

PSYCHIATRISTS AND WAR

TO begin, St. Exupéry said that "if we merely recite the horrors of war, we will never prevail against war." Rather, he suggests, we must try to understand "why it is that we make war when we realize that it is monstrous and senseless. . . . The familiar explanations of savage instincts, greed, blood, lust, . . . overlook what is truly essential. They ignore the asceticism that surrounds war. If we want to come to grips with what is universal in war we must forget such things as opposing camps and we must avoid arguing over ideologies. . . . do not insist that your beliefs are evidence of truth, for in that case, is not each of us right? . . . We must put aside the passions and beliefs that divide us."

And, in *A Sense of Life*, a new, posthumous work, he wrote: "What good will it do to win this war if we then face a century-long crisis of revolutionary epilepsy? Once the question of German aggression is settled, the real problems will begin to emerge. It is quite unlikely that speculation on the New York Stock Exchange will suffice at the end of this war, as it did in 1919, to distract humanity from its real troubles. If a strong spiritual force is absent, there will be dozens of sectarian faiths sprouting up like so many mushrooms each at odds with the other. A quaintly outdated Marxism will disintegrate into a swarm of competitive neo-marxisms. . . ."

At the end of Karl Menninger's excellent book, *Man Against Himself* (Harcourt, Brace, 1938), there is a statement by the psychiatrists of the Netherlands, made in 1935 under the auspices of the Netherlands Medical Society, which was later signed by 339 psychiatrists of 30 countries, and then by many other concerned individuals. Thirty years have not changed or altered its meaning or appropriateness, but only extended its application because of the more refined methods

of mass killing available to us today. Allow me to quote it from Dr. Menninger:

We psychiatrists whose duty it is to investigate the normal and diseased mind with our knowledge feel impelled to address a serious word to you in our quality of physicians. It seems to us that there is in the world a mentality which entails grave dangers to mankind, leading as it may, to an evident war-psychosis. War means that all destructive forces are set loose by mankind against itself. War means the annihilation of mankind by technical science. As in all things human, psychological factors play a very important part in the complicated problem of war. If war is to be prevented, the nations and their leaders must understand their own attitudes toward war. By self-knowledge, a world calamity may be prevented.

Therefore, we draw your attention to the following:

1. There is a seeming contradiction between the conscious *individual* aversion to war and the collective preparedness to wage war. This is explained by the fact that the behaviour, the feelings, the thoughts of an independent individual are quite different from those of a man who forms a part of a collective whole. Civilized twentieth-century man still possesses strong, fierce and destructive instincts which have not been sublimated, or only partly so, and which break loose as soon as the community to which he belongs feels itself threatened by danger. The unconscious desire to give rein to the primitive instinct, not only without punishment but even with reward, furthers in a great measure the preparedness of war. It should be realized that the fighting instinct, if well directed, gives energy for much that is good and beautiful. But the same instinct may create chaos if it breaks loose from all restraint, making use of the greatest discoveries of human intellect.

2. It is appalling to see how little the peoples are alive to reality. Popular ideas of war as they find expression in full dress uniforms, military display, etc., are no longer in keeping with the realities of war itself. The apathy, with regard to the actions and intrigues of the international traffic in arms is surprising to anyone who realizes the dangers into which this traffic threatens to lead them. It should be realized that it is foolish to suffer certain groups of persons to derive

personal profit from the death of millions of men. We come to you with the urgent advice to arouse the nations to the realization of fact and the sense of collective self-preservation, these powerful instincts being the strongest allies for the elimination of war. The heightening of the moral and religious sense in your people tends to the same end.

3. From the utterances of well-known statesmen it has repeatedly been evident that many of them have conceptions of war that are identical with those of the average man. Arguments such as "War the Supreme Court of Appeal" and "War is the necessary outcome of Darwin's theory" are erroneous and dangerous in view of the realities of modern warfare. They camouflage a primitive craving for power and are meant to stimulate the preparedness of war among the speaker's countrymen. The suggestive force of speeches made by leading statesmen is enormous and may be dangerous. The warlike spirit, so easily aroused by the cry that the country is in danger, is not to be bridled, as was evident in 1914. Peoples, as well as individuals, under the influence of suggestions like these, may become neurotic. They may be carried in adventures perilous to their own and other nations' safety.

We psychiatrists declare that our science is sufficiently advanced for us to distinguish between real, pretended, and unconscious motives, even in statesmen. The desire to disguise national militarism by continual talk about peace will not protect political leaders from the judgment of history. The secret promoters of militarism are responsible for the boundless misery which a new war is sure to bring. . .

It would be difficult to contest this testament, today. And the phrase, "War means the annihilation of mankind by technical science," becomes more suitably poignant now, compared to 1935. To argue the point that anyone *wins* a war is as fallacious as it has been at any time throughout man's history. Can anyone say for sure who won World War I, World War II, the Korean conflict, or who is winning any of our brush-fire wars today? Rather, it seems likely that we are making more and more enemies every day by these policies of killing people to "stabilize" political and economic situations—that, left to themselves, these disturbances would be less traumatic to all concerned.

Something went seriously awry in the thirties, and today, most of the Germans of an intellectual bent are *not* afraid to admit that they did *not* closely examine their motives, for many of them thought Hitler a big joke—at first. And those who did examine their own attitudes toward war and Hitler, and who made moves that jeopardized their well-being, have been proven right in the long run. German mankind paid a supreme price for this folly, as well as Russian and British humanity.

Obviously, man's collective attitude toward war has not changed and is quite different from man's individual attitude, but oh, how the methods of killing have improved! We can literally destroy ourselves in one huge mass orgy, now, so it is surely time for *our* nation in particular to examine its motives regarding war, for it seems that we are quite the activists in this respect in the present. The situations we have projected ourselves into in Cuba, the Dominican Republic, Viet Nam, Guatemala, and so on, leave much to be desired from a moral standard, for it seems we are now great exponents of genocide. Has this been worse (for us) since we dropped the first bomb? Might doesn't mean right any more, and so different values must be searched for, and these values depend on internal factors rather than externals inasmuch as consideration of the realities of human existence from the outside have not solved the problem of war. We must try to understand *why* we as a nation are bombing, shooting, killing (or why we dropped the first bomb), interfering, or whatever you would like to call these aggressive acts; and if we find a collective subconscious-destructive impulse on our part, we had better consider alternatives, if we are not to go on to total self-destruction. Menninger makes a brilliant argument in his book, written in 1935. And thirty years have only served to prove him right without much examination of current history. The question he asks as to whether the psychodynamics of individuals can be projected to nations is still relevant, for psychiatry has not only progressed mightily since then, but has also made

some small inroads into social thinking. At least there are some verifiable scientific data to support the claims of psychiatry; so why not try to project these verities to the nations as an alternative to war? The very least would be for our leaders to be prevailed upon to examine their own motives at the present time.

This may all seem rather idealistic to the pragmatists in government, which is no doubt why psychiatrists are not in the councils of policy in the administration of nations. Their techniques are mostly misused to influence people toward destructive ends, which as we well know, is easily done. But if psychiatry is able to reverse the trend of self-destruction in individual instances, there is a distinct possibility that it may be useful in arresting the self-destructiveness of groups such as nations. Good heavens! we cannot continue to be like the lemmings; our over-all viewpoint and insight give better promise than this. Humans remain human, and if there is success in reversing some processes in individuals by psychiatric means, it is reasonable to believe that it is also possible with groups. As a matter of fact, many psychiatric centers are more and more oriented to groups in treatment—family groups, group therapy, and so on. If people can be influenced to destroy, as has been done in the past recent wars, certainly they can be influenced to build and beautify; in the few instances this has been tried (CCC and other public works as were instituted during the depression—building programs, creative art, and so on), the success was measurable. It was good experience for those who did these things, and what they did was good for the nation as a whole.

There is no question but that the current way of life statism and economism—is by nature self-destructive, so that our discussion remains idealistic, because it might take major changes in the structure of society, just as it may take major changes in the personality of the individual to regain health. But so many things have been tried repeatedly and repeatedly failed that consideration

must be given to far-reaching remedies. Meanwhile the senseless killing of people is not the right direction for a so-called Christian nation to take. This schism, for example, between what we say as Christians and what we do as Christians (as a group) would be one area of exploration that could provide us with some answers. It does not appear that spirituality as exemplified by Christianity has done much to halt the slaughter; rather we are asked to accept it as inevitable in the course of things. I am certain that neither the prophets nor Christ himself would approve of what we are doing.

The only positive thought I can mobilize at the present time is that those who are not indifferent to this problem had better stand up and be counted, and not remain silent. And the medical profession, led by the psychiatrists, dedicated to increasing their power over the self-destructive tendencies in all of us, should be the first to arise, as did the Dutch psychiatrists in 1935. It is utterly senseless to condone killing and maiming so that we can devote our lives and energies to rehabilitation and repair of broken bodies and burying the premature dead, when there is a possibility that these bodies need not be dead, broken and deformed.

Let's not be swayed by military fervor, nor by Pentagon jargonese, but try to understand why these people feel as they do and how they may lead us to total destruction, and we then may be able to reverse the "escalator"; for, in my experience, an escalator keeps moving to the top, and I have never seen one stop half-way.

If we spend our time nurturing the diabetics, the misfits, the weak, and other congenitally less well-blessed people, our efforts should also be expended toward those who are victims of the fact that they're human—those killed and maimed in war. We can prevent diseases—how about war?

RAYMOND J. PY, M.D.

Vermilion, Ohio

REVIEW

"CONTEMPORARY MORAL ISSUES"

THERE are two utopian visions of the ideal university. One concerns the relationship of the faculty to the surrounding citizenry. The other is intimated by the title of Paul Goodman's *A Community of Scholars*—the community in which those who teach, think, write, and do research bring about a constant cross-fertilization between all their diverse undertakings, and who establish policies for administration by a continual improvement of methods. The first-mentioned vision contemplates the sharing of all resources of thought with interested persons who live in the area but are not enrolled as students.

During the past ten years, an expanding conception of the responsibility of the university to non-students has led to increase of the extension programs, embodying seminar-type discussions whenever possible. The University of California at Santa Barbara, for instance, has an informal noncredit opportunity for free discussions under the heading of "Contemporary Moral Issues" and, as an aid to group leaders and participants, has made available a text with that title, edited by Harry K. Girvetz (Wadsworth, Belmont, Calif.). Local interest and response in the Santa Barbara area have been impressive, with applications for enrollment in 1965 doubling expectations. The paperback text is a 370-page compendium of statements by leading writers on matters of current debate. Dr. Girvetz' Preface suggests the importance of such study to the sort of democracy Americans would like to be able to practice before the world:

This book deals with some of the major moral issues of our time. To call them issues is to say that they are not yet resolved, at any rate not among thoughtful and responsible men of good will, or, if they are resolved, the manner of resolution is not one that has decisively affected practice. Admittedly the determination of good will, wisdom, and responsibility involves judgments of value and might be said, therefore, to reflect personal bias. But, quite apart from the quality of the readings and the competence and distinction of their authors I have employed a principle of selection that should

commend itself to reasonable readers of every persuasion. I have chosen authors who might be presumed to encounter dissent without branding it as evidence of malice or stupidity—authors who, in short, claim no monopoly of wisdom and virtue. Presumably these are people who could engage in debate without denouncing each other as knaves or fools.

I have employed another related principle of selection, although obviously with no pretense to infallibility in its application. The authors are, it will be evident, committed people. But they have not, in my judgment, subordinated the pursuit of truth to defense of their commitments; their loyalties, however strong and even passionate, have not blinded them to alternatives.

Such, in addition to evidence of scholarship, are the requirements by which great universities recruit their faculties. The upshot of adherence to such principles is the exclusion of bigots and blind partisans. Their utterances to do are of interest, for they often have an impact on history and afford interesting evidence of the extremes to which men may be led by their passions and prejudices, but our concern here is a different one—namely, better understanding of some of the still unsettled moral problems of our day. This is not a project to which fanatics can make a significant contribution. However such a view does not imply endorsement of what has been called the "ultramiddle"; to reject blind partisanship is not to praise moral timidity or apathy.

Dr. Girvetz goes on to explain that such an undertaking need not at first concern itself with ethical theory and metaphysics—important as these matters are to any significant discussion—but that each person may enlarge his conception of ethics and morality simply by learning from fellow-participants with other points of view. On the other hand, though mature discussion would involve obtaining as much factual data as is possible, the truly crucial issues cannot be settled by "letting the facts prevail." As Dr. Girvetz puts it: "When this happens one may conclude that the conflict lies deeper and involves values themselves. It is here, in disputes over standards of value, that our differences are crucial. Can such differences be reconciled?" It is at this point that one "fact" of another nature must be faced squarely. Dr. Girvetz says:

This much is clear: bigots and fanatics will not submit their position to re-examination. Neither for other reasons, will members of preliterate or authoritarian societies, where the individual is so submerged in the group or so submissive that he would not think of challenging the prevailing mores. Re-appraisal is possible only for free men conscious of themselves as agents capable of guiding their own development—capable, that is, of an exercise of free will in what is perhaps the only meaningful sense of that term.

Contemporary moral issues are presented in this volume in five groups: Security and Its Moral Implications; The Values of a Business Society; Sexual Conduct; The Church and Society; Discrimination and the Negro. Contributors include Karl Barth, Harold Laski, Martin Luther King, John Steinbeck, Richard H. Rovere, Karl Menninger, Aldous Huxley, Harry Ashmore, and Joseph Wood Krutch. Introductory comments are supplied by Dr. Girvetz. The groups in turn are subdivided into topics. For example, under "Internal Security" there are essays on Civil Disobedience and The Loyalty Program. Every significant area of discussion of current moral issues seems touched upon. The conclusion is an essay by Joseph Wood Krutch, titled, "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Welfare." From Mr. Krutch:

Closely related to the value judgment is the idea of justice. Men have varied enormously, irreconcilably, over the question of what constitutes justice. But they have nearly always believed that there is some such thing and that they should adhere to it. Part of that feeling is, I believe, the conviction that acts should have consequences, and that the way you are treated should be in some degree affected by the way in which you behave. A spoiled child, one who never pays any penalty for his follies or misdeeds, one who is given what some of the modern educators call "uncritical love," is usually an unhappy child because something fundamental in his human nature tells him that acts should have consequences and makes him profoundly uneasy in a world where they do not.

Similarly I believe that a society is unhappy if it holds—as so many sociologists now profess to hold—that no man should be held responsible for his imprudences or his crimes. He may be glad to escape those consequences, but he is finding himself in a world without justice, in a world where the way in

which you act has no effect upon the way in which you are treated. And I believe that, like the spoiled child, he is profoundly uneasy in that unnatural situation.

I believe that it is also in accord with fundamental human nature to want some goods other than the material, that a society which defines the good life as merely a high standard of living and then defines the high standard of living in terms of material things alone is one which, in that respect, is denying expression to a fundamental characteristic of man. Few societies, whether primitive or not, have ever accepted the belief that welfare thus narrowly defined is the one and only supreme good. Men have sought all sorts of other things—they have sought God, they have sought beauty, they have sought truth or they have sought glory, militarily or otherwise. They have sought adventure; they have even—so anthropologists tell us—sometimes believed that a large collection of dried human heads was the thing in all the world most worth having. But seldom if ever, so it seems to me, have they confessedly sought only what is now called "welfare."

This is a mere beginning. You may dispute, if you like, even the few general statements I have made about permanent human nature. But if you admit that some things are and some things are not in accord with human nature, then you have grasped an instrument capable of doing something which few men today seem able to do, namely, attempt a rational criticism of things as they are.

Dr. Girvetz comments:

Some readers—the most thoughtful—will feel forced by the specific differences explored above to move beyond them and raise more fundamental questions. What is the basis of moral judgment? What are the sources of value? What are the criteria by reference to which good and bad, right and wrong may be distinguished? They will be thrust back, that is to say, upon ethics—philosophy.

Joseph Wood Krutch, whose comments conclude this collection, is not a professional philosopher. Although he is philosophical in interest and orientation, as is anyone who is interested in (and troubled about) the quality of American life and the criteria by means of which quality may be assessed, it is just as well that he ignores the technical and more recondite problems in which professional philosophers too often become lost.

COMMENTARY

THE GANDHIAN OBJECTIVE

THERE is a sense in which, simply because of their dominant position in American society, businessmen (see *Frontiers*) bear the brunt of most of social and intellectual criticism. They bring into focus the prevailing strengths and weaknesses of the people, and because they have initiative and take responsibility, they stand as major representatives of American civilization, embodying many of its contradictions. Yet these contradictions are not unique to businessmen, despite the fact that, because of their leading role, they exhibit them more noticeably than do other groups.

Unfortunately, criticism of American culture is haunted by the historic intentions of the Western radical tradition, which sought not only to point out the social failings of capital enterprise, but to abolish it entirely, substituting some kind of political or popular (state or worker) control. We know, now, that state control does not lead to the dreamed-of "classless society," but brings instead new problems and new forms of "class domination." Worker control would doubtless work in any political context, given workers capable of the tasks of management—as for example, has been the case with the Lincoln Electric Company of Cleveland, Ohio. Cooperative forms of enterprise—which succeed or fail depending upon people, local conditions, and the character of economic need—are plainly possible in the United States.

It should be possible, therefore, to free criticism of any ideological taint, mainly in order to insist that it be considered seriously, instead of parried with some ideological gambit which only confuses the issue. The criticism pursued in these pages is in behalf of no "system," but in a hope similar to Gandhi's when he wrote:

The more thinking set even in the West today stand aghast at the abyss for which their system is heading. And I owe whatever influence I have in the West to my ceaseless endeavor to find a solution

which promises an escape from the vicious circle of violence and exploitation. I have been a sympathetic student of the Western social order and I have discovered that underlying the fever that fills the soul of the West there is a restless search for truth. I value that spirit.

Gandhi also said:

I look upon an increase in the power of the State with the greatest fear, because, although while apparently doing good by minimizing exploitation, it does the greatest harm to mankind by destroying individuality which lies at the root of all progress.... What I would personally prefer would not be a centralization of power in the hands of the State, but an extension of the sense of trusteeship; as in my opinion the violence of private ownership is less injurious than the violence of the State. However, if it is unavoidable I would support a minimum of State ownership. What I disapprove of is an organization based on force, which a State is. Voluntary organization there must be.

CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

"MANAGING" HUMAN FAILURE

A PROVOCATIVE passage in the *Tao Te King* involves discussion of the "moral principle" in education:

He who tries to govern a kingdom by his sagacity is of that kingdom the despoiler; but he who does not govern by sagacity is the kingdom's blessing. To keep this principle constantly before one's eyes is called Profound Virtue. Profound Virtue is unfathomable, far-reaching, paradoxical at first, but afterwards exhibiting thorough conformity with Nature.

Closely related is Lao-tse's view in respect to the attitudes which make for "good" and "bad" government:

In the highest antiquity, the people did not know that they had rulers. In the next age they loved and praised them. In the next, they feared them. In the next they despised them.

How cautious is the Sage, how sparing of his words! When his task is accomplished and affairs are prosperous, the people all say: "We have come to be as we are, naturally and of ourselves."

The Sage practices inaction, and nothing remains ungoverned.

These quotations from an ancient master of paradox provide an excellent basis for a continuing discussion of the analysis of education by Paul Goodman. Making harsh specific criticism of the prevailing approach to the teaching-learning process, Mr. Goodman writes:

It is extremely dubious that by controlled conditioning one *can* teach organically meaningful behavior. Rather, the attempt to control *prevents* learning. This is obvious to anyone who has ever tried to teach a child to ride a bicycle; the more you try, the more he falls. The best one can do is to provide him a bicycle, allay his anxiety, tell him to keep going, and *not* to try to balance. I am convinced that the same is true in teaching reading.

Despite burgeoning attempts to create small schools and colleges which "humanize" education, modern schooling still involves a great deal of what in our time is called "behavioral

engineering." Though the process has been carried on largely without deliberation, it is none the less a continuance of the medieval determination to adjust the mind of the individual to a *structure* of status-quo values. Under the heading "Programmed," Mr. Goodman writes:

Intellectually, humanly, and politically, our present universal high-schooling and vastly increasing college-going are a disaster. I will go over the *crude* facts still again! A youngster is compelled for twelve *continuous* years—if middle class, for sixteen years—to work on assigned lessons, during a lively period of life when one hopes he might invent enterprises of his own. Because of the school work, he cannot follow his nose in reading and browsing in the library, or concentrate on a hobby that fires him, or get a job, or carry on a responsible love-affair or travel, or become involved in political action. The school system as a whole, with its increasingly set curriculum, stricter grading, incredible amounts of testing, is already a vast machine to shape acceptable responses. Programmed instruction closes the windows a little tighter and it rigidifies the departmentalization and dogma. But worst of all, it tends to nullify the one lively virtue that any school does have, that it is a community of youth and of youth and adults.

For sixteen years it is docility to training and boredom that is heavily rewarded with approval, legitimacy, and money; whereas spontaneous initiation is punished by interruption, by being considered irrelevant, by anxiety of failing in the "important" work, and even by humiliation and jail. Yet somehow, after this hectic course of conditioning, young men and women are supposed, on commencement, suddenly to exercise initiative in the most extreme matters: to find jobs for themselves in a competitive market, to make long career plans, to undertake original artistic and scientific projects, to marry and become parents, to vote for public officers. But their behavior has been shaped only too well. Inevitably most of them will go on with the pattern of assigned lessons, as Organization Men or on the assembly-line, they will vote Democratic-Republican and buy right brands. . . .

I am rather miffed at the vulgarity of the implication that, in teaching the humanities, we should at most attempt "exposure"—as if appreciation were entirely a private matter, or a matter of unstructured "emotion." (There is no such thing, by the way, as unstructured emotion.) When [an educator] speaks of the unshaped response to the kind of literature or music "they like," he condemns their esthetic life to being a frill, without meaning for character, valuation, recreation, or how one is in the world. Frankly, as a man of letters I would even prefer literature to be programmed, as in Russia.

This is a protest against the essentially authoritarian view that "science" and government will tell us what we really need—and need to do—but will allow vagaries of uninstructed personal preference to rule in the minor matter of "culture." Paradoxically the Russians apparently believe that culture is truly important, read a great deal in more than one language and revere great literary works. This insistence on an ever-improving cultural background may turn out, in the end, even in Russia, to be a liberating influence. For literature does many things which science cannot do—a point made lucidly by Joseph Wood Krutch in a recent essay quoted in *MANAS* (June 9):

Art is more convincing than philosophy because it is, quite literally, truer. The novelists are, to be sure, less clear and less precise. But for that very reason they are truer. Every philosophy and every "ideology" must sacrifice truth to clarity and precision just because we demand of a philosophy or an "ideology" greater clarity and precision and completeness than is compatible with human knowledge or wisdom. It is just the philosophical superiority of art, not only that it suggests the complexity of life and human character, but also that it is everywhere closer to the most genuine and the most justifiable portions of man's thinking about life.

The quotations from Mr. Goodman provide opportunity for calling attention to an interesting dialogue between Goodman and Alvin Duskin, one-time chairman of Emerson College, Pacific Grove, California. (The dialogue has been printed by Cunningham Press, 3036 West Main Street, Alhambra, Calif., and is available at 35¢ a copy.) Here Goodman indicates that the usual sort of "programming" in the university system fails to illuminate the nature of either culture or education:

At Columbia, there's a whole gang of kids who regard me as some kind of idealogue for them. Well, they're seniors now and they're willing to stay on at Columbia and get their master's, etc. They know that graduate work will help them make money. But they have no illusions that they're going to learn anything. Because they're not. What should they do? They asked me, "Can we form some little school?" So I said, "Look how many of you are there? Ten? Good."

"Why don't you go down and ask Ben Nelson," I said. "He's a professor out at Stony Point and he loves bright young people that he can really teach. And you arrange with him to meet with you one night a week for two and a half hours. You get together and see that you give him forty bucks for that. He doesn't need the money but you have to give him what a professor gets. All right, he'll teach you history and sociology." "And go see Elliot Shapiro," I said. "He'll teach you psychology. He's a splendid psychologist and also the principal of a public school. Then try to find a doctor who will teach you physiology. OK. Then you have three courses."

"You study these three things with these three fellows. You don't want to overburden yourselves because you still have to work during the day at Columbia. Now at the end of a couple of years of that you'll have had a much finer education than you could get at Columbia graduate school."

And they know it. So where's the difficulty? The whole problem would be to persuade Ben Nelson to do it. But he'll do it. All they have to do is go and ask him.

Goodman speaks of the inevitable conflict between the managerial intentions of "smooth" administration and the encouragement to read and study as natural vocations of life:

Goodman (commenting on reviews of his book *The Community of Scholars* in the magazine section of the *San Francisco Chronicle*):

I spent, well you know, about forty pages describing possible reforms within the present university system, aiming toward decentralization and cutting down administrative overhead and administrative interference and so on. And then, as a small shot in the arm from outside, I suggested the possibility of leaving that system and sitting next door. Just renting a house next door and having five teachers move their offices into it and having their classes meet there instead of in the university buildings. But still taking part in the university. Cooperating with it. So it's interesting when you get reviewed by college presidents. The spite with which they say: "He thinks we're going to let them use our library. How do you like that? These guys want to leave our university, and they're going to take a handful of our students away, and they're going to let other people teach who aren't regular professors, and they all want to sit across the street and use our library."

Duskin: Did they think you were going to wear out the books?

Goodman: Yes. Right. Maybe the books would really be read that way.

FRONTIERS Filling the Vacuum

ABOUT the best thing that can be said about the American activity called "business" is that, during a period of a hundred years or more, it has given a great many people, perhaps the majority, a feeling of *engagement* and an area in which enterprising, self-reliant individuals could test their metal and accomplish things of measurable value to the common good. Even Karl Marx, that arch-enemy of the capitalist system, as William Appleby Williams recently pointed out, "seemed to stand in awe of what he called 'the stupendous productive power' of corporation capitalism." And it is still easy enough for anyone to respond to business achievement in this way, if he is able to ignore the monotone of bad taste and ostentatious commercialism with which the countryside is draped, and to experience as things-in-themselves the efficiencies and productiveness of American industry. When you accelerate your car in a quick passing operation on the freeway, when you prepare a palatable meal in a modern kitchen in only a few minutes, or when you turn on a hi-fi set and hear Oistrakh playing the violin as though he were in the room with you—it is natural to utter a friendly benediction to the genius of industrial enterprise.

There is another side to this question—the kind of "freedom" that can be rightly attributed to the socio-economic system of the United States, although it has been sloganized and exploited in prideful political propaganda almost *ad nauseam*. For an illustration of this freedom, take the matter of publishing a paper like MANAS. One of the MANAS editors spent an evening several years ago with a group of Yugoslavian mayors (five of them) who had attended an international conference of city officials in Washington, and took some time to tour the country afterward. During the conversation, the MANAS editor asked one of the mayors—"Could we publish MANAS in Yugoslavia?" "Oh yes," he said. The next question was: "But could one start a business

to make the money to keep the paper going—after all, we have a terrible deficit!" "Well," said the mayor, "you could if you didn't have more than two or three employees." "The business I have in mind," said the editor, "needs ten employees." "No," said the mayor. "Anything that size must be state-owned and operated." "So," said the editor, "if we wanted to keep MANAS going, we'd have to have the crown jewels, or some secret source of funds, and then could keep on publishing as long as the money lasted—but we couldn't go out and *earn* it, under your system." "That's right," said the mayor.

The general implication here—that if you have a perfect socio-economic system you wouldn't *need* a paper like MANAS to carry on independent discussion and dialogue—that the State would do all that—was not debated, since this underlying contention was obvious enough. Our point, also obvious, is that under the present system of the United States, you are free to do things you think it is important to do, even though it may become very difficult, while in a society under total state control the same things will be quite impossible except as desperate underground activities.

Well, since we do have this "freedom," let us look at the institution of "business" from another viewpoint. At the outset of the industrial development of this country, the filling of economic needs was an engrossing enterprise. The settling of a wilderness, the winning of the right of economic independence in the revolutionary war, the exercise of Yankee, do-it-yourself self-reliance, the romance and daring of the Westward migration, the exploitation and rationalization of inexhaustible (as it then seemed) natural resources—all these activities filled the lives of men who became used to making endless practical decisions. You could say that the diversity and challenge of all the economic tasks gave color and pageantry to what were, in the last analysis, ideas and images of the good that had human value *while they were being fulfilled*, but

were worth very little afterward. That is, the satisfaction of material needs will do as a surrogate philosophy of life so long as the needs are urgent, but once a man and his family are well fed, he can no longer make constructive use of a philosophy of "prosperity." He may gimmick up his life with a lot of elaborate "needs" that are really of no value to a human being, and evolve a commercial iconography to persuade himself that the things he is still pursuing are actually worth while, but in time all these devices turn into unpleasant symptoms of moral decline.

The fact is that, when the satisfaction of material needs is used as the basis of a "cultural" philosophy, the idea of a natural *limit* to material needs drops out of the picture, and the doctrine of unlimited acquisition takes its place. Businessmen, to whom this doctrine has become a central article of faith, are graduated from the role of manufacturers and tradesmen to the high status of leaders of civilization. By common consent they are encouraged to mistake themselves for persons who are able to define the enduring values of the human community. To be sure that this vast self-deception has taken place, one has only to read a few of the annual reports of large corporations. These are not simply statements of people who employ a certain means of making a living, but recitations of the litanies of the commercial "way of life." From any authentically human point of view, the whole thing is absurd.

A successful business enterprise is not the model of a successful civilization. The assumption that it is bespeaks an immeasurable ignorance of the entire range of higher meanings of human life. That the businessman's model of success is or may become seriously destructive when made to control other human undertakings is clear in a variety of ways. Read, for example, the Byrne Report (printed in the *Los Angeles Times* for May 12) for evidence of what happens when a group of businessmen try to run a great state university as though it were some kind of overgrown country store. Read Raymond E. Callahan's *Education*

and the Cult of Efficiency (University of Chicago Press, 1969) for an account of the disservices to education when the "business" model of administration is applied to educational institutions. Read C. Wright Mills' *The Power Elite* for the delusions of grandeur which may overtake high-ranking business executives. Read *The Corporation Take-Over* (Harper & Row, 1964), edited by Andrew Hacker, for scholarly evidence that the corporate institutions of business have grown into a dominating power structure which shapes, molds, or modifies very nearly every area of human life, with hardly any consciousness of the responsibilities involved, and with irritated and often resentful response to the efforts of the body politic to regulate the operations of commerce and industry in behalf of general human welfare.

"Business" is not, never was, and never will be, a "philosophy of life." It is only the pretentious rationalization of the major specialties of our technological civilization—the production and distribution of economic goods—and its "ideology" has been allowed to displace from serious consideration all other modes of thought.

It is in this general context that statements were made in MANAS for April 7 ("The Obscure Alliance") which brought the following objection from a reader:

MANAS editors sometimes make strong statements which have no basis in fact and which usually do not add to the strength of the major argument. As a case in point, on page 2 the business community is pictured as "the most pathetic sight in all the world," as men who have cut themselves off from reality, who protect and influence bias in the press, who "pay a few scholars to publish papers knocking socialism." And on page 8, referring to Madison Avenue, "Loving is not something that sales promoters understand. . . . Love is possible only for unmanipulated people." You have fallen into a trap which seems to ensnare many people of socialist bent; making broad, unprovable generalizations to the point of being illogical and pathetic. I think it is grossly unjust to blame the whole business community for the doings of a segment of extremists who are undeniably guilty of one or more of your

charges. Indeed, in the April 21 issue you introduce evidence to show how socialistic big business really is in practice. No one will deny that the business world tends to be conservative, but it can hardly be accused of being complacent in a free-enterprise society. Nor is it any more manipulative than most other segments of society, including those areas run by so-called "liberals."

This paragraph of comment is unwieldy to reply to for the reason that it makes several vague and unconnected criticisms which seem held together by a mild innuendo suggesting that the editors are of "socialistic bent." To clear the air, then, this suggestion may be dealt with first. MANAS is not a political journal and has never espoused any conventional political theory. Rather, it has from the first concerned itself with those basic attitudes of philosophy and individual responsibility without which *no* political system can be made to work. Its commentary on socialism, through the years; may be summed up under six general contentions: (1) That the revolutionary movement—since, say, the time of Robert Owen, who invented the word "socialism," until the present (of, say, Norman Thomas)—has embodied a preponderance of the humanitarian ardor and condemnation of injustice that has found expression in the West for the past 150 years, and that the motives of these men and the hard sense of their protest are ignored only at the peril of Western civilization; (2) that the conversion of the dialogue about political philosophy into an exchange of epithets and rival slogans has been debasing to the Western mind, and that honest advocates of both socialism and capitalism are becoming well aware of this and are saying so (see the remarks of Erich Fromm and Jayaprakash Narayan, both socialists of a sort, both critical of traditional socialist thinking, in MANAS for April 1, 1964; and see Richard Cornuelle's "revision" of classical conservative doctrine cited in MANAS for Feb. 17 of this year); (3) that the gradual but inexorable change of the socio-economic structure of the United States under the compulsions of advancing technology and large-scale corporate enterprise has been

moving in the direction of the welfare state for many years, without the slightest regard for ideological polemics (as Seba Eldridge remarks in his classical study, *Development of Collective Enterprise* [University of Kansas Press, 1943], the primary factors leading to socialization "in a so-called capitalistic democracy . . . are to be found in the pressure of consumer and general public interest groups, not in pressures applied by labor groups"); (4) that the failure of the utopian dream of the Marxian socialists is a major disenchantment within the stream of the revolutionary thought of the twentieth century, leading to the crucial declaration by the American radical, Dwight Macdonald, that "We need a new political vocabulary," in his important essay, *The Root Is Man*; (5) that when socialist intellectuals lose hope of gaining political power, as in the present, they devote their energies to searching sociological and cultural analysis, often becoming society's most valuable critics, since they stand outside the assumptions of the *status quo* and at the same time remain deeply concerned with issues of social justice and human freedom; and (6) that the Gandhian idea of moral regeneration, implemented in economic terms by a pluralistic system embodying diverse adaptations to human need, with state functions varying according to the development of social responsibility on the part of individual entrepreneurs, probably has the greatest promise for Western civilization, and that two Western economists, E. F. Schumaker in England, and Walter Weisskopf in the United States, have already begun to sketch out a body of theory adapted to this view.

So much for the question of a "socialistic bent." Since our correspondent's Parthian shot about "liberals" has sufficient reply in "The Liberal Dilemma" (MANAS, Nov. 11, 1964), we may return to the subject of the business community. One could indeed wish that it were possible "to blame the whole business community for the doings of a segment of extremists," but in this case, as in all others of a like character, the hysteria of the few is a function of the apathy and

indifference of the many. It is, on the contrary, the middle-of-the-rovers in business who have to answer for their failure to look beyond the narrow self-interest of acquisitive corporate enterprise. It was not the Radical Right whose junior executives served jail terms for illegal price-fixing a few years ago, but the largest and most representative companies in the country. It was not the Radical Right, but the enormous food and drug industries which have had to face up to Congressional revelations of extreme irresponsibility in matters of both excess profits and poisonous ingredients.

This situation has little to do with the individual "morality" of businessmen, who are doubtless as good as people in other callings, or even a bit better. Nor would it call for extreme criticism if the business community had not preempted the role of cultural leadership and substituted the norms of manufacture and trade for serious thought about the meaning of civilization. It is *here*, in this substitution, that the role-playing of businessmen as cultural leaders becomes pathetic. They are grossly miscast for this responsibility and cannot understand why they fail, and why the great moral vacuum in the psychic existence of the people is so filled up with inane sensation-seeking and the multiplication of comforts and luxuries—to which, incidentally, the business community endlessly caters, as its very dynamic of "progress."

What is lacking in our common life is what the ancient Greeks called *paideia*. For explanation we borrow a paragraph from a recent paper, "Leisure and Mass Culture in the Cybernating Society," by Henry Winthrop, of the University of South Florida, Tampa. Dr. Winthrop says:

The term, *paideia*, possesses a meaning which sums up chiefly the content of the English words "civilization" and "education." The Greeks, in contrast to many other peoples and nations, past and present, believed that men advanced in civilization, not through the acquisition of power or wealth but by educating themselves. Their great masterpieces—tragedies, epics, histories, speeches, philosophical

works—are distinguished by the fact that they aim to bring to fruition our most distinctive human potentialities. They are preoccupied with encouraging what Maslow would call "self-actualization." In addition, the term, *paideia*, also meant for the Greeks the desire to cultivate the ideals of "sophrosyne" or sweet reasonableness and "spondaitos" or appropriate seriousness.

The ideal of *paideia* could be cultivated in depth because the civilized and educated Greek had some pretty sharp notions of what constituted the good life, therefore both ideas and politics could be viewed critically from that standpoint. . . . A challenge . . . to their most deeply cherished values would have been accepted by the civilized and educated Greek influenced by the ideals of *paideia*, without batting an eyelash.

For all their shortcomings and political follies, the Greeks have left us this heritage, and we ought to begin to put it to work. Businessmen, if they want to stay in business, will have to start thinking like human beings instead of highly paid mechanics of an economic process.

As for our jibe at the sales promoters—for support we suggest readings in the following: *Masscult and Midcult*, Dwight Macdonald (Partisan Review, 1961); *Culture for the Millions*, Norman Jacob, editor (Van Nostrand, 1959); *The Tastemakers*, Russell Lynes (Harper, 1959); the voluminous fictional literature on the corruptions and follies of the advertising and public relations business, as well as miscellaneous exposes of the "hidden persuaders." If these people, taken as professional types, can be seriously regarded as knowing anything about "love," then we confess ourselves to be in error.