

GREAT QUESTIONS: IX

TO attempt to think largely about Power is to join a lonely group of philosophers or would-be philosophers who have doomed themselves to small audiences by the choice of a forbidding subject. *Getting* power is a popular if difficult activity, while thinking about the nature of power has little popularity even among those who want it. By Power, we mean here control over the acts, decisions, and even the thoughts, of other human beings.

The study of Power—power as an end, power as a possession—is important in our time for the reason that human behavior is becoming more and more affected by *fear*, and the fear is of only one thing: Power. We have just set down the June 28 issue of the *Nation*, devoted entirely to civil liberties—what they are and what seems to be happening to them in the United States. It contains a monotonous account of censorship, purges, Congressional and state investigations, loyalty oaths, blacklists, discharges of officials, teachers and civil service employees, and the various drives and programs typical of jingo "patriotism." While there is doubtless point in Richard Rovere's comment in the *New Leader* that the conditions pictured by the *Nation* represent "no more than a half-truth, perhaps no more than a tenth part of the truth"—there being aspects of our common life which are far less discouraging—the facts, as reported, are facts. The *Nation*, moreover, might argue that it has endeavored to present, not what is right with America, but what is wrong and in need of correction. But we can agree with Mr. Rovere that the impression of "disintegration" is strong in the *Nation* articles, giving all the more reason for an effort to understand the historical and psychological forces which have created so much anxiety and vulnerability to fear.

Such an inquiry has several aspects. First of all, we can admit that the great mass of people in the world have no particular interest in dominating the lives of others. Most of them want a few simple things—a little economic security, a feeling of hope that they can better their lives, and some relief from whatever circumstances or oppressions seem to interfere with their "freedom." The villager in India, the Chinese peasant, the African laborer—the ill-housed, underprivileged and hungry all over the world—have no yearning to conquer the world for any ideology. They want a piece of land and the opportunity to work it, free from tyranny and exploitation. The desires of the common people in the more industrialized countries are not very different, in principle, from these longings.

The original objective of the Communist theory of revolution was not power, but justice. Karl Marx did not elaborate the doctrines now identified with his name because he wanted to establish a vast tyranny over human beings. The tyranny, as he saw it, was to be ended by the communist revolution. He wanted power, not for itself, but for what he believed could be done with it for the working classes. It is this obvious motivation in Marx which in the past, has drawn so many humanitarian thinkers into the ranks of Communism. And it is equally obvious that, after they became communists, they saw that power, and not the good of man, had become the immediate end of party activities, and most of them, if they were still humanitarians, were driven out of the ranks by this discovery. *The God that Failed* is the classical account of this cycle.

The theory of the Communist state is that it is a mechanism for obtaining and maintaining power, which is then to be used for the good of the people. The theory of a Democratic Government is that it is a mechanism for regulating the power

which belongs to the people, enabling them to use it efficiently for their own good. In both cases, the good of the people is the proclaimed end. Democracies, however, are in principle founded upon the competence of man for self-government. The evolution of the Communist State was different. The Communist State was avowedly formed as an instrument conceived to *make* men competent for self-government in a practically stateless society. Why else should Marx have affirmed, as he did, that eventually the State would "wither away"? In other words, the Communist State represents, in both concept and practice, the *power phase* of the Communist revolution, while the Democratic State represents a *realized theory of government*—very imperfect, no doubt, but relatively free from the emotional turmoil of unfulfilled utopian dreams.

The idea that the Communist State will eventually wither away is already a worn-out joke among students of the revolutionary movement. The orthodox Communist, however, will angrily rejoin that the Soviets have been forced to remain in the power phase of their development by the threat of "capitalist encirclement"—an argument which has some semblance of reason. No one, at any rate, can deny that Russian history since 1917 might have been very different if there had been no attempt by the European nations to weaken and destroy the government established by Lenin. The final merits of this argument, however, can hardly be determined, and the fact remains that the objective of power is still the major end of the Communist State apparatus. A government which conceives its function to be regulatory and administrative, whose authority is constitutional instead of power-born and absolute, is bound to recognize and defend the principle, doctrine, and practice of civil liberties. This the Communist State apparatus does not do.

It is fair to say that Democracy is founded upon the philosophical idea that the highest possibilities of man are realized through freedom, his government being conceived as a compact

made by the people to establish the conditions of maximum freedom for all. Communism has another definition of the Good—the good conceived in bitter resentment of centuries of indifference to the sufferings of the masses of Europe. It is the good which is interpreted: "Let us first get enough to eat, a house over our heads, and clothes to wear, and then we shall see about these other things."

Today, millions upon millions of human beings are caught up in the power phase of the Communist revolution—a phase which has no foreseeable ending. The power-wielding Communist State has grown into a vast institutional structure complete with ruling bureaucracy, military establishment, and secret police. Its activities are corrupting the rest of the world, not so much directly, by "conversion," but by stimulating rival struggles for power. Power creates fear, and fear creates an insatiable demand for power. As the competition for power continues, the power-acquiring institutions of the democratic states, once subordinate to the regulatory functions, are becoming more and more important. In the United States, for example, the power-acquiring institution is the military establishment. The military has no "regulatory" view of its duties. The military is intrinsically opposed to the regulatory idea, which applies to rational situations. War is the instrument employed by States when rational methods fail. It follows that, when the psychology of a nation is increasingly dominated by fear of war, the concept of government as regulatory of the powers of the people is increasingly abandoned. Military authority must be absolute. There are no "civil liberties" in the army. Nor can there be significant civil liberties in the Garrison State. War knows only one Good—Victory; and victory is obtained by absolute physical power, and all that victory provides, in the end, is absolute physical power. Since war recognizes only the good of victory, the morality of a State absorbed by war, or by expectation of war, becomes increasingly the morality defined by the objectives of war. Hence

all the methods of war—surprise attack, deceit, propaganda, spying, the requirements of absolute conformity and obedience—are progressively sanctified by dread of the enemy and the longing for power.

These are some of the reasons for the conditions described in the *Nation* for June 28.

In modern times, the trend toward the Welfare State—a result which has grown out of the increasing "bigness" and impersonality of economic enterprise—has placed larger and larger responsibilities upon the Federal government. And with responsibility, of course, goes power, and not only power, but also the multiplication of administrators and bureaus to apply the power and guide the functions of new public responsibilities. It is natural that, with these developments, public officials should desire as much power as they can get, as often as not for the simple purpose of executing their responsibilities with greater efficiency. Meanwhile, the integration of modern war with the vastly expanded apparatus of the Welfare State of the twentieth century has brought an extraordinary access of power to the centralized government.

Since the Middle Ages, war has been an activity monopolized by States for the obvious reason that no other agency has the capacity to mobilize the forces, both human and economic, for waging war. Twentieth-century war, moreover, is *total*, which tends to make the State total in power. Inevitably, therefore, the men engaged in fulfilling the functions of the State take on the absolutist psychology of war-makers. States begin by waging war to protect themselves, but in the end, war, as Randolph Bourne declared more than thirty years ago, becomes *the health of the State*. Bourne's words, partly prophecy, partly a reading of the social scene in 1918, are worth remembering:

War is the health of the State. It automatically sets in motion throughout society those irresistible forces for uniformity, for passionate cooperation with the Government in coercing into obedience the

minority groups and individuals which lack the larger herd sense. The machinery of government sets and enforces the drastic penalties, the minorities are either intimidated into silence, or brought slowly around by a subtle process of persuasion which may seem to them really to be converting them. Of course the ideal of perfect loyalty, perfect uniformity is never really attained. The classes upon whom the amateur work of coercion falls are unwearyed in their zeal, but often their agitation instead of converting, merely serves to stiffen their resistance. Minorities are rendered sullen, and some intellectual opinion bitter and satirical. But in general, the nation in war-time attains a uniformity of feeling, a hierarchy of values culminating at the undisputed apex of the State ideal, which could not possibly be produced through any other agency than war.

Men who are devoted to the State, who see in it the symbol of human greatness—and these today, much more often than in Bourne's time, are professionals rather than amateurs—are bound to recognize the peculiar "health" brought by war to their beloved institution and to cherish a secret, perhaps subconscious, admiration of war for what it brings. This, for them, is The Good.

By these means, then, or something like these means, the democratic State is slowly transformed by the war psychology and made to behave in ways resembling in some respects the policies of a State which has power-seeking for its ruling principle—as is the case with present-day Communist Russia. The principles of democratic self-government have not given way, but its practice is being channelled into deadly competition with a program based upon almost opposite principles. This, we may say, is the real disaster which threatens the democratic West. Eventually, if allowed to continue, it will erode and wear away even the principles of freedom.

Letter from GERMANY

BERLIN.—This little island of "West-Berlin"—set in a red sea stretching away behind the "Iron Curtain"—now, more than ever before, fights courageously for its existence. One of its weapons appears anew every month—the publication, *Monat* (meaning, simply, "Month"). It offers about 110 pages of high tension in political and cultural matters. The editor is Melvin J. Lasky, known to the writer (when a POW in the United States) as a contributor to the *New Leader*. *Monat* is not expensive—a copy costs one German mark—in consideration of the relatively small number of copies circulated in this area. Financial support from somewhere must be supposed, for intellectuals in the "East" sometimes get it free of charge. (Lasky, *Monat*, and the "Congress for Freedom of Culture" go closely hand in hand.)

The position of *Monat* is the liberal center—a position which is in Germany rather weak and, we guess, will so remain because of the extreme social changes during the turbulent fifty years of this century. *Monat* turns its cutting edge of criticism mostly against the bolshevist "East" and partly against what we might call "Neo-Nazism" in Western Germany. *Monat* is well edited and printed and keeps its readers informed about international cultural life in literature, art, poetry, the theatre. Its contents also include a little philosophy, some history, and much politics. It gives a cross section of all this, which is especially welcome to the spiritually impoverished intellectual in the "East," who lives professionally in a kind of desert country fenced with slogans.

When we look through the numbers 42-44 of *Monat*, issued this spring, we find many articles worth mentioning. The well-known sociologist, Alfred Weber, writes about "Man and Earth in History." He searches into past and present ages for an understanding of the problems of our period, with its growing population on one side,

and its depleted soil and ravaged forests on the other. He concludes that the hitherto natural (*naturhaft*) relation between man and earth must be replaced by a more rational and suitable arrangement. He sees danger in our wild, driving expansion—striking now against the frontiers of this planet—but thinks the situation is not hopeless if caution and measure are applied. (His own remedy, *i.e.*, the restriction of the growth of population, hardly seems possible, because it is difficult to apply and because of the strong trend among modern nations to encourage large families in order to gain more soldiers and workers.)

Two other articles deal with the poet, Bert Brecht, and Charlie Chaplin. In the first, "poor" Brecht—as he called himself in one poem—is brilliantly represented as the victim both of his own slyness and Eastern totalitarian rulers. (Brecht's real tragedy, we think, lies deeper, but cannot excuse his enormous opportunism joined with exceptional ability.) The second article investigates the roots of Chaplin's grand humor.

Voluminous reportage—in several articles—turns to East Asia and examines the chances of Communism there. Soviet Russia, her masters and her influence, play a leading role in all numbers of *Monat*. "Stalin and the Art of Government," together with "Russia by Moonlight" (after the book of Crankshaw, *Russia by Daylight*), are notable contributions in this direction. Another article reports the trial of the former Nazi, Remer, who, on July 20, 1944, played a leading role in bringing into the hands of the executioner the plotters against Hitler's life. Although he had recently insulted his victims in public, he received only three months' imprisonment and a fine. This is cheap enough!

Detailed letters from Casablanca, Canada, Nicaragua, Austria, and Saarbrücken; reviews by competent authors (mostly political, some philosophic); literary portraits and excerpts; and fine photographic illustrations complete the contents of *Monat*.

The contributors are internationally known, among them such men as Sidney Hook, Koestler, Silone, Solomon Schwarz, and Croce. Some are former Communists, some are old or new emigrants from Soviet Russia. The latter have probably the greatest influence on Communist intellectuals in the totalitarian region—and this is one of the outspoken purposes of *Monat*: to support the feeble, to influence the uncertain, to show the still existing riches of Western cultural life to the inhabitants of the Eastern desert, and to provoke its "imperturbable" rulers.

Monat is an instrument of propaganda, a spiritual weapon, and a sharp one. It is more—it is a torchlight, it is nourishment for hungry intellects, and it satisfies in every direction.

GERMAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW "NIGHT UNTO NIGHT"

PHILIP WYLIE may strike some readers as a man who is rather tediously wedded to his own theories and formulas, but it must be admitted that if Wylie has clichés, they are usually different from those of other writers. Moreover, Wylie *is* never entirely repetitive, seeming to retain a restless energy which sends him questing in new directions. The latest Wylian trend (noted in our review of *The Disappearance*) involves metaphysical speculation, but here, again, something can be said for the ideas that are studded with Wylie's brash verbosity. In both *The Disappearance* and his recently reprinted *Night Unto Night*, it is clear that the author is more concerned with upsetting his reading public's dependence on *authority* than in establishing claims to some esoteric wisdom of his own. He seems to have been impressed by the theory of "Serialism" (as developed by J. W. Dunne in his *Experiment with Time*), but he poses puzzling questions instead of offering intimate descriptions of what used to be called the "fourth dimension." In *Night Unto Night*, especially, he also demonstrates that his own confessions of ignorance are not meant to buttress the conventional skepticism of our time. This he makes clear in a well-written preface:

Here is a novel about death—a novel, that is, about the living and their thoughts of death. The shimmering constructions of our postwar world will someday lead us back—through envy and inhumanity, through greed, and through the lust for expressing lust without first examining it—to more wars. Wars are a collective fulfillment of the death wish; they are made necessary by the failure of individuals to reckon with themselves. Wars are a response to the orderliness of nature.

We are governed by laws which lie wholly outside the cognition of most of us—and need not. Our ignorance makes us lawless and the laws compel us to turn upon each other. They need not.

Churchly law cannot suffice for us, any longer. Our churches have studied politics instead of virtue, they have accumulated property instead of wisdom. Meanwhile, each church has dragged into these hopeful days its neolithic ritual and the medieval shabbiness of its dogma. Each has become the

mother of darkness. Each now cunningly promulgates darkness to retain adherents so that they, in turn, will hold its power and its property. Christ repudiated the churches of his time with raging eloquence; they were guiltless compared to our own—naïve perforse, where later churches could be clean.

The laws—the truths—which govern man abide nowhere in churches.

Agnosticism will solve the dilemma of an individual—and leave him with half a life: the half he chooses by deciding he knows so much he is unable to know anything. Such a man may be moral; busyness will replace his spirit. He will learn no more about life than a sparrow learns.

In *Night Unto Night*, I have concerned myself with these matters—not with the laws, so much, because in the finding of them lies the source of spiritual strength, but in a description of certain avenues of search. This book contains a few small ways to begin to think rather than the thoughts. Here are attitudes, lines for investigation, and statements of common problems which are too often either shuffled off for mundane affairs or flatly rejected as valid subjects for study.

At the outset, then, Wylie presents us with something worth thinking about. What ultimate meaning may hide behind Sigmund Freud's description of the "death wish"? Although Wylie does not develop the point, he leads us to wonder if the root of the "death wish" is not simply the unconscious knowledge that other and less confusing states of existence may be somehow, some time, somewhere, attainable. What is the principal appeal of Heaven if not in its promise that we may live again, and differently? What are the multitudinous Eastern beliefs in transmigration and reincarnation but a more disciplined philosophical expression of the same inward conviction? H. T. Buckle once wrote that "if immortality be untrue it matters little whether anything else be true or not," and, in so saying, he summed up what appears to be a basic human longing—an actual *need* of the superphysical or transcendental side of man's nature. Wylie's conclusions could also be regarded as further argument to the effect that metaphysics and the idea of immortality are not simply foisted upon man by theologies, but grow from deeply buried intuitions.

"I believe that life and death also are parts of something else," writes Wylie. "I believe the meaning of that otherness is different for each individual."

Night Unto Night involves us in the question of the validity of spiritualistic phenomena. There is a "ghost" in the story—two of them, in fact—and Wylie is quite serious in believing that such discarnate entities can exist, and communicate, under exceptional circumstances, with the living. Since we have never seen any good come from preoccupation with seances, however, we are bound to feel sympathetic to Wylie's contention that such *group* attempts at communication miss the whole point of the immortality question—that if the essence of our departed friend is his unique individuality, and our relationship to that individuality unique also, then the presence of other persons who are merely curious is likely to blur or confuse any "message" received. Death, like life, is for Wylie an entirely individual experience, and in this sense the author feels justified in claiming that *Night Unto Night* is a "religious" book—even when it attacks organized religion. He informs his readers at the outset that he has never seen a ghost, but that he has every right to conclude, on the basis of other experiences that might be termed "supernatural," and because telepathy has had adequate scientific demonstration, that something like ghosts *do* exist. In other words, he avoids the trap of establishing an "article of faith" on the basis of one man's or many men's experiences. He would deride the attempt of anyone who actually had had traffic with a ghost to convince others of the experience. In short, he trusts reason more than "data." This seems to us important, for mental criteria and emotional criteria are entirely dissimilar. Actually, the failure of most skeptics to have "ghostly" experiences does not justify their denial of extra-sensory perception.

Mr. Wylie's mysticism is extremely vague and unsystematized, as mysticism must almost necessarily be, but it is on the basis of such paragraphs as the following that we are inclined to agree that *Night Unto Night*, as the author claims, is a religious book:

He stood still and quietude came into his mind. The world of sound and angles, of smells, shapes, and vibrations commingled, melted, and flowed away from him. He was alone with himself. This, he thought, is not vision but the withdrawal of earthly vision. He waited patiently for more to happen. He had a sense of movement—not in one direction but in all the directions of expansion; he was gradually enabled to perceive the comfort of his shining, gray nothingness—both from the center of it and from its ever-widening peripheries. The light increased and became blinding—a classic white light and, presently, the whiteness beyond passion. All at once the brightness took on every hue. He knew that he was what he was observing and what he was experiencing.

Wylie's diatribes against conventional morality continue in much the same tone as that which permeated his *Babes and Sucklings*, written nearly twenty years ago. Another artist, a "strong personality" who sees clearly beneath the facades of most interpersonal relationships, preaches the necessity for moral anarchy. But Wylie is now trying to synthesize the problem of personal dishonesty with the problems of atomic civilization, and some of his generalizations, such as the following, approach the profound:

Materialism is man's defiant attempt to overshadow destiny with the panoply of cities, the hurtling activity of his body, the absorption of his five senses through ceaseless compulsion—with toys and furnishings, games, stone jewelry, and fine processions—with listening and looking and smelling and touching and tasting—with all and everything that serves to stave off introspection for a minute, an hour, a lifetime. . . .

Peace is not the perquisite of nations. Individuals, alone, can savor peace. The peace of the world will come only when the people who compose it have found the way to inner peace. Materialism offers no such way—and cannot offer it. As long as we are wholly extroverted—yes, as long as we ascribe "rights" to property or defer to a "right" of possession or consider nations "righteous"—we shall have no peace. That is not an economic statement but a description of a far-off attitude few living men can guess at—and a measure of its distance from us, nowadays.

COMMENTARY JOINT RESPONSIBILITY

AGAIN and again, in reading over the contents of an issue of MANAS as they are prepared for the press, the editors are overtaken by a strong sense of paradox. This is a journal which contends for the moral responsibility of human beings as a fact in nature, yet our articles are continually avoiding a "moralistic" interpretation of history, stressing, instead, the compulsions of circumstance, custom, and psychological habit as of major importance in human decision.

Why should this be?

The answer, it seems to us, is that, given the proposition that men are "responsible," the popular moralists of our time, the columnists and feature writers, the demagogues and irresponsible politicians, instead of studying the causal factors behind the problems of the world, simply look for a scapegoat. They pick out either an individual or a nation, or a segment of opinion, such as "Secularism," or "Socialism," as the source of our woes.

Ordinarily, we have little difficulty in seeing through such charges, but there are times when the popular moralists seem to be right. In the case of war, for example, the popular moralists win agreement by speaking from and into an atmosphere of disturbed emotions. The same problem exists in relation to the "communist menace." The average man, saturated with the angrily righteous claims of practically everyone who has access to public channels of communication, can hardly fail to agree with the popular analysts. There is, however, another approach to this issue than the self-righteous one. It is always possible to study the history of the communist movement, to see it as the focus of a tragic destiny which has overtaken a vast number of human beings in the world.

But somehow or other, the idea has gotten around that an effort to understand an unpopular movement or cause amounts to sympathizing or agreeing with it. This, of course, is nonsense. And when the "unpopular movement" involves several hundred million people, it is not only nonsense, but folly, and there can be no greater folly, even politically, than to assume that all these millions are wrong and bad, while we are right and good.

So, our theory of the moral responsibility of man is really a theory of *joint* responsibility. And the longer we evade the responsibility of understanding what we fear and do not like, the greater *our* responsibility becomes.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

ONE of the inevitable paradoxes of "moral education" is that many of those who are most concerned with the development of character in the young, and are therefore humanitarians rather than authoritarians, are also often convinced that a number of necessary restrictions and prohibitions should be established for children. If one believes that each human being may gain great strength of character, nobility, and an appreciation of the subtle forms of beauty in human relationships, he naturally desires to erect some kind of "guardian wall" against the spoliation of the emotions by indiscriminate and undisciplined adventuring. "Adventuring" can certainly become destructive to the lives and property of others, especially in an age of high-powered automobiles, and it can also lead youths into precocious emotional entanglements beyond their capacity to understand.

This paradox is curiously represented by Plato, who has inspired numerous non-theological educators since the fourth century B.C. As Robert Ulich points out in his *History of Education*, humanitarian and liberal movements all through western history have drawn inspiration from Plato. Yet Plato himself, in the *Republic*, advocated strict regulation of the young. Today, in an age which affords a *summum* of unrestraint, the question of whether we need more or less social restraint continues to occur. On the one hand, the theological educators insist that the destructiveness of modern youth and the spread of adolescent delinquency and promiscuity show the need for external regulation in order to save them from sin. Secular educators, on the other hand, argue that it is bad to "repress" spontaneous behavior, that youth cannot reach maturity vicariously, that experience is the only true teacher, etc.

A MANAS subscriber who was recently called upon to supply her home community with counsel on the subject of delinquency has provided us with some questions which seem very much worth considering. A satisfactory solution of problems respecting external disciplines for adolescents must

begin, we think, with the psychological attitudes involved: *i.e.*, is the approach philosophical? If parents, teachers, and, finally, the young people themselves, are to be able to consider emotional issues in rational terms—if the emphasis is to be upon achieving a maturity of understanding rather than upon a fanatical conflict between opposing standards—we must certainly go beyond the usual "radical vs. conservative" struggle. Conceivably, Plato envisioned a society in which the youth would be able to recognize spontaneously the functional value of restrictions upon their freedom of choice. But this is an historical argument involving a choice of interpretations of Plato, for which we do not presently have space. Our correspondent's statement of a "conservative" position, in any case, is certainly philosophical in orientation:

We have a wealth of reported disturbing facts concerning the "anti-social" actions of our young people. To cite the actions which win community disapproval may lead to a more widespread repetition of the pattern. To refuse to face them for this reason will not cure the trend. Explanations and inquiry may help us to determine the causes of the reported facts, and community action may be able to improve matters, if thoughtfully inspired.

Some of the flagrant practices of unrestraint which often *lead* to loss of life, health, or usefulness, may not in themselves be evil. We must have the courage to ask why they are considered so, and to recognize that only when satisfactory proof is apparent can we afford to be drastic in our steps to eliminate them.

1. Is hot-rod racing evil because it is dangerous? Are skiing, mountain climbing, and horse racing evil because of the danger to life and limb? Are any of these things wrong because, added to the willing hazard of one's own life, is added the *unwilling* hazard of the lives of others? Are hot-rodders, tilting on deserted highways, in pursuit of thrill and adventure, more to be censured than football players, boxers, bull-fighters, or any of the more traditional forms of thrill hunting?

2. Let us admit that hot-rod racing has much more terrifying consequences in terms of suffering than the sports of our horse and buggy era. Yet, have we stopped playing war because the Atomic Bomb is so much more frightful than old-fashioned rifles? Is either activity right in itself?

3. Is it possible to lay down the principle that no activity is wrong if *all* the participants assume full responsibility? Would this admit the legality of gambling, alcoholism, with their "accomplice" vices? If "unwilling participation" is the criterion of evil, then only burglary, murder, and libel, assault and battery, may be included as wrong. Harm to future generations, however, may also legitimately be considered "wrong."

4. Is it necessary for a human society to add to the principle, "No harm to others, without their own full co-operation," a second principle involving "full knowledge" on the part of those prepared to risk their own lives and the lives of others to promote thrills which are not the compulsion of necessity?

Workmen risk their lives willingly in building bridges, in mining coal, in many pursuits which contribute to the maintenance of human life. Progress and preservation are seldom free from danger. In constructive activities, the risk to life is often willingly assumed, but the price is still paid with sorrow. Unless, however, a human being has had experience with both the *constructive* thrill, *and* the thrill of senseless risk (which sometimes seeks the "narrow escape" as its own aim and object), that human being is actually without adequate psychological knowledge to qualify him for passing legislation affecting adolescents.

5. At what age have young people had sufficient experience and knowledge to be prepared to assume full responsibility for accepting risks, even if they themselves desire to take them? The law denies them the franchise until they are twenty-one, yet marriage is permitted at the age of eighteen, and driving licenses with parents' consent are issued after the age of sixteen.

Why do we refuse the right to vote to youngsters old enough to drive a car? Is it because the life of the whole community is at stake in the voting franchise, and the vote of the adolescent is notoriously subject to the sway of newly acquired emotions? But the driving privilege sometimes offers him additional means of mating without marriage, and the means of taking his own life while racing. Is there any violation of law in either case?

6. If it is impossible for our youngsters under eighteen years of age to have the discretion to make a wise choice as to marriage, then the community must assume the responsibility to provide situations which do not foster thrills unrelated to constructive aims.

If we are to create as many comparatively trouble-free situations as possible, we must *first* fill the minds of youngsters with fascinating, *useful* interest and jobs. That learning seems trivial which is too easy or too far from doing actual good for anyone. Helping a sick neighbor by washing dishes is more valuable than washing dishes in the home economics class, for a grade. Mowing our own lawn means more than collecting pictures of atomic equipment for the science class. Building a clubhouse for others as well as oneself to enjoy is a thousand times more educative than attending a series of movies. If we hook up our information and academic skill with active individual citizenship *in the community*, we gain for our youngsters the satisfying thrill of being necessary, of being needed.

Our youngsters have that wonderful quality, enthusiasm, plus the amazing energy to put it to use. They want "to do, to do," and true education will always stress the most active physical participation along with strenuous mental creation. *First*, we can provide more situations for constructive labor to fulfill this promise of youth. *Second*, those situations which mortgage the future can be, more than they presently are, prevented from arising.

After setting forth these speculations as background, our correspondent goes on to make specific recommendations, such as the restricting of driver's licenses to those old enough to vote, the barring of admission to nightclubs or public dance halls until after graduation from high school, the establishment of "curfews" in communities which do not employ the practice. At first glance such recommendations may seem to be simply old-line reactionism, but our primary purpose, here, is to argue that even those who believe in the *ultimate* "inalienable right of the individual child" need to consider that such restrictions *might* assist in achieving that state of social balance without which the full flowering of individuality is very nearly impossible.

This, however, is by no means an end to the question, and such discussions and speculations cannot do much more than scratch the surface. Remains to be considered, specifically, the psychological dangers inherent in all "blanket" prohibitions through legislation.

FRONTIERS

The Sun and Moon

NOTHING is more certain than that no event exists in isolation; each is a link in an endless chain. Adaptation is unseen, unceasing, and a new religion draws sustenance from roots centuries deep in the earth. Having, as late as 1950, discovered that the patron saint of the Mexican Indian—whose *fiesta* brings everything to a halt—is the Virgin of Guadalupe, it struck us as an event of the first magnitude that the pope should so lately have made the assumption of the Virgin into heaven an article of faith. Could this herald a swing away from the masculine-active Christ, toward the passive-feminine principle embodied in the Mother? It seemed almost as though the Roman pontiff, seeing what advantage had accrued to the church through the peons' innocent adoration of a Virgin, and gazing upon the poetic images of Virgins carried by non-white pilgrims from the East to Rome, had plumbed some momentous subterranean break-through from another part of the world. The publication, in the July *Ladies Home Journal*, of an article on "The Natural Superiority of Women," confirmed the lingering suspicion.

The author of the article, Ashley Montagu, is a professor of Anthropology at Rutgers University. In undertaking to inform women of the reasons for their "natural superiority," Prof. Montagu cites foremost their ability to bear babies. "It has always been a sore point with men," he says, that their chromosomal structure unfits them to give birth, "though consciously they would be the last to admit it."

Something of what follows on this wholly irreparable anomaly was suggested to the present writer several years ago, in reflecting on a passage in *The Education of Henry Adams*:

Of all the movements of inertia, maternity and reproduction are the most typical, and woman's property of moving in a constant line forever is

ultimate, uniting history in its only unbroken and unbreakable sequence.

If one can catch the dynamic sweep of history across centuries and continents; if one imagines the ceaseless ebb and flow of armies and peoples, down rivers and over mountains, across seas and uncharted deserts, then perhaps in the amalgam we call the human race one can see the functional role of woman. She is both the bearer and guardian of life.

Indeed, were it not for the single element of continuity woman represents, man might long ago have brought about the destruction of the human species as he has successfully annihilated so many animal species. Though so little aware of it, woman is actually akin to the speed of light, the eternal constant in the galaxy of time. Nor can she help herself, however she may rue her constancy, for she is linked to the vaster universe by an inscrutable tie, in a way no man can fathom. Woman is ruled, like the tides, by the moon.

This explains why the most vociferous claimants to "the right to be free" and "the rights of free men" are men, not women. And perhaps if men were to ponder the extraordinary fact of woman's being governed by a force completely beyond human control and understanding, they might pause to ask what governs *them*? So far as men in the United States are concerned, nothing does: they are confident and ready, any day, to command the air, to conquer space, to rocket headlong to a hole in the atmosphere where, so electronic calculators say, they will be free of the earth's gravitational pull. But is it possible, in our solar system, to escape the gravitational pull of the moon?

Prof. Montagu, very possibly deliberately, understates the case. A number of intelligent men admit to being haunted by the simple sentence, "Man is born of woman." But since woman is, too, the fact for her has nothing enigmatic in it. The reproduction of life is woman's *forte*, the creation of everything under the sun but life, is man's.

Throughout recorded history, men have satisfied in externals the unsatisfied hunger for creation in themselves by throwing up battlements, fortresses, and towers. They have fashioned kingdoms in heaven, empires on earth, commonwealths and corporations. And always they have knocked them down, pulled them apart, and either blown them or the whole civilization to ruin and rubble again. Their restless urge to complete the generative act begun is written in layer on layer of civilizations, the same the world over.

Women, throughout time, have patiently followed at men's side or in their wake, tidying the wreckage, putting the pieces together again, restoring debris to some semblance of a whole, hanging a bit of colored glass to lure a rainbow to a hovel, giving up a petticoat to make a baby's gown, growing seed in a rusty earth-filled can, and waiting for their men to quiet down again so they can go on with the business of living.

Prof. Montagu observes, on genetic and physiological grounds, that man is lightly held to life, unstable where women are stable. But the writer, a product of kinetic physics, has long awaited confirmation of a "hunch" that the directional flow of energy in the two sexes is somehow different.

The life force, the psychic energies of men are centrifugal. Not only sexually, but in every other aspect of his life activity, man scatters his seed, wastes his substance. A man is therefore comparatively unstable.

The life force, the psychic energies of women, on the contrary, are centripetal. Sexually, and in every other way, woman is a drawer-in, by nature a conservator, like the earth, receptive. She is, or should be, stable.

Man's genius consequently shines in *analysis*—Greek for "taking apart." Woman's lies in *synthesis*—Greek for "putting together." One thus perfectly balances the other.

The masculine-analytical wave will perhaps not reach its crest until the final bomb has fallen, but the reaction against it is already setting in. Women, Prof. Montagu urges, *must teach men how to be human*, and continues:

I think we have oversimplified the value of intellectual qualities and grossly underemphasized the qualities of humanity which women possess to such a high degree . . . intellect without humanity is not good enough.

One wonders whether Prof. Montagu knows into how deep a river he has stepped? Erasmus, excoriating the "Barbarians" of his day, wrote—*Amare melius est quam scire*: To love is better than to know; but later refined this to, "*Scientia* without *Compassion* (*Caritas*) is a ship without a helmsman." But there is an older river still.

To most Americans the Indians in Mexico are a "primitive people," and India is inhabited by a "backward people." History may just possibly upset these judgments, for the past of both peoples testifies to a deeper comprehension of the real unity of man and woman than any Christianity can offer.

In Mexico, wherever you see a Pyramid erected to the Sun, you see beside it a companion temple to the Moon. What this tells you is that these "primitives" were conscious in their everyday lives of the rulership of woman by the moon and of her co-rule with the Sun, the male principle. It also tells you that such shameless exploitation of a woman's body as goes under the modern name of merchandising would be ritually taboo.

While an Indian friend was resident in the United States, the writer, from a book lent to her, once copied the following passages from a critical commentary on what appeared to be an Indian classic, the *Kathopanishad*:

In most men there is serious disunity between the two sides of their natures that we term thinking and feeling sides respectively. In some the faculty of thought is overvalued and developed at the expense of feeling, and, in others, the opposite. But the psyche is

unity and any over-emphasis on one side means that the other side will be stunted, underdeveloped, and consequently out of harmony with the more developed side. It will moreover be filled with feelings of revenge. . . .

Within us are the Sun and Moon and if these are not in harmonious aspect with each other, a state of conflict is inevitable. "A house divided against itself cannot stand"; there can be no harmony within the psyche unless the Sun of thought and the Moon of feeling are equally valued and consequently equally developed.

In the outer world, too, the same disharmony prevails. The subjection of woman which has characterized most of the dominant sections of mankind is responsible for the present chaotic state of world affairs. . . . This has been very generally realized in recent years but what is not so widely understood is that its real cause is to be found in the overvaluation of the male thinking function (on the part of those, at least, who come to the top and stand at the helm of the destinies of nations) and the consequent under-valuation of the "female" function of feeling.

In Hitler the writer of this commentary saw the vengeful breaking out of the subjected "feeling" side, revealed when *Der Fuehrer* confessed to thinking "with his Blood" instead of with his head. Prof. Montagu in 1952 puts Lenin and Stalin alongside Hitler. "What these men lacked," he says, "was the capacity to love. What they possessed in so eminent a degree was the capacity to hate." From the woman's viewpoint, we would bracket Hitler with an Old Testament figure, Karl Marx, whose solar system knows no moon.

The havoc created in the *unloved of both sexes* is religious in origin. Monotheism failed of adaptation in Egypt, but came to bitterest fruit in the theocratic state, as unfeeling in South Africa and Leningrad as it was in Geneva or Salem. And if Prof. Montagu is right, he has unknowingly exposed the stem of the vindictive doctrine of original sin. Every American wife may be "The Dream Girl of Ten Thousand Men," the brand-name manufacturers; but so long as her psychic life is maimed by irrational notions of "sex" and

"sin," men will suffer for it. Woman must reject the dead past's baseless identification of herself and innocent babies with evil ("conceived in iniquity"), as surely as Mother Russia must one day fling the Marxist intellectual Sun from her subjugated body. On that day the dark brooding beauty of Byzantine madonnas, on ikons long suppressed, will reappear, and the Moon, eclipsed for centuries, will greet the New Age at the full. In *The Twilight of the Evening-Lands*, the German title, Spengler prophesied that a religion ushering in the civilization to follow this would rise from the steppes of Russia. Maddened by too long exposure to the sun, the Unloved are hastening the day.

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