

## THE OBJECT ALL SUBLIME

MAN'S most prized personal possession is freedom, and as Victor Gollancz said in these pages a few weeks ago, true personal freedom "is essentially an inner thing; something inside a man; the presence of something in a man's personality, not the absence of constraint from without." Contrary to popular impression, personal freedom is the one thing no man can take away from another. In Gollancz' words: "The supreme example is Socrates, who was utterly free up to the very moment of drinking the hemlock, and doubtless beyond."

The social possession that corresponds to the personal possession of freedom, is justice. And it is perhaps natural to think that if you can't give a man freedom, you—society, that is—can surely give him justice. This, we say, he has a right to expect.

But what is justice? Reflection on this question soon produces the haunting suspicion that justice, alas, is also hidden behind mists of subjectivity! The object of justice, we say, is to make the punishment fit the crime. But who can measure guilt? And who, after all, is truly innocent? We are obliged to admit that "the innocent," for all practical purposes, are only those whose offenses are not known, or who are of such guile or subtlety that the coarse mesh of the penal code cannot catch them in its net. We can catch, prosecute and punish only the vulgar criminals whose guilt is of a plebeian sort. We have to let the others go. We are not even sure of our definitions of righteousness above the level of gross behavior. The self-righteous man, for example, may be more subversive of goodness than the wastrel or the prostitute, for he makes people dislike a goodness which seems to produce pompous prigs. And what of a man who will let his vanity slay a nation, in the name of honor and patriotism? How will you prosecute *him*?

During the last war, several thousand conscientious objectors to military service were sent to federal prisons for terms ranging all the way from one to four or five years. Some of them—the ones the Government attempted to draft early—served two terms. A number of these men, when they were finally turned loose, showed that they had done a great deal of thinking about guilt and punishment. On the whole, they were absolutely against prisons as a way of controlling or restraining crime. Prisons, they argued, do not accomplish what they are supposed to accomplish. They do not rehabilitate men. They do not exact justice. Prisons, they said, are a kind of revenge which society takes on certain people for being unfortunate in the first place, unskilful in their relations with the law in the second place, and being, finally, either too stupid or too primitive to practice the sophistication and hypocrisy which convention demands of those who try to be dishonest and successful at the same time. These critics of prisons had no notably promising alternatives to offer, but this could hardly diminish the force of their criticism. The prisons of the world, they insisted, are monuments to futility and injustice.

Now justice, of course, has other forms than the administration of penal codes. "Free enterprise" is alleged to be the form of economic relationships which provides the maximum justice to all men. What does justice mean, on this basis? It must mean that, under this system, each man receives the just reward of merit. Whether or not "free enterprise" accomplishes this end is a separate question. The point to be established, here, is that human instruments of justice are *supposed* to allot to each man exactly what is coming to him. For each technique of supplying justice, and for the various rival techniques, there are elaborate arguments. The free enterprise

system, for example, is defended on the ground that it resembles the situation of man in a state of nature, the argument being that what a man can wrest from nature rightfully belongs to him, and that it is just for him to have it, with as little interference as possible. If he does not exert himself, or exerts himself in unprofitable directions, he is punished by his poor economic status. He suffers want and deprivation. This, it is claimed, is nature's law, and human arrangements can surely do no better than to imitate nature!

It is easy to ridicule such claims. It is easy to point out that some of the greatest of men, meriting both the admiration and the deep respect of their fellows, have exerted themselves very little in the direction of acquiring a substantial supply of this world's goods. A precise interpretation of the free-enterprise credo would say that such men deserve to go hungry or starve, and their children with them. But it should also be admitted that there is *some* sense to the claim. The great mistake lies in claiming either that the free enterprise idea is completely silly, or that it is completely wise. What we need to determine is, *how much* sense is there to this idea? At what point should we refuse to allow it any authority? If this question were easy to answer, we should probably not have any capitalists who make a religion out of their theories of "rugged individualism," nor any communists, who insist that an all-powerful state is a better administrator of economic justice than a somewhat sloppily and often dishonestly refereed free-for-all.

But "justice," whether in connection with economic systems or in relation to crime and punishment, means arranging that each man gets what is properly coming to him. The assumption is that it is possible to *give* him what is coming to him.

The proposition to be defended in this discussion is that it is impossible to give each man what is coming to him, and that the attempt to dispense justice on this assumption is a monstrous

fraud—as much, fundamentally, of a delusion as the idea that we can make men free. If it were only that our justice fails, as our attempts to legislate freedom into being fail, the situation would at least be tolerable. If we would admit these impossibilities, we could at least regard ourselves as well-intentioned but fallible human beings. But that we *claim* to do justice, and having committed this fraud, relax as complacent Olympians might relax after issuing divine decrees—looking around at our prisons and jails and courts, our armies and our wars, our military and economic establishments as though they were instruments of high justice—this is an intolerable egotism.

Once in a while a man is driven by experience and reflection to discover the fraud of this claim. If he is a real man, he can never regain peace of mind in the presence of the institutions of supposedly civilized justice. This discovery or something like it must have been behind Clarence Darrow's determined defense in the courts of *anyone* he could help. Darrow simply did not believe in punishment.

Another discoverer of the fraud of justice was Jacob Wasserman, a German novelist (1873-1934) whose book, *The Maurizius Case*, is a full-length study of human self-defeat in the matter of justice. Henry Miller was another victim of disturbing light; he read Wasserman and could not forget the case of Maurizius. In a small book of his own, *Maurizius Forever*, Miller extracts from Wasserman the essence of the question and pursues it further in some paragraphs of agonized but lucid writing. Why, he asks, has he been haunted by this book?

Nothing can explain its seduction. It is not the greatest book I have ever read, nor the best written. Neither is its theme the highest. It is a piece of propaganda to which a man like myself is peculiarly susceptible. It haunts me, as the Sphinx haunted men of old. For it does contain a secret in the form of a riddle. It is mysterious in that despite all explanations, those of the author, those of the interpreters of it, nothing is truly explained. Is it because it is about justice, of which we know almost

nothing? Is it because the description of human justice awakens in us intimations of divine justice? Why does such a knight-errant as Etzel develop later into a veritable monster? Does it mean that the man who is overly concerned about justice is himself the most unjust of men? Is it man's business to mete out justice here on earth. And if he does not attempt to do so, is he thereby shirking a duty towards his fellow-man, or is he inspiring him to a higher attitude?

*Maurizius* is about a man who is imprisoned for a crime he did not commit, but was morally responsible for, and about the efforts of a youthful fanatic to set him free. *Everything* miscarries—both the justice of the trial of Maurizius and his ultimate liberation. It all turns to dust and ashes. Throughout, there is the terrible sense of having missed the point.

In Henry Miller's analysis, a scene of the story is reproduced in which Etzel Andergast, the young man who devotes years of his life to freeing Maurizius, visits an aging writer whom he much admires. The writer, Ghisels, listens to Etzel's tale. Etzel wants Ghisels to appreciate his passion for justice. "Justice," he declares, "is the beating heart of the world. Is that so or is it not?" Ghisels answers:

"It is so, dear friend. Justice and love were originally sisters. In our civilization they are no longer even distant relatives. One may give many explanations without explaining anything. We no longer have a people, a people constituting the body politic; that which we call democracy is founded upon an amorphous mass and cannot dispose itself and elevate itself intelligently. . . . Perhaps we need a Caesar. But where shall he come from? And we must fear the chaos that would produce him. What the best people do in the best case is to provide a commentary for an earthquake. . . ."

Now comes a startling idea—the same idea, in essence, as that proposed by Victor Gollancz in respect to freedom:

"I should only like to tell you one thing. Think about it a little; perhaps it will help you on a step, for we can only move forward very, very slowly, and step by step. . . . It is not a means of salvation, not a tremendous truth which I have in mind, but perhaps,

as I have said, it is a hint, a useful suggestion. . . . What I mean is this: good and evil are not determined by the intercourse of people with one another, but entirely by a man's relations with himself."

Etzel nods, but Ghisels seems to evade the issue. In Miller's words:

There is something bothering him [Etzel], something he will never understand. If some one is imprisoned unjustly, what then? What is he to do in such a case? Is he to forget about the person? Is he to leave the man in torment? Is he to say to himself, how does that concern me? How does one's relation to himself help him in such a case? And then he fires at Ghisels the question which the latter cannot answer:

"What then is justice if I do not see it through I, myself I, Etzel Andergast?" And Ghisels, looking for all the world like a man crucified, can only answer: "I have nothing to reply to that except: Forgive me, I am but a feeble man."

Etzel wins from society the form of the execution of justice, but it is plain that no justice is done. There is no real release, only, as for the ancient mariner, a "wicked whisper." The whole affair is a botch. The two men in the story who have relieving wisdom, Ghisels and Klakusch, are impotent to explain their wisdom. Ghisels says what he can, but he cannot touch Etzel in his feelings. Klakusch is a Christ-like figure who finds it intolerable to decide between human guilt and human innocence and hangs himself.

Perhaps Wasserman dealt somewhat morbidly with the problem. His book appeared in 1928, an ominous time in Germany's history. Perhaps Wasserman felt anticipations of what was to happen in Germany, in five short years, in the name of justice and retribution. But surely Wasserman was justified in feeling pessimistic at the prospect of trying to communicate to the workaday world the faint outlines of the vast subjective universe which extends outwards from our inner selves to the peripheral surface of life where the gross phenomena of human action become visible and where men judge one another in terms of right and wrong, and attempt to define "justice." It is in this hidden world, too often a

dark place of shadowy groping and plaintive self-justification, that our private moralities are made. The outer world, with its laws and rules, its pieties and its prescriptions of right, will not, cannot, understand us.

The weak victim, Maurizius, having spent half a lifetime in prison, at least came to understand himself. Confronting the judge who sentenced him—who is Baron von Andergast, Etzel's father—Maurizius gives an account of his youth:

"I still remember that at nineteen I came home from a performance of *Tristan*, a happy, new-born person, and then I stole twenty marks from my father's bureau drawer. Both were compatible. Always both were compatible. To swear to a girl a sacred oath that one would marry her and shortly afterwards leave her contemptibly to her fate, and in an exalted mood to read and assimilate the life and works of Buddha. To do a poor tailor out of his earnings and to stand enthralled before a Raphael Madonna. One could be tremendously moved at the theatre over Hauptmann's *Weavers* and read with satisfaction that the strikers in the Ruhr were being fired upon. Always the two were possible. . . . There you have another portrait. A self-portrait. Do you think it is more flattering than yours? Its only redeeming feature is in its admitting two possibilities each time. Yours is cruelty implacable because it admits only one."

So Maurizius, and so each one of us . . . *"good and evil are not determined by the intercourse with people with one another, but entirely by a man's relations with himself."* Often we run afoul of human rules of justice only by accident. A man may be so intent upon a resolution of some inner problem that he violates some convention and society strikes him down like a rattlesnake. He may be fighting his way through to a conception of personal integrity, and find that some "oath" society requires of him cannot be taken. Or, in an ultimate moment of decision, he cannot pull a trigger any more. Graham Green's tragic protagonist in *The Heart of the Matter* cannot abandon his adulterous love, and so accepts eternal damnation. A Debs speaks his heart on war and is condemned to spend years in a federal prison.

Who knows the values in human decision? Who is so wise as to measure either guilt or innocence? Justice is at best a lottery, at worst a faceless, mindless persecutor which deals with men as though they were parts for a machine: if they do not fit, throw them out, or file them down to size!

The people who spend their lives trying to help the victims of social apathy, who work in the half-world of crime, delinquency, of police action, courts and punishment, of necessity learn humility and compassion. They see the tired pain and hopelessness of the suspected and condemned portion of mankind. They know that the varieties of innocence are as infinite and as equivocal as the varieties of guilt. They come to hate the facade of justice and order for its pompous deception and pretense. They seldom speak of justice any more. Somehow, it has become irrelevant. They become guardians of tiny sparks of hope, nurturers of the faint impulse of moral longing. They deal in cracks and crannies of room for human life, not spacious idealisms.

Justice does not come from systems, nor does it emerge in courtrooms and legislatures. Often the justest men—the men who have solved the secret of right relations with themselves—fare worst at the hands of systems and judges. The claim of being able to "do justice" is sheer presumption. Other things we may be able to do for one another, but not justice. Justice is something we can only do for ourselves.

## *REVIEW*

### PHILOSOPHY AND CENSORSHIP

THE issues of censorship are involved in nearly every current struggle of opinion, whether cultural, political or religious, probably for the reason that we must either have primary faith in education and "the natural reasonableness of man," or believe that it is necessary for the pure in heart to protect those less fortunately endowed. Among other things, Senator Joseph McCarthy was a blatant advocate of the censorship principle, but in his advocacy he was merely carrying to an objectionable degree the psychology of the faith to which he was born—the faith of numerous men of influence in all walks of life.

Now that the majority of the American people have fortunately decided that the McCarthy approach to politics is an affront to human dignity, it is not remarkable that more searching thought should be directed to the censorship problem in general. As Justice Jerome Frank remarked in a recent opinion, censorship in literature, and thought-control in politics, encourage and perpetuate each other. Whenever men in positions of authority feel able to give final definition of the "good, the true and the beautiful," we find much indoctrination and little education. Whenever, on the other hand, the "authorities" become *less* sure of their right to determine standards, both culture and politics enter into a cycle of constructive ferment. There is evidence that something of the latter sort is going on in the motion picture industry. Bosley Crowther, Hollywood correspondent for the *New York Times*, wrote on Oct. 7, 1956:

That long-time formidable obstruction to morally controversial material in American films—we speak of the operation of the industry's own Production Code—is slowly and quietly being loosened to accord with what is obviously a change in social attitudes. And the industry is much better for it, as is certainly the medium of films.

They don't like to talk about it out here. They are, for one thing, afraid that calling attention to it

may cause the more sensitive elements of the public to become alarmed. At present, a three-man committee of top industry executives is making a thorough survey of the specific restrictions and consequences of the Code, with an eye to the possible elimination of some of its more unrealistic prohibitions and pieties. So long as this survey is going forward behind more or less closed doors, the Code's conscientious administrators are keeping discreetly mum.

But there are already healthy indications that the Code is being sensibly relaxed to permit the resolution of complications that might have been forbidden a few years back.

Martin Dworkin, examining motion picture trends for the *Progressive*, suggests that television has inadvertently encouraged more "depth perspective" on Hollywood productions generally. The TV movie reproductions from an older era, with their obvious anachronisms, illustrate how easy it was—and is—to become absorbed in the naïve pre-dispositions of an epoch. The "great" features of twenty or thirty years ago may still have sterling worth, but they are spotted with other qualities which now seem somewhat ridiculous. Mr. Dworkin writes:

Millions of viewers now seeing the old movies for the first time are taking an intensive course, as it were, in the "literature" of the screen. Even watching ancient trash can throw new light on new trash. The movies have always emphasized the immediately novel. Habitual moviegoers are picked by whatever currents are passing, and carried along wherever they go. The moment one feels outside the current, as in watching a movie out of an obviously different time and place, one has begun to criticize rather than blindly experience, and a critical attitude developing towards a continuity of experiences is one facet of maturity. If a new cinematic literacy does emerge from the rehearsal of filmic tradition on television, it will itself reach for literacy and maturity in new works for the screen. The lost audience for good movies may have new recruits, in an ever proliferating supply. And so increasingly vast an audience will not be hard for film makers to find, if they care to try hard enough in their seeking.

All this affords useful perspective on those rigidities of censorship which have transformed many excellent novels and plays into characterless

pabulum. There is still, of course, a long way to go before we may expect the movie censorship experts to judge a creative work in terms of its basic motivation rather than its subject matter. So far, according to Mr. Dworkin, the new "veneer of sophistication" only takes us far enough to require changes in the Production Code of the Motion Picture Association of America—for the first time since adoption in 1930. With tongue in both cheeks, Mr. Dworkin concludes by remarking that "it is now permissible, at least, for films to recognize that drug addiction, prostitution, abortion, and kidnapping do exist—although admirably specific strictures are put upon their portrayal. It is thereby assured, we may well fear, that films treating these subjects may discourage the practice of evil as effectively as have those multitudes of movie moralities proving, in delicious detail, that brutality is wicked and that crime does not pay."

Meanwhile legal and cultural arguments in respect to "obscenity" statutes continue. A letter addressed to the editors of the *New Republic* (March 11) points out that although a Supreme Court decision on Feb. 25 killed a 118-year-old Michigan obscenity statute, the battle is still joined in Detroit. And what is happening in Detroit might be regarded as symptomatic of similar struggle occurring throughout the nation. William White, the *New Republic* correspondent, illustrates how easy it is for county or city officials to set themselves up as judges in fields about which they know very little. The assistant county prosecutor for the Detroit area, for instance, has no difficulty in deciding that a book is objectionable: "If I feel that I wouldn't want my 13-year-old daughter reading it, I decide it's illegal." Since there is always well-intentioned support for censorship, the official defenders of "book-banning" are often tempted to speak carelessly when among their supporters. Mr. White continues:

Edward R. Murrow's representative, looking over Detroit for a national telecast on censorship, said: "I've never seen such enormous public apathy to

what we supposed was a real menace to freedom." How great this threat to freedom might become may be judged by those who know that a pocket-type magazine was removed from bookstalls not on the ground of obscenity but because it contained remarks considered derogatory to the police!

When Inspector Melville E. Bullock became chief censor the National Organization for Decency in Literature and others persuaded him to ban items which had circulated freely before; *i.e.*, a Marilyn Monroe calendar. Under supposedly Roman Catholic demands, he also banned *Facts of Life and Love for Teen-Agers*, which had been recommended by the Detroit Council of Churches and approved by *Parents' Magazine*. Then John O'Hara's *Ten North Frederick* was banned in its paperback edition, and the city's police commissioner himself added the hard-cover edition of this novel to the list, with the explanation that he didn't want his 17-year-old son to read it.

It seems obvious enough that whether we are talking about the Motion Picture Production Code, about proposed laws to ban the wrong sort of comic strips, or about McCarthyism, we are talking about very nearly the same thing, and need to extend the conversation.

## *COMMENTARY* CONDITIONS OF JUSTICE

THERE is an enormous difference between the will to act justly and the pretense that one is doing it—the same difference as exists between love of wisdom and the claim of possessing it.

This week's lead article is entirely given over to the human failure to do justice—a depressing prospect which needs balancing recognition of the nobility in the will to do justice.

The question, then, is what a man *can* accomplish in the direction of justice, short of dispensing it. Justice, in every case, it seems to us, is constituted of the optimum education situation for the human beings involved. Sentimentality is as much the enemy of justice as punishment. The human is a being who is capable of high vision. He does not always have it; indeed, many men seem to go through life entirely without it; yet it is a capacity of man. Justice for a man, then, is the establishing of conditions which remove all external barriers to vision. This is a very different idea from that of reward and punishment.

There is a sense in which it is impossible to do anything *to* or *for* other human beings. This becomes true, however, only in the case of great or fully developed men. How, for example, could anyone "do anything" to or for the Socrates of Plato's account? Socrates was a wholly self-reliant and self-sufficient man. The Athenians could not take away his freedom, and in Socrates' opinion they could not destroy what was good and immortal in him by killing his body. Nor could Socrates' friends do anything for him. Crito, who urged him to escape and offered to provide the means, had no effect on Socrates. He did not want to escape. His disciples could not comfort him at the time of his death. He did not need any comfort.

Lesser men than Socrates can receive good from others and are vulnerable to evil. What can we do for these? All that we can do is help them

to be free to learn the meaning of both freedom and injustice. We cannot make them free, we cannot give them justice.

The terrible crime of the Nazis, as Victor Gollancz pointed out a month ago (MANAS, April 10), was not the physical torture, horrible though it was, but a treatment of human beings which tended to make them lose all sense of dignity. "The real charge against them is not that they enslave bodies (though God knows that is evil enough), but that they enslave men's souls by corrupting their inner freedom."

Most human beings are imperfect in their dignity. A "justice" which decreases the capacity of men to grow in dignity is a bitter travesty of its high pretensions. When prison guards lead a man down a narrow corridor to the execution chamber, they may do something to him which no crime can merit. They tell him, in effect, that he is no longer a man, that he has no choices left. They treat him like inert matter, something to be disposed of. No man, whatever he has done, should be helped to think this way of himself. This is an attack on the human spirit, which can never be just.

We need not set a man "free" to show our respect for the human spirit. Restraint may be necessary for many men, but restraint is not justice. The closest we can come to justice lies in refusing to judge any man. This he needs to do for himself.

## CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

### THE DEBATE ON DISARMAMENT

IN his recent *Letter to a Generation*, Sen. Ralph E. Flanders explains why he feels that world peace should be constantly discussed in our schools and colleges. An acknowledged leader in world disarmament movements, Sen. Flanders became widely known for his support of a resolution calling for plans to transfer resources and manpower now being used for arms "to constructive ends at home and abroad." Though the McMahon-Flanders proposal was passed unanimously by the Senate in 1953—after a guided tour through the Foreign Relations Committee, which watered it down considerably—it would be difficult to claim that much was accomplished during the succeeding tumultuous tides of world affairs. But Flanders *did* get disarmament talked about throughout the nation, and that is exactly what he wished to accomplish. Now he is at it again. *Letter to a Generation*, according to Edith Hamilton, "could be required reading in the colleges."

Viewed in psychological perspective, Sen. Flanders' arguments involve a number of contradictions. He seems to be quite conventional in his belief that disarmament movements are only practicable when and if Russia will promise to do the same thing at the same time. He also subscribes to the "Communist menace" point of view, but these are the things that Americans, young or old, hear all the time, anyway. What Sen. Flanders adds to conventional piety is simple honesty and an awareness of the possible limitations of his own point of view. This is why we should like to see Edith Hamilton's recommendation taken seriously by curriculum planners. As an example of the kind of objectivity on political matters which honesty can bring, we quote the following paragraphs by Sen. Flanders:

Two things we can do. One is a wise use of the Point Four procedure, which seems particularly applicable to India. Our purpose will not be to bribe an alliance or to purchase gratitude. Our purpose will

be to help *people*, whose miseries now leave them an easy prey to Communist rapacity.

The other thing to seek with all earnestness is communication. The ethical abyss between us is deep, but it is not so wide that we cannot talk to each other across it and seek mutual understanding.

Such communications between ourselves and people of other cultures are essential. A book like this, written by an American nurtured in American capitalism, cannot be universal, no matter how earnestly the writer seeks to identify himself with all mankind. The task of meeting our mutual crisis is not one to be completed by any one class, any one race, or any one culture. Only the united vision and devotion of mankind, in obedience to the moral law and the spiritual forces of the universe, can see us through our Time of Troubles.

Our major constructive efforts must be directed toward a spiritual contact with the peoples of the earth. We must make friends with the peoples of governments whose purposes and practices are morally abhorrent to us.

Young people can help in this. There are organized means of putting Indian (and other) students and American students in correspondence. Really remarkable results have come from such contacts. They need to be multiplied.

We need more men engaged in government affairs who recognize that their own perspectives, "nurtured in American capitalism, cannot be universal." Nor is Sen. Flanders so blindly patriotic as to feel that our past and current attitudes toward Soviet dominions have been ethically adequate. The last page of *Letter to a Generation* is particularly clear on this point:

No matter what the day-to-day discouragements may be, an alternative to World War III must be found which will permit mankind to live in freedom and order. That alternative, that solution, can be found only if we seek it through obedience to the moral law.

Let us sum up the attitudes and actions that meet the test.

We must bind ourselves to the deepest hopes of other peoples, making wise use of our limited financial resources in helping their material development, freely assisting them in finding their own solution to their economic, social, and political problems, and weaving a web of friendly comprehension, person to person, with those "whom



He hath made of one blood, for to dwell on all the face of the earth."

*This is at the opposite pole from our past policies of using our aid as a reward to help those who do as we wish, and withholding our aid as a punishment for a refusal. The moral grounds (moral in the eternal sense) form the foundation for a community of human interest* (italics added).

Now for a few more words from Sen. Flanders as to how our schools could pursue the sort of disarmament discussion which might achieve political results:

What can young people do?

For those in universities and colleges, there is a clear duty to insist that a study of this greatest undertaking in history shall become a part of every curriculum. This may be done by formal inclusion in the course of study. It may be done more formally by lectures and seminars, preferably with attendance required. If necessary, the students themselves must see to it that this subject is not neglected, whether through carelessness or through lack of understanding.

The next requirement is that all study, all discussion must be realistic. It would be the simplest thing in the world to get the country emotionally aroused on the subject of disarmament. It is a subject which properly appeals to the emotions. The emotional drive is essential. Yet the whole undertaking will fade in exhausted emotion unless the mind also is focused upon it.

Therefore, consider well the difficulties. Do not flinch from the obstacles. It was William James who truly said that we do not think at all until we meet an obstacle.

*Letter to a Generation* has only 113 pages. It is not exhaustive, nor is it always profound, but it is a beginning, made in a relatively "high place," of an effort to bring the minds and emotions of new generations of Americans to bear upon decisions which may affect, first, the understanding, then the peace of the world.

Also important is the fact that such books help to create an atmosphere in which "pacifist" literature is more likely to receive the respect which is its due. Always, in the past, research on war and disarmament stemming from pacifist authors has had great difficulty in obtaining a hearing from men in High Places—especially in the United States. It is

our opinion, however, that both Senator Flanders and any others in public life who are caught up in the spirit of this quest will be able to turn thoughtfully to the presentations of opinion offered by research agencies of the American Friends Service Committee, the Fellowship of Reconciliation and the War Resisters League. The pacifists may not have the final answer—may, indeed, be sometimes hide-bound in opinion, and "unrealistic" by virtue of their uncompromising position, but they do contribute elements of a needed balance in our time.

After all, peace will come to the world only when enough men believe that human beings are no more predisposed toward war and aggrandizement than toward self-discipline and self-sacrifice. And whenever men in public life have been exposed to pacifist influence, the world has benefited, at least in degree. Both Herbert Hoover and Dwight Eisenhower came from "peace" church backgrounds, while in the educational institutions sponsored by Quakers a notable atmosphere of determined idealism has been generated. Robert Hutchins, a consistent defender of the right of individual conscience—which is supposed to be, above all else, the American way—relates the effects of his exposure to the Quaker point of view at Oberlin College during his youth:

... The motto of the College was "Learning and Labor." Poverty, work, service, and what the President, Henry Churchill King, called Rational Living were the ideals that were held before us. But the principal one was non-conformity. The legacy the College left to every Oberlin man or woman of that day was the non-conformist conscience. Oberlin was the first college to admit women and the first to admit Negroes.

The great episode in the history of the College was the Wellington Raid, an occasion on which the faculty and students had gone to a neighboring town and rescued a fugitive slave. We were proud to remember that Oberlin had been a station on the Underground Railroad and to point out to one another the buildings, then still standing, that had been used for the purpose. We seriously believed that the greatest thing in the world was to lay down your life for your principles, and we considered that the Oberlin missionaries killed in the Boxer Rebellion, who were memorialized by the Martyrs' Arch in the center of the Campus, had shown us how to die.

## *FRONTIERS*

### **India's Second Five Year Plan**

WHEN people express dissatisfaction and impatience with democracy in India, they generally assume that a switch over to totalitarian methods is easy and feasible. They are unaware of realities which India's Five Year Plan exposes, and seeks to meet. Its various development programmes take people's cooperation as the major premise and point out that there is really no alternative to persuasion to make the plan succeed. Even if the planners decide on coercion, it is doubtful whether they would know how to go about it. The means by which the Second Five Year Plan hopes to realise its production targets, particularly in agriculture, illustrate this.

The plan seeks to raise production of food grains by 10 million tons—to 75 million tons in 1960-61, which is necessary to provide 2,450 calories per adult for India's total population. The use of fertilisers and manures, better seeds, and general improvements in agricultural methods are expected to contribute 5 million out of the 10 million tons; the other half is to be yielded by major irrigation works and land reclamation and development. Anyone with even a casual acquaintance with India's agricultural conditions knows how much the typical peasant distrusts suggestions for the use of fertilisers, improved seeds and agricultural practices, and how difficult it is to persuade him to give up his traditional, antiquated methods. The planners can hardly be unaware of the magnitude of the problem, though they project very impressive statistics. The plan expects an increase in the demand for nitrogenous fertilisers from 610,000 tons in 1955 to over 1.8 million tons and therefore provides for that much production. The provisions made for the expansion of agricultural research and education are also very ambitious and make available a sum of Rs. 14.15 crores (\$283,000,000) for the purpose. The few agricultural institutes dispersed in a few cities in the country are to be the centres of research, and agricultural departments in the

States train the field workers who will carry the fruits of research to the actual tiller.

India has already been through its first Five Year Plan and one would like to know how far the Government has been successful in reaching the peasant and impressing him with the benefits of scientific agriculture. But it seems that it is too early to expect precise and detailed information, though the second Plan does furnish figures which indicate that the first Five Year Plan has not done badly. Consumption of ammonium sulphate is reported to have doubled during the first Plan period, from 275,000 tons to 610,000 tons; 1.6 million acres have been brought under the Japanese method of rice cultivation. But when we remember that the actual agricultural population involved is 249 millions, this progress is far from being spectacular. Nevertheless, however despairingly slow agricultural progress in India under democracy may appear to be, there does not seem to be any other way. One cannot imagine how the state can adopt coercion to force improved farming methods on a recalcitrant peasantry in India. At present, the administrative machinery in India is not suitable for this purpose. When comparisons between India and China are made, and when it is pointed out that China's greater progress can be ensured only with China's methods, the difference between the administrative traditions of the two countries is ignored or is not understood. The administrative set-up that the British perfected in India, though bureaucratic, was not coercive, and the country has grown with it. To imagine that a change is possible from democracy to dictatorship and that India's rulers abstain from such a course out of altruism would be profound self-deception. There is really no alternative to persuasion for the economic progress which the Five Year Plan seeks, and the time-factor has to be reckoned with, however emergent the exigencies of the Indian situation may be made to appear by grim prophecies of eventual totalitarian deluge when democracy fails in India.

The success of India's Five Year Plan depends as much on official persuasiveness as on public integrity. India's public services bear a big responsibility for the operation of the Five Year Plan and nobody pretends that it is being conscientiously discharged. Integrity in public services, unfortunately, cannot be taken for granted. Audit authorities and public accounts committees often report grave financial irregularities, mismanagement and embezzlement. Planning authorities who have allotted huge funds for developmental expenditure have two objectives: prompt and proper spending. The total expenditure that the Planning Commission has proposed for the five-year period, 1956-61, is Rs. 4,800/- crores (\$960,000,000) on various development programmes, and over 2,300 crores (\$460,000,000) are to be undertaken by the States. During the first Five Year Plan, considerable amounts remained unspent with the various State Governments because of the slow and unsatisfactory progress of development programmes. At the same time development programmes have also suffered from official inefficiency, ignorance, irresponsibility and dishonesty. A large part of development activity has necessarily to depend on local contractors for execution and anyone who has had dealings with the labour contractors knows to his cost the care one must exercise to escape being fleeced. Officials in charge of public revenues and expenditure have a responsibility to see that unscrupulous contractors are not sanctioned sums, the major part of which goes to line their pockets. Experience in India has been that officials do not have the elementary knowledge of local labour conditions to enable them to make out correct estimates for construction works or check up those presented by contractors. This is bad enough, but not so bad as corrupt officers being in league with contractors themselves. Instances of such unholy liaison are not unknown or uncommon in India. Recently a contractor is reported to have boasted that he had been sanctioned Rs. 600/- (\$120) for the construction

of a polling booth which would assure him a net profit of Rs. 400/- (\$80)!

While standards of integrity in public service in India are undoubtedly poor, it will be wrong to imagine that they reflect Indian character. Individual morality in India should compare favourably with that in other advanced countries. The concepts of integrity and impartiality in public services are not often well understood in India, since they often conflict with personal amity and goodwill. An Indian official may find nothing wrong in helping a friend of his with a job, if he has the necessary influence; he sincerely believes that it is service and would be bewildered by charges of nepotism. A small town in South India did not get electricity, despite the repeated appeals by its citizens. But when a member of the State Assembly became a Cabinet Minister in charge of public works, electric power was supplied promptly to the town, because one of its residents was the minister's close relative. The minister did not deny the fact, but only the charge of impropriety. He asked why his relatives and home town should not benefit during his term of office. He had no objection to similar blessings being conferred on other people and towns when they had their chance, thanks to a democracy which offered opportunities to all to become ministers and oblige relatives and friends!

The eventual spread of education and the consequent promotion of civic sense alone can raise levels of public integrity. In this context it is relevant to recall that standards of civil service honesty, which are now very high in Britain, were far from being that in England a hundred years ago. British writers, both modern and Victorian, testify to this. Perhaps India does not fare too badly.

Democracy has helped the emergence of political pressure groups that British India did without and the public services now suffer from their deleterious influence. During the British rule, officials had to reckon only with their administrative superiors and execution of their

duties without fear or favour was possible and not as hazardous as it is now turning out to be. Local members of parliament or state assemblies with influence over cabinet ministers have not scrupled to interfere with civil service administration; nor do the cabinet ministers always have the courage or character to disown such political associates, and they have been responsible for deterioration in administrative standards. Many officials and politicians are bringing into existence pockets of intrigue and corruption and between them the rights of the people are forgotten or sacrificed. The Five Year Plan expects much from officials whose chief concentration is too often on their own self-interest.

While the standards of integrity and efficiency in Indian public service are not satisfactory, the Five Year Plan requires the services to operate under conditions and prospects that are not likely to promote integrity or efficiency. Democracy has required decentralisation of power and the public services have become increasingly subordinate to the various state governments and local bodies. The conditions that influence at least one such State Government, *i.e.*, Madras, in its recruitment to services definitely penalise merit. The Madras Government makes special concessions to backward communities whose uplift it is presently committed to, while those communities which have won positions successfully by merit are now being denied employment opportunities that would be theirs in open competition. The consequent deterioration in Madras Government services, resulting from this influx of ill-qualified, undeserving and inefficient employees, thanks to the Government's policy, is grave.

The Five Year Plan wrestles with problems of diverse kinds, but none so diametrically opposed as the serious dearth, on the one hand, of scientific and technical personnel, and mass unemployment on the other. The Madras Government's policy of communal recruitment seriously aggravates the former. The Second Five Year Plan requires a minimum of 2,300 engineering graduates, with

5,940 persons trained for posts at lower levels and 22,000 medical graduates among other technical personnel. The planners are not sure that this required number will be available from the existing and the proposed new institutions. The unemployment in rural and urban areas is such that at the end of the plan period the eradication of unemployment would require the creation of 15.3 million new jobs in rural and urban areas. The plan frankly recognises this as impossible. Most of these unemployed men will be unskilled and uneducated and therefore unsuitable for the technical and scientific jobs which badly need to be manned.

While the persons who suffer from such mass unemployment owe their bad plight to lack of educational and employment opportunities, to which they have a right, it is not fair to expect India in these early years of her freedom to have grown into a land of opportunity such as the U.S.A., where nothing stops a man who wants to become a doctor or engineer or anything else. But India's rulers do have a responsibility to see that the *artificial* obstacles in education and employment do not impede its people. The Madras Government has been one of the worst offenders in this respect. Admissions to engineering and medical colleges in Madras have virtually become impossible for certain communities which have till now been forward, while members of other communities pampered by the State Government out of mistaken concern for their advance, just walk in, despite their lack of equipment and qualifications on the basis of merit. Educational standards have been deliberately lowered to help these communities and the quality of the graduates turned out is frankly recognised as second-rate. Little attention is paid to the consequences of such educational and employment policy for a nation which has to depend on such poor quality scientific personnel.

C.V.G.

Madras, India