

## THE POLITICAL PERSON

WERE it possible to arrange, we should like to be present (as listener) at a seminar devoted to study of *The Political Person*, in which the participants would be A. H. Maslow, Carl Rogers, Erich Fromm, David Riesman, and C. Wright Mills. (These, in our opinion, are the men who speak most clearly to our condition, these days.) According to our definition, the Political Person is one who, no matter what question comes up, looks for the political bearing of its content. If the subject has no political bearing, or only a remote political bearing, the political person remains uninvolved, uninterested. The political person is a special sort of human being. His burdens are very heavy, for he bears the weight of the neglected political responsibilities of everyone else. For him, the final criterion of morality is political awareness and political responsibility. He is quick with judgments of apolitical people, since it is the apolitical, in his opinion, who are largely responsible for the world's woes.

Now this view, that the failures of modern society are due to the political indifference of a large majority of the people, is by no means limited to the politically aware. It is a judgment shared in some measure by almost everybody, even by those who admit their own guilt in this respect. This conclusion is practically inevitable in a culture which has no philosophy at all except for the political philosophy of democracy. We try, but we don't try hard enough. We would *like* to be better citizens, but we don't have time. Who can know everything about political issues? And so on. Then, too, our faith is not strong. Politics does seem pretty futile. We try to keep our basic ideas straight, believe in the right things, and vote whenever we can, informing ourselves somewhat in the last two weeks before election time. Toward the people who carry the ball for us, we have a mixture of feelings. Sometimes they seem

to us to be just "politicians." Then, when we are upset about something, or feel threatened, we worry about them—whether they are "honest," or know what they are doing. And when things are really bad, we make them into either saviors or scapegoats—as, for example, Franklin D. Roosevelt and Herbert Hoover.

There is a great difference, of course, between the people who staff the administration of an established system, and those who represent minority viewpoints arising from humanitarian convictions. Only the latter are properly called political people, since their activities are openly based upon principles and undertaken with a manifest moral ardor. And there is little need to point out that political people of this sort seldom survive the acquisition of power—a fact which should have close attention in any study of the type. Either they change in character, adapting themselves to the necessities of *Realpolitik*, or they are purged by those who have little patience with idealist scruples. "Why," a *Nation* writer asked many years ago, "does the Left always make the Revolution, and the Right always write the Constitution?" This is a pertinent question, since it describes a repeating pattern of events and not a single accident of history.

What, then, *is* a political person? It is a person whose primary conception of the good of men is obtained from a political definition of the broad relationships in human society. Further, it is a person whose concept of socio-economic relationships is intimately concerned with *power*. He may not even *like* the idea of power, but he is obliged by his opinions to insist that power is needed to institute those practical relationships and rules of order which will permit constructive cultural development.

So, the understanding of the political person obviously involves study of the role of power in the relationships of men and institutions, and, probably, moral judgments concerning the role of power. Useful examination of such questions is hardly possible without an inclination to moral judgments, since the welfare of human beings is at stake.

It is possible to say one thing about the political person without stirring up a controversy. This is that the political person is one who habitually thinks about social *wholes*. You cannot interest him in a program for the few. His moral instincts are offended by talk of any sort of elite. The only elite he can contemplate with equanimity is an elite made up of people like himself who are devoted to the political salvation of the entire community. This is not a self-seeking elite—not, at least, at the outset—and self-seeking activities are what this elite would like to put an end to. Because his inclination to think in terms of social wholes is both distinctive and rare, the political person realizes that he must work much harder than most men in order to accomplish anything with his life. His raw material is a sluggish, fickle, often contemptuous population, and his choice of methods and tools is between the methods and tools of the educator and those of the demagogue. Until he crystallizes his point of view, his inner life is likely to be a tumultuous conflict between the ideas of the anarchist, the Machiavellian, the hot-gospeller and the fascist. He is not likely to be a patient man, since one of the chief arguments for political action is that there is not sufficient time to wait for slower processes.

Now there are cases—historical cases—of which we tend to say that the political person was right: that we should not have waited, or that we were right not to wait. The American War for Independence is such a case. There was principled objection to this war, as well as the ardent demand for violent separation of the Colonies from Great Britain. If, for the sake of argument, we take the American Revolution as a

legitimate instance of political action; and say, further, that the political people who worked for the cause of the Revolution were right, then we may conclude, at least, that there are times when the special sort of human beings called political people see better than the rest what ought to be done. Making this judgment is the same as saying that the decision about political people is not an abstract question alone, but requires also the investigation of particular junctures of history.

In a case like the American Revolution, a qualifying judgment might be that the process of cultural growth, stimulated by a number of causes, had already proceeded to a point where political action could without much difficulty consolidate into constitutional reality attitudes and social relationships which already existed in the minds of the people, and were already in some measure in practice.

This calls for a further comment, to the effect that the "political people" of that time were something more than the political specialists with whom we, in the present, are familiar. The Founding Fathers, to use the familiar phrase, were rather exceptional human beings who recognized the peculiar opportunities which existed in their time. Their "politicalness," that is, was an expedient for the general good, and not their chief quality or distinction. We tend to remember the Founding Fathers almost exclusively for their political wisdom. Perhaps this is a mistake. Perhaps they would not have had this political wisdom if they had not been much more than political people.

It seems that we should settle for the view that there are times when politics is a necessary activity, or that there are things which can be accomplished only through political action, and that the need is for understanding what those things are, and what they are not.

This would be in keeping with the idea that the uses of politics may change with historical epochs. For example, a man who fought with clear vision and a clear conscience in the

American Revolution might shrink from a violent revolution in the present day. He would, we think, have good cause for this reluctance. While it would be a mistake to imply that political action inevitably involves the use of violence or military measures, it is difficult to separate the idea of violence altogether from political activity, since politics seeks power first, and then uses power as an instrument, and the ultimate value of power lies in the force which it can impose. There is power, also, in moral authority, but moral authority is not obtained by political means. A political authority may earn and enjoy moral authority, but the two have actually very little in common.

These general reflections all arose from an encounter with a man—we might call him an artist—who is on the whole apolitical, yet who, when pressed for his political opinions, tends to side with those who are commonly called "reactionary." You meet so many people of this sort—people who command respect in many ways, yet who share almost none of the attitudes of the so-called "political person." Let us say, for the sake of argument, that the political people are "right"—right, at least, in their broad intentions and in the obvious logic of their position—and that the apolitical people are wrong, at least in their political opinions. And yet, even for the sake of argument, one hesitates to make this concession. The difficulty lies in the tendency to sum up the relevant morality of all these people as antisocial, and therefore bad. But they are not "bad"—that is, they are not members of the morally indifferent mass who hardly think at all. They are persons who manifest sensibility, integrity in personal relations, whose idea of the good lies in some direction other than the political direction.

What has happened, it seems to us, in this case, is that politics, since it involves power, is practically impossible to separate from situations which make men fear. An artist may understand the importance of being unafraid in relation to his art, but not in relation to political questions. Yet,

in our society, the good tends to be defined in political terms, so that the non-political person is placed in a false position, so far as his moral attitudes are concerned.

Actually, the artist is one who senses the importance of individuality, even though he may not articulate this feeling very well. He may respond to a political threat emotionally, without understanding the origin or the mechanisms of the threat. He may choose the "wrong side." But does it define the problem to say that he must be made to see his mistake—that progress, to take him as an instance of the general problem—depends upon getting him to change sides?

What we are trying to suggest is that the social and moral conceptions of our age have been seriously distorted by the reliance on politics as the means—the *ultimate* means—of establishing the good life; and that hopes, fears, and judgments are all out of balance as a result of this distortion. We are trying to suggest that the political person is himself a distorted person, constrained by his conception of human good to distort his own life through this specialization in the struggle for political power. If he is sensitively self-conscious, as many political persons are, he may be aware of this distortion and regard it as a necessary sacrifice to the general good. As John Reed said, "The radical movement is a great thing, but it sure plays hell with your poetry!"

The point, here, is that men of good will must learn to devote their energies to activities which do not imply coercion or the exercise of power over other men. Decisions which turn on the direction of the exercise of power are decisions made under pressure and concerning a society which is characterized by conflicting pressures. Only saints and heroes can make wise decisions in such circumstances. In other words, the political activity, as such, creates the worst possible conditions for free exercise of human intelligence.

Perhaps we should go on to suggest that hope for a free society may be completely vain so long

as that society is conceived as an expression of political values.

What is indicated, then, for those whom we have called "political people," is a reconsideration of the terms of their definition of the good of man. What is evident today, in a way that has not been evident in the past, is that the methods of politics have become less and less applicable to human problems, as our civilization has increased in complexity. The revolutions of the eighteenth century, it may be admitted, accomplished their objective of releasing the energies of men, but the revolutions since that time have had an almost opposite effect, in that they have presumed to define the good of man with much greater particularity than the eighteenth-century revolutionists attempted, and then sought to *enforce* that good. The political principle we need to embrace might possibly be that while manifest evil can be removed by force, the good must be supported by another sort of energy. Once the evil is gone, at any rate, force or coercion must go with it, or it will recreate a whole host of new evils, mysterious as to origin because springing not from evil *per se* but from misconceptions of the good. Another principle might be that you don't need power to do good; and that with power, you can do no lasting good, but only lasting evil. Persuaded of this, men of intelligence, men of a formerly political intelligence, who are admittedly inventive and vastly resourceful, would set about doing things which, in time, might transform the values of our society—transform them from political to more basically human values. There are large areas of freedom in which these other values could easily be pursued. The arts have already sought new pastures; literature has long since deserted politics; psychology has ceased being social, except in protest, and is becoming philosophical. It is time for the political genius of the age—so long in ascendancy—to redefine its tasks.

## *Letter from* **INDIA**

KORAPUT, ORISSA.—I visited Koraput during 1957, when Vinoba's movement was at its peak here. In this *par excellence* Gramdan area, and in the year 1957, when hopes of a miracle were high, work was at highest pitch of activity. At that time, Annasaheb (Shri A. W. Sahasrabuddha), deputed to Koraput by A. B. Sarva Seva Sangh to guide Gramdan activities in Koraput, had studied the situation for a year and had submitted a plan to spend Rs 94,000,000 over a period of five years, to recreate the life in Gramdan villages on a Sarvodaya pattern. About three hundred workers were gathered here. An irrigation and soil conservation expert, engineers, specialists in agriculture, and some foreign educated young men were working in Koraput. The Government of India and the State Government of Orissa had put sufficient funds at the disposal of the movement to carry out these plans. Two training classes in agriculture and rural workers and engineers were in progress. A total of 1383 bullocks, Rs 33,114 worth of seeds, fertilizers and agricultural implements were distributed, and soil conservation work was undertaken on 165 acres. Rs 68,590 were spent on building forty wells, five tanks and eight dams on small irrigation schemes, and 1847 families benefited by community farming up to the middle of 1958. A big agricultural credit scheme was being discussed with the Reserve Bank of India. Many foreign visitors and Indian leaders of eminence visited Koraput during 1957 and 1958. The year was full of promise.

Now, in June, 1959, A. B. Sarva Seva Sangh is winding up its activities, and virtually leaving Koraput—leaving it to Government agencies like Community Development and the Khadi Commission. Sarva Seva Sangh has at present about eight existing centres covering about 200 villages and hamlets, which are being transferred to local bodies or the Khadi Commission. Has the Sarva Seva Sangh completed its work, leaving it to others to carry further? In a way, that was the

plan that Annasaheb had in view, that after three years the local workers should be able to carry out the activities, and Sarva Seva Sangh should retire. But this is not the whole story. For work done so far has not advanced sufficiently, and local workers are not really ready to undertake the job of reconstruction. In some ways the plan has succeeded, but in other ways it has failed.

I discussed with Annasaheb the position and the prospect of retiring from Koraput, or to put it at its worst, the debacle of Gramdan work in Koraput. Two main explanations became evident. One was the non-cooperative attitude of the State Government of Orissa. Annasaheb was obliged to declare publicly that if cooperation was not forthcoming, he would end the work here. But he also blamed his workers for the situation, as some of them had become rather proud and haughty, treating the Government servants with scant courtesy. Further, the present Chief Minister of Orissa, Shri Hare Krishna Mehtab, does not believe in Gramdan and Bhoodan, and calls it "the distribution of poverty." With him at the helm, the Government servants have been unenthusiastic, uncooperative, and sometimes even obstructive. The agricultural credit scheme envisaged in 1957 could not be put into action because the State Government was uncooperative.

The other reason for the failure was the calibre of the Gramdan workers, whose training and discipline were not up to the mark. Except in a few instances, there was not enough dedication, and there were group wrangles, even amongst the local workers, while people from other parts of India were considered to be outsiders, if not exactly intruders. The workers were lacking in courtesy and consideration for each other and for outsiders. Some of the good workers left in frustration, for one reason or another, since the Central Koraput office was neither efficient nor cooperative. Once, in 1958, Annasaheb had to undertake a fast, so that the office work could be brought up to date, particularly the account books, but even then some of the workers

displayed a "couldn't care less" attitude. India, too, has its own sort of "beat generation."

Can it be said that the ideal of Gramdan has been partially realised at Koraput? In a few places, a foundation has been laid on which the superstructure could be built, and the village may become an extended family on the pattern of a Sarvodaya society or community, with the village as the owner of all land. In Garanda, village land has been more or less equitably distributed, with some of the best areas set aside for community farming. Here the pattern of land distribution was scientific, and the production increased to about twice the pre-Gramdan level. So far, Garanda can be called a true Gramdan village, but to consolidate the gains a worker should remain here for the next five to seven years. Yet Garanda has no permanent worker at present, and the work achieved may fall to pieces. In other villages there has been some distribution, but not comparable to the pattern of Garanda. At Limbaguda, for example, the reclaimed land was not utilised properly. Limbaguda was expected to become another Gramdan showpiece, but it is still far behind Garanda.

In terms of material achievements, Gramdan work in Koraput may be called failure, as viewed by practical critics. And that may be a reason for relinquishing the work here. But in terms of human attitudes, or *Vichar-prachar*, even in the remote parts of Koraput, the idea has spread. The Adivasi people (the local aborigines) have become conscious of it. And the idea, when it takes hold of the mind, becomes a driving force. It is to be noted, however, that the educated city youth who comes to work in such regions, among people like the Adivasis, fails to be fully assimilated as a worker to develop leadership amongst the Adivasis, and short courses running for three months were organised by Annasaheb, dealing with better agriculture and social education. It is now further proposed to have these adult education courses from time to time, to develop local Adivasi leadership. But even in the life of

educated workers, who appear indifferent today, Annasaheb may have sown the seed of "*Nishtha*" dedication, by his own life, which may fructify some day. And this is no mean achievement, in the frustrated and morally depressed atmosphere of India.

INDIAN CORRESPONDENT

## *REVIEW*

### PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHIC PHENOMENA

A PUZZLED reviewer in a socialist periodical once reluctantly admitted that "the ferment of mysticism seems needed to make the social dough rise." The social reformer who undertakes meticulous theoretical planning must pause to reflect upon the fact that only those socialist communities inspired by a mystical or religious conviction have seemed able to long withstand the threat of competitive personal motivations. And it seems to us that the most provocative philosophical thinking arises from deep intuitive conviction, and is not simply the end-result of an intensive intellectual process.

As MANAS often remarks, contemporary philosophy is becoming interesting precisely because of its allowance of validity to certain deeply-felt "mystical" convictions. The psychiatrists and psychoanalysts have pretty well succeeded in outgrowing determinism as an account of human motivation. A concept of "soul"—though, for understandable reasons, seldom appearing with this label—has again thrust itself before the philosopher's eye in the form of distinctions between a "true self" and a "social" or "conditioned" self. In this context, the ancient issue of "free will" is being recast, as, for example, in the writings of A. H. Maslow, Carl Rogers, Erich Fromm, with further illustration in David Riesman's potentially "autonomous" man. The modern philosophers are also being stimulated by the insights of existentialism, although the existentialist impact is usually found more in literary art than in philosophical debate. Meanwhile, the vast field of psychic phenomena is beginning to afford a third channel through which new perspectives are opening before the eyes of the philosopher.

C. J. Ducasse, a former president of the American Philosophical Association, now devotes a large part of his time to evaluating the field of

parapsychology. He treats of some of the basic issues which confront the philosopher in "Causality and Parapsychology," in the June *Journal of Parapsychology*. He writes in part:

In order to be in position to judge what bearing some empirical fact of parapsychology, such for instance as precognition, does or does not have on the problem of human freedom or so-called "free will," it is necessary to distinguish sharply between two senses of the word "determinism," and also between the objective and the merely subjective sense of the word "chance." Every event—whether material or mental and not excepting human volitions—is caused and has effects. In *this* sense of "determinism," determinism is a fact. But this determinism does not entail determinism in the sense of theoretically universal predictability. For predictability depends on similarity of the new case to cases observed in the past, and the similarity is never complete.

The philosopher may be completely convinced of the reality of telepathy, clairvoyance, and even precognition, but before he is able to deal with these subjects in an accustomed manner, he must attempt some basic clarifications. Discussing "what is 'material' and what is 'mental'?", Dr. Ducasse remarks:

The term "the material world" denotes, *basically* trees, rocks, water, air, animal bodies, etc., i.e., comprehensively, such things, events, processes or relations as are *perceptually public*; and, *derivatively*, its denotation includes also molecules, atoms, and subatomic particles; the events occurring among them; and the energy at work there. For all of these although not themselves perceptually public, are *existentially implicit* in the things and processes that are public. Thus, the sole but sufficient title to be classed likewise as "material," which those non-perceptible things and processes have, derives from the fact that they are *intrinsic constituents* of the perceptually public ones denominated "material."

The term "mental" (or "psychical") has similarly both a basic and a derivative denotation. *Basically*, it denotes feelings, moods, sensations, images, desires, impulses, and so on; i.e., comprehensively, occurrences and processes that are *directly observable introspectively* and not otherwise. And, *derivatively*, the term "mental" or "psychical" denotes also such things as latent or repressed memories, and unconscious wishes, fears, inferences, attitudes or impulses. These are not accessible to introspection at

the time or perhaps at all, but—as in the case of the entities and processes of theoretical physics—their existence is *postulated* because it would account for various facts of consciousness that otherwise remain unexplained. The study of unconscious mental processes, however, is still in its infancy as compared with that of atomic and subatomic processes; and the postulations of "depth" psychology are therefore as yet much less definitely confirmed by resultance from them of powers of prediction and of control.

During the present infancy of parapsychology, we may expect to encounter all sorts of literary explorations or exploitations of the "new" area. Our review of Richard Matheson's *A Stir of Echoes* showed how a novelist may jump far ahead of the philosopher in suggesting correlations and conclusions regarding psychic powers. *Mind out of Time* by Angela Tonks (Knopf) is another "suspense novel" based upon telepathic communication between two English inmates of a German prisoner-of-war camp during World War II. Again, as in Mr. Matheson's novel, we encounter the strong suggestion that human beings are not yet psychologically mature enough to properly utilize whatever psychic capacity they may suddenly develop through experimentation. The dilemma of Miss Tonks' leading character, Erikson, is a peculiar one, for his partner in telepathy is a man of dubious intentions whose schemes might easily result in a betrayal of human or social trust. Erikson wishes to continue the experiments in telepathy after a successful escape from the camp and return to civilian life—but also feels he shouldn't. Miss Tonks describes the dilemma:

His thoughts began to turn to Kramer again, and it was not only the half-acknowledged realization that he might be able to help over a job that inclined him to do so. No. There was the insistent nagging urge to continue their experiments. The heightened perception his conscious mind had been able to achieve was by contrast making his present stagnation unbearable, as if he were spiritually cramped, denying this surging, questing inner life an outlet, strangling its expansion into that wonderfully satisfying and timeless world into which he had now and again been able to project himself. He felt he was

denying an ecstasy of fulfillment which nothing else had ever given him.

You could say his denial was voluntary; in one sense it was, but in another it was not, because he feared that if he entered this other world he would find Kramer there too. In that timeless, beautiful isolation there could be no turning aside, no denying his partner in power, or the forces motivating them: no reasoning himself out of the consequences of entering into a state of being streaming away into infinity without the brakes of reason, the firm hand on the wheel of logic. Either he must co-operate again with Kramer and strive to gain some measure of control over their power, or else he must leave the whole thing alone.

Well, the philosopher can't and shouldn't ignore the field of parapsychology, even though we agree with Mr. Matheson and Miss Tonks that casual experiment can be confusing or dangerous. The philosopher may find, in an honest appraisal of parapsychological evidence, reassurance that his own work will never be completed.

## *COMMENTARY* SECOND THOUGHTS

THE first impression of the reader of the Letter from India is likely to be one of extreme disappointment. For some years now, our correspondence with Indian readers has reflected feelings of this sort on the part of Indians who watched and participated with high hope in the launching of the Indian Republic. Yet now, in a few short years, the picture has changed to the discouragements which our correspondent reports, to which must be added the general agreement on the moral weakness of the Congress Party—once the party of Indian patriots.

The obvious comment is that a reaction of this kind was inevitable. There is more, however, to this problem than an "obvious reaction." Most Westerners have expected great things of the Indian people. The Indian people expected great things of themselves. They are, indeed, a people of almost unique historical greatness, of whom great things should be expected. Their hereditary philosophy is the subtlest and the profoundest the world has known.

Something, somewhere, is wrong. The Indians are disappointing others and disappointing themselves. Where was the mistake made, if there was a mistake?

The mistake, it seems to us, is not in the common idealism shared by Indians and admirers of India, but in assumptions about the Indian people. The Indians are too much like ourselves for us to expect them to behave like Christs. Actually, they did better in resisting the conditions of political servitude than in fulfilling, today, the functions once performed by the British administrators. It is one thing to stand bravely against massive colonial injustice, and quite another to create the temper of moral responsibility while acquiring a cultural milieu which is almost totally lacking in traditions of moral responsibility.

The Indians cannot turn back to the careful arrangements of their ancestral religion for ideas of responsibility. Those arrangements, while philosophical in origin, had become too much

involved in mere custom to survive a social and technological revolution. Then, it is evident from a great deal of reading matter from India that the self-conscious pride of Indians in their magnificent heritage has been a barrier to original thinking. They have known "everything" for too long. The Indian has not merely had bad luck in his adventure with Western culture. He has been betrayed by the universe!

This sort of moral attack by history is extremely difficult to withstand. A more barbarous people would not suffer so much in such a situation. Barbarians would have less difficulty in struggling against odds, but for the Indian, the very principle of order in life itself seems at fault.

The fact is that the Indian, with about the same moral and intellectual endowments as the rest of us, has begun to live for himself in the modern world. He is experiencing the pain that has afflicted the rest of us for a long, long time. This makes for shock.

India, alas, will probably have to become a "modern nation." People vulnerable to the appeals of Western culture are to that extent *Western* in their nature. The age of purity without temptation, of strength without self-consciousness, of vision without knowledge and experience of the entire gamut of attitudes and capacities of the modern world, is over, never to return.

One thing remains possible, and that is that the Indians, *because* of their heritage, may be able to pass through the cycle of Western culture in only a fraction of the time that it has taken Europe and America. And, as our Indian correspondent suggests, the seeds of another sort of culture may be taking root, today, to flower among the less tortured generations of the world civilization of tomorrow.

## CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

### CAN MORALITY BE UNETHICAL?

BROCK CHISHOLM, eminent psychologist and one-time director of the World Health Organization, has long been an explosive opponent of conventional morality. Dr. Chisholm feels that the idea of "sin," itself, is the worst offender, and that the ethical man is one who sees potential integrity and not potential evil in human beings.

In *Can People Learn to Learn?* (Volume 18 of the World Perspectives series), Dr. Chisholm devotes much of the section on education to a detailing of this argument. First of all, he points out, the very young child responds adversely to well-meant parental decisions to show him "love" when he is "good" in the conventional sense, and to withdraw "love" when he is "bad." Dr. Chisholm explains:

It is when he is conforming to the arbitrary code of which he so far knows very little except that it is not natural to him that he is called good, and is loved and feels secure when he behaves in that way. These facts produce in many children a fear and reluctance to explore, a tendency to withdraw into themselves, to avoid new experience because they don't know what the rules for new situations are, and they may be called bad and be threatened with loss of love or assault. . . .

But whether the child likes it or not he is going to be forced into many new situations. Such a child tends to be reluctant and fearful of going to school and may suffer acutely when he has to do so. He may hold onto his mother in real panic when faced by new situations. It is never the real situation of which he is afraid, but fear of loss of love of his mother, or by this time of his father, also. All unknowns have already been made fearful; he is by this time usually afraid of the dark, though he commonly does his best to conceal it from everyone.

His tragedy is that he has come to believe that he himself is naturally "bad," and so he is fearful of any new circumstances which might show up that badness, that is, under which he might behave naturally, instead of in whatever unknown ways the

local customs might find acceptable and would call "good." He believes that anyone who comes to know what he is really like will despise and hate him.

Dr. Chisholm also feels that a personalized God, as the supreme symbol of reward and punishment, tends toward paranoia, authoritarian politics, and general cravenness. Continuing with the story of the child who is taught that he is more "bad" than "good," Dr. Chisholm writes:

The concept of sin which he may meet at home or in Sunday school about this time reinforces this fear very strongly, and also pushes him strongly into conformity. The still more damaging concept of the all-seeing and all-knowing God and the "fear of God," which he learns is standard for all good people, leaves him no alternative to trying to keep even his thinking good. If he succeeds he will use that same method of repression to avoid painful or even only difficult thinking as long as he lives. It is not to be expected that he will be able to think clearly about threatening world conditions later. He will want to leave all such uncomfortable responsibilities to a "leader," a political "hero," or a "God," while he acquires virtue, or the feeling of virtue, by conforming to the regimenting demands of the "good" people and whatever authority they may support. Of course at any stage he may rebel against all these controls, still not thinking matters out for himself, but commonly being led into rebellion by a gang leader, or demagogue, who will preach and offer a competing authority in the name of freedom, or of hate of authority.

Of course most of these reactions are not distinct and clear cut. They may often alternate; conformity, with an emotional orgy of self-criticism, penitence and expiation, may take turns with delinquency, drunkenness or any conceivable type of antisocial behavior. Refuge of a sort is sometimes found in illness and dependence on others, or in chronic complaint and accusation against wife, or husband, or children of withholding love.

Any of these, and of innumerable other surface manifestations of a buried inferiority complex, with its multitudinous psychopathological complications, can stem from the "conviction of sin" in small childhood.

Universal education, in other words, is entirely incompatible with traditional religious training. In Dr. Chisholm's view, no human being,

young or old, is capable of "mature interpersonal relations" if concerned about his status as one of the chosen few. The reason for this is simply that the mature person is one who is willing to change his mind, to evolve beyond previous conceptions, constantly reaching for a broader perspective. Particularly during our time is this incompatibility revealed. The expanding universe of modern physics and astronomy can have no place for a God of local concerns. As Chisholm says: "It is very clear that what the world needs is thinkers, not believers. The child brought up to know the essential elements of all religions will be much more likely to be able to think independently, constructively and for the welfare of all kinds of people." Further:

A real and pressing necessity for the very survival of the human race is large numbers of people who can, and will, face facts, no matter how uncomfortable or threatening, and will take the responsibility of thinking and acting independently of past attitudes, and appropriately to the world as it is now. A generation brought up to believe in a God of the universe, who nevertheless enjoys being praised and "glorified" by mankind, which has existed for only a moment of time on one tiny satellite of one solar system among billions of others, can hardly be expected to be able to force themselves to think truly about the complexity of racial survival. It is so much easier to conform to earlier learned patterns and to leave all responsibilities to the "leaders" and to God.

Another point emphasized by Dr. Chisholm is that the child particularly needs to be aware of his parents' actual ignorance or uncertainty in particular areas. Why believe, as so many parents do, that the child must have a security founded on arbitrarily certain answers? Dr. Chisholm argues:

For instance, it is quite misleading to give a child the impression that religion means just one sect, or one religion. There are very many religions, each with its revelation, its dogmas and its rituals, or its escape from all these to humanism or rationalism. The sect or religion to which the parent is attached commonly is accidental, in that he or she was born into it. Sometimes the parent has left some other group for the present affiliation, to find some particular support or emotional necessity which he or she happens to need. That is no indication that the

same dogmas or ritual will be what the child needs when he grows up.

Would it not be fairer to the child to show him something of all the major religions and of their principal variations leaving him free to adopt whichever he finds most acceptable if any, when he has developed the emotional-intellectual capacity to make a free and wise choice for himself? Some people will object that then the child will not be religious at all but that is to say that acceptance of a religion is likely for only underdeveloped minds.

## *FRONTIERS*

### A Question of Assumptions

IN MANAS for Aug. 19, this space was devoted to a report of a debate between Mulford Q. Sibley and Wilmore Kendall on the question of whether war is moral or immoral, Christian or Un-Christian. A reader comments:

The story about the Sibley-Kendall debate has prompted me to write you. It seems to me that it is quite possible to argue that war is immoral but necessary. The reason it is necessary is because we do not yet have a world government. Those of us who believe in democracy feel that we should insist upon a world government being democratic. Until such time as the dictatorships are willing to agree to a democratic world government, we must be prepared to wage war as the lesser of two evils, both of which are immoral. The greater evil would be acquiescence in the creation of a totalitarian world government which would mean the enslavement of many generations before it evolved (if ever) into a democratic world government.

There is so much to consider here that systematic discussion in the space available is impossible. What may be done is to look at some of the assumptions and implications of this statement.

Take for example the proposition that war is "immoral but necessary." A thing that is necessary is neither moral nor immoral. It is just there, like a rock or a storm at sea. Morality has to do only with matters over which men have some control. So if war is necessary or inevitable, there is nothing to discuss at the moral level.

However, there is the view adopted by the *Christian Century* during World War II, to the effect that the war was an unnecessary necessity—some kind of inevitable punishment for our sins. We had to fight, even though it was wrong, the *Century* said. This is a puzzler because it really means that we have to be immoral for moral reasons. What else? Unless the implication is that we fight under some dark compulsion over which we have no control; but this invokes the mystery of freedom, or possibly the Will of God, which is,

as Spinoza said, the asylum of ignorance. So, to say that war is "necessary" is to beg the question. Some people don't go to war. It isn't necessary for them.

But our correspondent shows in his next sentence that he means it is necessary to a world which lacks world government. Is this "necessarily" the case? The assumption here is that the nations will fight unless an outside authority compels them not to. Well, this is true only some of the time. A lot of nations don't fight with one another. This shows that peace is possible without world government. It may be unlikely, but it is possible.

The next two sentences propose that the democratic nations want a democratic form of world government, but that the dictatorship nations don't. This is misleading. Some people living under democratic governments want democratic world government, but no democratic nation we know of is ready, now, to give up its national sovereignty. On the contrary, an angry nationalism is more characteristic of U.S. policies, today, than the interest in world government our correspondent has in mind.

Further, on this question of "democratic" world government, we think careful study should be given to Jayaprakash Narayan's criticisms of parliamentary democracy. He says it is not working well enough, today, to be used as a symbol of a desirable social system. The very mechanisms of democracy are now under question. In this case it is confusing to make democracy the basis of an argument that war is necessary. The whole question of democratic self-government needs re-examination, not to decide whether or not it is good, but simply to determine how to define it so that it really means something, and then how to get it. From investigations of this sort we may find, for example, that we have to stop wars *in order to get it*. This would make democratic world government, if we want it, dependent upon stopping wars, and not the other way around.

A chief difficulty in discussion at the level set by this correspondent is the tendency to regard national states as the ultimate units in human relations. They may be the units, today, in international relations, but this notion of the "real" unit may not be written in the stars. Consider this sentence: "Until such time as the dictatorships are willing to agree to a democratic world government, we must be prepared to wage war as the lesser of two evils, both of which are immoral."

We are trying to form a mental picture of a "dictatorship" making a decision and we are not succeeding. Compare this with the idea of a man making a decision. Even the idea of a man making a decision has its difficulties. For about a hundred years, scientific thinkers have been trying to take man apart, having in mind the objective of proving that man doesn't really make any decisions—that his environment or his heredity or both these forces together make them for him. If you submit to this scientific (rather pseudo-scientific) conclusion, you don't have a man any more, but some kind of impersonal juncture of natural (irrational) forces which doesn't do anything of itself. If you accept this view, you can't talk about morality or necessity. Morality exists only if men make decisions, and necessity has meaning only when not everything is necessary.

So, in order to continue this discussion, we must say that you can't take man apart to the point of rendering meaningless his integrity in making decisions.

But you *can* take the national State apart to the point of rendering *its* decisions meaningless. As a matter of fact, this is exactly what we must do in order to stop war. War is the Health of the State. If the State loses its identity, it can't make war. If a State loses its identity, you can't make war against it. It will have no coherence as an enemy. It will not be a threat, so war against it will not be a "necessity." It is notable that no State ever made war against just people, but only

against people organized as another State. Only religions make war against people—heretics and unbelievers.

Not only dictator States are difficult to imagine as making decisions. Any kind of a State presents this difficulty. There is no doubt about that fact that decisions get made, in some fashion or other. But the way they get made is so mixed up, so involved in massive elements of human weakness, human wickedness, Machiavellianism and delusions of grandeur that it seems an extreme of folly to make world peace depend upon a beneficent decision that will have to go through all these processes to get itself made. In fact, to speak of our "morality" as dependent upon such decisions seems like giving up to the Devil completely. Who says we have to wait on such processes?

The alternative, according to our correspondent, would be to submit to "enslavement of many generations," while we wait for totalitarian world government to evolve into democratic world government.

This is the "lest evil befall" argument. Now a man who writes about world government and what it will cost to get it must, because of the moral basis of his position, *speak for all men*. In this case, he is speaking for all men on two levels. At one level he is saying that all men want, or should want, and must be given, democratic world government. The idea is pretty abstract, but let us allow him permission to say this in behalf of everybody, even though there will be those ornery enough to say *they* don't want any such thing.

The other level is the level of what it is necessary to do in order to *get* what everybody ought to have—the level of the argument that "war is immoral but necessary."

We are thinking about a man sitting in a kraal down in Basutoland who may say, "Can't you have your 'necessary' war without involving *me*?" And you will say to him, "No; I'm sorry; war has gotten to be a pretty big thing, now, and you'll

have to be involved along with the rest of us." And he will say, "But I don't *agree* with you that war is necessary." And you'll say, "Come along now, be a good fellow; we've got this thing all figured out. It's syllogistic, you see." And then you go through the routine of proof.

But the man down in Basutoland can't read and write and he can get more use out of a plough than a syllogism. He just doesn't want that war. He wants, you could say, to pick his own wars—wars that *he* understands. But he, poor man, is not smart enough to speak for *everybody*. So his voice is raised in vain. Of course, he is used to that. He has been shouting vainly for a hundred years or so.

Well, there is the Big Picture to consider. Once we get that World Government we'll bring education and a fine line of democratic syllogisms down to Basutoland, and we'll *organize* that man into a responsible citizen of the world community.

But along with the Big Picture there are a lot of little pictures to consider—pictures of people who are saying, "Okay, go on and have your war, if you think it is necessary, but me—I just want to die a natural death. I hope you'll arrange it that way, *please*."

So it seems to us that at this point you either get tough or you give in. There are no half-measures to be adopted. If you think war is necessary, you really mean that it is necessary to *win*. And if you are serious about this thing, you're going to have to be pretty tough with very nearly everybody, and get on with winning *right now*. Time, as the experts keep pointing out, is not on the side of the democracies.

One thing more: There is a very different way of looking at an interest in world government. You can think of it as an ideal which men may some day embrace when they recognize the futility of identifying their welfare with a single nation. The people who support the ideal of world government are obviously people who have come to this realization. But what we need is not a

world order which depends upon extraordinary maturity in a great many people who don't have it, now. We need a thought-out view of how to get along with one another despite great differences in maturity among men, great differences in what men understand by maturity, and great differences in the way men define the Good Society. We need this in as many individuals as possible, because whatever we do collectively, we shall first have to think it through individually. If we don't think it through individually, we can't do it collectively; instead, it will be done to us, which is precisely what we are trying to avoid.