

A VISION FOR INDIA

IN the West one frequently hears the question: "After Nehru, who will lead India?" The question is asked from a European or American point of view, and it is, therefore, assumed that his eventual successor will be one of the men involved in the present government of India. Nehru's successor, however, might be none of these, but a man who, like Gandhi or Vinoba Bhave, is closer to the sage than the professional politician.

Just as Nehru is the political heir of Gandhi, so Jayaprakash Narayan is the social and political heir of Vinoba, the saintly figure who for years has been walking the length and breadth of India in the role of a seer. As the depository of his country's deepest treasures, the inheritor and perpetuator of an ancient religious way of life, Vinoba plays, in a sense, the "Christ" to Nehru's "Caesar"—the parallel being, of course, inexact, since in India there is no basic antagonism between them. Nevertheless, it was by an act of renunciation and turning away from politics—the "kingdom of this world"—that Jayaprakash made himself Vinoba's disciple. Caesar's renunciation of politics to follow Christ is a typically Indian phenomenon, and from it stems most of Jayaprakash's present prestige.

We Indians instinctively admire this kind of worldly renunciation as a sign of one who has been granted the *darshana* (vision) of truth. Nothing so much recommends Narayan to the Indian masses today as his total lack of political trappings and his break with all past allegiances and socialist affiliations. In consequence, he is the only Indian political figure who can attract huge audiences—in India, 500,000 or more—comparable to Nehru's. The Indian masses do not turn out in droves to listen to political "pros." While machine politicians exist in India as part of the increasingly complex democratic edifice, they are not popular. Popularity still belongs to the

leader who has something of the aureole of the saint or sage. Even Nehru derives much of his "charismatic" hold over the people from his long association with Mahatma Gandhi.

Jawaharlal Nehru, the son of the great lawyer and nationalist, Motilal Nehru, whose centenary was celebrated this year, was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. Jayaprakash Narayan is the son of a poor peasant. He was born in 1902 in the tiny village of Sitabdera, in a backward region (Suran) of Bihar state, in Eastern India. He was nineteen years old before he first saw a tram.

From the start a good student, Jayaprakash did well in his secondary studies at Patna, and won a series of scholarships to the local college. Responding, however, to Gandhi's request that Indian students boycott all British-run universities, he rejected this opportunity and plunged into the noncooperation movement. Then, when the latter collapsed some nine months later, he decided to pursue his studies in the United States.

He reached California in 1922, a month before the opening of the academic year, and found work harvesting fruit, thanks to a group of Pathans and Panjabi Sikhs who had settled there. Though ten thousand miles from home, these Indians had been deeply stirred by Gandhi's non-cooperation movement and were profoundly impressed by Jayaprakash's courage. The twenty-year-old emigré worked morning, noon, and night culling grapes, peaches, apricots, and almonds, to prepare the crops for the canners and packers. The eighty dollars he managed to accumulate enabled him to register as an undergraduate at Berkeley, but after one term the tuition fees were more than he could afford. He shifted to the University of Iowa, and here, too, he worked on a peach farm. From Iowa he moved on to Wisconsin, where, in the home of the Progressive leader, Robert La Follette, and in the company of

European-born students, Jayaprakash "drank deep at the fountain of Marxism," as he was later to describe this momentary enthusiasm. He was disturbed to find that even in the "Land of Opportunity," great wealth and poverty existed side by side. He could not understand why a privileged few enjoyed the good things of life while most people the world over suffered squalor and ceaseless toil. His friends were convinced that there was no solution to this age-old problem within the framework of the capitalist system, and Jayaprakash adopted the socialist creed.

As he was completing his studies—which had begun with mathematics, physics, and chemistry, but had shifted to economics and sociology (in which he obtained an M.A. from Ohio State)—he learned of Gandhi's plan for a second campaign for Indian freedom. He decided to return home immediately to put his newly acquired socialist theories into practice. He had spent seven years in the United States, completing his education, and arrived in India just in time to join the great Civil Disobedience movement which Gandhi launched in 1929. With the fervor and courage which have always characterised him, he gave heart and soul to the struggle. During the next two years he was increasingly shocked to find the Communists, among whom he then classed himself, denouncing Gandhi on orders from Moscow—a policy which eventually precipitated his break with the party. The rift was consummated in 1939, while Jayaprakash was undergoing a self-purification fast at Poona, in the course of which he bid a final farewell to Communism and all its works. By this time Stalin's collectivisation campaign and the first Russian purges had made it patently clear to him that Soviet materialism was irreconcilable with any ethical or humanistic philosophy of life.

Late in 1939, thousands of Gandhi's followers, Jayaprakash among them, were arrested. In prison he met some fellow socialists with whom he made detailed plans for the founding of a socialist party. Upon their release a year later, his former prison-mates helped him to be elected as the first Leader of the Indian

Socialist Party. His energies throughout the thirties were devoted to building up this new party which, like Gandhi's Indian National Congress, was dedicated to the cause of Indian freedom. Shortly before the outbreak of World War II, his activities again got him into trouble with the British Raj. After being jailed for his radical nationalism, he led a hunger strike, involving several hundred other political prisoners, against the terrible prison conditions. He served a year, then quickly found his way back to jail, this time to the central prison of Hazaribak (Bihar). Here he and five other inmates effected a spectacular escape, letting themselves down from the prison-walls on a rope-ladder made with *dhotis* (Indian sarongs).

Now began the most dramatic period of his life. Not yet having embraced Gandhi's gospel of non-violence, Jayaprakash and his companions became terrorists. They derailed trains, blew up bridges, sawed down telephone poles and cut telegraph wires. They made themselves full-fledged guerillas, seriously embarrassing the British at a time when they were trying to recruit Indian troops to fight the Axis powers. Ten thousand rupees (then about \$2,000) were offered for his capture, but Jayaprakash went on about the country, issuing clandestine manifestoes which demanded that the British quit India.

In 1943 he and Rammanohar Lohia were caught by the British in Nepal, only to be rescued shortly thereafter by revolutionary guerillas and local "patriots." Their escape was a further blow to British prestige and made them heroes overnight. But the hunted existence of these two—with sleepless nights, little food, and constant flights from one refuge to another—undermined Jayaprakash's health, and he and Lohia were finally captured in the Panjab. This time their place of confinement was kept a closely guarded secret, so that stories of torture and third-degree treatment of the famous prisoners were soon circulating and arousing indignation throughout the country.

In England, meanwhile, the Labour Party had been returned to power. While many political prisoners were released, Jayaprakash and Lohia still languished in jail, and indignant Indians reacted by holding many meetings and demonstrations. The prisoners were even honoured by the flamboyant celebration of a Jayaprakash Day and of a Lohia Day, but not until April of 1946 were they finally set free.

The decade which brought independence to India also brought political disappointment to Jayaprakash. After the Socialists were heavily defeated for a second time in the general elections of 1957, he withdrew from the party completely, not, as he said later, "because the ugliness of politics repelled me, but because the attraction of the new politics of *Sarvodaya* drew me."

The word *Sarvodaya*, which means "the welfare of all" in most Indian languages, was coined by Gandhi after he had been deeply moved by Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. It suggests a kind of ethical revolution or mass change of heart, beginning, as it must, at the lowest level of Indian life—which is to say, in the villages. In *Sarvodaya* philosophy, man is essentially good; or, in Vinoba Bhave's eloquence: "God is wide awake in the hearts of good men while He is asleep in the hearts of evil men." When the good are enrolled in the cause of benevolence and justice, they will exert a strong moral pressure against evil men and bring about a change in their hearts. The contagion of good is more lasting than the infection of evil, good being an attribute of the soul.

The ideal of *Sarvodaya* was from the beginning Gandhi's distant goal, but so much of his energy was spent in the struggle for Indian independence that he had little left, and no time, before his tragic assassination in 1948, to undertake its propagation. This task fell to his spiritual successor, Vinoba Bhave, whose disciple Jayaprakash became in 1954.

The occasion of this "conversion"—one of the most spectacular in recent Indian history—was

not without drama. It took place in April of 1954 at Bodh Gaya, in the state of Bihar, where twenty-five centuries before the Buddha found supreme enlightenment beneath the Bodhi tree. To this most sacred Buddhist site in all India flock every year thousands of pilgrims from all over the world. What must have been the surprise of these thousands on this spring day to see appear before them, as a humble convert to the Gandhian gospel of non-violence, none other than the former dynamiter and guerilla rebel, Jayaprakash Narayan!

Jayaprakash had just completed a thirty-one day fast of self-purification, which must, if anything, have enhanced the gaunt uprightness of this strikingly tall, six-foot figure, with deep reflective eyes, a strong square jaw, and the beautiful hands and fluent fingers of a born healer of men. Thousands, as usual, had come to hear him. He began as though he were addressing another of his old socialist gatherings: "We need thousands of workers ready to give up even their lives through love for the revolution . . ." Then, without the slightest change in the modulation of his voice, he went on: "Violence must be totally rooted out. It is wrong to oppose greed by stronger greed, or to try to suppress it by violence or the force of the law. That could only force it underground, and it would emerge and express itself in newer forms. The only effective way it can be done is through a change of heart, by conversion, as opposed to coercion. The *Bhoodan* (land-gift) movement of Acharya Vinoba Bhave is a brilliant application of his Gandhian technique and holds in itself the secret of world peace, not only for our age but for all time." He announced that he was abjuring politics, making a solemn pledge to become a *Jeevandani*—one who gives up his life for the movement, a "life-giver"—an example which was followed by many others in an atmosphere charged with immense religious emotion. Vinoba was deeply stirred, and he responded to Jayaprakash's gesture by rededicating his own life in these terms: "In response to your call of yesterday here is the

offering of my life, based on *Bhoodan* (land-gift) with village industries as its mainstay."

Under the joint apostolate of Vinoba and Jayaprakash, the *Sarvodaya* movement has made great progress, and last year Gandhi's birthday, the 2nd of October, was specially chosen to commemorate the ideal of *Panchayati Raj*—that is, "rule by the five" (village elders). Nehru himself gave the movement his official blessing, declaring: "You should give people in the village authority, initiative, and technical help . . . Let them make a thousand mistakes. Do not be afraid of it."

In those villages where the *panchayats* have been reinstated, the five village "elders" are now elected for a five-year term, preferably by a unanimous vote of all eligible adult male and female voters. Secret balloting is recommended only where unanimity proves impossible, the presumption being, as the villagers say, that "unanimity is the voice of God," whereas "majority is the voice of Man." The five elders of the *panchayat*, are, by the same token, likened to the five fingers of the hand, and they are expected to work in harmony, as the saying goes, so that "God may speak through the five."

"The parcel of freedom dispatched from London," Vinoba once observed with characteristic humor, "has gotten stuck in Delhi. You must bring it to the village." What he meant was that independence brought with it at first only a change of masters. The Indian civil servants who stepped into the shoes of the former British commissioners and their subordinates proved, only too often, to be as out of touch with the needs and sentiments of the villages as their predecessors had been. The senior of these continue to be chosen from among Indians with foreign university degrees, above all from Oxford, Cambridge, and London. The result has been to pile a kind of bureaucratic superstructure on top of a village infra-structure which is so divorced from the central government as to constitute a separate universe.

The country's long-term economic plans are drawn up in Delhi by functionaries who have served so long in the capital that they have lost all contact with the 355 million (80 per cent of India's population) who live in villages. Jayaprakash has stigmatised state and administrative institutions as alien invasions which tend to demoralise the villages by blandly ignoring their legitimate needs and grievances. Meanwhile the professional politicians who periodically visit the villages during election campaigns disrupt the traditional and sacrosanct unanimity of community life by seeking proselytes for their party causes. As Vinoba puts it: "Although freedom has come, we have not yet tasted its flavor. *Swaraj* (self-government) is incomplete without *Gramraj* (village government)." What Vinoba and Jayaprakash oppose is a center of power which cripples local initiative and self-help. Both leaders nevertheless regard the state as an agent of social change, but object to exclusive reliance on law and authority as the means.

To a Westerner, no doubt, the humble submission of a major political figure to an apostle of universal charity must seem an incomparably Indian paradox. It is a bit as though Aneurin Bevan had chosen to give up politics in 1954 to devote himself to Billy Graham's crusade, as though Mendes-France had elected to follow l'Abbé Pierre, or Willy Brandt had given up the Berlin Mayoralty to join Schweitzer in Lambaréné. Such comparisons are misleading, however, if only because Vinoba's influence is so great and his example so inspiring that there is no comparable example in the West. His hold over the Indian masses springs from that happy marriage of pure simplicity of soul and poetic felicity of language which is the hallmark of the true saint or sage. It is something which has to be seen to be believed, as I have seen it more than once by joining Vinoba on one of his walking pilgrimages. He embodies an incomparable mixture of humor and poetry, with a fund of picturesque images drawn from the treasure-chest of Indian myth and fable—a gift which no Indian

has possessed to a comparable degree since Gandhi.

Jayaprakash Narayan is of a more solemn and modest cast of mind. He can laugh at a good story, but telling jokes or parables, a spontaneous and effortless activity with Vinoba, requires a forced effort from him. Not only that; it would probably appear to him an act of ostentation, as though the mere exercise of wit were a slightly exaggerated or unfair way of driving home a point. Like Samuel Johnson, who once remarked: "I try to be a philosopher, but cheerfulness always keeps creeping in," Jayaprakash instinctively feels that philosophy and seriousness go hand in hand.

A good example of this inner seriousness was his indirect criticism of Nehru, made in December, 1959: "He is like a large tree; the shade is very comforting, but nothing grows underneath it." If Vinoba had felt like making such a remark, he would have found a more humorous way of putting it.

Of his leading disciple, Vinoba has said: "What attracts me most is his simplicity of heart." This simplicity is sometimes the source of considerable misunderstanding. So trustworthy is Jayaprakash that he will even give a hearing to charlatans, quacks, and, in general, to anyone unscrupulous enough to wish to exploit his innate goodness and faith in human nature. Such persons are often an immense drain on his time, yet he never shows impatience.

I have watched him a dozen times, at work, in meetings, at dinners and receptions, in informal and formal gatherings in India as in Europe. One thing always marks his behavior: he is invariably severe with himself. He refuses to pamper either body or palate; yet there is no false asceticism about him, even though he neither drinks, smokes, nor eats meat.

Due both to his now fragile health and to the inward discipline he has submitted to, Jayaprakash moves about very slowly, speaking with great clarity and with studied simplicity, gesticulating in

deliberate, hieratic gestures. He talks in a soft, almost monotone voice, dramatised only by the expression of his dark grey eyes and by the gentle smile which punctuates his words. What has happened to his former buoyancy and explosive energy? I think they have been transformed into a higher mode of comportment, which has become part of his second nature. The old socialist politician of yesterday has been transmuted into the Vinobian of today.

In his *Ashram* (the Sanskrit word for "community center") in his native village of Kadam Kuan, near the capital city of Patna in the state of Bihar, Jayaprakash Narayan has succeeded in creating the kind of atmosphere at which the *Sarvodaya* movement is aimed. Here each works for the other, and the villagers share and resolve their joint problems together. The prevailing spirit is "communitarian," and it is based on the idea of local self-government with a minimum of external interference and stimulus. Jayaprakash has developed the philosophy of *Sarvodaya* in a pamphlet, *A Plea for the Reconstruction of Indian Policy*, which, being a tentative draft, has thus far been limited to private circulation. Here he advocates nothing less than the breakup of the large political parties and the elimination of general elections, their place to be taken by *Sarvodaya*, communities.

The grass-roots revival which Jayaprakash and Vinoba are trying to promote will not be simple to achieve. Essential are the ideals of village self-sufficiency, non-violence, and a development of natural resources consistent with the development of the individual. This view of things embraces education—education for service, instilling an all-important respect for the idea of duty (as distinguished from the notion of right). Similarly, the concept of individual property must be subordinated to the ideal of communal enrichment, with a corresponding sharing of risks and penalties, as with accidents and diseases; or, more in the modern idiom, an acceptance, at the village level, of the benefits of social security. With village self-sufficiency gained, social

disciplines developed, and the *panchayats* from the lowest level on up through elected representatives at the regional and even national levels having acquired a high degree of administrative competence, the over-burdened and over-bureaucratized central state will be free to concentrate on the essential functions of over-all guidance, national communications, defence, and foreign relations which are properly and inescapably its own.

Nor does this conflict with the socialist pattern of society which is Nehru's ultimate ideal. Both village industries and heavy industry are needed for the full and harmonious development of India. Both act and interact on each other. The *Sarvodaya* workers simply point out that the promotion of the general welfare does not necessarily require the centralised machinery of the state. They do not criticise welfare, but only *state* welfare, at a time when so many people seem to take it for granted that the state should educate them, assure their health and full employment, pay them well until they can retire on a comfortable pension, and ultimately bury them. In the *Sarvodaya* order, the property-owner is a trustee of the community. He holds his land or his dwelling in trust, and while he can bequeath it to his heirs he must never forget that ownership implies a corresponding social responsibility. What he may possess must contribute not only to the welfare of his immediate family, but the community as a whole, and this applies to every form of possession—houses, talents, etc.

Jayaprakash believes that agriculture and industry should be looked upon as part of the same productive process. Industry exists for man and not man for industry. Society should be neither urban nor rural, but communitarian. It will then be truly social. Modern technology has all but abolished the old distinction between the rural and the urban, and in the society of tomorrow communities will tend to be agro-industrial. The large cities will progressively decentralise, so far as this is possible, the aim being to have

neighbouring communities working in harmony with each other while still remaining independent.

Is all this practicable? Even should enough landowners answer the call, can the *Sarvodaya* communities of tomorrow produce enough crops to feed an ever-growing populace? And how will their establishment affect India's industrialisation? Is forced industrialisation, on the Russian, or even the Chinese, model the only solution to India's backwardness? Or cannot the problem be solved in a more Indian spirit, through a sense of cooperative endeavour rather than through a slavish obedience to the inhuman dictates of a totalitarian blueprint ruthlessly imposed?

Though the *Sarvodaya* movement may seem Utopian, Jayaprakash remains undaunted. He is undeterred by the fact that it poses an immense problem of social engineering, requiring the help of the state, of scientists, engineers, technicians, educators, businessmen, old and young alike. It is a task which will define India's destiny, and which poses a challenge to India's sons and daughters. Will India accept that challenge?

His own answer to this question is implicit in his continued service in the *Sarvodaya* cause. At a *Sarvodaya* conference I attended as his personal guest, the villagers, in particular, seemed to be heart and soul with Jayaprakash as he told them about a village of a hundred souls in Bihar which he had recently visited. Having decided to pool their problems, as well as their food, shelter and clothing on a cooperative basis, they had even gone as far as to set up a common fund to draw on for village festivals and marriages. None had to bother himself further against the prospect of a rainy day. When my elder daughter, Meeta, who had been preparing a Sorbonne thesis on social problems in Indian villages, went to stay for ten days in Jayaprakash's own village of Kadam Kuan, she was amazed to discover that the villagers had acquired such a deep sense of cooperative community that they could now live happily only with a strong sense of mutual obligation. When

any of them travelled to nearby Patna, they found life too individualistic for them.

The key problem of our time, as Jayaprakash sees it, is one of social integration. Contemporary man is isolated and bored. He is the omnipresent "Organisation Man," ordered about and manipulated by vast forces beyond his personal control, and this irrespective of whether he lives in a democracy or a dictatorship. The problem is to overcome this atomisation of society and to re-establish vital, meaningful, and controllable relationships. It is a question of revitalising the human community, which in this age of uniformity and mass manipulation is threatened with a slow death by atrophy.

Nehru's possible successors at the present time include the sharp-brained Finance Minister, Morarji Desai, whom many Indians have sarcastically nicknamed "Moral-ji Desai" for his militant advocacy of Prohibition. They include Defense Minister V. Ghavan, a dynamic, clear-headed, tough, and incorruptible administrator; as well as S. K. Patil, who holds the vital portfolios of Food and Agriculture in the present cabinet. But none of these has as yet a real all-India following. Though all first-rate administrative officials, they are associated in the public mind with the dominant Congress party.

Jayaprakash's prestige, on the other hand, is untainted by any such party affiliations, and if the Indian masses were ever to be allowed a choice in the matter, it is to him that their votes would go. The triumph of any of the others would, in a sense, consecrate the triumph in India of Parkinson's Law, with the continued expansion of an ever more cumbersome, top-heavy, and crippling bureaucracy. Jayaprakash's triumph, on the other hand, would consecrate that victory of the spirit for which Gandhi, and in his footsteps, Vinoba, have selflessly laboured.

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Paris

REVIEW "NOT GUILTY"

THE late Jerome Frank's book of this title, now available as a Popular Library paperback, should be a valuable addition to the libraries of those who work for the abolition of capital punishment. Jerome Frank was a U.S. Circuit Court Judge whose lifetime of compassionate intelligence on the bench made him the recipient of hundreds of letters from men in prison. *Not Guilty* provides detailed case-histories of men from all walks of life who were mistakenly convicted and were confined for years before their innocence was established. The greatest tragedies, of course, are those in which the discovery of innocence followed execution.

A burning question struck Judge Frank many years ago: How many innocent but legally convicted men are never exonerated? The number, he believed, must be considerably higher than would be expected, for the following reasons:

The convicted man has to prove that he was guiltless. As he is locked up in the penitentiary, he must rely on others to engage laboriously in procuring that proof; that task may call for large expenditures of money, and he may be in poverty.

Those who testified against a man in prison are usually not willing to admit that they erred or lied. Evidence of his innocence may turn on the remote chance that another man will confess.

So the fact that there are relatively few cases where the punishment of an innocent has been established does not at all signify that convictions of the wrong men are a "rare exception." Ask yourself whether any insurance company (except at a prohibitive cost) will, just before trial, issue a \$100,000 policy ensuring an innocent accused person against his conviction.

If the sentence was death, and the convicted man has been executed, seldom will anyone bother to vindicate him. To do so will not bring him back to life, and the courts generally hold that his family have no standing that enables them to have his conviction set aside for the sake of his memory and the family's feelings. So the least likely instances of unconvicting

the innocent are those in which they went to their death. Who is to say that such cases are "exceptional"?

The last chapter of *Not Guilty* is directly concerned with capital punishment:

No one knows how many innocent men, erroneously convicted of murder, have been put to death by American governments. For—as we noted in an earlier chapter—once a convicted man is dead, all interest in vindicating him usually evaporates.

Such instances demonstrate the intolerably monstrous nature of any death sentence: It cannot be undone. It may mean the judicially sanctioned governmental murder of the guiltless.

To those officials who, nevertheless oppose the abolition of capital punishment, we might apply these words of G. K. Chesterton: "Now it is a terrible business to mark a man out for the vengeance of men. But it is a thing to which a man can grow accustomed . . . And the horrible thing about public officials, even the best . . . is not that they are wicked . . . not that they are stupid . . . it is simply that they have got used to it.

It is an exceedingly difficult task, even in the most favorable circumstances, for a jury to find that a man did commit a crime. As our courts now usually conduct criminal trials, the circumstances frequently fall far short of the most favorable. For instance: The ordinary treatment of witnesses is the least calculated to elicit testimony that is accurate or seems accurate; the tricks of the trade prevent the best humanly possible determination of the actual facts, many of our practices often seriously impede accused persons from presenting evidence that might persuade the jury to find in their favor. We dare not assume—at least without some major reforms of our methods of administering justice—that all innocent men will be safe from imprisonment or the death chair.

What are the factors which lead to the convicting of the innocent? Chief among the causes, Judge Frank holds, are the methods employed by most district attorneys. A California court said a few years ago: "It is too much the habit of prosecuting officers to assume beforehand that a defendant *is* guilty, and then to have . . . the features of a fair trial distorted to secure a conviction." Judge Bernard Botein, in his book, *The Prosecutor*, insists that "a ruthless,

prosecutor, indifferent to the rights of defendants, can with little risk win headlines or fame." Moved by habits of authoritarian thinking, according to Judge Botein, "we unwillingly . . . admire and vote for the type of prosecutor we loathe in fiction—provided he puts on a resounding show in lashing the helpless suspect . . . It is safer politically for a prosecutor to ride roughshod over the rights of an accused, provided he does so with energy and fanfare, than to proceed cautiously with scrupulous regard for those rights. The latter course might be misconstrued as coddling criminals or official laxity. . . . I do not recall any prosecutor ever coming a cropper because of the harshness of the methods he employed—provided he did not invite scrutiny by some collateral political blunder." But behind the failings of the politically ambitious prosecutor, Judge Frank detects an almost universal human failing which supports this ruthless drive to convict:

Almost all of us tend to be impatient in solving any problem that confronts us in everyday life. Suspended judgment is painful. A problem causes a conflict, an unresolved conflict leads to anxiety. Doubts create a tension, sometimes unbearable. We are loath to admit that some problems are insoluble. So we rush to a conclusion, then stubbornly cling to it, disregarding all facts contradicting that conclusion. This characteristic has its counterpart in the way we stick to our partisan political judgment: We stress all the facts favorable to our candidate and manage to forget the unfavorable.

Policemen investigating a crime inevitably share this all too human tendency, especially when the public in a state of panic fear, full of anxiety excited by a dastardly crime, indignantly clamors for the quick detection of a dangerous criminal. Especially under such pressure do the police grow eager to solve the problem and become impatient to solve it promptly, unwilling to admit that the available solution may be the wrong one, that they cannot find the criminal. The public wants vengeance, demands a victim of its vengeance, and one must be found without delay.

This impatient, careless method of inquiry, usually forgivable in ordinary affairs, can lead to tragedy in crime detection.

We lack space here to illustrate the many cases of wrongful conviction which are the substance of *Not Guilty*. It is necessary to read the book to get the full impact of instance after instance of men and women who languish in prison with nothing more than the flimsiest of circumstantial evidence against them. Sometimes a state will award damages to an innocent man who has lost four to ten years of his life in prison, but even if this travesty of "justice" can be taken philosophically by the victim, what sort of commentary do such cases make on the contrast between our loudly proclaimed "individual rights" and the general indifference which allows convictions of the innocent to multiply far beyond those which may be classified as "regrettable error"?

COMMENTARY

THE HISTORICAL INITIATIVE

Two centuries ago, the historical initiative of the age was in the hands of a handful of American leaders soon to create a government based upon new principles—the principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. For a long time, however, Europeans without imagination thought of the government of the new country as the claptrap innovation of some lucky political upstarts who could be safely ignored.

It is just possible that today, when the United States is at the height of its power, a similar conceit afflicts the American people. How many of them now believe that the capacity to affect the course of history is wholly identified with military power? As we all know, the survival of truth and goodness, if not beauty, is widely held to depend upon the possession of an adequate nuclear armament. Americans have, or think they have, this armament, but whether it is "adequate" or even good for anything remains to be seen.

Meanwhile, fresh currents of social and political philosophy are arising elsewhere in the world. Having the military power they believe is the key to the good life, Americans are not attentive to these thoughts. You could almost say that to command an international audience, these days, you have also to be zeroed in on international targets.

A contrasting view is that the age is more than ripe for the appearance of a fresh historical initiative. Some of its ingredients, it seems to us, are to be found in the career, thinking, and vision of Jayaprakash Narayan.

The author of this week's lead article, Baldoon Dhingra, has taught and lectured on literature in the Punjab, and worked as a literature Specialist for Unesco from 1947 to 1958. In 1959 Charles E. Tuttle published his *Asia through Asian Eyes*, a fascinating anthology of Asian literary and folk culture. His first appearance in

MANAS was in the Oct. 19, 1955 issue, when his paper on education, "A Task for Free Minds," was printed in "Children . . . and Ourselves."

CORRECTION

Two weeks ago (MANAS, March 6), we made a bad mistake of characterization. After quoting Dwight Macdonald's definition of "Midcult," we called *Harper's* and *Frontier* "prime organs of Midcult opinion." This now seems carelessly unjust. When magazines print articles which seem to us so good as to make us wish they had been written for MANAS, it is hardly appropriate to categorize them in this way. Perhaps the quotations (in the March 6 issue) will help to correct any erroneous impression we have spread, by illustrating the sort of material put into print by these magazines.

CHILDREN

. . . and Ourselves

OF TIME, DEATH, AND NEW LIFE

PEARL BUCK'S *The Big Wave* is a tale of subtle meaning, good for both children and ourselves (Scholastic Book Services, 50 cents). The story moves slowly; dramatic moments for a tiny Japanese village near the sea come only when a nearby volcano erupts or a tidal wave rushes in from the ocean—perhaps once in fifty years. These people live in the aura of "the big wave," but they are not overwhelmed by the prospect of death from the sea. Instead, they have learned, and they have taught their children, to savor the beauty of whatever moments the laws of nature allow them. And out of this "oriental" attitude comes a philosophy of serene acceptance, even on the brink of peril. Some, it is true, "endured" the situation with an acquiescence of dulled imagination; others—the few who constituted the sensibility of the village mind endured the continuous danger with the calm which comes from probing the meaning of existence. One of these, a boy named Jiya, had watched from a hillside while a whole village was swept into the sea; he saw parents and friends disappear in a moment. A wealthy islander who lived on a height beyond the reach of any big wave offered to adopt the boy, but Jiya felt the pull of his fisherman ancestry and knew he must return to danger—and learn the lesson of its endurance. How he acquires the wisdom to anticipate peril, and the courage not to fear it, will be left to Mrs. Buck's readers. But it does not "give away" the story to share one passage:

They sat together, father and son, and Kino asked still another question. "Father, are we not very unfortunate people to live in Japan?"

"Why do you think so?" his father asked in reply.

"Because the volcano is behind our house and the ocean is in front, and when they work together for evil, to make the earthquake and the big wave, then we are helpless. Always many of us are lost."

"To live in the midst of danger is to know how good life is," his father replied.

"But if we are lost in the danger?" Kino asked anxiously.

"To live in the presence of death makes us brave and strong," Kino's father replied. "That is why our people never fear death. We see it too often and we do not fear it. To die a little later or a little sooner does not matter. But to live bravely, to love life, to see how beautiful the trees are and the mountains, yes, and even the sea, to enjoy work because it produces food for life—in these things we Japanese are a fortunate people. We love life because we live in danger. We do not fear death because we understand that life and death are necessary to each other."

"What is death?" Kino asked.

"Death is the great gateway," Kino's father said. His face was not at all sad. Instead, it was quiet and happy.

"The gateway—where?" Kino asked again.

Kino's father smiled. "Can you remember when you were born?"

Kino shook his head, "I was too small."

Kino's father laughed, "I remember very well, Oh, how hard you thought it was to be born. You cried and you screamed."

"Didn't I want to be born?" Kino asked. This was very interesting to him.

"You did not," his father told him smiling. "You wanted to stay just where you were in the warm, dark house of the unborn. But the time came to be born, and the gate of life opened."

"Did I know it was the gate of life?" Kino asked.

"You did not know anything about it and so you were afraid of it," his father replied. "But see how foolish you were! Here we were waiting for you, your parents, already loving you and eager to welcome you. And you have been very happy, haven't you?"

"Until the big wave came," Kino replied. "Now I am afraid again because of the death that the big wave brought."

"You are only afraid because you don't know anything about death," his father replied. "But someday you will wonder why you were afraid, even as today you wonder why you feared to be born."

Here is the simple reassurance that, as Mrs. Buck puts it in her foreword, "life is stronger than death and we need not be afraid."

But what sort of life? Physical existence and the possibility of physical destruction go hand in hand. If there is another "life," one unaffected by bodily catastrophe, it is clearly a life of the mind, characterized by what Viktor Frankl calls "the will to meaning." A glimpse of this reality was offered to the Athenians by Socrates, and one rendition of this Platonic-Socratic perspective complements perfectly the quotation from *The Big Wave*. The source is a now out-of-print children's story of ancient Greece, *Gorgo*, by Charles Kelsey Gaines, who years ago taught the classics at St. Lawrence University. This dialogue takes place between the little boy of the story and Mr. Gaines' Socrates:

"Do you see the Long Walls?" he said. "They stretch far; but you saw that they had a beginning, and you know that they have an end. For all things that have a beginning have an end. Can you think otherwise?"

"But is there anything like that?" I cried.

"You know the meaning of what men call 'time'," Socrates said. "Can you think that it had any beginning, or that it will ever have an end?"

"No; it goes on always. But time—it isn't anything at all," I persisted.

"Well," he said, "you, at least, are something; for you can think and know. But can you remember when first you began to be?"

"No; I cannot remember."

"Perhaps, then, there is something within you that had no beginning. And if that is so, it has had plenty of time to learn. Some think," he said, "that what we call learning is really only remembering. Already you have much to remember, little son of Hagnon."

"Yes," I cried, harking back, "and if it had no beginning it hasn't any end either; for you said so. My mother thought that; but she did not explain as you do."

"And if there is something within us that was not born and can never die, but is like time itself, can

this be anything else than that part of us which thinks and knows, which men call the soul?"

"It must be that," I said; "for they put the rest in the ground or burn it up. I never understood about the soul before."

"And now," said he, "which part do you think is best worth caring for—that part which we cast away like a useless garment when it is torn by violence or grows old and worn, or that part which lives always?"

"It is foolish to ask me that; of course it is the part that doesn't die," I answered.

"I am glad," said he, "that you think this a foolish question. Yet there are many who do not understand even this; for just as some care only for clothes, some care only for their bodies."

FRONTIERS The New Psychology

IF the *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* may be said to represent the "trend" in psychology, present-day psychologists are slowly taking leave of the immediate historical situation and are studying man as he has been and is, in himself. They are trying to form conceptions of the human essence, with less attention to particular conditions. We are still working on the Fall, 1962, issue of this magazine, which contains enough papers to give a broad spectrum of the thinking of the self psychologists.

The first paper in this issue is by Clark Moustakas, of the Merrill-Palmer Institute in Chicago. Save for the fact that Mr. Moustakas quotes at length from Dostoevsky, Ewald, and Sartre, the paper might have been written two thousand years ago. We must add that of course it could not have been written two thousand years ago, since it has a subtlety that belongs to the twentieth century—a very recent portion of the twentieth century—but its central concern with the meaning of self-conscious being has the sort of wholeness that one seldom encounters outside the ancient Greeks or certain profound religious writings. The distinction of this paper lies in the fact that it is composed directly out of the stuff of the author's subjective life, and says things that the reader—very nearly any reader—longs to hear.

The paper is about honesty. If it is possible to discuss what we usually think of as a "moral" quality without even a hint of moralizing, yet with close scientific attention to its substance, Mr. Moustakas has done so. For the present reviewer, the great attraction of the self psychologists comes from their disciplined observations about subjective realities, states, and reactions, which turn out to be the common experience of mankind. They apparently pursue this work with the kind of pleasure one expects from children who find precious colored stones along the beach, holding them up for all to see. Look, they say,

this is what we have all been neglecting for hundreds of years! These are the true qualities of human beings!

Early in his paper Mr. Moustakas says:

Genuine development of the self requires honesty of expression, creating meanings from one's own real experiences and taking a definite position consistent with these experiences. Honesty implies a willingness to assert what one sees and a fastidious allegiance to what one perceives. Perhaps this is the only requirement of the continued existence of a real self, being true to one's own experience. Every distortion of experience creates a false self. The self requires a rigid honesty which if denied or violated leads to painful consequences pulling the person in a direction which is less than whole, less than complete, and forcing upon the self fragments of life, the eyes of another, the heart of another, the soul of another, which one does not possess and by which one can never be possessed. When this happens the person loses touch with his own real nature and his own unique experience. . . .

Being honest in a relationship is at times exceedingly difficult and painful. Yet the moment a person evades the truth, central fibres of the self pull away, and the person initiates a process of deception and control. Ultimately deviation from the truth is a form of manipulation, a form of power over the other person. Evasion, self-denial, and distortion are usually motivated by a wish to influence, change, direct or control. Even when fear motivates distortion, the fear is a way of manipulating the other person by preventing him from discovering one's real thoughts or feelings. If I did not manipulate the person would I not be as I am? Would I remain silent by deliberate and calculated control when my beliefs, my convictions, my feelings urged expression. . . ?

When I speak of truth and honesty I do not necessarily mean the boldly outspoken beliefs stated aggressively and without reserve, nor do I mean the conscious, thought-out, calculated statements intended to provoke and foment, although honesty may sometimes take these forms. I do not mean honesty which is hostile and destructive, which means to hurt or minimize or destroy. I do not mean the aggressive thrust or challenge, which aims to attack. I do not mean the "holier than thou" attitude which limits and restricts. All of these are perversions of a simple truth, a truth which exists solely because it is a vital piece of self-experience. Honesty *as I* know it, means the quiet direct

expressions which sometimes emerge reluctantly, hesitantly and even fearfully. It refers only to the self of the person, the person's own search for truth, not to the presence or absence of honesty in anyone else.

One thing bears in upon the reader of material like this. It is that when such thoughts are grasped and assimilated—"accepted," as we say—certain unavoidable consequences ensue. Whenever a man catches himself in a "lie," or in some device intended to conceal or manipulate, he makes himself sick. The sense of fraud makes him crumple inside. This happens without reference to the other person or his reactions. Honesty becomes a private dialogue.

That is one consequence. Another is the almost sudden transformation of the values or ends in human life. A sense of wholeness, of "integrity," becomes important above all—not as some kind of ethical show-piece, but as the health of self-consciousness. It is precisely in this that the individual steps out of the temporal, the historical, frame and begins to live in the context of his own sensed humanity. He may go back into history—indeed, he must—but never again will he be its captive, nor will he long to be its master. The classical hierarchy of ends is at last restored; the philosopher has become king.

One is driven to wonder if this process of self-discovery, so feelingly explored by Mr. Moustakas, is not in some way the means by which modern man will outwit his incredible weaknesses and self-devouring egotisms? And war—how can such men feel the motives which compel to any sort of war? War must seem to them only a vast irrelevance.

The *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* is published semiannually, subscription \$5.00 a year. The address is 2637 Marshall Drive, Palo Alto, Calif.