

EMOTIONAL RESOURCES FOR PEACE

MY reason for writing is the present state of the world, about which we have all been doing some rather hard thinking. I have put down some of my current thoughts in this letter. I know that it is an oversimplification, in that it fails to distinguish adequately between the emotions of people who support American military policy out of genuine concern for free political institutions, and the emotions of extreme right-wing nationalists who pay only a lip-service to freedom; yet, insofar as the two groups ally themselves with each other in supporting a militaristic policy, the difference between them does in fact get blurred, inwardly as well as outwardly, and they both end up feeding a nationalism which threatens to destroy us all.

I have followed with great interest the running discussion on disarmament, world government, the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and so forth, in MANAS this spring and summer. As a supporter of unilateral disarmament, I have taken part personally in a couple of local Peace Walks, vigils, etc. I have found these activities personally satisfying to a certain extent, as a means of standing up and being counted as one more person opposed to the present drift toward world suicide. Yet I haven't been able to suppress a feeling of inadequacy about the demonstrations in which I have participated. As I have puzzled over the source of this feeling, it has seemed that it is *not only* that there are so very, very few of us here in America, compared with the economic, political, and ideological power of the American military machine (though this is in itself discouraging enough); it is even more the feeling that we have often failed even to get our message really *across*, to those who have seen us; that there was some sort of wall between them and us, so that they couldn't even understand our point of view, let alone agree with it.

As I have wondered why this is so, what this wall consists of, how we could do better, etc., my mind has kept stumbling upon a persistent fact,

epitomized by a man who cried out contemptuously as we passed him, "Good-bye, America . . . This is the end of America. . . ." Most of the people in the United States are nationalists, in that they identify themselves with national political institutions and find their emotional security, politically, in the continuance of these institutions; whereas we who are walking are, for the most part, not nationalists, I think, but primarily members of the human race, and find our emotional security, politically, in hope for the future of mankind. Therefore, we are willing to risk the temporary (or possibly even permanent) submergence of our national political institutions for the sake of the continuance of humanity; whereas they are, politically, so identified with the nation-state that such a risk is to them unthinkable; they would rather die, and kill every other living being on this earth, than run the risk of living on here under any other government than our own.

Of course, when they are not thinking about politics, they may not be that way at all. They may love children, delight in sunsets, enjoy music, and ponder the vastness of the Universe and the richness and variety of human life; but once we touch their political nerve with the word "disarmament," they respond with an automatic "Give me liberty or give me death," or some other half-truth just as dangerously inadequate to the present situation. This ingrained nationalistic emotional response prevents their being open to arguments for unilateral disarmament just as much as it prevents their being open to suggestions for world government, or any other really constructive alternative.

The sources of this sort of nationalism in the life of the average American are not hard to find: the public schools train people to think of themselves as Americans through the salute to the flag, the national anthem, American history courses, etc.; where the public school leaves off, the draft begins; and then there are the newspapers, radio, and television; and, finally, the hard reality that every person's economic

life is intimately affected by what happens in Washington—that taxation, employment, wage levels, social security, all depend on national political policy and strengthen people's ties with their nation-state.

In your *Frontiers* article, "Disarmament and Its Difficulties" (*MANAS*, May 31, 1961), you say that with nationalism against us we can expect no help now from irrational forces, that "nothing will help us except our capacity to *think*." Later in the same article, discussing world government, you point out rightly that "before you can have a legitimate world political community, you have to have an acknowledged world community of interest." You hope that such a world community of interest may be developed, through intensive cultural exchange, and through philosophical thought to resolve the "ideological differences . . . about the nature of man . . . which now maintain the world in rival armed camps."

Certainly this is a basic approach, which I support. Yet I wonder if it is entirely true that there are no irrational forces which can be tapped at the present time to help us move toward disarmament and world government, to help us create an "acknowledged world community of interest." Man is a feeling animal as well as a thinking one; and if our hope is *only* in our capacity to think, I am afraid that historically we are doomed, since not enough people will begin to think soon enough to put a brake on institutions (such as national governments) which have gotten out of control. National governments are relying on the emotional allegiance of their people (which they mostly have) to support their policies, many of which are threatening the continued existence of people throughout the world. Perhaps in order to counter this we must not only appeal to people to think, but must also tap an emotional resource in people which can be on our side. There are at least two or three such emotional resources available.

The most obvious emotion, and probably the least useful, is fear of annihilation. However, since fear is a negative emotion, and people don't like to admit they're afraid, the State can usually counter our perfectly justified appeals to people to recoil in

horror from the prospect of total extinction by appealing to the "higher sentiments" of group loyalty, liberty, etc. In addition, the State can appeal to a counter-fear in people—fear of what might happen if the evils of "the other side" were allowed to run unchecked in the world—for the Americans, slave labor camps; for the Russians, capitalist exploitation. On the level of fear our argument is stronger—the evil of a nuclear war is worse than any conceivable evil of having either side running rampant in the world "unchecked" by the other—but the appeal of nationalism to "higher emotions" prevents people from seeing this.

I think we need to reach people on a positive emotional level if we are to counter the emotion of nationalism. There are two other human feelings which might help the advocates of disarmament and world government at this time, if we only knew how to appeal to them effectively enough: compassion, and a sense of the brotherhood of man.

Compassion is already widespread, but people fail for the most part to apply it in international politics. The same man can be unfailingly kind to children and simultaneously advocate burning millions of them alive if such-and-such happens in Berlin. How is it that we tolerate this contradiction?

I think the answer is that people have learned to compartmentalize their thinking: in the personal relations compartment, kindness may be dominant; but in the political compartment the supreme value is the nation and the continuation, intact, of national political institutions.

Likewise, there has also in the past been much cultural exchange and mutual appreciation between men of different cultures; this is good, but when the nation-god raises its head for war, the appreciation is laid aside "for the duration."

We seem to keep coming back to one thing: as long as the continuation intact of the nation-state is accepted by men as the supreme value in the political compartment, so long will mankind be threatened with extinction.

I wonder if we who see this clearly do not have an obligation to challenge nationalism more directly

than we have customarily done in the past—to tell people: "You must choose between being a loyal American (or Frenchman, or Russian, etc.) and being a decent human being. You can no longer be both." Garry Davis did this symbolically when he gave up his citizenship to become a World Citizen.

Of course, it is theoretically possible for a person to remain a citizen of one country and maintain for that country a limited allegiance, while his more complete allegiance is to all of mankind; but when a practical decision comes along like a war, he has to choose between the two. Usually at that point only the pacifists choose mankind. The rest have been conditioned by "I pledge allegiance to the flag. . . ."

I don't think it is impossible for the brotherhood of man to become a political force. It has been so before: "*Liberté, égalité, fraternité*"; "Workers of the world, unite; you have nothing to lose but your chains," and so on. After all, we were all born on this earth together; we all find nourishment from it; and our basic problems and needs are one all over the world, in spite of varying conditions. In thinking about evolution, people feel a glory in man's accomplishments (reading, music, wondering, thinking) above other animals; and they feel this for all mankind. It is only when politics comes up for discussion that they lose this vision—or else distort it so as to see man's accomplishments rising to their highest only on *their* side. . . . Yet, in spite of distortion, this is a basic feeling people already have—not a feeling we need to create in them. What we need to do is to emphasize it, and, especially, to *learn to break down the compartment walls*—to infuse this feeling into the political sphere, to the point where, when people say "we," speaking politically, they will mean, not "we Americans" or "we Russians," but "we human beings."

Once people achieve that perspective, the door will open for many other things to follow naturally—rejection of war and war preparations; aid to hungry people throughout the world, not because it is in any "national interest," but because they are human and hungry; willingness to revise national political institutions to fit into a broader framework;

willingness to risk a non-violent defense of human values. But the perspective is primary.

It is true that "before you can have a legitimate world political community, you have to have an acknowledged world community of interest." But maybe the most important thing that is missing now is the *acknowledgement*?

The big question remains how to achieve it. We who see this can acknowledge it publicly ourselves—refuse to pledge allegiance to any one nation or flag, refuse to sing national anthems, proclaim ourselves world citizens.

Perhaps this is essential for our integrity, but it is hardly a political program—at least in the sense of conventional politics. Indeed, by so doing we immediately remove ourselves irrevocably from the ordinary political sphere, since no one can assume any political office without an oath of allegiance to the nation. And it is within the political sphere that an alteration must ultimately take place, if mankind is to survive.

Yet, the sources of man's inspiration are usually far from the centers of power at first. If we can create a new climate of opinion—can somehow channel an emotional force of human unity to counter the emotional force of nationalism—then it will be easier, eventually, for the right decisions in the realm of politics to be made by some of the people who are already there.

Does anybody have any idea how to do this?

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The foregoing discussion is so clear and so constructive that we can think of only two comments that might possibly be useful to add. One concerns the different levels of emotional response, the other the creation of public opinion.

We have the impression that the ancient Greeks made a distinction between two kinds of irrational motivation in human beings—identifying one as sub-rational, the other as super-rational. To establish simple categories, we could say that hate, anger,

fear, lust, greed, are sub-rational springs of behavior, while altruism, brotherhood, love, sympathy, sharing, self-sacrifice, are an expression of the super-rational emotions. When the emotions of one category are in command, they block out the influence of the other category. For example, the higher feelings have no existence for a man in the grip of anger, fear, or lust. For this reason it is extremely difficult to reach with the appeal of brotherhood among the nations people whose dominant emotion is one of anxiety about their freedom, their possessions, and their ability to do more or less as they please.

It must be admitted that the emancipation of a man from bondage to the lower emotions is often a process which takes a lifetime, if it happens at all. This is the moral struggle, the very substance of the personal human drama, the raw material of literature and the arts. The structure of the social community, involving many people who are pursuing this struggle, constitutes a kind of statistical average of the balance achieved by all its members. The morality of the social community is usually little more than a temporal compromise between the conflicting demands of the moral struggle, but under the terms of that compromise a set of artificial standards emerges as the basis for the survival, well-being, and progress of the community, considered as a thing apart from the individuals who make it up. These standards exploit both the higher and the lower emotions as propaganda for conformity to the rules which serve the good of the community as an end in itself.

A sound political philosophy is based upon thinking about the social community as a means for individual development. Quite conceivably, the inevitable compromises of the rules of social order can take full account of the limited ends of politics and thus serve the true ends of human life. But when the ends of human life are no longer the inspiration of the political design, this confusion reflects itself in the political order, which now opposes instead of seeing individual development. In these circumstances, the compromises of the social morality tend to become vicious caricatures of the moral ends of man, while their justification still pretends to derive from the high moral values of

ancestral tradition. The result is an incredible moral confusion—the kind we have today.

We have space for only one illustration. The great revolutionary movement which gathered its strength in the nineteenth century and gained political power in the twentieth began with the moral inspiration of social ideals; the solidarity of mankind, equality in fact as well as in theory, from each according to his ability, to each according to his need. These are the ideas which moved the hearts of the leaders of the revolution, sustained them through long years of weakness and failure, and made them proud and arrogant in their years of success. How to make these ideas spark "the masses" into action: that was the problem. The Communist leaders did not hesitate long. Of Leon Trotsky, a major architect of the Russian Revolution, Max Eastman wrote: "He was a man with an extreme social ideal and enough mechanical instinct to know that the only force capable of achieving such an ideal is the organized self-interest of the oppressed classes." We know now, or ought to know now, that an "extreme social ideal" cannot be served or reached by the force of "organized self-interest."

This is the essential conclusion to be drawn from the political experience of the twentieth century. Its practical application ought to be in new rules drawn up for the working of the social community. The simplest statement of the principle involved is that means must be consistent with the ends they are to lead to.

This is the principle announced by Mohandas K. Gandhi, the prophet and leader of the revolution of the twentieth century—a revolution which is superficially political, but basically ethical, obviously drawing its nourishment from the moral nature of man. All the social contracts of the future—the agreements formed to accomplish the conventional compromises of the social order—will have to take this principle into account if they are to last.

It is important to have an unequivocal statement of this sort before us when we wonder how we can draw upon the emotional or non-rational energies of human beings in behalf of world peace. Terrible mistakes can be made by what would now be an

irresponsible appeal to the emotions, and we can afford no more such mistakes. Our contributor, of course, has nothing like this in mind, but the general problem, we think, ought to be stated in this way. Put in different words, but with a very similar meaning, the conclusion we are here concerned with was stated by Gene Debs many years ago. Speaking to a working class audience, he said: "If you are looking for a Moses to lead you out of the capitalist wilderness you will stay right where you are. I would not lead you into this promised land if I could, because if I could lead you in, someone else could lead you out." Debs' statement is pertinent because reliance on personal leaders is a form of emotional behavior.

Now, as for the bearing of human feelings on public opinion, the key to this question may be taken to be our correspondent's emphasis on the word "acknowledged" in the sentence: "Before you can have a legitimate world political community, you have to have an acknowledged world community of interest."

How is this "acknowledgement" to be gained? We know of only one way: By knowing about people, in principle and in fact. The community of interest must be seen and felt. We had planned to quote at length from Lafcadio Hearn on this point, but our space is about run out. Anyway, the book we were going to quote from is *Talks to Writers* (Dodd, Mead, 1927). This book is made up of lectures given by Hearn at the University of Tokyo between 1896 and 1902 (they also appear in *Interpretations of Literature* [1915] and *Life and Literature* [1917], and the particular lecture is titled "Literature and Political Opinion." Hearn reduces the question to fundamental considerations of how peoples' opinions of other peoples are formed, how the resulting feelings affect public decision, and how governments are obliged to respond to the feelings which pervade the people. For our purposes, this means that world peace depends upon a feeling of world *culture*, and the feeling of world culture will come only as our intellectual and emotional lives are slowly penetrated and honeycombed by ideas and feelings of understanding and appreciation of other peoples everywhere. If anyone says we have not the

time to wait for this slow process, the only sensible reply is that this may be so, but that no other process will take us in the right direction.

Letter from **INDIA**

SEVAGRAM (Wardha).—At 4:30 A.M. an Ashram bell tinkles, and about the same time the village cock starts crowing. Life in villages starts early—in summer much earlier. Ploughs are taken to the field as early as 5 A.M. as by 9 o'clock it becomes terribly hot during the dog days of June and July. The boy cowherd collects his herd of cows, bullocks and even a few buffalo and goats. He takes them to a hillock or to weeds, and then plays his flute or makes grass ropes, and returns to the village about 11 A.M. Womenfolk get busy with household duties, preparing bread, round thick bread of jear, to be eaten with chillie paste and onions in the absence of vegetables. Only the well-to-do village folk can afford vegetables.

Women also get work during certain seasons, for removing weeds from fields of jear and cotton. They are generally paid half of what men get, about 8 annas a day in these parts for an eight-hour day. Men get about Rs. 1.25 a day. But the villagers do not get work all the year round. There are about 10 percent who can be classed as well-to-do, but this figure is not the same for all areas. About 35 per cent are middle-class peasants owning a few acres, and the rest are landless labourers or village artisans. The average income per family for a middle class villager may come to Rs. 1000 a year, a little more if the prices are favorable. The income in the villages has gone down during recent years in comparison with urban areas.

The housing situation is still far from satisfactory. There are barely 5 per cent pukka houses made of baked bricks and cement, while the remainder are made of bamboo, wattle, tiles and weeds. The floor is of beaten clay plastered with cowdung paste. There are no latrines attached to houses, and men, women and children use open space and roadsides. Despite efforts of workers over years, the villagers continue to soil roadsides and streets. It leads to pollution and bad habits, but the villagers are not prepared to change. There is another side to this. In India, if night-soil and urine are composted properly, many thousand tons of manure could be produced, which would lead to a higher yield of crops. This wastage is computed as coming to Rs. 24 per head per year. Quite frequently

cowdung is used as fuel instead of manure. But old habits die hard, and people continue to soil the roads.

There is a curious result of the rural uplift process which Gandhiji initiated, that after more than two decades, instead of there being any appreciable change for the better, in the village nearby, a sort of animosity has developed between the village folk and Ashram people. Quite a number of Ashram people are called bad names, and they do not command respect they might have earned. One of the main reasons why there is a kind of antagonism between the Ashram and village folk is because the Ashram now possesses about 300 acres of land near the village, which, if the Ashram had not existed, the village folk would have cultivated. The Ashram is now a kind of landlord, and only provides occasional employment, so that the villagers feel aggrieved. Besides, the behavior of some of the Ashram workers is not altogether desirable.

Another curious result in this village, inhabited mainly by Harijans or lower class untouchables, was that when, some years ago, Dr. Ambedkar became a Buddhist, about half the people of the village became Buddhists *en masse*, and now Buddhist prayer drums are sounding. This is not what Gandhiji would have wished.

A good many workers of the original Ashram are now old and of retiring age, and very few activities of the Ashram are going on with any vigor. Few attend Prayers, which were attended by thousands when Gandhiji stayed here. Out of about 100 families who stay in the whole of the colony, barely ten regularly go to prayers. This is only one instance, but there is no common life even in the community, no common meals or spinning, no real equality. When Gandhiji was alive, he made it a point to always travel third class; the Assistant Secretary stationed here frequently travels first, or air conditioned de luxe, when to all long-distance trains is attached these days a third class sleeper coach, which is as comfortable as first class, except it does not lend an aura of elite-class living. One of the oldest inhabitants of the Ashram says that the Ashram is now only one in name, is merely an illusion. So many who come here return disillusioned, and some complain to Vinobaji.

INDIAN CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW

"A WORLD WITHOUT WAR"

UNDER this title and by auspices of the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, readers now have the opportunity to review in a single volume several pieces of writing already noted in MANAS. The new paperback, *A World Without War*, includes "Community of Fear" by Harrison Brown and James Real, Walter Millis' "A World Without War" and his "Permanent Peace," with, as Part IV, "The Rule of Law in World Affairs" by William O. Douglas. In the introduction to this book, Mr. Millis explains how the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions came to collect the material and the talents which now offer such invaluable assistance to anyone attempting to form opinions on global matters. He writes:

The study began with a simple observation: Since about 1900 the military factors in modern life—the war system itself, the weapons systems, mobilization systems, war industries—have been developing in a steeply rising growth curve (an "exponential curve" as the technicians would call it) now mounting toward an infinity alike of destructiveness and of human uselessness. Confronting such a phenomenon, it has become possible to consider, in a way that was never possible before, the total abolition of the whole system. This is not to say that a practicable *method* for the abolition of war has appeared—for it has not, and none is offered in these pages—but only that it has become possible to think about such an eventuality in a practical rather than a purely moralistic or Utopian way. The warless, or demilitarized, world is obviously not with us now. But it has become even more essential for a democratic society to study its possibilities and potentialities of the incredibly gruesome world of thermonuclear war, whose exponents bandy "megadeath" as lightly as they bandy the nuclear kilomegatonnages which will cause them.

Since we have recently reviewed Justice Douglas' "America Challenged," we turn first to the concluding portion of *A World Without War*, which is an expansion of the earlier lectures. While Justice Douglas is fully aware that a true respect for law must come from something other

than propaganda and conditioning, and from more than enlightened self-interest, he also knows that the rule of law is a natural support to the rule of reason. Those who believe in the rule of law believe in the principles of justice, and when a man begins to rely on principles, he constitutes himself a factor in the struggle for world understanding. Justice Douglas' arguments lead to this conclusion:

The arrival of disarmament and the end of war would not of course mean the advent of peace in the sense that there would be a disappearance of conflict. Great antagonisms would persist. Disputes would continue, nations would press their claims for justice. Clash and conflict are present in every community. They exist in virulent form at the world level and will continue. War from time out of mind has been one of the remedies for real or fancied wrongs. Now that it is obsolete, the rule of law remains as the only alternative. This is not an expression of hope alone. We have in truth the sturdy roots of a rule of law, including a few of the procedures which human ingenuity has devised for resolving disputes, including conciliation and mediation, arbitration, administrative settlement and judicial determination. The rule of law is versatile and creative. It can devise new remedies to fit international needs as they may arise. The rule of law has at long last become indispensable for men as well as for nations. Now that the instruments of destruction have become so awesome that war can no longer be tolerated, the rule of law is our only alternative to mass destruction.

Mr. Millis' first paper is concerned with showing that a world in which the war system had been abandoned would be fully as challenging as it would be "peaceful." He writes:

Deprived of the easy simplicities and illusory securities of the war system, statesmanship would meet more, not less, difficult problems than those it must now confront; and it would take brains, illuminated by vision in the leaders and education in their followers, to surmount them. A world from which organized war has been excluded would not be an easy one, and it would raise threats to various groups, economic interests, ideals and convictions which may well seem greater than the (still almost unimaginable) threat presented to all by a continuance of the war system itself. But it would be a viable world; it would meet the needs of people for

both order and change at least as well as the present world appears to do and hopefully a great deal better.

This conviction is growing among peoples and governors, although slowly. This paper itself could not have been written a quarter of a century ago; most of such ideas as it contains could not have occurred to the author under the conditions of 1935 and, if they had, would have seemed too patently fantastic to put to paper. The mere preparation of the paper may thus be taken as a sign of changing viewpoints.

Justice Douglas closes his treatment of a truly international conception of law with a quotation from Carl Becker's *The Declaration of Independence*—a fitting commentary on the "public philosophy" which once gave guidance to a people who might have become the greatest nation in the history of the world. Of the Declaration, Becker wrote:

At its best it preached toleration in place of persecution, good will in place of hate, peace in place of war. It taught that beneath all local and temporary diversity, beneath the superficial traits and talents that distinguish men and nations, all men are equal in the possession of a common humanity, and to the end that concord might prevail on the earth instead of strife, it invited men to promote in themselves the humanity which bound them to their fellows and to shape their conduct and their institutions in harmony with it.

COMMENTARY

TURN TOWARD PEACE

No doubt readers will share with us a feeling of absolute futility while inspecting the material presented in this week's "Children" article. There is a natural tendency to ignore what you feel you can do nothing about, which is probably the reason why we have never quoted such material before. "Reason" can make no headway against such sweeping assumptions. But there they are, and they seem to be multiplying.

The difficulty is that people who propagate these views know practically nothing, first hand, of historical studies or even the background of current events, and take their opinions whole from the sort of sources they are recommending to others. If you cite counter-authorities, you are met with the response that *your* authorities are either reds or the dupes of reds, up to and including former President Eisenhower (according to Mr. Welch of the John Birch Society). So citing authorities is no help. What is needed is the thoughtful reading of good books and articles, and exposure to a press less partisan than the American press is usually found to be.

No "divine intervention" is needed, in this case, but rather the intervention of impartial human intelligence. For example, we know of one family which recently subscribed to the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* in order to have around the house a newspaper that would provide unfamiliar viewpoints for a daughter (not yet fifteen) to absorb. This girl had recently expressed an interest in world events and has begun to read the British weekly. Then there are books like the one considered in this week's Review—*A World Without War*, comprised of essays by several distinguished writers who have spent long years thinking about the problems of war and peace.

Of more specific interest in relation to these questions is the recent formation of a group which will sponsor a national campaign "to build support for alternatives to the threat of war as the central thrust of American policy." The name of this campaign is *Turn Toward Peace*. Coordinators for

planning this campaign are Robert Pickus, now executive secretary of Acts for Peace, in Berkeley, Calif., and Sanford Gottlieb, presently political action director of the National Committee of SANE. Following is an outline of some of the orientations of Turn Toward Peace:

The Campaign will focus initially on five issues: (1) Berlin (2) nuclear weapons and inspected disarmament; (3) mainland China; (4) defining and strengthening the UN; and (5) U.S. Peace Agency.

[There will be] no optimism concerning Communist intentions. We make our case for a major shift in American policy the hard way: by demonstrating its wisdom, even given a "hard" view of Soviet policy.

The Campaign, in its issue statements and basic document would emphasize agreement on *direction*, rather than agreement on the specifics of any proposal. Individuals and organizations would be free to emphasize those elements of the Campaign that made most sense to them. No one would be bound to support all elements of the policy proposals advanced for discussion.

The central thrust of the basic document would emphasize the need for American action that comes in a form more compelling than offers to negotiate. The central idea is a series of acts the United States would undertake, which are not dependent on protracted negotiations and prior Soviet agreement, but which issue as a series of events which are actual steps toward a disarmed world under law. These acts would be set in a context of pressure most likely to win support from "uncommitted" nations, and designed to elicit a favorable Soviet response. Emphasis in the Campaign will be on concrete policy proposals. . . . Equal emphasis would be placed on initiative acts in six related areas: growth toward world law, developing a sense of community adequate to sustain law; the economics of disarmament; the revolution of rising expectations reduction of political tensions, and non-violent defense of democratic values.

The goal is a fundamental shift in American policy and understanding.

Persons wishing more information about Turn Toward Peace may write to Robert Pickus, care of Acts for Peace, 1730 Grove Street, Berkeley 9, Calif.

CHILDREN

... and Ourselves

THE GOOD GUYS WILL CONQUER

ON the subject of political propaganda and counter-propaganda as it affects youth, we regretfully present for consideration some recommendations brought home by our fifteen-year-old daughter after she unaccountably attended some sort of "Young Republicans" function in our old Republican town. Red-blooded Americans are active, yes siree! and bomb shelter salesmen are doing all right. As an adjunct or as a stimulant to this kind of frenetic reaction is an increasing enthusiasm for "anti-Communist" propaganda, all of which reminds us of most primitive attempts to scare away devils by making loud noises, burning effigies, etc. In any case, here are some excerpts from the mimeographed material our daughter brought home, suggesting definite steps which right-thinking youths should be taking:

Support Congressional committees investigating Communism, particularly the House Committee on Un-American Activities and the Senate Internal Security Committee. The abolition or crippling of these committees is a high-priority feature of the current Communist program. The California State Senate has had committees which investigated Communism. These should be activated once more.

Support the anti-Communist legislation now on the books such as the Smith Act, the Internal Security Act, and the Subversive Activities Control Act.

Read anti-Communist books and magazines such as those on the "Reading List For Americans" which you can have by writing to *Our Sunday Visitor*, Huntington, Indiana, with a postage stamp enclosed. Lend your books to others and ask for them back. Give anti-Communist books and magazines as gifts. Distribute back copies of your magazines to friends and neighbors. Books like J. Edgar Hoover's *Masters of Deceit* and Cleon Skousen's *Naked Communist* should be read by all.

See that the anti-Communist books and magazines are purchased by and available in your branch of the public library and also in your local bookstore. Get at least one anti-Communist book into

your library each week. If the librarian is unwilling to purchase the books, find someone who will donate good books regularly—surely a worthy cause for your organization whatever it may be.

See that anti-Communist magazines such as *National Republic*, *Human Events*, *National Review* are available in the waiting rooms of your doctor, dentist, beauty parlor, barber shop, etc. Persuade people to subscribe to the periodicals like the *Brooklyn Tablet*, One Hanson Place, Brooklyn, N.Y., a weekly for \$4 a year.

Promote anti-Red speakers and films in your community and in the various organizations to which you belong.

Distribute anti-Communist literature everywhere you go. Don't waste time trying to convert pro-Communists. Our job is to convert the non-Communist into an anti-Communist.

We know that Communism is intrinsically evil. Consequently we need Divine intervention in combating it. Pray as if everything depended on God. Work as if everything depended on you.

There isn't much point in trying to assign responsibility for this sort of unthinking militancy—whether, in this particular instance, it emanates from the John Birch Society, hang-overs of McCarthy type campaigning, or the Catholic church. All three, obviously, join hands when it comes to blaming the evils of the world on a political theory in conflict with our own. There is some point, however, in exposing daughters who are similarly approached to contrary forms of emphasis. We have not yet reviewed George Kennan's apparently excellent book, *Russia and the West under Lenin and Stalin*, but one quotation from it seems to make an excellent beginning in combating what the *London Observer* calls our "incredibly chauvinistic" American attitude. Mr. Kennan writes:

There is, let me assure you, nothing in nature more ego-central than the embattled democracy. It soon becomes the victim of its own war propaganda. It then tends to attach to its own cause an absolute value which distorts its vision on everything else. Its enemy becomes the embodiment of all evil. Its own side, on the other hand, is the center of all virtue.

We came across this quotation while reading a series of John Crosby's columns in the New York *Herald Tribune*. Mr. Crosby comments:

Why do all past wars sound like lunacy while present wars sound so inviting, so logical, so righteous? Our own legal position in this matter is extremely debatable, but the ordinary citizen knows as little about this as Mr. Paar, simply assuming that his country is, as always, the embodiment of all virtue, the Russians the embodiment of all evil.

Are we going to wipe out two-and-a-half billion years of slow biological improvement in a thermonuclear war? I agree with Nehru that to go to war under any circumstances for anything at all in our world in our time is utter absurdity. In any case, to start dropping hydrogen bombs on our former allies over a half a city of our former enemies on extremely dubious legal grounds in which the Russian position is by no means all wrong and ours is by no means all right is lunacy. I certainly think Berlin is negotiable.

...

The youth in our particular area are also up against another sort of problem, more basic than that presented by John Birch Society McCarthyites. The trouble is that many of our parents either read nothing but the editorial columns and the columnists in the Los Angeles *Times*, or else automatically reason as if they did. So, from the MANAS standpoint, here is a real "read-it-and-weep" set of paragraphs contributed to the *Times* for Sept. 29 by Holmes Alexander—sent in, incredibly enough, from the ancient and honorable seat of learning at Cambridge, England. Mr. Alexander has apparently had a reasonably close view of the astonishing behavior of Bertrand Russell and the thousands of conscience-spurred English men and women who have been making themselves seen, heard and felt in protest against a further development of the mechanisms of atomic destruction. This is how Mr. Alexander views the matter:

Lord Russell has just served a jail sentence and his recent career demonstrates how troublesome and pathetic science-without-sense can be. Russell is followed by thousands of witless intellectualists, pseudos and psychos, who cannot grasp the universality of knowledge.

Through terror, or mental exhaustion, they have been seized upon by the aberration of Single Thinking. All they can think about is the Bomb. They are oblivious to the humanities. All they are aware of is science in its limited modern connotation. They are forgetful of every other form of scholarship, the imperishable records in literature and history of the mind and spirit of man.

Brave men courageously believe that Khrushchev can be beaten either in his chosen game of power poker or, if necessary, by the old and honorable test of battle. The rest of us who choose to be hopeful can spend our time profitably by urging Mr. Kennedy to get rid of the pacifists, the hesitators and bomb-banners in his own household. This generation of Americans cannot be certain of conquering—but with the leadership of which the President is capable we can begin to behave like the conquerors we have always been.

This is really incredible stuff. The message is made plain in the last paragraph, where it is intimated that if you can't be a "conqueror," you should prefer to be dead. Fortunately, very few of modern youth are geared up to falling for such insanity. Whatever else they will become, these young people are most unlikely candidates for American organizations resembling the Hitler Youth. They prefer to find their own way, unmoved by such exhortations, and are more capable in many respects of doing so than earlier generations of Americans.

FRONTIERS

Thoughts on Religion

IF one is willing to adopt the view that religion is act before it is thought, that it is the essence of high motivation before it is a given set of particular motivations, then a conclusion which we find inescapable may have some validity. It is that the philosophical atheism of the eighteenth, nineteenth, and part of the twentieth centuries was the high religion of its epoch. This atheism sprang from devotion to absolute values. It grew from insistence upon the independence of the human spirit, the integrity of thought, the love of freedom, and the will to spread the truth that fosters these qualities. Metaphysical systems and the resulting theologies are secondary to these primary values, and since the atheism of Western thought arose in the midst of conflict with theological authority, it proclaimed its values nakedly, claiming empirical rather than philosophical justification.

Until about five or ten years ago, the intelligent, educated man of the West tended to inspect religion as he would any other reactionary phenomenon. He was on the outside looking in. He would concede its sociological importance, but not its philosophical significance. Today, however, a change in the attitude toward religion is taking place. Historically, this may be explained by the suggestion that the atheistic frame of reference no longer provides avenues of expression for the values which animated the best thinking of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Atheism has reached an emotional dead-end. The values which were once its justification are seeking new embodiments.

This is not the same as saying that from suffering and maturity men are now returning to the truths they have so long denied. Their atheism *did not deny* the vital truths of religion, but affirmed them with courage and heroic tenacity. It declared that men could find the truth, that truth is impartial, and that a second-hand truth is no

truth at all, but only a betrayal of human dignity. In behalf of these primary truths, philosophical atheism rejected the secondary, doctrinal "truths" by means of which men were held in bondage to sacerdotalism and authoritarian religious control. The organized religion of the West maintained power over the minds and to some extent the bodies of men by claiming to hold the secret of immortal life: it would tell men how to get to heaven, how to stay out of hell, if they paid the asking price. The atheists, in effect, said to hell with heaven, and, in effect, they were right, since the kind of heaven that could be promised on the basis that the church offered was a thumping lie and an expression of contempt for the human spirit.

So, we may say that the return to religious thinking and inquiry of the present is not really a return, for serious people, since they never really left the primary role of religion: man thinking about the highest questions and values. Rather, the return to what is conventionally termed religious thinking is no more than thinking about the same questions, but in a different way. That the change may prove fruitful does not prove a "return" to religion; it only proves that human intelligence is at work, insisting upon valid conclusions from thought.

These musings are a result of reading an Unwin Books paperback, *The Hindu View of Life*, by Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who is probably the most well-informed man on the subject of comparative religion alive in the world today. For those who find themselves itching to break out of the atheistic or scientific-agnostic frame of reference in a cautious investigation of religious thinking, this would good book to read. In the first place, it is written by a non-Christian (although not an anti-Christian, as soon becomes plain), and this has its advantages for one who wants to make a clean start, unconfused by a seeming return to childhood memories of religious instruction. Second, it is written by a man who is plainly convinced of the reality and validity of

philosophic religion, yet who acknowledges the independence of philosophic religion of any specific religious tradition. The value of this book is not in its capacity to persuade anyone to become a Hindu—which is furthest from our wish—but in its practical example of a way of thinking about the meaning of religion. For example, Dr. Radhakrishnan writes:

The Hindu attitude to religion is interesting. While fixed intellectual beliefs mark off one religion from another, Hinduism sets itself no such limits. Intellect is subordinated to intuition, dogma to experience, outer expression to inward realization. Religion is not the acceptance of academic abstractions or the celebration of ceremonies, but a kind of life or experience. It is insight into the nature of reality, or experience of reality. This experience is not an emotional thrill, or a subjective fancy, but is the response of the whole personality, the integrated self, to the central reality. Religion is a specific attitude of the self, itself and no other, though it is mixed up generally with intellectual views, æsthetic forms and moral valuations.

Religious experience is of a self-certifying character. . . . It carries its own credentials. But the religious seer is compelled to justify his inmost convictions in a way that satisfies the thought of the age. If there is not this intellectual confirmation, the seer's attitude is one of trust. Religion rests on faith in this sense of the term. The mechanical faith which depends on authority and wishes to enjoy the consolations of religion without the labour of being religious is quite different from the religious faith which has its roots in experience.

As Westerners, it should be useful, here, for us to remind ourselves of Sidney Hook's stricture against shallow intellectuals who "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." Both belief and unbelief need to have roots in experience, to have any value. Dr. Radhakrishnan continues:

Blind belief in dogma is not the faith which saves. It is an unfortunate legacy of the course which Christian theology has followed in Europe that faith has come to connote a mechanical adherence to authority. If we take faith in the proper sense of trust or spiritual conviction, religion is faith or intuition. We call it faith simply because spiritual perception,

like other kinds of perception, is liable to err and requires the testing processes of logical thought. But, like all perception, religious intuition is that which thought has to start from and to which it has to return. In order to be able to say that religious experience reveals reality, in order to be able to transform religious certitude into logical certainty, we are obliged to give an intellectual account of the experience. Hindu thought has no mistrust of reason. There can be no final breach between the two powers of the human mind, reason and intuition. . . . We can discriminate between the genuine and the spurious in religious experience, not only by means of logic but also through life. By experimenting with different religious conceptions and relating them with the rest of our life, we can know the sound from the unsound.

The interesting thing about this account of religion is its complete neglect of articles of faith and its omission of any reference to "God." Yet it is about the best contemporary statement on the subject that we have seen.