

SOME ENCOURAGING SIGNS

ONE thing you can say about the United States is that the free flow of ideas continues here today, as in the past, and that as the times get worse, the ideas seem to be getting better. If you feel compelled to minimize this sign of freedom and intelligence by arguing that the circulation of such ideas takes place among a very small number of people, the reply can be made that this limitation on the currency of the best intellectual and moral conceptions is nothing new. Too often, pessimistic criticism is offered from the standpoint of utopian views. This is a misuse of the utopian outlook. A high utopian vision serves well as a spur, but when the dream of the good is turned into a sour contempt for the good that is actually being accomplished, all the arguments against utopian thinking acquire full validity.

We have just read through two issues of the *Newsletter* of the Committee of Correspondence, one dated April 27, the other, May 19. The April 27 issue is devoted to discussion of various phases of the cold war, with considerable attention given to Soviet Russia's domestic needs and problems. The contributors are Erich Fromm, S. M. Lipset, Raymond A. Bauer, and David Riesman. Dr. Fromm's view, which he defends against criticism, is that Russia ought not to be dealt with any longer "as a revolutionary-expansionist country"—if, indeed, it ever should have been—"but as a reactionary and security-conscious one, merely making use of revolutionary ideology opportunistically, though at times prisoner of it."

Interesting as this question is, we do not propose to examine it here, but wish only to remark the particular value and even enjoyment which reading this newsletter brings, as a portion of vital analysis which has no commercial frame. Here is a publication which exists for no other purpose than to raise questions and invite discussion of its contents. The format of the *Newsletter* is unpretentious—it is lithographed typing on letter-size sheets, stapled together—but the pages are easy to read, which is all

that is necessary. The contributors include men who are doing some of the finest sociological and psychological thinking that can be found in the entire world. They are writing this Newsletter for exactly the same reason that the men who made up the original "Committees of Correspondence" in Colonial America decided to correspond with one another—to serve the interests of human freedom.

It is obvious that a central problem of the modern world is communications. We have billions of words clogging the press and the air channels, but little or no significant communication. The *Newsletter* of the Committee of Correspondence is a valiant attempt at a new start in communications. It is a fine example of what a handful of people can do, with very little capital, to fill a desperate need. It illustrates the resourcefulness of intelligent individuals as well as the freedom which they enjoy to express and publish their opinions in the United States—a freedom which will grow only as people make use of it.

The May 12 issue of the *Newsletter* presents the thinking of seven commentators on the Cuban situation. The writers are David Riesman, Lewis Mumford, Nadav Safran, Norbett L. Mintz, the London *Observer*, Michael Maccoby, and Erich Fromm. Something of the level of the discussion, which includes a careful study of how the American Press handled the Cuban "episode," is conveyed by a brief, introductory, editorial paragraph:

. . . a reflective Yugoslav scientist with wide diplomatic contacts to whom we were talking the other day observed that the fact that the United States didn't follow up the invasion with its own troops was a shock to the Soviet image of this country, which took it for granted that after the Cuban refugee volunteers had started things our own government would come to their aid and finish the job. That the government stuck, at least marginally, by its own pledge of non-intervention, jolted the Soviet bloc. And they cannot quite lay this to our weakness, since even in their eyes we are not that weak; and so they

conceivably might learn something about the vestiges of legality and caution on which we must all depend for the hope of peace. If this is not what we meant to teach them, and it certainly is not, it is a better lesson than whatever we had in mind.

(Persons interested in receiving the Committee of Correspondence *Newsletter* may address the Committee at Post Office Box 536, Cooper Station, New York 3, N.Y.)

Almost endless words have already been put into print about the Eichmann trial. So far as MANAS is concerned, we have been unable to think of anything that seemed worth saying, and so have kept still, despite various letters from readers who have asked for comment of one sort or another. How can you be for or against the Eichmann trial? How can you blame the nation of Israel for wanting it? Even if you wish they hadn't kidnapped Eichmann and brought him to Israel to face his accusers, you don't contribute very much by saying so. But, now that he is in custody, what is the next step? Punishment? He can be punished, of course, but how can the punishment fit the crime? The Eichmann trial, it seems to us, is an incident in a nightmare. As a part of the record of the most terrible events of the twentieth century, the story of the trial should be added, as a kind of documentary, to Dwight Macdonald's essay, "The Responsibility of Peoples," included in his book, *The Root Is Man* (Cunningham Press, 1953, Alhambra, California).

As for comment on the trial itself, we have seen nothing to compare with the observations of Hans Zeisel, professor of law and sociology, at the University of Chicago, in the *Saturday Review* for April 8. Dr. Zeisel begins:

The trial of Adolf Eichmann is likely to make all the wrong points, because neither the procedure nor the substance of our criminal law fits such a case. Our criminal law has meaning only for crimes that lie within the range of human understanding; at least the worst among us must recognize some remote affinity. But this crime lies too far beyond ordinary human experience to make such a recognition possible. . . . it is the larger purpose of the Eichmann trial, we are given to understand, to reawaken the conscience of the world to the horrors of this tragedy. But it is

precisely with respect to this larger aim that I fear the trial will fail.

Eichmann's trial will keep us from seeing our share in this catastrophe because, by comparison, our share must look infinitesimal. And yet, what ought to matter is not the absolute comparison but the relative comparison with our respective consciences.

The danger, quite plainly, is that, after the trial is over, too many people will tend to look back upon it as some sort of balancing of the equation of crime and punishment. The trial, in other words, is so inadequate a symbol of the retribution, and Eichmann is so limited a symbol of the guilt, that together they may hide the essential evils which lay behind the orgy of genocide conducted by the Nazis, and which were by no means rendered nonexistent by the allied victory in World War II. This is what Dr. Zeisel fears:

The trial will keep us from connecting the 6,000,000 dead Jews with the next realistic opportunity at which we might elect to kill 6,000,000 civilians. War still ranks so high among our institutions that we cannot see any parallel between the gas chambers of Auschwitz and the bomb. That is because our moral vision is not penetrating enough to permit us to see that for the victims of such mass killings, differences in mode or motive would be relatively insignificant.

The trial will make it, if anything, easier for the shouting mothers in Louisiana or the parading students in Georgia to believe that what they did had nothing to do with the horrors of Auschwitz. Nor will the decent citizens all over the country who guard their clubs from Jewish members see any connection. Not even the Louisiana mothers, to say nothing of the more gentlemanly segregationists, have probably ever harmed another citizen's hair. What connection could there be with the butchers of Auschwitz? Simply this: It all began with little more than institutionalized dislike of Jews and the devices to avoid contact with them. The sin began there, the disaster that followed would not have been possible without this innocent-looking prelude.

If the Eichmann trial fails at this level, what of the more familiar intentions of courts of justice? Dr. Zeisel asks:

What is to be the purpose? To make him [Eichmann] a better man? To keep him from committing another such crime? To serve as a

warning to others? It is enough to enumerate these traditional aims of our criminal law to see how inappropriate they are to this case. . . .

The final comment of this writer seems the most important of all:

To comprehend the full tragedy, we must see it as a part of the general decline of our moral sensibilities—a temporary decline, we trust. When the last century was about to end, the Dreyfus affair, the mere jailing of one innocent Jew, aroused the passionate wrath of the civilized world. A bare forty years later, this world is marked by the Moscow trials and the horrors that were hidden behind them, by our still only dim realization of what we did in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and by the boundless abyss of the Nazi crimes. The trial will not make it easier for us to realize that, however remotely, we all share in this moral catastrophe, that it is, indeed, in the words of the Christian prayer, *nostra culpa, nostra maxima culpa*.

It is always encouraging to find someone saying what needs to be said, and doubly encouraging when it gets said in a magazine with as large a circulation as the *Saturday Review*. Well, you may say, the *Saturday Review* has a commercial frame. It has a commercial frame and an editor by the name of Norman Cousins, and it does very well, under the circumstances. But it would do a lot better under other circumstances. We look to the day when magazine readers will demand total independence of editorial content from the responsibility to move merchandise.

Dr. Zeisel speaks of "the general decline of our moral sensibilities." What could more effectively contribute to this decline than making the communication of truth a secondary role in the function of the great mass media, upon which nearly all the people depend for knowledge of what is going on in the world?

What is the responsibility of the editors of the mass media? Their first responsibility is to achieve circulation, so that the business office can sell enough advertising to show a profit. It is common sense, in this context, to insist upon an editorial policy which will win as many readers as possible. Their second responsibility is to create an atmosphere of interest in material goods and

services, so that the editorial matter will provide a suitable matrix for the advertising which carries the economic load of the publication. Finally, there is the ancient idea of serving the public with truth, fact, and informed opinion.

We don't mean to suggest that papers supported by advertising wholly neglect the responsibility to disseminate truth, fact, and informed opinion. On the contrary, it is only fair to say that no doubt many editors do the best they can. But if you've ever worked on a newspaper, you know that a large part of the editorial function is to deliberately create a market for specialized advertizers. Newspapers have "travel" and "resort" sections because the business office can sell travel and resort advertising. They add a garden page when there is an opportunity to sell a lot of gadgets to the gardener. There is nothing immoral, of course, in providing a forum for the manufacturers of rubber hose, trowels and hoes, and garden seed, and all the other little things that make the garden grow. But what does turn out to be immoral, by slow accumulation of offenses, is the gradual departmentalizing of an organ of fact and opinion, until, when you add the comics and the sports section, there is precious little space left for important news, and not much motivation to print it. The preoccupations of the publisher, who has many practical problems to solve, are all in another direction. He has his budget to balance, his board of directors to appease, and these important items are bound to acquire more importance to him than the abstract responsibility of a publisher to readers who, anyhow, show only a slight interest in impartial factual coverage of international affairs and might even be antagonized by a careful weighing of moral issues. Further, the syndicated columnists have already created an entire mythology of popular morals, so that the editors don't have to bother their heads about serious questions.

The fundamental fact is that the end of modern commercial publishing is *not* to inform carefully, thoroughly, impartially. The fundamental end of modern commercial publishing is to show a profit at the end of the next year. Further, the occasional good stories are spoiled by this basic motivation,

since the impact they ought to produce is diluted by the superficial atmosphere of the entire enterprise.

But even this is not the real misfortune. The real misfortune is that people *think* they know what is going on, that they are properly informed, that all that they need to know is being reported to them. It is only if something happens like the Cuban invasion fiasco that they begin to wonder a bit whether *anybody* is properly informed. And then, when the newspapers show only a routine or "political" sort of indignation, this wondering is lulled by the general apathy.

We are obliged to confess to considerable editorial naïveté about the Cuban incident. When we read, as calmly reported in the press, that the Cuban invasion had been *planned* by the C.I.A., we could hardly believe it. It didn't seem possible that the United States would so desert its time-honored principles and so obviously interfere with the domestic affairs of another nation. And what seemed worse than being caught in this condition of innocence was the fact that almost nobody except the small-circulation liberal press and one or two senators gave evidence of being upset by this revelation. You don't want to rant and rage about the government, which has plenty of difficult problems to face, these days, but it does make you ask what has happened to the United States of America, and whether you live there any more.

So, when you listen to a broadcast over a radio station which accepts no advertising—which depends upon voluntary subscriptions from listeners (of \$12 a year) for its support—a broadcast which starts out:

Adlai Stevenson lied *about* his country at the UN a couple of weeks ago. Now that *we* know he lied—the Cuban delegate knew it at the time—we ought to ask whether he lied *for* his country. If he did, before we pronounce too quick a condemnation on him, we must figure out whether his lie was actually of value to the United States. In other, and older, language, we have to find out whether Mr. Stevenson's was a royal lie.

you feel encouraged because you are getting impartial, honest analysis by a commentator (in this case, Hallock Hoffman) who doesn't give a tinker's

damn about moving goods, but cares a great deal about the integrity of the United States of America. Mr. Hoffman discusses Mr. Stevenson's lie in Platonic terms—the terms of the Republic and the Socratic ideal of the pursuit of truth.

You feel encouraged because already there are three radio stations—KPFA in Berkeley, KPFK in Los Angeles, and WBAI in New York—which are operating on this principle of listener-support, and, somehow or other, are managing to balance their budgets (with occasional drives for funds and other help from interested parties).

One more encouraging sign: Not long ago a friend with an assignment to write a round-up story about peace walks throughout the world called on the phone in desperation. Where could she get *all* the facts? There were so many walks going on, you couldn't keep track of them all, and there seems to be no central bureau of information. That's right, we said. A lot of these walks are grass-roots affairs. And we read to her over the phone a clipping that's been lying on the desk since last October, which says, after a Copenhagen dateline, "A three-day anti-nuclear march with participants from eight countries ended today with a mass rally at Copenhagen. Speakers called for immediate abolition of nuclear weapons throughout the world."

There were ten thousand people in the ranks when the march reached Copenhagen.

Letter from **MOSCOW**

MOSCOW.—We have just returned from Red Square, where we stood for more than four hours in the front ranks of spectators to watch the May 1 parade, bits of which you will have seen on newsreels or TV. I understand that this parade was carried live on Eurovision, the great new European linkage of national TV systems. It is an ironic indication of the pace of the day's events that this show, which was to have been telecast as the Soviet Union's first contribution to the network, had already been displaced by the events following Gagarin's return, which were carried in extenso all over the continent.

The May Day parade was a great show. The display of armed might—of the guns and rockets, driven past with polish and precision—drew no special crowd reaction, and somehow, whether or not this speaks my bias, these tools of destruction had an air of history about them. There was no fly-past of deafening aircraft. Except for Marshal Malinovsky's brief opening speech, there was no oratory at all. No more than 20 to 25 minutes went into this military show, which was relegated to a minor place in the proceedings. What really counted was what may have received less attention on your film and TV—the orderly, serried ranks of the so-called "public demonstrations" which for about two hours filled the Square with six parallel streams of civilian paraders, eight or ten abreast, walking at a good pace. Each person carried and waved a branch of artificial blossoms: the Spring is late, here. This massive formation of lines of some fifty people, in ranks three to four feet apart, passed for two hours. I make a total of about 200,000, give or take a few. There was never a gap, never a hitch. On they came, apparently representing all elements of the new Soviet life—watch factories, ball-bearing plants, cars, trucks, agricultural instruments, sports clubs, the Young Pioneers, unions, cooperatives—carrying banners, symbols of their groups, of Soviet achievement such as

Sputniks, space-ships, and the like, some with great placards of production figures and economic plans. The latter were well-done, colorful, told a quick and impressive story for all to read.

Two things were lacking in this parade. First, though the dove of peace sometimes made its appearance, there was no mention at all of the United Nations. (Nor has there been, in any of our meetings with Soviet governmental or other organizations, this past ten days.) Second, there was no air of threat or menace at any point. This was a vast, well-organized, basically unexcited, well-mannered mass of people, seemingly enjoying themselves. Our party of three, through mischance publicly—and incorrectly—identified as three Americans, had the ill-luck to be standing at a point in the crowd at which a gendarme arranged the entry of two quiet-looking men carrying improvised Cuban flags. Established in the front row, they hopefully and silently waved their provocative symbols at the revolutionary masses marching by. Some marchers caught sight of the flags, recognized them—which was more than I did—and responded by waving or shouting. At rarer intervals the shouts settled into a short-lived chant, and several times into the Russian equivalent of Cuba's cry, "*Cuba, Da; Yanquis, Niet!*", but one would have to describe this expression as a friendly, participative sort of enthusiasm, a sort of "Come on in, boys! The water's fine!"

As a matter of fact, that invitation comes very close to expressing the somewhat wondering, somewhat tentative, relaxed feeling of individual well-being that seems widespread on this, my third visit to Moscow in three years. There is a kind of stir in the air. The impression comes from many directions and in many ways. In occasionally bitter April weather, Russian crowds eat ice cream as though it were summer—and carefully deposit the papers and sticks in the waste-urns which they know will appear every twenty yards on the street. Batteries of bright red, automatic fruit-drink vending machines are making their appearance on

streets and squares. People queue at length to drop in their coins and take their turn to drink out of the one glass at each machine. The great Traytiakov and Hermitage galleries in Moscow and Leningrad—both considerably larger than any I have ever seen elsewhere—are jammed. We worked our way through a two-hour portion of each in a great flood of students, tourists, school children in herds, Spring-struck couples holding hands, soldiers, sailors, and peasants in felt boots. Outside the Hermitage, parked nose-to-tail, were the new tour buses which brought them from collective farms, cooperatives, enterprises and clubs. In a ground-floor window embrasure of the Hermitage, watching the passing throng, sat an entire peasant family, surrounded by their innumerable bags, sacks and baskets, popping with loaves of bread and, presumably, the rest of the equipment needed for so daring an excursion to the city.

I am sure that there is a stir. Something is opening. One can make a case without difficulty for all the things that are *closed* to this people. It can be a sound case. The trouble is that this has been recited to us for too long, too frequently, and too glibly. It is becoming far more important for us to try to understand what is or what can be made *open* to them. The attempt to understand, as we work with various types of cultural exchange, is by turns fascinating, depressing, hopeful, and intensely frustrating, but always interesting.

ROVING CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

"THE LOTUS AND THE ROBOT"

ARTHUR KOESTLER can certainly be described as a valuable writer, for in him are combined three notable qualities. First, Koestler has talent in incisive discourse. Second, he is a man who has enjoyed a wide range of experience, having been born in Hungary, educated in Austria, culturally assimilated to France during his formative years, and who finally became British by naturalization. Koestler went into and out of communism (see *The God That Failed*), had experience with prison and concentration camp, and recently toured Asia. Third, Koestler is "hard-headed" in all his evaluations, yet not a foe to transcendental philosophy or inspired mysticism. As he remarks in his preface to *The Lotus and the Robot*: "The respect for 'hard, obstinate facts' which a scientific education imparts, does not necessarily imply the denial of a different order of Reality."

The present volume is regarded by Mr. Koestler as in some respects a sequel to *The Yogi and the Commissar*. The author's own point of view is, clearly, neither one nor the other. His greatest admiration is for the ancient Greeks who, in the sixth century B.C., managed a synthesis between physics and metaphysics. Koestler quite apparently feels that the Greek perspective could have saved India from "life-rejection," saved Europe from the Dark Ages and later from the deadly reaction of assertive materialisms. Since much of what he says in dealing with Indian thought is bluntly critical, it is necessary to take note of this perspective so that it will be clear that Koestler does not deny validity to philosophy and metaphysics.

In the concluding chapter of *The Lotus and the Robot* he writes of the Greek outlook in this way:

In the first great synthesis of European thought, the Pythagorean school brought together into a unified vision yin and yang, mysticism and science, mathematics and music; the search for Law in Nature, the analysis of the harmony of the spheres,

was proclaimed to be the highest form of divine worship. There were periods in which this discovery was forgotten and denied, like a recessive gene, but it always reasserted itself. . . .

The revival of learning in the thirteenth century and the subsequent Renaissance of culture were due to Europe's regaining possession of its own past—its temporarily lost Greek heritage. When the Hellenic tissue was grafted back on to the Latin culture of Europe—after nearly a thousand years—it had an immediate reviving effect, and this tends to show that Europe really has some kind of individuality of its own. We are still in the middle of the explosive development which started with that re-grafting operation.

If the Greek vision may be regarded as eternally regenerative, the same, Koestler feels, cannot be said of most Indian philosophy nor of most Zen. In both cases, he suggests, repetitive techniques have tended to bury "the primal germ of mind." On the subject of Zen, Koestler concludes:

Zen started as a de-conditioning cure and ended up as a different type of conditioning. The cramp of self-critical watchfulness was relieved by the self-confident ease of exercising an automatic skill. The knack became a comfortable substitute for "It." The autumn leaves still rustle in the ditch, but originality has gone down the drain. The water still laps against the heron's legs, but the muse lies drowned at the bottom of the ancient pond.

Mr. Koestler's evaluations of Gandhi and Nehru will seem harsh to most of MANAS readers, yet they can also be held to be usefully counteractive to any tendency toward an idolatry of persons. In Koestler's view, India has been bound so tightly to saintly authority that even the work of her greatest leaders has been diminished by this complex:

Gandhi was the father of the nation; and though Pandit Nehru is a different type of person, he had to step into the same role; whether he liked it or not, he became the new father figure. India is a democracy in name only; it would be more correct to call it a Bapucracy.

This is the inevitable consequence of a tradition which set a premium on uncritical obedience,

penalized the expression of independent opinion and proclaimed, in lieu of the survival of the fittest, the non-survival of the meekest—through entry into Nirvana. How could a citizen be expected to elect a government when he was not allowed to elect his own bride? How could he be expected to decide what is best for the nation's future when he was not allowed to decide his own future? Out of the sacred womb of the Indian family only political yes-men could emerge. Their compliance to the will of the leader was not due to opportunism or cowardice, but to an implanted reflex. In this atmosphere was the Congress Party born, and it is still governed by the same traditions. As long as Gandhi remained the Bapu, the men around him, including Nehru, were virtually incapable of going against his decisions, even when these struck them as illogical and dangerous—as they quite often did. Nehru gives several astonishing examples of this in his autobiography.

The first portion of *The Lotus and the Robot* is devoted to four of India's "contemporary saints." The most interesting character to emerge is that of Vinoba Bhave, and here we discover that, after all, the criticisms leveled at India by Mr. Koestler stem from a kind of bifocal vision. It is to Bhave incidentally, that Koestler assigns the credit for turning the tide against the Communists in 1951. And afterward:

In the years that followed Bhave had directly and indirectly influenced State and Government legislation, forced the politicians' attention on the country's most urgent problem, and created a phalanx of supporters, cutting across party and class divisions, from leftwing Socialists to dethroned Maharajahs, and including some of the most hard-headed and influential industrialists in the country. Improbable as these achievements were, the real significance of the phenomenon Vinoba lies still on a different level. Bhoodan at its inception was, and to a large extent remained, a one-man show, the fantastic enterprise of a saintly ascetic who had always shunned the public eye (except when forced to court imprisonment) until at the age of fifty-six, an inner compulsion set him on the road towards the greatest peaceful revolution since Gandhi. It galvanized the whole of India, filled millions of half-starved peasants and disillusioned intellectuals with a new hope, and made even the sceptics recognize that there may be other effective methods of action besides the blueprints of the rationalist planner and the voice of the soap-box

orator. In other words, Vinoba Bhave has proved that even in the twentieth century a saint may influence history—at least up to a point, at least in India.

Koestler makes this summary in a chapter entitled "The Crossroads":

The enterprise of Vinoba Bhave may end in failure; it has nevertheless revealed the untapped resources of the nation, its responsiveness to an inspired appeal, its potential of generosity enthusiasm and self-sacrifice. It has also shown that this response came from all strata of the population, from Rajahs to Harijans, and that it cut across all party-divisions, which are to a large extent fictitious. Concurrent with the Bhoodan movement, new trends of thought have emerged whose spokesmen I propose to replace the Western-style democracy, mechanically copied from highly industrialized, urban societies, by a "grassroots democracy," based on the traditional nuclei of Indian self-government, the village councils, together with the fostering of native crafts and regional industries. I believe that the salvation of India lies in a gradual transformation, on some such lines, discarding the petrified elements in past tradition and harnessing those spiritual resources which Gandhi and Vinoba revealed, to create, not an artificial pseudo-democracy, but—to coin a word—a home-grown "Indiocracy."

The Lotus and the Robot is published by Macmillan. The sections dealing with Koestler's experiences with Zen and Yoga first appeared in the magazine *Encounter*.

COMMENTARY

AMERICA'S SAHIB COMPLEX

WE have been doing a lot of reading about Cuba, lately, and confess to an undiminished sympathy for the Cuban people and a strong distaste for the behavior of the United States, yet feel that nothing important would be accomplished by trying to put these feelings on paper. What one must do, it seems to us, is get in as much reading as he can—probably a lot more than we have done—and then, not "decide" on anything in particular, but begin to think about the big abstraction, "Communism," which, like a dark obscenity, prevents so many people from thinking at all about the problems of the world.

A person might start out by informing himself concerning the malignant aspects of Communism. For example, there is a book sent to us for review, Frank S. Meyer's *The Moulding of Communists* (Harcourt, Brace, 1961, \$5.00), which sets out the restructuring of the mind and the emotional reactions which hard-core Communists endeavor to accomplish in recruits to the Party. This activity has been going on for some thirty years and it represents a massive psychological recalcitrance that will have to be dealt with.

But it is not enough to gain sophistication concerning the archetype of the Communist mind. There is also the need to comprehend, as well as one can, the historical causes which led to the intense determination behind this enterprise. You might say that it represents a mind-set as immovable as the white-supremacy constellation of ideas and feelings found in the American South. It has been *burned in*, so to say, although by a very different set of causes.

It is easy enough for the supporters and enjoyers of the freedom—not to mention the prosperity—of the West to identify Communism as a psychological, cultural, and political evil. It is easy enough and proper to do so. So far as we are concerned, there is the simple test of asking whether or not we could publish MANAS in a

Communist country. While MANAS is not a political paper, it would be forced to *become* political in a Communist country, because the Communists get all their definition of values from politics, a derivation we should have to protest. This kind of criticism is not permitted under a Communist regime. You can criticize what is done within the assumptions of Communist philosophy, but you cannot attack the philosophy itself. So MANAS would be suppressed.

So it is easy enough—for this and for other, probably more important reasons—to identify Communism as a bad political system. But it will not do to identify it as an *incomprehensible* historical phenomenon. Communism has a rational explanation. This is fortunate, for only if it has a rational explanation can it have a rational cure.

And so we keep reading, trying to understand. What we read makes it seem ridiculous to think of the Cuban people as becoming hard-core Communists. Some of the things we read suggest that it is ridiculous to think of Fidel Castro as a hard-core Communist.

The British had a Sahib complex about India. They are getting over it. A lot of Americans have had a Sahib complex about Cuba, Mexico, and practically everybody who doesn't have Anglo-Saxon blood lines. At bottom, it is probably the *impudence* of the Cubans in getting fresh with us, that enrages Americans, rather than their alleged Communism, which is a handy excuse for condemning them with great self-righteousness. American thinking about Cuba ought not to be governed by a ritual choice between Communist and Anti-Communist abstractions. After all, the Cubans did have to sell their sugar to *somebody*. They don't have much to sell.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

EWALD ON PARENTS AND EDUCATION

[Here is another extract from Carl Ewald's hitherto untranslated book, *My Big Girl*. This is the fourth of a series of extracts put into English from the original Danish by Beth Bolling, of Philadelphia. The first appeared in "Children" for Nov. 30, 1960; the second, Feb. 22; and the third, May 3. A number of MANAS readers seem to want as much of Ewald as they can get. Through courtesy of Mrs. Bolling and by permission of the author's son in Denmark, we here continue with the first English printing of portions of *My Big Girl*.]

I TAKE my big girl out of the seminary. When she graduated from high school she paid her tribute to the terrifying but common cultural *mores*. After that she supplemented her education by studying the harmless classics in French sufficiently to be able to read some of the more spicy, modern things, if she wants to. She waded through the Ladies' Aid Society's version of cultural history. She listened to suitably rarefied lectures about history, literature and the like, and managed to get Shakespeare and his time so elevated, at the cost of her own time, that she wouldn't touch him now with a ten-foot pole.

Now I have decided that this is enough.

I suggest she leave—right away—on this Friday, the 26th, at 7:30 in the midst of a French composition. She is delighted. But she wants to know what is in store for her.

"Dad," she asks, "does one have to work?"

"It's a good enough idea," I answer. "There are so many people who have to, that in the long run it becomes unpleasant to walk idly about with empty hands. Neither does it do any harm to stay in practice. . . . One never knows when one will have to."

"What shall I have to do then?"

"For a while you will rest. Read what you want, go bicycling, take walks with me, darn your own stockings, if your mother will permit you to."

"Oh, she wouldn't."

"I don't think so either. In the meantime we shall talk it all over, and one day you will find what suits you. It must be something worth while; something that you like; that you will be good at, and that will bring you an income."

* * *

Winter comes and winter goes; summer too, and the whole year.

My big girl has grown a bit wider of chest and hips and somewhat narrower of face. Her eyes look more intense. She looks at people first in a suspicious way, which gains her the reputation of being bad-mannered. She has a forthright way of showing whom she likes, which makes elderly ladies detest her and elderly gentlemen mistake her intention. She talks less than she used to, and her silence is informative. For hours we can walk together without exchanging a word and have a wonderful time.

At times she reads nothing at all and at other times she swallows one book after another. But she finds all of them either stupid or ugly. When she is alone in her room she hums all the time.

Often she sits there with her guitar in her lap and eyes that stare into space. If we catch her like that she gets red in the face.

She doesn't care for dancing any more. But if she does go to a dance she dances furiously and doesn't notice her partner at all. She goes to the theatre only when the performance includes music, or if some famous actress is on the bill.

She is the princess in the folk songs of all the world.

Our mother and I stand in the window and look at her. She is walking in the garden where spring is beginning to make its appearance. She is kneeling in the wet path to hold a tulip between

her fingers and looks at it as if it had some important message for her.

"Oh, her nice new dress !" says our mother.

"She talks to a friend," I say. "They are at the same stage, the two of them."

"How she has grown lately! She is quite changed. What do you suppose is going on in her?"

"She is thinking of love."

"There *are* other things in the world."

"Not for the young. She has become conscious of herself. She cannot name her longing as yet, but it floats around her as a lovely scent. She couldn't live without it. The man who got her now would not be cheated."

* * *

Spring has come. The trees stand there in sunshine and freshness, and the birds are singing. My big girl doesn't see anything. She doesn't hold my arm as she used to but walks at my side—yet is so far away. Her face seems so small from worry. There is something she wants to talk about but she doesn't know how to get started. She wants to ask about something, but doesn't because she is afraid of the answer. She is full of painful thoughts. And she doesn't understand that I am reading them like an open book and longing, no less than she, for her to clothe them in words.

"It is funny with children and parents," I say. "They can be very close—yet so far from each other at the same time. It's all right so far as the children are concerned. They have theirs—something the parents don't understand—something the parents cannot understand, because it's something like the woods today—like spring—longing—new beginnings. The children may not understand it themselves. They just feel it and know it. But the parents—" She is listening but does not look at me.

"Parents are history—something which has already taken place and is finished and cannot be

done over again—something which needed to be put into words, be told and from which conclusions may be drawn."

"Yes," she says.

"People are foolish and dishonest, in this as in much else," I say. "They consider it quite important, even quite necessary, to inform the children about Charles the Great, Christian the Fourth, and Shakespeare. But rarely does it occur to them that it might be more useful for the child to know how their own lives have shaped up. I don't particularly mean that they should know about the date that their father was knighted. But what gave joy to the heart and what was painful; where they obeyed the law and where they broke it."

She takes my arm but says nothing.

"In every business there is a secret book," I say. "Only the boss knows it, and he shows it to no one until he shows it to his successor. It has the record of all that went on. Only in that can one see the true status of the firm. Such a secret book ought to be handed over from parents to children, when they begin to tackle the business of life on their own. Every crisis should be carefully noted and described in it; every debt be accounted for. But parents don't do that. They make a rather false account—one that is suitable for songs and speeches at silver wedding parties. With lies like that the child starts off."

Her arm lies more snugly in mine.

FRONTIERS The Old-style Logic

A READER now living in Rome has sent us a clipping of a letter-to-the-editor by Sidney Hook, professor of philosophy at New York University, which appeared in the May 8 New York *Times*. He suggests that we comment. This is hardly an easy assignment, but not one to be rejected. Prof. Hook has been one of the most skillful polemicists of his time. His pamphlet, *The Meaning of Marx*, published by Farrar and Rinehart in the 1930's, is a brilliant investigation of the assumptions and logical consequences of Communist thought, and of Communist abuses of Marxist thought. All his life Prof. Hook has been a devoted partisan of freedom of thought. Especially lucid have been his discussions of the oversimplifying conversions to "religion" of intellectuals who, as he put it, "had never earned their right to religious disbelief to begin with, but had inherited it as a result of the struggle of an earlier generation." The present letter, however, shows the weakness of a purely polemical approach to the question of disarmament.

The burden of Prof. Hook's letter to the *Times* is that the spread of pacifism, today, is damaging the Free World's will to resist Communist aggression. He begins by recalling the Oxford Peace Pledge pacifism of the 1930's, and reminds us of George Lansbury's return from a visit to Berchtesgaden with the glad news that Hitler, too, "wanted peace." It is Prof. Hook's view that Hitler saw the evidences of French and British pacifism as an opportunity "to achieve his goals." He continues:

It is now clear that if the foreign policy of pacifist groups had been followed by the West, Europe and other regions of the world would have become a vast concentration camp for the survivors of Nazi rule. The fate of the Jews and other victims of totalitarianism indicated that passive resistance could not be relied upon to tame tyranny.

Today we are witnessing a revival of pacifist propaganda against the defensive armament of the

free world which exists as a shield and deterrent against potential Communist aggression.

Aside from the Communists, who overnight have become fanatical peace partisans—but only in the West—many well-meaning people have fallen into the error of believing that our own pacific action of unilateral disarmament will generate a corresponding response on the part of the Kremlin. In the light of the historic record, no error could be more profound.

The only effect their propaganda will have is to erode the will to resist in the West and to strengthen Khrushchev's hope that the free world will drop its guard, thus giving him a clear field to carry out the Communist program. In his speech in Moscow on Jan. 6, before a general meeting of Communist party organizations, Khrushchev made crystal clear that he is relying upon the growth of "peace fronts" in the West to facilitate the task of achieving world communism.

The statesmen of the Western world are just as devoted to the cause of peace as the demonstrators against nuclear disarmament—but more responsibly, for they wish to preserve with peace our heritage of freedom.

In 1946 the United States offered to surrender its monopoly of atomic weapons. Since then, Western statesmen, despite Communist aggression in Berlin, Korea and elsewhere, have periodically sought to induce the Soviet Union to agree to reasonable proposals for disarmament.

Prof. Hook chooses his points with care. Nothing is more ridiculous than naïve, half-hearted pacifism, unless it be naïve, half-hearted militarism. And, for the most part, the pacifism of the 1930's was naïve and half-hearted. But it was not, as Prof. Hook seems to imply, simply a result of pacifist propaganda. In the January 1942 *Atlantic*, Raoul de Roussy de Sales provided a more searching account of the "pacifist" mood of Western nations. He wrote:

What may turn out to be the most important and characteristic trait of the times we live in is the existence of a universal and deeply rooted opposition to war. This sentiment is so general and so new in some of its manifestations that it will take the perspective of history to analyze it fully and to appraise correctly its influence on the state of mind and on the behavior of millions of men and women

who are involved directly or indirectly in this war. [Modern man] does not need any further demonstration that war is not only inhuman and evil, but also senseless and futile. And yet we live in a time when this lesson has to be unlearned, when we have to rehabilitate within our own selves instincts which our reason has condemned as barbaric, or create new reasons and new impulses to justify our plunging into what we want to avoid. . . . In fact the whole conflict in which we are engaged revolves around this question: Is it possible for the Western civilized world to stop the barbaric assault launched upon it by Germany without itself reverting to a state of barbarism?

Whether, once again, we ought to try to "revert," or to go forward to more disciplined rejection of violence, is the question. While Mr. de Sales said that we do not need "any further demonstration that war is not only inhuman and evil, but also senseless and futile," we had, some three years after he wrote, a thousandfold "further demonstration." Did, then, the victors of World War II revert to a state of barbarism? Can a barbarous people call itself "free"? These are questions Prof. Hook ought to have raised.

We did not read Khrushchev's Jan. 6 speech and cannot deduce from Prof. Hook's letter the context of the remark about the opportunity for the spread of Communism provided by "peace fronts," but we think it likely that the Communist leader was brashly asserting, once again, the capacity of the socialist economy to outreach the capitalist economies in an interval of peaceful but competitive coexistence. It would have been very bad public relations for him to say anything else, since the Russian people want peace as desperately as we do.

As for the comparative merits of the "peace gestures" of the Soviet and the Western powers, we do not feel competent to measure either their practicality or their "sincerity." The important thing to be considered, it seems to us, in relation to any sort of international agreement, is the fact that the agreement must serve the interests of all nations which participate. This is the only sort of agreement which a *nation* is inclined to keep.

But the real trouble with Prof. Hook's letter is that it totally ignores the tremendous importance of the facts to which the pacifists call attention. He is using an old-style argument which gains its single-minded persuasiveness by ignoring incompatible facts. But we cannot afford the old-style argument in an issue of such overwhelming importance as that of nuclear war. On this ground Prof. Hook's argument becomes frivolous. A philosopher—and Prof. Hook is a teacher of philosophy—has an obligation to take some kind of cognizance of the spread of distinguished opinion on the question of nuclear war, as for example, that of the British physicist, Patrick Blackett, who has said:

Within a few decades most political, military, religious, and moral leaders of the West came to accept as justifiable a military doctrine, which previously they would have denounced as wicked, nauseatingly immoral, and inconceivable as a policy for the West.

And that of Max Born, who recently wrote:

Modern means of mass destruction no longer deserve the name of weapons. They tend to regard men as vermin. On this lookout rest today's armament and strategic planning. I cannot think of anything more immoral or detestable.

A serious critic of twentieth-century pacifism may examine these comments, and then present the bitter necessities which, he thinks, oblige us to disregard such manifest moral disaster, but he cannot ignore such views and still hold the attention of civilized people.