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THE WAY THE WORLD IS

OCCASIONALLY MANAS gets a letter from a reader who thinks that these pages are unduly filled with alarms and anxieties about the way the world is going. When we talk or quote somebody about "the encroachments of the State," a writer may ask indignantly, *"What* encroachments?"—the implication being that the course of national affairs reflects no more than the dictates of national necessity. Well, it is possible to fall victim to an unhealthy mood of dark anticipations. Years ago, Nathaniel Hawthorne pointed out:

> No sagacious man will long retain his sagacity if he lives exclusively among reformers and progressive people without periodically returning into the settled system of things to correct himself by a new observation from that old standpoint.

No doubt it was Hawthorne's experience as one of the founders of Brook Farm which led to this observation. After this social experiment was over, to which Hawthorne, along with others, had given all his savings, he said: "I was beginning to lose the sense of what kind of a world it was, among innumerable schemes of what it might be, or ought to be." He did not, of course, advocate "returning into the settled system of things" as a way of giving up the struggle, but rather for the purpose of acquiring what we today call a refreshing "realism." After all, if the world is to change, the changes will have to start with the world the way it is.

But how do you look at the world in order to determine the way it is? We can think of no more important question to ask, if you are thinking about trying to change it. A man can be terribly wrong in his estimate of the way the world is. At the time of the American Revolution, the Tories, for example, were unable to comprehend the temper of the new nation which was arising on the American Continent. The Tories had many virtues, such as distrust of violence and respect for the established order. In fact, a fairly sound case can be put together for the Tory point of view. But behind the disorder and the violence, a new age was coming to birth in the American Revolution. An irrepressible vision—Tom Paine's army of principles—was in motion across the horizon. Vulgar men and ignorant men were able to feel what was happening, where scholars and gentlemen might not understand it at all. This is not to say that the secrets of life lie with the proletarians, but to suggest that great movements of history, great surges of progress, spring from causes which lie deeper than scholarship and manners.

Or, for an illustration of another sort, if you were to turn to the France of the middle of the eighteenth century, you might find it difficult to recognize the resources of the Revolution to come in the many clubs and societies devoted to learning and the enthusiasms of the Enlightenment. But in these clubs was fostered the spirit of self-reliance and self-determination. They helped to create the leaders and propagandists of the Revolution. By learning to think, these people came to think about what is *right,* and when enough people do this, the revolutionary activity begins.

The eighteenth century was a time of enormous upheavals, of release from centuries-old repressions. A few men saw the repressions, saw also the awakening of minds all about them, and were able to put the two together and declare that the time was ripe for a change.

But this is not the eighteenth century, or anything like it. Eighteenth-century revolutions are still going on, of course, but they are taking place in Asia and Africa. For the West, the situation is very different—so different that it becomes a project in depth analysis to say

anything about the way the world—the Western world, and before long, the whole world—is, today.

You can easily gather evidence of the great differences between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries. For example, the *Progressive* for August has a review of John K. Galbraith's *The Affluent Society,* in which Carl Auerbach, the reviewer, says: "It is Galbraith's contention that the basic ideas of modern economics are largely irrelevant for the solution of current economic problems." The big push to make and distribute more goods ignores this fact. Making more goods than we can intelligently consume is not the way to maintain full employment. The reviewer summarizes:

> Wants for goods must constantly be stimulated and even created by making their possession an obsession nourished by all the arts of modern advertising and salesmanship. To finance the structure of these manufactured wants, a towering structure of debts must be erected. Inflation is a constant threat. Social balance—"a satisfactory relationship between the supply of privately produced goods and services and those of the state"—is destroyed. Lush palaces continue to be built in Las Vegas while our cities decay and society in general is starved for schools, hospitals and health, sanitation, law enforcement, and recreational facilities.

Mr. Galbraith has no use for the claim that the people "buy what they want" and that in a free society this is the only way things can be. "Desires," he says, "are imposed on the consumer." The old economic relationship has been reversed: "Production is no longer urgent to satisfy wants but wants are urgent to provide employment."

Mr. Galbraith wants manufacturers and businessmen to revise their ideas of what is good business: "Evaluation of the opportunities that the modern corporation affords the people who comprise it for dignity, individuality, and full development of personality should be as important as estimates of its economic efficiency." When a leading economist can say this and be taken seriously, times have changed!

Mr. Galbraith may have defined the problem correctly, in both human and economic terms, but it is difficult to accept his solution. It seems almost ridiculous to expect corporations to take the lead in any such transformation of their own character. This is not to say that businessmen have not thought about these things and are unaware of the debilitating effects of undiluted commercialism. But ours is a situation for which even diluted commercialism is not much of a solution. If we are to have a revolution against the stupid kind of "plenty" Mr. Galbraith describes, it can't be a paternalistically managed revolution engineered by the manufacturers. Some of them may help, and some more of them may conform, but they will have to do it as human beings, and not as manipulators of what is "good" for people and "good" for the system. The people, the buyers, the blessed "consumers," will have to revise their wants and express them more intelligently.

The really interesting thing about this sort of revolution is that it involves no "enemy," no "oppressor." And all it requires is the slow birth of good taste and intelligence. If you can't wait for good taste and intelligence to develop—if there isn't "time" for that—then what sort of people will you have *after* the revolution? Or are the revolutionists going to *make* the people change? This sounds as though men with guns are better teachers than men without guns.

Let's look in another mirror of contemporary life—the novel. David L. Stevenson has a review in the *Nation* (Aug. 2) which deals with the great change in the novel during the past twenty or twenty-five years. Two books are discussed, Shirley Jackson's *The Sundial,* and *The Great Days* by John Dos Passos. We are interested, here, mainly in the comment on the Dos Passos book:

> Dos Passos' *The Great Days* is a reminder that the monumental sociological novel written between the wars has been moribund, now, for almost twenty years. . . .

> The "achieved content" of Dos Passos' trilogy *U.S.A.,* along with Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street* and *Babbitt,* Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby,* Steinbeck's *In Dubious Battle* and *The Grapes of Wrath,* Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms, To Have and Have Not,* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* was sociological in the largest sense of the word. This fiction written between the wars created usable points of view, large images of American life, for a generation eager for instruction, anxious to lose its provincial morality, its political and cultural innocence. But for today's serious reader, the novelist-as-spokesman has lost utility. The tone of protest and regret which pervades *The Great Days* is, I think, Dos Passos' acknowledgement of this fact.

Stevenson turns to Norman Mailer, Nelson Algren, Saul Bellow, William Styron, and Herbert Gold to illustrate the difference between the contemporary novel and the sociological novel of the between-wars period. These present-day writers, he says, express "a piercing awareness of the contemporary individual's need for a coherent identity, his need to explore the possibilities of self in a time present, overly conscious of the chanciness of event."

It is probably oversimplification to say only that the work of these modern novelists differs from the "social" tales of the thirties in lacking an "enemy," but the target, surely, of the contemporary novel is by no means clearly defined, nor is any "political" solution offered or implied.

How do you get a "coherent identity"? We'll probably have to wait quite a while for an answer to that one, but one thing is certain: the answer won't come from any formula which can be applied to the mass society, nor from exchanging one kind of mass society for another.

Harold Clurman's "Theatre" article in the same issue of the *Nation* (Aug. 2) has an illuminating comment on the work of dramatists who, for lack of a better adjective, may be called "Existentialist." The plays under discussion are by Eugene Ionesco, but the comment applies to Kafka, Beckeff *(Waiting for Godot),* and some others. Clurman says:

> Attentive spectators will find these plays understandable—particularly those I am now reviewing—if they do not seek to grasp every word in a literal or information-bearing sense. What must be followed is what the eyes take in (for example the weird clock in *The Bald Soprano)* and the *line of action* in each scene. The form of the plays rather than the details of each speech carries most of the message. The speech is understandable too but in a suggestive or "symbolic" rather than a strict sense. The whole is related to meaning as we know it in contemporary painting and in modern verse. What is mainly to be noted in such a play as *Jack,* for example, is that traditional scenes from bourgeois drama and almost conventional action (the mother entreats, the sister reasons, the father moralizes, the boy protests, the would-be inlaws storm, the boy begins to yield, the bride cajoles, love scenes ensue, etc., etc.) are transformed into grotesqueries by the author's thematic intention and poetically stylized dialogue.

Always the impersonal critic, Clurman adds:

> It may be difficult to determine at present whether Ionesco's plays will eventually seem more clever than truly felt. His view of life is certainly not mine. But every phase of feeling, every aspect of truth—no matter how strange—ought to find articulation in the theatre. Ionesco utters his truth in specific stage terms which are startling and often brilliant. What he has to say moreover is justified by the routine of our daily living. The lack of spiritual content in our civilization has been the major outcry of European drama since Ibsen. Ionesco has carried this idea to the climactic point of savage caricature.

For those who have difficulty in seeing the intent of a writer like Beckett, what Clurman says here is extremely helpful. Whole attitudes and sequences of action are satirized as cliches, instead of only the fragments of thought and speech. The plays are Harlequinades of the empty meaninglessness of modern life in which defeat is moral or spiritual rather than romantic.

Why don't these playwrights do something "constructive"? Well, what? Before you build, you have to clear away the rubbish and grade for the foundation. Moreover, the artist needs a context of constructive possibilities from which to take the materials for such work. His mind is too subtle to be fooled by moralistic pretense. He

wants the real thing, and where do you find it, in modern culture?

The artist is a philosopher only indirectly. He needs more than the bare bones of affirmative thought to make flesh-and-blood embodiments of the sort we want. If they are artificial, if they are contrived in a do-good spirit, the result is only a pious fraud.

So, in the arts, the iconoclasts are still the most powerful and effective interpreters of our time. Their reading of "the way the world is" has the substance of bitter truth.

Again, we are able to point out that, in these plays, there is no specific "enemy." What is attacked is a hackneyed and sometimes glib cultural zombie-ism, in which the acting out of conventional fictions is unrelieved by either courage or understanding. The plays portray the conditions of psychological and emotional captivity, these conditions standing condemned by the senseless pain they produce, rather than by a comparison with the conditions of freedom.

Another commentary on modern life is provided by a passage from Dorothy Thompson which appeared in an article in the *Ladies' Home Journal* last March. For a clear account of the way many, many people in our world are, what Miss Thompson says is hard to beat:

> Observe whom and what a people admire and you will know what they will become.
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> If they admire only worldly success, interpreting it in terms of income ostentatiously spent and flashy publicity, they will never know contentment or peace, and will suffer from many moral and emotional derangements.
>
> What people at any time consider normal and according to which they pattern their lives reflects prevailing standards.
>
> But standards do not evolve of themselves. They are a conscious, cultural creation. They have always been set by a minority of the natural leaders of the community who first of all set them for themselves. People of the highest intellectual and moral integrity exist today inside and outside educational institutions. But their example must compete against a continual barrage of publicity, recording the comings and goings, deeds and views of persons whose lives are conspicuous for the absence of any standards whatever while, apparently on the thesis that crime and misdemeanors are more newsworthy than good acts, part of the press presents a picture to ourselves and the world of downright depravity. Press, radio, comics TV and the movies probably exert a greater influence upon the young than home, church or school, and their very voluminousness precludes, with rare exceptions, superior quality.
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> This is especially true of TV, whose demand for scripts is more voracious than can be met by available talent, since it grinds out its dramas and shows continually. Hence the repetitiousness of its themes, their tawdry sentimentality, forced wit and heavy humor, their sensationalism and constant recording of violence—violence being the easiest stuff of which to create hack drama.

To make a "positive" ending, Miss Thompson remarks that "no one has ever surpassed, or ever will surpass, the Golden Rule," which, she points out, is not a "Christian invention" but is found in all great religions.

But the *Ladies' Home Journal* is hardly the place to elaborate on how to put the Golden Rule into practice! Miss Thompson does say, however, that the Golden Rule is "not less but more valid in the atomic age, when hatred and ill will can exterminate a large part of mankind." And it is here, perhaps, that we can find tangible promise of constructive attitudes, if not in the way the world is, in the way it may eventually move. In the August *Frontier,* West Coast liberal monthly, Ralph Friedman tells the story of how Linus Pauling gained the support of nearly ten thousand scientists, representing scientific opinion in forty-five countries, in his appeal for an end to nuclear testing. In Dr. Pauling's opinion, "It's conservative to say that a majority of the scientists in the world are in favor of the appeal."

We have tried, in a sketchy sort of way, to follow Hawthorne's advice and "return into the settled system of things," to obtain fresh observations from "that old standpoint." But the

more "settled" the matters examined, the more disturbing is the scene, while those who reflect anxiety and even some disorder are at least giving evidence of moral awareness and concern for the future. The "settled system of things," today, exists only for those who are unable to see and feel the portents of social and moral degeneration which are everywhere about us. The best signs for the future are the signs of unrest, of the unavoidable pain caused in human beings by their recognition of the character of the contemporary world. It is the increasing rottenness of the settled system of things which obliges us to look elsewhere for the sense of "reality" which Hawthorne sought, perhaps more successfully, in his time.

Letter from ENGLAND

LONDON.—Events in the Middle East have diverted public attention from the world Church Conference now in session in historic Lambeth Palace, which lies across the Thames from the Houses of Parliament in one of London's poorest boroughs of that name. Rather more than two hundred bishops have converged on London for this great clerical pow-wow which is held in secret, presided over by Dr. Fisher, Archbishop of Canterbury, who for this amorphous collection of Protestant prelates stands as a sort of *soi disant* Papal figure.

There is much food for thought for the layman here, whether he be churchman or humanist, for these representatives of Protestantism are not subject to any absolute spiritual authority, bound by dogmas, or schooled by discipline. The umbrella of episcopal Protestantism is large enough to give shelter to many who, by the yardstick of the Roman Canon, would be deemed near heretics.

The Church of Rome has a head: the post-Reformation churches are hydra-headed—hydra-headed and many-tongued. The consequences of this lack of a unifying central authority are curious, both in dogmas and in the application of Christianity to daily life.

One example is here apposite. There is among the two hundred odd prelates an American Bishop, who has been divorced and is now remarried. He may possibly find himself seated beside that English Bishop who recently excommunicated two ardent church workers, man and woman, for marrying in a manner lawful by both Canon and Civil Law, in that one spouse had been the innocent party to divorce.

An exchange of views between these two in the shelter of that large umbrella would make diverting listening to a layman of whatsoever persuasion theological.

But such anomalies in practice lose in interest when pondered alongside utterances made within the last few weeks by the Primate himself, and by Dr. Chavasse, the Bishop of Rochester.

These may be stated and then considered.

The Archbishop, very widely reported, put forth the astonishing suggestion that it may be God's will that the human race should destroy itself in a nuclear war.

"There is no evidence," wrote the Archbishop, "that the human race is to last forever, and plenty in the Scripture to the contrary."

Said Dr. Chavasse, "Total destruction and a lingering death for any survivors would be a lesser evil than freedom under a totalitarian domination with its concentration camps, forced labour, regimentation, torture and brain washing."

This suggestion sounds oddly from the Head of a Church whose teaching it is that all good Christians are to enjoy life eternal—in one place or another.

Surely, here is both a condonation of fatalism, and a denial of that much vaunted attribute (according to the Church) of man's free-will. For if the Almighty should elect, as the Archbishop is beginning to fear, to blast his creation out of existence by nuclear devices, what can mere man's will do about it?

En passant, the learned Archbishop offers the simple a peculiar conception of a God of Love.

To turn to Dr. Chavasse, surely a curious pastor of souls, who embroidered his first proposition with this embellishment: "There is no difference in principle between bows and arrows, gunpowder or the hydrogen bomb."

The test of the Bishop's first proposition (that destruction and death are better than totalitarian rule) might be by referendum among Soviet victims: Which would you prefer, your present

and perhaps only temporary suffering or certain death?

That this prelate can equate the battles of past wars with genocide by nuclear techniques reveals him as a closet philosopher far removed from reality.

These pronouncements make the Sermon on the Mount seem both unreal and remote.

How can it come about that men capable of putting forth such views have become leaders of the "Church as by law established"?

The short answer is that the bishops of the Church of England are not chosen for their piety or holiness. They are selected for their administrative abilities, and for their scholastic distinction—in a lesser degree.

Take the case of the Primate himself. At twenty-six with a brilliant Oxford record behind him, in "holy orders" but with no pastoral experience, he was appointed headmaster of Repton, a great Public School. From that school he went to the House of Lords as a spiritual peer.

"I never take orders," he recently exclaimed, gleefully, "I give them."

The mood which made that boast possible goes some way to explain why many people, and not only churchmen, now speak disrespectfully of "The Pope of Canterbury."

So much for thoughts prompted by this grand pow-wow now in secret session in London.

What good will come out of it? One wonders!

ENGLISH CORRESPONDENT

REVIEW
BRITONS ON THE "BOMB"

A REVIEW in the *Manchester Guardian* (June 12) gives attention to *Brighter than a Thousand Suns* by Robert Jungk (Gollancz and Hart-Davis). The reviewer, Stephen Toulmin, says of Dr. Jungk's book:

> His story begins around 1920, when atomic physics was the concern only of a small but international confraternity of brilliant young men in university towns: he carries us up to the year 1955. The final climax is the famous Oppenheimer case, for in the records of these proceedings before the A.E.C. Personnel Security Board in April, 1954, Dr. Jungk finds reflected "not only the life-story of a single man but also that of a whole generation of atomic scientists. The evidence revealed their untroubled youth, their dread of the dictators, how they were dazzled by the overwhelming nature of their discoveries, the heavy responsibility for which they had not been prepared the fame which threatened to be their ruin, their inextricable involvement and their deep distress . . . all the new unsolved problems with which the onset of the atomic age had confronted scientists."

Dr. Jungk apparently regards the atomic scientist as a man initially receptive to human considerations, but who is lured into cooperation with the military by a sense of social responsibility. In 1941 a group of atomic scientists, mostly European, insisted to the American government that an atomic bomb should be developed in secret as a weapon against Hitler. Yet, as Mr. Toulmin puts it, "their actions look very different in retrospect, for they were in effect delivering themselves, their judgments, and the secrets of their craft unconditionally into the hands of the military." Mr. Toulmin continues:

> The moment of truth came in the summer of 1945. The scientists had thrown themselves into their work in the mistaken belief that they were in a neck-and-neck race with Heisenberg's team in Germany. (The internationalism of the physicists' fraternity had broken down—as events showed—more drastically on the Allied side than there.) When the mistake was finally realized, Goudsmit remarked to a War Department liaison officer: "Isn't it wonderful that the Germans have no atomic bomb? Now we won't have to use ours." To this the major replied prophetically, "Of course you understand Sam, that if we have such a weapon we are going to use it. And so the bombs were dropped on Japan, in spite of the fact that the Japanese Government was on the verge of capitulation, and in spite of anguished protests from many of the atomic scientists themselves. Their appeal was still lying on Roosevelt's desk at the time of his death: they had, however, to learn the bitter lesson that "when one gave soldiers a weapon they could hardly resist the temptation to pull the trigger.

A subsequent issue of the *Guardian* reviews Ralph E. Lapp's *The Voyage of the Lucky Dragon*—a detailed story of the maiming of twenty-three Japanese fishermen by the American test explosion at Bikini Atoll. The *Lucky Dragon* was a tuna boat whose crew were the first of many to be affected by the released radioactivity. The Bikini explosion was referred to by military experts as involving a "calculated risk"—since they could do little better than hope that eventual damage to human lives would not occur. The risk was not a good one, as the experience of the *Lucky Dragon* reveals. For six months after the bomb's explosion vast quantities of radioactive fish were brought in only to be condemned, and it became almost impossible to sell Japanese tuna on the market. Meanwhile one of the twenty-three fishermen died. After fourteen months, the rest lost their jobs. These afflicted fishermen received from the United States government sums averaging approximately $5,000, while Japan received $2,000,000 as compensation to the tuna industries and for medical and other expenses.

These facts, we think, should be remembered when "calculated risks" of a similar nature are proposed in the future. Emanuel Litvinoff, reviewing the Lapp book, concludes:

> What can one say about this frightening little episode other than it is a parable of the century? Mr. Lapp has done us all a service in recording it so meticulously, but it would be unjustifiably optimistic to imagine that the moral will be effective. In the four years that have passed many more "suns" have been exploded both in the East and in the West, sending their deadly dust into the stratosphere to filter

insidiously through atmosphere we all breathe. There is much talk of biological mutations, of disturbing increases in leukemia, bone cancer, liver disorders. Alarm is followed by despondency, despondency by apathy and apathy by cynicism. It will take more than the tragedy of 23 Japanese fishermen to frighten the world into doing something about it.

The British monthly, *Encounter,* continues to pose embarrassing but fair questions in respect to American policy. Mr. R. H. S. Crossman, writing in *Encounter* for July, points out that the United States seems to have developed a collection of "nuclear obsessions"—believing that peace can be preserved by improving and stockpiling atomic war heads. Crossman writes:

> Rational argument has not been successful in breaking the nuclear obsession. American strategy is still dominated by it, and the British Government is still following the American lead.
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> I see little chance that this American attitude will be rapidly altered.
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> Our main aim in NATO should be to counterweigh the American nuclear obsession by a more balanced approach. We should insist that NATO strategy should be based on the assumption of Russian technological parity, and warn the Americans that the West will never again be able to counter an inferiority in fighting effectives by a superiority in weapons of annihilation.

No small part of the threat of U.S. policy is its psychological effect upon other populations and governments. The present armaments race is the most expensive in history, and while the United States now possesses a strategic air force capable of blowing the world apart, economic "grants in aid" for countries reasonably friendly to the United States are seldom forthcoming. Mr. Crossman continues:

> As for the dollars to be spent in the next five years on nuclear missile development, they would be sufficient, if wisely invested in a world-wide Marshall Aid plan as part of a policy of disengagement, to make all Asia and Africa safe for democracy. The Indian Defense Minister, for example, recently went to Washington and stated that one billion dollars was required to save the second five-year plan from foundering. If that plan fails and India goes Communist, World War III will have been lost before it starts. Yet there were no dollars to spare for the Indians, and in 1958 the United States will spend ninety times more on military defence than on economic aid.

Further comment is hardly required. Suffice it to say that the subscriber to a good British periodical is much more apt to see thought-provoking material of this sort than the reader of dozens of conventional American publications.

COMMENTARY
A TIME TO QUESTION

IN the Bantam edition of *Beat to Quarters,* one of C. S. Forester's Horatio Hornblower novels, a description of the crew of a nineteenth-century British frigate shows the typical attitude toward war of the men that fight:

> The men had fought and worked, first on the one side and then on the other, without understanding the trend of high politics which has decided whom they should fight and for whom they should work. That Spaniards should be first enemies, and then friends, and then almost hostile neutrals, had hardly caused one of them a single thought. They had been content to obey orders unthinkingly. . . .

The accuracy of this account is so obvious that its presence in a novel reduces its validity not at all. But what about the fighting men of today? A paragraph in a letter from a MANAS reader is not especially encouraging:

> Yesterday my son received a tape-recording from a friend of his who is in the air force. They correspond this way. I wish you could have heard the thoughts of this young man who had stood in a control tower at the time of the Lebanon crisis. When his base was alerted, he watched the men he knows, men who think of nothing but the crabbiness of their wives and children, the nuisance of a TV set in need of repair, loading hydrogen bombs on planes without a thought of what it means to wipe out an entire city of millions of people if the signal is given. I asked my son if he thought his friend meant hydrogen bombs when he said "hydrogen bombs."
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> He replied, "I think so." They are both Cal Tech graduates and know the meanings of the words they use, and are apt to be accurate about them.

This, too, is the way the world is, although there have been some changes since the nineteenth century. While the loaders of bombs, like the common seaman of a century ago, are "content to obey orders unthinkingly," the number of men who protest such orders keeps on growing. And there are others who, although they say nothing, are filled with misgivings. They may obey, but not "unthinkingly."

There must surely come a time when some kind of spontaneous combustion of human feelings will bring open questioning of the management of a world in which the human targets for bombs—hydrogen or otherwise—may change two or three times within only fifty years!

Again, there is no real "Enemy" in a situation of this sort. The wrong lies, not in a particular sort of men, or race or nation, but in the compulsions to destruction which are allowed supreme authority. There is still time, perhaps, in the twentieth century, for us to find this out.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
CORRESPONDENCE AND NOTES

A READER continues the discussion of the causes of juvenile delinquency by referring to the June *Harper's,* which contains the views of a Los Angeles psychologist, Dr. W. H. Blanchard. According to Blanchard, the delinquent boy, often rebelling against domination by his mother, "is almost invariably protesting his masculinity, his physical strength, his powers in combat, and his hatred of weakness. This type of aggression is quite different from the assertive impulse to go after what one wants in life. . . . Delinquents will fight over trivialities and often . . . merely 'for the love of fighting'." Our subscriber then remarks:

> The foregoing extract from the June *Harper's,* coming on top of your recent discussions of the youth today, almost demanded a personal response, and perhaps you would be interested. While Dr. Blanchard's theory is engaging, it is rather too simple: today's juvenile delinquency incorporates gangs of girls as well as boys, and surely the girls have no cause to rebel against feminine domination in a society which has often been accused of becoming a matriarchy.
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> I think the answer as to the "why" of the rise of juvenile delinquency is a much more complex one, beginning with a society that sanctions the use of violence in certain areas. Coupled with the changes in body chemistry that occur during the teens, and taken with the obvious societal changes of the emancipation of women (now involving working mothers and divorced families), the rise of industrialization and the concomitant centralization of families (involving child labor laws, the absence of a strong father image, and lack of space for children to both "let off steam" and be free of adult supervision, we have practically invited the phenomenon of juvenile delinquency to appear.
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> When you add to the above the impression of the adult American world that the teenager has—years of compulsory draft, then either the "rat race" of the business world with the power struggles in even the most minor of jobs, or the toil of laboring jobs, with the economic insecurity of recessions, inflations, layoffs, etc.—you can understand why he feels a need to rebel. It is not to this that the teenager feels he ought to make a personal commitment.
>
> And what of the ideals, hopes, dreams, ideas that make man a creature that lives not by bread alone? I don't know where these have gone, but I do know that reference to them brings only embarrassed or cynical comments from teenager and adult alike. We are rapidly becoming a nation of scared little people, without ideals for our minds or substance for our souls. Thank God the teenagers still have a sense of the wrongness of it all to protest, however incorrectly. But more important, what have we become when we not only assert that the unexamined life is worth living, but that it's the safest way, and therefore the best?

The discouraging aspect of the "beat generation"—made up of young people who display a complete indifference to adult values—is that they are no longer concerned with protest or rebellion. On this aspect of the subject, some observations by Margaret Mead in the *New Republic:* (June 23) are worth repeating. In an interview with Henry Brandon, Miss Mead points out that there are intermediate cultural stages in the development of indifference to public affairs. The interview is titled "A New Form of Escapism—Escape Into Private Life," an idea which Miss Mead explains in the following manner:

> You could say there is a new form of escapism . . . and that is the escape into private life, which is so characteristic of the present age in this country and is also characteristic of the Soviet Union: the escape into one's own little house and one's own garden and one's own children, and the small bit of life which one can make a success in, and the concentration upon it, the flight from larger issues.
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> *Brandon:* What do you think is the reason for it?
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> *Mead:* Partly the depression and war and the whole series of things that has happened in the last 20 years, with a pressure on younger people by older people who say: "Better get your happiness now, you can't tell what will happen." Also, a sense that the world's gotten so big and unmanageable that it's very hard for individuals to be able to influence it very much. Also a dread of disaster, because this country is conscious of the possibility of total destruction. It's

almost as if they were trying to live a 50-year life within 10 or 15years.

Brandon: Wouldn't you expect, then, that people would have a special incentive for participating in politics and government?

Mead: If they thought they could influence events, yes. But we are told also that, whatever we do, we alone cannot determine our own fate any more. That is a new experience for Americans.

Brandon: You mentioned that the same is the case in Russia.

Mead: Well, in Russia also, as nearly as we can tell—one always has to qualify—there is a great retreat to private life. The one association that is safe from criticism and from guilt by association is with one's own wife and children. So there seems to be also in Russia an increased emphasis on personal relations within the family groups, and a shrinking away from involvement in other things.

Brandon: It's often been said that there's a good deal of similarity between Americans and Russians.

Mead: There are certain similar characteristics. Russian farmers and American farmers appear to have got on very well together. The sense of belonging to a big country, and a country that belongs to the future, that makes for a similar kind of national identity. The fact is that both the Soviet Union and the United States have had the job of continually making over the next generation. What the Soviet Union did at first was to make over the children of peasants and other groups within the society; we had to take people who came to us from other societies. But in both cases this produces a kind of thinness of culture. . . .

The "everybody-is-responsible" view is again expressed by Mr. J. W. Gray of Scotland, whose "Vacancy for Reason" appeared in MANAS for June 4. Commenting on the expression, "Beat Generation," Mr. Gray remarks:

There is no such thing as a "Beat Generation." The word "beaten" presupposes some form of definable conflict which has been lost. There *is* no conflict, nor has there been any: there is only widespread bewilderment and fear.

No, they are not "beaten." They are more like travellers through lands where the roads have been allowed to disintegrate and disappear into rock-strewn mountainsides or to be grown over by thick jungle. They are the descendants of myriad generations of travellers whose forebears had failed to ensure the establishment of good roads, sound transport and experienced guides. Instead they allowed the roads to fall into disrepair (the Pathway of Humankind), their transport received no servicing (the Vehicle of Human Ideology) and chose guides who were incapable of reading even the simplest maps (World Priestcraft) who ran the services to no form of schedule (blind prejudice, dogmas and creed).

It is well to be reminded, moreover, that the decline in influence of priestly authority in its familiar guises does not mean that there is an end to priestcraft itself. The tendency to categorize and manage continues in evidence, as revealed by "motivational research" in advertising, by the psychological studies conducted in education and medicine, and by the insights of modern psychiatry. Mr. Gray seems to feel that there will always be youths who are intellectually aware that this is so. On this view, the isolation of many young people from the social context of their forebears may eventually stimulate the emergence of an *independent* generation, to take the place of the beat generation.

FRONTIERS
The Record of Buddhism

A READER who wonders if he has found an anti-Christian, pro-Buddhist bias in the pages of MANAS writes to raise a question concerning the historical influence of the two religions:

> A philosopher must have "heart," or "be tender," as George Fox would say. Is there not in Buddhism (for example) a kind of emotional sterility or aloofness which fosters the tendency toward a slothful fatalism which has calmly allowed countless suffering human beings to stew in their own Karma while a long procession supported by begging bowls and clad in spotless saffron passed serenely by on the other side of the road? Is this not in fact almost the exact reverse of Christianity's over-zealous proselytism?
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> To love without trying to change the loved one *and* to be open to change without ceasing to love . . . is this perhaps another symbol of the extra-dimensional religion—beyond all present "faiths"—so elegantly summarized in "Maturity in Religion (MANAS, July 9) as pursuing the two thoughts together?

What we should like to avoid, in replying to this correspondent, is any impression of wanting people to *choose between* Buddhism and Christianity as more or less organized religions. All the great religions are the resources of human beings. We are men before we are sectarians, and we shall be men after we have outgrown sectarianism. A feeling of rivalry among religions and religionists is, after all, the defeat of true religion.

In this comment, our correspondent casts the Buddhists in the role of the Pharisees and the Christians as eager-beaver good Samaritans. We strongly suggest some reading on the origins and practice of Buddhism, to correct this idea. First, in Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan's *History of Indian Philosophy* there is ample evidence that one of the prime reasons for the Buddhist reform (Buddhism was a kind of Protestantism which revolted against the formalism and casuistry that pervaded Hinduism in Buddha's time) was to restore to Indian religion the warm compassion and universal sympathy which Gotama himself found to be at the very heart of life. Edwin Arnold's great poem, *The Light of Asia,* is a moving account of Buddha's mission and teachings, easily available to all readers. Concerning the historical practice and influence of Buddhism, an English writer, G. Lowes Dickinson, has this to say (in a small book called *Appearances):*

> . . . all this sculptured gospel [the statuary decorating the temple of Borobudur in Java] seems to bring home to one, better than all the volumes of the learned, what Buddhism really meant to the masses of its followers. It meant, surely, not the denial of the soul or God, but that warm impulse of pity and love that beats still in these tender and human pictures. It meant not the hope or desire of extinction, but the charming dream of thousands of lives, past and to come, in many forms, many conditions, many diverse fates. The pessimism of the master is as little likely as his high philosophy to have reached the mind and heart of the people. The whole history of Buddhism, indeed, showed that it did not, and does not. What touched them in him was the saint and the lover of animals and men. And this love it was that flowed in streams all over the world, leaving wherever it passed, in literature and art, in pictures of flowers or mountains, in fables and poems and tales, the trace of its warm and humanising flood.

We greatly fear that the charge against the Buddhists of "slothful fatalism" reflects a stereotype of superficial judgment, mostly hearsay, derived from large generalizations about Oriental "passivity." This generalization doubtless has, or has had, a lot of truth in it, but we question its application to Buddhism. If there are cases where it does apply—as, perhaps, in Tibetan monasticism—then these cases represent failures to follow the example of the Teacher.

For further material on the historical influence of Buddhism, Fielding Hall's *The Soul of a People* is a good source. Hall was stationed in Burma as a civilian official of the British colonial government and his observations, made over a number of years, show how the attitudes and temper of Buddhist thought are reflected in the *mores* and daily activities of the Burmese people.

Still another English writer, Edmond Holmes *(The Creed of Buddha),* throws light on the attractions of Buddhism to Western thinkers:

> What the science of the West is doing for the growth (and the development) of wheat and barley, Buddha did for the growth of the soul. He taught men that, if they would bring their lives into harmony with certain fundamental laws of Nature, their souls would grow—as well-tended crops grow—vigorously and healthily; and that the sense of well-being which accompanies successful growth, and which, when consciously realized, is true happiness, would be theirs. He taught them this; and, in teaching it, he made that appeal to their will-power which is his chief contribution to the edification, as distinguished from the instruction, of the soul. The husbandman must take thought for his plants if their lives are to be brought into harmony with the appropriate laws of Nature; but the plant which we call the soul must take thought for itself. Penetrated with the conviction that what a man does reacts, naturally and necessarily, on what he is, and so affects for all time the growth of the soul and its consequent well-being; penetrated with the conviction that conduct moulds character, and that character is destiny;—Buddha called upon each man in turn to take his life into his own hands, and himself to direct the process of his growth.
>
> This message was his legacy to the ages. It is for Western thought to take it up and repeat it, developing in its own way the mighty ideas that are behind it.

There is no space here to discuss—nor have we the time to research the question—the failure of Buddhists to embody the full inspiration of their teacher. We suspect that the Buddhists are themselves very much interested in this, and may be trusted to review conscientiously their shortcomings, whatever they are. Doubtless an interest of this sort was behind the great two-year convocation of all Buddhists in Burma, which began four years ago. Meanwhile, the people of Christendom might reflect on the fact that no Buddhist teacher or monk has ever led or urged an army on to victory! Throughout the centuries, the Buddhists have been entirely consistent with the ethics of Gotama on this momentous issue. When Buddhists went to war—and they have gone to war—they did it without the blessings of the Buddhist clergy. One possible side-exception to this rule may lie in the fact that the psychological disciplines of certain Japanese Buddhist groups are said to have been practiced by some of the officers in the Japanese army, during the recent war. In general, however, the record of Buddhist teachers is stainless in this respect.

The peaceful ways of the Buddhists have not diminished their influence, through history. Some years ago the Chinese scholar, Dr. Hu Shih, wrote proudly and gratefully of the Conquest of China—by Buddhism. The Buddhists have not been reluctant to attempt to spread their doctrines. It has even been seriously suggested that Buddhist missionaries penetrated to Syria and played a part in the establishment of the monasteries along the shores of the Dead Sea, with the resulting possibility that the Dead Sea Scrolls embody Buddhist influence.

It is virtually impossible to make any important distinction between the ethics of Buddha and those of Jesus; indeed, it is a triumphant demonstration of the unity of true religion that these two teachers seem to have said almost the same thing, on many subjects, and in almost the same words. The division between them is rather the work of their followers. Both Christians and Buddhists have scriptures and "teachings" which they treasure and repeat, transmitting them from one generation to another. What seems of the most significance, here, is the attitude of the Buddhists toward their teachings. In the last century, a Siamese Minister of State gave the Buddhist point of view to Henry Alabaster, an interpreter employed by the British Consulate General in Siam. Alabaster incorporated this view, stated in words attributed to the Buddha, in a book, *The Wheel of the Law:*

> "Do not believe merely because the written statement of some old sage is produced; do not be sure that the writing has ever been revised by the said sage, or can be relied on. Do not believe in what you have fancied, thinking that, because an idea is

> extraordinary, it must have been implanted by a Deva, or some wonderful being.
>
> "Do not believe in guesses, that is, assuming something at hap-hazard as a starting-point, and then drawing conclusions from it—reckoning your two and your three and your four before you have fixed your number one.
>
> "Do not believe merely on the authority of your teachers and masters, or believe and practice merely because they be1ieve and practice.
>
> "I [Buddha] tell you all, you must of yourselves know that this is evil, this is punishable, this is censured by wise men; belief in this will bring no advantage to any one, but will cause sorrow; and when you know this, then eschew it. . . ."

Observant and thoughtful Christians need no commentary to "point up" the moral for themselves in this quotation. Buddhism, doubtless, being constituted a world religion by human beings, has its share of faults and imperfections. But those who are concerned, not with joining sects, but with the study and practice of philosophical religion, will hardly be interested in such matters. They are after the manifest and intelligible good, wherever it may be found.