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POLITICS AND MYSTICISM

WHILE mystics commonly remain aloof from politics, along with various other human activities, the fact is that the idea of mystical perception has clear implications for politics—implications which will have great difficulty in gaining acceptance among people who are persuaded of the importance of democratic principles in government. Those who become interested in mysticism have an obligation to consider with some seriousness this clash between mystical and democratic conceptions of the good in human life.

Fundamentally, the clash is between theories of knowledge. Of course, the mystical theory of knowledge is concerned with ultimate truth—whatever that may be—while democracy, as a doctrine of political order, is concerned with power, or, more precisely, the control and limitation of power, so that the conflict is not direct. But since any form of knowledge, or presumed knowledge, if it has a basic character, points directly to some ideal system of human relations, political implications are practically inevitable. Mysticism, therefore, is bound to have political implications.

We can think of three historical examples of the influence of faith in mystical perception upon politics—one ancient illustration and two modern illustrations. The Hellenic city states, when puzzled by a difficult decision of policy which lay before them, would on occasion send an emissary to consult the Oracle of Delphi. The counsels of the Oracle were not always clear, a situation common enough among mystical revelations, but the Greeks were sufficiently persuaded of the supernatural insight of the Oracle to seek the help of its entranced sibyls. In modern times, we find the members of the "traditional" group of the Hopi Indian tribe seeking and relying upon the mystical inspiration of their religious leaders. While the Hopis possess recorded traditions which recite the history and prophetic role of the Hopis in relation to other peoples and to the entire world, there is always the problem of interpretation of this ancestral charge. Leadership of the traditional Hopis falls to those in whom the meaning of the ancient instructions of the Hopi religion burns brightly enough to inspire the assent of the rest of the "traditional" members of the tribe.

The decisions of the Molokans, a Quaker-like sect of Russian Christians who settled in the United States, mostly on the Pacific Coast, some forty or fifty years ago, are guided in a similar manner. The Molokans, also, have a tradition of high mission and a destiny to fulfill, and the elders of the group have the responsibility of informing the members when the time of momentous choice has arrived. This may involve emigration to another land where, it is hoped, the Molokans will have more opportunity to live their lives in closer adherence to their religious principles.

A fourth illustration from recent history might be added—that of the power exercised by Adolf Hitler over the German people, through what many believed was a kind of Wagnerian earth-mysticism which promised better fortunes for the Teutonic "race." Hitler was a *shaman* to a bewildered, aggrieved, and desperate population, with what consequences everyone knows.

No one who is investigating the possibilities of mysticism as an avenue to knowledge can afford to overlook historical experiences of this sort, for if faith in mysticism should become "popular," they are experiences which will almost certainly be repeated, in one form or another.

Let us now turn to the mystical theory of knowledge, or apprehension of knowledge. There are doubtless many versions of this theory, but one at hand is that adopted from Plotinus by

Samuel Taylor Coleridge and set down with some particularity in his *Biographia Literaria.* For the full implications of this view to become clear, we shall have to quote extensively. Coleridge begins with a frank avowal of the "aristocratic" implications it involves:

> ... it is time to tell the truth; though it requires some courage to avow it in an age and country in which disquisitions on all subjects, not privileged to adopt technical terms or scientific symbols, must be addressed to the Public. I say then, that it is neither possible nor necessary for all men, nor for many, to be philosophers. There is a philosophic (and inasmuch as it is actualized by an effort of freedom, an artificial) consciousness, which lies beneath or (as it were) behind the spontaneous consciousness natural to all reflecting beings. As the elder Romans distinguished their northern provinces into Cis-Alpine and Trans-Alpine, so may we divide all the objects of human knowledge into those on this side, and those on the other side of the spontaneous consciousness. . . . The latter is exclusively the domain of pure philosophy, which is therefore properly entitled *transcendental*, in order to discriminate it at once, both from mere reflection and re-presentation on the one hand, and on the other from those flights of lawless speculation which, abandoned by *all* distinct consciousness, because transgressing the bounds and purposes of our intellectual faculties are justly condemned, as *transcendent.* [Coleridge has a long footnote justifying this distinction between the meanings of "transcendental" and "transcendent."]

Now comes a passage filled with somewhat bumptious imagery (for which Coleridge apologizes!) to convey what he is after:

> The first range of hills that encircles the scanty vale of human life, is the horizon for the majority of its inhabitants. On *its* ridges the common sun is born and departs. From *them* the stars rise, and touching *them* they vanish. By the many even this range, the natural limit and bulwark of the vale, is but imperfectly known. Its higher ascents are too often hidden by mists and clouds from uncultivated swamps, which few have courage or curiosity to penetrate. To the multitude below these vapors appear, now as the dark haunts of terrific agents, on which none may intrude with impunity; and now all a-glow, with colors not their own, they are gazed at as the splendid palaces of happiness and power. But in all ages there have been a few, who measuring and sounding the rivers of the vale at the feet of their furthest accessible falls have learned, that the sources must be far higher and far inward; a few, who even in the level streams have detected elements, which neither the vale itself nor the surrounding mountains contained or could supply.
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> How and whence to these thoughts, these strong probabilities, the ascertaining vision, the intuitive knowledge may finally supervene, can be learnt only by the fact. I might oppose to the question the words with which Plotinus supposes Nature to answer a similar difficulty. "Should any one interrogate her, how she works, if graciously she vouchsafe to listen and speak, she will reply, it behooves thee not to disquiet me with interrogatories, but to understand in silence, even as I am silent, and work without words." (*Ennead*, iii. 8 3.)
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> Likewise in the fifth book of the fifth *Ennead*, speaking of the highest and intuitive knowledge as distinguished from the discursive, or in the language of Wordsworth,
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> "The vision and faculty divine,"
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> he says: "It is not lawful to inquire from whence it sprang, as if it were a thing subject to place and motion, for it neither approched hither, nor again departs from hence to some other place; but it either appears to us or it does not appear. So that we ought not to pursue it with a view of detecting its secret source, but to watch in quiet till it suddenly shines upon us; preparing ourselves for the blessed spectacle as the eye waits patiently for the rising sun." They, and they only, can acquire the philosophic imagination, the sacred power of self-intuition, who within themselves can interpret and understand the symbol, that the wings of the air-sylph are forming within the skin of the caterpillar; those only, who feel in their own spirits the same instinct which impels the chrysalis of the horned fly to leave room in its *involucrum* for *antennae* yet to come. They know and feel that the potential works in them, even as the actual works on them! In short, all the organs of sense are framed for a corresponding world of sense; and we have it. All the organs of spirit are framed for a correspondent world of spirit: though the latter organs are not developed in all alike. But they exist in all, and their first appearance discloses itself in the moral being. How else could it be, that even worldlings, not wholly debased, will contemplate the man of simple and disinterested goodness with contradictory feelings of pity and respect? "Poor man! he is not made for *this* world." Oh! herein they

utter a prophecy of universal fulfilment; for man must either rise or sink. . . .

A little further on, Coleridge discusses degrees of inward perception:

> It is demanded then, whether there be found any means in philosophy to determine the direction of the inner sense, as in mathematics it is determinable by its specific image or outward picture. Now the inner sense has its direction determined for the greater part only by an act of freedom. One man's consciousness extends only to the pleasant or unpleasant sensations caused in him by external impressions; another enlarges his inner sense to a consciousness of forms and quantity; a third in addition to the image is conscious of the conception or notion of the thing; a fourth attains to a notion of his notions—he reflects on his own reflections; and thus we may say without impropriety, that the one possesses more or less inner sense, than the other. This more or less betrays already, that philosophy in its first principles must have a practical or moral, as well as a theoretical or speculative side. This difference in degree does not exist in mathematics. Socrates in Plato shows, that an ignorant slave may be brought to understand and of himself to solve the most difficult geometrical problem. . . . To an Esquimaux or New Zealander our most popular philosophy would be wholly unintelligible. The sense, the inward organ, for it is not yet born in him. So is there many a one among us, yes, and some who think themselves philosophers too, to whom the philosophic organ is entirely wanting. To such a man philosophy is a mere play of words and notions, like a theory of music to the deaf, or like the geometry of light to the blind. The connection of the parts and their logical dependencies may be seen and remembered: but the whole is groundless and shallow, unsustained by living contact, unaccompanied with any realizing intuition which exists by and in the act that affirms its existence, which is known, because it is, and is, because it is known. The words of Plotinus, in the assumed person of Nature, hold true of the philosophic energy. "With me the act of contemplation makes the thing contemplated, as the geometricians contemplating describe lines correspondent; but I not describing lines, but simply contemplating, the representative forms of things rise up into existence." The postulate of philosophy and at the same time the test of philosophic capacity, is no other than the heaven-descended KNOW THYSELF!

Except for Coleridge's assumption that the New Zealanders or the Eskimos are incapable of philosophy (the Hopi language, to take an illustration, is far more accommodating to modern concepts of time than any European tongue), the foregoing may be taken as a disciplined approach to mystical perception, with considerable attention to the subtleties involved. But that the approach involves an aristocratic theory of human development is quite inescapable. A first question to be considered, then, is whether a political objection is competent to dispose of the mystical theory of knowledge.

Here, Coleridge's distinction between "transcendental" and "transcendent" gains some importance, since he obviously regards as worthless "those flights of lawless speculation" which transgress "the bounds and purposes of our intellectual faculties." In these terms, the deliveries of mystical perception must accept the trial by reason, enjoying no more authority than any other form of presumed knowing. It is certain, at any rate, that while "intuitions" may reach beyond the rational, they can have no real claim on our attention when they oppose or contradict the rational, and since rational appeal is in principle the foundation of democratic politics, the aristocratic theory of mystical perception need give no offense on this count.

But even more important than political considerations is the question of whether Coleridge's analysis conforms with our experience of nature. We think it does. At any rate, what he says of the inward faculty goes further toward explaining artistic and moral genius than any other account of man's nature and any other explanation of the differences among men. It may be an unpopular theory, and a theory capable of endless abuse, but it nevertheless meets a class of fact and human phenomena which have been almost wholly neglected by the modern sciences, including the psychological sciences.

Letter on *Anarcho-Pacifism*

DEAR EDITORS: I was glad to read your bow to anarcho-pacifists in the issue of June 19. Although most people have not heard the term, would not understand it if they did, or, more likely, would be horrified if they saw themselves described as such, some of us who do accept the designation are happy not to be herded into an ivory tower with the religious, the cynics and the scholars. If anarchists have been placed anywhere, it has been in a well-guarded non-ivory dungeon with the burglars and the criminally insane. So little have latter-day concepts of anarchism seeped into general knowledge that beards and bombs are still the tags they get from cartoonists and John Citizen alike. Pacifists, on the other hand, are regarded as harmless escapees from the real world, useful perhaps as reminders of what-might-be but ineffectual and often a bit tiresome in their perfectionism.

My view is that the ranks of anarcho-pacifists are not "thinly scattered" at all. They may not be making much noise with their ideas, but they are more potent than people think. Anarchism and pacifism, now linked together through world wide demonstrations of the power of nonviolent resistance, have never been so subversive of the established order. Never, in my opinion, have so many people espoused and acted according to such views. Since most of the actions are in no way directed or related to institutions dedicated to libertarianism or peace, the prospect is all the more hopeful.

What are some of these self-generated actions? I have space to enumerate only a few. I believe each of them could be documented. Interest and/or participation in government steadily diminishes. The farther a governmental agency is from a person the less respect it gets. Respect for big politicians, Congressmen, even the President, is lessening. The Military's prestige has fallen so low that it must bribe young men to join its ranks by granting PX privileges, free medicine, big pensions and other "socialistic" inducements. Big industry, long considered more efficient and especially more honest than government, now finds its influence in erosion. Its affinities with big government are too widely recognized for illusions to be harbored. The labor movement, not necessarily because of recent Teamster revelations but rather because it has said "Me too," to Big government and Big business, is no longer thought of as a radical, or even as a reformist, influence for civic betterment. These are only a few of the areas where the prestige of the established order has rotted away. On the other hand, the kind of people who may be roughly grouped in the anarcho-pacifist pattern have been busy making a brave new world in the debris of the old.

I speak of the creative areas of painting, literature and ethical-religious thought. In subject matter, expression, freedom of style and use of materials, contemporary painting and sculpture are unequivocally anarchist and pacifist. Its audience becomes larger each year, its prestige increases, and soon the slick-paper magazines and Madison Avenue ad agencies will embrace them. Subversion indeed!

Libertarian poetry and prose is published, widely read, and banned in San Francisco as not fit for children to read. For once the censors are accurate if not right. These books, if read for their whole meaning and not merely for their Anglo-Saxon monosyllables, would incredibly hasten the maturation of the young. It might even make them more mature, and hence more radical, than their elders. This is going too far in San Francisco. By contrast, the anemic work of the academic conservatives is read only in classrooms and morgues.

It is a little more difficult to pinpoint the growing area in ethics and religion. I would mention the interest in Buddhism and other Eastern religions among young intellectuals: several young men have claimed conscientious

objector rating as Buddhists. Painting and poetry show the influence of the oriental philosophers. But more generally, I would suggest the prevalence of bohemian morale: a spirit of rough and ready give-and-take and come-what-may that undermines the regimented conduct pattern of state, industry and the military. Bohemianism is more than a state of mind among the young; it is a course of action, a way of life. And it is antithetical to sacred cows of all complexions. Aversion to the rat-race of modern life is widespread among barbers, butchers, scavengers, students and milk-wagon drivers. One expression of this unified view is courtesy and a degree of fraternity among fellow workers and blue-shirt-wearers generally.

It would be foolish indeed to posit a movement upon these scattered rays of solidarity. In our society the forces of division are greater than those of cohesion. But I think it is fair to say that the cult of the state has seen its heyday in America, and from here on it declines. As the king and the nobles remove themselves in space and place from the people, the cult becomes a mere symbol, viable only in time of war. Then the engines of propaganda force a temporary cohesion. The little wars of the coldwar period have not engendered this unification. Matsu-Quemoy, Korea, Suez aroused no enthusiasm in the American heart. Abolishment of nuclear tests is a far more popular issue, and this one has brought together people who abhor anarchism and deprecate pacifism.

Thus the "thinly scattered but stubborn files of the anarcho-pacifists" would seem to be fairly widespread and deep in strength. They show one way out of the ivory towers and "the cattlepens of army, industry, and government bureaucracy."

GEORGE B. REEVES

San Francisco

REVIEW
"THE HEDGEHOG AND THE FOX"

A REVIEWER ought, before reporting on Isaiah Berlin's *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (Mentor), to read again *War and Peace*, and possibly some other of Tolstoy's works as well, since this essay is concerned with the philosophical dilemma which haunted Tolstoy's life and which is presented pre-eminently in *War and Peace.* We have not done this, mainly because of the more pressing obligation to get this copy to the printer in time to appear in the scheduled issue of MANAS. Mr. Berlin, however, seems worthy of considerable trust, and with this warning we proceed with the report.

The engaging title of this essay is taken from a line of the Greek poet, Archilochus: "The fox knows many things, but the hedgehog knows one big thing." Mr. Berlin makes this rule distinguish between two great classes of minds—

> those, on one side, who relate everything to a single central vision, one system less or more coherent or articulate, in terms of which they understand, think and feel—a single, universal, organizing principle in terms of which all that they are and say has significance—and, on the other side those who pursue many ends, often unrelated and even contradictory, connected, if at all, only in some *de facto* way, for some psychological or physiological cause, related by no moral or aesthetic principle; these last lead lives, perform acts, and entertain ideas which are centrifugal rather than centripetal, their thought is scattered or diffused, moving on many levels, seizing upon the essence of a vast variety of experiences and objects for what they are in themselves, without, consciously or unconsciously, seeking to fit them into, or excluding them from, any one unchanging, all-embracing, sometimes self-contradictory and incomplete, at times fanatical, unitary inner vision. The first kind of intellectual and artistic personality belongs to the hedgehogs, the second to the foxes; and without insisting on a rigid classification, say that, in this sense, Dante belongs to the first category, Shakespeare to the second; Plato, Lucretius, Pascal, Hegel, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Ibsen, Proust are, in varying degree, hedgehogs; Herodotus, Aristotle, Montaigne, Erasmus, Molière, Goethe, Pushkin, Balzac, Joyce are foxes.

Mr. Berlin's contention is that Tolstoy was by nature a fox, but that he longed to be a hedgehog, from deep inner conviction believing that somehow the truth lies with the hedgehogs; yet he was prevented from wholehearted alliance with the hedgehogs by his very genius as a writer and an observer of the unresolvable variety in human experience. Hence he became the ferocious critic and enemy of all superficial hedgehog doctrines. His need to be faithful to the subject-matter of his art made him appear as the opponent of what he longed to discover:

> Any comforting theory which attempted to collect, relate, "synthesize," reveal hidden substrata and concealed inner connexions, which, though not apparent to the naked eye, nevertheless guaranteed the unity of all things—the fact that they were "ultimately" parts of one another with no loose ends—the ideal of the seamless whole—he exploded contemptuously and without difficulty. . . . Tolstoy perceived reality in its multiplicity, as a collection of separate entities round and into which he saw with a clarity and penetration scarcely ever equalled, but he believed only in one vast, unitary whole. No author who has ever lived has shown such powers of insight into the variety of life—the differences, the contrasts, the collisions of persons and things and situations each apprehended in its absolute uniqueness and conveyed with a degree of directness and a precision of concrete imagery to be found in no other writer… Yet what he believed in was the opposite. . . .

Let us pause to pay tribute to Mr. Berlin, who is able to bring order and clarity to an extremely difficult subject, and whose language is a continuous delight to the reader. Once in a while you come across writing which seems so just in its appreciation of the many facets of the matter under discussion that you feel you can really rely on what the writer says. Mr. Berlin inspires this confidence. All that we could ask of him, in addition, is that he should reveal just a little personal *involvement* in Tolstoy's dilemma, which was, after all, an instance of the universal situation of thinking man.

But the lesson of this essay, above all, is to emphasize the importance of the arts. Neither the metaphysician, as metaphysician, nor the scientist,

as scientist, can *feel* the Tolstoyan dilemma. The beautiful structures of the metaphysician with their patterned correspondence to human longing for "higher" meanings, and the stubborn "brute facts" of the empirical investigator—how are these alien empires to be brought into even distant relationship, except by the artist? The artist unites particularity and principle, and the greater the artist, the more universal his perceptions, and the more difficult the achievement. Nor can the synthesis enjoy a specious simplicity. The task of the soul, as Henry Miller said, is "to choose an arena in which to stage its agonies." For Tolstoy, the arena was *War and Peace*, and the agony was born of his search for a larger meaning which continually eluded him, while the frustrations attending the search brought a high intellectual rage which he turned against all simplifying pieties, tearing them to shreds:

> Tolstoy's concern with history derives from a deeper source than abstract interest in historical method or philosophical objections to given types of historical practice. It seems to spring from something more personal, a bitter inner conflict between his actual experience and his beliefs, between his vision of life, and his theory of what it and he himself, ought to be, if the vision was to be bearable at all; between the immediate data which he was too honest to ignore, and the need for an interpretation of them which did not lead to the childish absurdities of all previous views. For the one conviction to which his temperament and his intellect kept him faithful all his life was that all previous attempts at a rational theodicy—to explain how and why and what occurred as and when it did, and why it was bad or good that it should or should not do so—all such efforts were grotesque absurdities, shoddy deceptions which one sharp, honest word was sufficient to blow away. The Russian critic, Boris Eykhenbaum, who has written the best critical work on Tolstoy in any language, in the course of it develops the thesis that what oppressed Tolstoy most was his lack of positive convictions. . . .

But Tolstoy had convictions; he was, as Berlin points out, driven by them as by the Furies; his tragedy was that he could not articulate them. Berlin devotes about eight pages and a few more scattered passages to trying to intimate what Tolstoy was reaching after, and what, in practical settlement, he was able to get on paper concerning the "sense of reality" he sought. What *was* Tolstoy after?

Do not expect your reviewer to do what Tolstoy could not do; what Berlin naturally avoids by making a percipient summary of Tolstoy's intimations; what has silenced teachers like Buddha and caused Plato to set down his pen. "Resignation," in the meaning given this term by the *Bhagavad-Gita*, is probably the negative aspect of Tolstoy's idea of wisdom, but there is much more. A sense of the "fitness" of the human situation plays a part, leading to action without ambition, and to acceptance of defeat, when defeat comes, without despair. Something more than a doctrinaire "philosophical" attitude is involved. Prometheus, hanging in his chains on Caucasus, has a better understanding of "patience" than one who has memorized all the maxims relating to this virtue. The wisdom Tolstoy reveres is forged from the full exposure of the soul to life; it is not compounded of wide collections of facts, after the manner of science; yet no disregard of facts is involved. It is as though the man must feel in his own being the larger being of nature, grasp in his own life the processes of history.

There are endless parallels in literature and philosophy to Tolstoy's dilemma. W. Macneile Dixon wrestles with the system-builders as vigorously as Tolstoy, in *The Human Situation*, yet embraces Leibniz' monads in final submission to the hedgehog position; Roderick Seidenberg's *Post-Historic Man is* a work worthy in some respects to typify the struggle, which is the war between the head and the heart, between the integrity of man as observer and the integrity of man as dreamer. But it is from the artist that we learn the importance of being suspicious of all those who find too easy a solution. It is the artist who insists that we renounce any subdivided or abstracted truth—who declares that every partisan view suffers violent contradiction from some other, and that the synthesis is a wordless and

imageless reality which no syllogism or formula, no diagram or equation, can contain.

Tolstoy beats at the world like a Zen philosopher with his rod:

> Tolstoy can only say what is not. His genius is devastatingly destructive. He can only attempt to point towards his goal by exposing the false signposts to it; to isolate the truth by annihilating that which it is not—namely all that can be said in the clear, analytical language that corresponds to the all too clear, but necessarily limited, vision of the foxes. Like Moses, he must halt at the borders of the Promised Land; without it his journey is meaningless; but he cannot enter it; yet he knows that it exists, and can tell us, all that it is not—above all, not anything that art, or science or civilization or rational criticism can achieve. . . . Tolstoy's sense of reality was until the end too devastating to be compatible with any moral ideal which he was able to construct out of the fragments into which his intellect shivered the world, and he dedicated all of his vast strength of mind and will to the lifelong denial of this fact.

Well, shall we then read the system-builders and the moralists out of the universe? Shall we expurgate our minds of their partisan goodnesses? We can hardly do this, but what we can do is insist that every one of them install a bust of Tolstoy in his study, or, at least, some minor statuary representative of the hedgehog and the fox.

COMMENTARY
THE DIFFERENCES AMONG MEN

A MAJOR theoretical weakness in democratic doctrine and folklore is the almost total neglect of the fact that human beings vary widely in their innate physical, intellectual, and moral capacities. There is a very good explanation for this neglect, which springs from moral idealism rather than intentional bias or ignorance. The theory of man in modern politics, whether democratic or socialist, arises from the revolutionary thinking of the eighteenth century, the popular foundations of which are expressed by the great and ennobling slogans of the French Revolution: "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity."

It is obvious that the formulators of the principle of human equality could not themselves have believed that all men are "equal" in the sense of being the *same* in all things; they meant, rather, that men are equal in having the essential qualities of human beings and entitled to equal rights and privileges before the law. But to think of men as both equal and not equal—this is a subtlety which does not lend itself to success in political campaigns. In practice, therefore, the doctrine of equality has been over-simplified into the myth of *absolute* equality—in which everyone claimed to believe but which no one was really *able* to believe.

This grand deception has led to endless confusion, not only in democratic countries, but to a greater extent in communist countries where ideological pressure turned the doctrine of equality into an absolute.

In the United States, the idea of Free Enterprise eventually became a compensating dogma which gave exhilarating scope to the differences which "practical" men acknowledge, while avoiding overt contradiction of Equalitarian slogans. In Russia, under rigid communist enforcement of "Equality," the brute fact of differences gained institutional accommodation in the *elite* caste of the Party Members, inheritors of the prestige and power of the old Bolsheviks.

In both cases, the adjustments were makeshift, yet, after a fashion, they have worked.

Intelligent politics, however, can never result from theoretical makeshifts. An unequivocal account of the nature of man is therefore a prerequisite of all constructive political thinking. This week's lead article is an attempt to explore a basic problem which constructive political thinking must meet.

CHILDREN
. . . and Ourselves
BACKGROUND FOR MARRIAGE

ONE of our readers recently fell to speculating upon what he considered a curious phenomenon—that "parents worry so much over, and sacrifice so much, for the future happiness of their children, yet seem to pay exceedingly little heed to the way and manner and circumstances under which grow up and are reared the future husbands and wives of their children." He apparently feels that the chances for "congenial living" between new marital partners, and consequently their happiness and general worth to society, may depend in no small degree upon the quality of their background and training.

We don't quite know what to do with this question, since it would be both presumptuous and a little sticky to discuss how parents might probe the "rearing" of prospective mates for their children. However, it does seem that most American parents tend to ignore such matters entirely. Again and again, young people contract marriages with family approval gained merely by the personableness of the prospective bride or groom. This lack of interest in the cultural background of the young would undoubtedly strike the European mind as quite naïve, since in countries of the Old World it seems most natural for families to get to know one another before a marriage is seriously considered—that is, among family groups to whom custom is still an influence. While the European precedent is largely based upon religion and social position, the same sort of interest might well obtain in regard to the general psychological atmosphere of a family background. There are homes, for instance, wherein punctuality in all things—and a proper performance of whatever duties or family obligations exist—becomes as much a part of a child as the color of his hair or the configuration of his body, and those who make a religion of punctuality will certainly disturb those who pay this virtue scant attention. Some lives are "programmatic," ordered by a sense of obligatory discipline, and some lives proceed with virtually no attention to such things. When young couples are caught up in these discrepancies they will have more psychological trouble than need be, and would at least benefit by forewarning. The nature and extent of the discrepancies should be recognized early, and parents, without exerting a prejudice for or against any prospective suitor on these grounds alone, could at least educate as to their existence.

A recent column by Max Lerner on Catholic pronouncements against "steady dating" reveals the extent to which youths are today seeking security in romantic alliances rather than in confidence in parents; this is what the Church is protesting. And it is true that if the family does not offer intelligent counseling, security will not be found within its fold—for this is one of its natural functions. Lerner comments:

> Up to now the campaign of the Catholic Church against too early steady dating, especially in parochial high schools, his been mainly a local matter. But the other day at Milwaukee, it became a matter of national Catholic policy. This important step was taken in an attack on "going steady" by Msgr. Irving De Blanc, who heads the family division of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and who gave an authoritative statement of the Catholic viewpoint to Catholic laymen and clergy from every part of the nation.
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> This doesn't mean that the Church is ready to legislate yet on "going steady" by making it a mortal sin, as predicted by a writer in a Paulist magazine. That may come later. But one gathers that the tentative stage is past, and that the decision has been taken to try persuasion and pressures—pulpit warnings, school assembly talks, school expulsions if necessary.
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> Readers will recall a constant succession of episodes during the past half year. Last October there was a ban on steady dating at St. Mary's HS at Lynn, near Boston, in November there was a similar ban at Sacred Heart Academy in Buffalo; in December these schools were followed by St. Francis College, at Loretto, Pa.; last month the climax was reached when four students of St. Anthony HS at Bristol, Conn.,

were formally expelled because they and their parents refused to go along with a similar ban. The speech by Msgr. De Blanc takes its seriousness from these widely discussed episodes.

Only a decade ago the sociologists were still complaining that American girls were obsessed with getting a different date every time they went out, and that they were rated in their group for their popularity as dates. This was the now-classic "dating-rating pattern."

But the new pattern is for youngsters to start dating at the precocious age of 14, and by the time they are in college (or even seniors in high school) they are behaving like old married couples.

Why do they do it? They are scared of getting left behind, alone and unwanted. "Without a steady," said one of the Lynn teen-agers, "you are not even in line for a dance at the school record hop."

You don't solve this kind of emotional insecurity by cracking down on it, as the Catholic Church seems intent on doing. All that will happen is that you impose an added burden of guilt on the shoulders of the already anxiety-ridden boy and girl.

Mr. Lerner's conclusion is hardly one with which a liberal can disagree. However, and despite the fact that the Church's chief concern is obviously the extension of authority over the young by way of family dominance, it is also true that a precocious and dependent emotional relationship with a member of the opposite sex is seldom desirable. While we would be a little more sympathetic to the confusions encountered by married or near-married teen-agers than to iron rule from church and home, young people do need time to absorb whatever virtues of habit and conduct their family may happen to possess. They will spend such time and energy willingly, though, only when the virtues and value are evident, and when parents "make" enough time to spend with them, so we come back again to the rather trite assertion that the emotional center of the teenager's life should be the orbit of parents, brothers and sisters.

Why is it so difficult for the majority of families to create such an atmosphere? First of all, when the bulk of the American public makes a career out of utilizing leisure time for personal pleasure, teen-age children are often left out of the picture. The increasing number of school activities, designed to fill the psychological vacuum in modern home life, unfortunately provide the golfing or bridge-playing parent with what appears to be reasonable excuse to let the young "live their own lives." But youths crave some point or place where they can feel an intensity of emotional acceptance; if this is not forthcoming in the home, as both Catholics and sociologists have discovered, a sort of unofficial "marriage" may exert a powerful attraction.

There are other reasons. Both youths and their parents live today with the impression that external forces are more and more taking control over the early years of life, anyway. The United States Department of Defense is not alone in asserting that a term of military service is simply "normal" and to be expected. And it is because the young men of America have accepted this premise, however grudgingly in some cases, that propaganda designed to secure voluntary enlistments is so successful. An article by Cabell Phillips in the July *Harper's* indicates the degree to which the Department of Defense is sure that the money spent on lures to enlistment will obtain satisfactory results:

> The biggest "sell" to teen-age America today is being engineered by the United States Department of Defense. It is a sustained, high-pressure merchandising campaign which will cost about $40,000,000, and for which a highly polished 7,500-man sales force has been deployed into just about every community of consequence in the country. Some of the best brains of Madison Avenue have worked out the programming which, in the patois of the craft, is a "saturation job" employing every channel of communication from television spectaculars to sober classroom lectures.

There is, moreover, a central slogan employed along with the wide distribution of brochures and leaflets—"It's your choice." In other words, the eighteen-year-old boy is told by his government that he is now a man, can take on man-size responsibilities, and has sufficient

wisdom and understanding to order his life in whatever manner he chooses—within the confines of his expected tenure in some branch of service. Small wonder that the objects of this approach feel that they are certainly able to select a girl for steady dating, or undertake marriage without advice or instruction from parents, least of all interference by way of suggested postponements.

So far as steady dating and early marriage are concerned, therefore, the "problem" seems to come down to this: if you cannot provide a family situation in which a youth will have a spontaneous and binding emotional investment, he will seek a family situation of his own. Often this is better than drifting from one casual contact to another, but often, too, young couples pay a price for their parents' lack of attention to them, when their new "security" begins to break down under unexpected pressures.

FRONTIERS

Not Just McCarthy

A LONG and thoughtful article in the July *Harper's* on the elements of "A Rational Security Program," by Eugene Rostow, Dean of Yale Law School, is worthy of thorough reading. Dean Rostow's main point is that the loyalty-security programs with which we have been afflicted during the past ten years are *not* tapering off—that the official censure of the late Senator McCarthy did not institute the throwing out of a most unseemly baby, but simply brought a change in the bath-water. "Loyalty-oath" requirements, rather than diminishing, are extending themselves into new areas, and Dean Rostow considers it his duty to emphasize the dangers of "penalizing on suspicion." He writes:

> It is ten years since President Truman established the first loyalty program, in response to the fear and tension which accompanied public recognition of the Cold War. There is widespread impression that the loyalty-security programs, as they are now known, have been on the wane since the censure of the late Senator McCarthy. The impression is misleading. Although we have been somewhat less agitated about subversives lately, the institutionalized machinery of investigation screening, hearings, and appeals goes on; and the practice is skill spreading.
>
> The loyalty-security programs are not important only because they directly affect the jobs of many millions of workers in government, in the armed services, in defense industries, in schools and universities, and in various "sensitive" jobs throughout the nation. In their present forms these programs also deny basic values of our law. They introduce into the social order, and into the legal system, concepts of guilt without fault which have no place in a society formed under the Constitution and its Bill of Rights, and committed to the faith of freedom.
>
> We should conclude that the process of universal screening was a mistake, and that the rules of exclusion we develop, presuming that people of certain views or habits were more likely than others to commit crime, were wrong. They represent in our law an extension of the dangerous idea behind the relocation program for Japanese and Americans of Japanese ancestry which we carried out during the war; that men can be segregated, penalized, and stigmatized without individual fault, because it is widely suspected that they may commit crime.
>
> In seeking to deal with conspiracy, we have through the loyalty-security program succeeded in punishing heresy, and often mere heterodoxy or confusion.
>
> It is time to call a halt.

Loyalty-oath precedents are clearly not a rational development of law to meet growing emergencies, but rather an expression of a state of mind which often borders on hysteria. The recent conviction of Arthur Miller serves as an excellent case in point, for here, with no "loyalty-oath" required, the Senate's Un-American Activities Committee behaved precisely as if such an oath had been required, affirmed, and then betrayed! In this case, particularly, it was obvious that the intention of government representatives who suffer from Communist phobia was to insist upon ex post facto punishment; and to this was added the double indignity of "screening'" a private citizen's ethical standards.

The Senate's Internal Security Subcommittee, headed by Robert Morris, has recently revealed its determination to institute a system of thought-control: A. J. Muste, distinguished head of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, may soon be called upon to appear before that Committee to answer charges that his formation of a Socialist discussion group is profoundly un-American. Muste publicly announced, last May, that he would refuse on grounds of conscience to answer any questions based upon the Committee's suspicion of the outcome of Socialist discussion, and it may therefore be assumed that Muste, after being called, will be cited for contempt. The "Muste case," too, could be a very educational one, especially if the liberal press takes it up. Muste's formation of the American Forum of Socialist Education is an attempt to "bring Communism out into the open" in a *genuinely* American way. Murray Kempton, reporting for the New York *Post* on the Senate's Internal Security Subcommittee's proposed "investigation," pointed out that a truly subversive group would hardly make widespread public announcement of its intentions. Muste deliberately invited two active Communists to join the Forum; also included, however, were a number of pacifists, Trotskyites, ex-Trotskyites, pacifist-Socialists, ex-Communists, Communist fellow

travelers, ex-Communist fellow travelers, and independent radicals. The Forum has no program of action and, in Kempton's opinion, is but an expression of a natural desire for a setting in which disagreements can be discussed in a free and educative manner.

Kempton's article (May 28) was entitled, "The Risk of Compassion," by which he meant to show sympathy for an additional purpose of Muste's group:

> The thing A. J. Muste is trying to do seems to me both simple and commendable. The Communist Party had only 8,000 members at its last convention; the uneasy compromises of that occasion worked no better than such devices usually do. The party has lost 2,000 members since then; its attrition rate runs to 500 a month. Most of those departing are members of the group which, after Stalin and after Hungary, hoped for better things. The loss of that hope is reflected in their general disembarkment.
>
> The "hards" have to win because before long all save them will be gone and the party has to become more and more openly a tiny, naked apologist for all the crimes of the Soviet Union. Its interior debate is almost over, and, before very long, any man who thinks himself a democrat and remains a Communist must know that his credit is exhausted and his life a failure.
>
> There remain those who are coming forth to wander around in the light. Is there to be no answer for them but a place in the defendant's chair and the public confession at the state trial?
>
> A. J. Muste reserves his right to extend the hand of compassion to confused and troubled men and the right to protect their confidences from the state. There are dangers in this as there are dangers in every commitment of compassion. But without such risks, each of us will live in his own prison.

The exasperating manner in which a gentle and worthy man is required by his government to pay a "price for compassion" is described by Kempton in these words:

> I am afraid, and it makes me sad to say so, that, if the American Communist Party ceased to exist, it would be necessary for Robert Morris and the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee to invent one.
>
> Two weeks or so ago, A. J. Muste, of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, announced the formation of the American Forum for Socialist Education, a group of 40 persons, including two still active in the Communist Party, to promote "untrammeled political discussion among all elements who think of themselves as related to historic socialist and labor traditions."
>
> This is a group with no program except discussion and with little agreement upon anything except the need for lonely men to quarrel together.
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> But the Internal Security Subcommittee interpreted Muste's announcement as the first triumph of a subtle Communist maneuver to reinfiltrate our society under the protective coloration of an immense army of Trotskyites. In pursuit of this theory, the Senate subpoenaed Albert Blumberg, one of the two members of Muste's flock who are still public Communist Party members, and asked him whether he had joined under the orders of his National Committee. Blumberg took the Fifth Amendment, according to custom.
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> As chairman of the Internal Security Subcommittee, James 0. Eastland then wrote Muste demanding a full explanation of his dealings with Blumberg and "other representatives of the Communist Party."

The Muste case offers clear confirmation of Eugene Rostow's indictment of our legal and ethical short-sightedness. Dean Rostow said in summary:

> While the attack on Communists in the trade unions counterespionage and other police methods, criminal law enforcement, and above all the ordinary processes of public debate have effectively limited the influence of active Communists, the loyalty-security programs have accomplished little in this positive sense.
>
> They have created, however, an atmosphere of fear and insecurity, both in the public service and in other sectors of society, gravely disturbing men's confidence in the fairness of government and in the sense of justice of law. Large numbers of people are now persuaded that there is something seriously wrong with programs that produce such a costly side-effect, though there is so far no consensus as to where their weakness lies.