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ARTICULATE ASIA

WITH mixed motives, varying skills, and much enthusiasm, the East is now endeavoring to "catch up with the West." A tremendous effort of this sort was practically inevitable. First, being human, and not so very different from their occidental brothers, Easterners have not found it pleasant to be overshadowed by the dramatic achievements of the Western nations in technology and other practical expressions of "scientific progress." Least of all have they enjoyed the arrogance of Western invaders and imperialists who suffered from deep-seated delusions of "superiority." In addition to this, however, there has been honest admiration for the Westerner at his best—in his conceptions of political freedom, order, and government.

In consideration of the hundreds of millions of human beings involved in this great change, the astonishing thing about the rapid transformation of Asia is the degree of self-consciousness that is involved. This awareness is of course limited to relatively very few, but the striking thing about the movement toward "modernization" (a poor word, that) in Asia is the high quality of its leadership. At least three of the new Asiatic republics have already compelled recognition through the sagacity of their chief spokesmen—Nehru in India, U Nu in Burma, and Soetan Sjahrir in Indonesia. These men, and doubtless many others less famous, are obviously masters of two cultures, the Eastern and the Western, and as aware as anyone can be in an age of furious transition and its resulting confusion of the enormous problems of synthesis and adjustment which lie before them. Although of an earlier epoch, Sun Yat Sen might be added to the list as one who had similar insight and capacity for synthesis in behalf of China, and whose vision may still gain a measure of realization in that great country, after the tensions of the present "cold war" have somewhat relaxed.

Already it is trite to say that Asia is in the throes of a great revolution. And it is being obvious to add that no one can tell, at this early date, what form the Asian societies of the future will finally assume. Actually, the new Asian countries are undergoing in a matter of decades at least two revolutions, perhaps three, which in the West were spread over hundreds of years—the democratic revolution against monarchic and theocratic power, the industrial revolution, and the social revolution which seeks economic equalization of the consequences of the industrial revolution. Still another "revolution," the revolution against violence inaugurated by M. K. Gandhi, may have to be added as a profoundly modifying influence on all these other changes, since the conceptions of civil disobedience and the challenge to military force let loose by Gandhi are slowly taking root in all parts of the world and must inevitably change the character of the relationships between States, and between individuals and groups of individuals and States.

One great advantage that Easterners have over the West during these troubled years is the experience already harvested in Western countries. The growth of nations like Germany, France, England, and the United States has been a more or less undirected expansion—a swelling and bursting of forces which were far from understood and whose effects were certainly unpredictable, except for the intuitions of an occasional solitary seer. Today, the bewilderments of the West at its "progress" have been largely documented by dozens of social critics and sociologists. The alert Easterner can look at the West and discern the dead-ends reached by programs which, at their outset, were launched with the zeal of utopian crusades.

Take for example the way in which the development of "atomic power" has been hailed in the West as containing the promise of incredible benefits to mankind. Article after article has appeared in the American press, listing all the wonderful things that can and some day will be done through atomic energy. If we neglect the comment that a certain anxiety has attended these claims—that the shadow of destruction at Hiroshima and Nagasaki gave urgent reasons for promoting the "constructive" side of atomic energy—there are still questions which ought to be asked, and which we have not seen asked in the American press at all. A new Indian magazine, however, *Mankind*, published monthly at Hyderabad, offers another kind of comment on the development of atomic power in India. An editorial in the September issue examines happenings which may be taken as Eastern "strides" to overtake the West—a course of events which is regarded as having begun with the defeat of the Russians by the Japanese in 1904-05—and places India's atomic reactor in the sequence:

> The first atomic reactor of Asia reached criticality near Bombay on Saturday, 4th August at 3:45 in the afternoon. Production of atomic energy whether for peace or war is still twenty or thirty years away, and, meanwhile, the white peoples will have made further advance. India may derive some silly satisfaction by contrasting her condition with China and Japan, but the Japanese would be illegitimate for Japan has banned atomic experimentation. It is needless to add that, atomic reactors in India and elsewhere are made possible at least partly by help of information and machines from foreign lands. Would this date, 4th August, 1956, become as seminal for human future as that earlier date of 52 years ago? In the first place, as far as India is concerned, but perhaps only in India and nowhere else in the coloured world, an instinctive dislike of the big machine persists. We share that dislike. But we also realise fully that the atomic reactor and the charkha [spinning wheel] cannot co-exist and that the charkha must go under. We only hope that science will take a new turn and that invention will make small machines possible, which oil or electricity or atomic energy shall run. The big machine is a great temptation, which we know is irresistible in certain spheres and which we shall therefore embrace with a permanent question. The small machines appear to us to be as much ethically desirable as they are economically necessary, heralds of a new civilisation as much as the only possibility of a current age.

There is, however, a realistic recognition of the enorrnous difference between the liquid wealth of India and that of Western countries:

> Let no one forget that India's capitalisation will stand at rupees three hundred per working person at the end of 1960, while that in Europe varies between Rs. 5,000 and 10,000, and in America, it is upwards of Rs. 10,000. Ten years of planning and three years of preliminary preparation have increased the country's [India's] capitalisation by about rupees one hundred a person, and the role of increasing prices in this calculation should not be neglected. European and American capitalisation has meanwhile expanded by thousands of rupees for every working person. Only nitwits would try to escape the irrefutable conclusion of this situation. A revolutionary perception, almost like the realisation of mystics, of the unity of the human race should seize both white and coloured alike so that they are willing to share and sorrow in equal measure, with equal capitalisation on all the earth. Such fantastic abdication of what seem to be joys of life may be possible in the case of an individual or two, but it is impossible where hundreds of millions are concerned. But the conception of human unity may still come, although through another way.
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> It is, however, remotely possible that the atomic reactor near Bombay is the beginning of developments that will place the coloured people or sections of them alongside of the white peoples or even ahead of them in the sphere of science. Should that happen, the unity of the human race will again be impaired. A few coloured peoples will have gone on top ., and a few white peoples will have crumbled into dust and the wheel of history shall ever go on. The people of India should at least be old enough not to want to go on to the top of the wheel again. Whoever wishes to go on top and stay there will necessarily be broken at the bottom. *Mankind* is therefore not interested in such developments of the century as will once again place the coloured peoples or sections of them on top of the white peoples. It must however record that ugly developments may take place.
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> Australia with three persons to the square mile and America with fifty and Russia with twenty cannot co-exist with India of three hundred or Java of six

> hundred. The coloured peoples must either be held permanently inferior or they will one day knock on the doors of Australia, California, Siberia and Texas. Today they have not the power. . . .

This is militant Indian socialism speaking. It is a firm but not an angry voice. Nor does this editorial writer on the staff of *Mankind* share the delusion that all that India and other Asian peoples must do is "catch up" with the nations of the West. Indian socialism is eclectic rather than doctrinaire. A month later, in the October issue, a professor of economics, Raj Krighna, examines the impact of modern technology on human values, pursuing the question raised editorially in the September issue concerning "big machines." This writer begins:

> Technological change in the Eastern countries means, by and large, the wholesale importation and introduction of machines and processes developed in the West during the last two hundred years. For, almost all the original advances in science and technology in this period occurred in Europe and America. There was no parallel original development in Asia. Asian countries merely remained the helpless victims of superior Western technics. Only during the last decade, having won political emancipation, have they become its envious imitators. "Catching up with the West" in technics, and thereby in economic and military power, has now become the chief passion and preoccupation of eastern nationalism. But the full implications of the desired technical revolution seldom receive the attention they deserve.

Follows a review of "the history of the painful adjustment by Western peoples to the process of technological change." Various Western writers are quoted. Aldous Huxley speaks of the divorce of men from the world of nature. George Friedmann writes of the "forced attunement of the human organism to the rigid and unnatural routines of the city, the factory and the machine" which has "produced chronic, nerve-shattering tensions."

Prof. Krishna says:

> Modern technics and the excessive specialization that goes with it have also denuded productive labour of all spontaneity, all creative, æsthetic joy, all personal, human significance. Work, having been reduced to the performance of a tiny sub-process of the whole productive process, becomes repetitive, boring, monotonous and meaningless. The whole man, with all his urges and faculties, is not required and mobilized. Only a few limbs and a few conditioned reflexes are called into service. As a result, personality is fragmented.

By a parallel process has come the degradation of recreation, which is supposed to relieve the factory worker of the aimlessness and boredom he suffers at work. Krishna quotes from Aldous Huxley's *Point Counterpoint:* "The industrialists who purvey standardized ready-made amusements are doing their best to make you as much of a mechanical imbecile in your leisure as in your hours of work." A Unesco study is made to testify:

> The signs of individual unhappiness are legion. They range from complete breakdown—suicide or permanent mental illness—through sicknesses with a large psychosomatic component, to the obsessive thinking and morbid states of dejection which have no statistical tables to themselves. Divorce, delinquency, and the myriad examples of anti-social behavior not classified as crime are the repercussions in intimate social relations. More generally the drift is toward autocratic leadership and mass destruction

The thing that is encouraging about Indian socialism—at least, as found in *Mankind,* which declares a "positive orientation towards Socialism, Democracy, Equality, World Government and the Nonviolent Revolution"—is the willingness of its spokesmen to criticize and admit mistakes common to both the socialists and the capitalists. On the effects of technology, Raj Krishna writes:

> The tendency of modern technics to cause concentration of wealth and power at the social level and to cause neurosis at the personal, psychological level is more or less inherent in it, and independent of the political system or the ruling ideology of the society which employs it. It is common to capitalist and orthodox socialist systems. Excessive

> preoccupation with the capitalism-socialism controversy and the habit of laying the blame for every evil of modern industrialism at the door of capitalism have, during the last one hundred years, prevented really radical and constructive thinking on the part of socialists about the basic problems created by technological change. Evils inherent in mass production technology have been wrongly attributed to capitalism with the result that when societies with socialist pretensions employ the very same technology, the very same evil tendencies appear as in capitalist societies and socialists are found to have no better remedies than the very same extenuative measures which enlightened capitalism has already evolved and adopted. The time has come for socialists, especially in the East, to go beyond the Western socialist orthodoxy and think in terms of a new approach to technology so that the pathology that equally characterises Western capitalist and socialist societies is attacked at its roots

These are observations which seldom find their way into print in the West. Prof. Krishna quotes Albert Camus to the same effect—on the failure of socialists to deal, even theoretically, with the psychic effects of the industrial system, but who among Western socialists of the organizational variety has given this problem searching discussion?

A non-socialist American, Ralph Borsodi, has written on the subject at great length. His too-neglected book, *This Ugly Civilization* (Simon & Schuster, 1929), has chapter after chapter on the effects of industrialism, arriving at much the same solution as that proposed by Raj Krishna. In fact, if socialists of the present are to learn to think in authentic human values, instead of the slogans which have to do with political control, they would do well to use Borsodi's book for a text, for a while.

The solution offered by both Borsodi and Krishna is decentralism in economic production. Not decentralism of the sort which comes from factories moved to the American South to exploit cheap labor, nor the kind which flees to deserted areas to escape the threat of atomic bombings, but decentralism which is keyed to small-scale manufacture. Borsodi's book rationalizes the advantages of decentralist production—much of it *home* production—in economic terms.

Important reading in connection with this subject would include C. Wright Mills' essay, "Work Milieu and Social Structure," which appeared in the pamphlet, *People at Work* (published by the Mental Health Society of Northern California), and Erich Fromm's *The Sane Society.* Mills is concerned with the attempts of mental hygienists and industrial relations experts to "adjust" the workers in factories to the debilitating effects of the industrial system—a brilliant analysis; and Fromm writes of these and related problems from a broad, sociological and psychological outlook

But the point we set out to make, and have been obliged to make quite briefly, is that the Asians, who are now in the act of molding and shaping their society, are attempting to do so with as much awareness as possible. We have seen various magazines from India and other Asian lands, but *Mankind* seems to be the first to give clear voice to what promises to be a *world* perspective on human problems. There is a natural emphasis on Indian affairs, and an Asian outlook on events such as the conflict over the Suez Canal and other happenings on the international scene, but peculiar value attaches to these mature expressions of the Eastern world for the Western reader. *Mankind* may be addressed at Himayatnagar, Hyderabad, India. The principal editor is Rammanohar Lohia, Chairman of the Indian Socialist Party.

REVIEW

"GOD BLESS ENGLAND"— ONCE MORE AROUND

STILL warm to the mood of appreciating critical thinking in England—see last week's review of "Amateur Journalism"—we have noted that recent editorials in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* are object lessons in forthrightness. The *Guardian* can hardly be considered a "party" paper, for it has followed no clearly defined line. Conservative? Yes, but in no empty or formal sense, since its disapproval of the policies of Prime Minister Anthony Eden is plain enough. Nor, apparently, do the editors feel that it is silly to insist that there can be no separation between ethical and political issues.

Mr. Eden has excused abrupt (and exceedingly violent) interference in Suez on the ground that the United Nations, to date, has represented nothing better than "moral force." He is quoted as saying that "moral force alone is not effective for meeting the challenges of this world." A *Guardian* editorial for Nov. 8, as we say in America, "lays it on the line":

> True; but military force without proper moral backing is still less effective. What we need is both together. The Government has used one without the other—in fact, in dreadful opposition to the other. It made no attempt to get effective action through the United Nations. It has been the aggressor in an unnecessary war. And it has not even achieved its objectives; the canal, which was open, is blocked and the Government has had to drop its insistence on a settlement; our oil supplies, which were flowing freely, have been seriously interrupted and may not be restored for months or years to come; the Israeli Government still disputes our right to move the armistice line back to where it was, and is apparently unwilling to evacuate Egyptian territory in Sinai; Nasser has not fallen. To these add the threat of Soviet intervention in the Middle East—and, even without counting the damage to the United Nations, the American alliance, the Commonwealth, and the prospects of freedom in Europe, the total is a measure of Sir Anthony's achievement. It is notable.

But, as of Nov. 15, the *Guardian* writers are willing to admit that some critics of the Government, including themselves, were wrong in their previous estimate of the military outlook. At least, so far as the landings undertaken by the military were concerned, the British casualties were astonishingly light. Second, the government is allowed to have temporarily quenched the flames of the Israel-Egypt conflict. But the *Guardian* has still something to say:

> These are the tangible measures of gain and loss. It is for the individual to decide whether, on balance, the Anglo-French action has been worth while. Our view is that, counting the tangible factors alone, it has been a costly failure. And there are other factors—intangible and less easy to state, but of still greater importance. They are the damage to Britain's moral standing in the world, to the United Nations, to the Atlantic alliance, and the Commonwealth; and the enormous gain to Russia in the Middle East.
>
> The moral damage has been caused by Britain's breach of its pledges in the United Nations Charter. It has used war as an instrument of national policy, and it has sought to resolve a dispute by force. It has been guilty of aggression—and no talk of "police" action, of defending our rights and interests, or of preventing a greater conflict can absolve us of the guilt. No nation should take the law into its own hands, as Britain has done, or go to war in its own interests without the approval of the United Nations. That is one of the fundamentals of the Charter. It is an essential part of what many men who fought in the 1939-45 war—especially men of the younger generation—believed they were fighting for. Today war and military force cannot justly be used by one nation against another, except in self-defence against attack. That is a transcending obligation. We must keep the peace and we must help to create a form of international order. The British Government, by breaking its pledges, has offended grossly.
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> True, moral standards are harder to apply to national conduct than to personal conduct. True, also, the British and French Governments believed sincerely that they were acting for the public good, in the widest sense. Their view was that the United Nations is (or was) incapable of keeping the peace, and that action had to be taken quickly. Therefore they alone accepted responsibility. They judged that

> they had to prevent Nasser, a dangerously ambitious dictator, from getting into a more powerful position.
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> Yet they could have achieved the same ends—more effectively and at far less cost—by working through the United Nations.

Macdonald's evaluation—that the British press has been considerably more forthright than our own—is here proved to the hilt. The Guardian, like the London *Times,* is a national institution, but no effort is made to "tone down" honest opinions in order to cater to an amorphous majority. The Guardian casts its spear and leaves the issue to the gods—or rather to the judgment of responsible readers and voters. All in all, the writing throughout the Guardian, whether in "letters to the editor" or in staff articles, is alien to political over-simplification. The Guardian supporters, for instance, find it quite natural to take a "long look" at the shifting trends of Soviet emphasis—both within the Union and abroad. "Comment" for Nov. 22 sums up shifts of power and influence inside Russia by remarking that "in the absence of any proof one way or the other—or even much evidence we would be wise, surely, to assume that Soviet policy, while it clearly has its long-term objectives undisputed by any of the parties struggling for control of it, is being moulded in detail by the stress of events. It would be a healthy thing if the West came to believe that its actions could and did have a powerful influence on internal Soviet politics."

Realistic in noting the excellent propaganda value to the Russians of the Anglo-French Suez bombings, a piece by the *Guardian* "Parliamentary Correspondent" points out that England, just like Russia, cannot be identified with a single clear policy in international affairs. This may be confusing—or even held to be regrettable so far as England is concerned—but it at least demonstrates that one must not judge a "nation" on the basis of any limited sequence of political events.

Meanwhile, hostility toward United States influence on England's foreign office is cropping up in Tory ranks:

> Anti-Americanism used to be confined to the Labour Left. Now some Tories are becoming a prey to it. It would not be the least of the tragic consequences of recent events if the infection were to spread, but one thankfully records the conviction that the Tory leadership and the great majority of the Tory party would regard any threat to the Anglo-American alliance with horror. Soon the question must be faced of the withdrawal of the Anglo-French forces and whether it is to be conditional or unconditional. Here, undoubtedly, is the possibility of a cleavage developing within the Tory party.

So, in conclusion, it is easy to share Macdonald's contention concerning such papers as the *Guardian.* The *Guardian* does not pretend to have all the answers, it adopts no party line, and is chiefly interested in helping a literate public to understand the tangled web of political issues.

COMMENTARY
COMPULSIONS OF POWER

WITH the arrival in this country of refugees from Hungary, the reports of the Communist terror have been translated into first-hand eye-witness accounts and personal experiences. Not that anyone has doubted the truth of the reports. The twentieth century is too old in the double horror of terroristic regimes for doubt. Terrorism is horrible, first, because of the hopeless agony of its victims, and second, because of the stark compulsion which makes men who hold power through terror resort to more and more terrible measures when their authority is questioned. They know nothing else to do.

But lest we suppose that terrorism is a uniquely Communist device in the twentieth century (everyone knows, of course, that the Communists copied from the Nazis), we might recall the methods used by Chiang Kai-shek in Shanghai in 1927, when he decided to wrest power from his dubious allies, the Chinese Communists, who had taken the city. First he ordered them to give up their weapons. Then the leaders were seized. Many were merely shot, others were thrown into the boilers of locomotives and burned to death. Torture may have been an old Chinese custom, but these innovations of an industrial age lose nothing by comparison with the past. (The story of this dark interlude in the history of the Chinese Revolution is poignantly told by André Malraux in *Man's Fate.)*

Then, in *War in Eastern Europe* by John Reed and Boardman Robinson (1916), the hideous excesses of the Hungarian Magyar troops of the Austro-Hungarian Army are an unforgettable antecedent of the present Hungarian disaster. After conquering and taking Lechnitza, a Serbian village, Franz Joseph's sullen Magyar subjects chained together and beheaded more than a hundred women and children. In Prujavor they tied with ropes and burned alive in a house a hundred citizens, shooting those who tried to escape. The Austrians, the Serbs later told Reed and Robinson, were orderly in their behavior as an occupying army, did no looting, and paid for what they took, but the Hungarians were brutish and merciless to all.

Why recall this now? Not, certainly, to suggest a "poetic justice" in the sufferings of the Hungarian people under Communist rule, but simply to show that brutality and terror are a disease of human nature, and by no means exclusively Communist infections. They reach fever pitch when vulnerability meets provocation. Who is responsible? All who give assent or are silent when dehumanizing and brutalizing processes go on. What could possibly so turn men against life and make them mutilate themselves into assassins and terrorists? If we cannot try to understand this, the victims of all the terrors the world has known have died in vain.

Some apology is owing to readers for calling attention to C. Wright Mills' essay, "Work Milieu and Social Structure" (see page 8), and suggesting that it be read, since subscribers who, because of a MANAS (Feb. 22, 1956) review, tried to buy the pamphlet in which it appeared *(People at Work,* published by the Mental Society of Northern California), were unable to obtain copies.

Well, what would you do? This essay by Prof. Mills is in our opinion the best brief discussion that has been written on the mental health and "adjustment" problems of people who work in modern industry. Shall we stop saying so because the pamphlet seems to be out of print? We prefer to do our bit to create a demand for Mills' essay, in the hope that, somehow, it will eventually be reprinted.

Situations of this sort sometimes tempt us to try to persuade our printer, the Cunningham Press, to undertake a venture in pamphlet-publishing. Pamphlet-publishing, however, is notorious for the losses it can accumulate, and our printer is in no position to sustain them. If MANAS could be assured of sufficient sales to justify reprinting such material in pamphlet form, a MANAS Pamphlet Series might be attempted. Suggestions from readers will be welcome.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves

THE most provocative article on education in a democracy for many a month is, in our opinion, Virginia C. Gildersleeve's "The Abuse of Democracy," in the *Saturday Review* for Nov. 94. Virginia Gildersleeve was Dean of Barnard College from 1911 to 1947. The incisive character of her thought is at once evident:

> Education in our country has been harmed as well as helped by the word "democracy." That chameleon-like word, which means so many different things to so many different people (witness the interpretations the Russians put upon it) arouses emotions everywhere. We Americans would lay down our lives for the meaning which we devoutly believe in and value. We ought to lay down, if not our lives, at least a good barrage against the twisted meaning and misuse of it that threatens to wreck the quality of our education.
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> "Democracy" is fundamentally a *political* term, applying to political units or groups of human beings. We follow democratic principles, I hope, in the government of our nation, our state, our city, and the little village in which I live. But when we begin to apply "democracy" in the fields of education or scholarship grave perils descend upon us.
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> One of these perils is the fetish of the majority vote. In operating any political government we have to depend upon a vote to determine what policies are to be adopted, what persons elected to represent us and carry out those policies. The majority, under limitations imposed by the Constitution and the courts, must determine these things. It is a convenient way of settling political action. We have not been able to find a better one.
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> The peril is that this useful device for settling political matters comes to be regarded by people at large with a kind of superstitious reverence, as if a majority vote could settle the *truth* of a theory or proposition in the field of scholarship or education. A few moments' serious thought will convince anyone that even the most august convention, the wisest meeting of the Parent-Teacher Association, or of the American Legion, even of the Senate of the United States, cannot by majority vote determine the truth or the falsity, of, let us say, the latest Einstein theory.
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> To a lesser degree this is true not only of the scholar's search for truth but also of matters of educational policy. Yet we have to settle a good many questions in schools and colleges and universities, important questions of educational policy such as the requirements of the curriculum, by a majority vote of the faculty under the safeguards of parliamentary law. Yet we should never forget that this cannot possibly establish their verity or wisdom; the decisions should always be open to later reconsideration and further discussion.

Such material is excellent for classroom discussion—beginning, perhaps, with the "social studies" course provided in junior high schools, and extending through graduate school seminars. For unless we examine the typical weakness of our American version of democracy, we can hardly measure its virtues. Dr. Gildersleeve apparently made a habit of challenging the student body of Barnard to debate her "undemocratic ideas," and we suspect that students who gave real attention to the issues were thereafter better prepared to be educators in their turn. The charge of favoring an "intellectual elite" was probably leveled at the Dean again and again, but it is impossible to get around the fact that those to whom we owe the greatest contributions to our culture *were* an intellectual elite, a "natural aristocracy" of perceptive minds

Dr. Gildersleeve points out that confusion as to the extent to which democracy can govern educational policy has resulted in many uninstructive furors. Radical students often come to think of the college as a political unit, and themselves as citizens entitled to determine the conduct of the affairs of the institution by majority vote. Highly sensational campus speakers may then be sought, and if the administration does not approve the use of an auditorium for someone's personal sounding board, the school papers wax indignant. Dr. Gildersleeve is abrupt on this point: "I have always been perfectly sure that in a college no such rights existed for students as students. The only right a student has *as a student* is the right to receive the best possible education that the college can give. (He retains of

course his political rights as a citizen of the state.)"

However, lest it be thought that the one who makes these points favors an intellectual straightjacket for the students, this bit of history is enlightening:

> In my time at Barnard College we had on the whole a lively, independent and courageous student body—eager to speak up and express their views and try to make them prevail, containing a small number of Marxists and other extremists, enough to provide some spicy controversies. And I always wanted to keep them like this. Today I imagine college students may be less bold, less full of original initiative under the lingering influence of McCarthyism, apprehensive lest some innocent sophomore membership in a socialist club may stand as a blot on their record throughout their lives and cut them off from advancement and success. I trust that these sad days will pass.

Another facet of Dr. Gildersleeve's argument revolves around the need for giving the best minds their fullest scope. Echoing the sentiments of Robert M. Hutchins, Stringfellow Barr, and Jacques Barzun, she makes an effective plea for "the recognition of brains":

> When we began to set up in our colleges special honors courses for the better students, designed to give them opportunities for more rapid and extensive development than the average group, there were shrill cries of "discrimination" and "undemocratic action." In schools, we are told, arranging special sections for the more promising pupils and segregating the lazy or incompetent ones in another class arouses loud protests from parents who insist that their children must not be put into a group known to be intended for "dummies."
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> We must break down this state of mind if our democracy is to survive. Can we not somehow put brain power on same basis as physical powers or other special talents? As Dean Jacques Barzun of Columbia University said recently, "As regards familiar and especially physical powers, the public understands that there can be no claims, no rights, except those of ability. You do not get your turn at leading the band if you are deaf to music . . . The plea for the recognition of brains must be granted."

It has often been pointed out that the "Founding Fathers" of the United States were members of an intellectual elite, possessing a broad cultural background. They were also philosophers and psychologists of the first magnitude—able to understand and appreciate the Constitutional guarantees against the United States ever becoming a sectarian nation, regardless of the "will of the majority." And this is the same ground as that on which the advocates of "higher learning," such as Dr. Hutchins and Dean Gildersleeve, stand. It is not that they consider themselves part of a "side" in national opinions. Rather, they seem to perceive that it is only some level of philosophical understanding which can possibly raise a standard *above* sectarianism. Only those men are fit to govern who realize that their own personal opinions, even if they gain majority support, must be regarded as only partially representative. The good jurist or the good legislator must be able to respect all honestly held views, so that the focus of attention is upon the self-induced development of the *individual*, and not upon enforcing any particular set of opinions. Democracy ideally provides the mechanism by which differing opinions can be debated and can even alternately prevail in political decision. But this mechanism is effective only so long as freedom of inquiry and freedom to differ are regarded as essentials to an enlightened society, and it depends for its working upon the people who know how it must work, to be of value.

FRONTIERS

War Resistance in Germany

THE Germans are nothing if not thorough. From month to month, the rumor that German youth would reject any program of German remilitarization has been repeated in the American press, but last month, with the major call-up of eligible nineteen-year-olds, the rumor became a dramatic report of facts. John R. Dornberg, an American journalist in Frankfurt, tells in the *Nation* for Dec. 8 the story of the rejection of the draft by this crop of young Germans. Today, Dornberg declares, there are 100,000 conscientious objectors in West Germany, and three organized and active groups devoted to servicing draft-age men "with free legal service," pamphlet literature, and meetings.

Leader of the Frankfurt branch of the *Gruppe der Wehrdienstverweigerer* (Group of Defense Service Objectors) is Hans A. Nikel, a young publisher who began in business with a book of anti-military cartoons—*Discipline Is Everything.* When asked by Americans what he is about, Nikel replies:

> I'm a product of your American re-education program. I was drafted into the German Army as a teen-ager and served until the Hitler regime collapsed. In 1945 you Americans told us that we should never again have an army. In 1950, your re-education officers all packed their bags and went home. Coming in behind them were your generals and politicians who told us to get busy on rearmament. I'm sticking to the original lesson. It appeals to me, and besides, I'm getting tired of being re-educated.

Even the draft boards are sympathetic to West Germany's anti-war youth. City officials in Dortmund who had been transferred to work in the registration office for the period of the call-up stayed at home. One of these officials explained that they would not send their sons into the army. "Our consciences would bother us if we had to register these boys," he said.

If the German government attempts to enforce its present draft law, police complaints will have to be filed against more than half of West Germany's nineteen-year-olds. Nikel remarked that even the sons of "obedient" and "law-abiding" Germans were refusing to register, which is more than the anti-war groups have been advocating. "We wanted them to show up for registration," said Nikel. "They can't make a conscientious objector's application until they've registered."

The big issue, in Germany, is likely to be the same one that troubled conscientious objectors in the United States during the second world war and the Korean "police action." What is a conscientious objector? During World War II, the law said that the C.O. must show that he holds his convictions by reason of "religious training and belief." A fairly liberal interpretation of this provision was advocated by the Selective Service System, although this direction was ignored by many draft boards. The local tendency was to require the candidate for a IV-E classification (the present designation is I-O) to show that he was a member of a traditional peace church—that is, either a Mennonite, a Brethren, a Quaker, or belonged to some similar Christian pacifist sect. Eventually, the law was revised to require also belief in a "Supreme Being," which made the going difficult for the philosophic objector with pantheistic background or simply agnostic views on the subject of God.

The German Constitution, written in the momentarily enlightened post-war years, makes requirements of this sort illegal. As Dornberg says:

> The German constitution not only guarantees freedom from military service, if such service conflicts with one's conscience, but in another article precisely specifies that "conscience is an individual matter" and cannot be controlled by any law or any state.

The Group of Defense Service Objectors plans a test of the present draft law, hoping to prove that it is unconstitutional. Nikel explains:

> What the government is trying to do is to limit conscientious objection to traditional pacifism. If you're a member of an established pacifist religious sect, you're covered. But if you object to military service on political grounds or in a particular situation, you're not protected. We consider this unconstitutional, because the constitution states specifically that no one can be forced to perform military service against the dictates of his conscience. Everyone has his own conscience; the constitution guarantees the individual his right to follow its dictates."

> The government has tried to lay down a norm of conscience, and we are convinced that this is illegal.

The backing of the Group, for which Nikel speaks, comes from all classes of Germans. Dornberg quotes a printing foreman, a shoe manufacturer, and a bank employee, all of whom explicitly reject war as a means of settling international differences.

Years ago, a wise commentator observed that the first casualty in war is truth. The statements of Nikel and the others are all documentary of this claim. Nikel says:

> There are many members in our organization who would gladly defend the constitution under which we seek protection, and who would probably defend Germany from attack. But only if they can be certain that it is *really* an attack. The experience of the last decades teaches us that plain soldiers and the general public can never know for sure whether a war is a defensive war or an aggressive war.

The bank employee said:

> I don't think I'd defend myself because I wouldn't really know whether I'm being attacked. In 1939, when I fought in Poland, I found that Hitler took concentration-camp prisoners, dressed them up in Polish uniforms and made them attack us. One never knows the whole story. There is always the possibility for peaceful understanding between nations.

Two sets of facts in the American experience lend support to this German point of view. There is first the question of the precipitation of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The revisionist school of American historians insists that the Government of the United States is partly responsible for this event, through pursuing a policy which led the Japanese to adopt desperate measures, and causing the liberal element in Japanese politics to lose power to the war party. But if questions of this sort are brushed aside, there is still the matter of the atom-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Many intelligent observers maintain that this was unnecessary. It was an act, however, over which the common people had not the slightest control or influence. The only way for an ordinary man to avoid being a participant in such actions is to refuse to support the military in any way.

The second set of facts relates to practically any future war. The private citizen and the "plain soldier" will have no real understanding of what is happening in the "pushbutton" wars of the future. The general public can only look forward to being carefully "conditioned" by government propagandists to accept whatever is done by the policy-makers and strategists. The only point at which the individual citizen can exercise moral decision in respect to war is the point of being drafted into the service. Some, in considering this issue, go further and propose that the protesting individual can refuse to pay taxes in the proportion of the military budget to the total tax burden, but wherever one decides to draw the line, it should be evident that a personal protest is the only way in which the individual can make his convictions felt in relation to modern war.

For those who feel that the national security is of so great importance that such decisions are properly left to the leaders who are believed to give their best judgment to the perilous decisions which lead to war, the prospect of thousands and hundreds of thousands of conscientious objectors is sure to be bewildering, if not terrifying. Already, in Germany, angry voices are heard. Dornberg reports:

> The Group is preparing a slander suit against Major General Paul Hermann, commanding general of the Fourth Military District in Germany, who recently told reporters that all conscientious objectors were either Communists or cowards. When his comment became public, he insisted that he had only quoted a high-ranking government spokesman. Hermann has been up for questioning before the defense committee of the *Bundestag*, which wanted to know the identity of the "spokesman."

But even if conscientious objection should spread to such proportions that it actually disables the military plans of modern nations, should sensible people want to discourage the young men who adopt this position? Who is more entitled to call into question the entire program of preparation and training for war? And how else are the leaders of nation-states to realize, as is so often said, that the *people* do not really want war?

Some months ago, under the heading, "The Decline of Politics," MANAS proposed that while "pacifist politics" is at least rational, the pacifist has

an educational rather than a political function to perform. This view may now have to be qualified, at least as it applies to German pacifism—which, incidentally, is rather an anti-war movement than pacifism in its usual meaning. Dornberg remarks:

> Although itself politically non-partisan, the Group and other objectors' organizations are being watched carefully by all German political parties. The Social Democrats (SPD) have latched on to the anti-draft and anti-rearmament proposals. This month they scored resounding victories in local elections in four German states.

There is surely no harm in allowing political groups to articulate the planks in a pacifist program, thus permitting a registration of public opinion on such issues. Even if the full political implications of the pacifist position are obviously revolutionary, and effectively anarchist in relation to the military power of the state, perhaps the time has come to insist, by every means available, that self-government which does not include free democratic determination of whether or not to go to war is not self-government at all, but a species of political fraud.

It is not that we or any other people are the "victims" of clever tyrants who want to involve us in wars. The evolution of technology and the centralization of political power are the twin causes which have made a "democratic" war a virtual impossibility. We have reached a stage in history when we can defend ourselves with the weapons of modern war, or we can have a democratic form of government. We cannot have both.

Meanwhile, from the headquarters of the War Resisters International in England comes a report which, even if eyed skeptically, is worth repeating. Headed "Developments in Communist Countries," the report is as follows:

> Oct. 31.—A few weeks ago it was reported that the Polish Government had decided that those persons who did not wish to do military service would be permitted to work in the coal mines instead. Twenty-six months of military service or 20 months in the coal mines is required. This has since been confirmed by the present Government.
>
> Now, from informed sources the War Resisters International has learned that the Soviet Peace Movement has discussed sympathetically the rights of pacifists. Shortly thereafter the Soviet Government was asked to examine the question of legal recognition for conscientious objection in the Soviet Union.
>
> The Russian Government has agreed to this request in such a way as to cause these informed sources to predict a favorable decision.
>
> This news, coming as it does in the midst of revolts and unrest in Eastern Europe, is both encouraging and remarkable.

One is reminded by the various reports of such ideas percolating in the minds of contemporary Europeans, of the ferment of revolutionary ideas which began in France some fifty years before the outbreak of the French Revolution. Generations are needed for revolutionary ideas to take root and to spread their influence. Then, as proposals for great reforms slowly supply more and more of the currency of speech and discussion, men become ready for new kinds of *action.* The French Revolution was action for freedom. Why should not the next revolution be a revolution for peace?