this field, we find it still more difficult to locate any work which betters Dr. Horney's presentation of a comprehensive groundwork for social analysis. For the newcomer to psychiatric literature, particularly, the *Neurotic Personality* is well adapted, since, in 1937, it was not possible for psychoanalytic authors to take for granted the reader's familiarity with the nomenclature of social psychology.

It is now necessary to attempt an answer to two questions which by this time may have arisen naturally: First, precisely what is the "transition" in psychiatric philosophy, of which we present Karen Horney's first major work as representative? Second, what is "cultural neurosis"?

Psychiatry is concerned with the cure of psychic ailments. Freud's work began with "hysterics," as a wide variety of seriously disturbed persons used to be called. The problem, on the face of it, was to find ways to restore these victims of psychic disorder to a normal relationship with surrounding conditions. Freud was a persistent and uncompromising man. Intensely dissatisfied with shotgun methods, such as hypnosis, as means for securing "adjustment," he perceived that whenever the original cause of the neuroticism was left untouched, when treatment dealt only with symptoms, another personality dislocation—perhaps of a slightly different order—was bound to appear. In the healing of neurotics and psychotics, he concluded, the patients must be helped to help themselves, which meant, specifically, becoming able to understand the *causes* of unbalance. The affirmative side of Freud's emphasis here enters in the form of a belief that whenever a man can perceive, objectively, the causes of his own disturbance, he has a fair chance to weather the storms they produce. Freud also "discovered" a new kind of brotherhood, for he found that he himself, and most men, most of the time, were plagued by "repressions," "complexes," neurotic promptings of one kind or another, and, save for a difference in degree, were near to being "mental patients," whether aware of the fact or not.

While Freud emphasized the temporal location of childhood in describing what all we neurotics have in common, Karen Horney foresaw a dangerous delusion incipient in thinking that neuroses were almost invariably produced in childhood—although we agree with Erich Fromm that Dr. Horney slighted Freud's understanding of neurosis-producing societal patterns. But at any rate her special emphasis, too, has been particularly rewarding. She claimed that tension-producing, inconsistent cultural situations can cause neuroses to originate at any time of life, and, in pointing this out, she extended modern awareness of the "normal" man's kinship with the neurotic. Further, her explorations of the social origins of neurosis led to a philosophy of responsibility toward those who suffer dislocations of personality; unless we strive to clear up the cultural neuroses of our time, we will continue to *produce* neurotics, and must hold ourselves in degree accountable for the swelling numbers of mental patients.

In her discussion of "inhibitions"—an inhibition being defined as the inability to do, feel, or think certain things; in other words, an effective block to the full use of our perceptive and reasoning powers—she points out that "it may be impossible ever to become aware of personal inhibitions if they coincide with culturally approved forms of inhibitions or with existing ideologies." For example, "an inhibition against critical thinking about dogmas dominant in politics or religion or any specific field of interest may escape attention, and we may be entirely unaware of the existence of an anxiety concerning exposure to punishment, criticism or isolation."

In this light, Dr. Horney's discussions of our common cultural contradictions become especially illuminating. Here, we discover, she is not so much *telling us* that many neuroses have a social origin, as *showing* that they do, with evidence which leads the reader to see that the conclusion is inescapable. Thus, at least in her first work, Dr. Horney's method was carefully scientific, leaving her invulnerable to charges that she was simply exploiting a pet thesis. In her concluding chapter she writes:

There are certain typical difficulties inherent in

our culture, which mirror themselves as conflicts in every individual's life and which, accumulated, may lead to the formation of neuroses.

According to existing ideologies success is due to our own intrinsic merits, or in religious terms, is a visible sign of the grace of God; in reality it is dependent on a number of factors independent of our control—fortuitous circumstances, unscrupulousness, and the like. Nevertheless, under the pressure of the existing ideology, even the most normal person is constrained to feel that he amounts to something when successful, and is worthless if he is defeated. Needless to say, this presents a shaky basis for self-esteem.

The same cultural factors that affect the normal person—leading him toward a shaky self-esteem, potential hostile tension, apprehensiveness, competitiveness entailing fear and hostility, enhanced need for satisfactory personal relations—affect the neurotic to a higher degree and in him the same results are merely intensified—a crushed self-esteem, destructiveness, anxiety, enhanced competitiveness entailing anxiety and destructive impulses, and excessive need for affection.

In every neurosis there are contradictory tendencies. The contradictions embedded in our culture are precisely the conflicts which the neurotic struggles to reconcile: his tendencies toward aggressiveness and his tendencies toward yielding; his excessive demands and his fear of never getting anything; his striving toward self-aggrandizement and his feeling of personal helplessness. The difference from the normal is merely quantitative. While the normal person is able to cope with the difficulties without damage to his personality, in the neurotic all the conflicts are intensified to a degree that makes any satisfactory solution impossible.

It seems that the person who is likely to become neurotic is one who has experienced the culturally determined difficulties in an accentuated form, mostly through the medium of childhood experiences, and who has consequently been unable to solve them, or has solved them only at great cost to his personality. We might call him a stepchild of our culture.

To illustrate how *Neurotic Personality* furnishes a clear, fundamental tone of social-neurosis analysis, to which other and later works play perfect counterpoint, we append a passage from essays collected by Charles B. Thompson in *Our Common Neurosis* (reviewed last week in MANAS). The

writer is here speaking of the tendency of every generation to encyst itself in characteristic distortions of outlook, which inevitably lead to neurotic manifestations among those most torn by the resulting ethical dilemmas:

The disease that afflicts us most is the disease we do not want to rid ourselves of. The disease that is the secret is the secret of the disease. But how infinitely more illusive must be a disease the secret of which is lodged in a social compact among many individuals.

There is a malady prevalent among us that is unrecognized but of exceeding virulence. This malady is social. It is mental. Not only does it invade the tissues of the individual but it permeates the entire social organism. This social disorder is our obsessive self-interest and its secret maintenance by each of us at the expense of the interest of others. This obsessive self-interest or interest in one's own advantage must be kept secret. The nations that fight for what is right must keep secret from one another what they really know—that each is fighting for a hidden wrong and that his real "right" is but the secret of his private interest and monopoly.

This disease of society with its symptomatic expressions in our industrial possessivism and in our social paroxysms of war, based as they are upon the ever-present secret claims of one individual upon another, can only be envisaged rationally by the societally united mind of the community as a whole. These disorders of our common social organism will then be as clearly recognized clinically as we now recognize clinically the disorders of the individual insane.

Turning from societal considerations to the field of interpersonal relations, Dr. Horney also provides excellent focal points for reflection. What she has elsewhere called "the vicious circle of alienation from self," so often set in motion by prevalent ideologies and behavior patterns, results in man actually becoming what medieval theology insisted he is—a weak and "sinful" creature. "When the real self is 'locked out' or exiled, one's *integrating power* will be at low ebb," she writes, and thus his capacity to either give or receive genuine affection can be all but destroyed:

Competitiveness and its potential hostilities between fellow-beings, fears, diminished self-esteem—result psychologically in the individual

feeling that he is isolated. Even when he has many contacts with others, even when he is happily married, he is emotionally isolated. Emotional isolation is hard for anyone to endure; it becomes a calamity, however, if it coincides with apprehensions and uncertainties about one's self.

It is this situation which provokes, in the normal individual of our time, an intensified need for affection as a remedy. Obtaining affection makes him feel less isolated, less threatened by hostility and less uncertain of himself. Because it corresponds to a vital need, love is overvalued in our culture. It becomes a phantom—like success—carrying with it the illusion that it is a solution for all problems. Love itself is not an illusion—although in our culture it is most often a screen for satisfying wishes that have nothing to do with it—but it is made an illusion by our expecting much more of it than it can possibly fulfill. And the ideological emphasis that we place on love serves to cover up the factors which create our exaggerated need for it. Hence the individual—and I still mean the normal individual—is in the dilemma of needing a great deal of affection but finding difficulty in obtaining it. The situation thus far represents a fertile ground for the development of neuroses.

These things, we submit, are self-evident to the reflective man, but only when he has the strength to transcend *status quo* perspectives. *The Neurotic Personality of Our Time* has helped many to gain courage for the ascent, and, moreover, is an excellent point of departure for the study of other and later literature dealing with the same problems. One who has read and pondered Dr. Horney's first book can best appreciate and profit by her later writings, the last of which appeared in 1950 (she died in 1952) under the title, *Neurosis and Human Growth*. Similarly, *Neurotic Personality* aids one to get the most from the works of Erich Fromm, Harry Stack Sullivan, H. O. Overstreet and Rollo May. In Overstreet's words, the growing realization of the dangerous psychic immaturities of our culture now makes it possible for an increasing number of people to see that "when psychiatrists venture to speak of *cultural neurosis* they are not using a mere figure of speech."

REVIEW

TWO UNUSUAL THEMES

AMONG the many distinctions and sub-distinctions which may be made in classifying fiction is the differentiation between the themes which challenge our preconceptions and the themes which reinforce them. It seems clear enough, too, that the literature which challenges our thinking and habits of evaluation is, in the long run, by far the most rewarding. Nearly all the novels on "great book" lists have this quality in common, for good reason.

The "challenging" story, of course, does not make good "escape" reading. We have known of people who in anger have thrown books half way across the room because what they were reading implied there was something to be questioned about their own ideas. To use a homely simile, most escapist readers like to have their fur pleasantly stroked, not ruffled, nor scratched for fleas. Both Dostoevsky and Tolstoy have made some of their readers angry, but have been appreciated by others who recognized that literature can and should help to *break* molds of mind.

Mention of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy may seem a bit pretentious in introduction of two recent novels, *Death Goes Hunting*, by Chris Massie, and *The Night Thorn*, by Ian Gordon, but whatever the failings of these books, both do much to jog accepted notions and feelings. *Death Goes Hunting* is the story of a hanged murderer's fantastic journeys through the nether world, where, he discovers, most of the values of conventional society are inverted. His companions in this shadow land are nearly all murderers of some sort, since a kind of natural magnetic law seems to draw together those involved in similar circumstances. But in "Troy," as the capital of this invisible land is named, those who have killed in a positive burst of violent emotion are the most respected of the whole community. Relegated to serve inferior positions,

handling refuse, sewage, etc., are those guilty of more calculating homicides; further, in "Troy" it is recognized that the usurer, the exploiter in either commercial or political fields, no matter how respected he might have been on earth, is also a "murderer," for exploitation along deliberately selfish lines inevitably leads to someone's death—often the death of many—through famine, depression, war, etc.

The main figure in Massie's story, one Brodrribb, leaves behind him a despised wife and a cherished daughter; his killing of a young interloper in the family was occasioned by Brodrribb's conviction that the man was morally corrupting his home. Brodrribb refuses to subject the child to the witness stand, is convicted and executed. Then, after following his own body to the mortuary—and speculating on the futility of trying to kill murderers or anyone else—Brodrribb is met by the man he murdered.

A strange friendship ensues, since the latter has been appointed to show Brodrribb the way around Troy. In but a short time both have forgotten the circumstances leading to the original killing. In fact, in Massie's version, all of the dramatic incidents of earth life tend to drop out of memory after death, for they are regarded as being no more than incidents, seldom changing the course of the inner, real, life of the individual.

In proper story-book fashion, Brodrribb encounters a new light-o'-love in Troy, a girl as mysterious in her comings and goings as she is beautiful, but he is also fated to live in a boarding house managed by the ugliest female creature he had ever seen. Along with the many other things which develop in *Death Goes Hunting*, Brodrribb is finally prepared for the realization that the indescribably lovely girl and the horrible hag who so affronts his aesthetic sense are one and the same person. In other words, with all his notions about his capacity to love the inner self or "soul" of one for whom he feels affection, Brodrribb discovers that he has never fully realized how much of his earthly love was a matter of

possessiveness. Only after seeing that both the ugly and the beautiful must be accepted—and in their extremes, if necessary—in one that is loved, is he able to return with clarity to an evaluation of his relationship to his daughter. After passing these tests, Brodribb is finally able to "reach" his daughter and to comfort her, however indirectly, by his unseen presence.

"Troy" is really a city within a city, for its streets are interstices of the roads of London, and, passing back and forth between them, Brodribb has changed dimension rather than locality. London, incidentally, does not come off too well in this comparison, nor would, we suspect, the machinations hidden by the respectable facades of any other major urban center do better.

Mr. Massie is particularly effective in his psychological expose of the men who arrest and convict criminals, suggesting that many of those whose professions are connected with the bringing of criminals to justice are vampires of the most perverted sort, feeding upon the excitement and misery of men and women enmeshed in criminal circumstances. Brodribb finally comes to observe the man who prosecuted him, and, after watching him gloat over another successful conviction, discovers that since this "public servant" is on the verge of death from a stroke, communication with him is possible. What he says to Prosecutor Pholange is a good sample of Massie's tone and orientation:

"You are now getting justice where once you obtained only judgments—against others," continued Brodribb in a low voice. "Justice is not a medicine any fool can dispense and administer. It is an inflexible law that links time with eternity. It is the machine of fate that no legal procedure can hasten or hinder. It goes on unwinding. It is slow but certain. There is the death sentence and after it the judge asks mercy for the soul; but after death the machine continues to unwind, and there is no mercy either in time or eternity for the soul. Nor has the soul need of mercy. Its roots feel into the darkness, and it unfolds its beauty against the bitter irony of fate. *Brodribb is speaking who was hanged by the neck until he was dead. I am I. . . .* You, Leo Pholange, got into the

habit of thinking about human life as something you could handle and destroy. You flattered yourself that backed by a little luck and circumstantial evidence, you could send an innocent man to the gallows. You may, or may not have done so. But I do know you looked on life with the eyes of a murderer. You had the man-killer mind. I don't accuse you, for accusation is worth nothing, and gives no results. So don't blame me when you are dead. Try to look on the little affairs that concern you as part of some bigger concern, and you won't get on so badly after all."

Apart from such psychological notes on the anatomy of motive, Mr. Massie seems to be driving at two things: first, there is the suggestion that potent psychic remains of executed criminals may influence passive or receptive individuals yet alive, perhaps explaining the puzzling statistical records of numerous crimes, of the same nature as that punished by an execution, following in what may build up to a minor wave over a period of many months. (In such cases, incidentally, if we recall correctly the not-at-hand remarks of a criminologist, the tabloid reporting of all the details of the crime is unable to account entirely for these repetitions of the same offense, since some criminals who have seen no papers and others who hardly know how to read have at times reproduced "the act" in most of its details.) Second, Massie is trying to point out that if there be a future life, regardless of its nature, the-main problem for a man will be *facing himself*, and gaining the courage to reconsider the values he lived by. While Brodribb, in after-life, can immediately see what is wrong with London, it takes him a long time and 188 pages to learn to see and make moral diagnosis of himself.

Finally, in the case of this book, the publisher's "blurb" seems an apt summary of its mood: "*Death Goes Hunting* may be read as a work of intense individual artistic accomplishment, as a satire on our national hypocrisy, or as a thriller; but it is not written for babes and sucklings." (Incidentally, there is no "sex" in Troy—at least not for those who have lived there very long. Having passed beyond one

area of illusion by the shedding of the physical body, Troy's inhabitants express their yearnings and desires for personal satisfaction in non-carnal ways.)

Our second book, Ian Gordon's *The Night Thorn* (available in a pocket edition), revolves around the curious destiny of a light young Harlem girl who passed the color line on her eighteenth birthday, and a youth of dissolute, "nigger-hating," southern parentage. The boy falls in love with the girl, not knowing her lineage, and she, afraid to reveal her "racial secret," suffers his frequently expressed neurotic abuses of all things Negro. Yet strange affinities draw him to Harlem to share the company of a notorious Negro gangster. The unusual theme of *The Night Thorn* then begins to develop—the story of two people who *change racial identities* through transitions of psychological state. The boy identifies himself more and more with the Negroes he had once hated, while the girl gradually loses all *rapport* with this phase of her heredity. Bobby Deering is finally killed in a gang war. After shooting a policeman who menaces his Negro friends, Deering with his last breath expresses bitter hatred of typical white attitudes toward Negroes. The girl "lives white," though a Negro, while her white lover "dies Negro."

We don't know whether anyone else has attempted this complex development, or whether, if so, the quality of Gordon's work has been equalled, but we are sure that his approach adds interesting dimensions to the "racial question." Is it not quite possible that some of those who are fanatical about "race" differences might be fanatical precisely because their own temperamental inclinations are identical with those of the unpopular group? Such a speculation has the ring of likelihood.

The dramatic impact of *The Night Thorn* for the reader is chiefly in terms of a transition in feeling concerning the leading character who, at the beginning, is about as weak and neurotic as a spoiled youth can be, but who dies for the sake of

a loyalty which, if partisan, is still loyalty to something beyond himself. When the book began, any race riot would have found Bobby among the Negro baiters. At the conclusion he is fighting on "the other side," because he finally identifies himself with the feelings of his friends in the Negro world.

COMMENTARY

THE OTHER SIDE OF LIFE

ALTHOUGH, in recent years, writers seem to have been developing an increasing interest in the after-life, the subject is by no means a new one, its popularity for the West having been set by Dante Alighieri. What is distinctive, however, is the use of this theme by modern novelists as a vehicle for inventive moral psychology. There are, perhaps, two types of story on this subject. First, there is the work which suggests that the writer is himself intensely interested in the possibility of a life after death, in which the mechanisms of post-mortem existence seem related to some specific theory of survival, such as, for example, the doctrines of Plotinus, or those described by W. Y. EvansWentz in his rendering of *Bardo Thödol*, the Tibetan Book of the Dead. Books falling in this category are Basil King's *The Spreading Dawn*, published some thirty years ago, and the more recent *Johnson Over Jordan* by J. B. Priestley.

The other sort of after-death story is written by men who are not especially concerned with a particular theory of immortality, but who are attracted by the freedom to the imagination permitted by this theme. *The Vintage*, by Anthony West, might fall in this class, and Jean Paul Sartre's *The Chips Are Down*. From the reader's viewpoint, however, it does not seem to make too much difference whether the writer tells his tale out of personal conviction of life after death, or as an agnostic moralist who chooses to break away from the workaday world by means of an imaginative device: if the stories are intelligently conceived and sensitively developed, the doctrinal aspect becomes relatively unimportant, while the impact of psychological validity gains the basic assent of the reader.

On the basis of this week's review, we do not feel able to place *Death Goes Hunting* exclusively in either category, nor is there actual need to do so. We have sometimes wondered if "reality" ought not to be defined in psychological rather than material or even metaphysical terms, the

point, here, being that formal or circumstantial reality may easily become a "dead" affair, while psychological reality involves the dynamics of the mind in considering it—it is somehow "alive" and awakens a corresponding attention in the reader.

At any rate, most of the recent books with an after-death setting have been remarkably good, exercising a liberating influence on the mind. We hope there will be more of them

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

THAT it is as easy to find evidence of wisdom in our time, as of folly and tragedy, is a pleasant proposal, yet one not difficult to support. For example, in a brief article, almost a "note," in *Harper's* for April, Thornton Wilder concerns himself with charges directed at the current "younger generation," to the effect that these young people are a cautious, conservative lot, uneager for crusades and indifferent to causes. While some truth may be in these charges, a greater truth, we think, lies with Mr. Wilder's defense. Recalling the report of John Phillips in *The Second Happiest Day* (reviewed in *MANAS*, April 15) on the present rift between the older and younger generations, Mr. Wilder interprets the "dead-pan" traits of the young as a "guardedness" against their parents, and guardedness, he notes, is not "apathy." Whether or not he is right in concluding that a transition is proceeding in family "authority" from father to mother, with resulting confusions for the young, his primary observation seems accurate enough:

In all my reading I have discovered no age in which there was so great a gulf between parent and child. A seismic disturbance has taken place in the home.

Concerning the lack of interest displayed by youth in either shining or climbing, he says:

This generation is not impressed by any vested authority whatever. And their freedom to judge authority is accompanied by their willingness to be judged. Their caution reposes upon their unwillingness to exercise any authority or responsibility for which they do not feel themselves to be solidly prepared and adequate. They hate the false and they shrink from those conspicuous roles which all but inevitably require a certain amount of it. I find this trait very promising. Plato was the first to say that high place is best in the hands of those who are reluctant to assume it.

It is well, perhaps, to inscribe upon our memories as indelibly as we can a further fact noted by Mr. Wilder: ". . . these young people will be the first truly international men and women." They belong, not to the millions, but to the billions, and

they feel the reality of "one world" even while their elders mouth the expression. To them, not just some wars, but *all* wars, will seem to be civil wars:

The Army authorities go into anxious huddles over the unabashed candor with which young men can be heard exploring ways of avoiding military service. The Army—like the church, like the university—is an echoing gallery of outdated attitudes and sentiments. It still thinks soldiers can be coerced and it still thinks that the primary qualifications of a soldier are courage and obedience. In machine warfare, the soldier is a kind of engineer; his primary virtue is technical skill and his function is cooperation, not obedience.

Perhaps Mr. Wilder takes too bright a view of the young. His contacts may not be wide enough to give him acquaintance with a large enough sample of American youth. He admits to having just spent an ocean voyage with a boatload of "Fulbrights" in whom these traits "reappear constantly," and who seem determined "to live correctly by their lights and not by ours." Let us remember, however, that the winners of Fulbright scholarships come from all over the country, and that if they are the brightest of our youth, they may only reflect more articulately attitudes and opinions which are bubbling up on every campus in the land. Let us hope so.

One last note on this coming generation. In the matter of religion, Mr. Wilder finds its members more "interested in the nature of belief itself" than in creeds and zealotries. They may be a "silent generation," but they are not an unthinking one. And the failures of their parents—"The mistakes of the previous generations are writ large over the public prints"—have made them determined to think for themselves.

Not all the skepticism toward familiar means and methods lies with the new generation. An outspoken minority of critics—found especially among men trained in the Humanities—keeps up a running commentary on the insanity of imagining that to rehabilitate the present we have only to repeat more thoroughly the mistakes of the past. Last December, speaking before the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Cornelis W. de Kiewiet, president of the University

of Rochester, told the Conference on Scientific Manpower that—

The simple equation of a skilled manpower policy with the flow of soldiers, scientists, and engineers is both wrong and dangerous. The total policy of a nation is too important and complicated to be guided solely by the recommendations of generals and engineering deans. We could perhaps listen more readily to their statements if the physical force we now possess or can readily develop were really the measure of our power and influence in the modern world. Never in modern times has a nation possessed so much physical power and yet been so baffled in the conduct of its foreign policy. The vast sum of atomic bombs and jet airplanes, of guided missiles and super-carriers and retired generals, cannot release a single American citizen from a Czech prison, or secure a visa for an American scholar to visit Russia. (The outstanding discovery of the past few years was made by a journalist named Oatis. He discovered the powerlessness of the atom bomb.) Incomparably the most remarkable phenomenon in the modern world is precisely this lack of any equation between nuclear fission and the forces of history. A study of the experience of France or Great Britain in the past twenty-five years makes it plain that the compulsion to mobilize the total power of a nation in war is itself a defeat which an ultimate military victory cannot redress. Great Britain did not win the first world war in 1918. She lost it in 1914. To lose the peace is the great disaster. It is of the utmost importance for us to recognize that the pressure of events in the Arab world, in India, in China, and even in Africa, cannot be controlled or guided by the traditional forms of military action. . . .

It is not a shortage of engineers or atomic physicists that explains the bankruptcy of our China policy. If we have disastrously erred in the Far East, it is partly because American society had so few experts on China to whom it could turn for knowledge and counsel. Even of these few only a pitiful fraction was competent in knowledge or wise in counsel. At this moment we can only guess at the other disasters which ignorance and inexperience are preparing for us.

Mr. de Kiewiet's assurance in formulating these generalizations suggests that he can document them to the hilt. He happens to be a specialist in modern European history, and would probably be delighted if anyone would challenge him to support either his indictment of American foreign policy or his

conclusions about the futility of "victorious war." Concerning the attack on centers of learning, he speaks as both historian and prophet, and accurately, we think, in both respects:

In this country it is the marvel and the triumph of higher education that so few of its teachers and graduates have been dearly and basely faithless to their society. To those who plan to "investigate" the colleges it should be explained that there is no activity more blameworthy than to torture the dignity and destroy the confidence of those who think and write and teach. . . . At this point a very ancient piece of human experience must be made contemporary. The anger and the disaffection of the intellectual, once aroused, are a sword against which neither the purse of the rich nor the law of the mighty can ultimately prevail. A great society never declines but the signs are first plain in either the indifference or the hostility of its intellectuals. When frustrated men crucify scholars for not giving correct or pleasing answers to some of the most difficult problems of all history, then our voices must be raised in the defense of the learning and patience, the conscience, and the love of man which characterize scholarship at its best.

. . . if we do not defend the thought that deals with human life and its values, we may have to study the atomic bomb through our tears before we learn what these values are—that a man or a people has the right to stand in a dignified relationship to others, that the death and suffering of human beings in Uganda or China or Peru must cause sorrow in Chicago or Rome or Tokyo, that in today's world consent and congeniality are as greatly superior to coercion and conflict as was the sense of human community of the New Testament over the tribalism of the Old. (*Scientific Monthly*, February, 1953.)

There is a power in these words—the power of an acute mind addressed to the realities of human events and the causation behind them. And there is the power, also, of an awakened ethical perception, dealing with matters and values as tangible and real as any "physical" or "economic" fact. This is the sort of thinking that can be found without too much searching or difficulty in the modern world, and it is spreading, growing, and becoming the basis of the hopes of intelligent men, everywhere. It is the thinking which the youth of today may tomorrow attempt to put into practice.

FRONTIERS

Keeping Posted

WE have two "items" on which to report, both concerned with actions of the Government of the United States. One is a handy summary of the controversial provisions of the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, which, somewhat unseasonably, went into effect on Dec. 24. In *Science* for March 20, William A. W. Krebs and Carmel P. Ebb of the National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C., analyze the three sections of the McCarran Act which deal with the acceptability of both immigrants and visitors on political grounds, excluding from entrance to the United States the following classes of aliens:

1. Those who are believed by a consular officer or by the Attorney General to be seeking entry into the United States to engage in sabotage or attempted overthrow of the government, or to engage in other activities prejudicial to the public interest or endangering the safety of the United States. . . .

2. Those who are, or in the past have been, affiliated in a broad sense of the word with the Communist Party or any other organization that seeks to establish a totalitarian form of government in the U.S.

(The writers explain that, under the law, "any person who contributes or lends money to be used for advocating a doctrine is presumed to advocate the doctrine," and any person who gives or lends money to any organization is presumed to be affiliated with the organization.")

While exclusion on the first of the above grounds depends upon the finding of the consul or the Attorney General that an individual is likely to engage in sabotage or revolutionary activity, based upon, for example, membership in the Communist Party or some other subversive organization, exclusion on the second ground requires no judgment of what the individual *might* do upon entering the United States—"it rests upon the general conclusion embodied in the law that political affiliations of the kind described are likely to result in activities prejudicial to the public

interest, without further proof of intent or motive."

In the case of a visitor, these requirements may be relaxed by the Attorney General, provided he believes that the visit will be in the public interest; further, an alien who can show that he was forced into such political affiliation, to obtain the essentials of life, or who, "for at least five years prior to his application for a visa, actively opposed the doctrine, program, principles, and ideology of the organization in question, may be admitted," provided, again, that both the consular officer and the Attorney General agree that the entrance is in "the public interest."

The writers of this analysis repeat the rather obvious recommendation that the act be amended to deny entry only to those who are *presently* members of objectionable political organizations, to which might be added, as the MANAS German correspondent pointed out recently, that requiring an applicant to have been "actively opposed" to a group to which he had formerly belonged may be quite unjust to people who have no inclination to political activism—who have simply changed their minds.

While the abuses possible under this Act are plain enough, they might be illustrated by the ordeal to which a young German woman was subjected by the immigration authorities for some three years. Although the events of this case occurred before the McCarran Act became law, they are nevertheless suggestive of the processes involved in such restrictive legislation. This young woman, an anti-Nazi and a pacifist, came to the United States in 1939, undertaking studies in social psychology in an American university. (She has since earned a doctor's degree in this field.) When war with Germany broke out, she was obliged to register as an "enemy alien," although she was permitted to continue her studies, and allowed several renewals of her student visa. For a few months, at about the end of the war, she worked on a job with a private social service agency, but later in 1945 returned to the university

and asked that her status as student be restored. There were delays and correspondence back and forth with Washington, the net result being that, while she was never granted student status again, she was permitted to continue working for her degree in this country. Then, suddenly, in 1949, she was served with a warrant of arrest by an official of the Immigration Service. Bewildered, and a little shocked, she asked what she was charged with. With almost Kafka-like uncertainty, the official said he wasn't sure, and would have to "look up" the matter. Actually, the girl was charged with having remained in this country since 1945 without maintaining student status, and deportation proceedings were instituted against her. The local office of the Immigration Service gave her a hearing and ruled that she be deported, despite the fact that for over three years—1945-49—she had taken every possible step to renew her student status while studying at the university. She was finally saved from deportation only by the activity of a lawyer who appealed to Washington in her behalf, calling attention to a new law, passed in 1950, which provided that if an alien had been in this country for a number of years, and would suffer serious hardship from deportation, he might be permitted to remain, if other qualifying conditions (good character, etc.) could be satisfied. But in order to gain this relief, the girl was obliged to plead "guilty" to the charge against her, and to throw herself on the "mercy" of the Attorney General.

The most interesting part of this case, however, relates to interviews with the local representative or "inspector" of the Immigration Service—the official whose report would have meant deportation for the student, had it not been for an alert lawyer. In the course of his questioning, the official attempted to obtain from the young woman a commitment on the subject of "Capitalism." "Do you," he queried, "believe in the capitalistic form of government?" She replied that she could hardly answer yes or no, since capitalism is not a form of government, but an economic system. This the inspector plainly

regarded as mere evasiveness. Further, he ignored the practical impossibility of anyone thoroughly trained in the social sciences "believing" in any orthodox ideology, and questions of this sort were made the final test of whether or not the deportation proceedings ought to be suspended. It was fairly obvious that her interrogator regarded the young woman as "suspect" because of her pacifist views, and he revealed his own background and point of view by showing some surprise that she, although not a Negro, was nevertheless a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Summing up his judgment of her, he remarked that "she seems to be well versed in Dialectical Materialism, the art of equivocation when you cannot sustain a tenable position," and recommended deportation.

The point, here, is that legislation of the type of the McCarran Act arms such bureaucratic nonsense with the force and dignity of law.

Our second "item" is provided by a Norman Cousins editorial in the *Saturday Review of Literature* for March 14, wherein the editor reports that the State Department recently asked American publishers "to sign what amounts to a loyalty oath under the State Department's information program." He explains:

Specifically, publishers are requested to certify that books submitted for export are not written by "Communists, fellow-travelers, or persons who might be considered controversial."

What is equally bad is that the State Department has announced an order removing books by authors in this incredible "controversial" category from the bookshelves of our information service libraries in foreign countries.

While last-minute word revealed that the State Department—probably after a strong rumble of protest—had rescinded the first requirement, the decision to remove books from overseas libraries was unchanged. Mr. Cousins printed his article anyway, and we quote some of his fine show of indignation, which still applies to the fact that the rescinded order was ever issued at all:

No explanation is offered concerning the meaning of "fellow-travelers or persons who might be considered controversial." Nor is there clarification on the question: considered controversial by whom? To make matters worse, a news report about the recall of books abroad has added three words to the phrase about controversial material. The three words are, "and so forth."

Thus what began as an apparently honest drive against subversion, rigidly defined, has now become a blunderers' woozy paradise, the gates to which are marked, "and so forth." We now have the spectacle of frightened pygmies writing letters on the stationery of the United States Government, asking responsible citizens to concur in their supine conduct before investigating committees.

Mr. Cousins adds this profound observation:

The worst aspects of McCarthyism in America today are represented not so much by Senator McCarthy himself as by people in public and private life who are falling all over themselves in an effort to please him.

Comment hardly seems necessary. Such matters are reported in the interest of common knowledge of "what is going on."